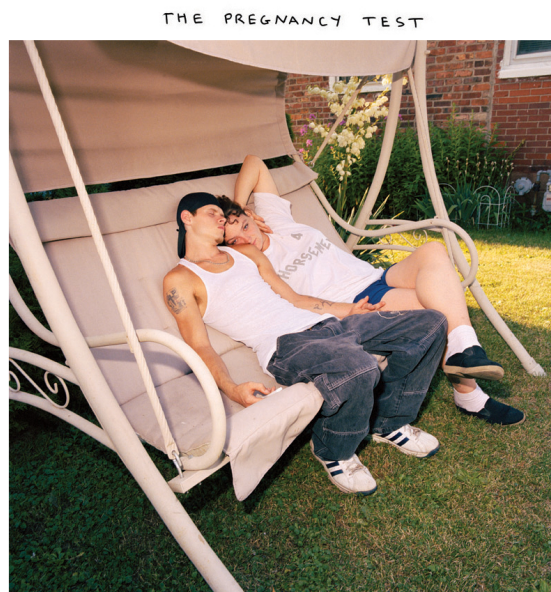




Continuing and Recommended Exhibitions September 2009

Chris Verene
September 5 – November 7, 2009



“Family” is a new book and series of digital c-prints by Chris Verene that offers a window into the artist’s past and documents a present that is at the mercy of alcoholism, poverty, and unemployment. Galesburg, Illinois, a small town where Verene’s family has lived for the past three generations, provides an endless source of fascination that is at the heart of his work. The artist writes the names of people and locations directly on the prints, transforming the faces of perfect strangers into identities that we come to know. This he does by capturing all walks of life, from “Max the Bachelor,” a balding elderly man with thick plastic glasses seated on a exercise bike, to “The Pregnancy Test,” where a young couple seated on a swinging bench either waits for or has already received the results. A young boy named Billy stands proudly in his room, his arms crossed over his chest, but the walls behind him have deteriorated and are covered in graffiti and handwriting more likened to a seedy bathroom stall than a young boy’s bedroom. The landscape is covered with junkyards, clothing lines with denim and corduroy flapping in the wind. Double wide trailers are supported by concrete blocks and adorned with twinkle lights.

A white clapboard house is crushed by a tree and the title explains, “the same day they signed the divorce papers, a tornado hit the house.” In the Galesburg presented here there are no homes behind white picket fences, only those who have very little and are struggling to do the best they can.

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