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PORTLAND

A Biennial of Contemporary Art
February 26 – May 19
Citywide

[disjecta.org / 2012](http://disjecta.org/2012)

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OF CONSEQUENCE AND SUBJECTIVITY

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Prudence F. Roberts, Portland2012 Curator

THE BIENNIAL IS AN EXPERIMENT.

Its boundaries are sketched loosely by basic rules and a number of historical precedents. Like any experiment, it relies on a system in order to reveal an unknown. But at its core, we see a program that begins with questions whose answers come—as is art’s nature—sometimes quickly and intuitively (the erotics of art, as Susan Sontag suggested), sometimes with time and further proof.

On the key issues of a biennial experiment—namely time, place and relevance—a fitting commentator comes to mind: writer, curator and critic Lucy Lippard. In 1976, Lippard joined a short list of contemporary luminaries to enter Oregon’s art history when she was invited to organize an exhibition of art from Oregon and Washington for Portland Center for the Visual Arts (PCVA). After viewing 5,000 slides and visiting 70 studios in ten days, Lippard selected the work of 35 artists for an exhibition she titled *Nature, Ritual and Sensuous Art from the Northwest* (her observations of the art world then, published in *Art in America* as part of a broader survey of the region, are noted by historian Natilee Harren in her essay for this publication). Lippard’s comfort at the helm of subjectivity was evidenced by her choices and her belief that “Art criticism has less to do with some god-sent condition called quality than with knowing what you like and why.”

Lippard’s pointed selections did not go unnoticed. With a bit of synchronicity, Lippard was also cited recently in an essay by historian Roger Hull, curator of the 2010 Manuel Izquierdo exhibition at the Hallie

Ford Museum of Art in Salem. Hull reminds us that Lippard did not select the (arguably ritualistic and sensuous) works of sculptor and printmaker Izquierdo for her PCVA exhibition, nor did she include other accomplished artists of the close-knit arts community surrounding the Museum Art School. Vexed by this slight, Arlene Schnitzer, the doyenne of modern Portland culture, penned a letter to PCVA questioning their omission. Hull surmises that Lippard, the famous curator from afar, surprised many on the local art scene by offering the thesis that “Northwest art” was evolving, becoming, some may have thought, less old school.

This anecdote from our past carries questions that persist. Who is suitable to organize a place-based survey exhibition? Who is capable of uncovering the allure, import and consequence of an era? Of probing the palpable undercurrent of talent? Of recognizing inertia? How much of their vantage should be a discernible force in the exhibition versus riding the momentum of an extant movement? Disjecta has debated these questions, among many. We play out scenarios and imagine what the Biennial might be like if so-and-so organized it. Whose ideas might be broad and challenging? Will the curator make mistakes, misinterpret the scene, or simply select the safe and established? For us, who are privileged to ask someone to take on this difficult job, they are compelling and complex questions as we consider not only the immediate year, but also the shifting landscape created between each two-year document.

The first rule Disjecta introduced for the Biennial is that it would not be institutionally controlled. Instead, each biennial relies on a curator to craft a viewing condition that heightens awareness of the works and reveals his or her particular perceptions and vision. Thus, each exhibition is a distinctly woven pattern that when pieced together with those of its predecessors and successors might bring some patchwork energy into alignment.

That is to say, the Biennial is not by nature a thematic show (rule #2). The curator’s experience, knowledge and interests are ingrained in each exhibition, just as the works of art exhibited evidence a host of choices, preferences and gestures as solid as prime numbers. Artificially imbuing the process of discovery with a constructed concept or an imperative theme would be unjust. And to question how the artists or works were chosen or why (Hull posits that Lippard may have found Izquierdo’s work masculinist) or to form opinions about their pattern of organization might seem distracting, entangling or enraging. But to our mind these questions are the tools of consideration—less the weight of preordained memes; the work, how it is experienced singularly, as well as in context, and how it transcends the formulaic—this is the resonance of a distinctive curatorial voice amid the cacophony of opinion.

The initial pair of voices, at least, has spoken. We are indebted to our Portland2012 curator Prudence F. Roberts, as well as to Portland2010’s Cris Moss. Both expressed their interests fearlessly. Roberts’s deep understanding of the history of American art—

and, specifically, the paths of the region that Portland2012 artists walk in or are blazing away from—is certainly evident in her choices. They are more broadly representative of different practices than Moss’s pointed emphasis on art that, as he noted, “challenges expectations and materials.” These exhibitions presented a view of work being made in the region that intrigued each curator.

Given the propensity for Portland to struggle against the fickle and rabid muscle of NYC and LA—imagining as it were that we simultaneously are and are not competitive—we might reach certain conclusions: that our aura is indestructible, that our provincialism is indefensible, that our art is poignant. We might toil over our relevance, constantly over and undervaluing our talent. But Portland2010 and Portland2012 are too close to their origins to mete out substantial acclaim or chagrin. Still, they do capture the moment.

The immediate results are between the works and the viewers: the optical shuttering of Arnold Kemp’s masks—instantly beguiling and easy to see, but increasingly uncomfortable to know; the suppleness of Vanessa Calvert’s ordinary materials and hybrid forms; Vanessa Renwick’s ethereal, billowing video installation at the Gray Box; and the high-energy musical theater of a new complex orchestrated by Hand2Mouth. These are the initial, corporeal, intuitive results.

The lasting results of the Biennial will come as we look back over years of catalogs and consider how each curator’s sensibility captured the cultural shifts that become clearer

with the passage of time and with the unfolding careers of the included artists. As former LAMOCA curator Paul Schimmel noted in a conversation with critic Jerry Salz, “To begin to define what later will be understood as the history of your particular moment in time is one of the richest aspects of being a curator.”

Time and place, thereby, are both instantaneous and protracted. In a keynote address for the 2010 Falmouth Convention, Lippard said, “No matter how long or short a time we live in a place, we inherit the responsibility for knowing about it, valuing it, working to keep it viable, and illuminating our dynamic cultural spaces and their underlying, often invisible, meanings and uses—for those who don’t.”

That sentiment is very befitting as we consider Portland2012. Many of the included artists may not be here in two biennials’ time (some have moved already). By contrast, the majority of the artists Lippard included in her PCVA show stayed in the region for the rest of their careers. Portland in 2012 versus Portland in 1976 is a broader and more transient community. Today, art schools regularly deposit new students, graduates and faculty into the contemporary art communities of Portland and of Oregon. These artists now have the opportunity to live, work or show (inter)nationally, in part due to what Harren references as a “comfortable and functional de-centralization of the art market” (with the internet and the art fairs as rosy-cheeked dancing partners).

The Biennial does not aim to introduce the new guard nor parade the old. It intends to give a curator free reign—and this is perhaps the crux and beauty of Disjecta’s biennial—to jettison constraints and simply bring the brightest works to the fore, for reaction, distinction and future reflection. It places art—our art—amidst a persistent conversation about time, place and relevance, with the curator’s voice serving as a guiding commentary. This communication with our regional past serves to inform the future of an ever evolving arts community. It is through this mark-making that we seek to better understand cycles of activity and chart change and imprint our consequence, however bold or minute, for posterity. ✕

CURATOR'S NOTES

Prudence F. Roberts

AS THE GUEST CURATOR FOR PORTLAND2012, my goal was to present a sampling of work from a Portland art world that has changed almost beyond recognition in the 20-plus years since I first moved here. Rather than impose overarching themes or focus on one form of art, I wanted to present a plurality of styles, ideas, media and questions. Yet perhaps inevitably, given that I am one person with a particular view of the world and an aesthetic sense founded in my own experience as a curator of American art and an art historian, I found that thematic connections did exist between the 24 artists and artist groups I selected from the nearly 300 whose applications I reviewed.

Thanks to the luxury that Portland2012 had in terms of space, with five separate venues, those themes became an important principle in organizing each exhibition, and in determining which artists to place in each gallery. Although the decisions were ultimately mine, I am very grateful for being able to consult and collaborate with Disjecta's curatorial committee and with Terri Hopkins at The Art Gym, Jane Beebe at PDX Contemporary Art and Tomas Valladares at The White Box.

In this essay then, I'd like to consider each venue as a separate show and give you some of the thoughts that went into the choices I made and the insights I gained into the artists' work from the time of my initial studio visits through installation. I might note here that in more than one case, an artist's work had changed considerably in the months that followed that first visit.

THE ART GYM
Despite a wide range of styles and materials, the seven artists at The Art Gym were linked by their interest in narrative structure, in mapping and in language. References to the human form ranged from Future Death Toll's two fragile, unintentionally self-destructing beeswax casts of men to Cynthia Lahti's sculptures—images of women torn from mid-20th-century fashion magazines and twisted into expressive three-dimensional figures.

Ben Killen Rosenberg's and Jack Ryan's sculptures can be read as maps, both of space and of experience. Rosenberg's quirky houses, made primarily from studio scraps, trace the lives of his neighbors as he has imagined them from the evidence of their dwellings. These are "stories that are true and not true," as he described his project. Jack Ryan's pole sculpture, meticulously assembled from wood scraps, proposes a celestial map or grid spread over a dome of twinkling lights, as if attempting to contain and describe the cosmos. The same sense of mapping informs Chris Knight's paintings, where figural elements and personal symbols are gridded out and juxtaposed as if to suggest a narrative, but ultimately defy linear interpretation.

Dustin Zemel's and Marie Sivak's video work investigates the ideas of documentation and language: of "the need to record and the absurdity of doing it," as Sivak noted. Zemel, trained as a documentary filmmaker, presents a group of four people as they simultaneously struggle to master the slightly nonsensical lyrics to Ke\$ha's "Tik Tok." Sivak's video of herself writing appears to emerge from the

pages of her carved marble book, as if it were memory made visible.

HELZER ART GALLERY
With a graduate program at Portland State University and events such as the Open Engagement conference and the Portland Art Museum's annual Shine a Light program, the city has become a hub for artists working in the field of relational aesthetics, or social practice, and I reviewed several intriguing proposals before selecting Ariana Jacob. *The American Society for Personally Questioning Political Questions*, begun in 2011, is an endeavor that has taken her to various locations in the Southwest, Midwest and, most recently, Northeast United States. When I invited her to participate in Portland2012, I chose to bring her project to the Helzer Art Gallery on Portland Community College's Rock Creek campus. Because of its racial, economic and social diversity, she found a ready audience, asking self-described conservative or libertarian people to talk with her about their political beliefs and concerns, particularly those concerning the liberal left. The gallery became her office, with posters and maps on the wall, and she was in residence on several occasions, speaking not only to individuals but also to classes and other groups.

PDX ACROSS THE HALL
Both Akihiko Miyoshi and Ben Buswell speak of the artist as an absent author, and of effacing traces of the self and of the artist's hand. The mirror, both literally and metaphorically, is a central and confounding element in each artist's work. In Miyoshi's photographs, it functions as a formal plane,

reflecting not only the artist's body concealed behind the body and black cloth of a large-format camera, but also an array of tape and paper placed both on the mirror and on the backdrop behind the artist. As Miyoshi notes, the red, green and blue tapes reference pixels and thus the ways in which photographic images function within digital technology. In certain of Buswell's sculptures, strips of angled mirror provide an incomplete and fractured reflection; like Miyoshi's photographs, they subvert the act of direct perception, substituting an abstracted image for a true one.

DISJECTA
As the largest of the spaces, Disjecta's galleries had the greatest range of objects. But certain key themes emerged. These include perception: what we see and often choose not to see; history and its occlusions; and a coming-to-terms with the history of art and its relevance in the 21st century. The latter issue is best illustrated in Grant Hottle's grand-scale oil painting, whose composition is filled with references to art historical tropes—the landscape, the still life, the composed draperies, the calculated spaces, and elegant passages that can also be read as purely abstract elements.

