



## ***Conversation VIII: Serious Play***

**On view through August 1, 2010 / 20/21 Gallery**

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### **PUBLICITY IMAGES AVAILABLE (300 PPI JPG)**

**LAWRENCE**— Summertime is perhaps the season most associated with play and playfulness, so it seems the perfect time for a fresh “conversation” in the Spencer’s 20/21 Gallery that goes beyond mere fun and games to explore the topic of play in a variety of ways. ***Serious Play***, which is on view through August 1, features Randy Regier’s [\*Impending Future Bus\*](#), a recent acquisition that uses the vocabulary of toys to create a memorable sculpture that may change your thinking on several topics, both playful and serious.

As curators Susan Earle and Kate Meyer write in the installation’s introduction, “When we play we have fun. If we are just playing, we do not „mean it” — we are not serious. But play may not always be light-hearted. When we watch two teams play a sport the athletes are committed to their activity. The ability to play a musical instrument requires years of hard practice. Cartoons can be playful but a political cartoon uses an accessible visual style to comment on society. Anyone who has been teased by someone who was „just playing” can still be hurt by those words.”

On the east side of the Conversation Wall, Regier’s ***Impending Future Bus*** is joined by a portfolio of woodcuts by H. C. Westermann called [\*The Connecticut Ballroom Suite\*](#). Regier and Westermann both explore American mass culture from the 1950s, including children’s toys and cartoons, to comment on the interaction of Americans with their landscape, race, death, disaster, and an uncertain future. The artists share a commitment to craftsmanship, an engaging, playful style, and an unquestionable seriousness of purpose. The Conversation Wall’s west side features

a video by Pipilotti Rist on the big screen, paired with related works on the theme of serious play, including several artists' books.

### **About the 20/21 Conversation Wall**

On the south wall of the 20/21 Gallery, we bring together a group of objects focused on a single topic of conversation. Among these objects we hope you will hear not only the voices of individual artists and interpreters, but also enter into the discussion with your own thoughts and questions. Just as conversations move fluidly from one topic to the next, so too does this installation change with relative frequency.

We invite you to visit often, mine the collection, and participate in the conversation.

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