

# New Artists in the Mix Machine

April 22–June 2, 2006

## Kortney Niewierski

### *Sculpture*

Kortney Niewierski received her Master of Fine Arts in sculpture in 2005 from Kent State University. Over the past several years, her work has been shown both locally and in central Ohio. Her fabric-skinned sculptures address themes of empathy, repulsion, and self-evaluation through the use of abstracted sculptural images of medical procedures and anomalies.

“Imagery from medical anomalies and those slightly recognizable human or animal-like forms combined with fantastical organic shapes create creatures that are intended to intrigue our curious side and pull at our heart strings, while at the same time repulsing us by their oddity. A balance between the elements of the grotesque and the disturbingly interesting is achieved through an attraction to the odd. Whether the fabric-skinned objects are toys or creatures, human or animal, they all suggest a fusing or malformation at the cellular level. While medical procedures and anomalies dominate the vision of the work and imagery of the pieces, there is an underlying tone of self-evaluation ever-present.”

## Dylan Ethan Collins

### *Sculpture*

Born in Chicago in 1974, Collins grew up in rural Charleston, Illinois. He attended Eastern Illinois University, where he received a B.A. in 2-D studio art (1996) and an M.A. in sculpture (1997). In 2003 he received an M.F.A. in sculpture from Kent State University.

From 2003 to the present, he has been an adjunct professor in KSU's School of Art, where he teaches both drawing and sculpture classes.

“As an artist, I am interested in the way systems of classification and organization function. I utilize hybridized forms that combine traits of human, animal, and machine to bring attention to questions of beauty versus the grotesque, history as an activity of the present in its relationship to what remains uncanny, and rational efficiency juxtaposed with the messiness of everyday life.”

## Troy Richards

### *Drawings*

Troy Richards lives in Cleveland Heights and works as the chair of Drawing at Cleveland Institute of Art. He received his MFA in 1997 from Cranbrook Art Academy in Bloomfield Hills, MI. He taught art at Monroe Academy for Visual Arts in New York City and was a founder of Global Enterprise Academy, an alternative school created with funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He has had solo exhibitions at Grand Arts in Kansas City, Duncan and Miller Gallery in Washington D.C., and a long-term installation at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, PA. His work has been included in many group exhibits and is included in the collections of the Cranbrook Art Museum and the Queens Museum of Art. This past December he performed at Artists Space in New York City as part of Performa 05 and this summer a video game installation he has created

## Gallery Hours

Wednesday through Saturday noon to 9 p.m., Sunday 1 to 5

in collaboration with Knut Huybinette will be included in the Ingenuity Festival in Cleveland.

“*New Ripon* (2004-present) is a series of drawings that present a dystopic midwestern society in the midst of breaking down.

“The neighborhood used as the setting is drawn from images of Ripon, Wisconsin, a town near where I grew up that was founded by followers of Charles Fourier, a utopian writer, as an experiment in socialist living. The experiment quickly failed, but the town did later go on to be the birthplace of the Republican party. That such an unremarkable place had this past as a hotbed of ideas and social experiment made it seem like an ideal location to explore the fallout that occurs when such ideas are taken to an extreme and fail. From these drawings a video game is in the process of completion (in collaboration with Knut Huybinette) utilizing a similar approach where each element is hand drawn and then manipulated digitally to create a detailed and disturbing world.”

## Wesley Friedrich

### *Painted gesso*

Since 2002 Wesley Friedrich is enrolled in the BFA program at the Cleveland Institute of Art. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

“The images in this series were taken from the basketball and urban culture magazine *SLAM*. I selected the images for the series from the many issues that I have accumulated since high school. The series has 15 pages—the average number of players on an NBA roster. I chose pages that showed diversity in the size, position, and gesture of the player. I also wanted diversity in the skin color of the players.

“I isolated each chosen player using gesso and a coat of matte medium, then chose two or three colors to use with each image—the typical number of colors found in NBA jerseys.

“I used quick strokes on top of wet paint to exaggerate the ferocity of the players' actions. Most of the time I let the painting just happen, beginning with the background color and discovering how I wanted the figure to be involved within the new space. Some of the figures seem to be bursting out

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from something, some look as if they are exploding, and some cannot even be recognized because of the chaotic activity occurring on top of their bodies.

"These images are an exaggerated depiction of the possibilities and limitations of the human body. A certain degree of spectacle occurs when the athlete is at the height of performance—skill, instincts, and improvisation occurring in unison provide for a sometimes unrepeatably event. This is what I wanted to show in these drawings: an event of extreme and exaggerated activity involving the human form and awesome colors."

## Thu Tran

### *Drawings*

Thu Tran is five feet tall and loves food. The inspiration for her work comes from many different sources, including, but not limited to, sandwich wrappers, manga, sanrio, and the infinite rainbow that is Vietnam. Thu currently refers to herself as a "mixed media artist." Thu was born in a Malaysian refugee camp and raised in Cleveland. She graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art with a BFA in Glass and was the recipient of the Third Agnes Gund Traveling Award. She currently lives and works in Cleveland, at numerous jobs ranging from

book illustration to painting psychedelic murals for sub shops with fellow artist Taylor Dell. First and foremost, she is a food enthusiast, and enjoys the simple pleasures of home cooked meals and food experiments with her friends and family.

"The main visual factor that I want to achieve in my work is visual MSG (monosodium glutamate—a chemically derived spice that opens up the pores of the tongue). MSG is a flavor enhancer that enhances what is already there. With this series of drawings, I am working from memory and adding MSG to it. The results may add embellishments to the truth. The work may become a whole new monster of its own."

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