Erik Geschke's pristine and cerebral sculptures allude to the history of art and architecture as well as the ways in which we depict the natural world. *The Ascetic's Mirror*, a landscape cast from a composed surface of rocks, twigs and dirt, forms the surface of a balanced half-dome. Its monochromatic gray not only undermines its verisimilitude, but also suggests a dystopic view of the landscape.

In a similar vein, Susan Seubert's videos, accessible only through smart phones with QR readers, find the artist at various power generation sites critiquing the environmental costs of such technology by spelling out messages using the all-but-obsolete Semaphore Code, signaled in colorful flags.

Brian Gillis is not interested in making permanent art objects. In his work, he seeks to give visual form to historical events that have been buried, forgotten, or conveniently overlooked. He built *On Failure and a Prospect* as a temporary, site-specific piece, responding both to Disjecta's soaring spaces and his own concept of a giant parade float, one celebrating disasters and failures that yielded more positive events—for example, the felling of an ancient tree that led to the creation of a national park. At the end of the exhibition, Gillis recycled most of his materials, including lumber, donating them to charitable groups.

Like Gillis, Anna Gray and Ryan Wilson Paulsen find much of their material in archives and in historical records. *Giants in the Earth* is an ongoing project that asks us to consider the legacy of such towering figures as e.e. cummings, Hannah Wilke and Piet Mondrian, as presented through photographs of the two artists (and sometimes their son) lying on the graves of these notables, and images of the grasses and other plants they collected from the cemeteries. Thus, the work looks forward to "how cultural influence grows, propagates, and transfers from...the dead to the living," as they write.

Over the years, Arnold J. Kemp's ongoing investigation of race and identity has manifested itself in paintings, poetry, sculpture and photo-based works such as the series *Who's Afraid of Something Real?* These large-scale photographs of crumpled, abstracted masks made of aluminum foil, allude to a cool minimalist aesthetic, but, with their haunting presence, contain a sense of anguish as well, as if these anonymous faces were emerging from soil, long hidden from view. For this exhibition, each of the frames for these prints was painted in a variation of gray and thus became a subtle rumination on the notion of quantifying and calibrating race through degrees of blackness.

In similar fashion, Mack McFarland's video installation operates on more than one level. McFarland's thesis—that we have neglected our peripheral vision, once so critical to our survival, in favor of looking straight ahead—led him to create video sequences projected on monitors on each side of a small booth. We are unable to see both images unless we look forward and allow our sideways vision to operate. McFarland is playing here with two assumptions, one physical and one more metaphoric, alluding to issues in the periphery that we will not or cannot confront head-on. Like Kemp, McFarland references race through his palette of colors, which is derived from von Luschan's Chromatic Scale, an early-20th-century palette of colors designed to define ethnicity by measuring skin tones.

Matt McCormick's work also plays with ideas of perception. By locating a video projector against a wall and aiming its lens into the cor-

ner, McCormick transforms a single panning shot of winter tree branches along the banks of the Willamette River into a rumination on vision, technology and the natural environment. The distortions and pixelations that the projector's lens angle sets up become part of the piece itself, adding their own spectrum of color and pattern to the slow movement of the trees, as they appear to funnel down into the projector's lens.

HAND2MOUTH THEATRE
During the course of the show at Disjecta, the members of theater ensemble Hand2Mouth built, revised and rehearsed *Something's Got Ahold of My Heart*, performed as a work-in-progress toward the end of the exhibition. Assembled from visitor comments, from interviews and from personal experience, the piece dealt with varieties of love, from tender, long-lasting partnerships to fights and raunchy encounters. During the course of their residency, theater members noted that they drew ideas and themes, particularly about relationships and communication, from the other artists in the space.

THE WHITE BOX
While the five artists at The White Box shared little in terms of style, an interest in history and cultural identity informed the works of each. Wendy Red Star's photographs and video document a masquerade dance performed each year on the Crow Indian Reservation. Referencing the regalia of the fancy dance competitions, dancers wear costumes made from such elements as Kentucky Fried Chicken and Big Gulp containers, and perform to a soundtrack that

includes traditional pow wow music as well as Michael Jackson. This cultural collision underscores the complexity of contemporary Native American culture, which has long been at the heart of Red Star's work.

The imagery in Daniel Duford's rough, tin-glazed ceramic vessels and woodcut posters pasted to the gallery walls look at the myths, massacres, truths and fabrications that constitute American identity in this age of declining empire. *The North American Codex: Fragments and Shards* is part of a project that has involved Duford for many years, taking the form of comic books, sculpture, painting and poetry. Influences as wide-ranging as *Moby Dick* and Scots-Irish folk ballads—what he describes as the “subconscious of the North American continent”—lie at the core of this endeavor.

Sang-ah Choi's work grapples with issues such as the relative meaning—and frequent loss of meaning—of symbols and images as they are deployed across time and culture. Within her ceramic-like, glossy paintings, arranged inside a wall drawing resembling a child's house and landscape, is an abstracted set of icons, including her own vocabulary as well as the so-called Ten Symbols of Longevity that have their origins in traditional Korean landscape paintings. The deer, mountains, clouds and trees have become Americanized, rendered in cartoon style. Her *Flower* piece, composed of fake flowers—tulips and daffodils—along with real ones, decayed over the course of the exhibition.

Vanessa Calvert, too, looks at symbols—in this case, the conventions that dominate the domestic sphere and dictate the ways in which we shape our living spaces and are, in turn, influenced by them. Her hybrid sculptures reference the tenets of modernism but also the craft involved in woodworking and upholstery. The three sculptures that comprise *Generator with Loveseat and Ottoman* are at once anthropomorphic and furniture-like, friendly and somewhat menacing, since the love seat and ottoman, covered in wool, invite but do not accommodate such postures as sitting or lying.

With *Medusa Smack*, Vanessa Renwick transformed The White Box's Gray Box room into a dimly lit, sub-aquatic environment. Her two-channel video installation allowed audiences to walk around or lie beneath a translucent, domed projection screen whose tendrils evoked the jellyfish that are the subject of her 20-minute film. The haunting score, composed by Tara Jane O'Neil, incorporated sounds from a bell wheel at the Museum of Jurassic Technology, and from the sculptures of Harry Bertoia. Renwick, who notes that jellyfish are among the few creatures able to live in the ever-expanding oceanic “dead zones,” worked with filmmaker Eric Edwards at the Oregon Coast Aquarium to produce the footage, transformed through her editing into a rumination on color, beauty and mystery.

I am pleased to note that, in the fall of 2012, selections from Portland2012 traveled to the Schneider Museum of Art at Southern Oregon University.

Thank you to all the artists and to the staff, board and volunteers at Disjecta, The Art Gym, PDX Contemporary Art, the Helzer Art Gallery and The White Box. ✕

Portland2012 Curator Prudence F. Roberts is a Portland-based curator and art historian. She is an instructor of art history at Portland Community College, where she also serves as the director for the Helzer Art Gallery. Roberts has curated, consulted and contributed essays for exhibitions at the Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle; the Hallie Ford Museum of Art; The Art Gym at Marylhurst University; Core Sample; and the Portland Art Museum, where she served as Curator of American Art from 1987 to 2000. During her tenure at the Museum, Roberts organized numerous exhibitions of Northwest artists such as James Lavadour, Bonnie Bronson, Lucinda Parker and Marie Louise Feldenheimer. With Kristy Edmunds, Terry Toedtemeier and John Weber, she co-curated 1993's Cross-cut—Contemporary Art from Oregon at the Portland Art Museum. Roberts holds a MALS in art history and linguistics from Reed College and a BA from Sarah Lawrence College.



DISJECTA CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER

THE PROMISE OF THE POST-BIENNIAL

Natilee Harren

I. FORM

In the wake of Portland2012, the second edition of Disjecta's biennial of contemporary art by Oregon-based artists, it has become yet clearer the promise this new platform holds for the local arts ecology. Such a periodic overview of artistic practice is as illuminating for the immediate community as it is for out-of-town viewers. And yet it still seems worthwhile to ask: Why a biennial? Now? In Portland? These questions followed me throughout my tour of the exhibition's five venues. At The White Box, a woodcut poster by Daniel Duford stopped me in a particularly striking moment of reflection. An American scene from decades past, it showed a cast of weary men and women shuffling through an urban landscape, possibly Portland. Although isolated from one another, a great cartoonish bubble floated above their heads, uniting their thoughts. "EMPIRE," they were all thinking. At first, Duford's image seemed a deflating critique of how American individualist philosophy lays the ground for nationalist pretensions of power. And yet the figures and their expressions—some despondent, some honorably forthright—demanded sympathy. The print was titled *The People Dream of Empire!*, but I contemplated another possible subject of the figures' collective yearning: The People Dream of a Biennial.

The connection isn't so outlandish, really, given that the historical origins of the biennial are bound up in imperial politics. An understanding of this history is important, if only so that we can understand what the Portland Biennial is assuredly not. The earliest historical model for the biennial was

the 19th-century World's Fair, exemplified by London's 1851 *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*, a grandiose display of industrial and cultural goods from around the world. The first such exhibition dedicated to art, the Venice Biennale, opened in 1895 and has long stood as the paragon of the biennial as a large-scale international art exhibition whose organization continues to follow the cultural, political and economic agenda of the nation-state.

The truly defining boom in contemporary art biennials wasn't inaugurated until after World War II, with the founding of the first Bienal de São Paulo in 1951. There are now biennials on six of the seven continents, with many countries hosting multiple, competing exhibitions. Many initiatives of this period, including Germany's Documenta (1955), South Korea's Gwangju Biennial (1995) and South Africa's Johannesburg Biennial (1995), belong to a second identifiable model, that of the biennial as a means of cultural regeneration in the wake of national trauma. The countless biennials that have since sprung up across Asia, Africa and the Middle East speak to a related model, one that rather straightforwardly instrumentalizes culture as part of ambitious political and economic development programs. A final model would be the regional or local biennial, which seeks to expand the audience for its artists, capture an aesthetic consensus and foster critical discourse within deeply networked environments in which dissenting opinions are often repressed. These models are not mutually exclusive, and they are all represented within the United States—from the Carnegie International and Whitney

Biennial to Prospect New Orleans to the Portland Biennial and the new Los Angeles Biennial launched in 2012.

The summer of 2007, in which Documenta, the Venice Biennale, Munster Sculpture Project and the Art Basel fair coincided, may have marked the apotheosis and the beginning of the decline of the biennial. Now, the art fair has usurped the biennial as global adjudicator of contemporary art. The fair's openly commercial nature has proved a more robust way of circulating contemporary art and the most expeditious means of viewing it.

Returning to past debates on provincialism may help us understand how radical are the changes we've witnessed in the past thirty-some years. In a 1974 essay in *Artforum* on "the provincialism problem," critic Terry Smith noted conflicting drives in periphery cities to celebrate localism while also seeking external validation. This may be his only claim that holds today. Smith's argument that artistic models from the center are received in the peripheries in poor reproduction and divorced from their context has been obviated by the expansion of regional contemporary art centers, the internet and other sophisticated media. Moreover, migration of cultural information is no longer one-way. At the time of my Portland visit, a group of musicians and artists, including Portland2012's Vanessa Renwick, were preparing for a Portland-themed tour of art institutions in France, including the Centre Pompidou. Another biennial artist, Arnold J. Kemp, was awarded a 2012 Guggenheim Fellowship.

As artists who frequently exhibit their work in artistic centers are choosing to live and work elsewhere, the centers are looking increasingly to the peripheries. Lucy Lippard's observation during a 1976 tour of the Northwest that "you don't have to live in the Big Apple to be an artist, only to be known as an artist," is simply no longer true. In effect, we have returned to the conditions of prewar America, in which, as Donald Kuspit has written, "there were to be no privileged places in which art would be practiced. It was un-American to suppose that any American place would offer better conditions for the making of art than any other." Smith's article concluded with the ironically optimistic statement that "most of us are provincial artists." Now, I think, provincial artists are what many of us desire to be.

