



ANTHONY LEPORE

Press Pack



## ANTHONY LEPORE

**BORN** 1977, Burbank, California  
Lives and works in Los Angeles

### EDUCATION

2005 Master of Fine Arts, Yale University  
2004 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture  
2000 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Fordham University

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 Two-person exhibition with Michael Henry Hayden, Left Field Gallery, San Luis Obispo, CA  
Two-person exhibition with Samira Yamin, Chan Gallery, Pomona College, Claremont, CA

2015 *Bikini Factory*, Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2014 *Flash: Anthony Lepore*, California Museum of Photography, Riverside

2013 *Paris Photo Los Angeles*, François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2012 *Night Walk*, Artist Respond Series, LACMA, Los Angeles, CA

2011 *New Wilderness*, M+B, Los Angeles, CA  
*New Wilderness*, François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2010 *Paper Surrogate*, Works Sited Series, LA Central Library, Los Angeles, CA

2008 *Restoration*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO

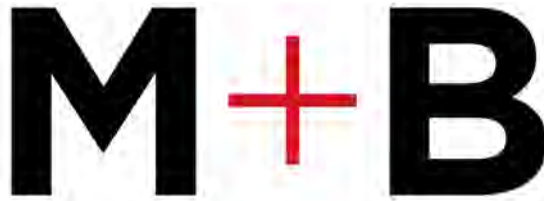
2007 *Bird Shop*, Marvelli Gallery, New York, NY

2006 *I Would Make You My Own*, Marvelli Gallery, New York, NY

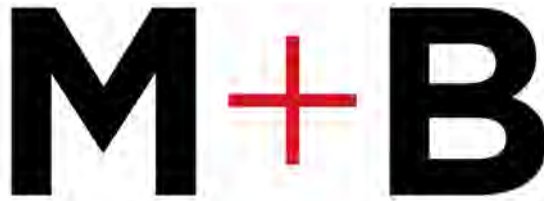
2005 Groeflin Maag Gallery, Basel, Switzerland

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2016 *New Builds*, Josh Lilley, London, UK



- 2015 *Russian Doll*, M+B Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
M+B, Los Angeles, CA  
*Bad Boys Bail Bonds Adopt a Highway*, curated by Amanda Ross-Ho, Team Gallery, New York, NY  
*In Focus: Animalia*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA
- 2014 *Me and Benjamin*, curated by M+B, Galerie Xippas, Paris  
*Attunement*, Armory Center for the Arts, Mezzanine Galleries, Pasadena, CA  
*Another Cats Show*, 356 Mission, Los Angeles, CA
- 2013 *The Scandalized Mask*, Josh Lilley Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
*October 18, 1977*, Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert, *October 18, 1977*, New York  
*Works Sited, reprised, Cleopatra's*, Brooklyn, NY  
*Set Pieces*, Cardi Black Box, Milan, Italy
- 2012 *Treating Shadows as Real Things*, The Church of the Holy Shroud, Artissima Lido, Turin, Italy  
*Los Angeles Contemporary Tendencies*, Helene Bailly Gallery, Paris, FR  
*Cave-IN*, Ramekin Crucible, Puerto Rico  
*Los Angeles Contemporary Tendencies*, Helene Bailly Gallery, Paris, France  
*Deep Space*, François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2011 *(Un) Natural Histories*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO  
*On Forgery: Is One Thing Better Than Another?*, LAXART, Los Angeles, CA  
*My House Is Your House*, Statler Waldorf Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2010 *Gray Day*, Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles, CA  
*The Billboard Project*, Portugal Arte 10, Lisbon, Portugal  
*Group Show*, Luis de Jesus Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2009 *The Poetics of Space*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO  
*Desert Sexy*, The Constant Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2007 *Art in America: 300 Years of Innovation*, Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, China, Organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation  
*Pie in the Face*, Jail Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2006 *Guggenheim Pictures: A Conceptual Portfolio*, Guggenheim International Gala, New York, NY
- 2005 *The Once Over*, Bernard Toale Gallery, Boston, MA, Curated by David Hilliard  
*Monstrously Tranquil*, Ingalls & Associates, Miami, FL, Curated by Christial Curiel
- 2004 *Skowhegan Projects*, The White Cube, Skowhegan, ME, Curated by Dave Hardy and Siebren Versteeg



2003 *For The Birds*, Art Space, New Haven, CT, Curated by Denise Markonish and Michael Crewdson,

2000 *Strange Routes*, The Center Gallery, Fordham University, New York, NY

### FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

2016 "Cut and paste and snap: the new collage photography – in pictures." The Guardian, January 19

2015 Mizota, Sharon. "Anthony Lepore's show at Francois Ghebaly explores the workplace and spandex." Los Angeles Times, May 29

Wagley, Catherine. "Anthony Lepore Finally Joined his Father's Bikini Factory – To Inspire his Art." LA Weekly, May 27

Nelson, Steffie. "The Distinct Californication of Paris Photo L.A." The New York Times Style Magazine, May 1

"Inside a Bikini Factory, a Photographer Plays with Fabric." Hyperallergic, April 27

2013 Wullschlager, Jackie. "The Scandalized Mask." The Financial Times, London, June

2011 Lehrer-Graiwier, Sarah. "Critic's Pick." ARTFORUM, June

Barardini, Andrew. "Natural History: Anthony Lepore and Mark Hagen." LA Weekly, June

2010 Knight, Christopher. "Gray Day at Roberts and Tilton." Los Angeles Times, November  
Tokion Magazine. "Portfolio." Collaboration with Daniel Gordon. February

2008 Cook, Chris. "Restoration." Kemper Museum of Art

Thorson, Alice. "Human Dynamics." The Kansas City Star, October

Cook, Chris. "Kemper ARTcast." 89.3 KCUR FM

2007 Hsu, Helen. "Everything is Problematized." Art in America Now

2006 Cotton, Charlotte. "What's so Contemporary About Photography," Yale Art Gallery Bulletin

Aletti, Vince. "Anthony Lepore," The New Yorker, March

"Art," The New York Sun, February

Hsu, Gin K. "Photography: Anthony Lepore," Flavorpill, Issue 299, February 28

Therond, Eve. "Actualite—New York," Photo, France, March

Haskell, David. "A Game of Tag," Topic, Issue 10

2004 Crewdson, Michael, and Denise Markonish. "For The Birds," Artspace Press

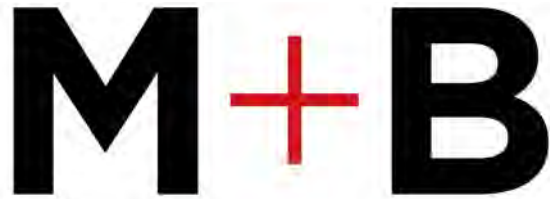
### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

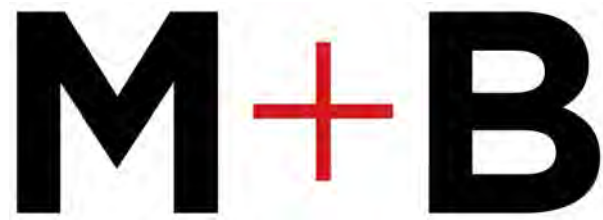


The Getty Museum, Los Angeles  
The Guggenheim Museum, New York  
Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City  
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven  
The Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte



## ANTHONY LEPORE

**Anthony Lepore** (b. 1977, Los Angeles) received his BFA from Fordham University in 2000 and his MFA from the prestigious Yale University program in 2005. *New Wilderness* is a provocative series of photographs that lay bare nature as an historical construct governed by human invention and intervention. The series, comprised of numerous landscapes, undermines the commonplace distinction between the real (nature) and simulation (image), alluding to the power of politics and representation in shaping our interactions with the world. Eschewing digital manipulation, Lepore shoots with a 4 x 5 camera often in the interpretive visitor centers of designated wilderness areas. Solo exhibitions include California Museum of Photography (Riverside), M+B (Los Angeles), Francois Ghebaly (Los Angeles), Kember Museum of Contemporary Art (Kansas City), among others. Selected group exhibitions include the J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), Galerie Xippas (Paris) and Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art. His works can be found in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, The Getty Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Hammer Museum, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and the Yale University Art Gallery.



ANTHONY LEPORE

Selected Portfolio

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

Installation View of *Square Hole, Round Peg*, two-person show with Michael Henry Hayden at Left Field Gallery, San Luis Obispo, CA  
November 4 – December 4, 2016



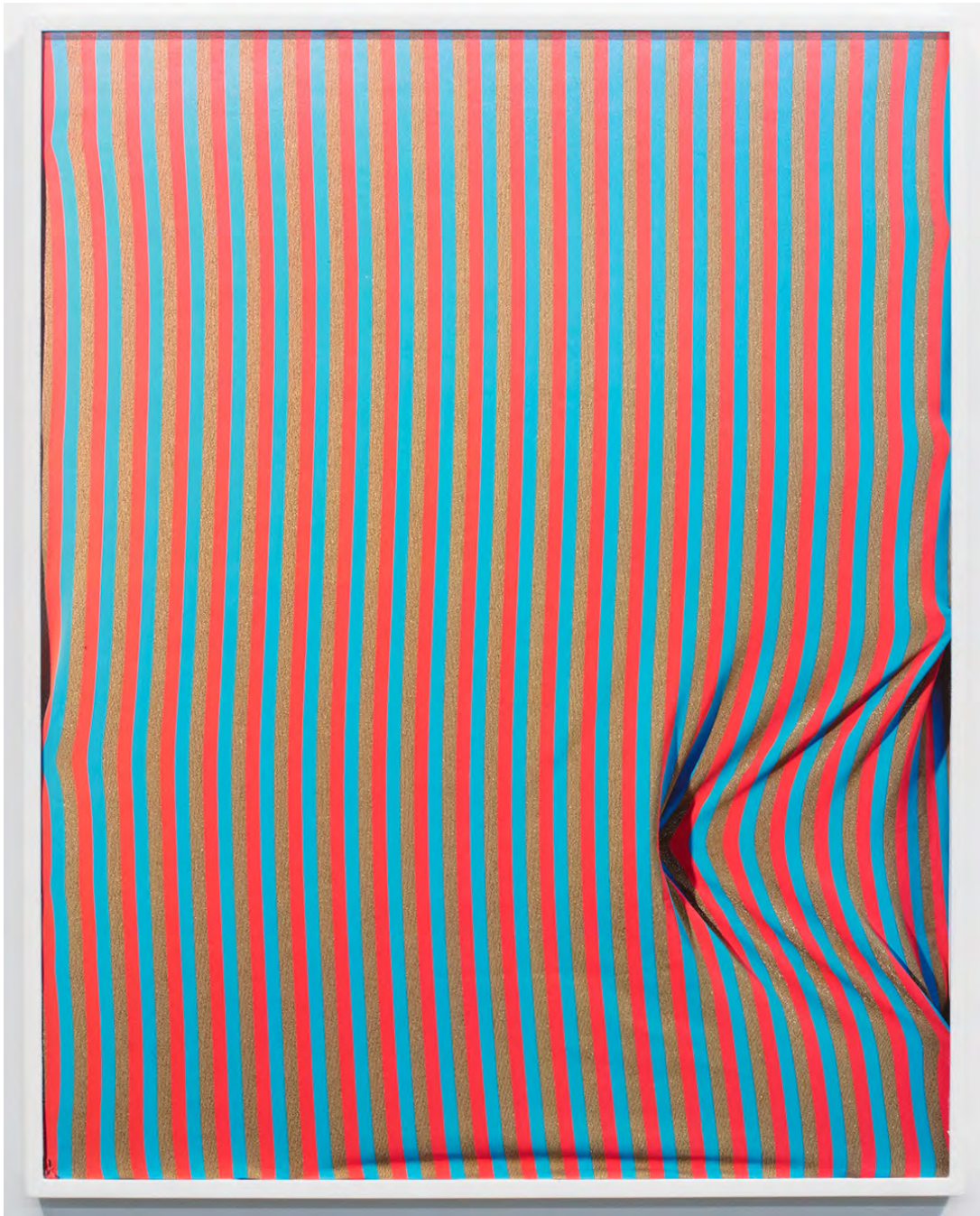
# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

Installation View of *Anthony Lepore and Samira Yamin*, at Chan Gallery at Pomona College  
October 24 – November 17, 2016

**M+B**



**Anthony Lepore**

*Punch*, 2015

archival pigment print in artist's frame

34 x 27 inches (86.4 x 68.6 cm)

edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.04.13.34)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
Installation View of *Bikini Factory*, group show at Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles  
April 25 – June 6, 2015

