

TEXAS TRADITION OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL FEATURED IN MEADOWS EXHIBITION

Timed to coincide with Super Bowl XLV, photography exhibition will highlight significance of Football to Texas Culture

DALLAS—This January, timed to coincide with Super Bowl XLV at the new Dallas Cowboys Stadium, the Meadows Museum at Southern Methodist University will present an exhibition exploring the regional tradition of six-man football. On view from January 30–April 24, 2011, *Six-Man Football: Photographs by Laura Wilson*, will feature a selection of images from Wilson’s book *Grit and Glory: Six-Man Football*. The exhibition will examine the cultural importance of football to the Texas community, and the local tradition of the six-man version of the sport.

An acclaimed photographer, Laura Wilson was an assistant to Richard Avedon for six years. Wilson’s documentation of Avedon’s creative process and working methods culminated in her publication of *Avedon at Work: In the American West* which was named Book of the Year by the Royal Photographic Society of England in 2004. Wilson became intrigued by six-man football in 1991, and spent the next eleven years taking several thousand photographs of six-man games. Using a Nikon camera, a 35 or 85 mm lens, and an on-camera flash, she employed a pared down technique meant to match the intensity and directness of the sport itself. Traveling through Texas, visiting small, rural towns, Wilson photographed games across the state, resulting in an exhibition that conveys the spirit of the sport and the passion for the game.

Football is an integral part of local Texas culture, and in towns too sparsely populated to field eleven-man teams, the tradition of six-man football became a common solution. With fewer players and a smaller field, six-man football is a game of speed and high scores. As the mother of three boys who played high school football in Dallas, Wilson understood the obsession with football, and became curious about the six-man incarnation of the sport after hearing about the high, basketball-like scores. Following a trip to Moran in Shackelford County one October night in 1991, Wilson became hooked on the game, and began driving hundreds of miles around the state, taking the photos that culminated in her book *Grit and Glory*,

Six-Man Football: Photographs by Laura Wilson will include black and white photographs, featuring players from fourteen towns in Texas. Wilson’s work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, *Texas Monthly*, and *London’s Sunday Times Magazine*. In addition to *Avedon at Work*, Wilson has produced other books including *Hutterites of Montana* (2000), *Watt Matthews of Lamshead* (1989), and *Grit and Glory: Six Man Football* (2003). Since 2009, the Meadows Museum has enjoyed a special relationship with Laura Wilson, who is photographing the museum’s collection of modern and

contemporary sculpture for a forthcoming publication. Laura Wilson lives and works in Dallas, Texas.

Art and Football in Texas

The intersection of football and art is not unprecedented in Texas. The Dallas Cowboys Stadium Art Program, launched in 2009, brought contemporary art into the untraditional venue of a football stadium. The initiative involved the commissioning of site-specific installations by contemporary artists, among them Olafur Eliasson, Daniel Buren, and Lawrence Weiner. The 14 initial commissions, and four large-scale acquisitions, are installed in prominent locations throughout the stadium.

Meadows Museum

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. institution focused on the study and presentation of the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings, as well as funds to start a museum, to Southern Methodist University. The museum opened to the public in 1965, marking the first step in fulfilling Meadows' vision to create a "Prado on the Prairie." Meadows hired William B. Jordan, an American historian of Spanish painting, in 1967 to serve as director of the Museum, and worked with him over the next 11 years to assemble an outstanding collection of Spanish masterpieces.

Today, the Meadows collection of Spanish art—one of the largest and most comprehensive outside of Spain—comprises more than 125 paintings and sculptures and approximately 450 works on paper. The collection spans from the 10th to the 21st century, and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters.