



**THIS IS  
KILLING  
ME**

**MASS MoCA**

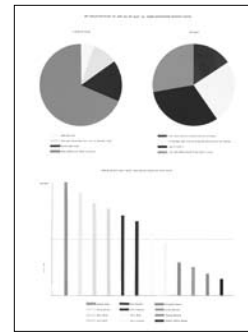




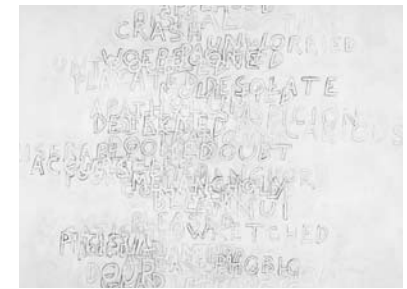
Broken Hand 26, 2005



Studio Still Life, 2004



My Relationship to Art as of May 10, 2008 [Crooked-Mouth Face], 2008



Apathy, 2006

## Whitney Bedford

b. 1976, Baltimore

Lives and works in Los Angeles

For the past eight years, each time Whitney Bedford has moved into a new studio, she has continued her series of paintings of broken hands. Featuring images of bloodied, mutilated, and injured hands on white backgrounds or, conversely, hands that have been treated, wrapped in plaster, and confined in casts on black backgrounds, these works are derived from images found on the internet. Bedford searches for photographs of disfigurement and trauma as well as images of the healing process. These paintings of hands bound and immobile are an effort on Bedford's part to restore control in the face of disruption—imagining first the damage of accident and injury and then the restorative effects of a cure.

This series serve an almost talismanic purpose, symbolizing and potentially protecting against Bedford's deepest fears—that she could be physically unable to paint. As a painter whose practice is tied to the act of making something with her hands, Bedford seems to face her own fragility with these works. If they are an attempt to ward off the possibility that her practice could be ruined by injury, then by extension they represent any number of threats to an art career.

For *This is Killing Me* Bedford created *Broken Hand* and *Cast*, monumental versions of the smaller works from the series.

## Karl Haendel

b. 1976, New York

Lives and works in Los Angeles

Karl Haendel's virtuosic drawings mine the personal and the political, replicating on varied scales the ephemera of both private and public spheres. Each time Haendel exhibits his works, he combines and arranges them differently, acting as an editor—drawing out new relationships and creating new meanings between images.

For *This is Killing Me*, Haendel is exhibiting thirteen works, including *Questions for My Father #1 (Howard Beach Group)* (2007), an amusing but uncomfortably intimate glimpse into the artist's thinking about his father. *Studio Still Life #3* offers an array of tools of the trade: a slide, a razor blade, a paintbrush, a screwdriver, and other supplies combined with more banal objects, like a tube of ChapStick, a penny, and the lid of a bottle. Also included is Haendel's *Soapbox #2 (Howard Beach Group)*, presenting the small box of Cheer detergent as a clever literalization of the soapbox, a makeshift rostrum for public speaking. *Little Legless Longo #5* is a beautifully exacting image derived from Robert Longo's *Untitled* (1981), part of a series of works that feature well-dressed urbanites contorted and writhing as if dodging an unseen assault. Haendel's updated version features Longo's collapsing woman, lurching forward, one of her legs amputated and invisible. This (Oedipal) gesture points, perhaps, to an anxiety of influence and, even more clearly, to Haendel's self-conscious positioning of his own art-historical lineage.

## Andrew Kuo

b. 1977, New York

Lives and works in New York

Andrew Kuo's paintings and sculpture are a sometimes riotous attempt to quantify his life and his ideas in the most mundane form of data presentation, the chart. Using varied forms of charts, graphs, and grids, Kuo employs bold graphics and concise, thoughtful language to illuminate with an unsettling empiricism some of the tedious details and central concerns of his life. *My Relationship to Art as of May 10, 2008 [Crooked-Mouth Face]*, which features three separate graphs, is part of a series of paintings that feature multiple charts on related themes. In this work, Kuo has included a bar graph labeled "Twelve Artists I Wish I Was [Solely Based on Their Stuff]." Scaled only with "The Most" at the top of the chart, it is a deceptively straightforward ranking of the contemporary artists Kuo admires and, as the title indicates, wishes he could be.

