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CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM ST. LOUIS PRESENTS

THE FRONT ROOM

Short exhibitions by artists and others

SUMMER 2009 SEASON: May 8 – August 16, 2009

APRIL 2009 (Saint Louis, MO) —The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis is pleased to announce its fifth season of The Front Room, which presents an ongoing series of short exhibitions. Provisional in nature—with projects lasting anywhere from one day to four weeks—The Front Room is an active space for experimentation and operates alongside the exhibitions in the Main Galleries to form a series of continuously renewed juxtapositions and relationships. As a sketch-book for new artists and curators, The Front Room remains connected to the most contemporary currents in art-making.

The Summer 2009 season features a series of four group shows:

Olga Chernysheva & R.H. Quaytman & Josephine Pryde (May 8 – 30)

New York based artist R.H. Quaytman considers her painting practice like a book, where paintings develop as chapters while retaining their autonomy as individual objects. In The Front Room Quaytman presents a selection of the smallest versions of these paintings which she calls Captions. Operating somewhere between photographic record and painterly surface, her ambiguous images merge abstraction, history, and perception into a network of visual ciphers.

London and Berlin-based artist Josephine Pryde makes photographs and sculptures using techniques she invents, using a variety of sources. In The Front Room, Pryde presents new work created for a photography exhibition in New York earlier this year made of photographs wrapped around aluminum tubes.

In her series of black and white transparencies, *From the Deputy*, Moscow-based artist Olga Chernysheva captured a municipal public art project in Russia in various stages of decay, vandalism, and erasure—presenting tensions between social policy and artistic practice.

Christopher Orr & J. Parker Valentine & Rezi van Lankveld (June 3 – 28)

Scottish-born, London-based artist Christopher Orr's meticulously painted pictures are derived entirely from extant media: vintage magazines, Ladybird storybooks, science textbooks, Old Master paintings, newspaper articles, and found slides. Testing the objectivity of scientific depictions, photographs, diagrams, and paintings, his eclectic style and content combine competing perspectives of different histories.

Amsterdam-based artist Rezi van Lankveld often works wet-on-wet and pours paint onto laid board or paper, allowing the suggestive nature of the pools of paint to lead her towards an image. Emotionally charged scenes and figures emerge from droplets and swirled marbled paint, whose figures and muted palette nod at nineteenth century Dutch painting and hint at humor, violence, and sexuality.

New York-based artist J. Parker Valentine works on paper and rough MDF panels, making bold gesture drawings with chunks of graphite, oil pastel, and ink. Interested in mythology, the relationships between media, architecture as psychological space, and man's physical, gravitational connection to the earth, Valentine's additive process reveals dynamic and often violent abstractions, as well as feral and animal forms.

Sam Moyer & Lesley Vance & Stan VanDerBeek (July 1 – 26)

Los Angeles artist Lesley Vance's small painted compositions—comprised of shells, horns, coral, and flowers in bloom or decay—both isolate and suspend the organic form. Her enamel-like surfaces, at times brittle, porous, or wilting, point to the traditions and refinements of the still-life genre, while propelling it towards abstraction.

A recent graduate from Yale's sculpture program, Sam Moyer's objects and photographs often feature traces of an event—an explosion of white steam, a generator, a smoke machine, a light fixture from a movie set. In *The Front Room*, she presents a sculpture emulating a house of cards, along with new photographs depicting Willie Nelson at the end of a concert.

A pioneer in the development of experimental film and live-action animation techniques, the late Stan VanDerBeek achieved widespread recognition as an American avant-garde filmmaker. An advocate of the application of a utopian fusion of art and technology, he began making films in 1955, and his multimedia experiments include movie murals, projection systems, planetarium events, and the exploration of early computer graphics and image-processing systems. *The Front Room* features a selection of VanDerBeek's series of early paintings, presenting an added layer to his already expanded practice across media.

Douglas Ross & Philip Vanderhyden (July 29 – August 16)

New York-based artist Douglas Ross constructs and frames forms of physical, technological, and cultural mediation, while often, as he says, "inviting recognition of the contingent." In *The Front Room*, Ross exhibits an installation of new sculptures—a slightly disordered sequence of discrete images quietly pedestalled upon wristwatch bands and watch-display-stands. Concurrent with their implied mobility, the title of each object is changed each day of the exhibition.

On the gallery walls, New York artist Philip Vanderhyden hangs a seemingly-timeless series of intensely-pigmented, atmospheric, and concentrated red paintings. Beginning with a complex ground that is sanded almost to a polish, he builds up images through the intricate balance of application and removal of color, and reveals inconsistencies in what at first appears to be a self-evident, pure surface.

The Front Room is curated by Laura Fried and Anthony Huberman.

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CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM ST. LOUIS

With a vision of presenting the most relevant and experimental developments in contemporary art and developing successful community partnerships, education programs and outreach initiatives, the Contemporary makes the arts available to wide and diverse audiences throughout the Saint Louis metropolitan area. Founded as the Forum for Contemporary Art in 1980, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis re-opened with a new 25,000 square-foot building in 2003.

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