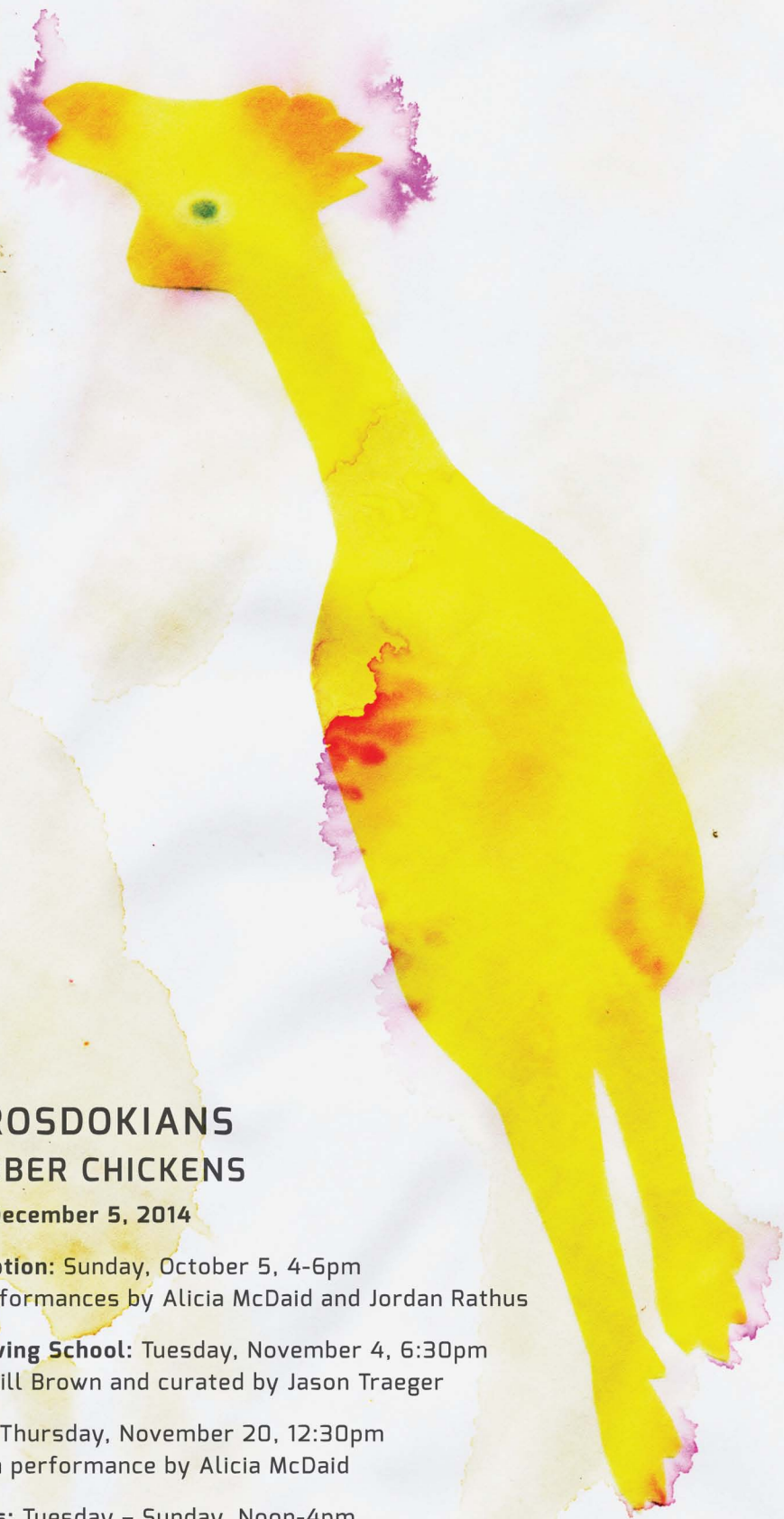


# PARAPROSDOKIANS AND RUBBER CHICKENS





## PARAPROSDOKIANS AND RUBBER CHICKENS

October 5 - December 5, 2014

**Artists Reception:** Sunday, October 5, 4-6pm  
featuring performances by Alicia McDaid and Jordan Rathus

**Comedy Drawing School:** Tuesday, November 4, 6:30pm  
created by Will Brown and curated by Jason Traeger

**Artists Talk:** Thursday, November 20, 12:30pm  
followed by a performance by Alicia McDaid

**Gallery Hours:** Tuesday – Sunday, Noon-4pm



top row, left to right:

