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School of the Arts
Virginia Commonwealth University

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Thomas Ryan Gothrup entitled THE IMAGINATION AND THE REAL has been approved by his or her committee as satisfactory completion of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Fine Arts

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April 28, 2009

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THE IMAGINATION AND THE REAL

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

By

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Bachelor of Fine Arts, Kent State University, 2004

Master of Fine Arts, 2009

Director: JACK WAX

PROFESSOR OF GLASS, DEPARTMENT OF CRAFTS/MATERIAL STUDIES

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia
April 28, 2009

Acknowledgement

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One thousand thank yous to my crew who helped make these two absurd pieces possible:
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Abstract

THE IMAGINATION AND THE REAL

By Ryan Gothrup, Master of Fine Art

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2009

Major Director: Jack Wax
Professor of Glass, Department of Craft/Material Studies

Artist Statement

This thesis challenges the sedentary nature of living vicariously through the television, whether it be watching sports or playing video games. Since the advent of professional sports spectators have become accustomed to stadiums stuffed with people cheering on their favorite teams. The television substitutes for this visceral experience and allows viewers to live surrogate lives without leaving the living room. Ultimately, I see this thesis as a social commentary on the impact of sports and media in our society. This project highlights the sociological implications of the loss of interpersonal contact perpetuated by media.

Thought Process/Influences

Throughout this section I will explore my thought process during my graduate school experience, and the influences and inspirations that led to the development of my thesis exhibition. I will explicate my thought process exposing the theoretical, sociological, and personal influences that drive my creative process. My graduate work is an exploration of childhood memories and their connection to sociological exploits and constraints in a modern consumer driven world.

Shortly after starting graduate school, I found out that my brother was being deployed to Iraq to fight in the war. This would be his second deployment to the Middle East. When he came back from Afghanistan after his first deployment he was a different man, which made adjusting to the States difficult for him. After I heard he was going to Iraq, I became extremely concerned for his mental and physical safety. It was all I could think about, causing me to investigate my personal history and pull inspiration from what I discovered. I began revisiting the childhood memories we shared together: playing with G.I. Joes in the bathtub, acting out our favorite action movies with toy guns in the house, building forts, and always playing the sport of the season indoors and out. We developed a love for sports from our father. We grew up in a very active and competitive household with a father who was extremely playful and silly. It was never a dull moment in the Gothrup house. While looking through old pictures, I came across a photo of my father, my brother, and myself playing guns. We were all in our pajamas playing with these ray guns that made different types of laser sounds. We would team up, and run around the house pretending to shoot aliens and monsters.

When I thought hard about these memories I started noticing the connections these childhood activities had on shaping our personalities. I discovered a direct correlation to

how we played and the careers we chose. My brother, the soldier, joined the National Guard when he was nineteen, and I, the artist, began art school when I was twenty. I remember vividly playing with army men in the house, I loved setting up the scene, placing them all in strategic locations for us to shoot down with rubber bands. My brother was impatient and would begin shooting the army men down before I was finished arranging them. He definitely enjoyed the destruction aspect of play more than I did. I thrived on creating the scene, and the careful placement of the men in realistic positions. This is how I create my artwork today, meticulously crafting pieces to be staged in the final work.

The early years of interaction with objects (toys) and the associations and behaviors instilled by those objects shaped the core of our adult personalities. In researching the influence of objects (toys) over behavior, I discover the research of sociologist Robert Caillois. According to sociologist Robert Caillois, a child's first encounter with an object would be a type of play called *paidia*. Caillois' model for play includes an axis of distinction, between the formal, rule-focused state of play *ludus* and the anarchic state of spontaneous play he refers to as *paidia*. "The *ludus* proper is complementary to and a refinement of the *paidia*, which it disciplines and enriches. It provides an occasion for training and normally leads to the acquisition of a special skill." (Caillois, 29) "*Ludus* play requires an ever greater amount of effort, patience, skill, or ingenuity." (Caillois, 13) His description is as follows:

