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**BALLS TO THE WALL: APPAU JUNIOR BOAKYE-YIADOM, MATT BROWNING, TIM DAVIS,
LEAH DIXON, DARIO ESCOBAR, LEO FITZMAURICE, NINA KATCHADOURIAN, LISA YOUNG**

July 11 – August 16, 2013

Reception: Thursday, July 11, 6-8pm



DODGEgallery is pleased to present *Balls to the Wall*, a group exhibition with Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom, Matt Browning, Tim Davis, Leah Dixon, Dario Escobar, Leo Fitzmaurice, Nina Katchadourian and Lisa Young. *Balls to the Wall* explores the intersections of art and sport, aspirations and failures, and the humor in between.

Athletics play a significant role in Western culture and are introduced to us from a young age, whether through actual participation, attendance or media observation, which for some develops into intense vicarious involvement. The high of participation and ultimate glory of winning is instilled alongside the fear of failure and rejection. Dario Escobar's

Bicho No. 4, are two ping-pong paddles that are disjointed and connected with ample hinges. The metal hardware exaggerates the dysfunctionality of the bent paddles and their absurdity as conjoined opponents. *Bicho No. 4* plays into the fear of failure by exemplifying defeat from the outset- *no one* wins. Similarly, Matt Browning's *Mountain Scene*, composed of skis that have been cut into multiple diamond-shapes, and re-formed into mountain-like peaks, appear as seemingly brutalist abstract forms. These large dense objects suggest power and strength; however, Browning uses the supple underside of the ski, exposing their vulnerability and fallibility. They have been spliced to form the thing that they are intended to surmount.

Prescribing to a team often eases the extremes found in solitude with that of a communal solidarity. Winning becomes more celebratory with a squad and losing becomes a shared burden. Solitude is highlighted in Tim Davis' *Upstate New York Olympics* as he conceives and executes his own sports, from "Rusty Pipe Drag" to "National Geographic Gymnastics," all of which are *played* in alone and filmed by a stationary camera—the antithesis of the modern Olympics. Presented on three large screens mimicking the layout of a sports bar, Davis invites the viewer into a split-focus, hyper-consumption of his struggles. The futility of these events heightens the viewer's sense of Davis' isolation, which amplifies our empathy. We root for him, we laugh at the absurdity of his tasks, we share in relief when he's successful and wince when he "fails". Lacking opponents, Davis is a one-man show. His competition is himself, his challenges are self-created, and his drive is amidst seclusion.

The participants are not the sole figures in sport; the spectator plays a significant role. One selects (or is born into) a team to support. A sense of community is found within fellow fans through watching the wins and losses as a group. Leo Fitzmaurice's soccer (football) jerseys made of folded cigarette cartons speak to the cultural obsession of watching sports whilst sitting in a bar/pub and entertaining vices that premier athletes are meant to abstain from. Watching athletes exert themselves physically in ways unfathomable to the common person, the spectator enthusiastically consumes alcohol, fast food and cigarettes in solidarity with fellow fans. Presented as a series, the miniature jerseys call to the other element of consumption—memorabilia. A massive market is dedicated to the ownership of various sports/team paraphernalia from jerseys to balls to hats, Fitzmaurice gives us these items out of an everyday piece of trash, highlighting the kitsch aspect of the collectable.

The game of sport harkens to that of battle with two (or more) contending forces/teams. Leah Dixon's works *Chaos in the Sky*, *Comfort on the Floor*, and *Impetuous Interests* directly reference notions of modern warfare with bomb imagery inlaid on yoga mats. A practice that is defined by leaving the body behind and connecting to the spirit, yoga strives toward a peaceful existence. Dixon's mats, the very object that the body is grounded on in practice, depict imagery that mimics the graphics of video games, a consumer avenue through which war has become a part of our collective conscience. The flat graphics integrated into the yoga mat leave the question open as to what gains precedence here. The material composition proposes a means for defusing and conquering, as if through practice and repetition one can control reactions to the influx of violent imagery—or be consumed by it.

Sweat, labor, practice and fine tweaking can be found across all levels of athletics, not just the elite. Sport can easily become an obsession; athletes by many standards would be considered unstable, always seeking to reach the next level with a relentless ambition. Nina Katchadourian's piece, *Mallory's Words*, depicts the legendary mountaineer George Mallory's famous response to the question, "Why do you want to climb Mt. Everest?" His reply, "Because it's there," provides the form for the installation, made entirely of rock climbing holds that ascend the wall of the inner gallery as if reaching for the unattainable. Here, Katchadourian humorously makes language material, and sentiment suggestive—as if we can all practice the unattainable.

