

Bike

Bike Rides: The Exhibition. Monica Ramirez-Montagut and Richard Klein. The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum 2009. p1,11,13.

bikes originated during childhood, when his father prohibited him from touching his bike because it was not an entertainment device, but a serious vehicle used for work. Some fifty years later, the Club members, including founder Martha Clavijo and members “El Gallo” and Orlando Rivera, are dedicated to restoring and tricking-out their vintage Schwinn with flags, sound systems, repurposed car horns, stickers, lights, and more flags. These humorously fetishized Schwinn speak of a profound melancholia for homeland, as well as emotional childhood remembrances. Their appeal is evident in the vast audiences that gather to vigorously discuss the ornaments and accessories with the Club members when they take the bikes out for rides throughout the city.

Other artists in this exhibition also explore the bicycle’s role as a symbol for childhood memory. Jonathan Brand’s *Fallen* is a fiberboard replica of the BMX bike that the artist had as a youth. The story behind this sculpture, however, is much more complicated than meets the eye. In 1986 Brand desired a Redline RL20, one of the first production BMX¹⁰ bikes ever made. His ideal was out of reach, however, and he had to settle for a cheap K-Mart knockoff. In 2007 the artist attempted to recreate something he could never have again: the K-Mart BMX of his childhood. Through an act of retro engineering, he acquired an old Redline and painstakingly transformed it into his cherished BMX of memory. This replica did not go far enough, however, and Brand then made a three-dimensional pantograph, a device that allowed him to mechanically carve an exact duplicate of the replica BMX out of fiberboard. This process of making a copy from a copy of something that was originally a copy is an apt metaphor for the nostalgia for youth: one can try to replicate the past, but the harder one tries, the further it seems to recede.



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Lance Armstrong, Bamboo Bike Studio, Guy Ben-Ner, Jonathan Brand, David Byrne, Cai Guo-Qiang, Cannondale Bicycles, David Gelfman, Subodh Gupta, Bari Kumar, Jarbas Lopes, Miguel Luciano, Mexican Pride, PARLEE Cycles, Carolina Pedraza, Puerto Rico Schwinn Club, Richard Sachs, Tom Sachs, Secret School and the K.I.D.S., Seven Cycles, David Sowerby and Danny MacAskill, Studio Tractor, and Rob Vandermark.

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The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum



Jonathan Brand, *Fallen*, 2007
Courtesy of the artist
Collection of Cindy Sherman