

Wall Text from the Milwaukee Art Museum [2009]

In his series “Dream Job,” Jonathan Gitelson draws attention to the power that imagined personae have on the formation of identity, whether in our own mind or the minds of others. By composing classified want ads tailored to the ideal occupations he imagines for the subjects he photographs, Gitelson constructs a fictional universe where the world’s needs and his subjects’ wants are in sync. This work from the series is particularly trenchant, as it points out the role photography has played in the cult of celebrity – or in this case, the cult of independent film personalities. Photographic images make it possible for a large number of people not only to develop an idea of how another person lives his or her life but to create for themselves a different, albeit staged, reality – as a form of wish fulfillment. “Film Director” suggests this function of photography with a subtle wit that never seems bitter or insulting.