

Laura Poitras:

O' Say Can You See?

Where were you on September 11, 2001? Laura Poitras was in lower Manhattan where she lives, and in the hours and days after the bombing and collapse of the World Trade Center Towers she shot film footage of stunned and grief-stricken citizens. The world has dramatically changed since that date, and Poitras has made two probing and powerful documentary films that examine post-9/11 socio-political realities as they impact individuals, families, government policies, and belief systems.

Poitras's film, *My Country, My Country* (2006), focuses on the U.S. occupation of Iraq, while *The Oath* (2010) examines the fates of two brothers-in-law, Abu Jandal and Salim Hamdan, whose associations with al-Qaeda provide the drama for the filmmaker's investigation of faith and loyalty. Her films bring us directly into the complexities of life in Iraq

and Yemen, giving context and a human dimension to a world with which we are ill-prepared to understand or sympathize.

O' Say Can You See? is Poitras' first art gallery exhibition. Her installation features a projection of the imagery from Ground Zero in 2001, with audio recorded weeks later at the Yankees' come-from-behind Game 4 World Series victory on October 20. Poitras has said that "*O' Say Can You See?* returns to the moment of innocence when America waited for the dead to arise. It is a meditation on loss and revenge." Interviews with recently released detainees from Guantanamo Bay are presented on flat screen monitors, adding new layers of information and emotion about the War on Terror.

This exhibition was organized in conjunction with Atlanta Celebrates Photography.



Laura Poitras, *O' Say Can You See?*, 2010, Film stills, Courtesy of the artist.

Poitras was nominated for an Academy Award, Independent Spirit Award and Emmy Award for *My Country, My Country* (2006). Her most recent film, *The Oath* (2010), received the Excellence in Cinematography Award at the Sundance Film Festival. She received a Peabody Award and was nominated for an Emmy and an Independent Spirit Award for *Flag Wars* (2003; made with Linda Goode Bryant), a documentary about gentrification that premiered at the SXSW Film Festival and won the award for Best Documentary. Her films have been recognized at film festivals including Berlinale, Full Frame, SXSW, New Directors/New Films, San Francisco International Film Festival, Edinburgh Film Festival and many others. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Media Arts Fellowship from the Tribeca Film Institute.



Steve Aishman, *Filet O' Fish* from *Throwing Fast Food* series, 2007, Archival digital print, Courtesy of the artist and Solomon Projects, Atlanta.

Steve Aishman Jaimie Warren:

Recent Photographs



Jaimie Warren, *Untitled (Self Portrait, Dinosaur Mouth)*, 2009, Color photograph, Courtesy of the artist.

Food, friendship, popular culture, and the grotesque are some of the subjects that photographers Steve Aishman and Jaimie Warren have in common. They both point their cameras at themselves, friends, and various objects, capturing everyday aspects of celebration and revelation. Most of their works are shot at close range, with great attention paid to formal qualities of color, texture, and pattern. The pairing of their works highlights two of contemporary photography's most dominant characteristics—staged situations and snapshot aesthetics.

Throwing Fast Food is a recent series by Aishman, inspired by classic Dutch still life paintings, in which he captures his own restaurant transgressions of tossing fish and roast beef sandwiches in the air. Other investigations include variations of twisted Silly Putty shapes, impromptu masks, and casual portraits of male friends holding his son Bill.

Warren's pictures are taken at her home, at parties, and while she's traveling, offering images of outrageous behavior and its aftermath. She claims Roseanne Barr as a role model, and it is easy to see how the comedienne's "Domestic Goddess" persona might influence Warren's sense of self and silliness.

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Aishman received a BA in Astrophysics from Princeton University and an MFA in Photography from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He has exhibited his work at galleries and museums around the United States including Solomon Projects, Atlanta; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Boston Athenaeum, and Tilt Gallery, Portland, OR. He is a professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Atlanta and Hong Kong.

Warren is a photographer, performance artist, and curator. She is represented by Higher Pictures, New York, and has exhibited at White Flag Projects, St. Louis; Smith-Stewart, New York; Getsumin Gallery, Osaka, Japan; Beida University, Beijing, China; and Rocket Projects, Miami, among others. Her photography has been published in dozens of national and international publications including *Nylon*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Fader*, *Elle* (Japan), *Vogue* (Brazil), *Village Voice*, and *Vice*. She is the originator of *Whoop Dee Doo*, a "faux public access television show" which has toured Chicago, Sweden, Omaha, and New York. Her first monograph, *Don't You Feel Better*, was published by Aperture in 2008.