# M+B



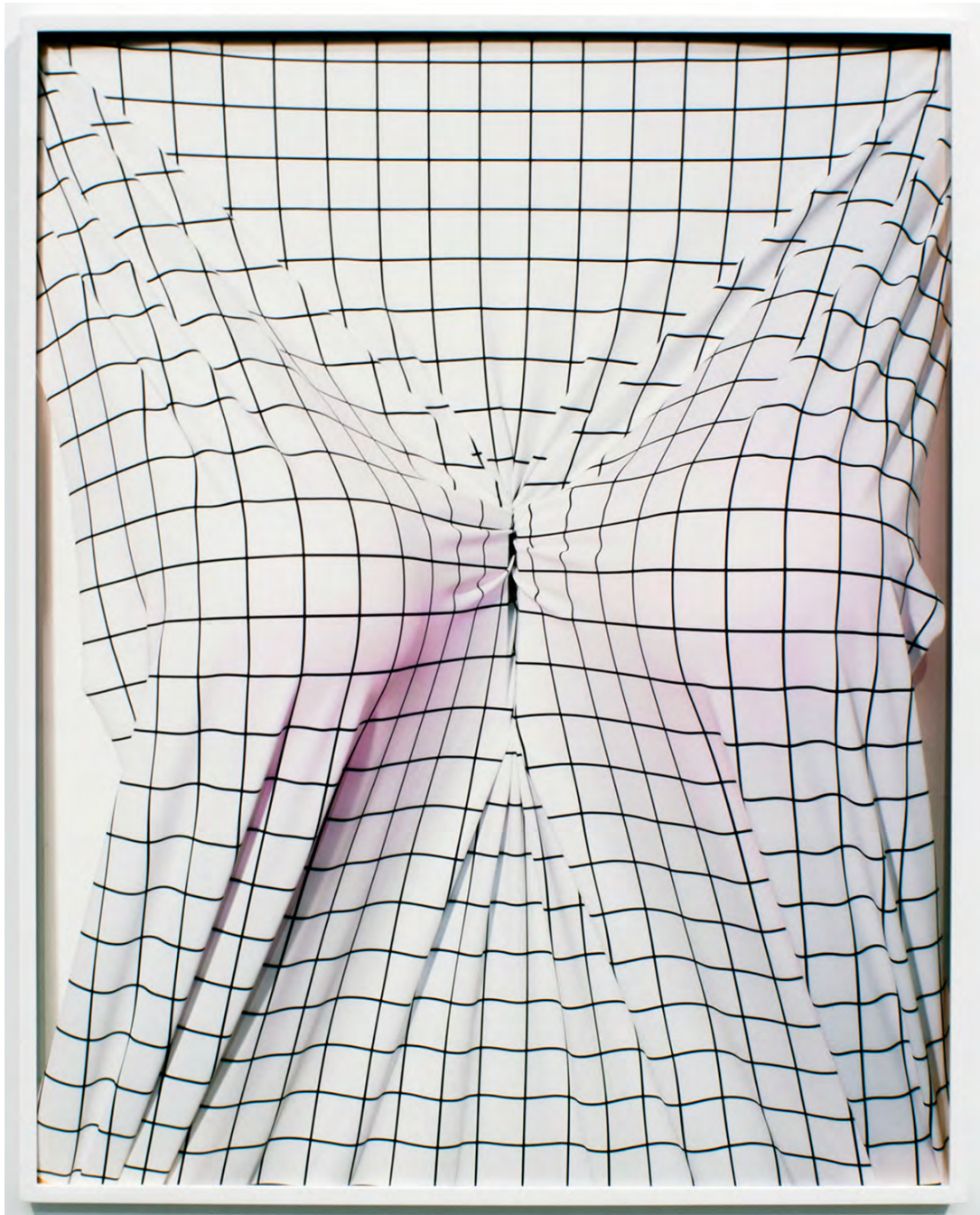
**Anthony Lepore**  
Installation View of *Bikini Factory*, group show at Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles  
April 25 – June 6, 2015

# M+B



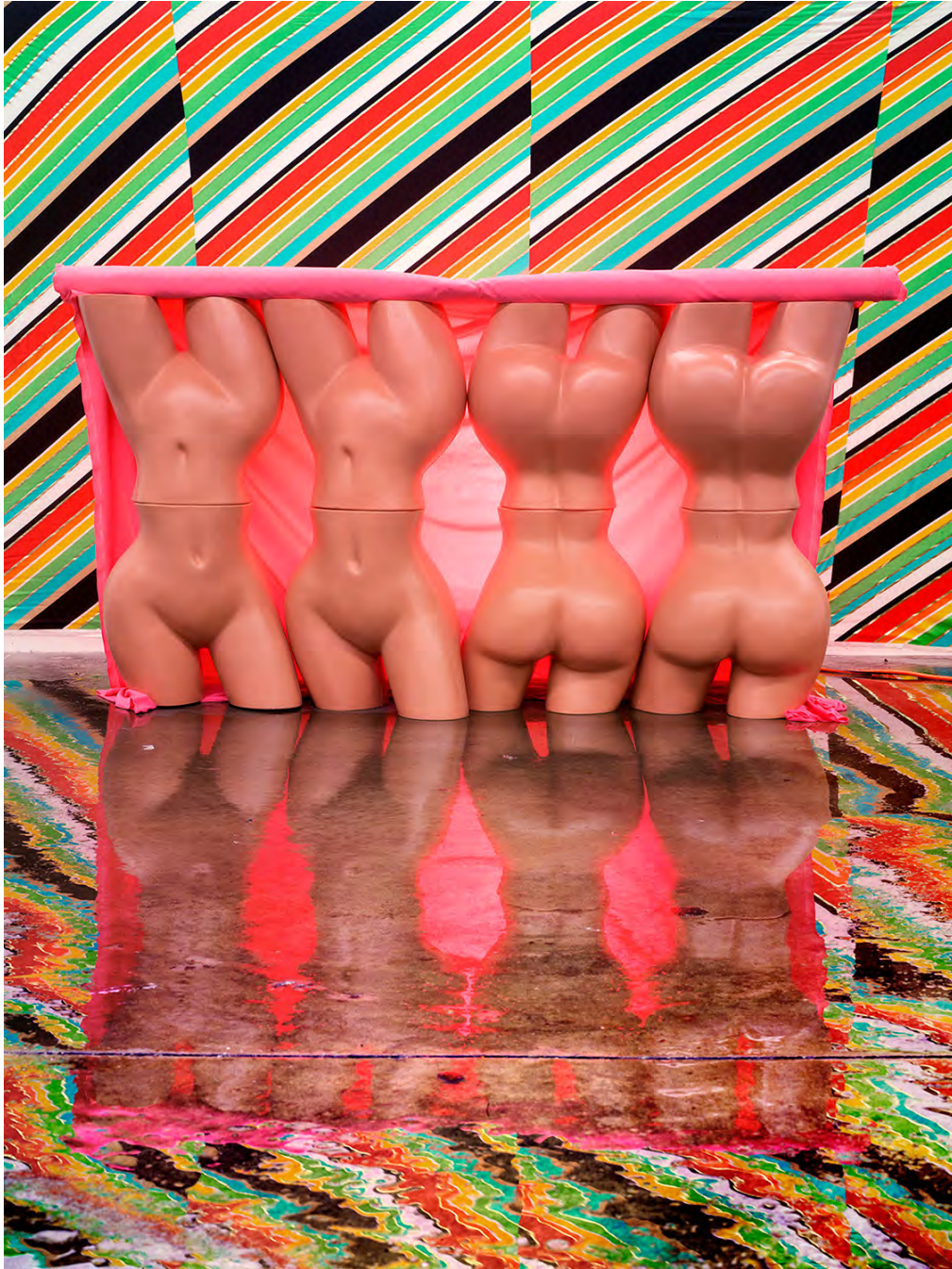
**Anthony Lepore**  
*Gold Cup*, 2015  
archival pigment print in artist's frame  
34 x 27 inches (86.4 x 68.6 cm)  
edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs  
(AL.04.15.34)

# M+B



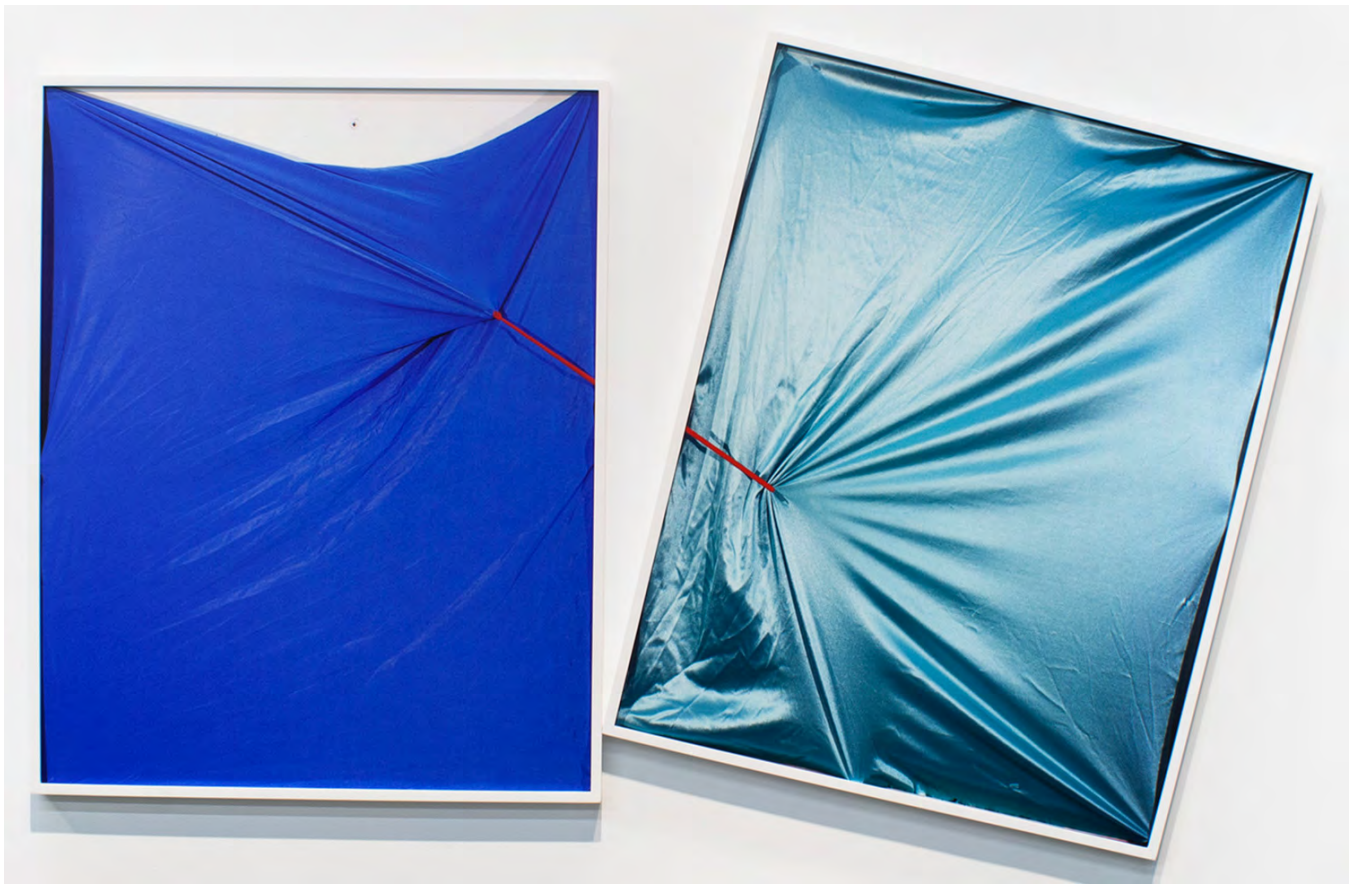
**Anthony Lepore**  
*Four Way Stretch*, 2015  
archival pigment print in artist's frame  
34 x 27 inches (86.4 x 68.6 cm)  
edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs  
(AL.04.10.34)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
*Floor Show, 2015*  
archival pigment print in artist's frame  
53 x 40 inches (134.6 x 101.6 cm)  
edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs  
(AL.04.17.53)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

*Gimme*, 2015

archival pigment print in artist's frame  
34 x 27 inches (86.4 x 68.6 cm) (each)

edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.04.09.34)



