

# Galleries & Museums

## Now Showing

# Earth, Wind, and Tires

In "Borderlands," a series of lush, almost surreal large-format images at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, **Eirik Johnson** presents urban and near urban areas that have largely been abandoned to nature. Often one wonders about the story behind what's shown. In *Untitled (Sweater)*, an orange sweater and a brown shirt are tied together and stretched between trees. It turns out Johnson found them in a creek used by urban hobos, with the shirt covered in moss. *Untitled (Debris)* shows a bundle of sticks on the concrete ledge of a freeway underpass, apparently deposited there by a flood.

Johnson began photographing in his early teens, inspired by Ansel Adams and later by Edward Weston. He and a friend shared a darkroom in his native Seattle, and together they'd shoot everything from old billboards to wildflowers in a nearby mountain valley. Entering the University of Washington as a jazz studies major, then switching to history with a concentration on Latin America, Johnson took fewer photographs. But a year in Ecuador when he was a junior rekindled his interest in photography—and channeled it in a new direction. Everything in Ecuador, it seemed, carried traces of its history, which couldn't be encompassed in the beautiful patterns of the formalist photography he loved. "There's

**Eirik Johnson: Borderlands**  
**WHEN** Through Sat 10/1  
**WHERE** Museum of Contemporary Photography, 600 S. Michigan  
**INFO** 312-663-5554 or 312-344-7104

a huge indigenous population still speaking Quechua," Johnson says. "And Inca ruins. I felt the past was so involved with the present." Returning, he became more aware of Seattle's history and started photographing freeway overpasses and downtown intersections, built on

sites that had once been used by Native Americans for sweat lodges and funeral pyres. To produce stereo images—a format common 100 years ago—he made a camera with two pinholes. The resulting series served as his senior thesis for a double major in history and photography, and the university library bought prints for its collection.

In 1999, two years after graduating, Johnson received a Fulbright for a similar project in Peru, creating stereo images of Inca sites. On that trip, some Andes villagers invited him to go with them on an annual pilgrimage to find the "snow star," a ritual that dates to pre-Colombian times. "Tens of thousands of villagers hike to a site at the foot of a glacier to worship the sacred mountains," he says, "an animistic tradition that was later appropriated by the Catholic church. Several days of singing and dancing are followed by a 24-hour hike." Since then he's returned for the event four times, working on a black-and-white series.

In college Johnson had been impressed by such large-format photographers as Andreas Gursky and Thomas Struth and by the great chronicler of human alterations to the American landscape, Robert Adams. Grad school at the San Francisco Art Institute introduced him to earthworks and to Richard Long and Hamish Fulton, whose walking trips serve as a starting point for some of their photographs. Johnson began taking pictures on long walks through his run-down neighborhood, "trying to find the exotic in the everyday." This urban series, "West Oakland Walk," led to "Borderlands." Both series have roots in Johnson's childhood, especially the time he spent exploring city-owned greenbelts, undeveloped patches of weeds and forest. One next



**Eirik Johnson, *Untitled (Tires)***

to his house, he says, included "an old patio with Roman-style columns. I also remember finding a teddy bear that had been left a long time ago with a note attached to its collar. We thought we had discovered the lost ark."

While in Peru on the snow star trips, Johnson observed how the pilgrims marked their route by placing single stones on piles left by previous pilgrims. For *Untitled (Tires)*, he consulted a tidal chart

and waited days for the low tide that would reveal the abandoned tires he'd noticed on other occasions. Then, before taking the picture, he waded up to his knees in mud to place sticks with colored plastic on the tires as markers. *Untitled (Tarp)* shows the remains of a white tarp against an empty field, the plastic ripped to wispy shreds by the wind and rain, their shapes echoing those of the fennel plants in the background. —Fred Camper

from 1913 on, through Fri 2/17. Mon-Fri 9-5. 312-814-5322

**Intuit** 756 N. Milwaukee. "Art From the Inside," drawings on handkerchiefs (known as *pañeros*) by Chicano prison inmates, through Sat 9/3. Wed-Sat noon-5. 312-243-9088

**Gwenda Jay/Addington** 704 N. Wells. "Bloom," paintings by Jean Larson and Frances McCormack, through Sat 9/3. Tue-Sat 11-6. 312-664-3406

