

# HAGEDORN

FOUNDATION GALLERY

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## *Suburbia*

Martin Adolfsson, Jonathan Lewis, Sarah Malakoff,  
Brian Ulrich and Christina Price Washington  
February 1 – March 16, 2013



Martin Adolfsson *Parkway Chalet, Bangkok, Thailand* 2006 Archival Pigment Print 21 x 14 inches

ATLANTA – Hagedorn Foundation Gallery is pleased to present *Suburbia* a group exhibition of photographs by five artists that reflects on the ideas of repetition and seriality that shape middle class culture. The show includes pieces by Martin Adolfsson, Jonathan Lewis, Sarah Malakoff, Brian Ulrich and Christina Price Washington and will be on view from February 1 – March 16, 2013. *Suburbia*, created post WWII as an artificial dream world, offered a space in which one could “escape from complexity, age, fear, insecurity, imperfection – precisely the motives that have periodically drawn people to search for new beginning.” As this alternative space has become a dominant cultural model it has produced a pervasive and stultifying conformity.

The psychologically produced need for isolation and protection that the Cold War brought about was the basis for a sense of safety in the world after the wars of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and fed this model of conformity, retreat and wall building. This constricted cultural ideal was a distinct backlash against the free ideas of creativity, exploration and social development inherent in the radical and avant-garde practices of the earlier half of the century—Surrealism, Dada, etc., which championed the imagination and exploration. In its place “safe” and “perfect” havens of commodity culture were installed along with a reliance on a level of consumption that continually replaced the old with the new and “better.”

The contemporary practices of the five exhibiting artists use this formative shape of the suburban imaginary as fodder for their images, which show the repercussions of how this production of desire for a homogenized lifestyle plays out on a micro and macro scale.

**Martin Adolfsson** is a Swedish photographer living and working in New York. The images from his series *Suburbia Gone Wild* are the result of five years of photographing an ever-expanding global suburbia. Shooting in Bangkok, Shanghai, Bangalore, Cairo, Moscow, Johannesburg, Sao Paulo and Mexico City, Adolfsson has recorded the normative standards of emerging middle class domestic space. His images of rooms from around the world, shot from the same point view, are presented in grids of 4-9 images. Adolfsson’s pattern book of suburbia emphasizes the fact that one room, one locale is no more true than another: here is a form of nullified architecture and culture, endlessly rehashed and reconfigured. His work reveals this economy’s omnipresent desire to be well groomed and the deadening and isolated abandonment that this nicety creates.

**Jonathan Lewis** lives and works in London. His series on the interiors of Walmart stores, *WalmArt*, explores the all pervasive system of lifestyle choices and market analyses created by mass production. From the bright, chromatically organized aisles of Walmart stores across England, photographed in vanishing point perspective, Lewis’ digitized, candy colored aisles introduce a near religious environment. The homogeneity of these big box stores partner with the emerging middle class consumer to confirm universal ideals and taste where misfit dreams of elegance and abundance reside.

**Sarah Malakoff** lives and works in Boston. Works from her series *Living Arrangements* trace the empty, but distinctive, rooms and décor of New England suburban houses, many is questionable repair. Whereas the measure of quality in the typical planned communities of the suburban ideal, highlighted in this exhibition, are “gauged by the thoroughness with which (the resident) replaces the old with the new and “better” the alluring high chroma flair and honesty of Malakoff’s homes, with quirky figurative banisters and odd combinations of wallpaper and carpet, fight against the idea of the amalgamated suburbs and rally around the idea of risk, personal expression and independence.

**Brian Ulrich** raised in Northport, NY and currently residing in Virginia and teaching at Virginia Commonwealth University is best known for his work *Copia*, luridly documenting abandoned suburban big box stores and malls of the economic boom. His interest in the interaction between man and material goods and the global economy’s impact on the middle class has been further supported by his ten-year pursuit of vintage photographs from early iterations of the suburban department store. For this exhibition, he has re-photographed these Fifties relics, scaling them between 20 x 24” and 40 x 52,” the latter emphasizing the grandeur and staged appeal of material consumption following the shortages and difficulties of the Depression and WII.

**Christina Price Washington** born in Germany and residing in Atlanta, photographs empty spaces of middle class culture. Her work reflects on the “fastidious, relentless pursuit of perfection played out in the houses and spaces,” left without any natural reference, on the edges of world cities. Washington’s lush renditions of suburban grounds and the light of empty homes reflect on both of these as objects of voyeuristic desire and of a detached techno urban coolness and emptiness that now confronts our entire culture.

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