"[Games] can also be placed on a continuum between two opposite poles. At one extreme an almost indivisible principle, common to diversion, turbulence, free improvisation, and carefree gaiety is dominant. It manifests a kind of uncontrollable fantasy that can be designated by the term *paidia*. At the opposite extreme, this frolicsome and impulsive exuberance is almost entirely absorbed or disciplined by a complimentary, and in some respects inverse, tendency to its anarchic and capricious nature... I call this second component *ludus*." (Caillois, 13)

The *paidia* is lost when we learn and associate meaning and purpose comprised in an object (toy). First encountering plastic army men, a child might make it dance, bang it on something, throw it, or taste it (*paidia*). “The active exploration of, and interaction with, objects becomes a source of joy. Pure *paidia* is impulsive and effortless (Rodriguez, 41). Once that child learns more about the object, possibly through television or information provided by parents or adults, the state of play moves to *ludus*. The child then begins a type of play associated with the toy according to sociological restrictions and begins to mimic the actions learned about the object. A set of rules becomes established and affects the way the child interacts with the object.

In Frank Lloyd Wright’s early childhood, he was obsessed with creating new and interesting shapes with simple geometric blocks. Is it coincidental that these forms became the backbone of his designs as an architect? We are greatly affected by how we interact and learn from the objects we play with as children. My fascination with creating installations developed from my interaction with toys. If toys affect children on such a level, why are toy manufacturers still allowed to create toys that promote violence, vanity, and many other unsuitable character traits? Children are targeted with objects (toys) at a young age to create the perfect consumers for the future. Make them think they need pointless things (objects) when they are young and they will continue buying pointless things when they are adults. We are all the subjects of this sociological and psychological targeting by corporations and companies.

This research led to the development of the *Ray Gun Series*. I chose the ray gun object for its history in the spectrum of toy gun manufacturing and its personal connection to my childhood. These objects added fantasy and imagination to promote violence. My goal was to take the many surrounding associations of the object and embed them within the glass object created. The root of the objects created derived from ‘50’s and ‘60’s style ray guns embedded with sex toy imagery. The barrels were modeled after sex toys. This was to exploit the seducing nature of toy guns and how they promote the playful acceptance of violent behavior to young impressionable children. The addition of sex toy

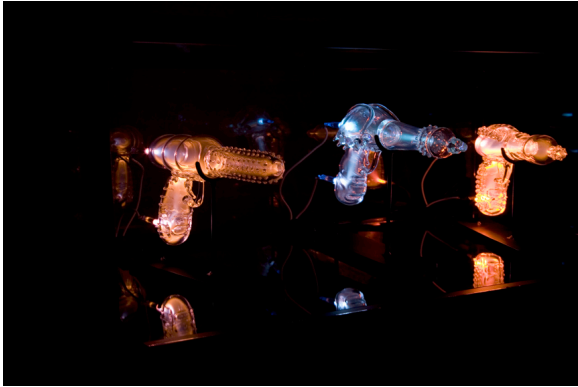


Figure 1: *Ray Gun Case*, 2008

Case, the sexually charged toy guns are glowing like neon signs and are presented in a similar fashion to how firearms are sold, locked inside glass cases. The neon was an element connecting to consumerism and the marketing of firearms to adults and toy guns to children. I was disturbed by a Google image found of a toy gun-store. All of the toys were exact replicas of real firearms. It is no wonder children have been shot by law enforcement for playing with toys guns.

On June 24, 2007, a 12 year-old boy was shot and killed by a West Memphis police officer around the time of ten o'clock in the evening. The officers were staking out a parking lot in attempt to break up a string of convenient store robberies. They saw two people, yelling and running, and got out of the car to confront them. Assistant Police Chief Mike Allen stated that one of the two running had something in his hand that looked to one of the officers like a gun. Allen said, "We carry Glock .40-caliber handguns, and this weapon appeared to be a silverish replica of that type of firearm." The officers hollered at the two people, ordering one to drop the gun. The person made what Allen called an "evasive action," and one of the officers fired at least two shots, the assistant chief said. "I don't think the officer realized until after the shooting that this boy was as young as he was. He just had no idea." (Sanders)

imagery was a way to connect or be repulsive to adults. My intent was to show how alluring both sex and violence is to children. These objects are an amalgamation of toy guns with sex, power, video games, and consumerism.

