



Bae Bien-U



Sonamu SNM1A-043H, 1992 (detail)

image courtesy of Gana Art, New York

Bae Bien-U is a self-taught photographer and one of the most internationally recognized outside of South Korea. Always interested in landscape, he began to take photographs in the 1970s. From 1985 Bae Bien-U has concentrated on pine forests, resulting in the series *Pine Tree* which is exhibited in Proof On Main along with the series *Sea*. Profoundly inspired by pine trees, the largest tree to be found across all of South Korea, Bae opted to focus on the trees on the hills around the old city of Gyeongju. One of the oldest provinces in Korea and once the home of over 20 kings, the sacred Pine tree groves were planted to honor the death of the kings. Today the pine groves of South Korea are a national treasure. Photographed at different times of day, often in mist and using very long exposures, the images are imbued with great poetic density and create a mystic effect and a feel of eternity.

Bae Bien-U does not aim to capture reality in his photographs, but rather the essence or soul of the objects that he observes. He invites us to contemplation, even meditation, so that we feel transported in their presence. His work reveals connections with the Oriental pictorial tradition while also evoking the spirit of European Romanticism.

Bae Bien-U, *Sea SEA1A-032H*, 1999. C-print mounted on plexiglass.
 Bae Bien-U, *Sea SEA1A-033H*, 1999. C-print mounted on plexiglass.
 Bae Bien-U, *Sonamu*, 2002. Gelatin silver print mounted on plexiglass.
 Bae Bien-U, *Sonamu SNM1A-014V*, 2002. Gelatin silver print mounted on plexiglass.
 Bae Bien-U, *Sonamu SNM1A-016V*, 2002. Gelatin silver print mounted on plexiglass.
 Bae Bien-U, *Sonamu SNM1A-043H*, 1992. C-print mounted on plexiglass.
 All works courtesy of the artist and Gana Art, New York.

Vee Speers



Untitled #6 (Birthday Party), 2007 (detail)

image courtesy of the artist

If you were a child, at the age of 9 or 10, and told that for just one night you could transform into the character of your dreams, what would it be? Australian-born photographer **Vee Speers** celebrates this kind of fantastical role-play in the seven photos from her most recent series, *Birthday Party*, currently on display at Proof on Main. In each photograph, a child looks as if they could shed their day-to-day identity and transform just long enough to be immortalized by the camera. While one child chooses to transform into a gladiator others dress in playful costumes, while another appears distraught - possibly taken from a nightmare.

In her own words, Speers says: "I wanted to capture the last moments of childhood by means of an imaginary party." By allowing the children to act out their dreams and fears, Speers' photographs offer a glimpse into an imaginary world that straddles the realm of reality and the often forgotten innocence of youth.

Speers is based in Paris where she is pursuing a career in both art and commercial photography. Since 2002, Speers has had solo and group exhibitions throughout Europe, South America, and Asia but is relatively new to US institutions. She is among important permanent collections such as the Elton John Collection, Cierci Collection, George Eastman House, and the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. In 2004, Speers received the Hasselblad/Prophoto prize in Paris and recently in 2007 she received the second prize at the LIPF Photographic Festival Lianzhou, China.

Vee Speers, *Untitled #3 (Birthday Party)*, 2007. Courtesy of the artist.
 Vee Speers, *Untitled #6 (Birthday Party)*, 2007. Courtesy of the artist.
 Vee Speers, *Untitled #8 (Birthday Party)*, 2007.
 Vee Speers, *Untitled #16 (Birthday Party)*, 2007.
 Vee Speers, *Untitled #20 (Birthday Party)*, 2007.
 Vee Speers, *Untitled #22 (Birthday Party)*, 2007.
 C-prints mounted on aluminum.