II. CONTENT

With no predetermined curatorial thesis, Portland2012 was a variegated exhibition of individuals for which, as viewers traveled between five widely dispersed venues, the city provided a readymade framework. Overarching themes did not emerge for me, but the widely varying works did share certain approaches to medium and materials. If Portland2010 followed a conventional biennial format in its concentration of large-scale installation, sculpture and video projections, Portland2012 consisted of more traditional art, mainly discrete objects—paintings, sculptures, and wall-mounted works—in which the artwork as a category of object was not under threat.

First, a word about craft. While the long-standing craft tradition of the Northwest continues to be supported by the region's art schools and museums, Portland2010 seemed to distance contemporary art from this history in an effort to speak the language of international contemporary art. In 2012, however, we saw craft taken up again, even if it must be noted that the meaning of craft has undergone a radical shift. In the traditional economy of fine art, craft has been seen as a minor art concerned with the functional, domestic and decorative—not the manner of craft on view at Portland2012. Rather, the new craft stands for a rejection of the outsourcing of artistic production to assistants or industrial fabricators and a return to the most basic definition of craft: the making of things by one's own hand. And in this sense, Portland's history as a center for craft, Portland artists' continued engagement with craft as a concept, and the heightened cultural awareness of Portland as a creative center all resonate with the recent shift in contemporary art toward a re-engagement with process and an economy of means, accompanied by a rejection of monumental, high production-value work. A first sign of this aesthetic shift was the New Museum's 2007-2008 exhibition, *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*, and valences of it continue to be seen, for instance, in the 2012 Whitney Biennial, suggesting a connection with the ongoing economic crisis. However (and thankfully), Portland2012 included none of this trend's pleasing, casual arrangements of everyday objects or neo-modernist abstract formalisms that cynically play to the art market's investment class.

In Portland2012, multiple approaches to the new craft were at play. First, several works employed a highly finished mode of craft that nevertheless betrayed details of the handmade. Erik Geschke's sculptures subjected minimal forms to uncanny distortion. *The Ascetic's Mirror*, a smooth, gray half-sphere with a rugged topside modeled after a patch of earth, wobbled slightly on its platform. The blocky, plinth-like *Harbinger* (2012) rested on two aluminum I-beams like a truncated marble burial vault, its surface mysteriously impressed as if it were a soft pillow. Vanessa Calvert's *Generator with Loveseat and Ottoman* pushed this sort of anthropomorphic minimalism further in its play with affect. An erect wooden beam, which rose up from a puddle-like base, was accompanied by two exquisitely crafted, three-legged, creaturely objects whose bewildering identity lay somewhere between sculpture and furniture. Sang-ah Choi's wall-mounted wooden panels, mimicking glazed porcelain, were covered over in intricate, decorative patterns referencing popular representations of Asian female beauty. Nearby, a mixed bouquet of vibrantly colored real and fake flowers treated with fragrance oil signaled the artist's play with material and symbolic artificiality. Marie Sivak's sculptural installation deployed an impressive array of media, including carved stone, video, wood, wax, organza and steel, to construct a dreamy, all-encompassing environment. Most remarkably, carved stone encased video or served as the ground for projected images.

A second modality of high craft informed by graphic design, architecture and technology

was represented by the work of Jack Ryan and the Future Death Toll collective, which proposed ambivalent models of a totally designed future, neither fully utopian nor dystopian. In Ryan's work, a geodesic dome was incorporated into an improvised wooden lean-to structure adorned with flickering lights. In a related diagrammatic drawing, another dome's surface was outfitted with speakers. Future Death Toll's *BEEGAS* installation featured two male nudes cast in wax, precariously suspended with safety-orange nylon rigging on either side of a wall and left to crumble gradually throughout the run of the show.

A third approach to craft was represented by artists who deliberately overworked their materials, as if to defend the importance and legitimacy of the handmade. For her *Trash Paper* series, Cynthia Lahti transformed vintage and contemporary magazine images of women into diminutive sculptures mounted on white ceramic bases. These paper women—wrung, crumpled and wrinkled into three-dimensional grotesqueries—united in an astonishing way feminist critique with sculptural techniques borrowed from Surrealism. Daniel Duford's *North American Codex* series included woodcut as well as crudely wrought ceramic vessels glazed with text and imagery parodying the masculinist violence propagated by North American folklore. Finally, Ben Killen Rosenberg's group of tabletop sculptures, *This Must Be the Place*, were whimsical, delightfully pathetic models of buildings from the artist's neighborhood, meticulously constructed from the odds and ends of his drawing and watercolor practice.

In considering other modalities of practice, a number of works engaged photography in a balance of formal and conceptual concerns, in some cases pressing the indexical, documentary nature of the photograph into the service of abstraction. In his *Abstract Photograph* series, Akihiko Miyoshi played with the limitations of the camera's vision in conjunction with simple props including a mirror and brightly colored paper and tape to create dazzling, confusing, impressively layered images that looked digitally altered. Like Miyoshi, Arnold J. Kemp used the camera in conjunction with everyday materials as a means of playing with representation. Seven images from his funny, unnerving, deadpan series, *Who's Afraid Of Something Real?*, were on view; the crumpled fields of tinfoil, each torn open in three places, could not help but evoke a line of grimacing faces. Ben Buswell treated photographs as material objects to be manipulated as part of a sculptural practice. In *Untitled (Devil's Lake)*, mirror images of open water were etched with a fine tracery of lines, amplifying the waves' illusion of texture while paradoxically calling attention to the photograph's material flatness. Anna Gray and Ryan Wilson Paulsen's poignant documentary project, *Giants in the Earth*, was perhaps the most conceptual. Grass samples collected from the grave sites of artists, writers and intellectuals important to their practice were displayed in a typological succession of dramatically enlarged photographs, each footnoted with an image of the artists' bodies laid atop each plot.

The paintings included in the show, like much of the photography, dallied in abstraction,

yet they remained committed to the representational, scenographic format of the tableau. Grant Hottle's monumental painting, *Facing North*, was a wonky, acid-colored catalog of the medium's tropes. Landscape, abstraction and still life became vehicles for the artist's play with paint as a material of deception, as subtle details—an errant stroke here, a counterintuitive overlapping of objects there—threw relations of interior versus exterior, foreground versus background, into disarray. The paintings of Chris Knight engaged with a collage-like, illustrational practice indebted to the New Leipzig School, borrowing imagery from a range of historical and geographic sources. Elusive historical and personal narratives coalesced from the patchwork compositions of scenes.

Relational aesthetics and social practice, perhaps to be considered as forms of craft in their own right, were underrepresented given the reputation of Portland State University's Social Practice MFA program and Portland's status as a center for this type of work. Given this, Ariana Jacob's installation at Portland Community College Rock Creek of her ongoing project, *The Office of Questioning Questions*, carried a tremendous weight of representation. In the context of an educational institution, the artist's proposal to interview political conservatives about their beliefs was pressed into promising new directions, as her office served as a center both for conducting interviews and for distributing information about the project itself. Wendy Red Star's video and canvas prints featuring contemporary Crow Indian masquerade dancers, on the other hand, amounted to a kind of capsule ethno-

graphic documentary that turned viewers into self-conscious voyeurs.

The videos and video installations on view could be organized along a continuum between the polarities of absorption and alienation. In Vanessa Renwick's lush, absorptive installation *Medusa Smack*, viewers could lay down on "sea grass" pillows and luxuriate under a sculpted fabric canopy onto which was projected a video of phosphorescent jellyfish undulating to an atmospheric score by Tara Jane O'Neil. The video *Tangle* by Matt McCormick was also meditative, focused on the flickering black-and-white patterns created by the naked branches of passing trees in wintertime. Projected across a corner of the Disjecta space and thereby subject to purposeful distortion, the piece was one of few works to engage directly with its exhibition site. Dustin Zemel's *Convergence Series*, a sequence of synchronized four-channel videos, tested the body's ability to exactly replicate movement and speech as well as the viewer's ability to correlate multiple audiovisual inputs. In the video *Movement*, for example, four dancers of varying ages and abilities were seen performing the same piece of modern choreography, revealing how gestures register differently in different bodies. Mack McFarland's *A Composition for your Peripheral Vision* was a video installation for one, in which monitors were positioned at the sides of the head. Viewing the abstract compositions and everyday scenes that filled the margins of vision required a deep concentration that was intermittently interrupted by a loud, obnoxious pig squeal, a feature determined to disrupt the viewer's efforts to take in the work.

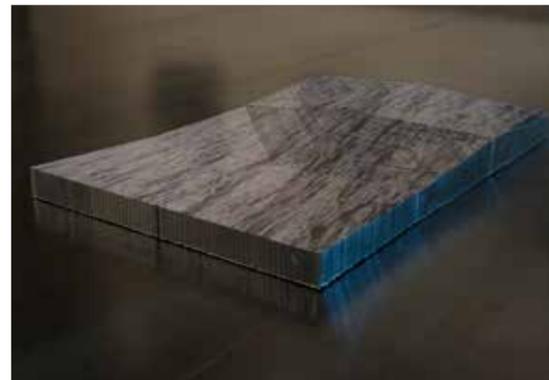
A final group of installation works engaged productively with the experience of failure and disruption. Brian Gillis's monumental installation at Disjecta, *On Failure and a Prospect*, was a trumped-up monument to five true stories of failure, from the intimately personal to the nationally consequential. The tales were narrated on vinyl banners draped over a colony of gratuitously large inflated spheres, with related props and reading materials scattered about. Meanwhile, Susan Seubert's *The Digital Divide* was a rather plain wall decal of QR codes linked in a camouflage-like manner to a series of gorgeous web-based videos which showed the artist stationed in various picturesque landscapes, spelling out by Semaphore messages of environmental protectionism. Lastly, theater ensemble Hand2Mouth appropriated part of Disjecta as a rehearsal space for a work in progress, effectively contributing to the exhibition an empty stage littered with props. As a tangible promise of many performances to come, it stood as a fitting emblem for the Portland Biennial at large. ✕

Natilee Harren is an art historian and critic based in Los Angeles. She is currently a Getty Predoctoral Fellow and PhD candidate in modern and contemporary art history at UCLA, at work on a project on the status of the object in the art of Fluxus. Harren is a regular critic for Artforum magazine and was winner of the inaugural Art&Education Papers Prize. In addition to Artforum, her writing has appeared in The Getty Research Journal, Ephemera, Modern Painters, ArtUS, Athanor and PART, the journal of the CUNY Graduate Center PhD program in art history.



THE ART GYM

BEN BUSWELL



BEN BUSWELL CREATES A SERIES of works that point to the disappearance of self and the construction of knowledge. By asserting the apprehension of structure over image, Buswell works to elude symbolic reference and place meaning in a temporal reading of the work.

Rather than utilizing imagery associated with particular cultural or personal significance, Buswell employs images that are cross-culturally and historically ubiquitous. Water, mirror glass and the figure: each, in its own right, is an archetype of both meaning and cliché. By conflating the reading of these images with the comprehension of their physical structure, these works function as surrogates for self reflection and question where the foundation of understanding lies.

LEFT: UNTITLED (LACAN), 2011
Mirror glass, wood, steel
30 x 40 x 2"

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at PDX Across the Hall, February 28 – March 31



VANESSA CALVERT

GENERATOR WITH LOVESEAT AND OTTOMAN invokes the personal and collective mythology of domesticity with forms evolving out of household materials and objects. Evoking personal, cultural and utilitarian histories, the materials are imprinted with traces of human identities and power structures. They suggest the familiarity of the home but have evolved away from it. Located in a transient state between creation and destruction, the pieces reflect the fluctuating nature of identity and the fragile barrier between formed and unformed.

GENERATOR WITH LOVESEAT AND OTTOMAN, 2012
Poplar, wool, foam, zippers
Generator, 8 x 2 x 1' / Loveseat, 3 x 3 x 3' / Ottoman, 1.5 x 1 x 1'

Exhibited at The White Box, April 1 – May 19



SANG-AH CHOI



FULLNESS AND EMPTINESS

An image is a social product of the culture it belongs to. When we see an image, we are subject to influences of cultural iconography—whether we intend to be or not. As a result, an image gets overloaded with a multitude of meanings over time.

