

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Chris Cosnowski *Might and Main*

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is delighted to present Chris Cosnowski's *Might and Main*.

Cosnowski continues his exploration of the conflicted soul of our pop culture. His toys, trophies, models and other Americana transport us into a world that's both playful and haunting, sacred and silly, minimal and complex. In *Might and Main*, a phrase from the 12th century meaning with as much effort or strength as one can muster, many of Cosnowski's figures are raising their fists in a gesture that speaks equally of assertion and desperation. A gesture that perfectly encapsulates our current situation. All of these figures seem to have jumped right out of a nostalgic childhood dream. Plastic toys depict characters from classical Greek mythology and trophies remind us of past glory and success. But there is no real strength depicted in these figures. Despite their gloriously shiny surfaces, experience tells us that the trophies are hollow, cheap spray-plated plastic. The figures are placed dead center in the middle of the painting, making them appear isolated and lonely. Each is painted with a heartrendingly loving hyper-realism, yet set against an empty, monochromatic background which turns them into objects of an abstract world.

Cosnowski doesn't add any commentary, he doesn't need to. His toys and trophies perfectly capture the harrowing soul of American culture and all it represents. Our nostalgic longing for simplicity, the inherent hollowness and betrayal, and its inescapable charms ... and just like Cosnowski's face peers back at the viewer in the reflection in his trophies, we see our own longing looking at us through the eyes of his plastic toys.

Cosnowski's paintings are derived from classical still lifes in the tradition of the Dutch breakfast painters and JBS Chardin. Rather than depicting fruits or dead flowers, however, his subjects revel in references to the world of pop-art and pop culture. His photo-realistic style is sublimated by the minute, even obsessive attention to detail and geometric perfection that render Cosnowski's still lifes into works of idealized art. "Ultimately," Cosnowski says, "I'm a closet minimalist who creates Neo-Classicist Pop-Art."

There is also a spiritual dimension to Cosnowski's art. Seemingly, his paintings are ironic commentaries on the golden calves we worship in our secular age—cheap trophies and mass-produced toys. And yet, they are painted without judgment, with no detail left out and a humility that borders on devotion. The monochromatic abstract backgrounds are reminiscent of medieval icons, but instead of the traditional saints there are idealized toys and trophies looking at us with their empty, lifeless eyes. We feel that in spite of their silliness his figures have a simplicity and presence about them, a rarified purity, that is ennobling.

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Cosnowski was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1968. In 1992, he graduated with a BFA from Columbus College of Art and Design and in 2000 with a MFA in painting from Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. Since 2003 he has been a faculty member at the American Academy of Art in Chicago where he teaches advanced painting, intermediate drawing and portfolio.

Cosnowski has been included in numerous group exhibitions and has had more than a dozen solo exhibitions in cities throughout the US, in particular NYC, Chicago, San Francisco, as well as a 10-year retrospective at South Shore Arts in Munster, IN.

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Chris Cosnowski

EDUCATION

- 2000 Northwestern University, Evanston IL - MFA Painting, June 2000
1992 Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus OH – BFA, May 1992

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 Might and Main, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2017 I Love Humanity This Much, Linda Warren Projects, Chicago, IL
2016 Paintings, The Ohio State University, Lima, OH
Paintings, University Club of Chicago, Chicago IL
2015 University Club of Chicago, Chicago, IL
2014 Enlightened, Linda Warren Projects, Chicago, IL
Enlightened-NYC, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, NY
2013 SUPER-ficial (catalogue), South Shore Arts, Munster, IN
2012 American Metal, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, NY
2010 Apocalypse, Linda Warren Gallery, Chicago, IL
2008 Fresh, Lyonswier-Ortt, NYC, NY
2006 Civic-minded, Gescheidle, Chicago, IL
2005 Recent Paintings, Dolby-Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco
Recent Work, Lyonswier Gallery, NYC, NY
2004 Deflated, Gescheidle, Chicago, IL
2003 New Paintings, Gescheidle, Chicago, IL
New Paintings, Dolby-Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2002 Dreams, Lyonswier Gallery, NYC, NY
2001 Colorforms, Gescheidle, Chicago, IL
Cast, Northern Indiana Arts Association, Hammond, IN

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 Toy Box, Illinois State Art Museum, Lockport, IL
It's Not Funny, Rochester Contemporary Art Center, Rochester NY
Luminance, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
Can't Lose, Metropolitan Capital, Chicago, IL
GAME ON!, Manifest Gallery, Cincinnati, OH
2016 Summer Session, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
Chicago Paints, Ohio University, Athens, OH
2015 Hybrid's Paradise, Evanston Art Center, Evanston, IL
The Mayfair Exhibition, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
Art by America, Jurors: James Yood, Ginny Voedisch, The Art House, Chicago, IL
2014 National Contemporary Painting Exhibition, Weatherhead Gallery, University of
St. Francis, Fort Wayne, IN

