

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Gallery 400 (MC 033)
College of Architecture and the Arts
400 South Peoria Street
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7034

Louder

"Gallery Scene: Every picture's worth a thousand notes"

by David McCracken

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Every picture's worth a thousand notes

By David McCracken

GALLERY SCENE

The dark and twisted side of American male adolescence—obsessed with death, sophomoric humor and heavy metal—reaches an apotheosis of sorts in the group show "Louder" at Gallery 400.

The exhibition was curated by Kathryn Hixson and Tony Tasset, and the germ of the idea developed when Tasset, a sculptor and instructor at the University of Illinois-Chicago, noticed that one of his students came to class each day sporting a different black T-shirt emblazoned with the name of a heavy metal band and various iconic illustrations in that distinctive, strange style seen on countless album covers.

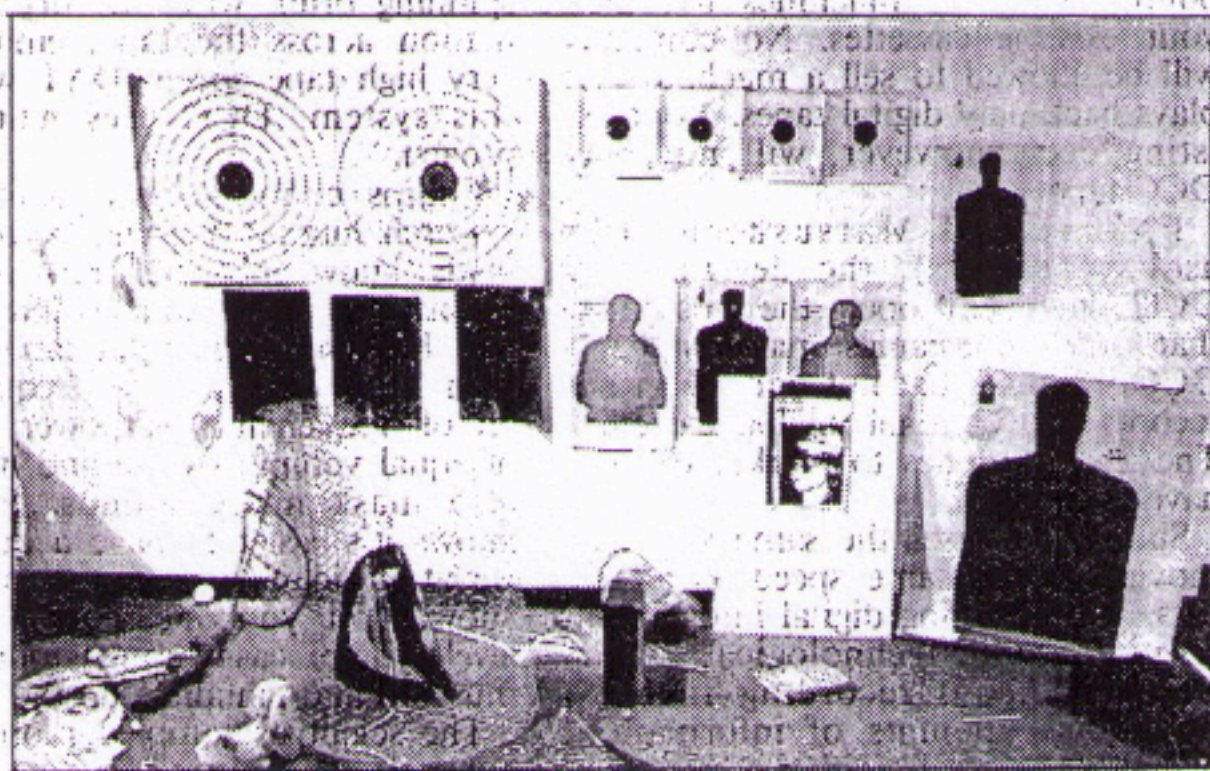
Yet the student's work seemed

to Tasset to be completely divorced from the esthetic, if that is what one must call it, operating in the realm of T-shirts and metal bands. The show is thus intended to bridge that gap by bringing together work from artists such as Mike Kelley, Ken Lum, Richard Prince and others who utilize imagery not unfamiliar to an American teenager.

Thus, there is from Kelley a series of silkscreened banners capturing, in typically queasy and dead-on fashion, the sort of images a bored high-school boy might secretly draw on the back of a notebook during civics class; from Pruitt-Early, a nearly wall-size depiction of the artists, hanged, over a background of beer cans with illustrated cartoons and slogans; and a desiccated fake cadaver in the middle of the floor from gore-meister Matthew Owens.

This curious, morbidly fascinating exhibition brings to mind, finally, the squalid basement headquarters of some 17-year-old headbanger with bad acne and few friends. It ain't pretty, but there's somebody living there.

The show runs through Dec. 13 at 400 S. Peoria St.



Karen Kilimnick's "I Don't Like Mondays" at Gallery 400.

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