REAL AND FAKE

An image is merely an image and “cannot” be real. However, the so-called “real” in contemporary culture can either be real—as in, physically existent, genuine—or faux, illusionary, or whatever is not real. This type of duality is a more relevant concept in contemporary culture. Likewise, painting, whether abstract or figurative, deals with images, which are “not real,” on a “real” surface of panel. Painting can be an object as well as an image.

LEFT: FLOWER, 2012
Flowers, fake flowers, fragrance oil, glass vase, paint
22 x 23 x 8” vase (flowers and wall paint variable)

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The White Box, April 1 – May 19



DANIEL DUFORD



THE NORTH AMERICAN CODEX is an ongoing body of work consisting of narrative pots, prints and paintings. The *Codex* grows out of the subconscious of the North American continent. Forms, myths and histories all intermingle within this work. The pots in this exhibition contain fragments of my own poems, folk songs and historic imagery. The woodcut posters reflect this same archaeology of image and text.

Like the aforementioned folk traditions, we encounter the images and song lyrics in fragments—shards of a past that itself was never whole but always in flux. For the past several years I've worked within an umbrella narrative called Radio Relay Towers. Radio Relay Towers is a trilogy of stories that plumbs American mythology. The stories span centuries, cultures and media.

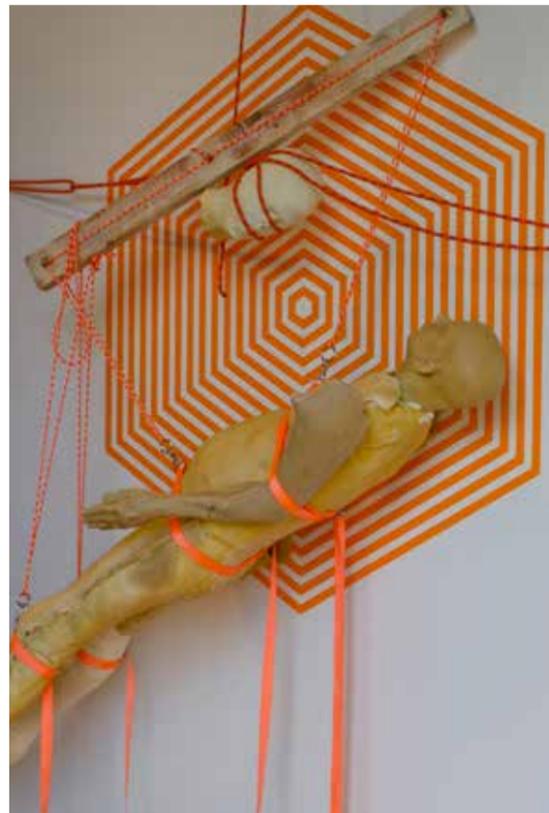
LEFT: EMPIRE JAR (HORSE), 2011-2012
Glazed tinware
18"

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The White Box, April 1 – May 19



FUTURE DEATH TOLL



BEEGAS CONTEMPLATES DISTANCE AND DEATH to provide an ephemeral context for public effigy. Industrial-grade replication allows for the examination of the notion of our own mortality. This techno sarcophagus serves as generic aesthetic reference to life-form itself, which viewers must fill with their own perception of time, geography and personal narrative. This aura of mankind both upholds and disrupts our conceptions of what it may mean to be a member of a vast population of creatures all shaped the same way—which brings us to the realization that identities once perceived as personal may be byproducts of physical existence.



BEEGAS, 2012
Beeswax, nylon, wood, urethane foam, video screens
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4

ERIK GESCHKE



MY WORK DEALS WITH PERSONAL AND social narratives more oblique than obvious. I am interested in and inspired by a diverse range of sources, including but not limited to, art history, political propaganda and popular culture. These sources influence both the conceptual and formal aspects of my work.

Among the themes explored in my current work are issues surrounding mortality, dystopia and modernism. Within these works, I utilize humor, social commentary and familiar iconography as a way to address complex subjects. I often reference elements of museum dioramas, cinema special effects and industrial design. I am interested in the artifice of these working modes as I believe they act as a metaphor for our own strategies to exist within an uncertain world.

LEFT: HARBINGER, 2012

Wood, aluminum, Aqua-Resin, polyester resin, fiberglass, epoxy, hardware, acrylic
30 x 43 x 54"

RIGHT: THE ASCETIC'S MIRROR, 2012

Aqua-Resin, fiberglass, epoxy, polyester resin, wood, acrylic
20 x 36 x 36"

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



BRIAN GILLIS

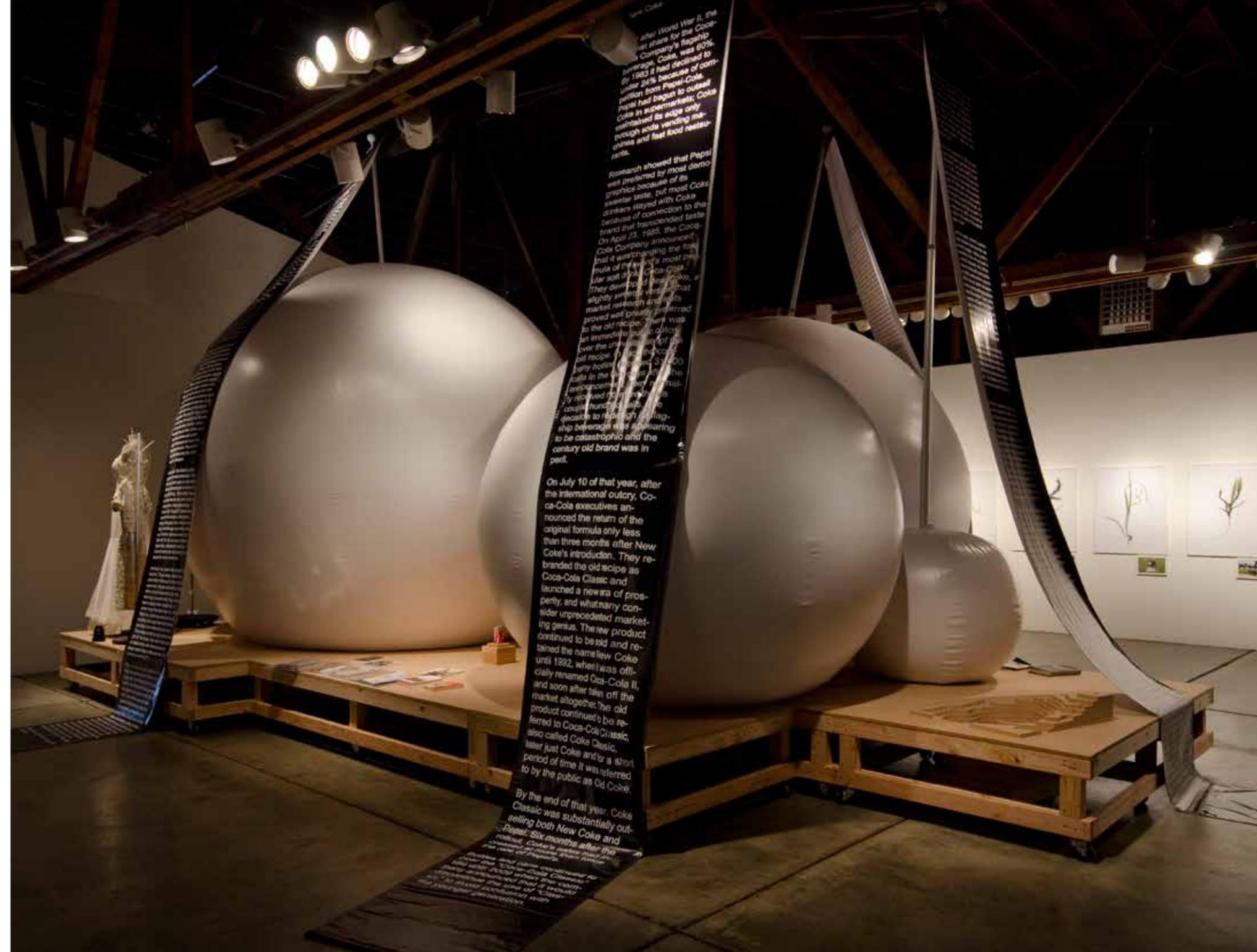


THOUGH TIME HAS REPEATEDLY PROVEN that development comes on the heels of calamity, it is so often represented as an outcome without connection to its origin. Thus, failure is often regarded in the pejorative or as simply an end point, and is seldom respected as something of value or a necessary point of departure. I'm interested in reframing things in such a way that a body sees a direct relationship between the historical point of rupture, the context it happened in, and its resolution.

My chief concern with this project is to use the parade float form, a familiar system already tied to public veneration and education, to build a field of instances whereby the viewers' scrutiny may lead to a greater understanding of both the value of failure and the human capacity to use it as a necessary agent for progress.

ON FAILURE AND A PROSPECT, 2012
Inflatables, MDF, text, vinyl, found objects
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



ANNA GRAY & RYAN WILSON PAULSEN



GIANTS IN THE EARTH is an ongoing project about acknowledging a dependence on the past—our common (or uncommon) cultural inheritance. It consists of an archive of live grass, soil and seed, and a series of photographs.

Though it is largely ignored in favor of a focus on individualism and self-reliance, we live in a time and place where social and economic inheritance predetermines so much. With this project we are looking at cultural inheritance—what it predetermines—and how cultural influence grows, propagates and transfers from writer to reader, maker to viewer, speaker to listener, the dead to the living. The effect these particular dead have had on our lives is varied; some connections are distant and some more intimate, others are based on convenience, inescapability, curiosity, indebtedness, awe or fascination.

We are considering cremation; so many important people end as ash.

LEFT: GIANTS IN THE EARTH (PIET MONDRIAN), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
31 x 42" & 12 x 8"

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



HAND2MOUTH THEATRE



FROM WHISPERED LOVE LETTERS to rock concert catharsis, this ensemble performance wrestles with our desire to craft the perfect declaration of love. A performance in four movements, *Something's Got Ahold of My Heart* creates an onstage space where tumultuous and tender feelings of love hang thick in the air and six performers lay their bodies down and fight to keep their love alive. Drawing from interviews, found text and seminal concert footage, the work wrestles with our desire to craft the perfect declaration of love, and the tension between the ideal and the reality of long-term commitment.

Something's Got Ahold of My Heart was supported in part by MetLife Creative Commons | Meet the Composer, The Regional Arts & Culture Council and Work for Art, the Juliet Ashby Hillman Foundation, and Portland Actors Conservatory's PAC Lab Program.

SOMETHING'S GOT AHOLD OF MY HEART
Work in progress, 2012

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



GRANT HOTTELE



I MAKE LARGE, COLORFUL PAINTINGS that bring the romance and eccentricity of historical painting into a shuffled image of the contemporary. I combine formal elements of modernism—color sensibilities, attention to surface, abstraction—with the technical and compositional structure of classical painting. The domestic space, the landscape and the still life are all loaded with ambiguity in my work. This ambiguity is both a formal and conceptual tension, where beneath the boring and beautiful I find the bizarre or seedy.

My paintings are figurative, absent the figure. I make decisions about composition, color, texture and mark based on abstract concerns—what the painting needs, rather than what the subject dictates. I move intuitively around the canvas, finding answers across various painted languages—discrete and voluptuous, modeled and gestural, neutral and bright. The spaces act like stage sets, and the absence of actors is a deliberate invitation to inhabit the space.

