

Jonathan Bonner: Front Pockets, November 9, 2001-January 27, 2002

Jonathan Bonner (American, b. 1947) is a sculptor trained in woodworking, furniture design, and metalsmithing. In *Front Pockets*, Bonner focuses on the relationship between one individual – the smallest possible audience for an artwork – and pairs of objects that are designed to fit into his or her trouser pockets. Personal items to which we require easy access (keys, money, Kleenex) are normally kept in front pockets. Bonner's objects – magnets, weights, balls – have some relationship to everyday use but their functionality is preposterous. By presenting them in a museum, Bonner reveals what is often hidden and turns an individual's private contact with objects into a public forum.

In order to connect Bonner's contemporary inventions with historic artifacts and traditional museum practices, each pair of objects is displayed on a separate pedestal, covered by a vitrine, elevated and isolated to invite scrutiny, and lit to accentuate its nature as sculpture, artifact, and product. In the humorously deadpan video, which was shot in the style of an industrial promotion, visitors may observe how the objects are deployed. Bonner utilizes the conventions of display at the same time that he subtly pokes fun at them in a way similar to his humorous swipes at functionalism.

Bonner good naturedly provokes viewers to connect with the pairs of objects he has made. He asks each visitor to identify with this experience: to recall past autobiographical incidents and become aware of his or her reactions. Wit, humor, and mischief replace shame and embarrassment. This exhibition was made possible in part by a grant from The Concordia Foundation.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)
Front Pockets, 1999-2001
Video, color, silent
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.12



RISD MUSEUM

Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Lead Pocket Eggs, Front Pockets, 1999

Lead

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.10



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Graphite Pocket Balls, Front Pockets, 1999

Graphite

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.1



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Pocket Water Bladders, Front Pockets, 1999

Latex; nylon and cotton

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.8



RISD MUSEUM

Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)
Chocolate Pocket Mice, Front Pockets, 2001
Chocolate and cotton
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.9



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)
Pocket Burr Balls with Insertion Tube, Front Pockets, 1999
Plastic and Burdock burrs
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.6



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)
Pocket Counterweights, Front Pockets, 2001
Blued steel and nylon string
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.5



RISD MUSEUM

Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Ice Pocket Mounds, Front Pockets, 1999

Anodized aluminum; ice

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.4



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Glass Pocket Balls, Front Pockets, 1999

Glass

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.3



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Pocket Magnets, Front Pockets, 1999

Ceramic

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.2



RISD MUSEUM

Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Pocket Weasels, Front Pockets, 1999

Stainless steel

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.7



Jonathan Bonner, American, b. 1947, (RISD MFA 1973, Sculpture;
RISD Faculty 2000- present, Foundation Studies)

Pocket Air Bags, Front Pockets, 1999

Latex; nylon and stainless steel

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2004.116.11

