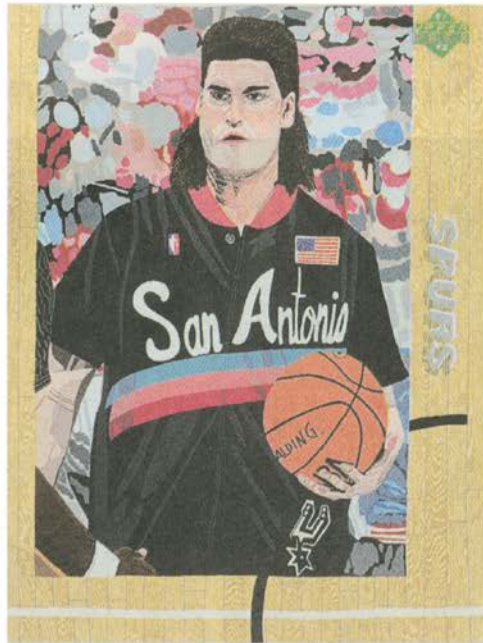


THE NEW YORK TIMES **SPORTS** SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2016

'I was really into this Dwayne card because of the wood grain, as well as his extreme look. I painted his head upside down because I don't like to paint high on a ladder. I flip the canvas and the image, and then paint.

I don't always know of the athletes I paint, and in this case, I had never heard of Dwayne. I was turned on to it when a good friend showed me the image. I purchased the card and had it for a few years before I painted it.'



JONAS WOOD, OIL AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 80 X 82 INCHES  
DWAYNE SCHINTZIUS, 2016

# Drawn to Athletes From Every Angle

By FRED BIERMAN

It is not often that David Hockney and Dwayne Schintzius come up in the same conversation.

The art of Jonas Wood, however, is one of the rare places that Hockney, the British pop-art pioneer, and Schintzius, the N.B.A. journeyman who died in 2012, can coexist.

Wood's brand of off-kilter realism is often compared to Hockney's work, and Wood cites Hockney as one of his major influences. Yet Wood's current show of portraits at the Anton Kern Gallery in Chelsea is dominated by an enormous painting of an early-1990s San Antonio Spurs basketball card featuring Schintzius and his legendary mullet (nicknamed the Lobster).

Sports has always played an outside role in Wood's work. His love of portraiture drew him to sports cards, whose bold typography and abstract backgrounds are elements that Wood loves to experiment with. He is also fascinated by Manute Bol — he has painted the 7-foot-7 former basketball center numerous times. From the lighting and composition of a televised poker

match to a floating basketball to the confrontational stare in a promotional boxing poster, Wood has found inspiration in the unlikely corners of the sports world.

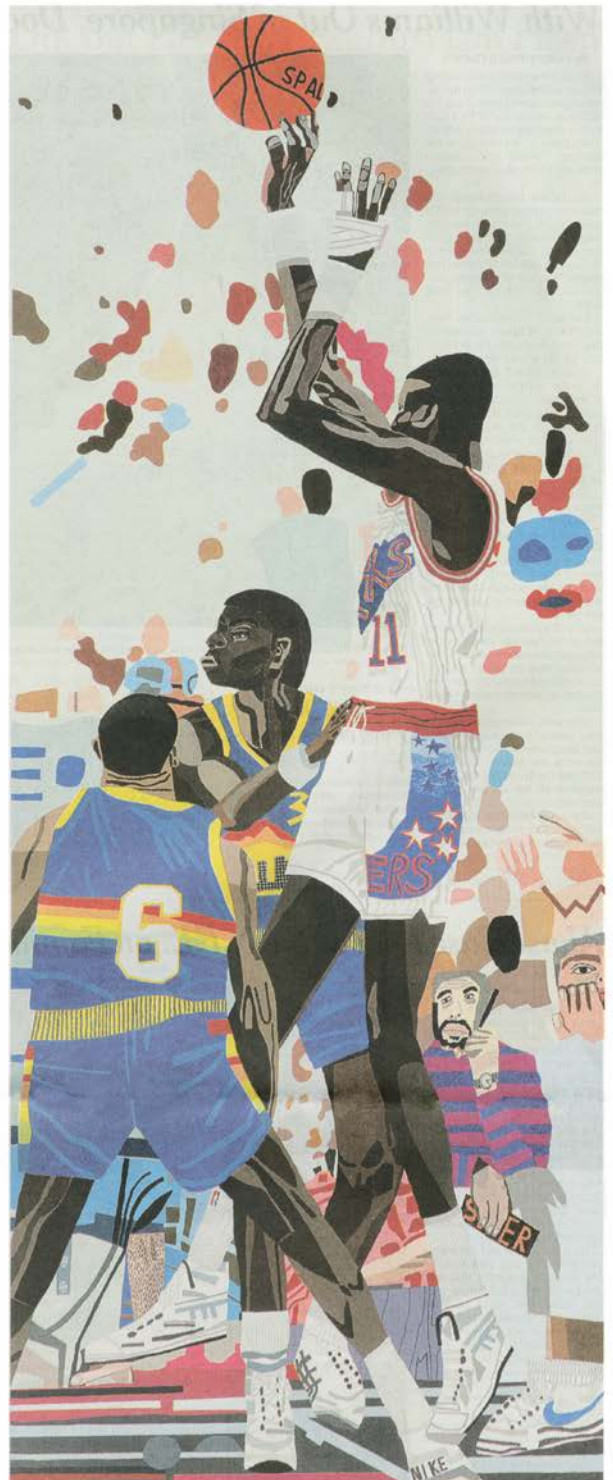
He was born outside Boston, and grew up idolizing Larry Bird and rooting for the local teams. After college, he moved to Los Angeles, where he adopted the Clippers and matured as an artist. The New York Times critic Roberta Smith said his work "presents a highly personal but impersonally observed reality." Museums like the Guggenheim and the Museum of Modern Art feature his work in their collections, and paintings of his have sold for six figures at auction. Through it all, Wood continues to use sports as one of his major themes.