About 21c MuseumHotel and the International Contemporary Art Foundation

The International Contemporary Art Foundation is a non-profit, collecting institution that funds and operates the 21c Museum adjoining Proof on Main. The museum is dedicated to exhibiting the very best work of living artists from all over the world. With over 9,000 square feet of exhibition space, as well as a dedicated video lounge, the museum features dynamic group and solo exhibitions, as well as permanent, commissioned installations.

Since the grand opening in the spring of 2006, 21c Museum has curated over a dozen exhibitions with an attendance of over 90,000 visitors. In addition to *Tangled Up in You*, visitors and guests to the hotel will find artwork that extends beyond the gallery space. 21c continues to work with artists from around the globe to create permanent exhibitions that provoke thought and enjoyment. Whether it's discovering where the *Red Penguin* sculptures by the Italian artists collaborative Cracking Art will appear next or discovering the poetic beauty of Camille Utterback's *Text Rain* interactive video in the first floor elevator lobby, there is always something new to experience.

The ongoing Highlights and New Acquisitions exhibition in 21c's atrium gallery will also bring many new and exciting works in 2008. Recent installations include the psychological landscapes of Josephine Taylor's large scale drawings and the larger than life photographic work that combines both the sculptural and painterly skills of Brazilian artist Vik Muniz.

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Cover: Werner Reiterer, *Untitled (Chandelier)*, 2006; image courtesy of Kenneth Hayden

Jay Bolotin



Adam tills the soil in Lower Eden VII, 2002 (detail)

image courtesy of the artist

The Cincinnati based artist **Jay Bolotin** creates elaborate fantasies in a prolific body of work that includes painting, printmaking, sculpting, song-writing, and most recently filmmaking. The prints which fill the Private Dining Room in Proof are the direct source of the imagery in the woodcut motion picture, *The Jackleg Testament, part one: JACK & EVE*. In the past, Bolotin has translated his narrative woodcut prints into concerts, stage productions, and mechanical operas. This project represents a desire to more directly translate the prints into a moving image. From the simpler, handmade quality of the woodcuts, Bolotin draws forth complex textures and layers to create striking images and a dense narrative. Bolotin also adds handwritten notations that reference the motion picture by identifying objects and quoting characters.

Jay Bolotin. *The Jackleg Testament, part one: JACK & EVE*, 2004-2006. Portfolio of 40 woodcut prints, Edition 1 of 35.

Various Artists



Beth Cavener Stichter, *Spanish Feral Meat Goats*, 2002

image courtesy of the artist

Fantastical animals and mythological creatures populate many spaces in Proof. *Randy*, a satyr sculpted by **Larry Shank**, presides at the bar, while **David Mach's** *Golden Rhino* stands at attention facing the kitchen, his textured hide made from wooden safety matches. The use of unexpected materials also animates the work of **Johnston Foster**, whose *Zebra Trophy* combines strips of leather with wire and broom-handle brushes. Human attributes are evident in **Beth Cavener Stichter's** graceful hanging goats, and in **Michael Combs's** hand carved *Alpha Male* buck, suggestively clad in zippered black leather.

Also featured in the bar are portraits of local leaders and luminaries, one series by Louisville painter **Shayne Hull**, another by painter and photographer **Laura Lee Brown**. In all of these works, viewers may recognize a vision of themselves, in reality, in desire, or in dreams.

Larry Shank, *Randy*, 2005. Bronze.
David Mach, *Golden Rhino*, 2004. Wooden safety machines.
Johnston Foster, *Zebra Trophy*, 2005. Mixed media, including leather, wire, and broom handles.
Beth Cavener Stichter, *Spanish Feral Meat Goats*, 2002. Stoneware, terra sigillata, hemp rope, and hooks.
Michael Combs, *Alpha Male*, 2005. Linden wood, leather, rubber cladding, and zipper.
Zilla Leutenegger, *Tete a Tete*, 2005. Mixed media: tempera paint, DVD projection, dimensions variable.
Shayne Hull, *100 Portraits*, 2006-present. Ongoing commission by 21cMuseumHotel.