

SARAH STOLFA
Press Packet

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SARAH STOLFA

b. 1975

Sarah Stolfa is a recent graduate of Drexel University's photography program. While relatively new to photography, Stolfa has leapt into the field passionately and actively, already producing several bodies of work, including ones focusing on local boxers, the death penalty in Philadelphia, and a poverty awareness bicycle trip. The work for which she has garnered the most recognition is a portrait series of the regular patrons at McGlinchey's Bar, where she has worked as a bartender for several years. With this series, Stolfa won The New York Times Photography Contest for College Students in 2004. These striking, luminous portraits resonate with the searching and loneliness of the urban bar experience. Yet in these images, Stolfa has found the dignity and individuality of her subjects. In addition to the Times award, Stolfa has also won the Noah Addis Photojournalism Award and an award for Artistic Excellence in the Perkins Center Photography Competition. She has also participated in several group shows and had a solo exhibition at the Pearlstein Gallery at Drexel University in 2004. Stolfa is currently working on a book project related to the McGlinchey's series. She began her MFA at Yale in the fall 2006.

Ryan Weideman and Sarah Stolfa *Patrons*
November 16, 2006 – January 06, 2007
Opening: Thursday, November 16, 6-8pm

Silverstein Photography is pleased to announce *Patrons*, an exhibition featuring photographs by Ryan Weideman and Sarah Stolfa. Shooting clients within their respective workplaces, Stolfa bartending at Philadelphia tavern McGlinchey's, and Weideman driving a New York City taxicab, each of these artists has created a uniquely personal series of portraits. *Patrons* draws attention to the inexplicable yet natural ease that most city habitants feel in bars and taxis, depicting complimentary views of urban American experience and culture.

In 1980, Ryan Weideman cruised into New York City to become a street photographer. Having graduated with an MFA from the California College of Arts & Crafts, Weideman already had a style influenced by the great photographers of the period including Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander. Though anxious to pursue a career in photography, Weideman's focus turned to the more immediate goal of earning money to pay his rent. Soon after moving into an apartment on West 43rd Street, Weideman met a neighbor who drove a taxi, leading him to his newfound profession. For the next 25 years, Ryan Weideman photographed the theatric riders, including models, poets, drag queens, and celebrities, all within the back seat of his makeshift photo studio.

Weideman's work is a part of such prestigious collections as the Brooklyn Museum, the Oakland Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago. His awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship Grant (1992-1993), a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship (1986-1987), and a NEA Fellowship Grant (1984-1985).

In 1997, after touring with the band Delta 72 for several years, Sarah Stolfa moved to Philadelphia and began bartending at McGlinchey's. Like Weideman, Stolfa began using her workplace as a photo studio. In doing so, the relationship between worker and patron became transformed. Taking advantage of the proximity, and in turn intimacy, which occurs between bartender and customer, Stolfa collected portraits of the diverse group of regulars. Her carefully composed images, often including a glass, mug, ashtray, newspaper, or money, are reminiscent of Seventeenth Century Dutch paintings in their color, lighting, and decipherable detail.

In 2004, Stolfa won The New York Times Photography Contest for College Students, and several of the early portraits were reproduced in The New York Times Magazine. In 2006, she was included in the Second Woodmere Triennial of Contemporary Photography, alongside Arnold Newman, Naomi Savage, and David Graham. In 2006, Stolfa began her MFA at Yale University.



GIVE YOURSELF: A VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

PLUS

artist's 50-year career; through 1/8. • "Defamation of Character." Works by 30 artists created during the post-punk era exploring fame and notoriety. Artists include Jack and Dinos Chapman, Sarah Lucas, and Adam McEwen; through 1/8. • "Music Is a Better Noise." Photographs, sculpture, and video by musicians who make art and artists who make music. Works by Barbara Ess, Rammellzee, Alan Vega, and others; through 1/8. • "The Gold Standard." Works addressing the iconography of gold through such themes as alchemy and religion. Artists include Sylvie Fleury, Kent Henriksen, and Geof Oppenheimer; through 1/8. • "Sam Samore: The Suicidist." Two photography series shown together featuring the artist in various staged post-suicide situations; through 1/8. • "Loris Cecchini: Cloudless." A large-scale installation composed of thousands of plastic balls exploring the concept of space; through 1/8. • "Burt Barr: Recent Works." Video works drawing from culture and nature; through 1/8. • "Katrín Sigurðardóttir: High Plane V." An artificial landscape installation utilizing only blue insulation and white paint; through 5/7. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Thurs.-Mon. noon-6; \$5 suggested donation, \$2 students and seniors, free with MoMA admission.

QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART
 • "Queens International 2006: Everything All at Once." This year's biennial presents the works of 52 Queens-based artists in a variety of mediums as well as photographs by 38 local photographers documenting everyday life in the borough of Queens; through 1/14. • "Tiffany: The Glass." Flat sheets of opalescent glass used to create the spectacular leaded windows of Louis C. Tiffany; ongoing. "The Panorama of the City of New York." A 9,335-square-foot architectural model built for the 1964 World's Fair; ongoing. *Flushing Meadows Corona Park (718-592-9700), Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat.-Sun. 12-5; suggested donation \$5 adults, \$2 seniors and children.*

RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART
 • "Humanitas II: The Photographs of Fredric Roberts." Twenty-six photographs taken during Fredric Roberts's travels in Asia between 1986 and 2006; through 2/26. • "Take to the Sky: Flying Mystics in Himalayan Art." Paintings and sculptures exploring the supernatural power of flying; through 1/8. • "I See No Stranger: Early Sikh Art and Devotion." Drawings, paintings, textiles, photographs, and metal work

the relationships between art, the human body, and the natural world; through 2/11. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-370-3976), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish 6-9); \$15, \$10 students and seniors, children under 12 free.

GALLERIES

MADISON AVENUE AND VICINITY

JOHN CURRIN
 Paintings utilizing sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European techniques depict edgy figurative subjects; through 12/22. *Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., nr. 76th St. (212-744-2333).*

JASPER JOHNS
 Paintings, drawings, watercolors, and ink on plastic—each depicting the fleeting quality of snow; through 12/16. *Craig F. Starr Associates, 5 E. 73rd St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-570-1789).*

JOHN KEANE
 Paintings incorporating abstracted low-res digital images of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; through 12/2. *Flores, 1000 Madison Ave., nr. 77th St. (212-439-1700).*

JOHN MARIN
 Nineteen oil paintings and watercolors from 1912 to 1952; through 12/16. *Meredith Ward Fine Art, 60 E. 66th St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-744-7306).*

SIGMAR POLKE
 New paintings as well as finely crafted Renaissance and Baroque objects made of amber; through 1/13. *Michael Werner, 4 E. 77th St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-988-1623).*

"SLIDING SCALE"
 Small- and large-scale works by the same artists examining the correlation between size and perceived importance. Works by Caio Fonseca, Tony Scherman, Seton Smith, Robert Taplin, and others; 11/29-1/6. *Winston Wächter, 39 E. 78th St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-327-2526).*

SAUL STEINBERG
 Drawings, works on paper, and mixed-media constructions including *Roccamarelli Table*, a work composed of the tools Steinberg uses to create his art; 11/28-2/10. *Adam Baumgold Gallery, 74 E. 79th St., nr. Park Ave. (212-861-1261).*

ANDREW WYETH
 Watercolors and drawings from the now legendary

Collages incorporating found and collected written and printed materials; through 12/9. *Lori Bookstein Fine Art, 37 W. 57th St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-750-0949).*

SARAH MORRIS
 An installation transforming the ceiling of Lever House's ground-level public space, organized by the Public Art Fund; through 12/3. *Lever House, 390 Park Ave., nr. 53rd St. (212-421-7027).*

"POST-WAR FRENCH ARCHITECTURAL AND MODERNIST FURNITURE 1947-1958"
 Works by influential architects and designers of the twentieth century including Pierre Jeanneret, Le Corbusier, and Jean Prouvé; through 12/20. *Tina Kim Fine Art, 41 W. 57th St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-716-1100).*

