

Larry Krone (b. 1970, Chicago) received a Bachelor of Science degree from New York University in 1993. Solo exhibitions include Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, St. Louis (2006); Take Me Back (2004) and The Grand Tour (2002), William Shearburn Gallery, St. Louis; Crazy, Mark Pasek Gallery, New York (2002), Patches, Croxhapox, Gent, Belgium (1999); To All the Girls I've Loved Before, Forum for Contemporary Art, St. Louis (1998); Wanted; Lombard-Freid Fine Arts, New York (1996); I'll Never Break Your Heart, AUTOMATIC Art Gallery, Chicago (1996); and Margaritaville, North Gallery, Ringling School of Art & Design, Sarasota, FL (1995). Krone has participated in the group exhibitions and performance installations: My Life Began at Conception, Snakeshow, New York (2005); New American Story Art, Eyewash @ Parker's Box, New York (2004); Mama's Boy, White Columns, New York (2003); Five by Five, Whitney Museum of American Art, Altria Branch, New York (2002); Hash Brown Potatoes, Smack Mellon Studios, Brooklyn (2002); All American, Bellwether, New York (2001); 15 Minutes 2000 (The Art of Change) with Danny Tisdale, Franklin Furnace, New York (2000); Off the Record (Music in Art), Bucknell University Art Gallery, Lewisburg, PA (2000); Whatareyanutz?, Knitting Factory, New York (1998); Circular Circle (two-person show with Dianna Frid), P.S. 122 Gallery, New York (1998); Your Home is an Ideal Place for Crying, Bedroom Gallery Bathroom Gallery, Paris (1997); and A Labor of Love, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (1996). Additionally, he has presented original performances at: ArtistsSpace; apexart; Starlight Bar & Lounge; The Whitney Museum of American Art; the Living Room; Mark Pasek Gallery and Mercer Union, Toronto; Fez; P.S.122 Gallery; Ars Nova; La MaMa; and Dixon Place, all in New York; and The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York; Forum for Contemporary Art, St. Louis; and the Vancouver Performance Festival, Vancouver. Krone's work has been reviewed or featured in The New York Times, ARTnews, The Village Voice, PAJ, A Journal of Performance and Art, The Burlington, and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Krone lives and works in New York City.

Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer is organized by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and curated by Chief Curator Shannon Fitzgerald.

Larry Krone and Family will perform live on October 5, 2006 at 7:00 pm at the Contemporary.

Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer is accompanied by a Limited Edition Artist Box Set that contains: a 96-page, full-color exhibition catalog with essays by Shannon Fitzgerald and Carin Kuoni; a new Larry Krone music CD featuring 14 songs;\* a collection of hand-designed performance playbills; an artist designed pattern to create your own Underpants of Many Colors; a sticker collection; a suitable-for-framing poster; an etched shot glass; and a signed postcard.

\*This CD features 10 songs by Larry Krone and 4 favorite covers of Tennessee Waltz, Over the Rainbow, Shopping for Dresses, and Coat of Many Colors. Recorded at The Fort Brooklyn this CD brings together an impressive cast of musicians and singers like Stephin Merritt of The Magnetic Fields, Kenny Mellman of Kiki & Herb and At Least it's Pink, Christy Davis of Kansas State Flower, Jim Andralis, formally of The Isotoners, Mason Brown of Clint Michigan, and of course family stars Janet and Randy Kennedy on vocals, among others.

Funding for the exhibition has been generously provided by the Arts & Education Council, Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, Regional Arts Commission, William E. Weiss Foundation, Whitaker Foundation, and Friends and Members of the Contemporary, with in-kind support from the Chase Park Plaza Hotel.



cover image: Where You'll Find Me (detail), 2006, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Mylar and Scotch tape, 10 x 42 feet. Courtesy of the artist and realized with the assistance of Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

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# LARRY KRONE: ARTIST/ENTERTAINER

SEPTEMBER 15 - DECEMBER 31, 2006

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Where You'll Find Me (installation view), 2006, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Mylar and Scotch tape, 10 x 42 feet. Courtesy of the artist and realized with the assistance of Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

### Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer

Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer is an exhibition of work by New York-based artist Larry Krone that reflects the zeal and pathos of a passionate maker of objects, songs, and performances. Krone's practice weaves an expansive discourse out of everyday, personal experiences and a fascination with marginal aspects of American popular and material culture. His distinctive language involves a significant level of self-disclosure and elicits his audience's trust and identification. By performing and communicating intimate and even embarrassing moments through his objects, Krone offers up art that is at once starkly vulnerable, delightfully accessible, but most importantly, sincere.