**Patrick Rock**

*W.P.P.*

Model of upcoming installation- plywood, paint, and

log

2014

13 x 8 x 3 feet

**Bruce Conkle**

*El Gran Cucharón*

Oil on panel

2014

30 x 40 inches

**Matt Jacobs**

*Backwards Painting 21*

Acrylic, latex, and spray paint on printed burlap

2014

15.5 x 12.5 inches

**Ralph Pugay**

*Cattle Rave*

Acrylic on canvas

2013

Courtesy of the artist and Upfor

22 x 25 inches



second row, left to right:

**Sara Greenberger Rafferty**

*Band Aid Prop*

Direct substrate printing on Plexiglas, Edition of 3

2010

Courtesy of the artist and Rachel Uffner Gallery

7 x 5 1/2 x 1/2 inches

**Jamie Isenstein**

*Sand Lamp*

150 lbs of sand, water, light socket, electric cord, lamp

shade, light bulb

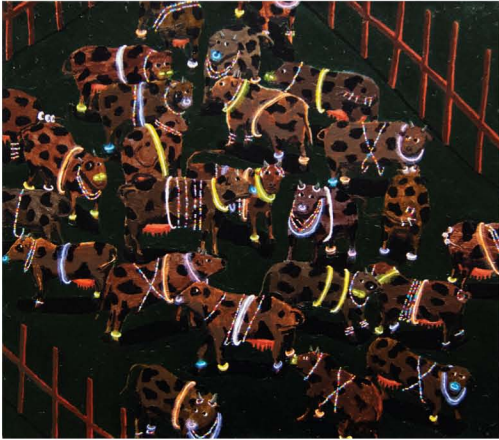
2014

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery

24 x 25 x 25 inches

**Let's start by stating the obvious:** things are not good, nor do they look like they are getting better.





**Ben Sanders**

*Theven Thooth*

Acrylic and gouache on paper in artist frame

2014

8.5 X 11 inches

*third row, left to right:*

**Jonathan Gitelson**

*Things Are Not Good, Nor Do They Look Like They Are Getting Better*

From the series, *Let's Start By Stating The Obvious*  
Oil based paint pens on paper

2014

30 x 40 inches

**Jordan Rathus**

*Lenny Dos*

Photograph of live performance

2014

**Lindsey White**

*Break*

C-Print

2014

15 x 22 inches

**Alicia McDaid**

*Pain Is Fear Leaving Your Body*

Still from Video

2009

*On front cover:*

**Bruce Conkle**

*Leinenanzug*

Linen suit, oil paint, tar, pine resin, pepto bismol, concrete  
2014

70 x 25 x 7 inches

(photograph by Marne Lucas)



*Yipes. Is that what she thinks of me? That I'm far gone enough to be put in a straitjacket in front of a potter's wheel where I can sculpt vases with my one free nose?*

— Steve Martin, *The Pleasure of My Company*

Humor is a cognitive human experience. Despite the belief that dissecting a joke is what ruins it, people study and probe humor repeatedly. There are many understood purposes for humor — social connection and communication, challenging accepted ideas, the childlike joy of play, and, ultimately, laughing in the face of our mortality — but studies have yet to fully grasp what makes something funny. Contemporary artists employ comedy to various ends: at times visual art gives us a piece of the joke or a mismatch of comedic parts and ideas, embracing the uncertainty and magic of humor.

A crucial element in joke-telling is that the listeners make a leap for themselves, connecting what is stated and what is implied. This kind of engagement heightens the humor. Within art, we may be asked to look even further, to make more associations, and at times to create our own punch lines.

The Art Gym presents *Paraprosdokians and Rubber Chickens*, an exhibition of art exploring humor that includes works by Bruce Conkle, Jonathan Gitelson, Jamie Isenstein, Matt Jacobs, Alicia McDaid, Ralph Pugay, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, Jordan Rathus, Patrick Rock, Ben Sanders, and Lindsey White. Each artist works with humor — addressing comedy tropes and props, playing off of methods and forms, creating darkly humorous situations, automating jokes, or using comedic timing. The exhibition includes painting, sculpture, video, performance, photography, drawing, prints, and site-specific work.