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- Summer Session, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, NY
MIA in MIA, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, NY
- 2012 Dallas Art Fair, Lyons Wier Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2011 Here and Now, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, NY
- 2010 Angels, KunzVisGonzales, Chicago, IL
Midnight Snacks: Chicago, 1366 Space, Chicago, Curated by Brian Hubble, Amie Cunat, Travis Wyche
- 2009 Endless Summer, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC
Another Damn Good Painting Show, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC
Upscale/Downsized, Bowling Green University, Bowling Green OH
The Art Of Play, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Playing Around, Brattleboro Museum, Brattleboro, VT.L
- 2007 Ground Breaking: New Space, New Perspective, Lyonswier-Ortt, NYC, NY
Unseriously/Serious, Linda Warren Gallery, Chicago, IL
Representation 2007, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, NYC, NY
- 2006 10 Years – A Retrospective, Dolby-Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2005 Domestic Disturbance, Evanston Art Center, Evanston, IL
Sinister, Tarble Art Center, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL
- 2004 The Reflected/Refracted Self, Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago, IL
The Artist as Collector, Northern Indiana Arts Association, Munster, IN
(catalogue)
American Realism, Plus One Plus Two Galleries, London, UK
Meat Market, Lyonswier Gallery, NYC, NY
Fantastical Memories, NURTUREart Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Exhibition of American Art, Juror: James Rondeau
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2003 Group Show, Dolby-Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Young Painters Competition, Juror: Buzz Spector
Miami University, Oxford, OH
60th Annual Salon Show, Juror: Michael Rooks
Northern Indiana Arts Association, Munster, IN
- 2002 Here and Now, Cultural Center (catalogue), Chicago, IL
Harboring Beauty, Gesheidle Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2001 Snowglobe Invitational, Gescheidle, Chicago, IL
Pin-up, Lyonswier Gallery, NYC, NY
Welcome to My Dollhouse, Zolla-Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, IL
Subject Matters, Standard Gallery (catalogue), Chicago, IL
Artists/Alumni, Block Museum, Northwestern University (catalogue), Evanston, IL
Narrative Sampler, Lyonswier Gallery, Chicago, IL
15th Annual Juried Exhibition, Juror: Dana Miller
Nexus Gallery, NYC, NY
Narration: Emblem and Sequence in Contemporary Art, Juror: Robert Taplin

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

- 2000 Creative Arts Workshop, New Haven, CT
Les Chemical Carnales, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
Shake the Coat, North Park University, Chicago, IL
- 1999 Union League Civic and Arts Foundation Scholarship Exhibition, Chicago, IL
Union League Civic and Arts Foundation Scholarship Exhibition, Chicago, IL
Votive Offerings, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL

AWARDS

- 2016 Finalist-Manifest Prize, Manifest Gallery, Cincinnati, OH
- 2015 Juror's Award, The Art House, Chicago
- 2003 Juror's Award \$500, Northern Indiana Art Association
- 2001 Finalist award \$700, Illinois Art Council
- 2000 Scholarship \$4,000, Union League Civic and Arts Foundation, Chicago
Scholarship \$1,000, The Eugene Myers Graphics Artist's Program
- 1999 Scholarship \$5,000, Union League Civic and Arts Foundation, Chicago
- 1998-2000 Teaching Assistantship, Northwestern University, Evanston IL
- 1988 Scholarship \$4,000, Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus OH

REVIEWS & PUBLICATIONS

- 2017 Top V. Weekend Picks (6/22-6/28), Bad at Sports
RoCo's Exhibit Approaches Serious Subjects With Merry Media, Rebecca Rafferty, RochesterCityNewspaper.com
- 2015 Seeing the Art for the Trees, Philip A. Hartigan, Hyperallergic
- 2014 Portrait of the Artist: Chris Cosnowski, Maria Girgenti, NewCity.com
Jason Foumberg, Chicagomag.com, "21 Art Gallery Exhibits to See in Chicago", New American Paintings.com. Must See Painting Shows: March
- 2013 New American Paintings #107, Midwest Edition (cover image)
- 2012 Oscar A. Laluyan, Arte Fuse, "The Luster of Metal and a Little Monster Arts Observer", American Metal: Chris Cosnowski's Trophies Symbolize More Than Athletic Victory
Soalife.com, "Momento: Chris Cosnowski's American Metals"
New American Paintings, "Must See Painting Shows: March"
- 2011 Philip McCluskey, Scallywag and Vagabond, "Here and Now at Lyons Wier Gallery"
Malorie R. Medellin, ChicagoLawyerMag.com, "Using Office Art to Convey A Firm's Culture"
- 2010 Phil Morehart, Chicago Journal, "Smiling Through the Madness"
- 2008 LiftingFaces.com
Big Mind, Dennis Genpo Merzel, Tricycle
- 2006 Flavorpill CHI, online review, "Civic-minded"
The Edge of Realism, American Art Collector, December 2006
Christine Newman, Open House, Chicago Magazine, August 2006

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2005	Myrna Petlicki, Diversions, "A Male View of 'Domestic' Life"
2004	Fred Camper, Chicago Tribune, "Look into the mirror, and what do you see?" A Spotlight on Living Artists, Crow Woods Publishing
2003	Margaret Hawkins, Chicago Sun Times, Gallery Glance Mario Naves, New York Observer, "Stand up painter" New York Sun, "Toy Story" Alan Artner, Chicago Tribune, Here and Now
2002	New American Paintings #35, Midwest Edition (cover image)
2001	Margaret Hawkins, Chicago Sun Times, "Boys and Their Toys" John Brunetti, New Art Examiner, Welcome to My Dollhouse Margaret Hawkins, Chicago Sun Times, Welcome to My Dollhouse
2000	Cara Glatt, Hyde Park Herald, "Chemical brothers: an arresting exhibit"
1999	Cara Glatt, Hyde Park Herald, "Art as devotion and sacrament"

COLLECTIONS

Beth DeWoody, NYC
John Cain, Crown Point, IN
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
Kirkland & Ellis, San Francisco, CA

TEACHING

2003-Present	Faculty – Advanced Painting, Basic Drawing, Intermediate Drawing, Anatomy American Academy of Art, Chicago, IL
2002-2003	Instructor - 2-Dimensional Design, Basic Drawing Triton College, River Grove, IL
1999-2000	Instructor - Basic Painting, Basic Drawing Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
1998-2000	Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL