

CONTEMPORARY ART WRITING

PAPERWAIT

VOLUME 17

ACEARTINC.
2014-15

PaperWait 17

2014-15

Contents

4

Foreword

6

Tracy Peters *SHED: Unusual Migration*

A RESPONSE BY KEGAN MCFADDEN

14

Brandon Vickerd *Chopper*

A RESPONSE BY JOE KALTURNYK

22

Fiona Annis *Outlines of Astronomy (The stars are dead but their light lives on)*

A RESPONSE BY DAINA WARREN

30

Emily Hermant *Spatial Drawings*

A RESPONSE BY LIANE VENESS

38

Ming Hon *Chase Scenes #1-58*

A RESPONSE BY SEEMA GOEL

46

Toby Gilles *It Doesn't Grow There*

A RESPONSE BY TED BARKER

54

Artist Pages

60

Cartae Open School

61

Indigenous Curatorial Residency 2015/16

64

Gallery Information

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ACEARTINC. IS AN ARTIST RUN CENTRE DEDICATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT, EXHIBITION AND DISSEMINATION OF CONTEMPORARY ART BY CULTURAL PRODUCERS. ACEARTINC. MAINTAINS A COMMITMENT TO EMERGING ARTISTS AND RECOGNIZES ITS ROLE IN PLACING CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS IN A LARGER CULTURAL CONTEXT. ACEARTINC. IS DEDICATED TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ITS PROGRAMMING AND TO THIS END ENCOURAGES APPLICATIONS FROM ALL CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS AND CURATORS INCLUDING THOSE IDENTIFYING AS MEMBERS OF GLBT (GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED), ABORIGINAL (STATUS, NON-STATUS, INUIT AND METIS) AND ALL OTHER CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.

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Foreword

The programming year of 2014/15 was particularly noteworthy for **aceartinc**. We launched two projects we have been working on for a while: The Cartae Open School and the Indigenous Curatorial Residency.

Cartae came about via many conversations about learning and criticality between myself, Jamie Wright, and (now former) board President, Helga Jakobson and with people in the city's contemporary art community. It became clear that providing an alternative, collaborative, self-directed learning space for artists within a supportive institution was an experiment worth doing. Cartae provides a shared studio with 24 hour access, special workshops/visits from the Regular Program artists, the opportunity to program artist talks and screenings, access to ace's equipment and resources, introductions, regular studio visits from the Cartae Committee, and a year end exhibition. Skill sharing is encouraged via workshops that the Cartaers run for one another and for the public, and self-directed learning is a strong element of the program. The inaugural year was, we believe, a gritty success, the exhibition testifying to the degree participants pushed themselves and each other. The Committee learnt a lot in the process and we are looking forward to working with Cartae II.

In partnership with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, we created the Indigenous Curatorial Residency at *aceartinc* which is funded by a generous grant from the Winnipeg Foundation. Niki Little was selected by jury to undertake the six month residency to work on and realise the exhibition, *Enendaman | Anminigook*, to be mounted in January 2016. This program enables us to work with and learn from indigenous artists and curators and an important organization, the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective. We look forward to supporting the artists that Niki brings to *ace* as well as those who learn about the gallery through this project.

You might have noticed a change in the format of *PaperWait*. For several years the publication has been an anthology of every activity that occurred in or with *ace*—from project rooms and artist talks to one-off performances—really anything that took place in parallel to the Regular Program. However, we are refocusing *PaperWait* on its core: writing and juried artist pages. In doing so we put artists, critical discourse and experimental responses to contemporary art front and centre. The many other activities that *ace* supports can be found in a risographed annual compendium this year and next year via our website.

Jamie Wright, Co Director of *aceartinc.*, moved on to new art pastures in September 2015. Jamie started work in October 2010 and filled the last 5 years with professionalism, enthusiasm, kindness, imagination, hope, knowledge, hard graft, records, and incredible generosity. Many artists have benefitted from his installation prowess and perceptive criticism. Thank you, Jamie, it was a blast. And now a new epoch: Chantel Mierau is the Finance & Administration Co-Ordinator and brings formidable fiscal props with a fertile art practice. It's going to be great.

We sincerely thank our funders: Canada Council for the arts, Manitoba Arts Council, and Winnipeg Arts Council for their ongoing support of the gallery, and we thank our advertisers too; but in particular we thank the WH & SE Loewen Foundation: *PaperWait* can only exist because of their steadfast funding.

hannah_g | Director



SEPTEMBER 5 - OCTOBER 7, 2014

Tracy Peters

SHED: Unusual Migration

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:1

(Re)Build

A response by

Kegan McFadden

All photos by
Karen Asher unless
otherwise noted.

There is a call that goes unanswered in the latest iteration of Tracy Peters' multi-layered, ever expanding project, *SHED*. She's given this show the amended title *Unusual Migration*, and that clue, as it were, suggests this audible albatross. I don't want to talk about the seemingly endless exploration of the landscape by artists both historically and ongoing, or the flatness of this land. I don't want to dissect how the Charleswood location where Peters conducted her experiments and research was near a ford—a naturally occurring low laying water passage way. I can't ignore this all took place—the 'settling,' the ford, the shed, the research, the exhibition—on Treaty 1 territory. The land accumulates: first by inhabitants, then promise, then strife and grief, the stuff of histories. The now disappeared ford that once allowed for traverse across the Assiniboine River might have also acted as a siphon to sift and collect this information, but I said I wouldn't talk about that ford.

Peters lives in Charleswood, a semi-rural suburb of Winnipeg. Having come across a shed some years ago, she was struck by its history. It's not a spectacular shed. It is old, weathered, was functional at some point but is now an abandoned outpost barely held together; a relic of domesticated industry; an all but tumbled tomb. It is a perfect hiding place, too uncomfortable to actually



live in, but reliable nonetheless for shelter. Its thin shell, loose at the corners, its cracked roof, and flimsy unlatched door practically beg to be breached, and so they were—by mice, birds, foxtails, daylight, rain and snow, by the artist herself.

Using this land as both inspiration and studio / laboratory, Peters photographed the prairie dirt floor mottled with grasses and burgeoning foxtails, an invasive seed taking over the region, then had the images printed double-sided on huge sheets of vellum. She cut the translucent prints into uniform strips and wove these photographs, vertically, through the wooden wallboards of the shed. At the heart of this gesture is an intuitive pseudo-scientific examination of the metaphor lying within the resiliency of materials. A metaphor for what, I am still piecing together. The artist has entered a landscape, gathered imagery and indexed it with her digital camera, repurposed it into physical matter and placed it first outdoors to accumulate information from climate and time, and then installed the weathered photographic strips in the gallery to create two distinct sculptural works—*Detritus* and *Uproot*. Placed adjacent from one another, the two pieces, though made out of the same weathered parchment-like material, couldn't be more different. *Detritus* acts as a single 96" x 300" x 12" curtain comprised of the salvaged inkjet print on vellum the artist had woven in and out of the shed along its perimeter. Like flora collected for closer inspection, this data is stretched into a single line, creating a porous and shredded threshold, a delicate expanse. Just as I wasn't going to talk about the flatness of the land, I want to sidestep the ghostlike quality of Peters' sculptural

Left: Installation view.

Right, top: Still from *SHED Root*, Digital Video 1:04 loop, 2013. Photo by Tracy Peters.

Right, bottom: *Disturbance*, Digital Video, 3:03 loop, 2014. Photo by Tracy Peters



treatment of photography. I love it though; her translation from the image to the materiality and placement of the object conjures many questions for me. But like the countless spectres that make up this flat land (oh, here I go again), to investigate the subject of that translation might negate its object. *Uproot* on the other hand is a messy nest of even thinner shreds of photographs. Bundled and installed in a corner near the ceiling, mimicking the barn swallows' nests the artist encountered throughout her years of research, this sculptural object

is spot lit but only perceptible to the wandering eye. Unlike the false wall suggested with *Detritus* that could never attain the integrity to hold the weight of its subject, *Uproot* could very reasonably be repurposed into the domestic, a rearing shelter for offspring, a safe-zone for future migrants of a certain feather.

Any migration that is unusual bids another kind of call. It means a shift has taken place, both in influence and occurrence, or in theory and practice; from pattern to (dis)placement. But what shift? One answer might be in Peters' interest with liminal spaces, the inside and outside of structures but also the limits of experience. The work in *Unusual Migration* considers this slippage, or interpretation of thresholds. This isn't so much homage as mimesis. Mimetic actions, such as the still (re)presentation of a once organic, living, used structure,

Left: *Detritus*, Digital photographs, inkjet prints on vellum, conduit pipe, 2014.

Right: Detail.



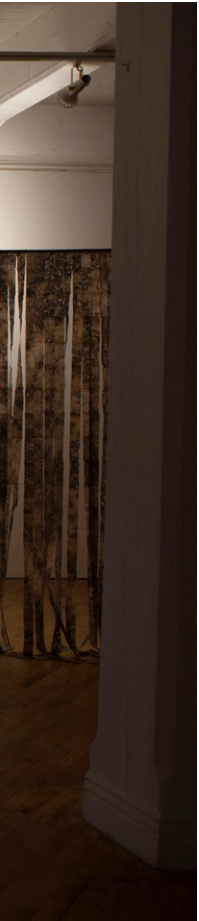


are historically an integral part of the journey that encompasses liminality. This journey is so familiar because it is a meta-narrative, witnessed by us all but only known by some. Liminal experiences take place during religious ceremony and maturation, throughout our lives at every milestone where we can see the past we are leaving and the future we are seeking or even falling into. We only know ideas of boundaries, whether metaphorical, spiritual, or geographical because of our inherent understanding of the liminal. And so, invasion has been happening, naturally and by human interference since the first boundary was put

into place. There is something to be noted here between invasion and migration, but I cannot infer the violence of colonization is a natural occurrence. We are left with two options: to ignore or to replicate.

Peters' interest in mimesis is evident in the way she duplicates patterns found in nature, in its elemental and illusory forms. The imagery she culls from the shed and its surrounding elicits the ghost of these experiences, as demonstrated in her animation, *Lapse*. Having first found enchantment with, and then taken the step to document, the light as it shone through the tiny square window and moved along the floor of the shed throughout the day, Peters sought to recreate the experience in the windowless gallery space. A video derived by manipulating a single digital image, *Lapse* is a playful projection shone onto a reflective surface, only to bounce back and slip slowly across a portion of the gallery floor. We can see the artist is negotiating architectural space, she is navigating the shed and the gallery at once. Peters is well versed in the history of photographic techniques and has extensive experience in the darkroom. Her analog expertise informs her digital experiments. *Lapse* becomes an indication of another liminal event—where we witness the artist's development, straddling a threshold of personal experience to professional presentation.

With the cursory list of topics I want to avoid feeling weighted, what, then, *do* I want to think about? I want to consider the budding ornithologist who, upon coming across an abandoned nest thought she might want to know more about this knotted habitat. I think of her at the age of 7, inquisitive and afire with questions of who / what / why / how since she knew the 'where'. I imagine at first she picked it up, examined it closely, poked at it and held it to the light of the window, the tiny divisions between layers of twigs and dirt became an







Left: *Uproot*, Digital photograph, inkjet print on vellum, 2014. Photo by Karen Asher.