America widely promotes violence, it is idolized, and accepted in the media, but sex is censored and chastised. In *Ray Gun*

It seems over the past decade there have been many children shot and killed as a result of playing with toy gun replicas.

The *Ray Gun Series* second component, *Target Locked*, is an interactive work, in which the activating element is derived from video game interface. *Target Locked* is a ray gun with a laser inside it that shoots out of the gun barrel when the viewer

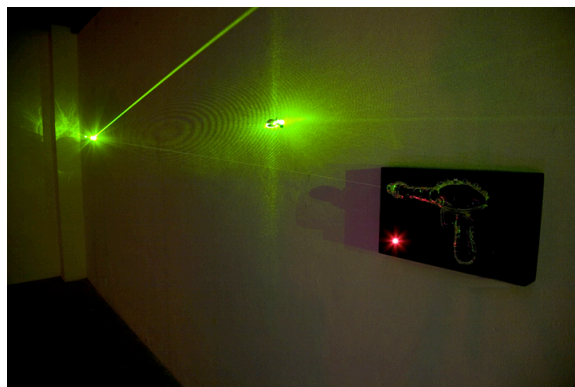


Figure 2: *Target Locked*, 2008

presses the arcade button on its box. When activated, the laser ricochets off a series of small mirrors creating a web of lines surrounding the viewer. The laser also flashes a Morse code message, “Target Locked” when energized. The laser and Morse code allude to modern warfare, referencing the violent characteristics surrounding weapons. This piece emerged from my childhood memories of an irresistible toy ray gun, which made several unique sounds when pulling the trigger. These interactive toys capture the fascination of children by luring them in with the phrase, “Press Here” while pointing to a button that activates the toy. *Target Locked* references the interactivity of video games, the targeting of children for corporate gain, and the hostile nature of guns.

Duel, the third component of the *Ray Gun Series*, draws on memories of my brother and I reenacting the old western show downs. I feel western movies contributed to the popularity of toy guns. Specifically, it grew out of the memories I have of my brother standing back to back with our cap guns, walking ten paces in opposite directions, then, turning and firing our toy guns. In *Duel* I use two neon ray guns, one blue and one red, on stands in the middle of a gray and red oval mat to portray the opposing forces in the fight and connection to sports, war games, and modern day war strategies. The red residing between the two guns highlights the conflict zone. The wrestling mat alludes to



Figure 3: *Duel*, 2008

competition and is intended to draw a connection between sports and war games. My brother's deployment caused me to obsess over the way warfare is applied in modern war zones. Today, decisions are made and executed thousands of miles away from the conflict zone with commanding officers ordering devastating strikes by pushing a button. I reference this in *Duel* through triggering mechanism in the piece. At each end of the mat, are two small boxes on stands with red arcade buttons in the center, bringing a war game experience to the viewer. When the button is pushed the ray gun closest to the viewer lights up, allowing the duel to begin.

During graduate school, my thought process has revolved around investigating and analyzing my personal history and deriving ideas dealing with social concerns. The exploration of my childhood memories has led me to the development of my thesis exhibition based on my close and life long connection to sports. I extract ideas from my personal investigations and use them as a vehicle to express my opinions and concerns on societal issues.

The Imagination and the Real

The Imagination and the Real consists of two absurd video performances, *TV Slugger* and *Diversion*. They deal with potentially negative social implications of living vicariously through television and video games, and bringing fantasy to life. When watching sports, I idolized my favorite athletes acting out their every move. These works are intended to challenge the sedentary nature of living vicariously through the television or video games. These videos also are a means to bring my fleeting childhood fantasies and my lost aspirations of becoming a professional athlete to reality. The work reflects the aggressive nature of sports on and off the court. Since the advent of professional sports, spectators have become accustomed to stadiums stuffed with people cheering on their favorite teams. The television has become a substitute for this direct and visceral experience while allowing viewers to live surrogate lives without leaving their living room. These works are a social commentary on the impact of sports and media on our society. They highlight the sociological implications of the loss of interpersonal contact perpetuated by the media and reveals how these activities can facilitate aggressive behavior.