The constant strive towards perfection speaks broadly to the human spirit. The notion of continually laboring towards such an unachievable goal finds grace in triumph and humility in defeat. Lisa Young's *Lyra Angelica* pays homage to the figure skater, Michelle Kwan. An athlete who was repeatedly heralded to win it all but always fell just short of the gold. In *Lyra Angelica*, Young splits the screen into four different performances of the same routine so the viewer can watch as Kwan comes off pace, fails and triumphs. As spectators, our vicarious participation is guided and dramatized by the choreography of multiple images and the announcers' audio recordings. Young tunes in and out of the audio of each performance at specific points to interplay the sensationalization and genuine support of each respective broadcaster. Young's selection of her subject exemplifies the obsession of grinding towards perfection. The sport itself, figure skating, is one that is extremely physically demanding but meant to look absolutely effortless.

Athletics and labor merge through the intense requirements of the body. In his piece *Melon n Ball (Mop)*, Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom uses the tools of manual work, a mop and paint, with the densest of sport equipment, a bowling ball. Humorously, the form assumes a human scale, as if upside down. Boakye-Yiadom has rendered both the tools of labor and sport unusable, framing their gained futility. By displaying the objects on a pedestal in a plexi case, Boakye-Yiadom immortalizes them like trophies or pieces of

memorabilia retaining their newly impotent existence.

Each of the artists in *Balls to the Wall* taps into the shared human experience of athletics as a means to express the balance and contradictions between aspirations and limitations. Exploring the elements of team, labor, perfection and defeat, they have all chosen sports that are less than mainstream in this country. By not tackling one of the big three—baseball, basketball and football—the exhibition edges towards the experience of obscurity. Each artist has found beauty and often humor in the highs and lows of their representations, perhaps connecting to the greater human condition.

Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom was born in London, England, in 1984. He received a BA (Hons) from Winchester School of Art in 2005 and Post Graduate Diploma from The Royal Academy Schools in 2008. His work has been exhibited at The Bluecoats, Liverpool, UK, Josh Lilley Gallery, London, UK, Poppy Sebire Gallery, London, UK and Fort Gallery, London, UK, among others. Boakye-Yiadom was awarded the Vincent Harris Sculpture Prize 2008 and Patricia Harris Sculpture Prize 2008. He was awarded a residency with Gallery Primo Alonso, London in 2009. Boakye-Yiadom has exhibited at various international art fairs in Switzerland, New York, LA, Miami and Brussels. His work has been reviewed as critics choice on Saatchi Online. Twice selected as Art World Magazines Top 10 shows, and reviewed in Frieze magazine. Boakye-Yiadom lives and works in London.

Matt Browning was born in Seattle, WA, in 1984. He received his BFA from the University of Washington, Seattle. His work has been exhibited at the Frye Museum, Seattle, WA, Lawrimore Project, Seattle, WA, Western Bridge, Seattle, WA, Kirkland Arts Center, Kirkland, WA, and Ditch Projects, Springfield, OR, among others. Browning was artist in residence at Seattle University, Seattle in 2010. His work has been reviewed in the Seattle Times, Capitol Hill Times, The Stranger and Seattle Weekly. Browning is a member of the Northwest curatorial collective TARL, and he lives and works in Seattle.

Tim Davis was born in Blantyre, Malawi in 1969. He received a B.A. from Bard College, and M.F.A. from Yale University. His work has been exhibited in public institutions including the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, New Paltz, NY, the Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL, and Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA. Selected solo exhibitions include the White Cube, London, UK, Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels, Belgium, and Greenberg Van Doren, New York, NY. He was included in the 2012 Moscow Photobiennale. Several monographs of his work have been published including, *The New Antiquity* and *Permanent Collection*. He is the recipient of the 2007-2008 Joseph H. Hazen Rome Prize and the 2005 Leopold Godowsky Jr. Color Photography Award. His work is in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, The Guggenheim Museum, and The Walker Art Center, among many others. Davis lives and works in New York, NY.

Leah Dixon was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1982. Dixon is sculptor, painter, and digital artist who is currently receiving her Master's in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts. She attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2012, and received her Bachelor's of Fine Arts from The Ohio State University in 2005. Her work will be included in an upcoming exhibition curated by Omar Lopez-Chahoud at Present Company Gallery in New York, and an upcoming show at WEEKEND Gallery in Los Angeles. She has been included in recent exhibitions at Toomer Labzda Gallery in New York, 'Black Foliage' curated by Matthew Craven at NUDASHANK Gallery in Baltimore, and 'BCC' curated by Dave Harper and Karen Archey at STADIUM Gallery in New York. In addition to running an independent Artists' studio project in Lower Manhattan from 2007 through 2011, she has directed multiple independent curatorial projects in New York and Miami. Her work has been included in various publications, such as New York Magazine, and HYPERALLERGIC. Dixon is currently the co-owner and Creative Manager of Beverly's Bar in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Dario Escobar was born in Guatemala City, in 1971. His work has been exhibited extensively at biennials, museums and galleries internationally. His first monograph, *A Singular Plurality*, published by Harvard University Press was just released. He will be included in the 2013 California Pacific Triennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA (June – November 2013). Recent exhibitions include: Dario Escobar, Museo de arte Contemporáneo de Santiago (MAC), Santiago de Chile, Chile (2012); Singular-Plural, a one person exhibition at Savannah College of Art and Design, (traveled to SCAD Museum) Atlanta, GA (2012); Play with me, The Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA (2012); New Acquisitions, The Museum of Contemporary Art MOCA, Los Angeles, CA (2011); Art, Talks and Sensations, The Island/A Game of Life, Gallery 1, Manarat al Saadiyat, Abu Dhabi (2012); Efecto Drácula, Museo Universitario del CHOPO, México (2010); 53rd Venice Biennale, Mundus Novus - Arte contemporaneo de America Latina at the Artiglierie dell'Arsenale (2009); Nada y el ser (The 7th interpretation of the Jumex Collection), La Colección Jumex, Mexico DF (2009). Escobar is represented by Josée Bienvenu Gallery. He lives and works in Guatemala City.