Right: Detail. Photo by Tracy Peters

impromptu microscope of sorts. Then, upon showing her parents and being told the word for her new fascination, she went to the local library and devoured so many volumes dedicated to the science. At first her rudimentary reading level kept her to the flowery and showy books, but as she grew older and became a better reader, her interest became a passion and the books became denser but no less illustrated. I wonder why she went directly to the source of this object—the barn swallow—and not to the larger field of agricultural architecture? Was she guided to the sky, or dissuaded from the edifice? Perhaps she was always looking for a way out, and the bird knows the home is a temporary site, but is always something returned to. The bird knows that to discover new sites you must leave the old ones.

In my mind Tracy Peters might have been that young girl who looked towards birds to understand systems of nesting and migration. But more importantly, Peters is the artist who shredded her data in order to present her research. This installation is lived in but with so many histories there are decisions to be made as to which path to follow, which warning to heed. It becomes a harbinger, a shadow that ekes out the silhouette of time.

Having cultivated the position of Director / Curator with PLATFORM Centre for Photographic + Digital Arts between 2007-2012, **Kegan McFadden** first worked with Tracy Peters on the initial presentation of SHED as part of the thematic series of exhibitions and related anthology, *palimpsest* (2012). He has published widely through various arts magazines and exhibition catalogues, as well as developed exhibitions for artist-run, public, and university galleries throughout Canada. Kegan is an independent curator who remains a proponent of artist-run culture.



OCTOBER 17 - NOVEMBER 21, 2014

Brandon Vickerd

Chopper

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:2

When Words Are Not Enough
(Chop Chop Chop Goes The Chopper)

A response by
Joe Kalturnyk

Foreground:
Chopper #2,
70 x 36 x 32",
steel, resin, foam,
automotive paint,
2012.

Background:
Chopper #4,
70 x 36 x 32",
steel, resin, foam,
automotive paint,
2012.

All photos by
Karen Asher.

I was told of a story once about two lovers. The story wandered through wonder and horror, between love and obsession. However, this story was told over drinks while sitting amongst the rocks looking out onto the Sea of Japan. The story begins with a man and a woman. One day, each on their own journey, they met, felt akin, fell in love and a relationship sprung up. As with all new love, they were inseparable, walking hand-in-hand, lying on top of one another, staring at the sky, imparting their dreams. Now, often with time all this passes and a more convivial, less dependant relationship emerges in which the individual parts separate and become whole once again. But this love was different: the more time they spent in each other arms the more deeply connected and sure of this connection they needed to be. A dilemma arose: "How can we know we truly love one another when we primarily only know each other physically?" The feelings, they felt, that ebbed and flowed through sight and touch and sound may, in fact, obscure their *true* love via the vain deceit of the flesh. And so they set forth a simple plan involving 'Reckonings': if their love could be tainted by means of physical attraction and repulsion they must remove these barriers by removing the body. Then they would be able to love one another without the dishonesty of their senses.



Left: Installation view.

Right, foreground: *Chopper #3*, 45 x 63 x 36", steel, 2012.

Right, background: *Pinstripe #2*, vinyl, 2014.

The first sense to be Reckoned was touch. Each Reckoning began with a grand proclamation of love and failure. The woman declared that she had always admired his feet, wishing to be inside his feet, walking as he did, but it had become a fetish. So he lay down on a long, low table as she took a white, silk scarf from a basket and folded it in half. She then took the looped end, opened it, and fed the other end through it after which she gently took the new loop and threaded the man's foot inside and pulled it tightly around his ankle. With the other hand she reached into the basket and retrieved a long pull saw with an equally long woven leather handle. Placing the heel of the saw at the front of the man's ankle she pressed firmly and pulled, repeating the motion whilst also pulling tightly on the scarf until the man's foot dropped to the floor. Once he awoke he saw that his foot was placed neatly on a long, rectangular, white sheet. The foot was clean and positioned as if ready to walk. Now there was one less boundary between them.

The man said he had always admired and desired the woman's long fingers: he loved the sensation he experienced as they delicately scraped his back. After declaring this, he interlaced the white, silk scarf tightly between the fingers of the woman's left hand until the fingers were plump. With pruning shears he snapped each finger from the hand, catching them in a small basket, and after cleaning them, he placed them on the white sheet, each one pointing at the foot, radiating like a child's drawing of the sun.

The couple continued in this way, each day choosing a body part one admired and conspired to resolutely remove. After some time an array of flesh and muscle and bone were lined up upon the long white sheet: legs severed at the knees placed in the form of diamonds, a hand sawn from its arm, fingers splayed placed next



to another without fingers... Body parts no longer attached and no longer parts of THEIR bodies were now free to become a new being, a being that had neither lust nor revulsion, longing nor contempt—they were a new assemblage free to explore, un-tethered from the feelings of their previous forms.

Then came the next sense; sight. After their proclamations, they took turns plucking out one another's eyes with long silver serving tongs. Having still one arm and hand, the man his right, the woman her left, they could direct each others' hand to the next task...

...which was to remove each other's tongues so no words could ever again come between them, as words are too fraught with meaning. The man said



aloud, “With my last word I say ‘I love you’ then released his tongue from his mouth and, with one quick squeeze of the pinking shears, his tongue fell to the floor. After feeling around for it, she put it into the basket, carried it over to the sheet and felt for its ideal place in the composition. The next day the man performed the same action after she too whispered, “I love you.” He searched the woman’s face for her mouth, helped her ease out her tongue then squeezed the shears and it fell to the floor. He too struggled to find where it had landed before placing it in a suitable spot on the sheet that mirrored where she had placed his tongue, on the palm of his hand.

But even without tongues they could still make sounds and those sounds carried meaning and that meaning may stray, so the last of the senses to be reckoned was hearing. Using a long, flat razor with a mother of pearl handle inset with ebony, the woman pulled down along the seam of each of the man’s ears. The man followed suit upon her.

With only one arm and one hand, no legs to walk, no eyes to see, no tongue to taste and no ears to hear, they gestured upon one another’s chests to communicate, creating their own language. They lay down facing each other and embraced...

Left, Foreground:
Chopper #2,
70 x 36 x 32",
steel, resin, foam,
automotive paint,
2012.

Background,
left: *Chopper #4*,
70 x 36 x 32",
steel, resin, foam,
automotive paint,
2012.

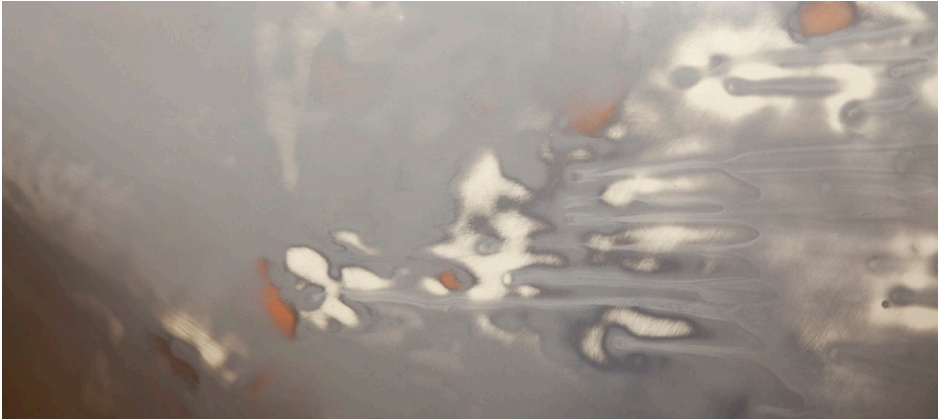
Right: *Chopper #4*,
2012.



I don't recall if there was much more to the story, and, admittedly I may have mixed up some of the translation, but what struck me about Brandon Vickard's exhibition, *Chopper*, at aceartinc. was that it too was a work dedicated to love. The works are about the love of materials and how they shift and change under pressure. Objects of desire are rendered lifeless and then reanimated under Vickard's careful hands.

The pieces are all motorcycle body parts, some of them stock and others custom; "chopper" culture plays heavily in his research and work. He describes being lured into this sub-culture by his love of metalwork and a desire to add a new vocabulary to his skill set. But, he pointed out, something strange takes hold when you immerse yourself in a scene. As Vickard describes it, chopper culture is more than simply building motorcycles, it's about potentials, about pushing form and performance to their limit. A fetish emerges as the mechanics succumb to the excesses of body modification and the result is often a grotesque image of a motorcycle, one wholly unfamiliar to non-choppers, and not one that necessarily has the same road-worthiness.

The other thing I found striking in the work is the inherent violence. A violence that is inferred, unwitnessed. As your eyes scan each piece you begin to recognize

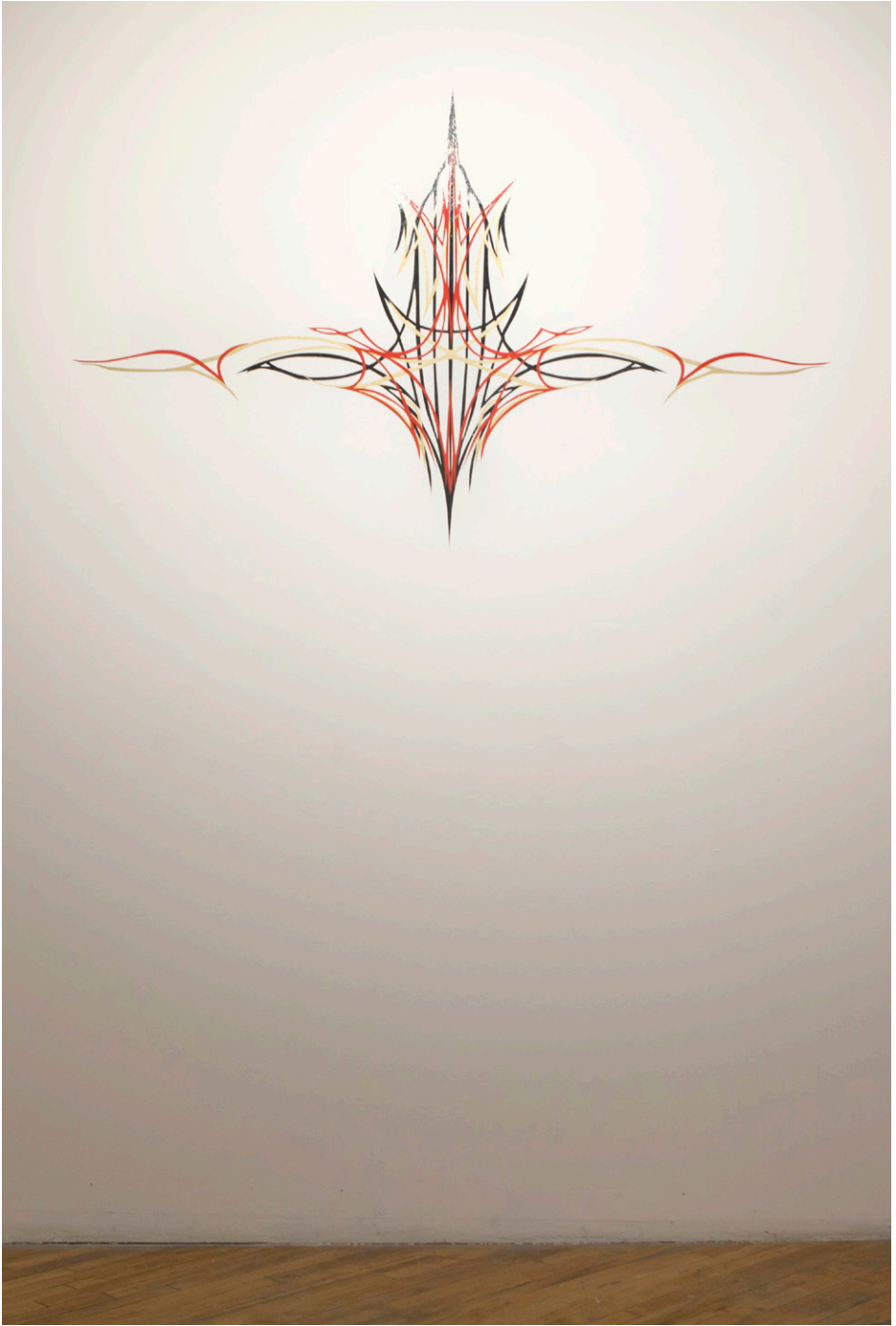


familiar motorcycle parts, its basic elements in different forms. A functional, intact motorcycle comes to mind and your imagination recreates the scene of the crime. You become the accomplice in Vickerd's vivisection simply by envisioning a "real" motorcycle, by bearing witness to the collage that lies before you. The final pieces are neither motorcycles nor motorcycle assemblages, they are something wholly new. By slipping the form of "motorcycle" through his grinder and torch and English wheel, Vickerd gives rise to a new form, ostensibly the elevated one of sculpture, but maybe his works even reach to somewhere else. Perhaps in the act of releasing the function from the form these pieces take on new functions rather than new forms? In a very real way the materials in Vickerd's work create a new utility and it is up to the viewer to work out what that utility is.

