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“Super•Ball”

Dec. 6-28/ If you ever acquired a Super Ball growing up, now’s your chance to rekindle childhood memories and take in a multimedia exhibit that combines dashes of pop culture, art, science and creative artistry. “Super•Ball” is the brainchild of Pittsburgh native Henry J. Simonds, an artist and filmmaker whose credits include founding the International Sphaerological Society, dedicated to celebrating, studying and promoting the iconic Super Ball. Some brief history: Chemist Norman Stingley invented the modern marvel in 1965. Wham-O Manufacturing Co. sold the Super Ball, which was created in one size in a basic gray shade. Additional size options came later, along with a dazzling palette of colors. “Super•Ball,” which includes collaborations with such artists and designers as Robert Beckman and Brian Holderman, highlights thematic explorations in specimen boxes, video and photography (some prints make the balls seem like images of alien planets) and multimedia. “This body of work is a celebration of the history and evolution of this magical sphere and the physical and visual splendor it embodies,” Simonds said in a statement from an earlier show. Look for opportunities to use Super Balls and even to try out a “ballistics-testing facility.” Lectures, performances and a kid’s day are planned to complement the show. Go on, have a ball. [Mine Factory, 201 N. Braddock Ave., Point Breeze; 412/370-0916, facebook.com/TheMineFactory]

“Untitled (lesbian bed #8),” Tammy Rae Carland, photograph, 2002.

“ALIEN SHE,” through Feb. 16/ The feminist punk-rock movement Riot Grrrl emerged in the early 1990s to expose and confront tough issues of the day, including sexism, racism and homophobia, in the punk-rock scene and the world in general. Its dynamic, multidimensional energies fueled and inspired women in areas such as writing, social activism, education and art. That last category is explored at Carnegie Mellon University’s Miller Gallery exhibit “Alien She.” It focuses on seven artists Riot Grrrl influenced to this day and is curated by Astra Supak and Ceci Moss, products of Riot Grrrl thinking. “Alien She” features examples in diverse media — “traditional” drawing, sculpture, printmaking and photography, as well as video, installation, music and new media. The show explores how the movement’s message has evolved and even mutated through time via current and archived works. The exhibit’s title is a homage to punk-rock group Bikini Kill’s song of the same name. As the Miller Gallery website notes of the exhibit, “Alien She” conjures the possibilities of identity, self-determination and subversion. In the face of alienation and bigotry, Riot Grrrl fostered community, action and creation.” [Purnell Center for the Arts, 5000 Forbes Ave., Oakland; 412/268-3616, millergallery.cfa.cmu.edu]