Leo Fitzmaurice was born in Shropshire, England, in 1963. He received a BA in Fine Art at Liverpool Art School and an MA at Manchester Metropolitan University. Since then he has exhibited nationally and internationally. In 2004 Fitzmaurice was invited by the British Council to take part in the Artist Links residency at Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, China. He has shown work at MOT International; Seventeen Gallery; Bischoff Weiss; and Tanya Leighton Galley, and solo projects at Rogaland Kunstsenter, Norway; Grundy Gallery, Blackpool; New Art Gallery Walsall; Firstsite, Colchester. In 2012 Fitzmaurice was the recipient of the 5th Northern Art Prize. His work has been reviewed in Frieze, Art Monthly, Blueprint, Hotshoe Magazine, Sculpture, Form and Eye magazine. Fitzmaurice's work is in the Arts Council Collection of England, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Manchester Art Gallery, The Royal London Hospital, The Locus Plus Archive and numerous private collections. Fitzmaurice lives and works in Wirral, UK.

Nina Katchadourian was born in Stanford, California, in 1968. Her work exists in a wide variety of media including photography, sculpture, video and sound. Her work has been exhibited domestically and internationally at places such as PS1/MoMA, the Serpentine Gallery, New Langton Arts, Artists Space, SculptureCenter, and the Palais de Tokyo. In January 2006 the Turku Art Museum in Turku, Finland featured a solo show of works made in Finland, and in June 2006 the Tang Museum in Saratoga Springs exhibited a 10-year survey of her work and published an accompanying monograph entitled "All Forms of Attraction." The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego presented a solo show of recent video installation works in July 2008. In February 2010 she was the artist in residence at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery in Dunedin, New Zealand, where she had a solo show entitled "Seat Assignment." She recently completed work on a permanent public piece, commissioned by the GSA, for a border crossing station between the US and Canada. Katchadourian is represented by Catharine Clark Gallery. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Lisa Young was born in Mt. Prospect, Illinois in 1964. She holds a BFA from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; an MFA from Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston; and is an alumnus of the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, New York, NY. She is currently holds a term appointment as Assistant Professor and Graduate Director in the Rhode Island School of Design Photography Department. Her exhibition venues include The Cue Art Foundation, Artists Space and White Columns, New York, NY; Wave Hill, Bronx, NY; Flux Factory, Long Island City, NY; Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Artexte, Montreal, Canada; and the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA. Among her commissioned projects are a billboard at 6150 Wilshire Boulevard, LA (Julia Metzer/Clockshop), an artist book project for Cabinet Magazine, and a web project developed with the Scholarly Technology Group at Brown University. Young's editions have been distributed through Printed Matter and Pace Prints, New York, NY; Pierogi 2000, Brooklyn, NY; and Art Metropole, Toronto, Canada. The artist's work can also be found in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art and The New York Public Library, New York, NY; the Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, MA; the The Rose Goldsen Archive of New Media Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and the Neues Museum, Weserburg, Germany. Young lives and works in Providence, RI.

Founded in April 2010 by Kristen Dodge, DODGE gallery is a contemporary art gallery located on the Lower East Side. The gallery is run by Kristen Dodge, Founder/Director, and Patton Hindle, Director of Operations. Housed in a 2,500 sq/ft former sausage factory, the gallery opened to the public in September 2010. The program combines early-career and mid-career artists, often featuring two concurrent exhibitions. Artists on the gallery roster include Rebecca Chamberlain, Dave Cole, Taylor Davis, Environmental Services, Darren Blackstone Foote, Ted Gahl, Sheila Gallagher, Ellen Harvey, Jason Middlebrook, Daniel Phillips, Cordy Ryman, and Lorna Williams. For more information please visit dodge-gallery.com

Image: Tim Davis, *The Upstate NY Olympics*, 2010-11, 34 minute loop; 3-channel video installation