

LYONS WIER GALLERY

542 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

Chris Cosnowski

“American Metal”

March 1 – 31, 2012

Artist’s Reception:

Thursday, March 1, 2012 (6-8pm)

Lyons Wier Gallery

542 West 24th St., New York, NY 10011

Gallery Hours: Tues - Sat, 11-6pm

Nearest subway: C,E @ 23rd St & 8th Ave



Chris Cosnowski, *Muybridge Rodeo (Species Switcharoo)*
2011, Oil on panel, 36 x 48 in / 91.4 x 121.92 cm

Trophies have played a critical role throughout history. Recipients take pleasure in their award, not because the trophy has monetary value, but because it symbolizes success. Those that win them cherish the satisfaction and legacy that is associated with them. They revel within the symbolism of the prize itself -- *victory*. Trophies are, and will continue to remain, a visible goal to which any competitor is geared, and harbor the unspoken sacrifices that victory so often demands.

In *American Metal*, artist **Chris Cosnowski** utilizes and exploits the intrinsic value and symbolism of these treasured keepsakes. His paintings envision a nostalgic no-holds-barred America as well as a contemporary look into current societal standards. Through his inherent narrative of the objects, geometric abstraction, and exaggerated scale, the artist poses the question, “Are the activities represented in the paintings pertinent to society in today’s economic and political maelstrom?” The answer lies within the artist’s consummate application of paint and use of vibrant color.

Cosnowski’s figurines truly exemplify different aspects of American society: the rodeo trophies illustrate our romanticized past and the wild west in all its rugged testosterone-soaked glory; the cheerleaders embody an obsession with sports, beauty and social standing; the motocross continues the sports metaphor and also typifies America’s love for speed, daredevils and gasoline; the bodybuilder addresses issues of self-image in America and evaluates our culture’s preoccupation with physical beauty; and the policeman confronts the proliferation of surveillance and shifting civil rights, but acknowledges the heroic duties assumed by our law enforcement community.

One part observation, one part criticism, Cosnowski weaves together the most superficial as well as splendid aspects of American culture. There is a prevailing presence of grandeur, yet something trivial or trite also seeps through. His mastery of allusion and juxtaposition of content creates a dialogue that far exceeds the simple compositions at hand.

Chris Cosnowski received his MFA in Painting from Northwestern University and his BFA from Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, OH. His work has been exhibited in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and London and has appeared in publications such as *New American Paintings* (Midwest Edition), *American Art Collector* and *Chicago Magazine*. Cosnowski currently lives and works in Chicago and has been represented by Lyons Wier Gallery since 2001.

For more information and images, please contact:

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