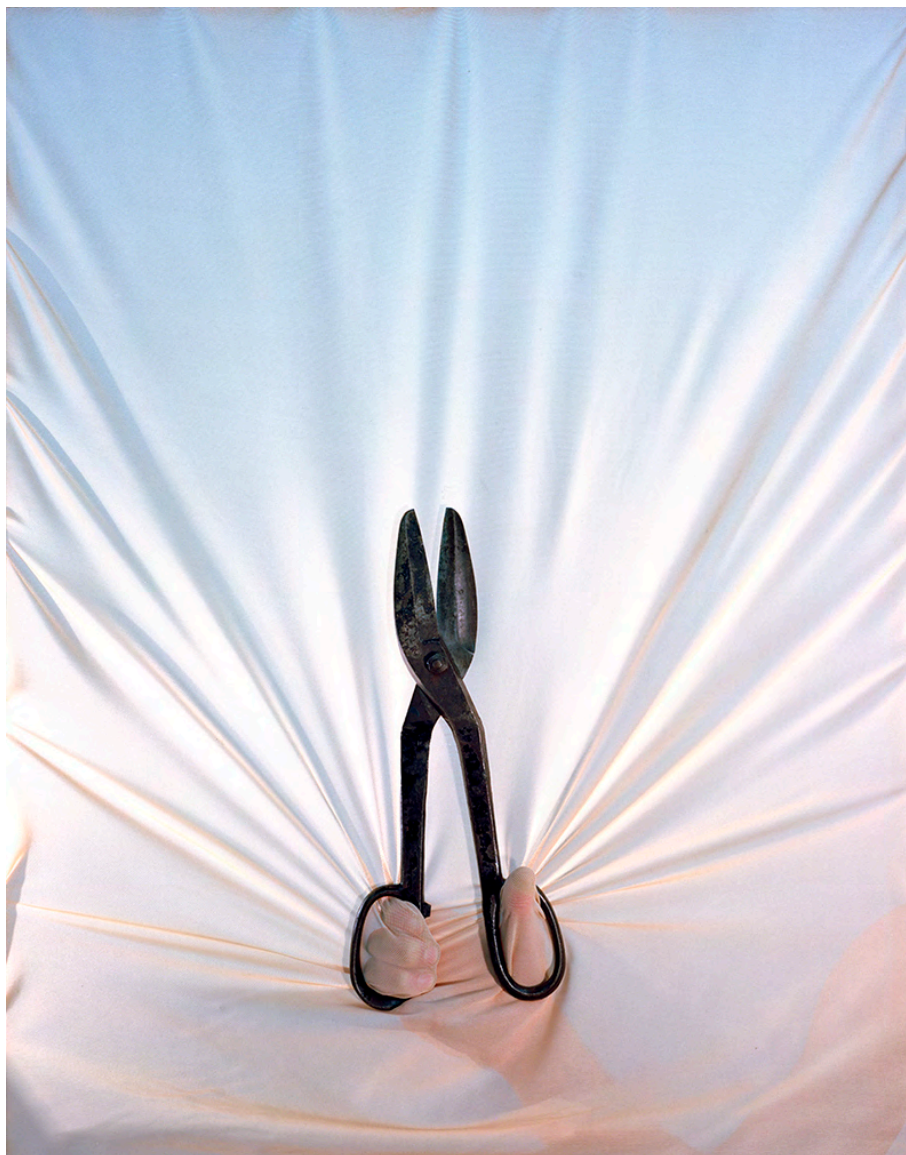
# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

Installation View of *Me and Benjamin*, group show at Galerie Xippas, Paris  
November 14, 2014 – January 10, 2015

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
*Shear*, 2014  
archival pigment print  
signed, dated and numbered verso  
34 x 27 inches (86.4 x 68.6 cm)  
edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs  
(AL.03.01.34)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
Installation View at Paris Photo, Paramount Picture Studios, Los Angeles  
April 26 – 28, 2013

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

*Space Plant*, 2012

archival pigment print in artist's frame

signed, dated and numbered verso

40 x 50 inches (102 x 127 cm)

edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.02.09.40)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

*Shade*, 2013

archival pigment print in artist's frame  
signed, dated and numbered verso

62 x 50 inches (157 x 127 cm)

edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.02.04.62)

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
Installation View of *New Wilderness*, solo show at M+B, Los Angeles  
May 21 – June 30, 2011

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**  
Installation View of *New Wilderness*, solo show at M+B, Los Angeles  
May 21 – June 30, 2011

# M+B



**Anthony Lepore**

*Night Birds*, 2009

archival pigment print in artist's frame

signed, dated and numbered verso

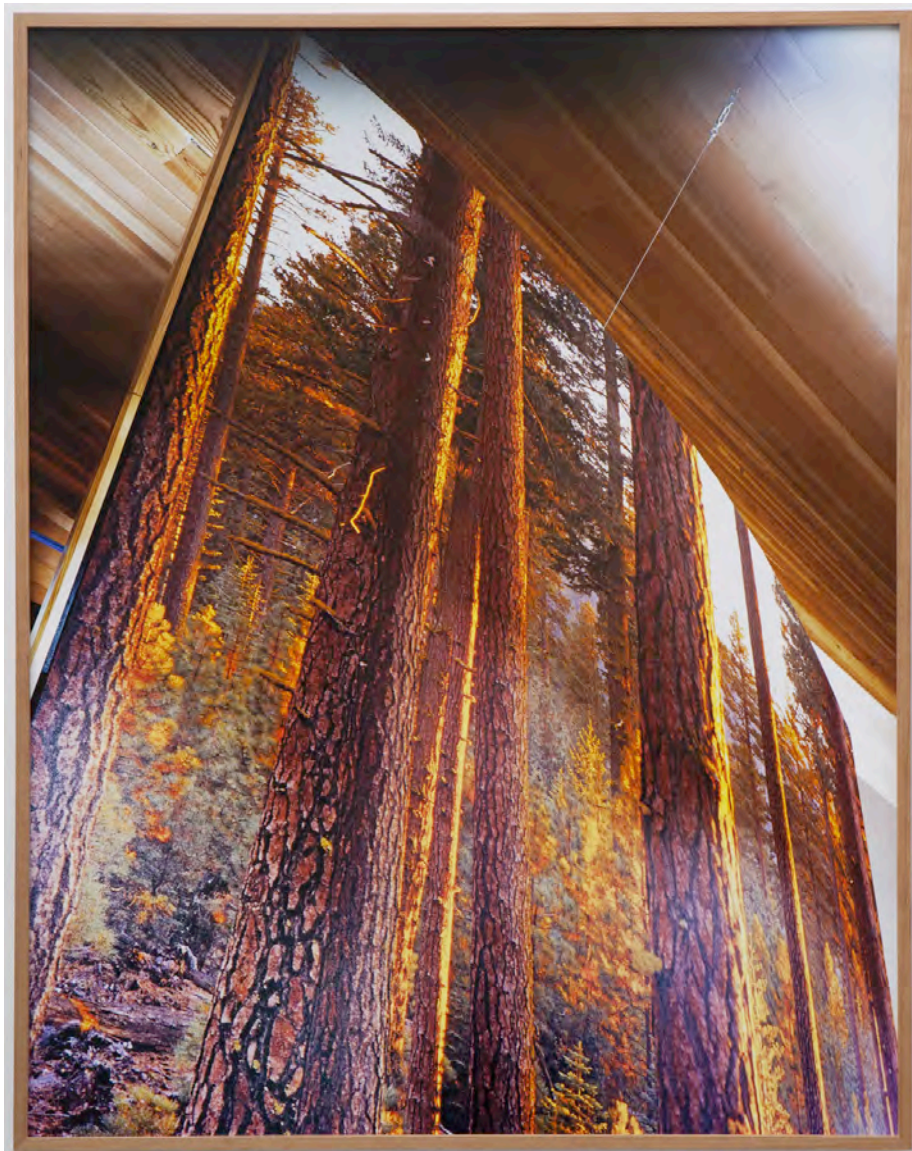
32 x 40 inches (81.3 x 101.6 cm)

edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.01.04.27)



**M + B**



**Anthony Lepore**

*Canopy*, 2010

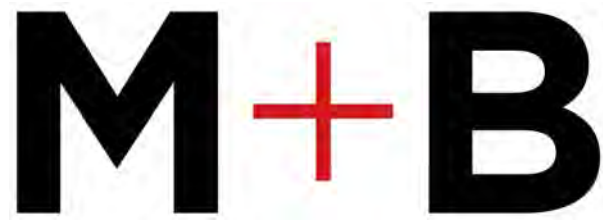
archival pigment print in artist's frame

signed, dated and numbered verso

40 x 31-1/2 inches (101.6 x 80 cm)

edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

(AL.01.50.40)



ANTHONY LEPORE

Press and Press Releases

# Anthony Lepore

# Bikini Factory

Jonathan Griffin

For Christmas in 2012, Anthony Lepore's father gave him a section of a bikini factory in eastern Los Angeles—rows eleven to fifteen, to be exact. A few months earlier Lepore had inquired whether his dad might have any surplus space that he and his partner, the artist Michael Henry Hayden, could use for a studio. Real estate in Los Angeles is increasingly expensive but Lepore's father, whose bikini business has been declining since the 1980s, had more than he needed.

At its zenith, the company—founded by Lepore's grandfather in 1971—employed some three hundred people. Now there are four: seamstresses Lupe, Rosa, and Ligia, and Otilia, who does the finishing. Lepore has known these women for almost all of his life. While the majority of bikinis sold in the United States are currently made in China, the company has stayed afloat by specializing: today it solely manufactures plus-size swimwear.

Lepore and Hayden were grateful for the gift, although they asked if there was any space less central and intrusive to the workers. Lepore's father replied that this was what he had to offer, since he had begun subleasing sections of the factory to other businesses several years before. In 2007, he encouraged his head seamstress to start her own swimwear company under his roof. Her thriving business now outperforms his. The fabric cutting, which still takes place on a seventy-five-foot-long table built by Lepore's grandfather, is subcontracted. Nearby, a small team of master saddlers from northern Mexico now produces premium gay bondage wear.

So the artists put up their studio walls in the middle of the building. Lepore, conscious of blocking the seamstresses' view across the factory floor, asked them to choose colors they would like the walls to be painted. A pale blue with a darker blue upper section was selected, evoking the ocean horizon—the eventual backdrop for the swimwear once it leaves the factory.

Lepore has said that the factory is “like a river, through which a rainbow of color and pattern flows every single day.” His studio is midstream. Within a short time of his moving there the factory began to infiltrate Lepore's photography, which often operates by confounding viewers' perceptions of depth and flatness. Initially, it was simply a case of using pieces of Lycra as backdrops. Then Lepore's mischievous torquing of foreground and background, of illusion and reality, began to seem reflected—sometimes literally—in the industry that envelops his studio space.

One evening, after factory cleaners had mopped the studio floor, Lepore dropped something and, stooping to pick it up, was astonished by the dazzling reflection of a striped fabric in the puddles. It is hard to believe that the resulting photographs were made without the aid of Photoshop, but Lepore rejects digital postproduction, and established an early rule that he would use only the factory's fluorescent lighting.

One exception to the latter rule is Lepore's series *Factory Chairs* (2015), in which he photographed seamstresses' chairs at the end of the working day in raking sunlight, isolating them against a white wall in the parking lot. These chairs, often custom upholstered by their owners with swimsuit Lycra to make them more comfortable, serve as surrogates for the women: not only for their bodies but also for their creativity, humor, and individualism. While the workers' daily labor can be hard and repetitive, Lepore also emphasizes the factory's enduring social role—a family business that, like many others, has itself become something like an extended family.

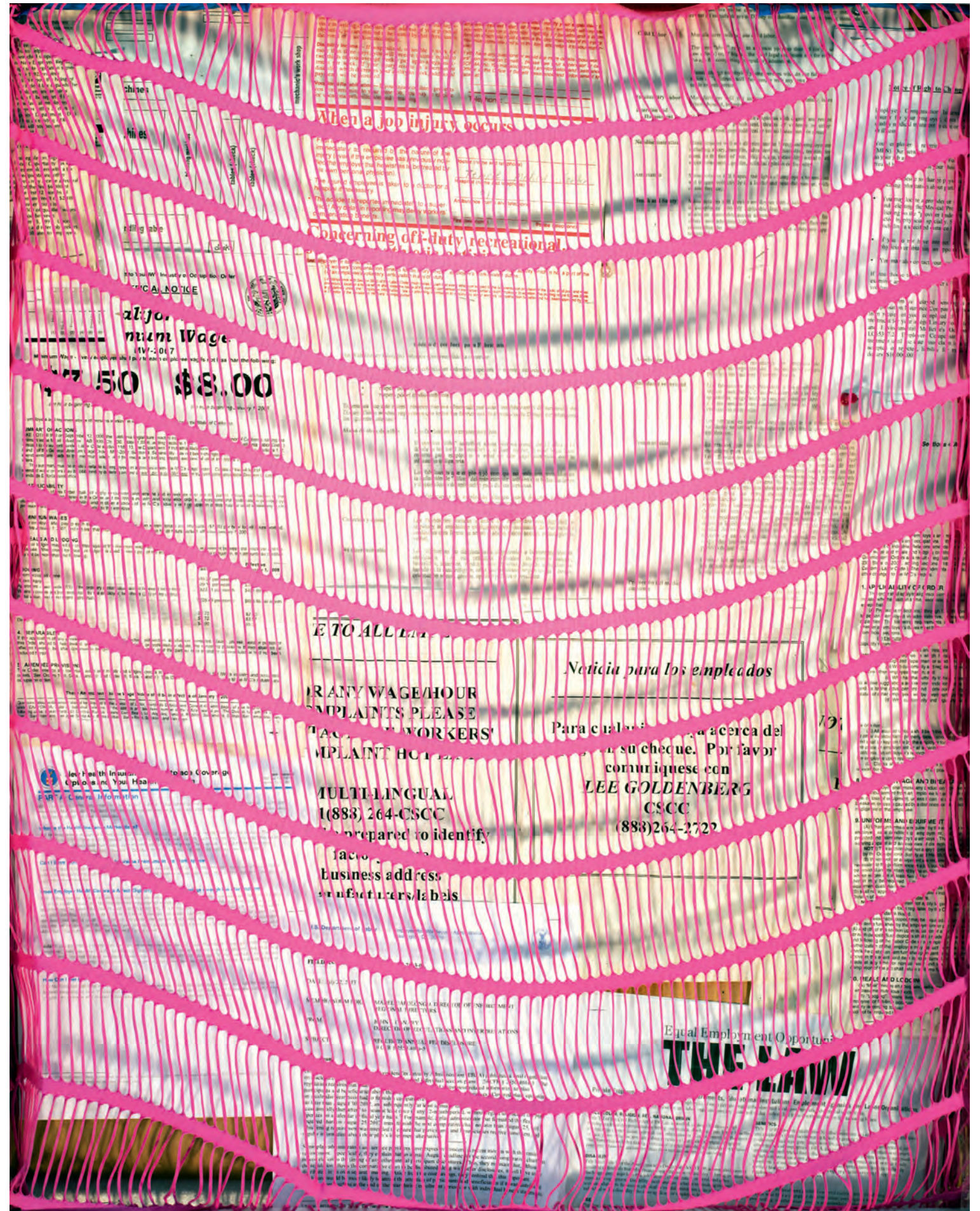
Jonathan Griffin is a writer based in Los Angeles and a contributing editor of *frieze*.





