

Paula Cooper Gallery

Paul Pfeiffer

Playroom

September 8 - October 13, 2012

534 W 21st Street, main gallery

NEW YORK – The Paula Cooper Gallery is delighted to announce Paul Pfeiffer’s first exhibition at the gallery and the artist’s first one-person show in New York since 2007. This exhibition of new work will be on view from September 8 through October 13, 2012.

An artist working in the field of video, photography, installation art and sculpture since the late nineties, Pfeiffer is well-known and celebrated for his highly sophisticated use of digital technologies and new media, probing the way these technologies at once shape and alter our daily visual experience. Digitally manipulating or erasing elements from iconic images, many of them taken from sports events or Hollywood films, Pfeiffer adopts today’s frenetic visual language in order to explore our culture’s obsession with spectacle and uncover its hidden psychological cost.

For this exhibition, Pfeiffer has created a sculpture based on the “playroom” from legendary basketball player Wilt Chamberlain’s Los Angeles mansion. Built in 1971 to Chamberlain’s specifications, the mansion was widely publicized in the press as a palace dedicated to luxury and sensual pleasure. The playroom, which was paneled in mirrors and upholstered with wall to wall sofas around a fur-covered waterbed, appears here in an abstracted, open-ended version, emptied of its décor and revealing the core geometries of the design. The exhibition also includes a video work, based on an 8mm home movie from the 1970s showing a group of adults and children on a trip to the zoo. The movie, which has been digitally altered, contains fragments of a storyline and invites the viewer to piece together the nature of the characters’ relationship and the narrative they are performing. A second film work, based on footage from basketball games from the 1950s through the 1990s, is a rhythmic montage focusing on the flutter of the net and the strobe of flashbulbs at the climactic moment when the ball goes through the hoop. Finally, a laconic, meditative group of photographs rounds out the exhibition. Based on an existing family album from the 1970s, the images have been turned into black and white tableaux showing domestic interiors and landscapes devoid of people. Mundane details suddenly appear loaded with significance as what is ordinarily thought of as background takes center stage. Together with the rest of the works, they not only conjure a period in our history when social norms governing race, sex and the family were lastingly transformed, but also resonate today as evocations of absence, loss and desire.

Paul Pfeiffer was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. He has had one-person exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2001), MIT’s List Visual Arts Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2003), the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2005), MUSAC León, Spain (2008), the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2009) and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (2010). He has received numerous awards and fellowships, including a Fulbright-Hayes Fellowship and the Bucksbaum Award from the Whitney Museum. He was most recently the subject of a retrospective at Sammlung Goetz in Munich, Germany. Concurrently with this exhibition, the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin will be presenting *The Rules of Basketball: Works by Paul Pfeiffer and James Naismith's Original Rules of Basket Ball* (September 16, 2012 – January 13, 2013). Pfeiffer lives and works in New York City. For more information and images, please contact the gallery: (212) 255-1105; info@paulacoopergallery.com
Artist Pages: [Paul Pfeiffer](#)