Left: *Chopper #2*, details, 2012.

Right: *Pinstripe #2*, 2014.

Joe Kaltornyk is a Winnipeg based artist, designer, director, and provocateur. He is the founding director of RAW:Gallery of Architecture and Design and has helped co-found several art initiatives throughout the city. Kaltornyk listens often, writes on occasion, and remembers at times.





FEBRUARY 6 - MARCH 6, 2015

Fiona Annis

Outlines of Astronomy

(The stars are dead but their light lives on)

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:3

An Ode to Astronomy and Dr. Spock

A response by

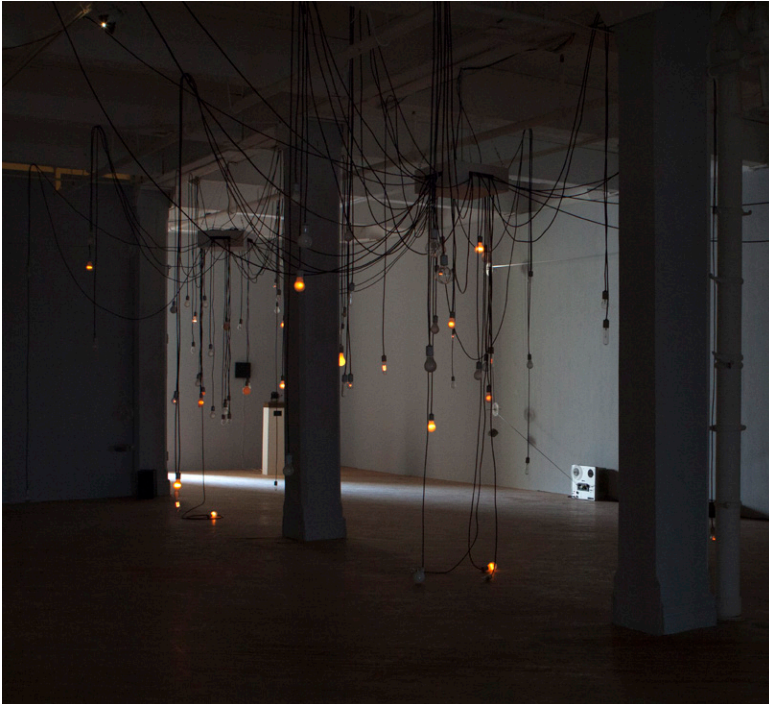
Daina Warren

Untitled Symphony (SN 1987A), Hundreds of light bulbs respond (flicker, illuminate, dim) according to a data feed tracking the death throes of massive short-lived stars. Light bulbs, light controllers, Linux operating system Variable dimensions and configurations, 2015.

All photos by Karen Asher.

I am writing this just a few days after the passing of Leonard Nimoy, and I want to acknowledge his character, Dr. Spock, and the incredible influence and inspiration he had on our ideas about space and what we imagine about it. Spock and the Star Trek crew incited many emotions and thoughts concerning space, curiosity, fascination, dread, excitement, fear, puzzling challenges, and extreme mathematical articulations. We can also easily see parts of the real universe either online or by watching any space documentary where the images come from telescopes, observatories, and various space crafts such as Voyager 1 and 2.¹ Both illustrate that our apprehension of the universe is both simple and bizarrely complex.

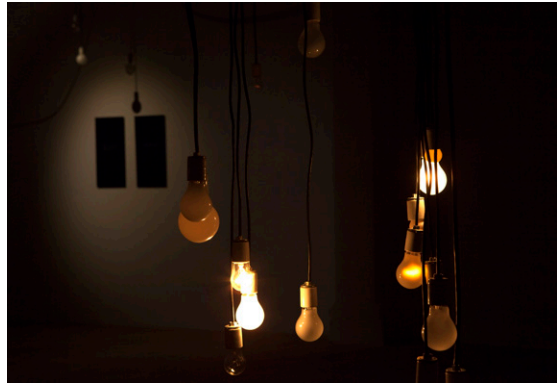
Space was thought to be infinite just a couple decades ago but now some scientists think of it as being more like a cosmological bubble.² There are billions of stellar remnants: planets, moons, black holes, supernovas, wormholes, and gases. The light that all these celestial bodies produce is billions of light years away and some of those bodies may be long gone.³ It makes the mind ache. Fiona Annis' exhibition, *Outlines of Astronomy (the stars are dead but their light lives on)*, is a poetic gesture towards mathematics, physics, and astronomy and ideas about light, time, mass, gravity, and the ephemerality of both celestial objects and art objects.



Top: Installation view.

Bottom: *Untitled Symphony (SN 1987A)*, 2015

The installation created a dark contemplative space in **aceartinc's** gallery. One is engulfed by the obscurity of the room. As eyes adjust to the dimness, one first becomes aware of the minimal aesthetic of the multitude of bare light bulbs suspended from their own electrical cords at varying levels.⁴ Several of the bulbs slowly, rhythmically illuminate and dim, softly incandescent. Annis chose to have the light pulsate to the rhythm of the supernova explosion 1987A, which could be seen with the naked eye when it exploded on February 24, 1987. Scientists believe that the actual supernova happened around the Middle Paleolithic period in our Earth time but it had taken that long for the light event to reach us.⁵ The timing of the light bulbs' rhythm and how we perceive their light is significant. It takes 1 billionth of a second for light to travel one foot, so there is a miniscule delay while the light from the bulbs

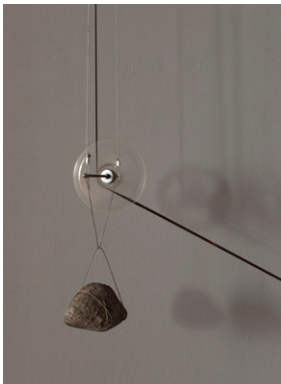


travels to our eyes.⁶ This concept is working on a micro level in the installation but it illustrates the temporal relationship between celestial bodies and the earth.

In front of three of the gallery's walls sit three reel-to-reel machines, each playing a single roll of audiotape that is strung from floor to ceiling in square formations; the audiotapes produce constant, low, grinding sounds that are derived from the radio waves of exploding supernovas.⁷ During the course of the exhibition the audiotape will slowly but steadily erode, distorting the sounds and making them fainter, the audioscape thereby disintegrating illustrating the impermanence of matter. This leads us to the thought that large celestial bodies (like massive stars) live and die, a concept that we humans can relate to in terms of aging, mortality, and time, but which simultaneously seem minute and fleeting in comparison to the universe's approximate 13.8 billion years.⁸

In the far back corner of the gallery is an illuminated, unidentifiable machine on a small white plinth with a sign that says "Please turn handle". A small dark square is mounted on the wall behind it. Upon turning the handle of what looks like an old pencil sharpener, light radiates from behind the dark square and a small white circle becomes visible in its centre. *Star Machine (Halley's Passing)* is actually constructed from an old telephone crank's repurposed dynamo: turning the handle creates electricity that powers a bulb hidden

There is music in the spacing of the spheres, 3 reel-to-reel tape machines looped continuously, sub-woofers, speakers. Soundscape is composed from samples collected from astronomy databases devoted to the sonic interpretation of dying stars. Variable dimensions and configurations, 2014.



behind the dark square which allows us to distinguish a faint image. The image is from a photographic plate from an observatory that tracked the passing of Halley's Comet in 1910 which the artist sourced from a second hand shop.⁹ It's interesting to note that by the time Halley's Comet had swung back into our inner solar system in 1986, it was just one year before the light of the supernova

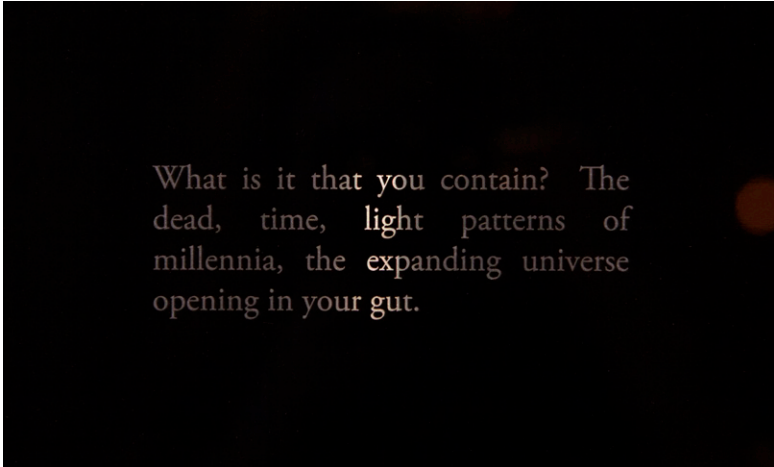


Matter imprinted with its echo (Plates no. 1-6), Six engraved anodized aluminum plates, 30 x 61 cm each. Text source: Jeanette Winterson, *Gut Symmetries*, 2014.

1987A explosion reached Earth.¹⁰ Two major space events occurring almost at once, and that are rarely observed on their own is a phenomenon that Fiona has brought together in her installation, perhaps as another comment on perception of time.

Hung on three of the exhibition walls are six two-dimensional, sleek, mirror-like black rectangles with text engraved on them that refer to various ideas from quantum physicists and theorists, as written about by Jeanette Winterson in her novel, *Gut Symmetries*:

“If we accept Hawking’s idea that we should treat the entire universe as a wave function, both specifically located and infinite, then that function is the sum of all possible universes, dead, alive, multiple, simultaneous, inter-dependent, and co-existing.”¹¹



The viewer's own image is reflected upon the dark, glossy surface when contemplating these engraved descriptions and concepts about time and space. By looking into the black mirrors in this particular location for this one instant, thinking about vastness, "We, and the sum of the universe cannot be separated."¹²

Annis chose Supernova 1987A as the chief source of material for the exhibition because this light event resembles an infinity symbol to her, a sign familiar to many people but in particular to the Métis community in Winnipeg, who have integrated it into their culture.¹³ The Métis flag is a white infinity sign on a blue background, the white symbol representing the mixing of two cultures in a specific time and space of a group of people who have recently been granted treaty territories within Manitoba.¹⁴ The infinity sign is also a loaded signifier in math and science because it represents the idea of a quantity without end, something hard to imagine.