Top:  
Blue Print, 2015

Bottom:  
Window Dressing, 2015



Cover Up, 2015  
All photographs courtesy  
the artist and M+B Gallery,  
Los Angeles

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ANTHONY LEPORE

### *Bikini Factory*

April 25 - June 6 2015

Anthony Lepore's third solo presentation with the gallery features new work created in his father's bikini factory.

Lepore's grandfather built the factory in 1971, and two years ago the artist's father rearranged several rows of obsolete sewing machines to make room for a studio.

Surrounded by the droning hum of machines, punctuated by the babbling conversation and laughter of the seamstresses, Lepore creates these photographic works in a space that continuously flexes between the mundane and the whimsical. Lepore pinpoints moments emblematic of this dynamic—an unintentionally suggestive handle for a cardboard box made from the same bikini straps the box contains, the apparition of a gold-striped mirage in a puddle of mop-water. Circumventing digital manipulation, Lepore's working methods mirror the analog production that has continued unchanged in the sewing factory since the 1970's.

Many of these works explore the enigmatic qualities of spandex, in photographs that Lepore composes with the excess material also being used by the other workers in the factory around him. Stretching a few feet of fabric in a picture frame—equivalent to the amount used to make a single bikini—Lepore stages intimate interactions between the fabric and the stuff of the workplace. Printed to the scale of the original objects, these works elicit an uncanny illusionistic presence.

In his series of *Factory Chairs*, Lepore has documented the workers' own interventions. Over the years these women, who have known the artist since his birth, alter, dress, and decorate their sewing station seats with the same material they work with, both to individualize them, but, more importantly, to make them comfortable. Lepore photographs the chairs in a neutral but illusionary space—hung on the outside wall of the factory just before sunset, making them look as though they might be floating, or reclining—figures sunning themselves in makeshift bikinis.

The exhibition at Ghebaly Gallery coincides with an installation of Lepore's work curated by Lauren Mackler on-site at the bikini factory in Lincoln Heights, available to view by appointment.

Anthony Lepore lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BFA from Fordham University in 2000 and his MFA from Yale University in 2005. His work has been exhibited internationally, from Los Angeles and New York, to London, Paris, Turin, Milan, and Shanghai, and is held in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles), the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), the J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art (Kansas City, Missouri) and Yale University Art Gallery (New Haven, Connecticut), among others.

For more information, please contact the gallery at [info@ghebaly.com](mailto:info@ghebaly.com)

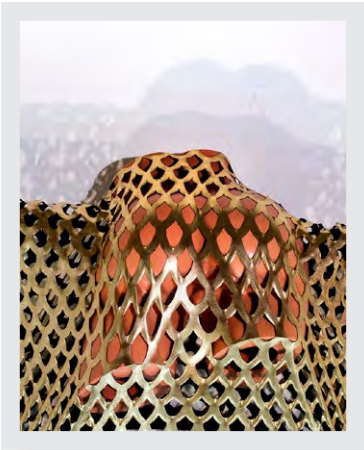
# Splash, Glow, Fullflex,

At The  
Bikini Factory

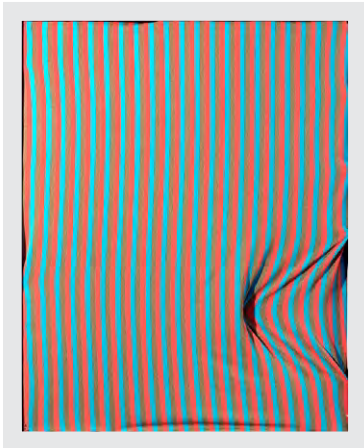
By **Anthony  
Lepore**

with Public Fiction  
Curated by Lauren Mackler

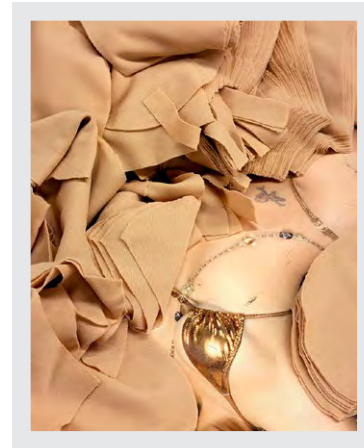
April 24 – June 6th,



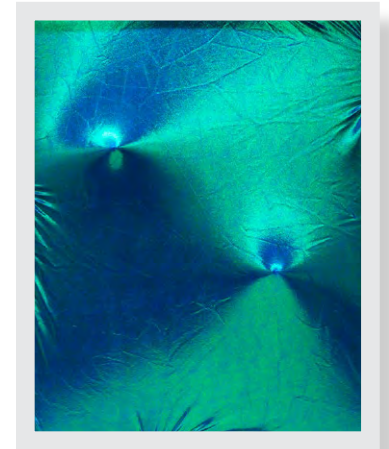
*Gold Standard, 2015*



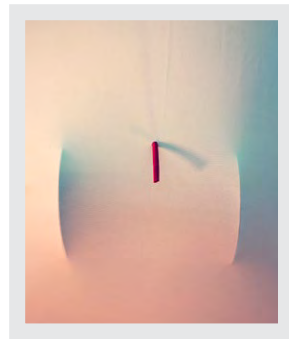
*Punch, 2015*



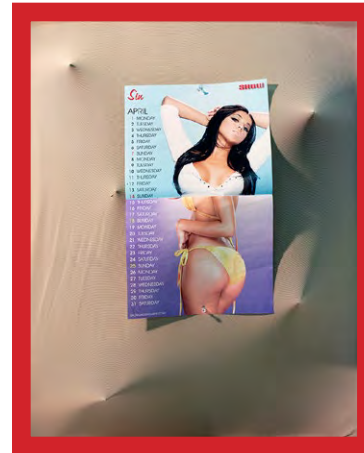
*Gold Cup, 2015*



*Pusher, 2014*



*Spaghetti Strap, 2015*



*Pin-Up, 2014*



*Squish, 2014*

**The Bikini Factory**  
3305 Pasadena Avenue, LA, CA. 90031

# Splash, Glow, Fullflex,

Dear reader,  
Thank you for joining us, for this night-viewing of eight works by Anthony Lepore *in situ* of their making. This exhibition runs concurrent with "Bikini Factory", a larger show of the artists' work, being held at François Ghebaly Gallery downtown.

The gallery exhibition proper, presents three lines of thinking, one of which is autobiographical (not only was Lepore basically raised in the depicted factory, but his role as a young terror, running through the sewing machine aisles, is still palpable in the misbehaving pictures.) The second is biographical, depicting with a poetical-documentary eye some of the residuals (chairs, table, talismans) of the women who work, have worked, at the factory every day, for decades and sometimes generations. The third is abstract, fabric is pushed, pulled, violated, stretched over unidentifiable body parts. In the white cube, these three approaches come to-

gether to make a whole thought, a complete experience of the factory, displaced and restaged in the gallery for exhibition purposes. These three kinds of work are mixed up to make a slippery whole: objects, pictures, bodies, fabrics, infrastructure, architecture.... Splash.

But back to our event at hand; further North, in Lincoln Heights, seven photographs have been hanging, or let's say hovering, over the factory's backdrop since April 24th. Seven images pulled from their settings, tensile-ing their likeness to their surroundings. Sitting, cool, through the daily bustle of the factory. Watching and being watched. For a knowing eye, the materials and objects that construct the semi-abstract pictures are familiar, and layered; the familiar made strange.

And speaking of the uncanny, this one comes in many flavors: *Snakebite, Madera, Rockstar, Wht/pink, Nude lace*, list the rows of fabric. The labels we have for things don't really work here. I mean, really, what exactly is on display at the factory? Is it the framed works strategically placed throughout the space, driving you forward, left, right,

straight and up? When I invited you here, did you come to see the images or the place? Does that matter? Do you care? Are they the same? Did it change? Is the factory an elaborate frame for the images Lepore produced or are the works a gateway to enter this private, loaded, productive and generational space?

One of the more conceptual flavors of uncanny is the equation made between the labor of bikini crafting and the labor of art production. One of the benefits these twin-shows provide is distinguishing the site of making from the site of showing, and then complicating their roles, a bit. The factory is a kind of backstage, providing transparency to the process. Did you want to see everything? The sweat and the unspooled? Bra cups and spaghetti straps? Here it is: layers of history, family histories, of innumerable families, paintings by your grandmother, pictures of the women-laborers, pin-ups on calendars, noticias, clippings, fabrics, boxes, chotchkie....

Dear V,

*What I have been trying to say is that this is about context, site and*

*context: Whereas I usually stage for you exhibitions in which I invent a topic, a frame that jointly contextualizes disparate works, this one is different. The site itself is unforgivably loaded and married to the images that were produced, that are presented. Imagine this show at night alone, each piece a safe distance from the others, lit unevenly by available light, a security strip maybe, one that never goes off, permitting an eventual interloper to find their way out in the case of a fire. The whole place is sleepy, save for the works, gyrating. My idea here is not to build narrative (as you might be doing at François') but rather to punctuate the preexisting narrative, (narratives!) of the factory. To imagine or inseminate the idea of people fucking in corners, of tits and asses fitting into these crude cut out shapes, of dismembered body parts being held together by teased latex.*

*This exhibition is a hall of mirrors, an infinite regress, a series of fertile Russian dolls producing bodies out of shells.*

*It is the first in Public Fiction's new offsite and nomadic exhibitions. This one is situated within the romantics of vintage furniture, but also within a corporation, a business, a site of production. Old clunky machines and racks act as a hilarious counterpart to the prevalent cor-*

*porate fetish in contemporary art; the dripping models dismembered by ripped and re-taped calendars, smiling because they know that the #confidencecode is a brand they invented.*

Now, let's talk about showing. Showing art, showing skin, showing your parts, showing your bump, showing your process. Showing a transformation; bodies flexing, being molded, aging, sweating, aliform and androgynous. Raunchy, rough and destabilizing. Let's show both the discomfort and the pleasure of being in one's own skin. Let's show the ones "about skin": lycra skin, plastic skin, real skin.

Because what is the body if not sloppy, sexy, funny, and so precarious, so temporary: a classic case of the thing that defines, will defy you. What self-respecting feminist can talk about the body without talking about its unraveling, its treason? A treason to who exactly, you might say. This image of desire is not yours, you are un-seduced. So much so that it's easy for you to recreate sexiness as a kind of monstrous grotesque game of the imagination. Spools protrude twice through fabric like breasts,

like weapons, sharp and raging. These monsters you have made from surrogate-parts are a kind of reverse birthing. You turn a body that can manufacture other bodies from gooey mass, into a solid flat image, barely containable in a frame. Are these forms even gendered?

One of the hypothetical characters is a disjointed body, upper half severed, legs only extending down to its thighs, and held together like many others by gravity-defying fabrics, and materials made to repel wetness.

The final flavor of uncanny? "Supernatural Alienesque-Real," or the inconceivably real. Nothing here is manipulated, photo-shopped or privy to post-production airbrushing. The images depict a comedy of props, gravity, time, like-ness and performance, for your camera's eye.

Now, suppose we gave this body a name...Like A or Z or Hilda, which is scribbled on a box beside her. And we re-read the images with a penchant towards Science Fiction. Iridescent colors, glowing fabrics, shapes that imply bodies, bodies without orifices, flat surfaces protruding violently like ghosts reaching through walls.

The bikini factory cannot help but remind you of the supernatural relationships we have to our bodies, the way we twist and turn them, see them as they are or as they never will be or as they never were. "Alienesque", burlesque, cutesque, delusionesque, full-flex....an alphabet soup of uncanny spaghetti.

And so. We are here, alongside the images, waiting, watching a video called the *Raunchy Mariachi* and listening to the eighth piece on display: a sound work called *Las Muchachas*, named after the women who work in the factory and on view (in your ears) for one night only. *Las Muchachas* is a recording of their voices, singing along with (and over) the radio station they play, while working. The impromptu choir of voices rising, daily, through the open warehouse, singing through speakers protruding from a factory sewing machine-cum-sculpture, her mechanical, industrial body.

— Lauren Mackler





# M+B

## Los Angeles Times

### Review

### Anthony Lepore's show at Francois Ghebaly explores the workplace and spandex

By Sharon Mizota  
May 29, 2015

Created in his father's bathing suit factory in Lincoln Heights, Anthony Lepore's photographs at Francois Ghebaly Gallery examine workplace conditions, and more surprisingly, the formal qualities of slippery, shimmery spandex.

The center of the larger gallery is filled with two rows of well-worn industrial sewing machines, punctuated with spools of bright thread and personal tchotchkes: a portrait of Pope John Paul II, a Chinese calendar, a cutesy pin cushion shaped like a hat.

Most striking however is the furniture that's not there. Each worker's chair is represented by a stark photograph. Wrapped or covered with sad bits of fabric or padding scavenged from the factory floor, the chairs are testaments to poor working conditions, but they are also self-portraits, created out of necessity or whimsy.



