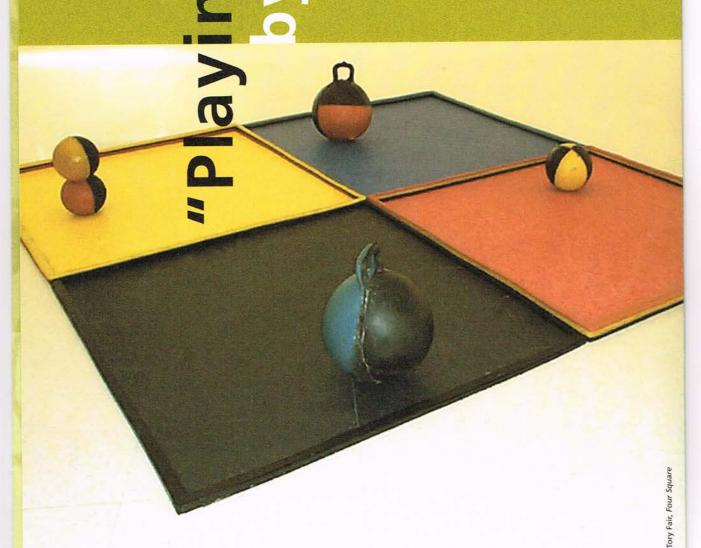
"Playing by the Rules"
explores systems and games
as Inspiration, working
method, and subject matter
for contemporary art. To
answer a frequent question
— I did not set out with this
exhibition (or any other)
to confirm a curatorial
premise. I look and listen
as artists reflect the
tremors and movements
in the contemporary art
community. "What is next"
is always my interest and
making sense of that is
my curatorial goal,

and material in the art on exhibit; the viscous solidity of rubber cast in the colors of the playground, the inked remnants of Ben Day dot patterns on woodblock prints, staccato circular forms emerging from the surface of a painting then cascading to the floor of the gallery. Color theory, gender roles, ephemera, the newest technology and the sweep of the artist's arm all find their place in the richly thought-through and superbly executed work on exhibit.

Tory Fair, John Schulz and Linda Price-Sneddon have taken a leap of faith in allowing the Montserrat Gallery to showcase their dynamic works of art in conversation. Visitors to "Playing by the Rules" complete the synthetic energy and allow a new relatedness to emerge. Thanks to all: the many artists who allow me into their studios, the Montserrat college staff – especially Laura Donaldson – and you, the viewer, for your part in this venture.





Tory Fair

Tory Fair uses the architecture of sports to create a self-portrait in absentia'. Four Square and Running Bases are sitedependent sculptures developed for the Montserrat Gallery. As sculptural memoirs, they draw inspiration from a childhood spent as a 'tomboy.' They are also the efforts of a young artist to find and utilize her own aesthetic and personal vocabulary. "The objects get stronger in relation to a specific space. The gallery has become the idea of 'game time.' I want to create idiosyncratic objects that exist by themselves and create their own terms."

The gallery is its own playing field with anticipated rules and rewards. Fair upends our expectations of its discreet demeanor. Running Bases

brings the parquet floor of the gymnasium to the gallery. The understated linoleum tile of the gallery is mirrored and gently mocked as saturated red and blue, and translucent yellow tiles define the interior space of Four Square.

The primary identity of these sculptures, however, comes from Fair's use of cast rubberdense, awkward and heavy. She employs an industrial palette, using the rubber just as it comes from the supplier. The sculpture is cast using plaster molds, which leaves the surface of the lines and balls rough. "The forms would be too neat if I made the molds of rubber. The seams would be too neat. I like the excavated sense of them as not perfect."

"One of the reasons you choose to become an artist is to set your own rules: there is no protocol. You approach the day in a way consistent with the next day – you wake up and make a piece or a drawing or whatever. As a young artist I don't find myself being drawn to any 'school of art.' I am excited by artists who are breaking the rules." – Tory Fair

to make courts and scenarios out of materials that are so dysfunctional. I love the idea of having a dysfunctional game. It is a great metaphor. I've been thinking about the difference between making a game – iterating it – and using the game as a source for sculpture. One of the major questions is 'Is the sculpture something to be looked at or to be engaged?' For now, I don't want people to move the pieces around. I don't want the elements to be props."

"I thought it would be fun

In this choice, Fair declares the primacy of the sculpture; the materiality overrides the person in the game. "As a painter, I could never get past the edges of where the work began and ended. I was never satisfied with the physicality of it. When I was working on etchings, I was moving lines around a court. With sculpture, there is an elegant play between inside and outside. The edges relate to where you are standing. When you play soccer there is also that play between inside and outside. The soccer field becomes more like an organism moving and expanding in relation to you, your team and the goals."

There is humor and delight in these sculptures, a reflection of the life of the body in synergy with the life of the mind. "I'm much happier now working in the context of sport. It has been so much of my life – a girl in New Jersey playing on the boys' soccer team."

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