**Johnsonese** 2149 W. Armitage. "Cartography 101," group show, through Sat 9/24. Tue-Sat 11-6. 773-252-8750

**Stephen Kelly** 750 N. Franklin #101. Luis Gonzalez, paintings of "verdant nature," through Fri 9/2. Reception Fri 9/2, 6-9 PM. Tue-Sat 11-6. 312-867-1921

**Leigh** 3306 N. Halsted. Hans-Ulrich Buchwald, homoerotic linocuts, through Sun 9/18. Wed noon-5, Thu-Fri 11-7, Sat-Sun noon-9. 773-472-1865

**Lincoln Park Conservatory** 2391 N. Stockton. *Calls and Songs*, audio installation by Hal Rammel, through Fri 9/30. Daily 9-5. 312-742-7736

**LIPA** 410 S. Michigan #502. "Echoes of Complicity," art dedicated to the victims of the July 1995 massacre in Srebrenica, Bosnia, through Fri 9/30. Tue-Sat noon-6. 312-212-1522

**Loyola Univ. Crown Center Gallery** 1001 W. Loyola, 2nd fl. Susan Slogoff, prints "using titles and names of book authors in densely overlaid text," through Fri 10/7. Reception Thu 9/8, 4-7 PM. Mon-Fri 10-3. 773-508-3811

**Mess Hall** 6932 N. Glenwood. "Unhoused," work dealing with "local variations of a global housing crisis," through Fri 9/16. Sun 1-5. 773-465-4033

**Metropolitan Capital Bank** 9 E. Ontario. Vera Clement, paintings, through Wed 10/5. Mon-Fri 9-6. 312-640-2388

**MN** 3524 S. Halsted. Joan Livingston, photos, installation, and "found fragments," through Sun 9/25. Opens Fri 9/2, 6-10 PM. Sat-Sun noon-5. 773-847-0573

**Nicole** 230 W. Huron. Carlos Jimenez, paintings, through Sat 9/24. Tue-Sat 11-5:30. 312-787-7716

**Northeastern Illinois Univ. Fine Arts Center Gallery** 5500 N. Saint Louis. "Organic Matter," drawings by Noelle Allen and Eric Wert, through Fri 9/30. Mon-Thu noon-5 PM. 773-442-4944

**Parts Unknown** 645 W. 18th. Art "inspired by the graffiti scene" by Scar 1.0, David Gonzalez, and others, through Sat 9/24. Sat noon-5. 312-492-9058

**Polvo** 1458 W. 18th. "Glam Pov," images from government-surplus food labels printed on T-shirts and undies by Manuel Sanchez; Scott Blake, prints with images made up of bar codes; Julio Flores, mini-installation, through Sat 9/3. Sat noon-5. 773-344-1940

**Byron Roche** 750 N. Franklin. Work by Rebecca Shore, Ann Wiens, and other gallery artists, through Fri 9/2. Tue-Sat 11-6. 312-654-0144

**Saint Xavier Univ. Art Gallery** 3700 W. 103rd. "Synesthesia Raj," 19th-century miniature paintings, wooden and bronze sculpture, and other works of Indian art, through Wed 9/14. Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-3. 773-298-3081

**Judy A. Saslow** 300 W. Superior. Work by Cat Chow, Nancy Josephson, and Christine Sefolosh, through Sat 9/3. Tue-Sat 10-6. 312-943-0530

**SAIC Project Space** 847 W. Jackson. *Just Between*, video project by Angela Mobley and Steve Summers, through Sat 9/10. Tue-Sat 11-6. 312-563-5162

**SAIC Betty Rymer Gallery** 280 S. Columbus. "ThickDesign 05," prototypes and other materials by artists and designers, through Wed 9/28. Reception Thu 9/8, 5-7 PM. Tue-Sat 10-5. 312-443-3703

through Sat 10/1. Mon-Fri 1-6, Sat 10-5. 773-248-3100

**Chicago Arts District Exhibitions** 1915 S. Halsted. Richard Keely, sculpture, through Fri 9/9. Thu-Fri 6-8 PM, Sat-Sun noon-5. 312-961-7324