Presently some theoretical physicists, like Laura Mersini-Houghton, think that our galaxy has a limit, and other scientists have even started to guess at the approximate shape of our universe, or that there is even celestial line that can be drawn where our universe ends.¹⁵ It seems that even something as big as the universe may have an end to it. What's next or left after that? Everything that exists has a beginning, so does everything that exists have an ending? Or perhaps its form simply changes if we believe that matter and even energy changes form rather than disappear... Fiona Annis has found expressive, multifaceted ways of reusing latent technologies to describe these

complex ideas about space and what we perceive of our universe, from light bulbs that gently simulate the rhythms of the catastrophes of faraway stars and supernovas, to the use of reflections to show our place in large, dark, mysterious space.

*Star Machine
(Halley's Passing),
Antique magneto-
powered lightbox
with photographic
plate from
observatory
archive (1910),
2014.*

Daina Warren is from the Akamihk Cree Nation, and was first awarded Canada Council's Assistance to Aboriginal Curators for Residencies in the Visual Arts (2000) working with grunt gallery until 2009. She completed a second Canada Council Aboriginal Curatorial Residency at the NGC and curated the group exhibition *Don't Stop Me Now*. She received her BFA from the Emily Carr University of Art and Design (2003) and later graduated from UBC with a Masters in Art History (CCST program, 2012). She was recently awarded the 2015 Emily Award and is Director of Urban Shaman Contemporary Aboriginal Art in Winnipeg, MB.

NOTES

- 1 *Voyager Goes Interstellar*, <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?release=2013-277>, March 3, 2015.
- 2 Through the Worm hole – Season 2, Episode 2 Is there an Edge to the Universe, posted by "The Science Channel", March 10, 2015.
- 3 Plait, Phil, *Art the Stars You see in the Sky Already Dead?*, http://www.slate.com/blogs/bad_astronomy/2013/08/13/are_the_stars_you_see_in_the_sky_already_dead.html, March, 10, 2015.
- 4 Annis, Fiona. *Untitled Symphony (SN 1987A)*; installation; 2014
- 5 Cooper, Keith, *Astronomy Now*, <http://www.astronomynow.com/news/n1202/23sn/>, March 10, 2015.
- 6 Plait, Phil, *Are the Stars You see in the Sky Already Dead?*, http://www.slate.com/blogs/bad_astronomy/2013/08/13/are_the_stars_you_see_in_the_sky_already_dead.html, March, 10, 2015.
- 7 Annis, Fiona. *There is music in the spacing of the spheres*; audio installation; 2013
- 8 Taylor Redd, Nola, *How Old is the Universe?*, <http://www.space.com/24054-how-old-is-the-universe.html>. March 10, 2015.
- 9 Annis, Fiona. *Fiona Annis*, <https://vimeo.com/69016241>, March 10, 2015.
- 10 Howell, Elizabeth. *Halley's Comet, Facts About the Most Famous Comet*, <http://www.space.com/19878-halleys-comet.html>, March 10, 2015.
- 11 Annis, Fiona. *Matter imprinted with its echo* (Plates 1-6); engraved plates; 2013.
- 12 Winterson, Jeanette. *Gut Symmetries*, Great Britain London, Granta Books, New York, USA, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997, page 162.
- 13 Annis, Fiona, *Fiona Annis*, <https://vimeo.com/69016241>, March 10, 2015
- 14 *The Metis Flag*, <http://www.ictinc.ca/blog/the-metis-flag>, March 10, 2015.
- 15 Through the Worm hole – Season 2, Episode 2 Is there an Edge to the Universe, posted by "The Science Channel", March 10, 2015.





MAY 8 - JUNE 6, 2015

Emily Hermant

Spatial Drawings

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:4

Emily Hermant: Spatial Drawings

A response by

Liane Veness

Spatial Drawing IV,
2012. Hand-bent
hardwood, lumber,
clamps. Size: 96" H x
100" W x 40" D.

All photos by
Karen Asher.

Described by Graham Collier as an objective approach to visual experiences involving a tangible object in space, perception is one's understanding of a thing or a complex activity. How we perceive the tangible world is a direct reflection on how closely we have been able to touch it.¹

Walking into Emily Hermant's recent solo exhibition at *aceartinc.* from May 8 - June 6, I was first struck by Hermant's own perception of how a drawing can be conceived. Entitled *Spatial Drawings*, her work was constructed using only the structured lines of a limited palette of dimensioned lumber, bent hardwood, and steel clamps, which transformed into dramatically simple poses whose surfaces revealed the energetic process of their creation. Utilizing the materials' relationship to space, the gestures of these lines were enigmatic and filled the gallery like ribbons of ink on a blank page, impatient to complete an idea.

The lengths of hardwood were compressed to the point of malleability, reshaped by hand and then bound into place by strategically positioned dimensioned lumber and clamps. One's own perception of structural stability and the nature of hardwood were challenged, offering an unfamiliar acceptance of the (im)possible properties of the material. Here the passivity of the "everydayness" of lumber², a common material, is transformed into an active spatial experience



culminating in a series of sculptural drawings that challenge us to find the material beauty in the mundane.

Hermant herself describes *Spatial Drawings* as attempting to “transform hard structural materials, like wood, into something malleable and lyrical”.³ Given that some of her influences are brilliant performance artists such as Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown, it is no wonder that the sculptures feel like a choreographed exchange between the structured line of the lumber and the smooth curves of the bent hardwood. A silent dance of incredible movement occurs within the gallery space, the lumber and metal clamps twist and turn with one another, seemingly precarious.

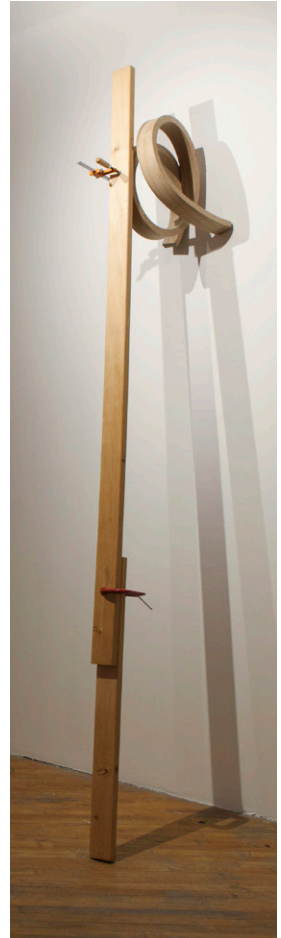
Moving further into the exhibit, one sees that Rainer and Brown’s explorations of power relations resonates strongly in Hermant’s work. One begins to realize there is a commentary on the relation between the different materials, and between the artist and her need to control those materials. The marks on the wood, evidence of the hand bending process, begin to appear like scars. For myself, it was as if I was fathoming the dark secret of the wood’s painful past and I became intrigued as I suddenly began to feel compassion for this material.



Installation view.

The work forced its way across my own personal boundaries. The dance transformed from one between two willing partners into an unequal relationship of complete dominance and forced submission. In *Spatial Drawing 6*, the hardwood twists into an uncomfortable and seemingly impossible loop, presenting a relentless tableau of complete subjection. Red oak is typically used for its strength and beauty, but here it was forced into position by the dimensioned lumber; un-sanded, unfinished, it was humiliated and stripped of its dignity. The scars on the hardwood where previous clamps had been used seemed to testify to preceding acts ending in submission. In some cases the dark marks left from the hand-bending process are strikingly similar to bruises on a body. The clamps and the dimensioned lumber became part of a sadomasochistic game of strength and stability over the natural disposition of the hard wood.

In *Spatial Drawings 2* and *5*, Hermant incorporates a studio broom and dustpan; a piece of bent hard wood physically supports the former, while another loop stands close to the latter. Here again we are reminded of Rainer and Brown's controversial task-like actions, which stood in direct opposition to choreographed performances. In particular, Brown's solo improvisation with a



Top, foreground: *Spatial Drawing V*, 2012. Hand-bent hardwood, lumber, clamp, studio broom. Size: 53" H x 32" W x 36" D.

Top, background: *Spatial Drawing I*, 2012. Hand-bent hardwood, lumber, clamps, wall. Size: 108" H x 200" W x 72" D.

Below: *Spatial Drawing I*, details, 2012.

Right: *Spatial Drawing VI*, 2012. Hand-bent hardwood, lumber, clamps. Size: 96" H x 12" W x 36" D.



Spatial Drawing I,
2012.

long-handled push broom, comes to mind, where she blends the mundane with the theatrical in a single gesture, stripping away the polished surfaces of a finished performance. Standing between these two pieces, which sit at opposite ends of the gallery, I felt caught in the middle of a secret, dark relationship, the tension between the two pieces occupying the room like an uncomfortable silence.

Being able to discern the artist's process of manipulating and transforming the materials beyond their perceived limitations presents a commentary on the act of making art in opposition to the framed and finished product that often becomes the art. Leaving the scars of the process visible to the viewer, Hermant is essentially framing the embodied process of its origin. Which leads to the question, at what point in creation does the artists' own physical process become disconnected from the product? Or rather, in this case, should it be separated?

Mark Kingwell's essay *Against Smoothness* asks a similar question about our experience of everyday objects, saying, "anything that so thoroughly effaces the signs of its own origin would be worth regarding with a skeptical eye."⁴ Applying this observation to Hermant's work, the parallel is obvious. Her pieces reveal the true nature of working with the materials. Wood, which is

both stubborn and persistent, must always be made to submit by the woodworker. In speaking about her process, Hermant herself admitted that it took her whole body to bend the red oak for these sculptural pieces, revealing a relationship of both dominance and respect between the artist, the material, and the process. In this relationship one can argue that Hermant asserts her provenance over the work, declaring an unmistakable authenticity by pulling back the curtain and exposing her own embodied process. Hence she asserts her complete ownership, taking on, we could say, the role of dominatrix.

Despite the causal dichotomy of power and inequality that Hermant weaves into her work, she also manages to cut this tension with a subtle yet brilliant shift in the material balance. The clamps, the lumber, the hardwood and the artist's technical understanding are all essential to the balance of each structure, redirecting our perception of complete dominance over materials to equal dependency. This carries a sense of acceptance and reliance, perhaps even one of accomplishment between the materials and the process involved, the stripped down, almost matter-of-factness of each sculpture, showing them to be in large part the authors of their own conception.

Leaving the exhibition, the question of authenticity lingered in my thoughts. The stripped bare honesty of Hermant's work presented a question for me in my own. Often, only the pristine manifestation of an architect's or an artist's work is presented to its audience, excluding any evidence of the setbacks along the way: the activity of conceptualization and realization is transformed into an objectified version of itself. Hermant's work is just as much about the embodiment of the process as it is about what the viewer is experiencing. Without the assistance of expensive materials or expressive colours, Hermant transforms the mundane into the magnificent by presenting the works as *subject* and exposing what makes them so.



Spatial Drawing V,
2012.



Spatial Drawing II,
2012. Hand-bent
hardwood, lumber,
clamp, studio
dustpan. Size: 46"
H x 48" W x 18" D.

Liane Veness is a registered Architect, who consistently balances her time between teaching design studio at the University of Manitoba and practicing Architecture. She is the director and founder of a newly established independent Architecture office + fabrication shop, which is known simply as WORK/SHOP. Winning multiple design awards in the start up year, her office/shop has found a small place in the design community, offering a unique approach to practicing “hand-made” architecture. Moving forward, her ambition is to expand the boundaries of how we traditionally define the profession through understanding Architecture as the collaborative as well the collective embodiment of its material process.