Accompanying this is his sculpture, *What I Fear about Traveling...*, made of seven two-by-four wood planks of varying heights painted different colors. The work is a deconstructed, knocked-over bar graph, and formally it draws on the rich tradition of abstraction that emerged in the last century. But through the title, each piece of wood comes to represent something to be feared; for instance, green representing "feeling lonesome," dark blue representing "spending all my money," and grey representing "plane crash." With restrained gestures and a minimum of language, these works assert the inspiring, but potentially crippling nature of Kuo's own obsessive self-reflection.

## Sean Landers

b. 1962, Palmer, Massachusetts

Lives and works in New York

The inspiration for Sean Landers's paintings ranges from elaborations on his own signature, to parodic interpretations of the history of painting, to completely text-based works. *Le'Go My Ego* (2007), a kind of flow-chart of ideas, allows the viewer to see the paths and cul-de-sacs of Landers's thought process as he creates a new painting. His words are often a preemptive criticism and undermining of his own work; for example, "Are you cringing yet?" and "I want to make movies." An uplifting note, next to the words "I'm not sure of anything," is a small arrow leading to the tentatively promising, "But I have a lot of hope for something."

*Apathy* (2006) is a ghostly litany of words spreading down the center of the canvas. CRASH, DESOLATE, DOUBT, MELANCHOLY, DOOMED, WRETTCHED, PHOBIC, and the titular APATHY stand out from the faintly outlined and densely layered list, setting the tone for a discouraged and discouraging painting. The words GLAD and APPEASED are legible at the top and bottom of the canvas, but their subtle presence does not mask the defeatist tone of the canvas. In both of these works, Landers subverts the idea of figurative painting, and instead offers a glimpse into the intellectual and emotional aspects of the creative process through language as the content of his work.



*Conversations wit de Churen V: As da Art World Might Turn*, video still, 2006



*House (1986-1996) with Art That I Dreamt That I Made*, 2005-2009

## Kalup Linzy

b. 1977, Stuckey, Florida

Lives and works in New York

Kalup Linzy's video works employ the saccharin melodrama of soap operas and the barbed humor of comedy sketches to unveil the subtexts that permeate our lives—domestic, professional, and public. In *Conversations wit de Churen V: As da Art World Might Turn* (2006), Linzy turns his attention to the (often) unspoken hopes and fears of artists. Dressed in too-tight women's clothing and wearing a shiny blonde wig, Linzy portrays Katonya, an emerging artist trying to find love, glory, and gallery representation in the big city.

When Katonya faces what appears to be an unbearable disappointment, an opening night party in her honor for which no one has shown up, she reads a weepy speech to a non-existent audience. Thanking everybody she wished would have attended, Katonya offers the viewer an embarrassingly honest account of an artist's fantasies of success even when confronted with a debacle.

Linzy also makes paintings, channeling characters from his videos to create this work. *Where Do We Go From Here #1* and *#4*, two whimsical gouaches, evoke the creative talents and oeuvre of Katonya (we see her painting similar works in the video). In making work under the guise and inspiration of Katonya, Linzy develops her from a parodic character into an almost real artist—a version of himself further expanding the already blurred narratives of his work.

## Shana Lutker

b. 1978 Northport, New York

Lives and works in Los Angeles

Shana Lutker's works in various media mine her unconscious and psychoanalytic theory. In *House (1986-1996) with Art That I Dreamt That I Made* Lutker fabricated a scale-model of her childhood home. The house is then filled with miniature versions of the art that Lutker dreams she has made. Lutker often reworks these miniatures into drawings and large sculptures—making real works from those she has literally “dreamed up.”

Complementing this work are Lutker's *Dream Books* from 2003 and 2004, collected transcriptions, in the style of *New York Times* articles, of every dream she had during each year, and *Schema (January 11, 2003)* and *Schema (January 16, 2003)*, diagrams of Lutker's personal interpretations of such dreams. Lutker's self-examination demonstrates the blurred boundaries between conscious and unconscious, real and imagined, public and personal.

In her more recent work Lutker demonstrates a continued interest in the flexibility and variability of meaning. The six photographs from her *Prop* series (2008) depict small rectangles arranged against a white background. These images suggest the formal possibilities of limited materials and gestures, and they create a subtle almost anthropomorphic narrative. Elegant and lonely, the rectangles and their multiplied shadows, like Lutker's work about dreams, offer an ambiguous and evocative space for interpretation.