FACING NORTH, 2012
Oil on canvas
108 x 180"

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



ARIANA JACOB



IN RESPONSE TO THE POLARIZING POLITICAL DIVIDE in our country, Ariana Jacob is touring the United States, inviting conservative and libertarian people to talk with her about their own political perspectives. She seeks to gather a better understanding of both their beliefs and her own, as an idealist with socialist leanings and a penchant for questioning herself. These conversations investigate the crucial but tenuous possibility of civic dialog. Ariana collects questions that her conversation partners wish to have answered by their political opposites and then has them turned into lawn

signs that function as evidence, while presenting open-ended considerations in a medium usually reserved for political promotion. This tour took up residence in The Office of Questioning Questions at the Helzer Art Gallery for the duration of Portland2012. The office served as both a site for conversation and a headquarters for displaying the accumulating evidence of people's political questions collected throughout our country.

The Office of Questioning Questions was supported in part by The Regional Arts & Culture Council.

THE OFFICE OF QUESTIONING QUESTIONS, 2012
A division of The American Society for Personally Questioning Political Questions

Exhibited at the Helzer Gallery, March 5 – April 14



ARNOLD J. KEMP



WHO'S AFRAID OF SOMETHING REAL? emerges from my enduring interest in combining aspects of identity-based art with post-minimal and conceptual strategies of art making. Recalling seminal minimalist objects, these works refuse to mean, allude or express, but at the same time offer surprisingly complex, even internally contradictory, visual experiences.

I am a descendant of a family of tailors, shoemakers, hotel maids—people who worked with their hands—and I also am the descendant of teachers and intellectuals who used language to engage with culture on spiritual and political

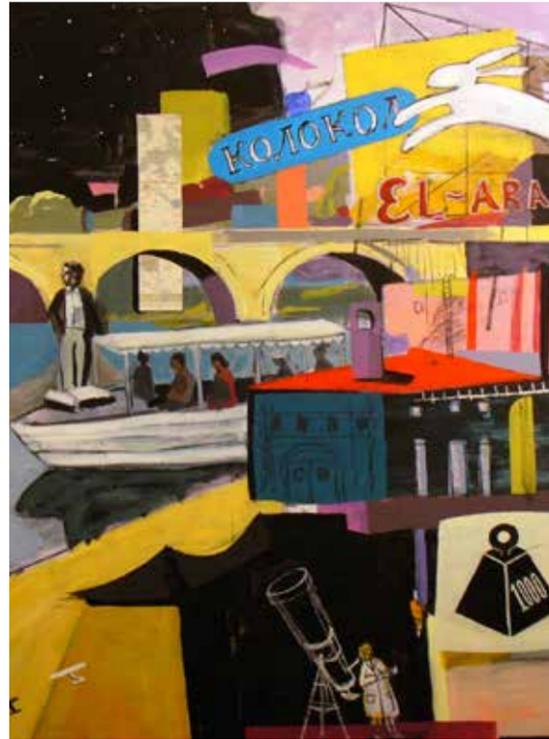
levels. How can one use these hybrid identities as sources of creative freedom and critical engagement with society? In a recent performance/lecture at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, I told the audience that I believed that art could change the world, but the question remains: can art change the art world? Questions such as these relate to my personal interests and histories as they are linked to global culture and the fragmentary instant of self recognition. The seven prints exhibited are selected from a larger body of work, which currently numbers twelve works.

WHO'S AFRAID OF SOMETHING REAL?, 2012
Archival pigment prints on Somerset paper in artist's frames,
43 x 35"

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



CHRIS KNIGHT



I THINK OF MY PAINTINGS AS EACH comprising a small, often curious mythology, which addresses a shared understanding of loss and longing in the contemporary world, while at the same time revealing a fascination with the magical and poetic. In my paintings, I use metaphors and symbols to create magical and fantastic associations as a way of describing reality, which may resonate more closely with our experiences than more realistic or naturalistic modes of expression. Through the juxtaposition and interweaving of contradictory and sometimes incongruent imagery, I strive to create images that throw the viewer into this kind of understanding, where it doesn't seem strange that a giant dress floats in a harbor, or that a hundred-foot-tall woman towers over a village. I am interested in creating a sense of having revealed what was always already there, a sense of being simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, estranged and intimate, sorrowful and whimsical.

LEFT: THE LOVESTRUCK MAN, 2012 (DETAIL)
Acrylic on wood panel,
36 x 84"

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4



CYNTHIA LAHTI



MY INTENT IS TO CREATE WORKS of art that resonate with honesty and reflect the beauty and chaos of the world. My art is influenced by human artifacts from ancient times to the present, as well as by my personal experiences and emotions. Like the varied objects I draw on for inspiration—from 1940s knitting catalogs and outsider art to Native American cedar carvings and Degas' sculptures of dancers—my artworks force an explanation of reality and compel viewers to connect to a larger human experience. I work in various media, including drawing, collage and sculpture.

LEFT: (LEFT TO RIGHT) GOLD HEAD, SILVER HEAD, CHRISTMAS HEAD 2012
Paper, ceramic base
Approximately 12 x 12 x 24" each

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4



MATT MCCORMICK

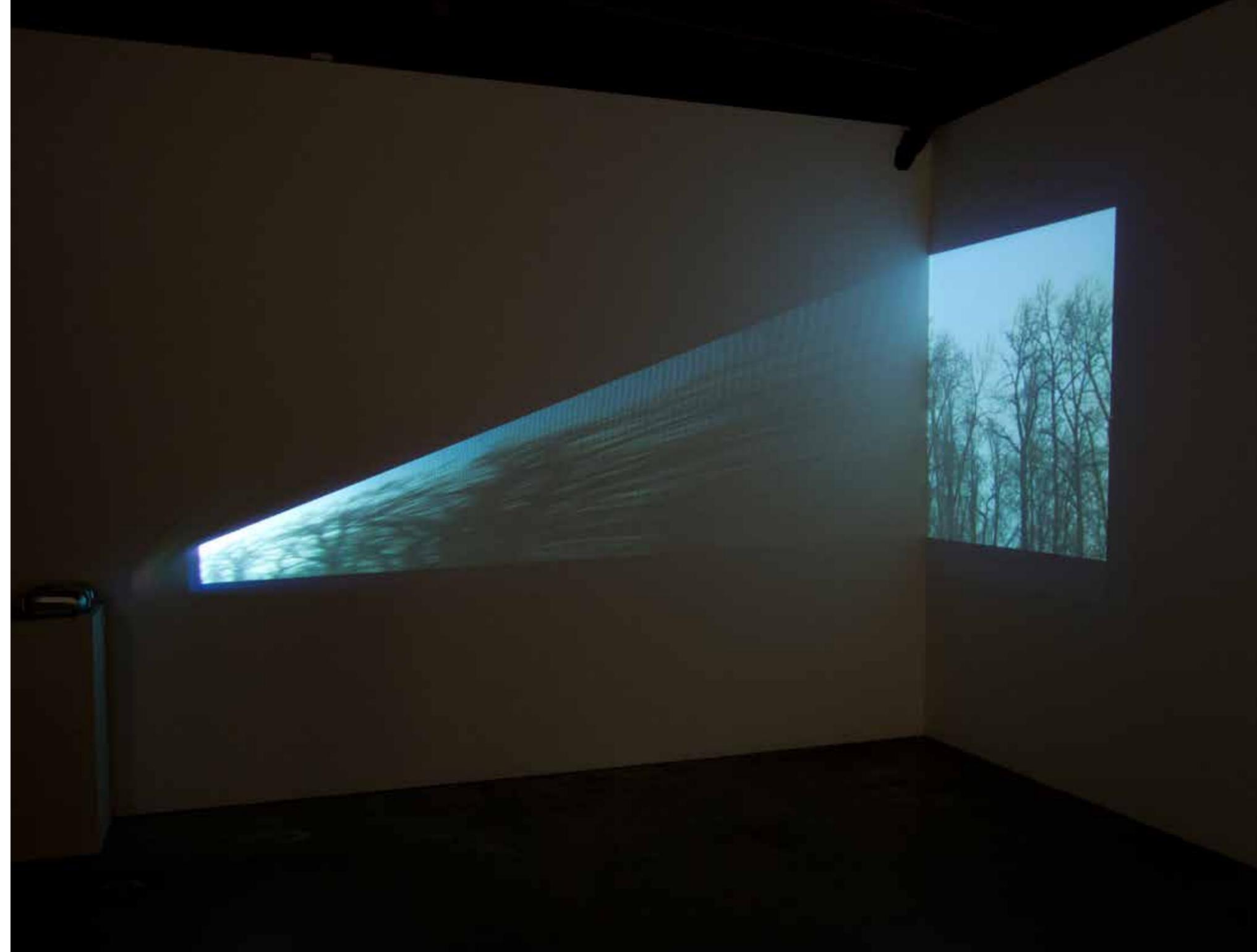
TANGLE IS AN EXPLORATION OF LIGHT, movement and the architecture of the projection surface. A two-and-a-half-minute tracking shot through the veiny tangle of branches in a wintertime deciduous forest plays on a projector that abuts a gallery wall and projects into a corner. Half of the projected image appears “normal” on the facing wall, while the other half

of the image is strewn along the adjacent wall as it stretches odd-long from the projector. The horizontal movement within the video image and the bisection of the projection beam create an abstract dimensionality that redefines spatial relationships—both in the forest where the original footage was captured and in the gallery where the video piece is playing.

TANGLE, 2012

Two-minute, 30 second video loop with interfered projection
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



MACK MCFARLAND



“...vision is bounded by the periphery of a given creed.”
—James Martineau, 1858

THE ARTS HAVE MOSTLY SUFFERED from tunnel vision for the past 5,000 years. With a myopic focus on what is in front of us, we have marginalized the sides of our eyes and, indeed, certain stimuli to our brain. The belief that current compositional techniques were not suited for an image experience for our peripheral vision spurred on a series of experiments which led to this present work, *A Composition for Your Peripheral Vision* (video). The use of “A” in the title is a bit of a misnomer, as there are in fact two distinct techniques in the 12-minute video.

The piece serves as a kind of affirmative action, a move away from privileging frontal, cone cell experience, and provides an opportunity for the rod cells to shine. Some formal choices alluded to this metaphor. The majority of the colors used

in the composition come from the von Luschan chromatic scale of skin color. Created in the early 1900s by Felix von Luschan, the 36 opaque glass tiles were widely used in the development of racial classifications for anthropometrists and eugenicists alike.

The second of the compositions focuses on the experiential and instinctual effects that are heightened by this peripheral viewing apparatus. This section, as well as the brief moment of sound in the animations, is an attempt to trigger the special neural connections that peripheral vision has to the stimuli in the limbic system of our brain. This connection, unlike the others to the visual cortex, is responsible for our basic survival functions, linking our vision to the sense of fear and danger.

A COMPOSITION FOR YOUR PERIPHERAL VISION, 2012
Digital video, sound, paint, carpet, wood
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



A Compos
Periphera

AKIHIKO MIYOSHI



THROUGHOUT MY CAREER, I have been exploring the intersection between art and technology, most frequently dealing with issues surrounding photographic representation. My works often reveal the conventions of perception and representation through tensions created by the use of computers and traditional photographic techniques. The photographs shown here are of mirrors, paper and tape taken with a large format camera as they attempt to unpack the structural mechanics of photographic representation by creating formally abstract pictures that are undeniably photographically real.

While the images allude to abstraction (which is understood as relieved from concrete references

to the real world, hence diametrically opposed to realistic depiction) the photographic nature of the images is emphasized as the image plane is selectively focused and blurred through the use of depth of field. The usually referenceless nature of abstraction is contradicted by the presence of minute details captured by a large-format camera, such as dust and scratch marks on the surface of the mirror, which make the images very “real” and photographic.

The photographs also express my interest in the role of digital technology in photography and its aesthetic. The choice of red, green and blue tape is based on the three primary colors of a pixel. From afar, the tapes can be seen as the pixels glowing on the computer screen.