NOTES

- 1 Graham Collier, *Form, Space, And Vision*. 3d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972),p.23
- 2 Emily Hermant | Artist Talk. <http://www.aceart.org/emily-hermant-artist-talk>
- 3 “The Body as an Everyday Material in the 1960s: Yvonne Rainer and Steve Paxton” Dr. S. Elise Archias. *WRECK: Volume 3*, number 1 (2010)
- 4 From a convocation address given by Mark Kingwell as the Nova Scotia Collage of Art and Design. Published in *Harpers Magazine*, July 2000



JUNE 19 - 21, 2015

Ming Hon

Chase Scenes #1-58

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:5

Chase Scenes #1-58

A response by

Seema Goel

SCENE #1 THE PARK

High-heeled footsteps set a quick tempo. Their hard, distant, clack-clack growing louder as the pace increases. The stark black and white image of a woman walking alone at night is silently projected onto the walls. Her trench coat wraps her in the thin protection of the knotted sash. She is afraid and looks back to find the source of her fear, but the darkness only pushes towards her.

In my body my heart is beating wildly. I am her. The camera tells me she is in trouble, that she needs to start running.

She enters the room, a video image crossed over into the flesh, she is suddenly amongst us. Her live image, now projected on another set of screens, makes the room fill with her presence. She quickens her pace to start running on the spot, her fear doubles and swells. The trench coat, a hindrance to her stride, is stripped off and her shoes cast aside.

NEXT SCENE

Barefoot, she keeps running and strips off another layer. She is running in her underwear gaining no distance. Desperate screams burst from her to pierce the room.

All photos by
Karen Asher.

NEXT SCENE

Another woman, also in her underwear, dashes in. Now the two of them are chasing each other, threatening tickles and seeking a furtive caress. The scream of horror becomes a shriek of delight.

• • •

Ming Hon's *Chase Scenes #1-58*, is a visceral performance and cinematic journey which grabs the viewer by the throat and then whispers jokes into their ear. Inhabiting the rich territory of contradiction, it is everything big, yet absurdly simple. Continuously traversing the chasm between cinematic screen and real-space performance, Hon's group of performers collapses the two into an imagined space inviting the audience to loop back and forth freely. To describe this piece as complicated is an understatement. Both technically and conceptually, *Chase Scenes #1-58* is a challenging and enthralling work.

Imagine a space: the performance area in the gallery is roughly 43' x 31'. The peripheral 5' edge is lined with props. Nails support jackets and clothes making them cling to the walls, a wooden pallet leans on its side, two bedroom

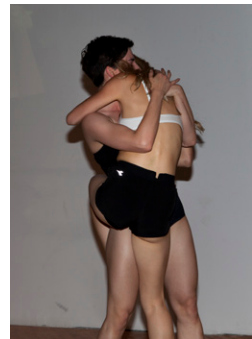


Installation view.

spaces are set up in opposite corners, and a kitchen table with chairs is off in an adjacent area. Facing in from the east and west walls are two sets of two rows of chairs for the audience who face the centre of the room that serves as centre stage. The audience is thus encompassed in the organism of the performance, trapped within the body of action and emotion, and is included in the pile of props. Six 4'x6' projection screens line the space: the east and west walls host titles and prerecorded, contextualizing footage, the 4 remaining screens in the north and south of the gallery project live feed from the performance, which runs approximately 50 minutes.



From the moment the show begins, the performers are in motion ranging through the space in choreographed chaos. Working together to continuously construct each scene, they hand off the roles of performer, prop support, and videographer. The scenes overlap in a blur as one character transforms into another or takes up another position. The scene titles flash up cueing the audience to shifts in narrative, and pre recorded, 'real world' footage informs the live action, either by placing the performers in a parallel setting undertaking the same actions or by incorporating Hollywood and advertising footage. During each scene, two performers take up the tiny portable cameras to stream the live action onto four screens. The cameras are fixed to small, portable platforms





which are held chest high so the operator looks down into the digital screen while filming. This gesture of breaking the direct line of sight between the person behind the camera and the subject and instead shifting it to a 90° angle recalls the brownie box camera, and works to focus attention on the technical apparatus rather than the person holding the camera, thus asserting that the gaze belongs to the camera rather than the person supporting it.¹

The primary narrative of the performers explores the frayed edges of control in intense psychological and physical states. Losing or gaining or wanting control of one's self, situation, objects, desire, fear, imagination, future, dreams, etc. and these fraught states are manifested through the chasing/running that dominates the work producing an atmosphere of endless exhaustion. Introduced to the performance through the keyhole of that first scene, we unexpectedly find ourselves in the long tunnel of, in theatrical terms, the Second Act which spans the entire show. David Mamet calls this Act "the time of struggle" when the protagonist is up to their ass in alligators.² We witness our protagonists endlessly running towards and away some unfixed point.

Employing a keen sense of juxtaposition, Hon alternately moves the audience through scenes of terror and desire, humour and anxiety, bringing the viewers into a tempo that mirrors the action, so our emotional muscle is flexing rather than cramping. She also switches between physical scenes and more psychologically powered drama to induce a body/mind tempo as well. For example, Scene #28 Suburb is a woman (Hon) jogging. When she crosses onto a square of sod a cyclist suddenly cuts in front of her shouting "Hey!" startling both her and the audience, this moves immediately into Scene #29 Dog, in which the sound of a ferociously barking dog accompanies a hand-puppet-dog attacking the jogger bringing her to the ground with her leg oozing ketchup-blood and eliciting screams of pain. Hon crawls to the centre, stands up and is in Scene #30 Rearview, shouting "Get the fuck out of the car! Get the fuck out of the car!" at an audience member until they vacate their chair in confusion. The carjacking is a childhood game turned nightmare. Hon takes the seat, steadies a rearview mirror in the air with one hand and abruptly shifts the orientation of the chair with the other while vocalizing motor revs in what is clearly a high-speed car chase. It ends with the sound effects of a car crash and Hon is thrown out of the chair onto the floor. The audience member regains their seat, but it is now soaked in the aura of its life as a car and I find it unlikely its occupant can forget this. Horror and play overlap effortlessly as the context continues shifting at dizzying speed.

The primary narrative of the form explores the control and "magical fascination of the technical image"³ as experienced through the combination of live projection and low-tech props. The structure exposes our complicity in the cinematic gaze and affection for the tactile, our desire to believe the fantasy even when we know it to be false. As Vilèm Flusser notes, the idea of "objectivity" in the camera-produced image is an illusion.⁴ In this piece the construction of

the illusion is continuously presented before us, and we become aware of our desire to succumb to the trickery in turning our heads to the screens.

During the show the viewer has, at all times, the option of either viewing the live performance directly in front of them, or of turning their head away from the performers in order to watch the projected live footage. This twisting back and forth between the live performer and their avatar creates a schizophrenic continuum forcing us to become conscious of our vacillation between screen and person. We want the magic the lens provides as it crops extraneous information and transforms mash potato



flakes into snow, the mist sprayed on the man into glistening sweat, the cardboard brick wall into a solid background, and the fan beneath the woman's face into the air rushing past her as she falls, forcing her hair to billow into a halo while she plunges to her demise. The videoed scenes are more believable while concurrently removing the visceral exhaustion and vicarious risk that live work elicits in the sympathetic body of the viewer. The apparatus of the camera is revealed as an integral character to the piece, one which constructs the experience only as much as we give it power to. What is comical as live action is acceptable fantasy on screen. Our noses are pushed into our own dirty desire to view the screen and be fooled.

In thinking about the success of this piece I find myself dwelling on the idea of defamiliarization. This term, coined in 1917 by Viktor Shklovskii,⁵ refers to the practice of taking the commonplace, and recontextualizing it to make it new again, essentially, to make us see and feel it again. *Chase Scenes# 1-58* is about making it new again. Our complicity in the camera's magical nature is revealed both comically and poignantly. The performance leaves us vibrating in residual echo, deeply aware of having witnessed something extreme, a thing we all hold inside but do not generally give in to. In both instances, it is brought back to the viewer, it is something in the viewer that is made new.

SCENE# 58 BREATH

A woman lies crumpled on the floor her legs angled beneath her. She is spent. Her chest heaves with each effort to fill her lungs, with each effort to retreat from edge. She can rest now.

Chase Scenes #1-58 was performed on the 19, 20, and 21 June 2015 by Ming Hon, Hilary Bergen, Carol-Ann Bohrn, and Trevor Pick at aceartinc. in Winnipeg. A video and installation was then exhibited 3-18 July.

Seema Goel is a Canadian artist and writer recently relocated to Winnipeg from Dublin, Ireland. Her current practice explores the broad strokes of human activity on the planet (i.e. climate change, colonization, animal domestication etc.). Using tactility, phenomenology, participation, and humour, she employs an eclectic range of materials to engage her audience with these larger issues on personal and visceral levels. She has exhibited in North America and Europe and her writing has appeared in literary publications, radio broadcast, and newspaper journals.

Goel holds an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, an Associated Arts Diploma from the Ontario College of Art and Design, and a BSc. from McGill. She is indebted to the many mentors and teachers who have offered their encouragement and critique over the years, in particular David Garneau, Thalia Field, and Lindsay French.

NOTES

- 1 The general concept of gaze refers to the power intrinsic to looking/observing and choosing what and how something is presented. It includes the specific perspective of the maker/photographer, not just their physical act of seeing but rather their perspective through class, gender, socio-economic situation etc. While Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault provided early articulations of this concept, Laura Mulvey went on to dissect it with specific reference to film. She integrates the gaze of the spectator as well as that of the camera in terms of gendered power relationships. Hon's work exposes the spectator's fetishistic gaze as presented by Mulvey, where "the represented figure...becomes reassuring rather than dangerous" (Mulvey, 1975). At the same time it eliminates the specificity of the videographer and focuses attention on the apparatus, the camera, as the primary eye.
- 2 David Mamet, *Three Uses of the Knife*, Vintage Books, NY. 1998. pages 38-39
- 3 Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, Reaktion Books, London, 1983 (Kindle edition 2012) The technical image references any image produced by a camera apparatus as opposed to the hand.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Viktor Shklovskii, 1917, *Art as Technique*.



JULY 15 - 17, 2015

Toby Gillies

It Doesn't Grow There

CRITICAL DISTANCE VOL 20:6

Toby Gillies: It Doesn't Grow There

A response by

Ted Barker

*It Doesn't Grow
There, ink on
paper, 2015.*

The growth that happens around us, unattended to and overlooked, is, to Toby Gillies, a source of inspiration to be harvested. *It Doesn't Grow There*, an installation of new work held in a shipping container, is the outcome of a search for this unassuming flora. While the themes of botanical growth, discovery, and documentation are apparent a parallel process exists in the development of his concepts.

The act of meandering and discovery is always present in Gillies' work. He works intuitively, constructing and deconstructing themes and images as they dictate. As one tends to a plant, he nurtures what arises and, with a sensitive hand, allows it to grow organically. He is aware that the ideas and growth that come naturally will inevitably be the most successful. Some growth arises from undoubtedly fertile ground while other concepts may appear like industrious plants that push through the cracks in a parking lot.

Gillies created two series simultaneously, a group of drawings with the same name as the exhibition and *Parking Lot Portraits*, which were hung within a standard steel shipping container in downtown Winnipeg, the Manitoba Artist Run Centres Coalition shared exhibition space during the Fringe Festival (Gillies was aceartinc.'s artist). The first series features six carefully rendered



drawings of gardeners working in hard edged patches of black soil. Staring at these across the exhibition space hangs the other, parallel series: simplified faces made from the scanned images of leaves found in six Winnipeg parking lots.