*Untitled #3* (from the “disruptions” series), detail, 2005

## Marco Rios

b. 1978, Los Angeles

Lives and works in Los Angeles

Marco Rios's work draws on varied sources within pop culture, art history, and the everyday to create work about both his artistic practice and his life. In the video *Moving Equilibrium* (2006) we see Rios, dressed in a black wrestling onesie, attempting to balance a monumental construction level above his head. Complete with a referee, two drummers, and a round card girl, Rios struggles in front of a large audience. But, despite prodigious efforts, the artist finds himself unable to locate a sense of equilibrium. He fails to steady the level and leaves the gym defeated by the task he laid out for himself.

Accompanying this work is *The Nightmare (Paxil Boy)* (2008), a sculpture made from plastic, foam and Paxil, a common antidepressant. The form and title are based on the German artist Henry Fuseli's painting *The Nightmare* from 1781, which shows an incubus, a kind of sexually predatory demon, crouched on the body of a sleeping woman. Rios has updated this malevolent figure, combining Fuseli's creature with his own image (the hair and face of the sculpture are based on a photograph of Rios when he was five years old). One of the most common side effects of Paxil is weight gain, and Rios, who took Paxil for a number of years, had put on pounds equivalent to the weight of a five year-old boy. In these works, Rios conflates his personal life and his art-making, acting out his own dilemmas and transforming them into rich visual metaphors.



*I wished I was a Giant*, 2006

## Joe Zane

b. 1971, Utica, New York

Lives and works in Boston

Often combining found and fabricated objects, Joe Zane's work revolves around failure and success, both imagined and real. *Zane* (2006), a sculpture of the artist's own last name, is made to look like a neon sign. Because it is constructed from vinyl tubing, plastic, and wire, the sign will never light up, and its apparent ambition, to put Zane's name in lights, is rendered unattainable. *Feather in My Cap* (2009) evokes a similar combination of confidence and pathos. Piled in a window and comprising two second-place medals accompanied by honorable-mention ribbons (one simply says “participant”), the work is an attempt on behalf of the artist to award himself tangible yet unheroic accolades.

Counter to these displays of failure is *I wished I was a Giant* (2006), a series of books and magazines that the artist made based on well-known art publications. These include his do-it-yourself, unauthorized, and unpublished Phaidon monograph, a special issue of *Parkett* dedicated to him, an *Artforum* with him on the cover, and an issue of *Avalanche* (defunct by 1976) focused on him. Also included are guerrilla insertions of Zane's work into seminal art historical texts. Together with his medals, these fictionalized publications lampoon Zane's unfulfilled wishes for critical attention, but they also suggest the hopeful and potentially self-fulfilling possibility that his work will find its place in (art) history.

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## Whitney Bedford

*Cast 9*, 2004  
16 3/8 × 13 1/8 in.  
Collection of Tony Fehrer

*Cast 2*, 2004  
16 3/8 × 13 1/8 in.  
Collection of Michael Benevento

*Broken Hand 9*, 2005  
16 3/8 × 13 1/8 in.

*Broken Hand*, 2005  
16 3/8 × 13 1/8 in.

*Broken Hand*, 2009  
60 × 84 in.  
*Cast*, 2009  
60 × 84 in.

All mixed media on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles  
Projects unless otherwise noted

## Karl Haendel

*Little Legless Longo #5*, 2004  
Pencil on paper  
30 × 22 in.  
Courtesy of the artist, Susanne  
Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects,  
and Harris Lieberman, New York

*19th Question Mark*, 2008  
Pencil on paper  
30 × 22 in.  
Courtesy of the artist, Susanne  
Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects,  
and Harris Lieberman, New York

*Faith/Failure (After Florian  
Maier-Aichen After Mungo  
Thompson) ghost version*,  
*mirrored*, 2004  
Unique C-print  
51 × 41 in.  
Private collection, Los Angeles

*Ripped Scribble #4*, 2007  
Pencil on paper with staples and  
MDF frame  
59 × 100 in.  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Harris Lieberman, New York

*Studio Still Life #3*, 2004  
Pencil on paper  
80 × 52 in.  
Collection of Pamela  
and Arthur Sanders,  
Greenwich, Connecticut

*Family Drawing #6*, 2007  
Pencil on paper  
41 × 26 in.

