

# The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877  
Tel 203.438.4519, Fax 203.438.0198, [www.aldrichart.org](http://www.aldrichart.org)



Charlie White, *OMG BFF LOL* (animation still from mall scene), 2008

## Charlie White **OMG BFF LOL—Video A**

June 2 to September 20, 2009

By now, every bona fide Blackberry or iPhone owner probably knows that the abbreviations OMG, BFF, and LOL stand for “oh my God,” “best friends forever,” and “laughing out loud” in the world of Short Message Service (SMS), which has come to be known as texting.

Charlie White uses this technology shorthand to title his most recent animation, *OMG BFF LOL*, on view at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum from June 2 to September 20, 2009. An exhibition reception was held on June 21.

Based on a two-year study of the behavior of an actual American teenage girl, the animation is part of a larger project called *The Girl Studies* that dissects the desires and social anxieties of our era. The animation is meant to perform as a viable cartoon for young girls, while simultaneously providing a platform from which viewers can critique them. White’s works in photography, film, and more recently animation, often offer fictitious narratives to help us understand and evaluate the underlying realities of contemporary life.

This particular project features Tara and Blakey, two American-girl cartoon characters with pink-glitter accessories, trendy clothing, and commercial desires. These archetypes of the American teen are used to examine their representation from different angles. Set in three looping scenes, *OMG BFF LOL* contains the cartoon’s capitalist manifesto, “having is so much better than wanting,” discussed by the girls in a crystal shopping mall scene. The second and third scenes, set in a bedroom and bathroom, open the door to the interior loneliness and isolation of the two main characters, as viewers observe them surfing TV channels and radio stations, snacking, posing in front of a full length mirror, and crying, as a digital clock marks the passage of time.

White wrote and directed *OMG BFF LOL*, working in collaboration with Chuck Gammage studios, a Canadian animation house, to create the intentionally dated quality of the scenes. He explains, “The three segments loop on a now obsolete 4:3 Sony Trinitron monitor, which conjures the television as both box and broadcast mechanism.”

As part of the project, two music tracks—*We Love to Shop*, the theme song from *OMG BFF LOL*, and the teen-dance remix of *We Love to Shop* by respected DJ Boom Bip—will be available for free download at [aldrichart.org](http://aldrichart.org). In addition, for ten dollars, the DVD of *OMG BFF LOL* will be available at the Museum store, for the must-have consumer.

Museum funding provided, in part, by the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Special thanks to the opening weekend event sponsors: Collyer Catering, Ridgefield Magazine, HSBC Bank, WSHU Public Radio, and the

-over-

Harry Zarin Fund.

**The Artist:**

Charlie White, born in Philadelphia in 1972, has created some of the most arresting and trenchant images in contemporary photography. White's photographs, films, and recent animations dissect the desires and social anxieties that trouble the American collective unconscious. Based in Los Angeles, White is associate professor at the University of Southern California, Roski School of Fine Arts, where he is also director of the MFA program.

**The Museum:**

The Aldrich is one of the few non-collecting contemporary art museums in the United States. Founded on Ridgefield's historic Main Street in 1964, the Museum enjoys the curatorial independence of an alternative space while maintaining the registrarial and art-handling standards of a national institution. Exhibitions feature work by emerging and mid-career artists, and education programs help adults and children to connect to today's world through contemporary art. The Museum is located at 258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877. All exhibitions and programs are handicapped accessible. Free on-site parking. Regular Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm. For more information call 203.438.4519.

**Contact: Pamela Ruggio**

**Phone: 203.438.4519**

**Email: [pruggio@aldrichart.org](mailto:pruggio@aldrichart.org)**