LEFT: ABSTRACT PHOTOGRAPH, 2011

Archival pigment print
40 x 30” each

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at PDX Across the Hall, February 28 – March 31



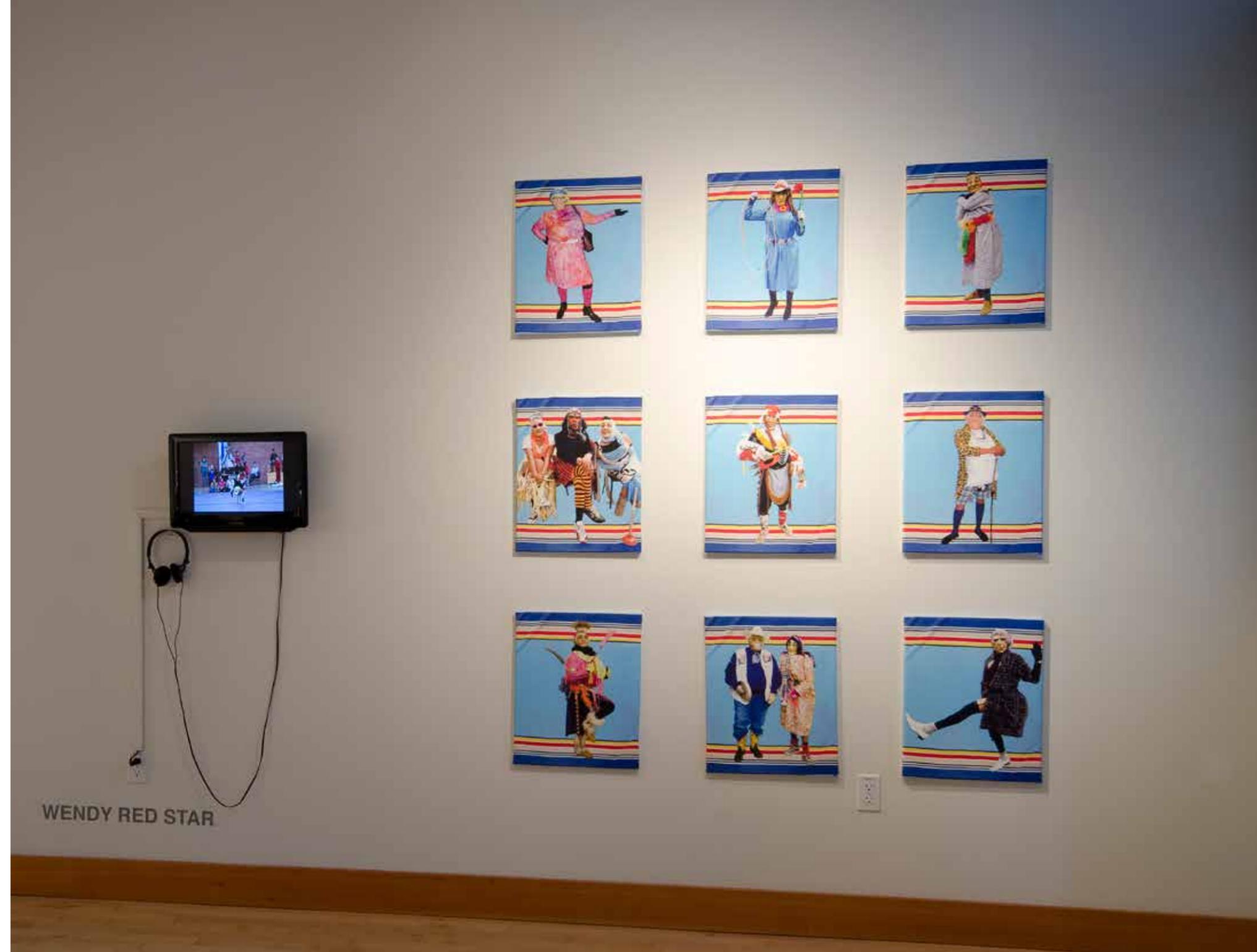
WENDY RED STAR



WENDY RED STAR'S WORK EXPLORES the intersection between life on the Crow Indian Reservation and the world outside of that environment. She thinks of herself as a Crow Indian cultural archivist speaking sincerely about the experience of being a Crow Indian in contemporary society.

CROW MASQUERADE DANCERS, 2011-2012
Video, nine digital inkjet prints on canvas
20 x 16" each

Exhibited at The White Box, April 1 – May 19



WENDY RED STAR

VANESSA RENWICK

“What we see before us is just one tiny part of the world. We get into the habit of thinking, this is the world, but that’s not true at all. The real world is a much darker and deeper place than this, and much of it is occupied by jellyfish and things.”

—Haruki Murakami

MEDUSA SMACK, 2012

Two-channel video installation, spandex, fiberglass, steel, fake fur, canvas, carpet
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at The White Box, April 1 – May 19



BEN KILLEN ROSENBERG



MY NATURAL INSTINCT AS AN ARTIST is to work like a scientist, collecting and investigating through a wide variety of media from drawing and painting to sculpture and filmmaking. Much like an urban archeologist, I find myself asking questions about what I see and what I am recording. I am the observer of unintentional design and a participant in an unspoken conversation. I often find myself ascribing my own narrative meaning to a set of observations about the things I see. What intrigues me as an artist in the houses, yards, streets and rotaries in my neighborhood is the changing light and shadow. The quality of light brings about an abstraction of shadows and linear curves, and the repetition of forms. I am obsessed with finding what is banal about the environment around us and exploring it further.

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, 2011-2012
Mixed media
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4



JACK RYAN



MY EARLY ARTISTIC IDEAS came from a three-year experience as a commercial fisherman in Alaska. At the time, my work centered on ideas consistent with the locale: hermetic fabulousness, escape, odyssey and the sublime. Today, perversities of the sublime continue to influence the way I shape projects, though neurology and perception have become more of the centerpiece.

Peter de Bolla discusses the limits of our intellectual wanderings, writing, “...wonder requires us to acknowledge the limits of knowledge. It is a different species of knowledge, a way of knowing that does not lead to certainties or truths about the world or the way things are. It is a state of mind that, like being in love, colors all that we know.”

This work is a tool of speculation.

LEFT: DARK SKY RESERVE, 2012
Found wood, electronics
9 x 3 x 3'

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4



SUSAN SEUBERT



NEW METHODS OF COMMUNICATION
(cell phones, smart phones, computers) have created forms of consumption, which directly correlate to the environmental impact of that consumption. Although not obvious, many natural resources are used to manufacture technological goods that we now rely on for communication. These materials are often harvested from third world nations. To explore ideas of toxic waste, environmental impact due to rapid changes in technology, specifically communications technology, I have created a series of videos accessible via QR codes using smart phone technology.

Eyes are no longer adequate to handle the task of reading (i.e. decoding) the image.

The semaphore signal videos I have produced, installed on the internet and transmitted to the viewer via QR codes, emphasize the digital divide that prevails in our global culture. Working on the assumption that most viewers of this piece will not be able to read the semaphore signals as letters (which form a sentence relevant to the location where each video was made) and that there will also be a number of viewers who will not have the relevant technology to read the QR codes, the piece will have effectively alienated the viewer from at least one critical portion of the piece, thereby encompassing both ends of the digital divide.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE, 2012
Digital video, QR codes, vinyl
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at Disjecta, March 11 – April 28



MARIE SIVAK



OVER THE COURSE OF MY CAREER, I have worked in drawing, sculpture and installation. My influences are diverse and include the filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky, the Renaissance master Michelangelo Buonarroti and the first generation of video and performance artists such as Bill Viola and Carolee Schneemann. Aesthetically, my work draws equally from the vocabulary of the decorative arts and conceptual art, freely combining linguistic interpretation with the visually ornate. While these influences are always present, they are rarely at the forefront of my mind when I am creating work. Most often, I begin with my own experiences. I fill sketchbooks with images, which later reassert themselves in more detailed illuminations of ideas.

My fascination with the combination of video and carved stone is driven by my desire to use sculptural objects as portals through which we may access the world of the metaphysical, the spiritual or the sublime, as well as the world of the psychological, the internal and personal. Through tactile history and our interaction with objects, we end up on the other side in a transcendent space. They are magical tools for understanding the human condition.

LEFT: VICIOUS, 2012
Carved stone, video
Dimensions variable

RIGHT: INSTALLATION VIEW

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4



DUSTIN ZEMEL

SCIENCE, FILM THEORY, VIDEO PRODUCTION—these have all become part of an ever-changing synthesis that constitutes my artistic approach and methodology. Even though reality exists as a balance between objective external events and personal interpretation, refined media conventions work with little consideration toward the latter. The exposure of methods, however, can work to undermine the manipulation of cinematic convention. My work as an artist has been about using the medium as a tool to teach us more about itself by turning a lens on the screen and using editing software as microscope.

What tools are used to create a visual experience, and how can we use these tools to dissect the cinematic/telegenic layer cake? How can we break things down and slow the visual onslaught giving viewers the cognitive space necessary to digest details behind the superfluous sensationalism that inundates our information delivery systems? There is a need to give more power to the audience, and I am interested in how to accomplish this through digital means.



CONVERGENCE SERIES, 2012
Four-channel synchronized video
Dimensions variable

Exhibited at The Art Gym, February 27 – April 4

“THE ANALOGIES BETWEEN STARS AND WORKS OF ART CAN PROFITABLY BE PURSUED. HOWEVER FRAGMENTARY ITS CONDITION, ANY WORK OF ART IS ACTUALLY A PORTION OF ARRESTED HAPPENING, OR AN EMANATION OF PAST TIME. IT IS A GRAPH OF AN ACTIVITY NOW STILLED, BUT A GRAPH MADE VISIBLE LIKE AN ASTRONOMICAL BODY, BY A LIGHT THAT ORIGINATED WITH THE ACTIVITY.”

George Kubler. *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962. p. 19.

Lisa Radon

WHAT IT IS, what it was, and what it shall be. That’s what a catalog like this is supposed to convey to you, Reader of the Future. You’ll know, of course, what it’s become, but you may not know just why. A biennial proposes itself as an answer to why. Or we should say this is its ambition, to be a sorting machine crunching quantities of artists, sifting out the few for the future. Shiny ones.

Machine? Should we talk about subjectivity? Should we talk about air traffic control? Flight paths? Detours? The man in the tower and what he had for lunch and how his stomach feels as a result and whether or not his girlfriend is in love with his best friend and whether this is traumatic or frankly, a relief? Should we talk about why I wrote “the man” instead of “the controller” or some other gender-neutral solution? Should we talk about how what happened in the skies above PDX yesterday affects how he operates and what he says to the pilots today?

What about talking about the art? This vivid weed on the scanner bed, this bent projection, this QR code (how 2012!), this vessel, this jellyfish, this peripheral video, this self-portrait of an invisible man. I am torn about whether any web spun of words I might conjure around these works or whether any photo can give you any idea at all, provide even an approximation of what these artists made, or whether the equation for this graph of document vs. das ding an sich is a parabola, swooping down to some kind of intersection with the Real and flying away again into constructed irreality.

Can we leave it that each photo documenting work in this catalog is worth more than a thousand of my words certainly, in spite of Boris Groys’ on-point observation that art isn’t really permitted to be naked, unclothed, that it requires the vêtements of words, hence this essay. (Groys also points out, as I delight in noting, that it doesn’t matter what those words are, precisely, because nobody reads them. Therefore, let us hope that they are typeset in an aesthetically pleasing manner, that they might provide a graphically strong figure on a page. Lorem ipsum, dolor set amet. (Hi, Mom!)) And let’s admit up front that the art, the thing itself, on the floor, on the plinth, on the wall in the frame, on the screen, projected, suspended, carved, crumpled, printed, built, filmed, recorded, fired, is only a fraction of what a biennial is about. Or should we not talk about that?