Krone is well-known for his eclectic interests in music, performance, collecting, and American vernacular culture, and this exhibition represents a compelling and entertaining survey of the love, loss, obsession, and family fun that drives the artist's work. Culled from his East Village studio and from various private collections, Artist/Entertainer presents a decade of Krone's work hung salon-style in non-chronological order, inviting visitors to move at will through the works and through the years, much like one randomly revisits a family photo album.

Krone is very much concerned with the connections viewers will make with his art, and he offers plenty for us to identify with. A compulsive scavenger of everyday objects (tin foil, quilts, handkerchiefs, toys, clothing, even Jack Daniel's bottles) and bodily castoffs (hair, teeth, nail clippings), Krone revives domestic throwaways with labor intensive adornment (stitch work, glitter, beading). These objects retain the materiality and associative qualities of their original overlooked, marginalized status, but they gain a shiny new identity. Other objects meant to soften life's sadness and difficulty (pillows, love songs, alcohol, the hankie) are personalized with graphics, text, and signifying titles that address the joy and cruelty that can exist simultaneously within individuals and that demand heartfelt, emotional expression. With simple clarity, romance, and a sense of humor, Krone's works represent his fascination with love, intimacy, and memory, along with their ultimate disillusionment and failure.

Key to the presentation of his two- and three-dimensional works are Krone's keenly crafted performances, in which improvisation, country music, costume, and family meet amid lowbrow stage sets and themed environments, most of which incorporate his signature Mylar curtain backdrops. The idiosyncratic creative musings that inform his songs, objects, and texts are all best revealed in his performances.



left: Take Me Back (performance detail), 2004, Starlight Bar & Lounge, New York.



right: S.O.S., 2003, glass beads, thread, cotton handkerchief, 10 x 10 inches. Collection of Raul Rodriguez.

They are funny, thoughtful, even abject at times, expressing longing and loss, but without the irony and hard-edged cynicism so prevalent in contemporary culture. The exhibition Artist/Entertainer explores the multiple layers and transformative aspects of Krone's often confessional creative process—a process that lends cultural agency to the terrain of desire.

Krone's muse is country music. By adopting the persona of the country music star, he is able to address the autobiographical with humor and irony which distance him from notions of pure authenticity. Krone maintains a genuine fascination with distinctly American phenomena such as the cowboy, a figure that has evolved from western hero, to national icon, to internationally beloved entertainer. And while Krone has never wrangled cows, herded sheep, or ridden in a rodeo, he has adopted the romantic persona of a strong and particularly stylish rambling man, cobbled together from disparate parts of Western mythology. But be advised, his narrative transforms the hard-edged, masculine cowboy of Western novels and country music into sheer spectacle. Krone's on-stage sexual ambiguity and broken-hearted laments playfully undermine the sexual relations depicted in country songs, conflating men's and women's roles until it all becomes a farce. In so doing, Krone is essentially performing aspects of Krone. His work is personal. As an urban, gay cowboy, Krone makes work in which the idea of a fixed masculinity becomes a masquerade, a set of poses that refuse to conform to social expectations of manhood. Krone's feminization or queering of the cowboy myth can be read as a powerful, transgressive act, although it is powerful precisely because it is genuine and so funny. Indeed, Krone often opts for self-deprecation in order to convey both physical and emotional discomfort while reminding us to laugh at his self-scrutiny. He dares to explore matters of the heart with an awkward machismo—underscored by his own formidable, rough-and-tumble, tattoo-covered stature—that is generous and kind.

As an artist and entertainer, Larry Krone gives validity to such aspirations. His sensitive, lonesome, cowboy-esque pathos elicits happiness, sadness, empathy, and laughter. The joy of giving is at the heart of his eccentric practice and it works to keep him real.

Shannon Fitzgerald  
Chief Curator