In my youth sports played a large role in shaping my personality and character. They taught me how to be self motivated and trained me to live an active, engaged lifestyle. If weather permitted, I was outside playing baseball, football, or basketball with my friends. At night or on rainy days, my brother and I would play ball in the living room while pretending to be our most admired professional athletes. A child's imagination is based on free association and is limitless. The unhindered child's imagination fades, as we grow older and have a better understanding of the world. Playing real baseball in the house has always been a childhood fantasy of mine. Sometimes while playing whiffle-ball in the

living room with my brother, things would get broken. There was a primal satisfaction from that destruction. Even today I get gratification from destroying things.

Most children today seem to prefer the sedentary activity of playing video games in front of the television as a means of play, rather than physically reenacting the actions of their heroes through imagination. Children's television viewing habits restrict their physical and creative development. Video games activities are lethargic in nature while propagating the same aggressive behavior as sports, yet have they do not provide any outlet for the built up aggression. At least sports promote a healthy active life-style. Some video game companies – such as Nintendo – are creating more physically engaging games and this interactivity helps, but it is another means to keep children sitting in front of the television playing with their products and not physically engaging in the world. *TV Slugger* combines the physical engagement of sports with the fantasy element of video games.



Figure 4: Still from *TV Slugger*, 2009

TV Slugger, is a video performance used to draw attention to the sedentary activity of sitting in front of a television and bring my childhood sports fantasies to life. A portable living room was erected in the middle of the Memorial Baseball Stadium in Salem, Virginia, home of the Salem Red Sox, a class-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox. The room simulates a typical television-watching environment. The fully furnished space, with walls, windows, furniture, and décor, acts as a portal between the television viewer and the televised event. I engaged in batting practice, using real baseballs inside the room, emulating the ultimate video game experience. The direct destruction that occurred from this action reflects the aggressive

aspects surrounding sports. The baseballs were pitched through the door of the living room by a baseball pitcher. Through the absurdity of this performance, I illustrate the growth hindering effects of television and video games. Through the use of multiple camera angles, the video portrays how these events are constructed and broadcast into our homes.

Growing up, I had always wanted to be a professional baseball player and dreamed of leading the Chicago Cubs to the World Series. I was always reenacting scenarios of excelling during clutch moments in a World Series game:

“Two outs, bottom of the ninth inning and the bases are loaded, Gothrup steps to the plate with a full count. Here’s the pitch, Gothrup swings and a long fly ball to right field, this ball could go the distance. Grand Slam!!
Grand Slam!!”

Through the performance of *TV Slugger* and the splicing of World Series footage from the past five years into the video, I was able to play out these imaginative roles and fulfill my lost dreams of playing Major League Baseball.

The second installment of this exhibit includes, *Diversion*, a video performance where I replicated basketballs in blown glass and painted them to look authentic. I took them to an outdoor basketball court in a playground and played basketball. The piece acts



Figure 5: Still from *Diversion*, 2009

as a metaphor for the destruction of the unrealistic aspirations of professional athleticism, and through an unplanned confrontation caught on tape; the video reveals the sometimes-aggressive nature of spectators.

Since the advent of professional sports, fans have flooded stadiums to cheer on

their favorite teams and athletes. They always seem to be heckling each other, and trying to achieve some sort of self-satisfaction from the dismay of the opposing team. Alcohol has often always played a major role in the unnecessary rage expressed by drunken fans trying to start a fight or provoke the other fans. In the 2004 Pistons and Pacers brawl, this type of behavior hit a “high point”. A hard foul on one of the Pistons players resulted in a scuffle between the two teams. One of the Pacers players, Ron Artest, was injured by a blow to the neck and was lying on the announcer’s table after things had settled down, when an enraged fan ran up to Artest and point blank threw a beer bottle at his face. The furious Artest charged after the man into the stands, where fans and players began to brawl. The game was cancelled and, as the Pacers left the court, they had things thrown at them by hundreds of Pistons’ fans.

The unexpected confrontation while filming the performance, *Diversion*, reminds me of the Pacers-Pistons incident. While filming, four men, residing close to the park, were alarmed by the sound of breaking glass and charged into the performance to put a stop to it. One of the men called the police and then began yelling, swearing, ranting and raving, and trying to provoke a physical confrontation with almost everyone involved. By the time we had left, my crew had been elbowed, screamed at, sexist comments had been made, and we were told several times to get the f*#k out of their park. Those men became the typical irate fan at a sporting event.