Anthony Lepore's "Window Treatment" is at Francois Ghebaly.  
(Anthony Lepore / Francois Ghebaly, Los Angeles.)

Yet the show is more than an exposé. Lepore has photographed skeins of spandex, cut, gathered or punctured by straps or hands.

In "Window Treatment," hot pink fabric is cut and draped to form faux "windows" within the fluorescent-lighted factory. "The Fitting" is more of a performance: hands emerge from a scrim of dark orange fabric, seizing and pulling on brightly colored straps crisscrossing the surface.

Throughout is the implied presence, not only of the female bodies that make the bikinis but those who wear them. With his more playful, abstract gestures, Lepore locates a different kind of poetry in the spandex.

# M+B

## LA WEEKLY

### Anthony Lepore Finally Joined his Father's Bikini Factory — To Inspire his Art

By Catherine Wagley  
May 27, 2015



Anthony Lepore's photograph hangs in his father's bikini factory.

Artist Anthony Lepore's new photographs have funny titles: Boobie Loop for an image of a pink bikini strap popping out of a taut expanse of white and pink; Cover Up for an image of striped, see-through swimsuit lining draped over the board where legal notices regarding wages and workers rights are posted. This board hangs in the Lincoln Heights bikini factory that Lepore's grandfather built in 1971.

Lepore's father, Joseph Lepore, who runs the factory now, had at one point hoped his own son would work there someday. And over the past two years, this wish has come true — though not in the way dad expected. Anthony's been making sometimes abstract, sensual photographs using only material found in the factory as his subject.

Some of these images are hanging in François Ghebaly Gallery, in a show called "Bikini Factory." Others hang in the factory itself — a photo of flesh-colored lining piled on a bikini-clad mannequin is mounted to a shelf full of cardboard boxes — as part of "Splash, Glow, Fullflex," curated by Lauren Mackler of alt-art space Public Fiction.

The "Bikini Factory" project began almost by accident. It was late 2012 and Lepore and his partner, artist Michael Henry Hayden, were looking for studio space. They'd been working out of their apartment, then crammed with equipment and material. Lepore asked a friend, photographer Catherine Opie, for advice. "Doesn't your dad have a factory?" Opie said. "Why don't you ask him?"

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Lepore and Hayden deliberated. Would they want to work in close quarters with family and with women Lepore had known since his rambunctious childhood, when he would run through the factory, grabbing at colorful thread?

They decided to ask. At first, Lepore's father hesitated. While he liked the idea of his son in the factory, he said, there wasn't much space. Then, for Christmas, Lepore received a card with a note in it: "Merry Christmas, you can have rows 13-15." Those were three rows still occupied by sewing machines right in the factory's center.

It wasn't so strange for Lepore's father to divide the factory into parcels, as he had been lending rows to former managers so that they could start their own businesses after the once-thriving SoCal swimwear industry began slowing in the 1990s. Raquel, a veteran seamstress, now runs an active business of her own. Recently, a man and his son leased a few rows where they make gay fetish jock straps.

Lepore and Hayden had only weeks to remove the sewing machines from their rows, stack them against a shelving unit and raise walls before factory work resumed in January.

"We'd taken away everyone's horizon line," Lepore says of the square room they'd constructed in the middle of the main workspace. He and Hayden consulted with their new co-workers, then decided to paint the walls two tones of sky blue, providing a different kind of horizon line.

When he first moved into the factory, Lepore was finishing another series, *Nocturnes* — staged domestic scenes that had the crispness of production stills and always incorporated plants, often against pitch-black backdrops. The "Bikini Factory" project had not been his plan. It's just that, once he'd finished *Nocturnes*, his surroundings started to intrigue him.

As an art student, he had done a series of serious-looking, black-and-white photographs of his father, stepmother and brothers with factory workers and their children. Prints of these still hang around the factory, in his father's office, an overtly masculine space that feels as if it's been perfectly preserved since the 1970s, or high on the wall near the ladies' room.

Seeing these earlier photos reminded Lepore of how different an artist he had become. What grabbed him now were not the dramatic scenes of workers posed with machines but the small things — ripples in rolls of fabric — and the contrasts of patterns and stretchy, colorful materials against the pragmatic, dated machines.

"I started manipulating the scene around me," Lepore says. He used leftover fabric — only the same single square foot of material used to create a bikini — when making one group of photographs.

At a certain point, women he'd known since childhood, a few of whom have daughters that now work with them, started to participate. He would come in to work and find they had tossed scrap material over the wall of his studio for him to use.

One late night he decided to try on a bikini himself, because he had no idea how this fabric he'd been working with would feel against skin. It didn't fit. It clung strangely.

Most of the women working in the factory did not have bikini bodies, either. "It's a fantasy and a mundane labor that clashes in this place," he says. "That's what I was trying to figure out: How do I convey my relationship to this space in a photograph?"

So he invited four women to be in a photograph with him. They would stretch out a long sheet of golden nylon that glistened when bent. The women would stand behind, cut out holes for their arms and then stick their arms through, grabbing at bikini straps that Lepore and Hayden would hold. Then they would all be bulging, stretching, pulling and shimmering together.

This photograph went to the Ghebaly show, as did one image of Lepore's father sticking his head through a hole cut into black fabric covered with airy white clouds.

# M+B

But it's the open-by-appointment installation at the factory that best gets at the strange intersection of personal history, factory labor and concerns of Lepore as conceptual photographer. A photo of a mannequin, bent over, her rear facing the viewer and covered in the gold eyelets of a wrap-around beach skirt, hangs against the office window. Sometimes, when Lepore's dad is in there, and the vertical blinds are opened, the light coming through the slats echoes the shadows and glints in the photograph. Another minimalist photograph of striped nylon with a pucker near bottom right hangs in the lunch area, amidst oil landscape paintings by Lepore's grandmother and a colorful Virgin Mary icon.

"We wanted photographs that were more abstract," says Mackler, who with Lepore chose the images for the factory show. "They contrast the more literal, functional aesthetic of the factory, making all these kind of poetic inferences of skin, body parts."

She has found fascinating the way the workers and images cohabit. "It's seamless — the photos are just part of the landscape," Mackler says. "I don't know if it would be the same if [factory regulars] didn't know Anthony."

"I think that someone could make work similar to this without a relationship to this space," Lepore says. "But for me it has roots here." Without the story, the work would still convey certain ideas of texture, labor and tenderness. But it exists because of the story.

Often, during weekdays, Lepore's father will come in and sit on the leather couch against the eastern wall of the studio. He understands the hyper-real sculpture work Hayden does, making three-dimensional paintings of doors or windows, better than his son's imagery. Still, he tries to relate. "Love that fabric, son," he'll say.

ANTHONY LEPORE: BIKINI FACTORY | 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown | Through June 6 | [ghebaly.com](http://ghebaly.com)

ANTHONY LEPORE: SPLASH, GLOW, FULLFLEX | At the bikini factory, by appointment | Through June 6 | [publicfiction.org](http://publicfiction.org)

# M + B

## HYPERALLERGIC

Sensitive to Art & its Discontents

### Inside a Bikini Factory, a Photographer Plays with Fabric

April 27, 2015

LOS ANGELES — For the past two years, Anthony Lepore has been making photographs in his father's bikini factory. Now, some of these works are on view in the exhibition Bikini Factory at François Ghebaly Gallery. Lepore's father inherited the factory from his father, a man who always said that when it came to manufacturing garments, the bikini business had "the most profit for the least amount of fabric." Lepore began spending time there when he was a toddler. By the age of five or six he was visiting every Saturday, in his words, a curious little "maniac," torturing "the ladies" (a few of whom still work there) by playing with their elastics, stretching nylon fabrics as far as they would go, and swinging from racks designed to hold hundreds of bikinis.

The factory lies on the industrial edge of Los Angeles's oldest residential suburb, Lincoln Heights. The building's entrance leads into the community break area, where, on a studio visit, Lepore pointed out a small oil painting by his grandmother, one of many hanging throughout the factory, all signed G. Lepore.



Anthony Lepore, "Window Dressing" (2015), archival pigment print, 40 x 53 in (all images courtesy of the artist and Francois Ghebaly Gallery unless otherwise noted)

The oils show mountains by rivers, trees by rivers, a roiling ocean at sunset, a winter scene, thick with impasto-like brush strokes and saturated colors. Separating the break area from the phalanx of sewing stations is a wall of brown boxes. The words "Cotton Candy," "Snakebite," "Rockstar," "Sport," and "Circus" — the joyous hermeneutics of swimwear — are scrawled in Sharpie across their cardboard faces, indicating the various fabric patterns within.

Lepore moved his studio into the factory in 2012. In the 1990s, after his grandfather passed, the factory downsized yet stayed afloat throughout the decades. With layoffs came space, and, in time, Lepore's father gave the artist and his partner, the painter Michael Henry Hayden, 600 square feet of the factory as a Christmas gift. While the factory was closed, the two artists spent two weeks building a shared studio. It now sits in the middle of the factory, a two-tone blue square of drywall, surrounded on all sides by bolts of fabric, machines, cutting tables, spindles, and thread.

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“All the material in this building repels water except for the towels in the bathroom,” says Lepore, referring to the massive piles and stacked bolts of fabric while standing for a moment among the sewing tables, silent and still after hours. In his series of images made in the factory, the fantasy world of the bikini rushes in with fits and starts — a world of oftentimes awkward-fitting and gravity-defying fabrics. “I felt awful — like a horrible man-monster,” Lepore said about the time he tried on a bikini, alone, one night after months of working on the photographic series. The stretchy, clingy fabric made his body parts bulge and show in strange places; the experience inspired him to make a drawing of bikini fabric taut across a big body, with hands grabbing and pulling at the fabric. This drawing then inspired “The Fitting” (2014), a 16-foot long work that shows several arms poking through holes cut in a brownish gold fabric — what Lepore describes as a “mundane-looking special fabric” — stretched across three panels of a triptych. A layer of pink material peeks out from behind the edges of the brown and pushes through in areas where the pliable fabric is stressed like the blush of blood after a spank.

The metaphors for lycra/nylon qualities come through in many of these works — the tug of elastic pulling against you, while being satisfying to test its limits. In “Gold Cup” (2014), a woman’s breast encased in gold lame and chains — at first abstracted for being upside down — peeks out from under beige fabric clippings that undulate like a sandy landscape.



Anthony Lepore, "Shear" (2014, archival pigment print, 34 x 27 inches)



Anthony Lepore's studio in the bikini factory (image by the artist)

The most disorienting photograph, “Mirage” (2014), depicts what would otherwise be a humble image of a mop — a placid and thin layer of water on a concrete floor, mop halted — with a dizzying, ‘60s reflection of stripes in rainbow hues, cut through with black, white, and metallic gold stripes that are on the verge of being dashed into a watery mess. “Shear” (2014) depicts Lepore’s grandfather’s favorite fabric shears, grasped by a hand behind a layer of bikini-lining fabric that stretches to the frame of the image (a visual pun, says Lepore — “shears” on “sheer fabric”). The image is life-size, putting the viewer right there with the shears, as if you could reach out and take them from the hand. In “The Boss” (2013), the tufted head of a balding man pokes out from under a fabric patterned with planets, moons, stars, and supernovae. Also life-size, the man’s head looks eerily three-dimensional and real. The model is Lepore’s father, the boss of the factory — and might as well be the center of the universe as far as that is concerned.

# M + B



Anthony Lepore, "The Boss" (2014), archival pigment print, 34 x 27 inches

Lepore does not use Photoshop manipulation in any of the images described above, and yet many of the Bikini Factory works give a sense of unreality, especially in works such as "Mirage." These images prism out a vision at once absurd and optimistic, while also remaining grounded in good, old-fashioned industrial fortitude. As a child Lepore was entitled to play in the factory; as an adult he is moving things around and reassembling them to his liking. Yet there is a deep-seated respect that Lepore conveys in his Bikini Factory images — an awe for the space. Several images, collectively titled "Factory Chairs" (2014–15), are portraits of single chairs that the employees of the factory have personalized and decorated over the years with cushions, bikini fabric, and straps for both comfort and decoration.

Lepore shot each chair floating in neutral space, like an insect pinned to white velvet, by hanging them one by one on the outside wall of the factory, lit from the side by the setting sun.

According to Lepore, the atmosphere of the bikini factory has always been one of creative possibility, both for him as an artist and according to those who make the bikinis. His relationship with his father's workers is strong — they regularly toss new samples of fabric over the wall of his studio for his use, and they have been models in works such as "The Fitting." All of this comes together as an inspired exploration of a space. The images of Bikini Factory are fun and humorous, revealing a vivid world the viewer will want to get lost in.

Anthony Lepore: Bikini Factory continues at François Ghebaly Gallery (2245 E Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, California) through June 6.

# M+B



## The Distinct Californication of Paris Photo L.A.

By Steffie Nelson  
May 1, 2015

With nearly 200 art fairs on the international cultural calendar, it's no surprise that art-world denizens have a case of fair fatigue. Paris Photo L.A., however, seems to have the cure for what ails them. Expecting 20,000 people for its third year at Paramount Pictures Studios in Hollywood this weekend, it is an art fair that feels like entertainment, with a location that strikes the magic balance between convention center and amusement park.

