

Art We Saw This Fall

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Thomas Eggerer

Through Oct. 8. 15 Orient Gallery, 12 Jefferson Street, Brooklyn. 303-803-4347, 15orient.com.

Image



Thomas Eggerer, "Floorgames," 2018. The artist cracks open clichés of Americana and lets the ghosts slip out. Credit... Thomas Eggerer and 15 Orient; Sebastian Bach

The handsome elegance of Thomas Eggerer's collages may at first deceive you. Bold colors and pleasing shapes in this medium could easily feel like a century-old rehash of Kurt Schwitters or Constructivism, but the works in "Selected Collages (2002 to 2022)" zero in on the waning days of the last millennium, particularly the 1980s. Born and educated in Germany, the Brooklyn-based artist, known primarily for his paintings, cracks open clichés of Americana and lets the ghosts slip out.

"Floorgames" (2018) shows the outstretched legs of football players in cleats and padded pants. In "Turn Around" (2008), three cropped rectangles each show cheerleaders' black miniskirted torsos. "Chain" (2021) creates a network of gray-scale pictures, including photographs of silver necklaces, alongside United Colors of Benetton ads featuring models and flags juxtaposed with snapshots of street demonstrations and protests. Enclosed in a tabletop vitrine, the work includes a constellation of black-and-white coffee lids for dimensional flair. One of three images of fit shirtless young men in "Untitled" (2009) features a Confederate flag in the background.

The exhibition, an X-ray of an era in American history, unlocked from memory one of the answers from Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings about his high school days: working out, lifting weights, playing basketball, having beers with friends and talking about football and girls. A reminder that many of those now in power are a product of these same 1980s. *JOHN VINCLER*

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