**Chicago Printmakers Collaborative** 4642 N. Western. "Marking Forward," work by new CPC members, Sat 9/3-Sun 11/6. Sat noon-5. 773-293-2070

**City** Water Tower, 806 N. Michigan. "Servings," food-related photos by Laura Letinsky, Brian Ulrich, and three others, through Mon 10/10. Mon-Sat 10-6:30, Sun 10-5. 312-742-0808

**Columbia College A+D Gallery** 619 S. Wabash. "The Cartoonist's Eye," work by Chris Ware, Robert Crumb, and others, Thu 9/8-Sat 10/22. Opens Thu 9/8, 5-8 PM, with "Brief Stories About Cartooning," a slide talk by Canadian cartoonist Seth, at 6:30 PM.

Talk by Seth, Ware, and curator Ivan Brunetti, Fri 9/9, 1:30 PM. Mon-Fri 9-5. 312-344-7696

**Columbia College Glass Curtain Gallery** 1104 S. Wabash. Anni Holm, Masaru Nakamoto, Camila Olarte, photos, through Fri 10/14. Reception Wed 9/7, 5-7 PM. Tue-Wed & Fri 10-5; Mon & Thu 10-7. 312-344-6643

**DePaul Art Museum** 2350 N. Kenmore. *The Louisiana Project*, photo and video installation by Carrie Mae Weems addressing "questions of social justice, racial and sexual identity, and the legacy of slavery," through Fri 9/2. Mon-Fri 11-5, Sat-Sun noon-5. 773-325-7506

**Catherine Edelman** 300 W. Superior. Photos by 13 locals represented in the online Chicago Project, through Fri 9/2. Tue-Sat 10-5:30. 312-266-2350

**Fine Arts Bldg. Gallery** 410 S. Michigan #433. Work by five new gallery members;

Frank Vodvarka, drawings and sculpture, Wed 9/7-Sat 10/1. Wed-Sat noon-6. 312-913-0537

**Finestra** 410 S. Michigan #516. "Abstract Landscapes," paintings by David Cottingham, through Fri 9/30. Fri-Sat 2-6. 847-977-0526

**40000** 1001 N. Winchester. Seymour Perkins, paintings, through Sat 9/3. Sat noon-6. 773-342-4930

**Gallery 400** Univ. of Illinois at Chicago, 1240 W. Harrison. "The Warehouse of Disbelief," work by David Wolf incorporating ladders, crates, and other materials alluding to the space's origins as a grocery store, through Sat 9/17. Tue-Fri 10-5, Sat noon-5. 312-996-6114

