

The exhibition project, *You're Such A Good Sport*, includes local artists and objects along with several national and international artists all using visual references of sport and/or competitive gaming within their work. This exhibition exemplifies qualities of sport and art as experiences to be shared, critiqued, celebrated, and explored.

*Sport is not a metaphor. It is a game and a part of life, culture as learned behavior. The social activity and communion is more important than winning or losing, and the wellspring of that communion is regional, determined by where you live and how you live.*

*Ihor Holubisky, from Body Power/Power Play*

*You're Such a Good Sport* reaches across ideological and social constructs. It identifies and presents artists' works with evidence from sports culture. By doing so it challenges our visual perception inviting new associations. The project, as seen through its playful, facetious title, neither glorifies nor condemns 'sport' and 'art.' More importantly, it represents them as being deeply and individually rooted into our self-definitions, inviting viewers and participants to discover commonalities within the meanings of gamesmanship and art-making. This unbiased critique is vital in fostering awareness and exchange among audiences with diverse views.

Historically, the intersection of sports and art is not new, however, rarely is it combined in a local context. And for the most part such overlaps seem to be easily relegated to a tertiary component of the artist's work, or for that matter, of the sporting event, for rarely do such invested individuals on either side of the 'fields' find common ground. This exhibition withholds from such learned dismissiveness and attempts to explore through critique and humor this potentially, anthropologically rich collision. The Kansas City region's wealth of professional and collegiate sports activity makes it a particular good community for such a project.

Many themes overarch American sports culture and how it is perceived and studied. Areas of investigation include spectacle and audience roles, fanaticism and obsessivism, social sculpture, archetypes and gender roles, and the local historical, cultural contexts of arts & sports.

Components of the project include works by visual artists (2-D, 3D, video, and performance), regional sports objects & engagements, and specific exhibition furniture. Michael Schonhoff serves as the project manager and chief curator for the project.

**Participating artists/creators include:**

*Matt Dehaemers*

*Robert Heishman*

*Megan Mantia*

*Butt Johnson*

*Mike Hill*

*Miki Baird*

*Pellom McDaniels*

*Brett Reif*

*Pablo Helguera*

*Alexander Austin*

*Chris Doyle*

*Rab Booty*

*Chris Akers*

*Phil Peterson*

*Ray Noland*

*Emilio Said*

**Regional sports sources include:**

*Kansas City Museum*

*Negro League Baseball Museum*

*JACOMO Table Tennis Club*

*SRO video store (free sports movie rentals)*

*The Black Archives*

*Sports radio 810WHB*

*Kansas City Roller Warriors*

*Kansas City Sports Commission and Foundation  
WIN program*

**Specific exhibition furniture to include:**

*bleachers (portable)*

*'playbooks' for comments, essays, and artists info.*

*a water cooler*

*live radio broadcast table*

The spaces will become an evocative gallery for innovative artists, a laboratory process with unknown results, a unique and unexpected game & sport location, and a surreal site for a sports radio broadcast. Ultimately it is used to foster awareness and exchange among diverse audiences.

I anticipate the project will have an impact on everyone involved and experiencing the project. It will be documented with the intention of creating a trajectory for future opportunities and projects. As a trained artist with a variety of ambitions, this project marries years of experience on curatorial teams with artistic inspirations from multidisciplinary individuals with whom I've worked. Upon evaluating this exhibition's success, I also intend to solicit this project for touring potential, thus expanding its exposure. Beyond personal impact, the project serves to promote other Kansas City artists, Kansas City cultural institutions, and the greater metropolitan community.

Sincerely,

**MICHAEL J. SCHONHOFF**

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