A couch and television substitutes the visceral experience of cheering crowds, the smell of hot dogs, and the shouted profanity by irate fans. The television allows us to live surrogate lives without leaving our living rooms. Throughout my youth, I remember seeing my father and his friends get belligerent while watching their favorite teams on television. They cursed and yelled as if they were at the game and everyone there could hear their ranting opinions. It seems that sports can breed extremely aggressive behavior, whether it be at the game or in the comfort of one’s home, people get incredibly fired up over sports. The action of this piece connects to the primal pleasure of destruction, and the pugnacity of the neighbors paralleled the aggression of sporting events.

All professional athletes train rigorously for competition. Their aggression is channeled and released through intense physical training, discipline, and perseverance. “The practice of sports presupposes sustained attention, appropriate training, assiduous application and the desire to win.” (Caillois, 15) Athletes prepare themselves to excel and rise above their adversaries during competition. All of their hard work relies on their execution during crucial moments in the game. Roger Caillois classifies games of a competitive nature as the *agon*. His description is as follows:

“*Agon*. A group of games that would seem to be competitive, that is to say, like combat in which equality of chances is artificially created, in order that the adversaries should confront each other under ideal conditions, susceptible of giving precise and incontestable value to the winner’s triumph. It is therefore always a question of a rivalry which hinges on a single quality exercised, within defined limits and without outside assistance, in such a way that the winner appears to be better than the loser in certain category of exploits.” (Caillois, 14)

His comparison to combat hits the nail on the head. The personal satisfaction achieved from triumph reinforces the necessity of the training and the realization of the importance of training. These values have been instilled in me and drive me to excel in all aspects of my life. For this reason I am attracted to the medium of glass and the process of hot glass working. This process is fundamentally linked to the same rigorous training and preparation endured by athletes and soldiers. The replication process, of fabricating exact copies of basketballs in blown glass, embodies the intense training leading up to the performance. The glass balls are the shattered aspirations of professional athleticism and also reference the failures that occur during competitive events.

This thesis is a social commentary on the impact of sports and media in our society. It highlights some of the sociological implications that accrue in the loss of interpersonal contact perpetuated by media, and communicates the aggressive nature surrounding sports.

This exploration gave me the opportunity to bring my childhood fantasies to life through the absurdity of spectacle, and allowed me to relive my lost aspirations of playing Major League Baseball.

Diversion: Blog Posts from Oregon Hill Neighborhood

posted by Dusty Hooke at October 13, 2008 8:57 pm :

When I saw this title I thought it was referring to the episode that happened Sunday morning at Holly Street playground. VCU art students were filming a project in which they were smashing glass basketballs on the court in the playground. The Oregon Hill Defenders - that's my new name for them- Skillet, my husband Dave Hooke, John Stephens, and our neighbor Bob went over and forced them to stop and then to clean up all of the mess. We then found out that they had actually kicked two little girls out of the playground before they started this "art project". They refused to give their names or the name of the professor they were doing the project for and left before the police got there. The police arrived 45minutes after they were called. Does anyone have any ideas on the best person to contact at VCU to report this? I want to make sure that it is clear that this kind of behavior will NOT be tolerated. Thanks, Dusty

posted by anonymous at October 15, 2008 9:43 pm :

In regards to Dusty Hook's comment: The so called "Oregon Hill Defenders" Skillet, Dave Hooke, John Stephens, and Bob did not exercise or model appropriate behavior befitting the title defender. Swearing, yelling, threats of violence, pushing, intimidation, and sexist remarks were all caught on video tape. A father and his two children playing in the park were forced to leave by "The Defenders" excessive use of profanity. If our community is to take care of itself, we need to rise above such behavior in policing our own neighborhood. Why did the police take so long to arrive?

Also, confrontational behavior does not make oregon hill safer, if anything it makes us look bad, and alienates residents from banding together to stop truly dangerous activities. Does roughing up or threatening a few art students really prove anything, other than that we are uncultured and unaccommodating. After inspecting the park myself, I found no traces of glass. Obviously these particular perpetrators were no threat to our neighborhood. I am more concerned that middle aged men are acting like boys looking for a fight.

posted by Scott at October 15, 2008 10:37 pm :

I did not witness this "glass basketball episode", but I find it extremely troubling. Regardless of who did what, the park was made unwelcoming to children.