*ANOTHER FUCKING MITZVAH*,  
2007  
Pencil on paper mounted on  
board  
68 × 51 in.

*Soapbox #2*, 2007  
Pencil on paper  
52 × 45 in.

*GOVERNMENT*, 2007  
Chalk and acrylic on board  
96 × 71 in.

*Questions for My Father #1*,  
2007  
Pencil on paper  
61 × 45 in.

*Chess #1*, 2007  
Pencil on paper  
45 × 56 in.

*Democratic Bumper Sticker  
#4*, 2007  
Pencil on paper  
22 × 30 in.

*Untitled (Communists)*, 2007  
Pencil on paper  
30 × 22 in.

Collection of Joshua Adler  
unless otherwise noted.

## Andrew Kuo

*My Relationship to Art as of  
May 10*, 2008 [*Crooked-Mouth  
Face*], 2008  
Acrylic, Carbon transfer on  
paper  
24 × 18 in.

*Every Hour of Friday May 2*,  
2008 [*I Should have Worked  
More*], 2008  
Acrylic, Carbon transfer on  
paper  
24 × 18 in.

*What I Fear About Traveling:  
Being Stranded Alone [Pink],  
Being Away from Home When  
Something Bad Happens [Blue],  
Feeling Lonesome [Green],  
Getting Lost [Purple], Losing  
My Wallet [Yellow], Plane  
Crash [Grey], Losing My Glasses  
[Orange], Spending All My  
Money [Dark Blue]*, 2008  
Acrylic, wood  
Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Taxter  
and Spengemann, New York

## Sean Landers

*LeGo My Go*, 2007  
Oil on linen  
78 × 96 in.  
Collection of Lisa and  
Steven Tananbaum

*Apathy*, 2006  
Oil on linen  
58 × 80 in.  
Collection of Elie  
and Rory Tahari

## Kalup Linzy

*Conversations wit de Churen  
V: As da Art World Might Turn*,  
2006  
DVD, color, sound  
11 minutes, 16 seconds

*Where Do We Go From Here  
#1*, 2006  
Gouache on paper  
15 × 19 in.

*Where Do We Go From Here  
#4*, 2006  
Gouache on paper  
15 × 19 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Taxter  
and Spengemann, New York

## Shana Lutker

*House (1986–1996) with Art  
That I Dreamt That I Made*,  
2005–2009  
Mixed media  
49 × 50 × 27 1/2 in.

*Dream Book 2003 (Word  
Version)*, 2004  
Inkjet prints on paper  
300 pages, bound  
8 1/2 × 11 × 2 1/2 in.  
Unlimited Edition

*Dream Book 2004 (Word  
Version)*, 2005  
Inkjet prints on paper  
280 pages, bound  
8 1/2 × 11 × 2 1/2 in.  
Unlimited Edition

*Schema (January 11, 2003)*,  
2005  
Pen, carbon on paper  
30 × 44 in.

*Schema (January 16, 2003)*,  
2005  
Pen, carbon on paper  
30 × 44 inches

*Props no. 2–7*, 2008  
Lightjet print with walnut frame  
18 1/4 × 20 3/4 in.

Courtesy of the artist  
and Susanne Vielmetter  
Los Angeles Projects

## Marco Rios

*Moving Equilibrium*, 2006  
DVD, color, sound  
5 minutes, 3 seconds

*The Nightmare (Paxil Boy)*, 2008  
Plastic, foam, paxil  
19 1/2 × 12 × 7 1/2 in

*Untitled #3* (from the  
“disruptions” series), 2005  
Plaster, aluminum, spray paint,  
archival iris print  
48 × 60 × 12 in.  
Collection of Skadden, Arps,  
Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Courtesy of the artist and  
Simon Preston, New York  
unless otherwise noted.

## Joe Zane

*I wished I was a Giant*, 2006  
Vitrine with various  
books and periodicals

*Not Quite*, 2006  
Vitrine with various  
misshapen heads

*Zane*, 2006  
Vinyl tube, paint, plastic, wire

*Feather in My Cap*, 2009  
Ribbons and medals

Courtesy of the artist and  
Carroll and Sons, Boston

COVER: Karl Haendel, *Little  
Legless Longo #5*, 2004.

BACK COVER: Shana Lutker,  
*Schema (January 11,  
2003)*, 2005