

ARTFORUM

"In the Cut"

GALLERY LUISOTTI
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"In the Cut" presents photographs by five artists that assume a documentary interest despite the liquidated descriptive powers of photography today. Take Lisa Ohlweiler's seemingly factual photographs, for instance: *Untitled*, 2010, pictures a sunbathing man and *Paradise*, 2009, shows a golf course surrounded by palms. Everyday scenes, to be sure, but Los Angeles is a city whose main industry is generating images of it. Ohlweiler's prints harmonize with that noisy surfeit of pictures.

On the other hand, selections from Sam Contis's series "Deep Springs," 2013–15, with its focus on the titular California boys' college, extend the documenting impulse by other means. *Nude (Jack, Reading)*, 2015, staged with a model, shows the boy with his back to the camera, reading in the buff. Another image, *High Noon*, 2014, is a captured moment: Two cropped figures handle a bloody cloth, perhaps from the rodeo shown in *Hold Down*, 2014. Elsewhere, Contis depicts archival material—an aged note—in *Untitled (Greenest Grass Is in the Deepest Mud, ca. 1917–1920)*, 2013. Contis's patchwork of approaches seems aimed at a faceted view of her subjects.

Cindy Bernard's series "Your Personal View of (Social) Nudism," 2015–, by contrast, utilizes photographs originally made for the purpose of documentation but moves from anthropological specificity toward broader psychological questions. Bernard collects images from nudist magazines showing naturists using cameras. She then recasts these pictures as proposals for as-yet-unfinished television scripts. In *Bus (Episode 1963)*, 2015, a naked woman stands against a mint-green bus while wielding a Polaroid camera aimed at the photographer. Bernard has drawn a pencil graph over the print, reminiscent of viewfinder guides or archaeologists' grids. Her speculative TV episode might one day offer up an exposure of the Polaroid's subject, but for now, the thin lines of graphite ask viewers to measure and compose themselves.



Sam Contis, *High Noon*, 2014, ink-jet print, 24 x 30".

— David Muenzer

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