Wood was asked to select some of his favorite sports-theme paintings and explain what drew him to his subjects. Needless to say, it is not often that Patrick Ewing and Chinese scroll paintings come up in the same conversation, either.

Wood's show at the Anton Kern Gallery is up through Oct. 29.

'I watch and play a lot of poker, and I stream live high-buy-in tournaments. This was from a photo I took of my computer while watching the Aussie Millions 250K buy-in. I was super into the stage lights and the pink glow. When choosing what to paint, it has a lot to do with if I am attracted to the image on a variety of levels: subject matter, color, composition and so on.'

'I love Manute. I think I have made eight to 10 portraits of him. He is unique, strange and magical to me.'



JONAS WOOD, OIL AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 80 X 80 INCHES  
MANUTE, 2014





HEAD UP, 2013

JONAS WOOD, OIL AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 89 X 105 INCHES



JONAS WOOD, OIL AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 78 X 58 INCHES

**OREL, 2014**

'For me, sports cards are ready-made portraits. They're so accessible to my practice because they are flat, have bright colors and have lettering. Also, the backgrounds are always blurry, which is exciting because they are abstract, and I have to figure out a way to interpret them.'



JONAS WOOD, OIL ON CANVAS, 88 X 48 INCHES

**SCHOLL CANYON, 2007**

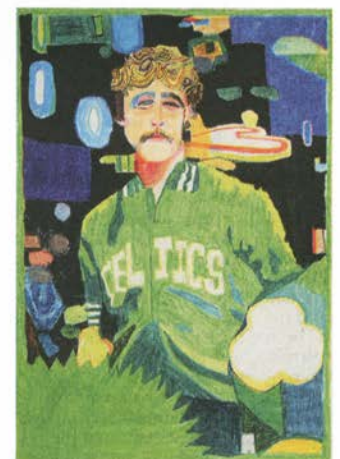
'Scholl Canyon is where I learned how to play golf when I first moved to L.A. I had never played golf before moving to the West Coast in 2003. I really wanted this painting to be flat, like an old Chinese scroll painting. This was in my first show in N.Y.C.'



JONAS WOOD, OIL AND ACRYLIC ON LINEN, 33 X 23 INCHES

**BLUE HITMAN HEARNS, 2012**

'I always loved boxing, and when I started to make paintings of sports players, I was attracted to these fighters' poses in the promotional images. They would stare right at you, which I think is powerful.'



JONAS WOOD, COLORED PENCIL AND CRAYON ON PAPER, 30 X 22 INCHES

**BIRDS CARD, 2005**

'This is the first sports card I ever made. I stayed up all night and made it without stopping. I made a similar one of Patrick Ewing the next day. Larry Bird was a childhood idol of mine. There was a lot of love and emotion put into this drawing.'