Dozens of exhibitors have traditional booths inside some of Paramount's biggest soundstages (big enough to have once contained the Enterprise, of "Star Trek" fame), while others set up shop in the storefronts of the legendary "New York Street" backlot, bringing these imaginary blocks to life. ArtBook/DAP is in their regular spot at the "café," offering an impeccable selection of new and rare publications for sale ("Chloë Sevigny"; back issues of "Visionaire") plus book signings; rising L.A. galleries Mama and Gusford inhabit a "tenement" on the Lower East Side; M+B holds down a "SoHo" corner with LeRoy Grannis's iconic surf shots; and Printed Matter's showcase of Roger Steffens's "The Family Acid" photographs can be found in a space just big enough for a fortuneteller and her crystal ball.

Inside the soundstages, one comes across everything from the Native American documenter Edward Sheriff Curtis's original copper plates (Bruce Kapson), to David Benjamin Sherry's chromatic landscapes (OHWO), to collages by Bettina Hubby that mine Paramount's golden age (Klowden Mann). In keeping with one of the stated goals of Paris Photo's new directors, Florence Bourgeois and Christoph Wiesner, to "anchor" the fair in California, one stage is devoted to young galleries and artists; the new Highland space LAM teamed with Zoe Crosher to present her complete "Out the Window (LAX)" series, centered on the Los Angeles International airport, in Los Angeles for the first time.

The biggest buzz surrounds "California Unedited!," a remarkable collection of late-19th-century portraits curated by Anthony Lepore from an archive of the photographer R. J. Arnold's glass plate negatives that were donated to a Central California historical society — and painstakingly restored by volunteers. The new prints depict people of all ethnicities in a size and quality we aren't accustomed to seeing, giving them a startlingly lifelike luminosity.

The actual people-watching isn't bad, either. At a preview on Thursday, Drew Barrymore and Will Kopelman and their daughters wandered around discreetly, as did Judd Apatow and some friends, while Jamie Lee Curtis was hard to miss in a white suit with parasol and camera in hand. Should the dreaded fatigue strike, there are food trucks, champagne bars and coffee stations seemingly around every corner, and, just like in New York, there's always a stoop to sit on.



LeRoy Grannis, "Palos Verdes Cove," 1964, on view at the M+B Gallery booth. Courtesy of M+B Gallery



R.J. Arnold, "Glass Plate 034-17," circa 1886-1898, on view at the "California Unedited!" booth. Courtesy of El Paso de Robles Area Historical Society and Paris Photo L.A.



# ARMORY

For Immediate Release: October 9, 2014

Contact: Jon Lapointe, Communications Director

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Exhibition: *Big City Forum: Attunement*

Exhibition Dates: November 1 – December 14, 2014

Opening Reception: Saturday, November 1, 2014, 6 pm – 8 pm

Location: Armory Center for the Arts 145 N. Raymond Ave, Pasadena, CA 91103



Image courtesy Frohawk Two Feathers

***Attunement* pays tribute to artists  
who function on multiple frequencies  
as part of Big City Forum's continued programming  
in the Armory's Mezzanine Galleries.**

*Pasadena, CA* – The Armory Center for the Arts is pleased to present *Attunement*, a group exhibition that includes paintings, photos, prints, text, and video that are prone to resonate beyond ranges of audio and visual perception. Co-produced by Leonardo Bravo, River Jukes-Hudson, and David Shorter, *Attunement* is part of the continuing programming of Big City Forum's *City of Hope, City of Resistance: Research and Actions on the Urban Level* in residence at the Armory through December 2014.

*Attunement* pays tribute to artists who function on multiple frequencies. They flow through worlds, above boundaries, under surfaces, around obstacles and inhabit the spaces in-between. They communicate on multiple channels, and their work can be defined as exceptionally rich, layered, complex, and in some ways “off the charts.” In order to appreciate the messages fully, we must “tune in” to the ranges of expression that continue infinitesimally through space and time. Exhibiting artists include Esther Belin, York Chang, Mercedes Dorame, Nery Gabriel Lemus, Gary Garay, Salomón Huerta, Lorenzo Hurtado Segovia, Khalid Hussein, Annapurna Kumar, Trang T. Le, Anthony Lepore, Dan Taulapapa McMullin, Fiamma Montezemolo, Amittis Motevalli, Ellie Parker, Gala Porras-Kim, Miko Revereza, Shizu Saldamando, Frohawk Two Feathers, Perry Vasquez, Samira Yamin, and Brenna Youngblood.

A reception, free and open to the public, will take place on Saturday, November 1 from 6 – 8 pm. The project will be on display in the Armory’s Mezzanine Galleries from November 1 through December 13. Big City Forum’s residency at the Armory is being facilitated by Armory’s Gallery Director / Chief Curator Irene Tsatsos.

### **About the Organizers**

**Leonardo Bravo** is an artist, curator, educator, and the founder of Big City Forum, an interdisciplinary project highlighting creative practices across architecture, design, and contemporary art. BCF produces events in partnership with institutions such as the Skirball Cultural Center, Armory Center for the Arts, Otis College of Art and Design, Santa Monica Museum of Art, and Laxart. Bravo is also Director of School Programs of the Music Center in Los Angeles, where he oversees the implementation of strategic arts education partnerships with districts and schools across Los Angeles County.

**River Jukes-Hudson** is an independent graphic designer who collaborates regularly with artists, curators, architects, writers, and other designers. She currently teaches Typography at Art Center College of Design. Jukes-Hudson co-directs Big City Forum with partner Leonardo Bravo.

**David Shorter** is a professor, filmmaker, curator, and consultant living and dying in LA. His areas of interest loosely overlap around ways of knowing through indigenous wisdom systems, the esoterica, and occult sciences. Shorter is currently Professor and Vice Chair in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at the University of California Los Angeles.

### **About Big City Forum *City of Hope, City of Resistance***

*City of Hope, City of Resistance: Research and Actions at the Urban Level* is Big City Forum’s 15-month, three-part residency at Armory Center for the Arts. The reading room/library serves as a dynamic, interactive platform for exhibitions, film screenings, workshops, and other discursive events. Big City Forum (BCF), founded in 2008 by Los Angeles-based artist, educator, and activist Leonardo Bravo and co-directed with artist/graphic designer River Jukes-Hudson since 2013, is an independent,

interdisciplinary project that explores design-based creative disciplines within the context of public space and social change. Since spring 2012, BCF has been in residence at the Armory, during which time it has programmed two seasons of lively, discursive events. Big City Forum's residency at Armory Center for the Arts is being supported with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

### **About the Armory**

Armory Center for the Arts, in Pasadena, California, believes that an understanding and appreciation of the arts is essential for a well-rounded human experience and a healthy civic community. Founded in 1989, the Armory builds on the power of art to transform lives and communities through presenting, creating, teaching, and discussing contemporary visual art. The organization's department of exhibitions mounts over 25 visual arts exhibitions each year at its main facility and in locations throughout the City of Pasadena. In addition, the Armory offers studio art classes and a variety of educational outreach programs to more than fifty schools and community sites.

Parking is available on the street or in the Marriott garage directly north of the Armory for free for 90 minutes. The Armory is off the Gold Line at Memorial Park – walk one half block east to Raymond and one half block north to the Armory. For more information please visit [www.armoryarts.org](http://www.armoryarts.org).

###B



California Museum of Photography  
Sweeney Art Gallery  
Culver Center of the Arts  
University of California, Riverside

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PRESS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release

*FLASH!* contemporary art series presents Anthony Lepore  
California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock  
August 16–November 29, 2014  
Public reception: Saturday, November 1, 6–9pm

RIVERSIDE, Calif., August 15, 2014 – UCR ARTSblock announces Los Angeles-based artist Anthony Lepore's participation in the *FLASH!* contemporary art series. *Flash: Anthony Lepore* (August 16–November 29, 2014) will feature a single photograph from the series "Nocturne" (2012–13). *House Party* (2013) depicts a set-like interior space, a scene at once evoking quotidian reality and a dreamlike artificiality.

Anthony Lepore (born 1977 in Burbank, California) is a Los Angeles-based photographer. The artist's work has been featured in solo exhibitions in Los Angeles, Kansas City, New York, and Basel, Switzerland. His works have been included in group exhibitions throughout the United States, France, and Italy; and in the 2010 Portugal Biennial, and the Guggenheim Foundation-organized exhibition *Art in America: 300 Years of Innovation* at the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007. Lepore's work is held in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. He earned his MFA from Yale University in 2005, and his BFA from Fordham University in 2000.  
<http://www.anthonylepore.net>

*FLASH!* contemporary art series features new photography-based work by artists in all stages of their careers. The projects, about four per year, are presented in a small gallery on the third floor of the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock, and are organized by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions. Each exhibition is accompanied by an original essay, available to visitors in the form of a gallery guide. *Flash: Anthony Lepore* is the sixth exhibition in the series.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND PRESS INQUIRIES

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main Steet, Riverside, CA 92501, and encompasses three venues: the California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. ARTSblock is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5pm. Admission is \$3, and includes entry to all three venues. Galleries are open late 6–9pm and admission is free during First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month. Film screenings are held on Fridays and Saturdays in the Culver Theater.

Press contact: artsblockpress@ucr.edu  
Public contact: artsblock.ucr.edu

###



*House Party*, 2013

© Anthony Lepore; Courtesy M+B Gallery, Los Angeles, and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles

## Flash: Anthony Lepore

August 16–November 29, 2014

The creak of the door is nearly audible as the viewer peers into a room filled with houseplants. It is an otherworldly scene staged in an otherwise simple domestic setting: white ceiling, wooden floor, lamp fixture without its shade, a singular fluorescent bulb protruding awkwardly. But this is not a typical guest room; the walls have been shrouded in opaque black fabric, and plants populate the floor and hang down from the ceiling. The picture at once conveys extreme flatness and pictorial depth. The edges of each plant appear as graphic cutouts against the black background, but the wide shot of the setup—the choice to include doorway, foreground, and ceiling—reveals the method by which this flatness was achieved, ultimately undoing it. Natural light streams in from the left side of the scene, casting shadows from a window frame onto pots and wall. The afternoon light, dappled through outdoor foliage, lands on the ceiling. The scene is augmented by artificial light from below, emanating from a lamp carefully hidden among the pots. The plants themselves are deliberately staged against the flat black background, peaking out from behind one another. Together they seemingly pose for this peculiar group portrait.

Anthony Lepore's *House Party* (2013) positions the onlooker as voyeur, simultaneously peeking—"like walking in on your parents having sex"—and being invited into the room.<sup>1</sup> The subjects are given a performative space; by this staging, the artist considers his own relationship to nature within the domestic sphere. Lepore explores notions of internal and external domesticity throughout the "Nocturne" series of which *House Party* is part, documenting temporary arrangements of garden hoses, rolled sod, and individual potted plants. These poetic interventions amount to an exploration of the natural and domestic worlds. The leafy plants and succulents here, each potted in its own dedicated quantity of earth, speak to the curious human inclination to harness nature into transportable units.

As with other works in the series, *House Party* was staged for the photograph. Lepore's use of light is an integral component of the resulting picture. Inspired by the night photography of Robert Adams, Lepore

transformed the spare bedroom in his home to accommodate a sort of "permanent night," a darkened space in which to arrange still lifes. Made using a long photographic exposure,<sup>2</sup> *House Party* is an intricately descriptive document of the plants as they hang, dying, leaves browning from insufficient sunlight. The prolonged exposure, Lepore contends, approximates the slow movements of botanic life. In this way, *House Party* stems from a deeply empathetic and intimate core. The absurdity of these personified houseplants, crowded together into a room, and illuminated by bluish natural light and the mysterious, seemingly internal warm glow of the lamp, evokes magical realism. Furthermore, by echoing the effects of digital editing—constructing what he refers to as an "analog illusion"—Lepore's photograph speaks in a language that it simultaneously subverts. After all, potted houseplants, too, straddle artificial and organic worlds.

—Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions, and Kathryn Poindexter, CMP Curatorial Assistant

### Notes

1. All quotes are from conversations with the artist, August 2014.
2. Lepore employed 5-10 minute exposures for the "Nocturne" series.

**Anthony Lepore** (born 1977 in Burbank, California) is a Los Angeles-based photographer. The artist's work has been featured in solo exhibitions in Los Angeles, Kansas City, New York, and Basel, Switzerland; has been included in group exhibitions throughout the United States, France, and Italy; and was included in the 2010 Portugal Biennial, and the Guggenheim Foundation-organized exhibition *Art in America: 300 Years of Innovation* at the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007. His work is held in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. Lepore earned his MFA from Yale University in 2005, and his BFA from Fordham University in 2000.

**Flash! contemporary art series** features single works made within the last year and is organized by Joanna Szupinska-Myers at the California Museum of Photography, part of UCR ARTSblock. *Flash: Anthony Lepore* is the sixth project in the series.

# M+B



## PARIS PHOTO LA 2013 Anthony Lepore

April 25 - 28, 2013  
New York Backlot D3

François Ghebaly and M+B jointly present a selection from Anthony Lepore's new working series *Nocturne*. Eschewing digital manipulation, Lepore shoots with a 4 x 5 camera providing visceral moments of fulfillment. The artist's work is held in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Hammer Museum, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Yale University Art Gallery. Lepore received his BFA from Fordham University in 2000 and his MFA from the prestigious Yale University program in 2005. He lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.

