

# Review: Yonemoto restages iconic images with a twist



By Ivy Cooper, Beacon art critic

**Posted 10 a.m. Wed., 05.19.10** - Currents 104 at the St. Louis Art Museum features works by Bruce Yonemoto, including a video projection in the New Media gallery and two photo series.

All of the works are restagings of iconic Western images, with Asian men cast in the lead roles.

"Untitled (NSEW)" from 2007 is comprised of color photographs inspired by cartes-de-visite of Civil War soldiers, with Asian models wearing Confederate and Union uniforms.

"Beyond South: Vietnam (Caravaggio)" (2010) has actors in South Vietnamese and Vietcong uniforms substituting for some of the Baroque painter's well known figures.

The video, "Before I Close My Eyes" from 2010, is a shot-by-shot restaging of a scene from Ingmar Bergman's 1966 film "Persona," this time with an Asian man viewing footage of the self-immolation of Buddhist monks in Saigon in 1963.

The result of all this is a productive friction and compelling questions regarding war and cultural identity. And while cross-cultural role-

## 'UNTITLED (NSEW)



Bruce Yonemoto; Untitled (NSEW 8), 2007; digital print; 24 x 18 inches; edition of 7 with 1 AP; Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York, NY

**When:** Through July 11

**Where:** St. Louis Art Museum, One Fine Arts Drive

**Information:** 314-721-0072, [www.slam.org](http://www.slam.org)

playing in photography long ago

became an art cliché (see Yasumasa Morimura, Yinka Shonibare and others), Yonemoto's work is distinguished by its firm grounding in political history and the specificity of its references to Vietnam.

*Ivy Cooper, a professor of art at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, is the Beacon's art critic. To reach her, contact Beacon features and commentary editor [Donna Korando](#).*

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