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# JOHN PILSON

## COLISEUM

**MARCH 4 – APRIL 1, 2011**

OPENING RECEPTION: MARCH 4, 6–8PM



Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery is pleased to present *Coliseum*, a solo exhibition of videos by John Pilson, running from March 4 until April 1, 2011. A reception for the artist will be held on Saturday, March 4, from 6–8 p.m. *Coliseum* consists of four video works that explore the shifting relationships between work and play, talk and action, the daily and the dramatic. The rhythms of language are constants in each piece: heated discussions of arcane knowledge, theatrical monologues, the physical dialogue between a group of athletes. While previous work has been concerned with the theatricality of space, these new works employ video in a prismatic exploration of group portraiture.

At once a conversation and a “search engine”, *Sunday Scenario* is a portrait of male intimacies and shared language. In the non-space of a conference call, three rabid sports fans reminisce, speculate and debate as players and places appear in the form of images culled from fan and collector websites. Memory and memorabilia appear simultaneously in a swirl of “visual subtitles” while the spaces and circumstance (an office, suburban forest, a master bedroom) of each participant tell a different story.

Women fend off multiple attacks in *Rondori*, a traditional Aikido sparring exercise. Each black-belt aggressor moves through an ambiguously minimal space extended by multiple camera view points which both divide and connect the women. Blows are exchanged and absorbed with balletic precision while the thuds of falling bodies create a percussive soundtrack.

In *Wisdom and Charisma*, five men gather in an after hours conference room for a marathon (12 hour) game of *Dungeon and Dragons*. Seated around a corporate boardroom table, the *Dungeon Master*, dressed in red, leads the others in debating pathways through astral planes and portals of pandemonium while stationary, control room-like, cameras allow for the men to appear simultaneously individual and as part of a group, collectively experiencing an imaginary world.

Seven British (and one Canadian) actresses give an impromptu (and improbable) performance of the opening monologue from David Mamet’s *GlenGarry GlennRoss* in The London Cast. Through editing, each performance is blended into a single monologue. The harangue of the salesman is spread across the seven voices while the various interpretations and acting styles suggest competitive performances within a play about competition.

John Pilson lives and works in New York City. This is his third solo show with the gallery. Previously, his work has been included in *Premieres*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2005; in *The Moderns*, at Castello di Rivoli, Museo d’Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, 2003, in *Moving Pictures* at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2002; in *The Americans – New Art*, at the Barbican Gallery, London, 2001; and in *Greater New York* at P.S.1, 2000. He was the recipient of the Bâloise Prize for Art Statements at the 2002 installment of Art Basel in Switzerland. He has also received the Young Artists Special Prize at the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001.