

WINDOW GALLERY SPOTLIGHTS EMERGING ARTISTS

BY JAY BODA

On July 16, a merry group of queer folk could be seen in front of the Leslie/Lohman Gallery at 26 Wooster Street, celebrating the opening of the exhibition in the 30 foot previously unused space currently referred to as the window gallery. It is entitled *Homeland: Portraits of America's Queer Youth*, curated by Cora Lambert, and features large-scale photographs. The prints are mounted to face the street giving passersby a moment to stop, reflect, and be se-

duced by the haunting faces staring at them. Beautifully lit by the gallery's lighting director, Victor Trivero, the exhibition may be experienced best during the dark quiet hours.

In 2008, during a Foundation board meeting, Jonathan D. Katz proposed making use of the long stretch of window space to display works of art devoted to new and emerging artists and encompassing four separate shows each year. Charles Leslie, the Foun-

dation Director, was immediately taken by the idea, and he made it a priority, for much planning was needed to make the idea a reality.

Lambert had co-curated Leslie/Lohman's 2008 lesbian show, which was called *Pink and Bent*. Based on her achievements there, she was asked to be the curator of the window gallery. The *Homeland* show has confirmed the astuteness of the board's decision.

In *Homeland: Portraits of America's Queer Youth*

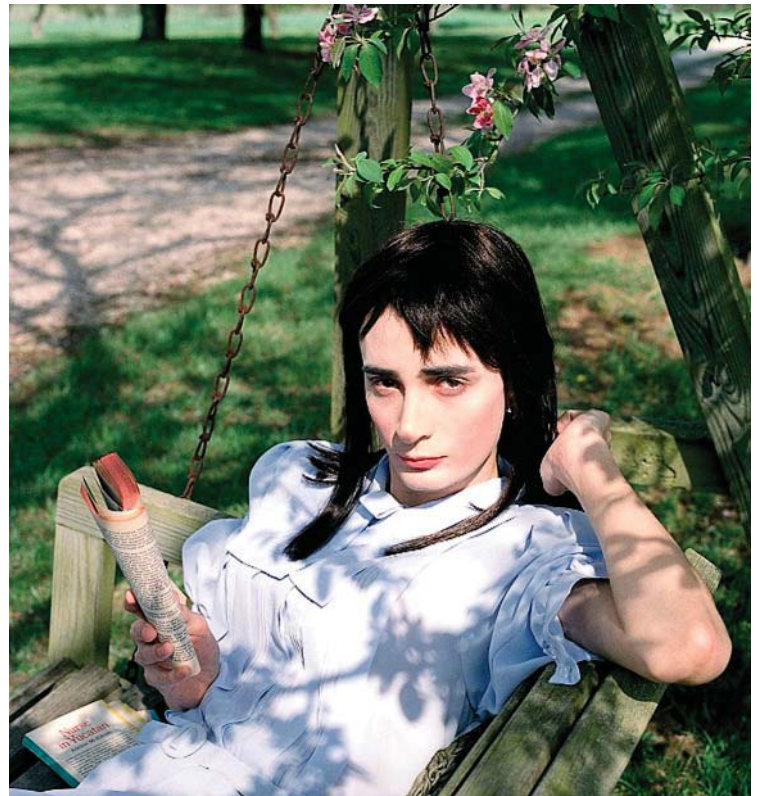
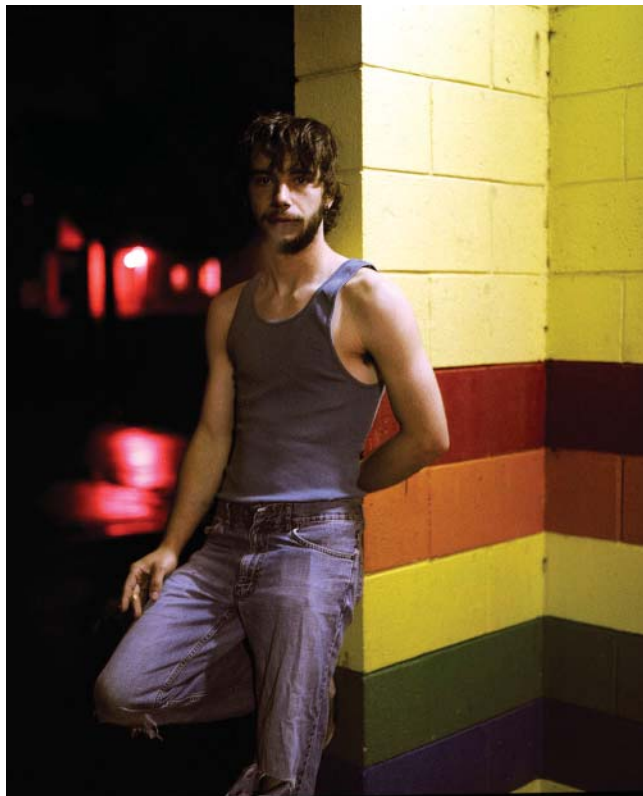
Bret Bell

Left:

Boy on the corner, 2005, C-print, 30" x 30" (1/5)

Right:

Girl reading, 2005, C-print, 30" x 30" (2/5)





(subtitled: Two photographers explore identity, sexuality, and gender in rural and urban America), Lambert showcases the photographs of Bret Bell (b.1982) and Molly Landreth (b.1978).

In many respects, *Homeland* reflects Landreth's ongoing project *EMBODIMENT: A Portrait of Queer Life in America*, a multimedia project that is touring much of the globe and has commitments from galleries through 2010. A powerhouse in creating her artistic vision, she has a Web site (www.mollylandreth.com) and a blog that show her to be an artist of boundless energy and resourcefulness. While she has lived in both New York and Los Angeles, she now works out of

her native Seattle.

Landreth's large-scale C-prints are mainly of couples, some who are undergoing gender reassignment, and others who are asserting their special identities. They all engage the camera head-on. They do not eye it hostilely but confront it directly as if in celebration of who they are.

Bell hails from Missouri. In 2008, he received an MFA in photography from Parsons School of Design. He now splits his time between New York and St. Louis. His C-prints are on a smaller scale than Landreth and mainly focus on loners, often in ambiguous settings and attitudes, but recognizable as inhabiting the grim margins of mainstream



America. Bell also has a Web site, www.bretbell.net.

In bringing these two artists together, Cora Lambert has written that "*Homeland* explores how GLBTQ youth ...are isolated from the major centers of queer culture ...these images depict subjects, both real and fictional, that help create a picture of what it means to be queer in America today."

Jay Boda has volunteered for the Foundation and has written and proofread for The Archive of which he is the editor.

Molly Landreth
Left:
Jalesa aka Cruz,
Columbus, Ohio,
2007, C-print,
42" x 32" (2/10).
Right:
Simon and West,
9 a.m., Seattle,
2007, C-print,
40" x 32" (2/10)