

# CRISTIN TIERNEY

*Under Construction: Photography, Video and the (Re)presentation of Identity*

September 6 – October 17, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 6th, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *Under Construction: Photography, Video, and the (Re)presentation of Identity*.

Examining human nature through the lens of recorded images, this exhibition includes photography and single-channel video works spanning the 1970s to the present by **Janet Biggs, Victor Burgin, peter campus, Neil Goldberg, Malia Jensen, Anselm Kiefer, Martha Rosler, Cindy Sherman, and Eve Sussman**. The show opens Thursday, September 6th with a reception from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Several participating artists will be present. It continues through Wednesday, October 17th.



Questions of how we perceive ourselves and how we relate to others have long been explored in the visual arts. In Cindy Sherman's iconic *Untitled Film Still #32* from 1979, the artist assumes a pose evoking a movie scene. Commenting on the often-stereotypical way women were presented in the media (and thus the way many felt obliged to look or behave), Sherman purposefully makes the image ambiguous, without a clear narrative. Familiar visual tropes suggest recognition where there is none; a copy of an original that never actually existed. From that same era, peter campus' straight-on, closely cropped Polaroid photographs of nameless faces use light and shadow to suggest emotional states that may or may not have ever existed. Facing the subjects, the audience's viewpoint is the same as that of the camera lens. Without any context for guidance, the photographs become psychological portraits—charged surfaces onto which each viewer projects his or her own interpretations.

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More recent works in *Under Construction* continue these investigations, but in the context of today's screen-obsessed, media-driven society. In Neil Goldberg's photo series *The Gay Couples of Whole Foods*, the artist photographs pairs of men he assumes to be gay as they emerge from a Whole Foods supermarket. Goldberg's photographs engage various stereotypes about gay men, especially preconceived notions about appearance, lifestyle, and shopping habits. The artist additionally uses the images to excavate his own discomfort with shopping at Whole Foods, which he feels reinforces the grocery chain's cultural value and carefully composed corporate image.

Among the video selections in the exhibition is *The Bear's Progress* by Malia Jensen, in which a bear embarks on a quest to find himself in the wild. Human nature and our own "animalness" is humorously investigated in the work, as seen through the eyes of a bear—actually an oversized costume worn by the artist. The bear undertakes an all too familiar search for love and companionship, encountering such transformational hallmarks as drugs, sex, death, and conflict along the way.

Whether historic or recent, still or moving image, all of the artists in *Under Construction* deliberately subvert long-held narratives that dictate how we look and what we see. In so doing, they demonstrate how all images are carefully managed, wholly subjective constructions, often presented as recorded, objective reality.

Cristin Tierney Gallery is open by appointment only during the summer. We will resume our normal business hours of Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm on Tuesday, September 4th, following the Labor Day holiday.

For more information, please contact Candace Moeller at +1.212.594.0550 or [info@crisintierney.com](mailto:info@crisintierney.com).

Image: peter campus, *Man's Head*, 1978. Polaroid print. 3.44 x 2.75 inches (8.7 x 7 cm). Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.