In Lepore's words on *Nocturne*:

*I'm curious about houseplant conversations, man-made starlight, the comfort of darkness and nocturnal emissions. These domestic still lifes took shape in the darkened second bedroom of my home. Lit by a single small window, they were made during the hour before sunset and the first hour of twilight. This shifting time between day and night creates a stage for the living and still objects in my house to inhabit.*

*These photographs were inspired by a wild violent nightlong windstorm in the San Gabriel Valley. The gales blew the smog out of the city and the lights out of the houses. It was the first time I had seen stars that bright in Los Angeles. My driveway was like a pool filter catching nests of debris, window shades and tree roots. I used the storm's leftovers to make the first pictures in this series. I want to sleep in a dark house, and see stars in the city.*

# M+B

## ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICK

June 17, 2011

### “New Wilderness”

M+B Gallery  
612 North Almont Drive  
May 21 – July 1, 2011

Anthony Lepore’s photographs, on view here in concurrent solo shows at two venues, are up-front about their trickiness and deceptions. Visiting national parks and official wildlife areas around the country, Lepore captures the strange and jarring unintended juxtapositions generated by visitors centers’ low-budget dramatizations of natural landscape. Photographing (and rephotographing) large multipaneled photographic murals, wallpaper, and dioramas of regional vistas that characterize the centers’ presentational conventions, Lepore homes in on places of rupture that break and undermine photographic illusion.

*Forest Light*, 2009, on view at M+B, depicts a black-and-white photo mural of a stand of tall pine trees that is weirdly punctured at multiple points by the incongruous flat geometries of several black panels of light switches, a thermostat, and a red fire alarm box. This spatially destabilizing effect, so striking and abrupt, is that of collage (i.e., surreal). Exploiting and then unsettling photography’s trompe l’oeil power, Lepore focuses on visual moments where one notices the banal architectural context in which nature is artificially packaged for visitors as picturesque landscape. This is, as the title of his present solo shows suggests, the “New Wilderness”: a nationalistic terrain, not of nature, but of representations of it; a reifying mediation of the natural world as poster and pedagogical display; an updated, digitized, and socially digestible version of that mythic product called wilderness.



— Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer

Photo credit: © Anthony Lepore, *Forest Light*, 2009, color photograph, 50 x 40"

# M+B

## LAWEEKLY

### **Natural History: Anthony Lepore and Mark Hagen**

**By Andrew Berardini**

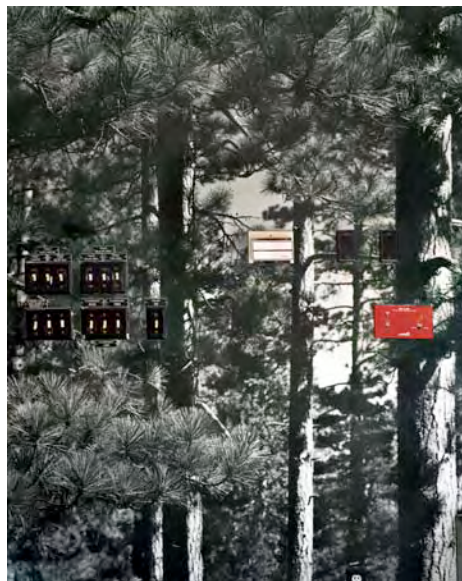
**Thursday, Jun 16 2011**

To make a landscape is to tame nature. We think of it as a picture of the land, painted or photographed, carefully framed on four sides, more or less flaccidly hanging on the wall. Landscapes were appreciated first by Renaissance bourgeois ramblers and open-air painters as scenery, as they were at the point in history when nature wasn't about to eat or crush or leave them to die, starving and naked to the vultures.

Nature still does this sometimes, but as in Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*, there's some element of collective dumb surprise when a modern man who frolics with wild bears gets eaten by one, as if nature hadn't got the memo we'd already beaten it. A classroom nature film from *The Simpsons* sums it up best: *Man Versus Nature: The Road to Victory*.

The landscape has become less a document of whatever scene, and more a document of how we place ourselves in relationship to it: We're looking at ourselves looking at nature. In a remarkable exhibition at a duo of galleries, François Ghebaly on La Cienega and M+B in West Hollywood, artist Anthony Lepore photographs visitor centers at national and state parks. While the photographs at first appear to be of nature itself, Lepore uses some subtle element in the photograph to reveal that the natural scene is actually fake — merely a depiction of the centers' educational interior decorating.

In *Forest Light*, for example, the majestic forest gives itself away as wallpaper when we see the light switches in the wall. In *Salt Carpet*, the ripples of sand and dust in the salt flats are of a similar texture and shade of beige to the carpeted wall on which the photograph hangs in the visitor center, making the viewer blink a few times to figure out the difference. Sometimes these simulations even take on a strangely tender character, as in *Stray*, where a branch reaches out gently from the diorama that contains it.





# M+B

These photographs are as much about depiction as redepiction. The frames are carefully selected to play with colors in the image and are smartly placed in the gallery about where the photo's subject would be in a visitor center. Some are in photographic sculptures that play with the elements of re-presentation, including Slot Canyon, a light box that mimics the soda machine it's capturing. At Ghebaly, Lepore has crafted a topographical map platform with a staircase leading up to it, blocked off with a bit of chain to unauthorized personnel, as it were. These photographs aren't just images, but objects attempting to impact the gallery space.



It's not all postmodernist smoke-and-mirrors — there's something peculiarly felt in these photographs. The raw grandeur of nature still holds some kind of physical and spiritual power even as Lepore shows how much those feelings are built on how we think we're supposed to view nature.

Still, it's hard to go to Yosemite and not see it all through the filter of Ansel Adams' camera or the guidebook you brought along in your rucksack or all the somewhat goofy exhibits one finds with their drab Eisenhower-era special effects. As a child I found them altogether creepy, like a bedridden grandparent bathed in pine-scented sanitizer, but as an adult, I find the exhibits have an antiquarian charm, and I feel weirdly impressed — along with Lepore, it seems — with their outdoorsy, civic-minded earnestness.

Our artists haven't always been looking at us looking at nature. Well after the pictorial grandiosity of Adams, artists a couple of generations ago were attempting to bring art out of the gallery and into the landscape itself. The so-called "land" artists, like Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer and, later, James Turrell — all of whom likely will be featured in MOCA's exhibition on the movement in 2012 — did rather macho interventions with landscape, mirroring in many ways heavy industry's fast-and-loose use of land, not to mention the sign outside U.S. National Forests: "Land of Many Uses." Land art often is enshrined in quasi-spiritual tourist pilgrimages, and its heyday has mercifully passed, as very few artists since feel the compulsion to dramatically alter the landscape for the sake of sculpture.

Around the corner from Lepore's exhibition at Ghebaly, at China Art Objects Galleries, artist Mark Hagen in his solo gallery debut, entitled "TBA," has found another way to deal with nature, working with it in a collaborative process to make his show of sculptures, photographs and paintings.

# M+B

In the series "Additive Paintings," the California sun first tans the burlap canvases. Hagen then pours paint onto the burlap in symmetrical geometric patterns, the pooling paint drying into a layered skin making the surfaces look almost like the topographic maps that Lepore photographed. They're placed in the same gallery as "Additive Sculpture," an 8-foot-tall, 48-foot-long wall composed of concrete molded from consumer packaging such as plastic bottles and cardboard boxes, with remnants still clinging to the concrete.

In the series "Subtractive Sculptures," Hagen attempts to impose form on the amorphous structure of obsidian stacked onto roughly welded steel plinths. The minimalists, an art movement hand-in-glove with land art, sought perfect simple forms, often using new industrial materials like plywood and plastics. Hagen's obsidian blocks, naturally impossible to make into a cube, make fun of how minimalists' drive to purity was a wholly synthetic and industrial gesture. To Hagen, nature defines its own forms.

In the third gallery, Hagen presents a series of "Directionless Field" photographs capturing mirrors, lenses, diffraction films, prisms and other optical glass pieces. They're shot as still lifes; the light bends and bounces and becomes both the pure subject of the photograph and its true shaper, more than the photographer.

In each series, Hagen's process allows for nature — in the form of gravity, light and material — to define what the finished product looks like. Such processes mimic the kind of conceptualism that Sol Lewitt outlined in *Sentences on Conceptual Art*: "Irrational thoughts should be followed absolutely and logically." But Hagen's material manifestation is wholly his own. Each of the works in the exhibition blurs the boundary between nature-made and man-made. The process returns again and again to what the artist calls "authorial disorientations" — moments where the art makes itself.

Humankind exerts such a strong effect on nature that scientists give us our own geologic era, the anthropocene, which is to say the whole idea of "Man Versus Nature" isn't quite true anymore. But these two artists show that nature is as much part of us as we are of it. Despite all the ways we've successfully tamed and framed it, there's still something strange and powerful in letting nature run its course.

## **ANTHONY LEPORE: NEW WILDERNESS**

M+B | 612 N. Almont Drive, L.A. | Through June 30

François Ghebaly Gallery | 2600 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A. | Through July 1

## **MARK HAGEN: TBA**

China Art Objects Galleries | 6086 Comey Ave., L.A. | Through June 25

# Aesthetica

THE ART & CULTURE MAGAZINE  
[www.aestheticamagazine.com](http://www.aestheticamagazine.com)

Issue 41  
June / July 2011

## LUMINOUS INTERVAL

Guggenheim's large-scale exhibition showcases 30 leading artists

## CULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

Cory Arcangel's digital art explores our relationship with technology

## PHOTOESPAÑA 2011

A selection of images from Spain's premier photography festival

## MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ

Robert Wilson stages a new production about the artist's life





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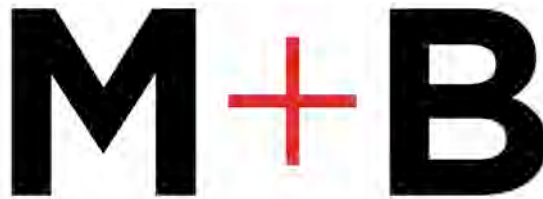
**6** **Tang Wen**  
Balman Gallery,  
Northumberland  
Until 8 September  
[www.balmangallery.com](http://www.balmangallery.com)  
This varied exhibition  
features paintings by re-  
nowned Chinese artist, Tang  
Wen, alongside Noel Ben-  
sted, known for his intimate  
paintings, ceramics from  
Katharine Morling and figu-  
rative and landscape paint-  
ings by Carl Melegari. Wen's  
paintings feature female  
subjects and atmospheric  
natural settings. The women  
in Wen's work are not attrac-  
tive in the superficial sense,  
rather they revel in deep  
observation and character.

**7** **Women Make  
Sculpture**  
Pangolin, London  
Until 18 June  
[www.pangolinlondon.com](http://www.pangolinlondon.com)  
Coinciding with the cente-  
nary year of International  
Women's Day, *Women Make  
Sculpture* celebrates female  
achievement in sculpture in  
an art world where women  
still find themselves under-  
represented. Presenting work  
from both established and  
emerging female artists, this  
show provides an opportu-  
nity to focus on sculpture  
inspired by topical issues  
such as war, mental health,  
sex, childbirth and science.

**8** **Plastic Lemons**  
Spring Projects,  
London  
Until 29 July  
[www.springprojects.co.uk](http://www.springprojects.co.uk)  
*Plastic Lemons* showcases  
work that shares a fascina-  
tion with the alternative  
usage of everyday materi-  
als. Petros Chrisostomou,  
Committee, Tony Cragg and  
Stuart Haygarth collect, ar-  
range, and experiment with  
prosaic objects in order to  
create forms that challenge  
their social significance. By  
creating incongruities be-  
tween object and representa-  
tion, they re-examine current  
understanding of the objects  
that surround us.

**9** **David Claerbout**  
SFMOMA, San  
Francisco  
Until 6 September  
[www.sfmoma.org](http://www.sfmoma.org)  
David Claerbout explores  
the ambiguities between  
photography and cinema,  
and the historical past and  
perpetual present. Claerbout  
manipulates cinematic time,  
depicting a single moment  
analysed from multiple  
camera perspectives.  
Amongst other video pieces  
in this show, Claerbout  
premieres *The American  
Room* (2009-10), which  
constructs and navigates  
the physical and political  
space of a formal concert.

**10** **Anthony  
Lepore: New  
Wilderness**  
M + B, Los Angeles  
Until 18 June  
[www.mbart.com](http://www.mbart.com)  
In a new series of works that  
expose nature as a histor-  
ical construct governed by  
human intervention, *New  
Wilderness* undermines the  
distinction between reality  
and simulation. Although  
suggesting collage or post-  
production, Lepore eschews  
digital manipulation and  
shoots with a 4 x 5 camera in  
the visitor centres of wilder-  
ness areas – reframing these  
displays to reflect on how  
nature is experienced.