Regional art’s a funny thing; little moves make big ripples. The fountainheads are few. The who’s who of O.G. artists in Portland is a factor of Arlene Schnitzer’s Fountain Gallery (active from the 60s through the 80s), which itself was founded because Schnitzer, the future arts mega-patron studied at Museum Art School (now PNCA) and was encouraged by her instructors, especially Mike Russo, to open a gallery. Might an adequate biennial essay consist of something like a visual map of the connections between artists to their mentors and professors, their dealers, their friends and collectors, and the curators who show them or are friendly with them?

As much as—if not more than—the next guy, I appreciate a frame through which the future can look at the past. I’ve spent a good amount of time reading Paul Sutinen’s smart reviews from the *Willamette Week* in the 1970s. He wrote me into where I was not or couldn’t be. Assemblages of words around art can be windows (albeit dirty, warped, prismatic, stained-glass), supplemental theoretical production, bad autobiography, but they can also be time travel machines. And really, I’d like to invite you to this past now because it is a pretty good time for art in Portland. I’ve lived here for a while—not as long as Arlene, but longer than Arnold—and I can tell you that from alternative art spaces like the Lumber Room, Appendix Project Space, Worksound, Recess and the Boatspace (10128) to top professional galleries that not only sell work here in Portland but take it to fairs (Fourteen30 Contemporary, PDX Contemporary and Elizabeth Leach, among others) to organizations bringing internationally recognized artists to Portland for exhibitions and lectures at the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Reed College’s Cooley Gallery, Yale Union and Disjecta, we have a healthy ecosystem where regional artists can show, sell and see important contemporary work. And Portland artists travel; the world is folding in on itself (internet!). Never mind the boosters. Portland in 2012 is simply a very kind place where there is space for and support for thinking about and making things, things that may be shown anywhere from Mumbai to Paris.

Every exhibition is an invitation. (Of course, these invitations can be generous and open or black-tie intimidating, obscure.) I asked if we shouldn’t talk about how the art is only a small part of what the biennial is and does. Talking, in the end, is a lot of what the biennial is about. The biennial for the general art audience is an invitation to see a survey of art made here now and an invitation to think and talk about it. Those with skin in the game—artist, dealer, critic, historian—no one needs to invite them to talk about it. For them it’s perhaps less an invitation than a provocation, this subjective, not-terribly-well-oiled or efficient machine. And both professional and lay analyses of the machine, how it works and who works it, the results it produces (i.e. who’s in, who’s out), launch and anchor the conversations at and around and after the biennial exhibition. If only I’d had the foresight to record all of this talk, at parties, at Appendix openings, at Tiga or Holocene or Valentine’s, in Colonel Summers Park, it might have added up to be the consummate biennial essay. I should have thought of that a few months ago. ✕

A Portland-based artist and writer, Lisa Radon has exhibited at The White Box, Car Hole, Worksound and galleryHOME-LAND. She curated the exhibition Reading, Writing, in 2011. Her book, Sentences on Sentences on Paragraphs on Paragraphs (2011), was published by Publication Studio. The Book of Knots, a book-length poem, is forthcoming from c_L. She is the editor of EIGHTS.



WORKS EXHIBITED

BEN BUSWELL

*Exhibited at PDX Across the Hall
February 28 – March 31*

UNTITLED (BURKE), 2012
Photograph, mirror glass, wood, paint
32 x 48 x 4”

LIONSGATE, 2011
Glazed ceramic, wood, paint
Diptych, 62 x 16 x 12” each

UNTITLED (DEVIL’S LAKE), 2011
Embellished photograph and custom frame
Diptych, 20 x 30 x 5” each

UNTITLED (LACAN), 2011
Mirror glass, wood, steel
30 x 40 x 2”

VANESSA CALVERT

Exhibited at The White Box April 1 – May 19

GENERATOR WITH LOVESEAT
AND OTTOMAN, 2012
Poplar, wool, foam, zippers
Generator, 8 x 2 x 1’
Loveseat, 3 x 3 x 3’
Ottoman, 1.5 x 1 x 1’

SANG-AH CHOI

Exhibited at The White Box April 1 – May 19

SUN, 2012
Acrylic, felt-tip pen, pen, glitter, resin
on wood panel
29.5 x 29.5 x 1” (wall paint variable)

HOUSE, 2011
Acrylic, felt-tip pen, pen, glitter, resin on
wood panel
Three paintings: 29.5 x 29.5 x 1” each
(wall paint variable)

FLOWER, 2012
Acrylic, felt-tip pen, pen, glitter, resin on
wood panel
Five paintings: 11.5 x 11.5 x .5” each
(wall paint variable)

FLOWER, 2012
Flowers, fake flowers, fragrance oil,
glass vase, paint
22 x 23 x 8” vase
(flowers and wall paint variable)

DANIEL DUFORD

Exhibited at The White Box April 1 – May 19

EMPIRE JAR (HORSE), 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
18” high

COME DIG MY GRAVE JAR, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
16” high

LANTERN VASE, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
21” high

KKK JAR, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
17” high

GO TELL YOUR YOUNG
MEN JAR, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
18.5” high

ERECT SOLDIER WINE
DECANTER, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
9” high

EMPIRE JAR (ERECTION), 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
16” high

PYRRHIC VICTORY
CAKE PLATE, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
9” high

SLIP KNOT JAR, 2011-2012
Tinglazed earthenware
10” high

THE PEOPLE DREAM OF EMPIRE!, 2012
Woodcut poster on rice paper
39 x 25”

GO TELL YOUR YOUNG MEN, 2012
Woodcut poster on rice paper
39 x 25”

THE BEES MADE HONEY
IN THE LION’S HEAD, 2012
Woodcut poster on rice paper
39 x 25”

FUTURE DEATH TOLL

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

BEEGAS, 2012
Beeswax, nylon, wood, urethane
foam, video screens
Dimensions variable

ERIK GESCHKE

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

THE ASCETIC’S MIRROR, 2012
Aqua-Resin, fiberglass, epoxy,
polyester resin, wood, acrylic
20 x 36 x 36”

HARBINGER, 2012
Wood, aluminum, Aqua-Resin, polyester
resin, fiberglass, epoxy, hardware, acrylic
30 x 43 x 54”

BRIAN GILLIS

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

ON FAILURE AND A PROSPECT, 2012
Inflatables, MDF, text, vinyl,
found objects
Dimensions variable

ANNA GRAY & RYAN WILSON PAULSEN

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(THE COLLYER BROTHERS), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
31 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(E.E. CUMMINGS), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
36 x 42 & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(BUCKMINSTER FULLER), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
32 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(HARRIET ANN JACOBS), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
32 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(PIET MONDRIAN), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
31 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
31 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(AD REINHARDT), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
31 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(WALLACE AND ELSIE STEVENS), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
27 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(NATHANAEL WEST), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
33 x 42” & 12 x 8”

GIANTS IN THE EARTH
(HANNAH WILKE), 2011
Archival inkjet prints
27 x 42” & 12 x 8”

HAND2MOUTH THEATRE

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

SOMETHING’S GOT
AHOLD OF MY HEART
Performance work in progress
April 20 & April 21

GRANT HOTTLE

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

FACING NORTH, 2012
Oil on canvas
108 x 180”

ARIANA JACOB

*Exhibited at the Helzer Gallery
March 5 – April 14*

THE OFFICE OF QUESTIONING
QUESTIONS
A division of *The American Society for Person-
ally Questioning Political Questions*, 2012
Public conversation

ARNOLD J. KEMP

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

All works:
WHO’S AFRAID OF
SOMETHING REAL?, 2012
Archival pigment prints on Somerset
paper in artist’s frames
43 x 35”

CHRIS KNIGHT

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

TIME FUTURE CONTAINED
IN TIME PAST, 2012
Acrylic on wood panel
48 x 60”

YOU WERE STILL HERE, 2012
Acrylic on wood panel
72 x 72”

THE LOVESTRUCK MAN, 2012
Acrylic on wood panel
36 x 84”

CYNTHIA LAHTI

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

CHRISTMAS HEAD, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
11 x 11 x 24”

GOLD HEAD, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
12 x 12 x 24”

SILVER HEAD, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
11 x 11 x 24”

BLACK HAIR ONE, 2012
Paper
11 x 17 x 9”

BLACK HAIR TWO, 2012
Paper
8 x 12 x 14”

LONG BLACK HAIR, 2012
Paper
30 x 24 x 9”

MY GLOVES, 2012
Paper, fabric
3 x 6 x 10”

CRUSH 1-CRUSH 10, 2012
Digital prints in frames
8.5 x 11” each

BELT TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 3 x 3”

BREAK AWAY, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 4 x 4”

BUST TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
9 x 3 x 3”

ELF TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 3 x 3”

FUR COAT TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 7 x 3”

ITALIAN CONE, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
15 x 4 x 4”

MOUNTAIN MADNESS, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
12 x 5 x 5”

NEW INFATUATION, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 5 x 5”

SLEEPER TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
6 x 7 x 4”

SPORTS CAR CONE, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
14 x 3 x 3”

SWEATER TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
12 x 3 x 3”

SWEATER COAT TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
12 x 3 x 3”

ZENITH TRASH, 2012
Paper, ceramic base
12 x 4 x 4”

MATT MCCORMICK

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

TANGLE, 2012
Two-minute, 30 second video loop with interfered projection
Dimensions variable

MACK MCFARLAND

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

A COMPOSITION FOR YOUR PERIPHERAL VISION (VIDEO), 2012
Digital video, sound, paint, carpet, wood
Dimensions variable

AKIHIKO MIYOSHI

*Exhibited at PDX Across the Hall
February 28 – March 31*

All works:
ABSTRACT PHOTOGRAPH, 2011
Archival pigment print
40 x 30” each

WENDY RED STAR

Exhibited at The White Box April 1 – May 19

CROW MASQUERADE
DANCERS, 2011-2012
Nine digital inkjet prints on canvas, video
20 x 16” each

VANESSA RENWICK

Exhibited at The White Box April 1 – May 19

MEDUSA SMACK, 2012
2 channel video installation, spandex, fiberglass, steel, fake fur, canvas, carpet
Dimensions variable

Score composed and performed by Tara Jane O’Neil, partially comprised of sounds recorded by Harry Bertoia on his own Sonambient sound sculptures, as well as a recording of Athanasius Kircher’s *Bell Wheel* at the Museum of Jurassic Technology. Thanks to Val Bertoia and David Wilson, respectively, for permissions granted. Cinematography: Eric Edwards and Vanessa Renwick; Edit: Vanessa Renwick; Online Edit: Tim Scotten; Senior Aquarist at the Oregon Coast Aquarium and Jellyfish Fluffer: Evonne Mochon-Collura;

Medusa screen: Philip Cooper with help from Dana Dart-McClean; Sea grass pillows: Natalie Barela; The Sandy Sea Bottom: Nick Storie; Installation Production Supervisor: Tomas Valladares; Projector Mapping: Tyler Centanni; Production Assistance: Corey Arnold, Mike Cobb and Kendall Core; Drape Saint: T.C. Smith.