The composition within each series is orderly and compartmentalized. Like the containment of the exhibition within the shipping container, the images all appear to exist in a well-defined, fabricated space. The plants and geometric gardens seem to be gleaned from the world outside and reassembled into bizarre, impossible forms. However, the drawn gardens contain physical impossibilities and the precise assembly and organization of the collaged leaves betray the fact that they were found growing wildly not long ago. There is playfulness in Gillies' work but also a consistent ambiguity and an ominous cast that keeps the viewer from placing it into any familiar territory. It hovers alone somewhere between the fully abstract and the landscape around us.

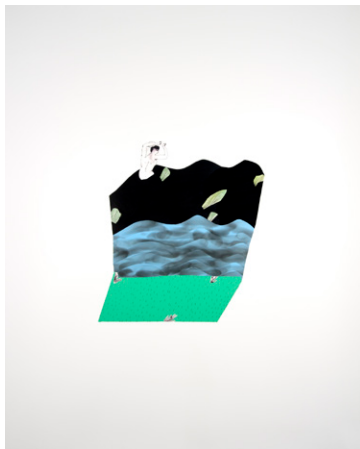
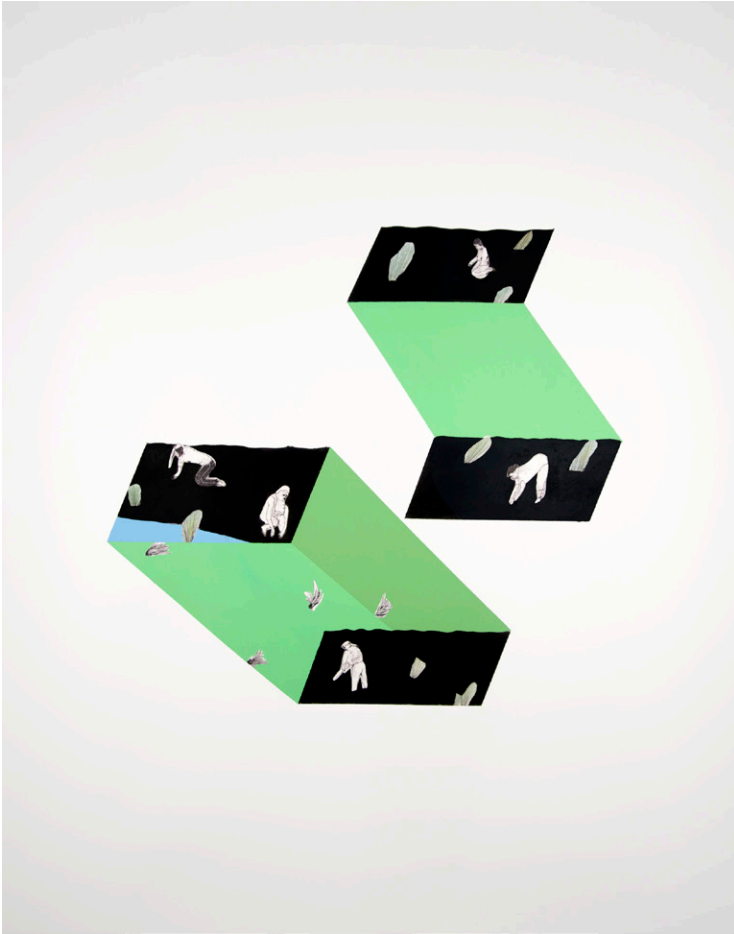
The six large, mixed media drawings in the *It Doesn't Grow There* series contain bizarre and autonomous worlds. Slightly deformed figures occupy black garden beds peppered with islands of plant growth. Bordering the soil are cleanly defined areas of green manicured lawns. In one piece there is a



Installation views.

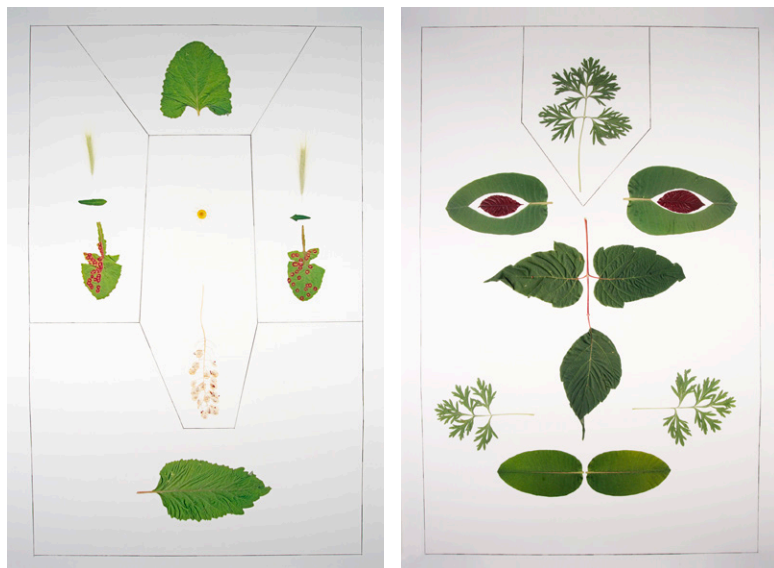
truncated river rendered in part with soot. Each composition floats in a neutral space defined by the white background of the paper. The scenes are constructed with impossible perspectives and purposefully vague landscape forms. The subjects are familiar but could not exist in the world the viewer inhabits. Each compositional decision was made considering the series as a whole, developing naturally first with figures, vague in their actions and form, and then with consecutive layers of drawn medium. Each step in the process was a reaction to the previous, either framing a certain element or paving over it. There is a push-pull in the compositions, some forms are obscured and then re-exposed through the erasure of the medium. Some elements are clearly outlined while others have been partially drawn over, hinting at potential hidden layers.

The most overt forms in the drawings are the slightly deformed ink figures. Each body is loosely drawn and then sprayed with water. The line-work of the ink is more suggestive than representational and the bleeding of the saturated ink figures furthers the ambiguity of their actions. The figures appear to toil fruitlessly in a harsh black, charcoal earth. Seemingly ignorant to much of what is around them, they are stubbornly gardening empty soil while nearby plants



*It Doesn't Grow
There, ink on
paper, 2015.*

grow. If the figures were to simply look around them, they would notice the growing plants waiting to be tended to. The posture of the figures suggest they are focused and unwavering in their ignorance, never do they connect with the plants around them. Like the proverbial ostrich with its head in the sand, these people dig with hands and feet in the soil, oblivious to any growth that is out of their sight. Nothing begets nothing is the cycle each of them appear to forever inhabit.



*Portrait from
Parking Lot, digital
print, 2015.*

The series *Parking Lot Portraits* hangs opposite the strange gardeners. Each piece is comprised of a simplified human face made with plants harvested from various parking lots around Winnipeg. The large prints, composed of scanned images of the pressed leaves, seem intent on watching the figures opposite who ignore them: more greenery that the figures do not acknowledge.

The six digital collages were started midway through the process of creating the drawings and it is clear that these pieces were a response to the neglected plants in that series. This work started by visiting a parking lot and collecting plant specimens growing naturally there. More plants were then collected at consecutive parking lots based on their uniqueness to that space and preferential choice was given to plants not found in previous locations. Thus each lot had a distinct personality from which a portrait was made.

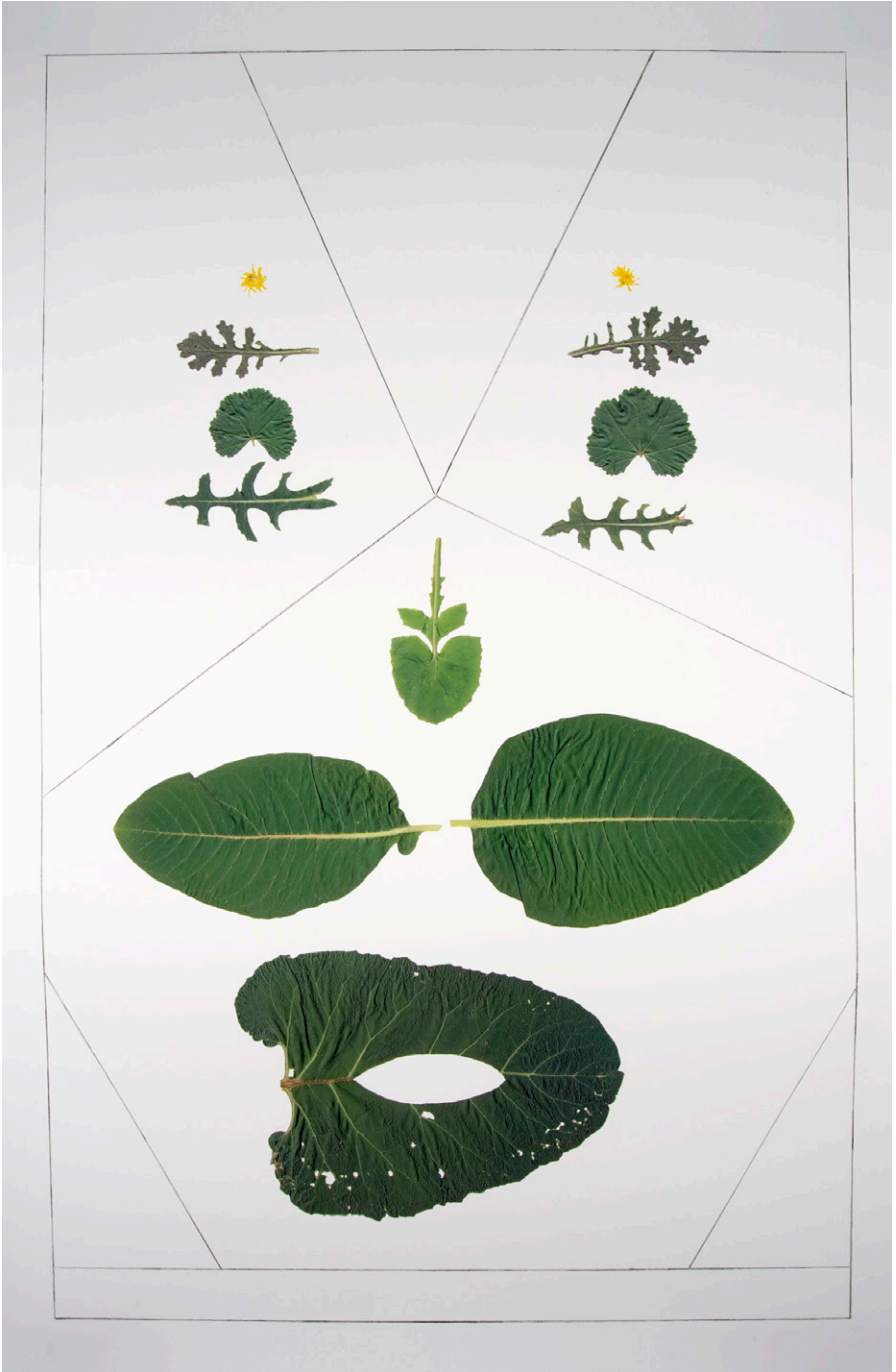
Surface parking lots exist as islands in our city, clearly defined, bordered, but often ignored. Their plants exist because of perseverance and every lot has developed a unique ecosystem. Each lot Gillies used was considered not for its context or location but as autonomous biospheres (a motif he applied to the drawings as well) within which unintended growth exists and flourishes.