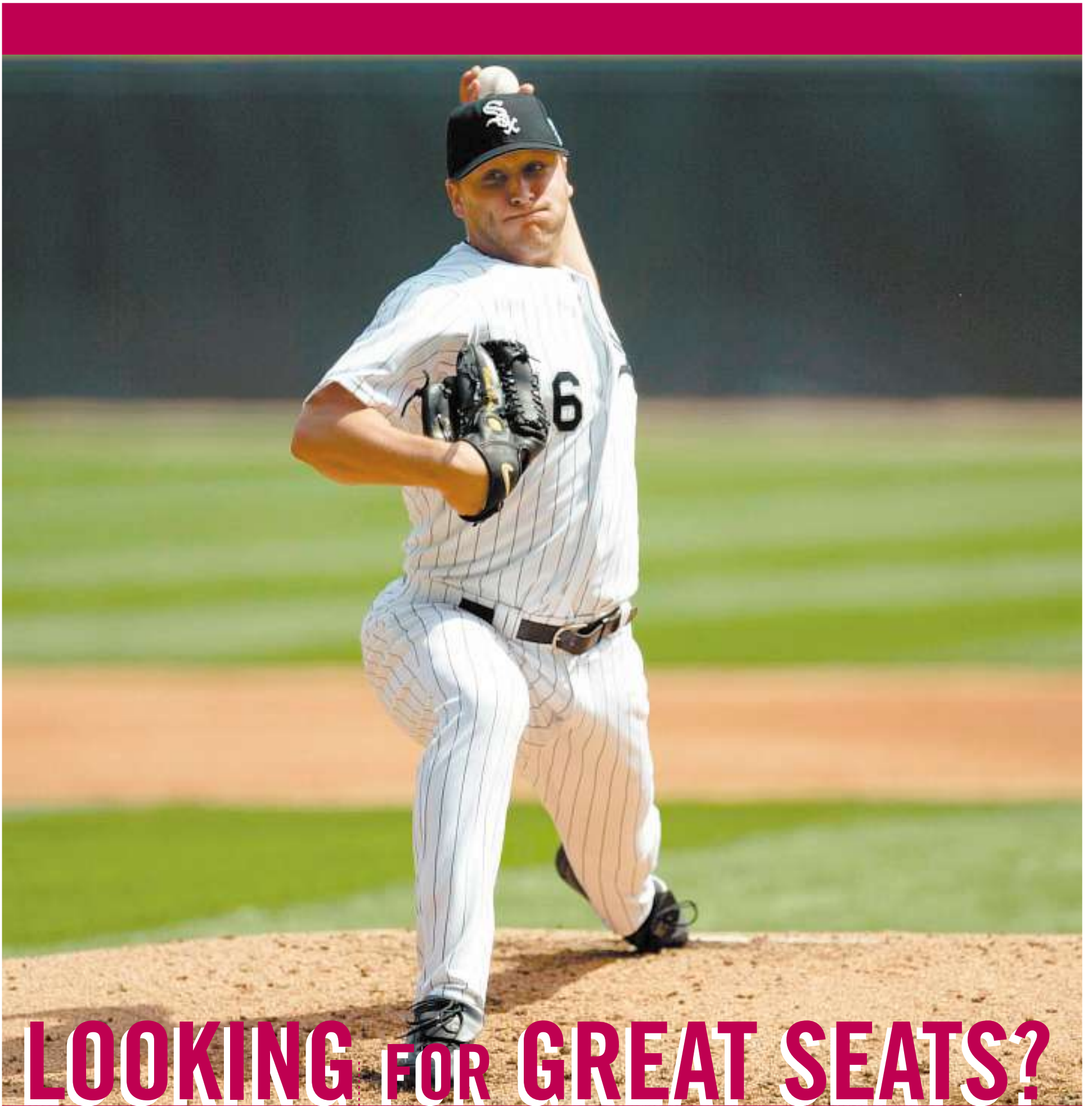
**Giola** 118 N. Peoria, 4th fl. "Illinois Best of Photography," shots by locals from 2004, through Fri 9/2. Mon-Fri 10-5:30, Sat 11-5. 312-850-4487

**Heaven** 1550 N. Milwaukee. Work by gallery artists, plus slides and video of work shown at the gallery over the last five years, through Sat 9/17. Sat 1-5. 773-342-4597

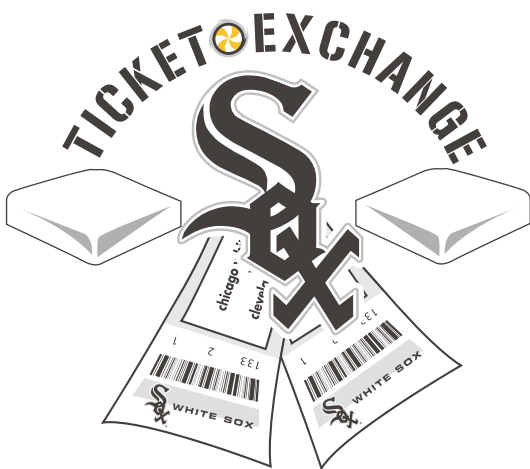
**Hyde Park Arts Center** 5307 S. Hyde Park. "The Ornamental Systems of Louis Sullivan," sculpture and drawings by Bernard Williams using motifs from buildings by Sullivan to address "the ethnographic and stylized peculiarities" of local architecture, through Sat 10/8. Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat-Sun noon-4. 773-324-5520

**Illinois Institute of Art** 180 N. Wabash. Julie Karabenick, Irene Ryan Maloney, Hermes Payrhuber, Jiwon Son, Serene Wise, work that "focuses on the extreme of obsession," through Fri 9/9. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat 9-5. 773-508-0400

**Illinois State Museum** 100 W. Randolph #2-100. "Art in the Abstract," work by Judy Chicago, Julia Fish, and other Illinois artists



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