



B@S at apexart

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Art Review:

By Chris Bors

It would be hard to find a more fashionable forum in which to discuss the artworld than blogs (with Jerry Saltz's Facebook postings running a close second), or at least that's what bloggers would have you believe. Last month a minicontroversy erupted when New Museum chief curator Richard Flood gave a talk at the Portland (Oregon) Art Museum and referred to bloggers as prairie dogs: popping up one after another, no communication between themselves, no (editorial) oversight. The fact that he admitted he had only heard about blogs three months before his talk — about the same time the controversy of museum ethics erupted over the Dakis Joannou collection show *Skin Fruit* (2010) at the New Museum — did not help matters. [Lisa Radon at Hyperallergic](#) broke the story, and questioned Flood's ignorance of the medium while working for an institution that purports to be cutting edge.

While a complete coincidence, the not-for-profit apexart has given over their space to the five-year-old collective Bad at Sports (B@S), who run a weekly blog and podcast. Founded in 2005 by Duncan MacKenzie and Richard Holland, Bad at Sports have chosen to exhibit their physical archive, as well as new project *You got questions, we'll get answers!* (2010), inviting gallerygoers to tape themselves asking a question they have about the artworld, and for which the collective will get an answer. Produced in Chicago, with contributors in New York, San Francisco, London and Zurich, B@S has compiled an audio archive that includes interviews with artists, museum directors, dealers and other bloggers — basically many of the players that make the artworld tick.



Bad at Sports, *Don't Piss on Me and Tell Me It's Raining*, 2010 (installation view). Courtesy apexart, New York



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Everyone B@S interviewed was asked to submit an object that chronicled his or her experience with the blog, with responses as varied as paintings, photographs, found objects and, from Michelle Grabner, a cement block from the wall of an actual gallery: her artist-run space, the Suburban, located in a suburb of Chicago. The painter Peter Saul's contribution — a self-portrait drawing showing a series of sharp objects piercing his groin, tears running from his eyes and a speech balloon with the phrase 'Ness O Vippers' — is another of his self-deprecating studies, possibly about hurtful criticism of his work, although he seems well liked at the moment.

While B@S contributor Tom Sanford's painting of a New York Knicks logo has a direct connection to his place of residence, other works were of a more personal, albeit affected, nature. In an artwork in the guise of a note to himself, the artist William Powhida writes an interview reminder: 'Next time anyone from Bad at Sports comes here make sure to call the "man" and get a mountain of coke and some hot ass strippers. You looked like a pussy.' The collective itself states that while 'there is art in the show, it really isn't an art show, it is more of a gallery sized Wunderkammer, a cabinet of wonders'. Artist Marlene Russum Scott sent along a baseball bat, most likely making a reference to the idea of being a poor athlete, or 'bad at sports', a generalisation that may unite many of the members. Madeleine Grynsztejn, director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, simply emailed back the questions that were sent to her in preparation for her interview. The liveliest work on view, however, is in apexart's window, where a monitor shows animated credits listing Bad at Sports's contributors. Created by B@S member Christopher Hudgens in the style of designer and filmmaker Saul Bass, well known for his masterful film titles, the retro graphics, limited animation and jazz soundtrack mesh seamlessly, while managing to get in a dig at Flood for good measure.

Bad at Sports: *Don't Piss on Me and Tell Me It's Raining* is at [apexart](#), New York, until 22 May