The collage portraits illustrate individual complexity within superficial banality. As in the life of a human, each lot has produced a quiet abundance of natural growth. These elements wait around us, underwhelming and static. They are, however, material we can all access, a commonality that we can arrange into uniqueness. The question Gillies asks in this work is: Why tend to self seeding concepts, when we have access to already rooted and established ideas? We have little control over the former's development but it is in our interest to give attention to them; we may not know why they grow where they do, but they push up for a reason. Seeds are planted at points in our past and grow strong because of the environment or their own potency, and it is through them that we create work that is authentic and unique to ourselves.

In each human's subconscious is a constantly developing catalogue of ideas and visuals amassed through life experience and memory. From this array certain recurring or potent themes surface. Like the plants that push their way through concrete, it is these ideas that Gillies chooses to work with. In the final stages, he added large graphic areas of green to the series of drawings. Representative of orderly and manicured lawns, they depict the banality of contrived or forced growth. These green spaces inevitably lack depth and rely solely on a superficial prettiness.

It Doesn't Grow There is an acknowledgment of organic, wild process, both artistic and natural. It is work about work, giving form to the search and development of concepts. On one side we witness the ineffectual industry of searching for something within a prescribed but barren area. Directly opposing is a series of faces, comparatively god-like, a testament to the cultivation of pre-existing growth. Gillies nurtures complex ideas that grow in modest soil, mindfully forming them into considered and extraordinary work.

Ted Barker is an artist who lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba. tedbarker.carbonmade.com



Artist Pages

DRAWING

1 Connie Chappel

The Undergrowth (detail)

digital photo of sculpture

2015

2 Véronique Lévesque-Pelletier

CHIENNERIES no5

(from the *Chienneries* series based on a text
by Jean-Mathieu Barraud)

9 x 14"

coloured pencil and watercolor on paper

2014

3 Katarina Mendoza

from 1a

scanned inkjet print

2013

4 Deann Stein Hasinoff

Spirit

digital drawing

2015

5 Amanda Schoppel

Large Circle Grid

44 x 30"

ink on paper

2015

JURY

Helga Jakobson

Jamie Wright

Andrew Kaplan

hannah_g

Seth Woodyard

Ashley Au

Julian Kirchmann

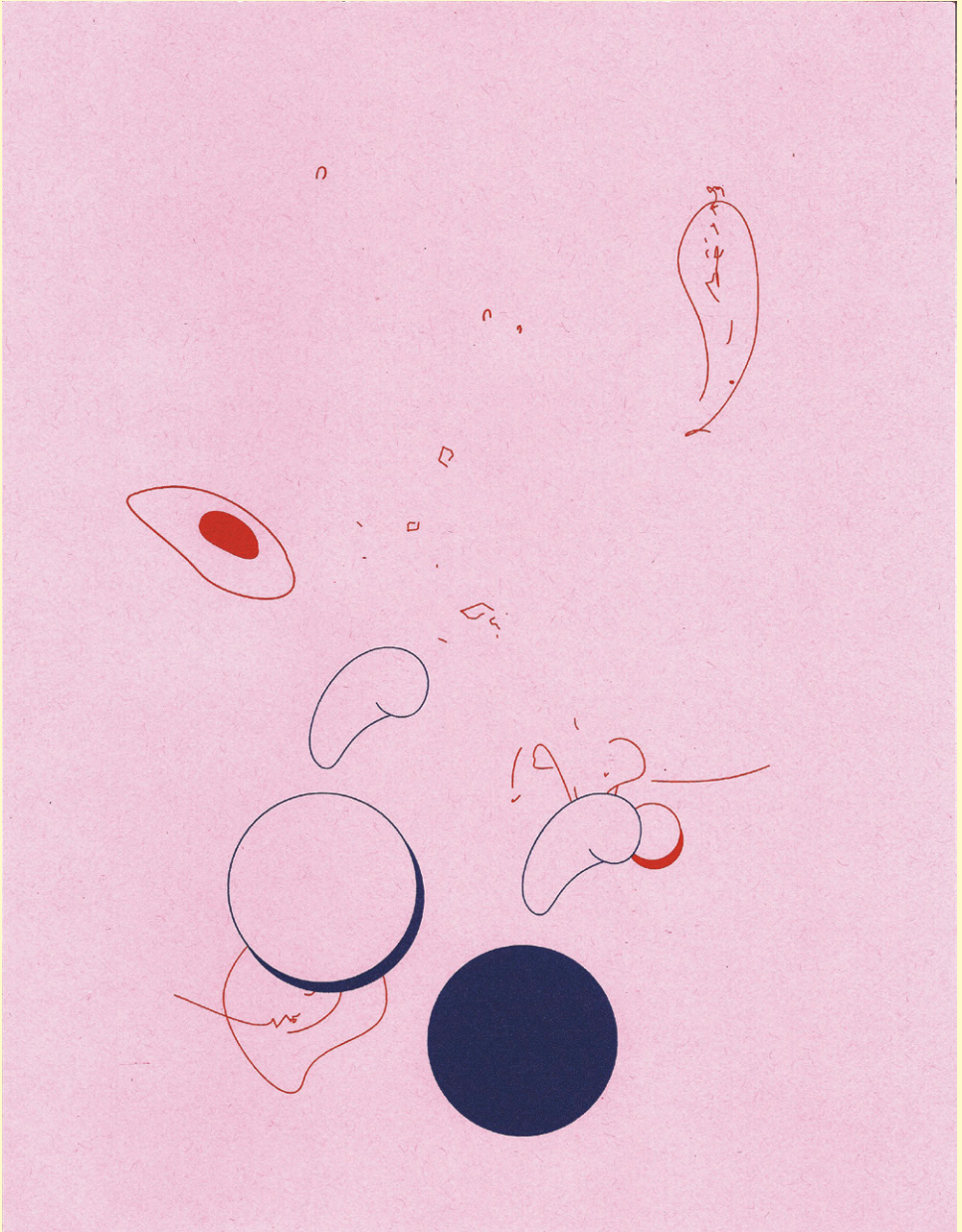
Hayley Isaak

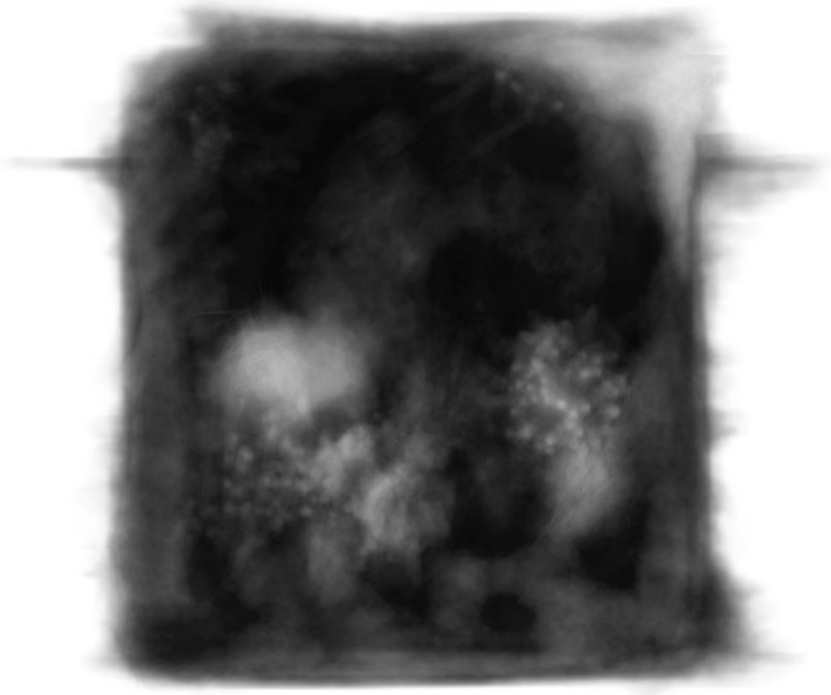
Shawn Jordan

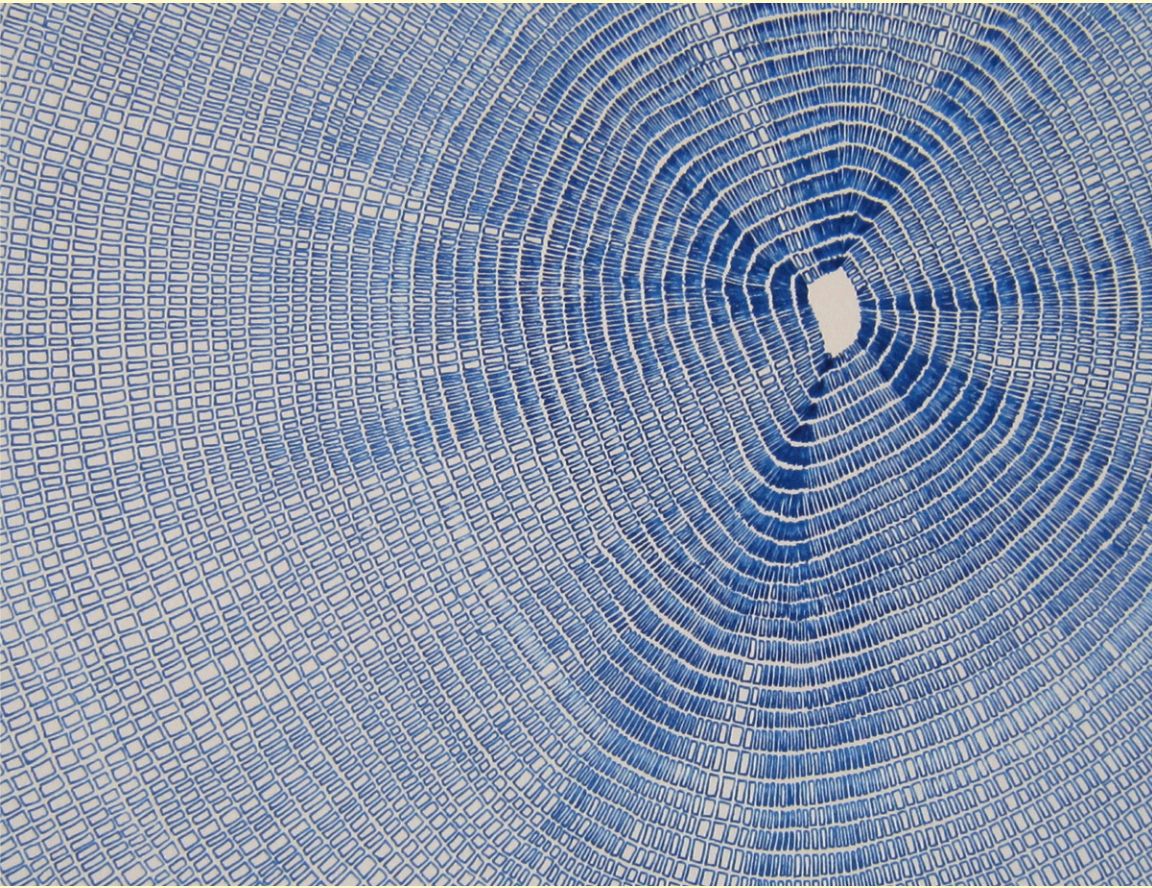
Nicole Flynn











Cartae Open School

OCTOBER 2014–JUNE 2015



Photo: Reza Rezaei

Cartae is an alternative learning space to explore contemporary art modes, ideas and criticality, and their applications to individual practices. Cartae is an initiative of [aceartinc](#).