Anonymous, why do you think VCU art students thought it was ok to break glass in a public park in the first place? Why did they think it was ok to ask children to leave for their filming?

I have to say, I find those actions pretty threatening, unaccommodating, and little to do with “culture”. I am also curious what class this was for and if VCU admin has anything to say on this matter.

I am not interested in refereeing a shouting match (and if this is just about name calling then I will shut down comments), nor am I interested in roughing up anyone, but I am interested in making sure that the park is welcoming to children again. On that I hope we can all agree.

posted by Ryan at October 16, 2008 2:50 pm :

I’m the artist responsible for the incident at the Holly Street Park. First, I would like to say it was not my intention to disrespect or cause a disturbance in the neighborhood. I am a graduate student and this work was done for me not for a professor. This way of working is new to me and I was unaware of the possible negative impact that could arrive with the performance. With that said, I would like to clear a few things up. We didn’t kick children out of the park, we asked them if they could come back in fifteen or twenty minutes. I was worried that they might get frightened or scared and was concerned for their safety. I came to the park with a crew of fifteen people ready to clean up the mess that would be created. We had every intention of leaving the park cleaner than we arrived. What amazed me was the adolescent behavior of middle aged men trying everything they could to provoke a physical confrontation. Their actions kept children out of the park twice as long as my short ten minute performance. At one point one of the girls on my crew was lunged at by a man as if he was going to hit her. I am amazed that you would call these men defenders. It seemed to me they just wanted to fight someone. I have the whole incident on video and videos don’t lie. We cleaned up EVERYTHING and as we were leaving we were still being provoked. If you want to change things for the better in your neighborhood I can assure you violent behavior is not the way to achieve it. If you have any questions concerns please email at trgothrup@vcu.edu

posted by Todd at October 17, 2008 5:33 am :

Dear Ryan and neighbors-

Ryan was definitely at fault here for assuming he could come into a City/neighborhood Park and monopolize it in the way he did. There is a procedure for “reserving” Park space for events in Richmond and here it is: First you must call Larry Miller at 646-0037 and ask

to reserve a Park for a certain time period. The Parks Dept will determine whether or not your "event" is appropriate or not and if so will charge you 15 dollars an hour plus 15 administrative fee. Of course you cant charge admission or in any way exclude others from the Park as it is public space and therefore open to the public. I cant speak for them, but I would say breaking glass in a City Park on a Sunday would not be an appropriate event. Since you did not even seek a permit, and excluded people (even voluntarily) you are egregiously in the wrong here. If the police came and determined you were creating a nuisance or disturbing the peace, you could be given a warning or even banned from ALL City Parks indefinitely (you could petition the director J R Pope to allow you access to return). I would say under the circumstances, you got off pretty easy and the tone of your response shows you have a chip on your shoulder. In the future, please consider other areas of the city for your "art".

posted by Ryan at October 17, 2008 10:23 am :

In regards to Todd's comment: You are right I didn't go through the proper procedure because I was truly unaware of those procedures. For that, I do apologize. As a student, this is all new to me and I am learning. I didn't say I didn't do anything wrong though I would like to state that it wasn't my intent to cause a disturbance. The only chip I have is the physical and verbal abuse asserted on my crew by middle aged men that represent the Oregon Hill Neighborhood. Swearing, yelling, threats of violence, pushing, intimidation, and sexist remarks are not adult behavior. I have seen children act more grown up than these men. They did their civic duty by calling the police everything else was childish adolescent behavior. I see the concern that was voiced and I apologize for my negligence.

posted by Wendy at October 17, 2008 12:58 pm :

Thank you Ryan for taking responsibility for your part of this unfortunate incident and for having the foresight to bring a crew to clean up the park.

It is unsettling to hear that you were bullied out of the park.

posted by Todd at October 17, 2008 7:10 pm :

Ryan-

I googled the name Ryan Gothrup and it brought up a website with pics of absolutely beautiful glass pieces. If thats your work it is awesome.

posted by Kelley Libby at October 17, 2008 8:54 pm :

I've been watching this conversation, and I'm thinking a few things:

1. How wonderful it is that a student of art was inspired in some way by our neighborhood.
2. How wonderful it is that we have residents in our neighborhood who care about their park and the neighborhood's children.
3. How wonderful it is that a student, through his art education, got a civics lesson too.