Inspired by natural phenomena, **Bruce Conkle** (Portland, Oregon) creates work that addresses contemporary attitudes toward environmental concerns. Often employing humor and the mystical, his art places man within nature, examining what he calls the “misfit quotient” between humans and their surroundings. **Jonathan Gitelson** (Brattleboro, Vermont) explores the ordinariness of life in his artwork. He searches for the oddities to be found in everyday situations in which people find themselves constantly bombarded with information. This project uses aggregated closing statements as punch lines to a joke that Gitelson began, finding the humor in something as common as a Google search. **Jamie Isenstein's** (New York, New York) work addresses the absurdity of humanity through the use of her own body or through the anthropomorphization of sculpture. Utilizing slapstick and the theatrical, she creates exaggerated and distorted stand-ins for the body that involve us as viewers. We are implicated as part of the work and part of the story of the sadness and humor of mortality.

**Matt Jacobs's** (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) art addresses and upsets formal aesthetic expectations. He rethinks everyday objects by disregarding function and using intuition. Chance and play come together in works melding the interests of two-dimensional and three-dimensional art practices. Combining pop-culture references, personal experiences, and therapeutic sharing, **Alicia McDaid** (Portland, Oregon) connects with darker—and funnier—aspects of psychology within her performances. She uses stand-up comedy, theater, and dance to create a mishmash of the human condition. Her works aim to open up the audience by “making them laugh so that they can cry.” **Ralph Pugay** (Richmond, Virginia, and Portland, Oregon) undermines accepted ways of thinking by combining absurdist narratives, pop-culture tropes, visual /literal jokes, and dark humor. His cartoonish paintings grab the audience and push us to rethink what we know, leaving room for larger existential reflection.

**Sara Greenberger Rafferty** (Brooklyn, New York) creates mixed-media works from sources such as stand-up props, portraits of famous comedians, and slapstick situations. Her work elicits comparisons among artist, performer, and viewer. By making abstracted bleeds of these figures and objects, Rafferty points to our own nostalgia, vulnerability, and human frailty. The artist as performer is overtly present in the videos and performances of **Jordan Rathus** (Brooklyn, New York). She counters our expectations for a story by removing much of the narrative in favor of repeated edits and revelations of staged behind-the-scenes moments. We reevaluate television, advertising, and our own documented memories through the viewing of her deconstructed, funny, and dizzying work.

With a punk-rock aesthetic, **Patrick Rock's** (Portland, Oregon) performative and sculptural work embodies a male outlook, destroying an established norm with humor and camp. In this work, he laughs, and we laugh along, at the absurdity of passive-aggressive approaches to controlling the border of the public and

the private. **Ben Sanders** (Los Angeles, California) uses vivid color and '80s style in his pop paintings and sculpture. Calvin Ross Carl aptly points out that Sanders' works "feel like [what would happen] if you got bored while painting still lifes and wanted to make comic books instead." The physical slapstick moment is frozen in time (or repeated forever) in **Lindsey White's** (San Francisco, California) photography and video work. She plays with mundane props and repeats gags in visually compelling ways. The concept that comedy is tragedy plus time is turned on its end within her work: if time is never-ending, is everything more tragic or just funnier?

— Blake Shell, The Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Director and Curator  
The Art Gym and Belluschi Pavilion

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## THE MISSION

The mission of The Art Gym is to increase public understanding of contemporary art of the Pacific Northwest through thoughtfully organized exhibitions, publications, and public discussions.

## PNW CONTEXT

This exhibition is one of an ongoing series of programs connecting artists of the Pacific Northwest with artists and curators outside of the region. These programs broaden and deepen connections for regional artists as well as providing a context for art-making that is national to international. Local viewers experience work from artists outside the region, and regional artists are brought to the attention of art audiences outside beyond the Pacific Northwest. PNW Context creates a dialogue around ideas, methods, materials, and processes.

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#theartgym

Parking is free. The gallery is located on the third floor of the central building on campus - BP John. We are happy to accommodate your group visit. Please email Blake Shell to make arrangements: [bshell@marylhurst.edu](mailto:bshell@marylhurst.edu)

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