The Cartae Open School provides opportunities in the form of peer to peer and supported self-directed learning, studio visits/workshops from ace's exhibiting artists, screenings, artist talks, and free access to all events that occur at ace during the Cartae year. There is also the opportunity to program artist talks and screenings and mount a year end exhibition.

The inaugural Cartaers were: Reza Rezaei, shimby, Shelley Vanderbyl, and Emily Sirota.

EMILY SIROTA

Well what are you supposed to do about your own emergence? Lying on a makeshift bed in the corner of our studio feeling acutely aware that I would need to invest in a new type of world-building, a new or shifted way of making sense of...whatever. A million episodes of SVU, and frenzied conversations with Shelley about the art of being wooed as described in one of her vintage marriage manuals. And asking what would happen if we let ourselves be wooed by our work instead of hunting it down and applying a work ethic. If we were unprofessionally attentive to how we might come to understand our lives when we stopped being nice and started getting real (I also watched the Real World). This thing where I wanted to talk less about what we were producing and more about the whatever of our everyday. When I was so angry and self-loathing because my analysis seemed totally disordered and half-baked and my studio mates were all, "Emily, wasn't allowing emergence and the not-yet-speakable like, your original theme? And now you're all stormy because you don't what to say? LOL you nerd." And I reread *The Undercommons*, and brought late night dates to the studio to make out. Really apart from reading theory I put all my labour into processing with my beloved interlocutors. Thinking together, which wasn't something anyone taught us to do but was something we decided to live in, and did, and then shots of my grandmother's rum. Secretly I crashed on the sofa here a million times, because even more than an analysis I wanted a world to live in.

I also refined my pilates practice and spent much of winter feeling pretty flexible. It's like, not not a metaphor.

SHELLEY VANDERBYL

School began with an empty room. I waited for Cartae to begin, but it turned out that it already had, so I moved in with my studio furniture.

Seeing it take shape. Finding kindred spirits. Creating a culture of vulnerability.

Surrounded by people who are totally committed to what they're making, immersed in an environment of exploration, even if no one is teaching. To learn to be more comfortable with questions, to drop over the edge of what I know, into the not-yet known, to let go of the edge before I feel my feet hit something else. To enroll in a program not knowing what it is, or what it will become. To be wooed by potential.

Scavenging curriculum through conversations, studio visits and interactions with local arts organizations. Reading articles posted on Facebook, ordering books to read, working, evaluating, adding ideas, removing excess, honing in on what's most important to me. Letting go of what I think I should be doing, and doing what most compels me.

Changing the way I view myself within the art-world, how I interact with people and move through it. Finding many artworlds, many connections between groups of people like a web.

Having power. Confronting biases. Using the language that I know. Speaking. Making more powerful statements. Giving myself my artist card. Using my artist card.

Cartae had a start date, but the work of Cartae doesn't have an end. There's no graduation, we'll only change the spaces we work in, and continue on. Cartae is a mental space. It's a group of incredible people who took a leap of faith with me, and I imagine them doing the most amazing things, because they're people who do things that have never been done before, that haven't been tested. They are independent, powerfully creative people. Emily Sirota, Reza Rezaei, shimby, you are my kind of people. Yours, Shelley Vanderbyl.

REZA REZAI

I was confronted with a certain unknown that was and is cartae. And as it ends, I have yet to understand it. It was to be a school. A place of alternative learning. The anti-institution. Yet it was structureless, ambiguous and aimless. But what it failed to be is not indicative of failure itself but rather a consequence of its precocious existence. For cartae was something else. It was a womb. A place of departure. A space for the not yet emerged, for the not yet spoken. Its blank white walls inviting us, teasing us with the uncertainty of nothingness. Our troubled thoughts wrestling with the nakedness of tomorrow. Something came of all this. I'm sure. But as it ends, I have yet to thank them for it.

aceart.org/cartae

Indigenous Curatorial Residency 2015/16

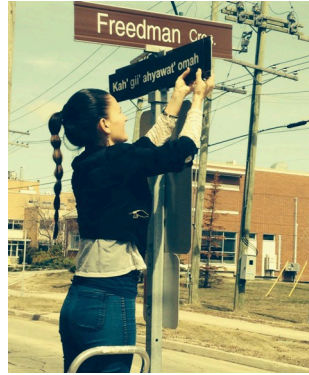
In partnership with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective and with the generous support of the Winnipeg Foundation, **aceartinc.** has created an Indigenous Curatorial Residency.

The curator will undertake a 6 month residency within **aceartinc.** from August 2015- January 2016 to work on an exhibition, write a curatorial essay, give a public talk, and conduct studio visits. The end of the residency will culminate an exhibition mounted in the Main Gallery in January 2016.

Niki Little was selected by jury and began the residency on August 4th, 2015. She will mount the exhibition, *Enendaman | Anminigook*, in January 2016.

THE CURATORIAL PROJECT

Enendaman | Anminigook will investigate the concept of authorship in contemporary Indigenous art; more specifically, utilizing this notion as a model to investigate the intersecting points of lineage, Indigenous female territories, and the value associated with labour/cultural skill. Little hopes to create a space that is a form of generative process and resistance revealing the nuanced complexity of recentering women. Little's aim with this exhibition is to bring together three artists whose work give rise to traditions/teaching, matriarchy, and genetic memory through the labour of their cultural artistic process. The exhibition will explore how process can be a form of Indigenous social engagement connecting various communities together attempting to experience/personalize/contextualize the value and worth of labour. The exhibition itself will be composed of a group exhibition, a written essay with visual counterpart, and an Indigenous-based social-engagement experience.



THE CURATOR

Niki Little is an artist/observer and arts administrator whose works extends from writing, curating, arts coordination and engaging in transient artistic experiences. She is interested in artistic and curatorial strategies that investigates art consumerism, gender, culture and cultural Diaspora with a hint of youth-inspired ambivalence along the way. She is a member of *The Ephemerals*, a female Indigenous art collective. Little is on the Board of Directors at Urban Shaman (Vice-President), and recently stepped down from President for the Independent Media Arts Alliance, and Treasurer for the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition. She studied at the University of Manitoba, the National Screen Institute, and the Camberwell College of Art, London, UK, and completed the Mentoring Artists for Women's Art (MAWA) mentorship program.

aceart.org/indigenous_curator





tiny feast

*modern goods for the
workspace and home*

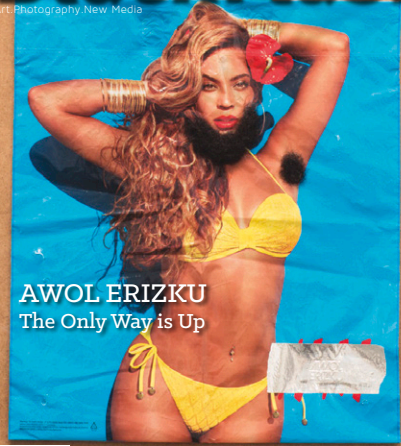


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MEMBERSHIP

Your support assists in the research, development, presentation, dissemination, and interpretation of contemporary art in Canada.

For one year members receive emails regarding upcoming events and programs, notices of calls for submissions and other opportunities, invitations to events, a subscription to *PaperWait*, ace's annual publication, access to Project Rooms, turnarounds, our library and woodshop, and an annual studio visit from the Director.

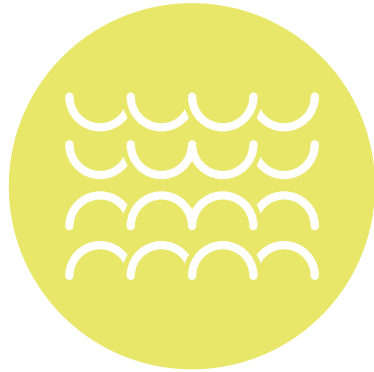
Membership is \$20. If you volunteer for 2 hours you get a membership in return.

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SUBMISSIONS

For information on submissions to our Regular Program, please visit:
aceart.org/submissions

ARTIST TALKS

ace records all of the artist talks we present. Access them via aceart.org and click on the discourse tab. You can also find the previous editions of *PaperWait* there.

THE 2-DAY POEM CONTEST

Every year, contestants in the 2-Day Poem Contest are challenged to write an original poem in 48 hours using 10 words that we provide.

*Write under pressure.
Win prizes. Get published.*

The weekend of April 9-10, 2016

More info at
www.contemporaryverse2.ca/2day

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CV₂

CONTEMPORARY VERSE 2
The Canadian Journal of Poetry and Critical Writing

GALLERY INFORMATION

ace exhibits contemporary visual art in a 4500 square feet of gallery space—the largest Artist-Run Centre in Winnipeg.

We exist to help artists realize their ideas so we share our resources—both equipment and space—freely with artists and other like-minded organisations.

Since 1983 we have exhibited emerging artists—many of whom you will now be very familiar with and some will be exciting discoveries when you trawl our online archive. Each is an important part of Canadian art history.

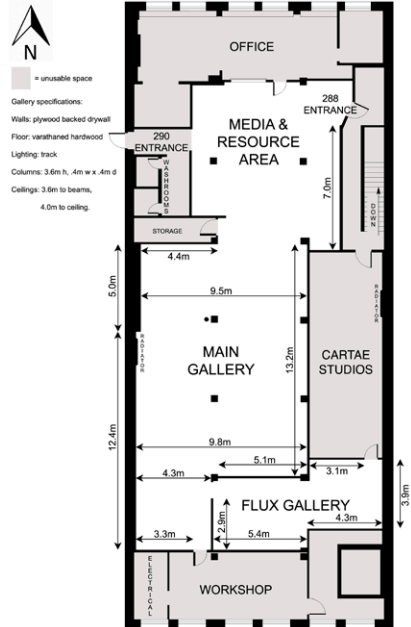
Our jury selected, Regular Exhibition Program is the spine of ace—the deadline is August 1st of each year. However, we do lots of programming underneath and in between exhibitions. If you have an idea drop us a line: hannah_g@aceart.org.

If you happen to be an artist visiting Winnipeg, pop in and tell us what you're up to. We also have some bicycles we can lend you to aid your Pegsploration.

Little
COFFEE
MAKER
Sister

FOR YOUR COFFEE!

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WINNIPEG, MB
7-7 M-F / 8-6 SS



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ACEARTINC.BANDCAMP.COM

UPCOMING 2015-16

Esther Simmonds-MacAdam *separates the man from the horse*
SEPTEMBER 4 – OCTOBER 12, 2015

Andrea Roberts *THE YOLK OF MENIAL LIGHT*
OCTOBER 23 – DECEMBER 1, 2015

Niki Little *Enendaman | Anminigook*
Indigenous Curator in Residence exhibition
JANUARY 2016

Colin Lyons *A Modern Cult of Monuments*
MARCH 4 – APRIL 1, 2016

Karen Asher *The Full Catastrophe*
APRIL 15 – MAY 20, 2016

Alexis Dirkes *[untitled]*
JUNE 3 – JULY 8, 2016

Jury that selected the 2015/16
Regular Program convened
on September 11 & 12, 2014:

Jennifer Lee Smith
cam bush
Helga Jakobson
Mark Neufeld
Jamie Wright
hannah_g

Jury that selected the
Indigenous Curatorial Residency
convened on June 15, 2015:

Mylène Guay
hannah_g
Peter Morin
Jamie Wright
Dayna Danger
Helga Jakobson