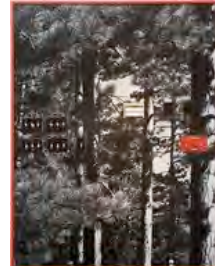


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ANTHONY LEPORE: NEW WILDERNESS**

**May 21 – June 30, 2011**

**Artist's Opening Reception: Saturday, May 21, 2011 from 6 to 9 pm**



**M+B is pleased to announce *New Wilderness*, a two-part exhibition of new color photographs by artist Anthony Lepore on view at both M+B and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles. *New Wilderness* is a provocative series of photographs that lay bare nature as an historical construct governed by human invention and intervention. The series, comprised of numerous landscapes, undermines the commonplace distinction between the real (nature) and simulation (image), alluding to the power of politics and representation in shaping our interactions with the world. Although these photographs often suggest collage or post-production alterations, Lepore eschews digital manipulation and shoots with a 4 x 5 camera in the interpretive visitor centers of designated wilderness areas. Both exhibitions will run from May 21 through June 30, 2011, with opening receptions for the artist on Saturday, May 21, 2011 from 6 – 9 pm.**

As the title suggests, Lepore's images recast the wild as it is restaged in the low-budget theater that is the visitor center. These spaces are the vestibules to wilderness—indoor recreations intended to instruct the newcomer on the open spaces they border, asking only that they walk the distance of the parking lot. By reframing these displays, which usually incorporate other photographs, these images also reflect on our predominant way of experiencing nature—through photography.

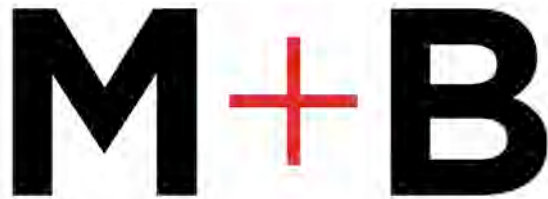
While the work nods to the idea that we are detached from the wilderness often by the very actions we take to “know it,” it is far from aloof. Lepore neither tries to simulate the meticulous fervor of the scientific naturalist, nor does he attempt to join that dense history or polemicize it. The pamphlet, the diorama, the topographical model are the iconic result of what resembles reverence. That the artist immersed himself in these environments to get long, 4 x 5 exposures denotes his involvement. He wants to go there too. An avid hiker himself, Lepore knows first hand the achy impossibility of “capturing” the wild in a photograph. It is only the body that can experience it. And this understanding on the part of the artist—that he can and must separate the ontological urge (to be in it) from the indexical urge (to know it)—that gives way to this new body of work that manages to refer to both.

Born in 1977, Anthony Lepore received his BFA from Fordham University in 2000 and his MFA from the prestigious Yale University program in 2005. His work has been exhibited internationally, from Shanghai to New York to Basel and is held in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art (Kansas City, Missouri) and Yale University Art Gallery (New Haven, Connecticut). Lepore currently lives and works in Los Angeles, and this will be his first exhibition with M+B.

Location:	M+B, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90069 and François Ghebaly Gallery, 2600 S La Cienega Blvd, LA, CA 90034
Show Title:	Anthony Lepore: New Wilderness
Exhibition Dates:	May 21 – June 30, 2011
Artist's Opening Reception:	Saturday, May 21, 2011, 6 – 9 pm
Gallery Hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appointment

For more info, please contact Shannon Richardson at M+B at (310) 550 -0050 or [shannon@mbart.com](mailto:shannon@mbart.com)

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**ANTHONY LEPORE**

**STATEMENT**

*Ryan Kelly on Anthony Lepore's New Wilderness*

Anthony Lepore's *New Wilderness* is a series of photographs that lay bare nature as an historical construct governed by human invention and intervention. Although these images often suggest collage or post-production alterations, they are produced with a 4 x 5 camera in visitor centers and on the edges of designated wilderness. In his "landscapes"—which are as often the capturing of a mountainside studded by telecommunication towers as the picturing of "forest-pattern" wallpaper in a ranger's office—Lepore is showing us our own misunderstanding of the environments we are prone to find ourselves in. He points to our most ridiculous attempts at cultivating, domesticating, and aestheticizing nature, and finds (in the crevices, along the seams) the sublime beauty of human carelessness. He knows it is not the diorama of the California desert that needs to be seen, but the lone branch that stretches beyond its frame to touch the pale white wall just beside it. The branch fails at being the image of nature it is cast to portray. Or does it successfully achieve the signification of liberation we press upon nature to deliver us? The uncanny dialogue of a soda machine with the Grand Canyon, or a fire alarm that appears (as a UFO? a satellite?) in the outer space model insists on our own intervention in what nature is. Nature is never at a remove from our own impression of it. It is, like these images, a series of maps and pictures.



## ESSAY ON ANTHONY LEPORE'S *NEW WILDERNESS*

by, Stanya Kahn

April 2011

*New Wilderness* is a series of photographs produced at the edges of designated wilderness in the American West. As the title suggests, Lepore's images recast the wild as it is restaged in the low-budget theater that is the visitor center. Similar to the way in which Disneyland invites us to view the imaginary, with papier mache forms in scene-painted warehouses, so the visitor center brings the flaneur and the weekend warrior to the wall-papered precipice of the natural world. Although these photographs often suggest collage or post-production alterations, they are all produced with a 4x5 camera in the visitor centers and ranger stations of parks and forests. These sites were once the outposts of exploration in the West, and continue to occupy that role in our popular imagination. However, each officially sanctioned wilderness now features a small museum that offers modern travelers an ideal perspective of the extraordinary place they have driven to, asking only that they walk the distance of the parking-lot. These spaces are the vestibules to wilderness – indoor recreations intended to instruct the newcomer on the open spaces they border. By reframing these displays, which usually incorporate other photographs, these images also reflect on our predominant way of experiencing nature – through photography.

While we understand Nature with a capital N, in relation to the ways in which it has been constructed as “other”—as it has been idealized, demonized, romanticized, spiritualized, aestheticized, commodified (and of course utilized for its resources)—so we similarly understand ourselves. We represent our identities and our desires now via the upload and the tweet. We displace the promise of contact with the pleasure of the quick click: Like/Dislike. We become the sum total of our “Favorites.” We detach from the body. We have known, in fact for decades now, how to get off on a photo. (*Girls on film/two minutes later/Girls on film/you got your picture*—Duran Duran.)

Lepore's photographs of wilderness “installations” as they appear in the gateway that is the visitor center, position our bodies in relation to our gaze: we encounter ourselves looking. And in this encounter, Lepore gives us a visceral moment of fulfillment: we simultaneously experience the pleasure of the photo (“ooh, she's hot”) with a longing for the wild, while indulging in the humor belying the fact that we might not really hit the trail (“do her.”) Or maybe we will. Lepore seems to quietly invite the possibility of adventure. He deftly sidesteps irony or contempt for what could be seen as pathetic albeit earnest attempts to valorize the wild. Lepore is clearly in love with the wild world himself, and there is tenderness in his recasting of Visitor Center art. His photographs, which always maintain the presence of a body (the reflection of glass, the fallibility of an unglued edge, a light socket, the absence of Photoshop manipulation), seem to mirror his own longing to represent that which is both over-determined (Nature) and that which can't be named (Wilderness). But instead of presenting glib frustration, the images offer a tipsy and complicated dysphoria (where am I), not unlike being lost in the woods. Lepore's wild has its starting point in the human body. The confounding of perspective in each photo is sophisticated exactly in its lack of trickery. The view is melancholic but not sentimental.

While the work nods to the idea that we are detached from the wilderness often by the very actions we take to “know it”, it is far from aloof. He neither tries to simulate the meticulous fervor of the scientific naturalist, nor does he attempt to join that dense history or polemicize it. Lepore manages to give us a picture of human urgency (“we must see it, we must know it, we must preserve it, we must contain it, we

# M+B

must also sell it") without collapsing it into the ridiculous, even when this urgency is dwarfed immediately by the grandiosity of Nature's portrayal. The pamphlet, the diorama, the topographical model are the iconic result of what resembles reverence. That the artist immersed himself in these environments to get long, 4x5 exposures denotes his involvement. He wants to go there too. An avid hiker himself, Lepore knows first hand the achy impossibility of "capturing" the wild in a photograph. It is only the body that can experience it. And this understanding on the part of the artist that he can and must separate the ontological urge (to be in it) from the indexical urge (to know it) gives way to this new body of work that manages to refer to both.





**Human dynamics; For every action there's an interaction with photographer Anthony Lepore and his subjects. By Alice Thorson**

Credit: The Kansas City Star  
Sunday, October 26, 2008  
Edition: METROPOLITAN, Section: A+E, Page F5

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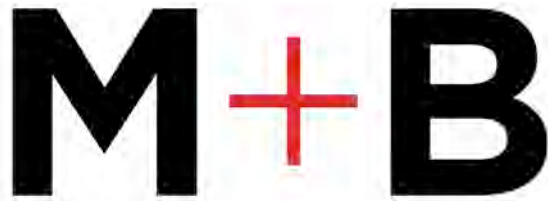
Human relationships are the bedrock of Anthony Lepore's photography, as seen in a new exhibit at the Kemper Museum. The 13 large color photographs in "Anthony Lepore: Restoration" include a radiant shot of a mother and child and the moving "Billy and Cal," an image of two elderly men in a church pew. Clearly they're a couple. Although one is stronger physically -- he props up his weaker partner, who clutches him from behind -- the expressions on their faces convey an emotional interdependence that bears the stamp of years.

The Los Angeles-based Lepore has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad, but his exhibit at the Kemper is his first solo museum show. Kemper curator Chris Cook was attracted to Lepore's work for its "emotional sincerity." The images "illuminate something profound," Cook notes in the accompanying brochure, "a desire, a hope, to restore a connection with others and the natural world."

"Untitled (Morrow Bay, CA)" (2005) shows a woman at the water's edge feeding seagulls. Her expression is ecstatic as the birds swoop and flutter around her. The woman is Lepore's grandmother, who at his request, agreed to enact her strongest childhood memory.

A native of Burbank, Calif., Lepore grew up "on a plain suburban street right next to Disney Studios." He didn't think about nature much until he moved to New York in the late 1990s to attend Fordham University. "The nature deprivation in New York made me need it more," said Lepore, who went on to earn his master's at Yale. "I started filling my apartment with plants from the Amazon."

To support himself, Lepore worked in an exotic bird store, where at one point he traded a woman a photograph in exchange for an egg of an endangered species bird from Peru. "Raising (such birds) in captivity extends the species' life," he said, "but they can't



be released."

Lepore is intrigued by such human acts of restoration while being attuned to their attendant ironies. His images of an urban falconer, a western wolf sanctuary and a skin cancer surgery on a baboon are emblematic of our relationship with wild animals at a time when pollution, development, poaching and global warming threaten their survival.

The baboon appears, post-op, recovering under a blanket at the Auckland Zoo in New Zealand. A zookeeper told Lepore it was one of a dozen baboons in Australia and New Zealand that had undergone surgery for skin cancer, attributed to the deterioration of the Earth's protective ozone layer.

The wolf sanctuary takes in wolves, but also wolf-canine hybrids, adopted by people who thought the baby animals were cute but were unprepared to cope with their needs and temperament as they matured. Lepore's shot shows the woman who founded the sanctuary nuzzling one of the animals. "She's the head of the pack," Lepore said. "I get to enter these worlds that are unbelievable."

Lepore doesn't stage his shots but lets them evolve out of contact with his subjects. "For me they're a collaboration," he said. "I'm working with these people, and we're having this exchange."

The falconer appears in her Brooklyn apartment with a bird she trained to scare pigeons off the runways at JFK International Airport. "How should I dress?" she asked when he was setting up the appointment for a Sunday morning. "Just wear what you usually do," he said. In Lepore's image she appears in underwear and socks, wearing a falconer's glove on her hand, which she extends to the attentive bird. Lepore loved the contrast that emerged from this unplanned scenario, between the woman's soft flesh and the falcon's sharp talons and beak. It electrifies the image, embodying the coexistence of trust and danger on both sides of the relationship.

Lepore's landscape images also focus on human intervention. "Painted Rock" (2008) shows a boulder that is a frequent target for graffiti. The graffiti doesn't show in the photograph thanks to the senior citizens who regularly cover it with silver and gray spray paint. Lepore compares it to a "new skin."

"View," a shot of a New Zealand hillside dotted with park benches and plots of greenery,



attests to similar good intentions. But the unnatural arrangement seems better suited to stadium seating than contemplation. The image exemplifies the rare balance of generosity and critique that may be Lepore's signature contribution to the photography of our age. He never points a finger, but we can see what's going on. To reach Alice Thorson, art critic, call 816-234-4763 or send e-mail to [athorson@kcstar.com](mailto:athorson@kcstar.com).

#### ON EXHIBIT

The show: 'Anthony Lepore: Restoration'

Where: Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, 4420 Warwick Blvd.

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Closed Mondays. The exhibit continues through Jan 4.

How much: Free

For more information: 816-753-5784 or [www.kemperart.org](http://www.kemperart.org)



*The New Yorker*

“Anthony Lepore: I Would Make You My Own”

Vince Aletti

March 13, 2006

Lepore, a photographer who got his M.F.A. from Yale last year, works in the popular quasi- documentary style that crops up in a lot of magazines. The big color pictures in his solid American debut are of people and places that seesaw provocatively between the ordinary and the eccentric: A bearded man sits in the curve of a massive toy race-car track, absorbed and alone. A basement where fish trophies fill one wall also boasts a stuffed elephant lying on its side next to a deer and an elk. A couple making love on their couch are stalked by a cat, a dog, and a lace- covered doll. Through March 11. (Marvelli, 526 W. 26th St. 212-627-3363.)