

**Brian Lund**  
**Curated by Mack McFarland**

Brian Lund works primarily in the medium of drawing. His recent series of works on paper combine the visual vocabularies of two cinematic sources: Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* (1987) and Busby Berkeley's choreographed dance sequences from Depression-era Hollywood musicals. Every character and/or action in every edit of *Wall Street* and the Berkeley dance numbers has been graphically translated to a series of marks. These marks cluster and expand to form a map-like surface. Through an interweaving of these diagrammatic forms, Lund interprets a complex and layered multimedia experience.

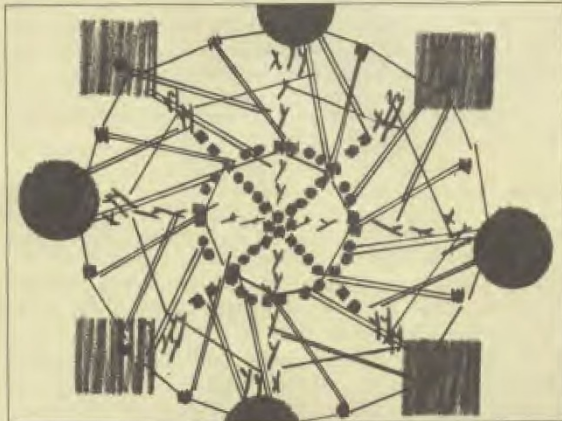


Figure IX: A detail of an untitled drawing by Brian Lund.

Mack McFarland: Your drawings, which map out every character and/or action in every edit of the selected films, are created from a graphical language consisting of colored dots and squares, as well as squiggly lines and bits of text. How and when does this system develop?

BL: I study a film at first, making a list of all the characters and/or events that are present in every shot, noting the cuts in between. From there, I create a set of symbols and marks that signify the main cast of characters from the film on a separate card. These symbols and marks will comprise much of the visual vocabulary for the actual drawing. Next, I'll then complete a drawing by essentially going through the entire sequence of the film from beginning to end, so that the drawing will end up abstractly translating the whole film. I'll usually indicate every fifth cut or every tenth cut by jotting down a number

next to the appropriate place in the drawing. I also use short, straight lines that act as dividers, symbolizing where the cuts are in the film sequence. I can do this, of course, with any film, or any recorded event or production that is documented in time from start to finish.

I also have been creating drawings that begin with a vocabulary from a film source and then completely take it in different directions, becoming highly experimental in the way the marks are expressed, really deviating from the order of the original film. These works no longer follow the pattern of the original film; they become something else altogether.

MM: When I first saw your drawings you were working with *Showgirls*, *Diehard*, and *Rambo: First Blood Part II*. For your show at Smith-Stewart you chose the films of Bob Fosse, *Sweet Charity*, *Cabaret*, *Lenny*, *All That Jazz*, and *Star 80*, and now you're working with *Wall Street* and Busby Berkeley's dance sequences. *Wall Street* seems very timely selection, how are films chosen?

BL: I have a very broad appreciation of all types of motion pictures. In terms of selecting film sources to work with, I usually allow myself time to settle and see what particular film surfaces for me and why. If the right components all seem to come together in an interesting way, my interest will build up to a point where I begin to study the film and chart the edits. Although there are many other factors, the editing seems to serve as a dominant factor in terms of the way the drawings are made. *Showgirls*, *Diehard* and *Rambo II* all feature lengthy running times with a large number of cuts—well over 1000 for each. That, in itself, was a high priority for me at the time. Fosse's films were also comprised of numerous cuts, as well as a highly distinctive (and, for me, fascinating) approach in how one shot cut to the next; I ended up exploring all five of the films he directed. By comparison, Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* was a source that seemed to go elsewhere, with significantly less edit cuts and a fairly standard running time.

I do pay a strong amount of attention to the content of the films I choose as well, with numerous themes and situations that have a tendency in my mind to overlap each other. *Wall Street* is a film I briefly worked with last year and recently took up again, specifically so I could integrate that source with the newly-discovered Busby Berkeley film sequences from the Depression-era Hollywood musicals. With *Wall Street* being a dramatic business film featuring characters that live and work in the world of finance, I really wanted to experiment with the movie's characters and edit cuts and try to explore a number of new visual possibilities with what I had discovered through

Berkeley. In doing so, the main characters from Wall Street would be able to cross over into the Busby Berkeley-inspired compositions, then grow and multiply. Incidentally, Busby Berkeley as a potential source was first brought to my attention by a colleague from Austin, TX, who came to see my show at Smith-Stewart. Good sources can certainly originate through suggestions by other people.

MM: What has been more important for you, Hollywood films or *Sentences on Conceptual Art* by Sol LeWitt?

BL: Currently, it is the former. I've been spending a great deal of time in my studio lately on YouTube, navigating sources in an unpredictable fashion from one to the next, often times with motion picture research in mind. I have yet to add Sol LeWitt into that mix. Right now, it's interesting for me to imagine where that might take me.

#### About

Brian Lund's work has been exhibited at numerous venues including Smith-Stewart Gallery, New York (2009); Frederieke Taylor Gallery, New York (2009); Newark Arts Council, Newark, NJ (2008); Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT (2008); b42 Gallery, Oakville, Ontario, Canada (2008); Moti Hasson Gallery, New York (2008); Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York (2008); The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, NY (2008); The Drawing Center, New York (2008); and chashama, New York (2006). His work has been reviewed in several publications including *The New York Times*, *Time Out New York*, *Art Review*, and *The Journal News*. Lund is represented by Smith-Stewart, NYC.

Courtesy of the artist and Smith-Stewart.