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Rodriguez, Hector. *On the Five Obstructions*. London: Wallflower Press, 2003.

Vita

THOMAS RYAN GOTHROP

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EDUCATION

2007-2009 MFA, Craft/Material Studies Concentration: Glass	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA
2002-2004 BFA, Crafts Concentration: Glass Minor: Fine Art Studio	Kent State University	Kent, OH
1999-2001 Studied sculpture and ceramics	Herron School of Art	Indianapolis, IN
1998-2002 Studied glass blowing	Indianapolis Art Center	Indianapolis, IN

WORK EXPERIENCE

2009 Visiting Artist: Lecture	Tidewater Community College	Portsmouth, VA
2008 Graduate Teaching Assistantship	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA
2008 Instructor: Summer Class	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA
2007 Graduate Teaching Assistantship	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA

2001-2007 Instructor: Youth and Teen glassblowing Instructor: Advanced Glass Blowing Instructor: Beginning Glass Blowing Glass shop technician	Indianapolis Art Center	Indianapolis, IN
2007 Instructor: Incalmo Workshop	Water Street Glassworks	Benton Harbor, MI
2006-2007 Instructor: Multi- level glass blowing	Ox-Bow	Saugatuck. MI
2003-2007 Teacher assistant Glass shop technician	Ox-Bow	Saugatuck. MI
2006 Visiting Artist: workshop and lecture	Tidewater Community College	Portsmouth, VA
2004-2006 Not for profit art organization co- founder. Exhibition director	Art Space 30	Indianapolis, IN

AWARDS

2009 Thesis/ Dissertation Assistantship	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA
2008 VMFA Fellowship Recipient	Virginia Museum of Fine Art	Richmond, VA
2006	Evanston Lakeshore Arts	Evanston, IL

Best in Category-Glass	Festival	
2004 Outstanding artwork award	Skokie Art Guild	Skokie, IL
2002-2003 Scholarship Recipient	Kent State University	Kent, OH

COMPETITIONS

2004-2005 Finalist: Great Ideas Competition	Indianapolis Arts Council	Indianapolis, IN
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EXHIBITIONS

2009 Art of Glass: Generations	Visual Arts Center	Portsmouth, VA
2009 Thesis Exhibition	Anderson Gallery	Richmond, VA
2009 <i>blend</i>	FAB Gallery	Richmond, VA
2009 <i>Sleight of Hand Show</i>	Gallery 5	Richmond, VA
2008 <i>MFA Exchange Show</i>	Pratt Institute	Brooklyn, NY
2008 American Craft Council Show	Baltimore Convention Center	Baltimore, MD
2007 <i>Domestic Seperation</i>	FAB Gallery	Richmond, VA
2007 <i>Exchange</i>	Stutz Gallery	Indianapolis, IN
2007 Group Exhibit	Dean Johnson Gallery	Indianapolis, IN
2007	IAC Fall Exhibitions	Indianapolis, IN

Woven: An Installation

2006 Spring & Fall Shows	Art Space 30	Indianapolis, IN
2005-2006 Pilot Windows Project	Indianapolis Arts Council	Indianapolis, IN
2005 <i>Vessel: A Glass Exhibition</i>	Historic School 30	Indianapolis, IN
2005 Solo glass show	Red Dot Gallery	Indianapolis, IN
2004 Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit	Crown Hill Cemetery	Indianapolis, IN
2002 <i>Craftforms</i>	Wayne Art Center	Wayne, PA

COMMISSIONS

2006 6 glass wall sconces	Community East Hospital	Indianapolis, IN
2006 54 custom lights including pendants & sconces	Bravo Tapas Lounge	Chicago, IL
2006 3 glass pendant lights	Indianapolis Arts Council	Indianapolis, IN
2006 36 blown and cast glass awards	Interior International Design Association	Indianapolis, IN
2005 Glass helix sculpture	Parallax Communications	Indianapolis, IN