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Three New Shows at SF Camerawork This Spring

Including a solo exhibition of the work of Mike Brodie a.k.a. “The Polaroid Kidd” whose images of the train hopping youth of America earned him this year’s Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers

April 3 – May 24, 2008

Opening reception: April 3 from 5 to 8 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO – This spring, SF Camerawork presents three new exhibitions of contemporary photography and new visual media including *Mike Brodie: The 2008 Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers*, a solo show of the work of Mike Brodie, a.k.a. “The Polaroid Kidd,” who documents his life as part of the underground youth community that train hops around America; *Past is an image we form in the present*, a group exhibition that explores perceptions of memory featuring artists Pablo Pijnappel, Liz Steketeer, and Melanie Willhide; and *Jenny Vogel: Your lips are no man's land but mine*, a video installation by New York-based artist Jenny Vogel. All events take place at SF Camerawork, the Bay Area’s only non profit gallery dedicated to contemporary photography located in the heart of San Francisco’s vibrant downtown art scene at 657 Mission Street.

Mike Brodie: The 2008 Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers

SF Camerawork hosts a comprehensive solo exhibition of Mike Brodie a.k.a. “The Polaroid Kidd”, a 22-year-old photographer who is the 2008 recipient of **The Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers**. Through the generosity of Glenn and April Bucksbaum of The Baum Foundation, this \$10,000 cash grant honors a talented and innovative photographer at a pivotal moment in the development of his or her career. It is the largest national award among grants available in photography, and is the only award in the United States to single out emerging photographers for support.

This year’s winner, Mike Brodie, documents his own life in a youth culture on the fringe of society. His images are of a train-hopping community of American young people who are,

Brodie says, “one of the most important, overlooked, and temporary underground cultures of modern times.” A 22-year old photographer, Brodie calls himself “the Polaroid Kidd” as, until recently, he shot only Polaroids on cameras he acquired at thrift shops. His current series of photographs were made with a 35 mm camera and are entitled *The Rockaway Summer* and *Boys & Girls of Modern Days Railways*. Highlights from both will be included in the exhibition.

"The Baum Award goes right to the heart of SF Camerawork's commitment to supporting exciting new work by emerging artists," says Sharon Tanenbaum, Executive Director of SF Camerawork. "We are delighted to host The Baum Award and thrilled that Mike Brodie was selected as the 2008 award recipient. His fresh images portray a rare and intimate point of view."

Glenn and April Bucksbaum of The Baum Foundation established The Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers in 2001. Twenty-five curators of contemporary art and photography from across the U.S. recommend two artists each for consideration. These fifty photographers are then invited to submit their work for review by a jury that this year included Bill Arning, Curator at MIT List Visual Arts Center; Susette S. Min, Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies and Art History at University of California, Davis; Chuck Mobley, Curator at SF Camerawork; Lawrence Rinder, Dean of Graduate Studies at California College of the Arts; and Moira Roth, Eugene E. Trefethen, Jr., Chair Art History at Mills College. Previous award winners include Deborah Luster (2001), Luis Gispert (2003), Katy Grannan (2004), and Lisa Kereszi (2005).

Past is an image we form in the present

In this show curated by Chuck Mobley and Emma Tramposch, three artists who manipulate vernacular images from family scrapbooks and home movies to exert control over the perception of memory in both literal and metaphorical ways.

San Francisco artist Liz Stekete raids the family album in order to mend familial rifts. She brings together long estranged relatives through manipulated snapshots that disrupt chronological narratives. Fashioned with the best intentions, Stekete's method also exudes a slightly sinister and authoritarian tone leaving one wondering if perhaps it might be best to let sleeping dogs lie.

Berlin-based artist Pablo Pijnappel offers a blunt recounting of his family's secret history in a 9-minute video entitled *1921-1977, 1979-2002*. In it, Super 8 footage shot by his grandfather is accompanied by Pijnappel's narration that moves from one unsettling revelation to another. The artist forces the 4:3 format of Super 8 into a cinematic letterbox treatment replete with subtitles, creating a hybrid home movie/independent foreign film that blurs the perception of fact and fiction.

Los Angeles artist Melanie Willhide collages the front and back sides of photographs, revealing both simultaneously, in her piece *Sleeping Beauties (The Box Under the Bed)*. Glue stains, fingerprints and handwritten scrawls combine with the partially revealed, aging images to hint at private histories long secreted away.

Jenny Vogel: Your lips are no man's land but mine

New York-based artist Jenny Vogel repurposes appropriated imagery from personal webcams and low-contrast surveillance cameras to create a pensive and poetic take on distance and desire. Set to an abstract narrative of unrequited love and composed primarily of low-resolution images, her video work somehow comes to resemble the dark and moody quality of early film, dramatizing the romantic tone. The installation at SF Camerawork includes both moving image media and still photographs.

This exhibition is part of SF Camerawork's ***New Works*** series that, with funds from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, provides financial support for artists to develop and exhibit new series of work at SF Camerawork.

All exhibitions are on view Tuesdays – Saturdays 12-5 p.m. at SF Camerawork, 657 Mission St., Second Floor. Admission is \$5.00; \$2.00 for students and seniors; free to Camerawork members. For more information, the public should visit www.sfcamerawork.org or call 415.512.2020.

About SF Camerawork

Founded in 1974, SF Camerawork encourages emerging and mid-career artists to explore new directions in photography and related media by fostering creative forms of expression that push existing boundaries. Throughout its history, SF Camerawork has nurtured artists, mentored youth and helped make San Francisco a destination for the exploration of photography as an artist's medium. Its exhibitions are nationally recognized as a focal point for innovation, a pacesetter for new trends in the medium and a launching pad for the careers of young artists. With three galleries and an education center at its new centrally located facility, SF Camerawork is the only non-profit organization in the Bay Area with an exhibition space and educational programs focused exclusively on contemporary photography and related visual image media. It is an accessible venue for people to view exhibitions, meet artists, participate in educational programs, peruse photographic publications, and gather for lectures, screenings, portfolio reviews, and discussions.

JPG images can be requested electronically. Please contact Nina Sazevich, Public Relations, at (415) 752-2483 or nina911@pacbell.net.

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