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG
 Collage paintings incorporating photographs as well as a cast bronze sculpture; through 11/25. *PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-421-3292).*

LOUIS STONE
 Thirty oil paintings from 1928 to 1945 marking the artist's creative path toward abstract painting; through 12/22. *Michael Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-247-0082).*

SOHO AND TRIBECA

SLATER BRADLEY
 Six video works incorporating diverse genres such as music video, silent film, avant-garde cinema, and the Hollywood musical; through 12/23. *Team, 83 Grand St., nr. Greene St. (212-279-9219).*

MATT GREENE
 New paintings combining the subjects of horticulture, pornography, horror films, and fairy tales; through 12/23. *Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St., nr. Wooster St. (212-343-7300).*

ZENG HAO
 Chinese avant-garde paintings of people and their possessions; through 12/9. *Fredericks of Freire, 536 W. 24th St., nr. Tenth Ave. (212-633-6555).*

"IN THE POEM ABOUT LOVE YOU DON'T WRITE THE WORD LOVE"
 Film, video, sculpture, paintings, drawings, and photographs creating a distinction between that which is an "image" and that which is "visual." Works by Simon Martin, Marc Robinson, Sue Tompkins, and Andy Warhol; through 12/22. *Artists Space, 38 Greene St., nr. Grand St., third fl. (212-266-3970).*

"UNIBODIES"
 Versatile composites made of fiber cloth, resin, and flexible core materials challenging the notion of skeleton and skin in architecture; through 12/22. *Artists Space, 38 Greene St., nr. Grand St., third fl. (212-266-3970).*

CHELSEA



Ryan Weideman and Sarah Stolfa

SILVERSTEIN PHOTOGRAPHY

The first part of the definition of *patron* in Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) is innocuous enough: "one who countenances, supports or protects." It is in the second sentence that Johnson gets in a dig at his fickle sponsor, Lord Chesterfield: "commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery." The provider-client relationships on view in "Patrons" are less fraught than those to which Johnson alludes, but are tangled in their own way. Photographers Ryan Weideman and Sarah Stolfa crystallize the transactional nature of the relationship between sitter and portraitist (and between viewer and artwork) by shooting those on the customer's side of the exchange between, in Weideman's case, taxi driver and passenger, and, in Stolfa's, bartender and drinker.

The artists know of what they photograph, having transformed their places of employ into provisional studios. Weideman drove a cab in New York City for twenty-five years, and took pictures of his fares from the front seat, while Stolfa worked at a Philadelphia tavern from 1997 until 2006, photographing tipplers from behind the bar she was tending. Twenty-six of Weideman's black-and-white images wrapped around the walls of the gallery's main room. Most subjects were shot from the waist up, and all are framed by the taxi's backseat and windows, but any consistency ends there—not an average Joe is to be found among the riders. Some of the surprises are unmissable

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Ryan Weideman,
Six Girls Crack Up,
1982, black-and-white
photograph, 16 x 20".



(two Lower East Side punks with a snake coiled around their necks, a fishnet-stockinged prostitute), but best are the images whose oddities take a few seconds to notice. In *Couple with Submarine*, 1984, a soigné older pair hold a giant hero sandwich that stretches across the width of the car. Most of these photos were taken in the early '80s, and are intimate time capsules of that much revisited moment, with men wearing Mohawks and women channeling Farrah Fawcett; Weideman picked up the riders in *Six Girls Crack Up*, 1982, from the Mudd Club.

These images work in part because Weideman caught his patrons on the fly at unself-conscious moments. The lowering of inhibition evident in Stolfa's subjects comes from familiarity (these are regulars at a bar called McGlinchey's) and, of course, alcohol. Eleven of her color photographs hung in the smaller of the front galleries, forming a pendant body of work in a different style. While Weideman sifts peculiar details through the deadpan tradition of New York street photography, Stolfa filters ordinary subjects through an amber-colored light that dramatizes her sitters. They are pictured singly, surrounded only by the appurtenances of the watering hole—bottles, glasses, ashtrays, money. The images are titled after their subjects' names, but this biographical specificity only renders their blank expressions more impenetrable, and narrative questions rupture the straightforward presentation. What thought has distracted the subject of *Kataryna Choniel*, 2006, from her beer, cigarette, headphones, and reading material? The star of *Robert Fleeger*, 2005, is dapper, presumably professional, and wearing a wedding ring, so why is he alone, his face impassive, double-fisting a shot and a beer?

Every photograph is a document of the bygone, but in "Patrons" one senses the past poignantly: Stolfa no longer lives in Philadelphia, and the New York City of most of Weideman's images—in which passengers could pile in six or eight to a taxi—is finished. What has not changed is the artist's need for financial support, and "Patrons" provided a heartening reminder that making rent and making art need not be exclusive propositions.

—Lisa Turvey



Sarah Stolfa's photograph of Jesse Schnabel, in the show "Patrons," at Silverstein.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

ROBERT IRWIN

One of Irwin's finest works, "Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow, and Blue 3" sandwiches space between three vast panels overhead, painted the eponymous colors,

ters Kenneth Noland's hard-edged compositions through disco, adding rainbow patterns and backgrounds mimicking black velvet. Rebecca Morris's patchwork abstractions look like early-twentieth-century painting mixed with remnants from a quilting bee. And Chris Martin wears his heart on his sleeve, paying homage in one canvas—the names of his honorees are inscribed on the edges—to Isaac Hayes, Yayoi Kusama, Andrew Masullo, Michael Krebber, and Paul Feeley. Humorous rigor has given way to honey reinterpretation. Or, to quote Martin, "Abstract painting is dead. That's why it has become so interesting again." Through Jan. 6. (Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 534 W. 26th St. 212-744-7400.)

Short List

ROBERT BECHTLE: Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 212-206-9300. Through Jan. 6. **ELLSWORTH KELLY:** Marks, 523 W. 24th St., 522 W. 22nd St., and 526 W. 22nd St. 212-243-0200. Through Jan. 27. **ENRIQUE METINDES:** Kern, 532 W. 20th St. 212-367-9663. Through Jan. 13. **IVAN NAVARRO:** Riebling Hall, 606 W. 26th St. 212-929-8180. Through Jan. 10. **ROBERT PRUITT:** Clementine, 623 W. 27th St. 212-243-5937. Through Jan. 6. **SARAH STOLFA / RYAN WEIDEMAN:** Silverstein, 535 W. 24th St. 212-627-3930. Through Jan. 6. **CHEYNEY THOMPSON:** Kreps, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-741-8849. Through Jan. 6.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

LAURA OWENS

Owens's mastery of high-keyed color and bravura brushwork lends a flinty aftertaste to pastoral fantasies that are pure fructose: peppy nymphs and androgyne satyrs, cutesy-poo kids, birds, and bugs. It's as if this leading Los Angeles artist wanted to embarrass us for liking painting. One of her stated inspirations, Marie Laurencin, is Goya, by comparison. Another—Matisse—is taken on directly in a big, spirited pastiche of "The Joy of Life," whose formal success tips the hand of Owens's ambition and makes her insipid figuration truly exasperating. Through Jan. 13. (Gavin Brown, 620 Greenwich St. 212-627-5258.)

Village Voice Review, Dec. 7, 2006

Sarah Stolfa

While bartending in Philadelphia, Stolfa began using her clients as photographic subjects. With bright-red tresses, cigarette, near-empty beer mug, spaghetti strap top, notebook binder, and faraway eyes, Kataryna Choniel (2006) could be one of a number of bar types: grad student? floozy? wronged woman? Another patron, in black fedora, coat, and cuffs, chin resting in a hand sporting a pinky ring, might be a bored hit man, though his eyeglasses say "accountant." Stolfa's portraits fascinate; the dark intimacy of the neighborhood tavern conceals many secrets.

Silverstein, 535 W 24th, 212-627-3930. Through Jan 6.