BEN KILLEN ROSENBERG

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, 2011-2012
Mixed media (foam core, cardboard, corrugated plastic, assorted papers, acrylics, inks, watercolors, birch plywood, wooden sawhorses, balsa wood, graphite, wire mesh, ceramic, wallboard joint compound, sawdust, gesso, fabric, Dura-Lar wet media, pumice stone, adhesive caulk, white tape, hot glue)
Dimensions variable

On plywood table #1:
BAPTIST CHURCH, GOD WANTS FULL CUSTODY SIGN, AND SMALL WHITE BARN SHED

HOME WITH SUNKEN DRIVEWAY, TV ANTENNAE

WORKSHOP/STUDIO WITH BLACK ROOF AND WALKOUT DECK

HOUSE WITH FIVE ROOFS AND BACK DECK

CAT WANTS INTO THE BACK WINDOW BARN-SHAPED HOME WITH DECK AND SMALL SHED

On plywood table #2:
HOME WITH TV ANTENNAE

SMALL STUDIO WITH WHITE ROOF

TYVEK PAPER HOUSE WITH WHITE REAR DECK

CHICKEN COOP

CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUND

AMERICAN FLAG HOME WITH SAWDUST ROOF

B.K.R.’S HOME AND STUDIO WITH SKYLIGHTS

SMALL GARAGE WITH ONE DOOR AND CARDBOARD FRONT AND BACK WALLS

REFRIGERATOR WITH KETCHUP

JACK RYAN

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

DARK SKY RESERVE, 2012
Found wood, electronics
9 x 3 x 3’

ONLY LOVE IS ON THE MOON, 2012
Ink, graphite, acrylic on paper
48 x 56”

SUSAN SEUBERT

Exhibited at Disjecta March 11 – April 28

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE, 2012
QR codes, vinyl, remote video
Dimensions variable

MARIE SIVAK

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

FLOATING REMNANTS OR THE LINGERING STING, 2007-2009
Carved stone, MDF, wood, pencil, wax, string, stainless steel, brass, video
55 x 22.5 x 10.5”

VICIOUS, 2012
Carved stone, video
Dimensions variable

MEMOIR, 2007-2008
Carved alabaster, video, wood, MDF
33 x 28 x 29”

TENUOUS, 2006-2009
Carved stone, video, steel, rare earth magnets, nylon organza
Dimensions variable

DUSTIN ZEMEL

*Exhibited at The Art Gym
February 27 – April 4*

CONVERGENCE SERIES, 2012
Four-channel synchronized video
Dimensions variable

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ARTIST BIOS

BEN BUSWELL

Ben Buswell received his MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his BFA from Oregon State University. Solo exhibitions include *The Shadow and the Willing* at the Helzer Gallery (2010) and *TENNESSEE* at TILT Gallery and Project Space (2008). Buswell has been included in the Oregon Biennial at the Portland Art Museum (2006) and recent exhibitions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oregon, Washington and Michigan. In 2011, Buswell received a Career Opportunity Grant from the Oregon Arts Commission and The Ford Family Foundation. [W benbuswell.com](http://benbuswell.com)

VANESSA CALVERT

Vanessa Calvert is a mixed-media sculptor and installation artist living and working in Portland, Oregon. She received her BA from Whitman College in 2003 and MFA in Contemporary Art Practice from Portland State University in 2009. She has shown in Oregon and Washington at spaces including Worksound, Disjecta, Igloo, Autzen Gallery, FalseFront Studio and Broderick Gallery, and was included in the 2012 Bellevue Arts Museum Biennial. [W vanessacalvert.com](http://vanessacalvert.com)

SANG-AH CHOI

Sang-ah Choi was born in Seoul, Korea, and earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters of Fine Arts from Ewha Women's University, Seoul, and her second MFA in the painting program at the University of Illinois at

Urbana, Champaign. Choi has had solo shows at Sandra Gering Gallery, Arario Gallery, University Gallery at Illinois State University, Doosan Gallery in New York, the Portland Art Museum, and in Korea and Illinois. Her works have been in group shows since 1996 in Oregon, Georgia, New York, Seoul, Michigan, Taipei, Chicago and Massachusetts. In 2011, she exhibited in the group show *Future Pass* in Venice, a parallel sanctioned exhibition to the Venice Biennale, and was one of three Oregon artists honored with a Hallie Ford Fellowship from The Ford Family Foundation. Her works are held in a number of public collections such as The Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and the UNEEC Foundation in Taipei. Her works have been reviewed in *ARTnews* and *The New York Times* and featured in *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being* by Jonathan Fineberg. [W sangabchoi.com](http://sangabchoi.com)

DANIEL DUFORD

Daniel Duford is an artist and writer. He grew up in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of New Mexico. His sculptures and drawings have been shown nationally, including at MASS MoCA; The Art Gym at Marylhurst University in Portland, OR; the Contemporary Crafts Gallery in Philadelphia; and the Bellevue Arts Museum in Washington. His writing has appeared in *ARTnews*, *The Bear Deluxe*, *ArtWeek* and *Ceramics Monthly*. In 2010, he received a Hallie Ford Fellowship from The Ford Family Foundation

and has also been awarded project grants from the Regional Arts & Culture Council. Duford teaches at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. [W danielford.blogspot.com](http://danielford.blogspot.com)

FUTURE DEATH TOLL

FUTURE DEATH TOLL IS A THROBING MESS OF COLLABORATION THAT CLONES BODIES IN BEESWAX, CREATES VIDEO ANIMATIONS AND PRINTS WITH LASERS.

[W futuredeathtoll.com](http://futuredeathtoll.com)

ERIK GESCHKE

Erik Geschke is a mixed-media artist who has exhibited both nationally and internationally. Venues include the UCLA Hammer Museum of Art in Los Angeles; ZieherSmith and Knoedler & Company in New York; The Navy Pier in Chicago; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Connecticut; Howard House Contemporary Art, Francine Seders Gallery, Esther Claypool Gallery and the Center on Contemporary Art in Seattle; The Tacoma Art Museum in Washington; Beppu Wiarda Gallery, Pacific Northwest College of Art and Disjecta in Portland, Oregon; FIAC Contemporary Art Fair in Paris; and Zaum Projects in Lisbon, Portugal. He has received awards from the Seattle Art Museum (Betty Bowen Special Recognition Award), Seattle Arts Commission (Seattle Artists Award), Oregon Arts Commission, Regional Arts & Culture Council, Jerome Foundation, College Art Association, Skowhegan School of Paint-

ing and Sculpture, Sculpture Space, Inc., and the Vermont Studio Center among others. Erik received his MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2001, attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1996 and received a BFA from Cornish College of the Arts in 1993. He is currently an assistant professor of art at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. [W erikgeschke.com](http://erikgeschke.com)

BRIAN GILLIS

Brian Gillis makes large-scale installation works informed by his interest in American history, archival research, found objects, craft and language. Gillis received his MFA from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University and his BFA from Humboldt State University. He has created work for Tacoma Contemporary, WA; The Ice House, Phoenix, AZ; The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL; and has an upcoming exhibition at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Gillis has received numerous awards, including an Illinois Arts Council Individual Artist Grant; Bronze Prize at the Art Interview 23rd International Artist Competition, Berlin, a Brink Award nomination; and a Merit Fellowship at the Contemporary Artists Center, NY. He is a member of the Watershed Advisory Board of Directors, Newcastle, ME. Gillis is an assistant professor of art at the University of Oregon. [W gillislab.com](http://gillislab.com)

ANNA GRAY & RYAN WILSON PAULSEN

Anna Gray and Ryan Wilson Paulsen are artists. Working at the meeting point of art and text, reading and writing, theory and action, their idea-based practice fuses history, fiction, autobiography and artistic commentary into a wide variety of material works, from poster projects, sculpture and multimedia installations, to publications, indexes and performative lectures. Their work has been recently shown at PDX Contemporary Art, Tacoma Art Museum, and PICA's Time-Based Art Festival and published in *NOON Literary Annual*. They are represented by PDX Contemporary Art in Portland, Oregon. [W ryannaprojects.com](http://ryannaprojects.com)

HAND2MOUTH THEATRE

Hand2Mouth is a theater ensemble committed to creating original work. Drawing from dance, music, theater and design, Hand2Mouth strives to connect honestly with audiences and collaborators, blurring the line between performance and reality. We celebrate the raw, charged potential of the live encounter, and our methods and styles change to meet the demands of the work. Hand2Mouth performances push boundaries toward theater that is bold and accessible. *Something's Got Ahold of My Heart* is created by Hand2Mouth's ensemble (Matthew Dieckman, Julie Hammond, Liz Hayden, Faith Helma, Erin Leddy, Maesie Speer), directed by Jonathan Walters, and

features choreography by Allie Hankins, music by Hand2Mouth and Ash Black Bufflo, and design by Christopher Kuhl, Bobby Brewer-Wallin and Efren Delgadillo Jr. [W hand2mouththeatre.org](http://hand2mouththeatre.org)

GRANT HOTTLE

Grant Hottle was born in Oklahoma City. He studied at Utrecht School of the Arts in the Netherlands and at the University of Oklahoma where he received his BFA in 2003. In 2007 he earned his MFA in painting and drawing from the University of Oregon. He has had recent shows at Laura Russo Gallery, Half/Dozen Gallery, Kirkland Arts Center (Seattle) and Samson Gallery (Boston). Hottle currently teaches drawing and painting as a member of adjunct faculty at Clark College in Vancouver, WA, and at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, OR. He is represented by Half/Dozen Gallery. [W granthottle.com](http://granthottle.com)

ARIANA JACOB

Ariana Jacob received her MFA from Portland State University. She has enacted her conversation projects across the United States in such places as the the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York and PICA's TBA Festival. Jacob's work has been exhibited at galleries and museums including apexart and Smack Mellon in New York City, and the Portland Art Museum. She is a recipient of a 2012 Artist Project Grant from the Regional Arts & Cultural Council.

[W publicwondering.wordpress.com/the-american-society-for-personally-questioning-political-questions/](http://publicwondering.wordpress.com/the-american-society-for-personally-questioning-political-questions/)

ARNOLD J. KEMP

Arnold J. Kemp holds a combined BA/BFA (1991) from Tufts University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He also has an MFA (2005) from Stanford University. He has been making and exhibiting regularly for 20 years, while concurrently writing and publishing critical and creative texts. Significant works of Kemp's are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, the Berkeley Art Museum, the Tacoma Art Museum and the Fine Arts Collection at the University of California, Davis. He is the recipient of awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (2012), the Joan Mitchell Foundation (2001), Artadia Fund for Art & Dialogue (2001), Pollock-Krasner Foundation (2003), Art Matters Grant (2009) and Printed Matter Award for Artists (2009). He has also been awarded an artist residency from Cité Internationale Des Arts, which allowed him to live and work for seven months (2005–2006) in Paris. This preceded a major residency, commission and exhibition supported by the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (2008–2009). Kemp's solo exhibitions include ESP, San Francisco (1998); Debs & Co., New York (2001); Quotidian Gallery, San Francisco (2002); Stephen Wirtz Gallery, San Francisco (2006); TBA Festival/Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, Oregon (2007); Envoy, New York (2008);

Patricia Sweetow Gallery, San Francisco (2009); and PDX Contemporary, Portland, Oregon (2009 & 2010). Kemp is represented by PDX Contemporary Art, Portland, Oregon. **W** [worksarnoldjkemp.com](#)

CHRIS KNIGHT

Chris Knight received his undergraduate degree in philosophy from Vassar College and his MFA in painting from the University of Wisconsin. He has exhibited on the West Coast and in the Midwest. His paintings are informed by his interest in images, collected from varied sources and presented as fractured narrative. He is fascinated by graphic novels and archaic texts. Knight’s awards include a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant and the W.K. Rose Fellowship. **W** [madebychrisknight.com](#)

CYNTHIA LAHTI

Cynthia Lahti has explored various sculptural media, from cast glass to plaster and ceramics. Like her drawings and collages, they frequently begin with a found image, from art history, old textbooks, publications ranging from popular periodicals to knitting catalogs. Lahti received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and has also studied at Oregon College of Art and Craft and the Pacific Northwest College of Art. She has had residencies and grants at the Pilchuck Glass School, Caldera and the Oregon College of Art & Craft. Lahti is represented by PDX Contemporary Art; her most recent solo

exhibition, *Nurse*, was held there in 2011. **W** [cynthialahti.blogspot.com](#)

MATT MCCORMICK

Matt McCormick is a filmmaker and artist whose work crosses mediums to fashion witty, abstract observations of contemporary culture and the urban landscape. He has exhibited and screened works at the Sundance Film Festival, The Serpentine Gallery, The Oslo Museum of Modern Art, the Reykjavik Art Museum and the Seattle Art Museum. His film *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal* was named in “Top 10 / Best of 2002” lists in both *The Village Voice* and *ArtForum*. McCormick’s debut feature, *Some Days are Better Than Others*, was invited to screen in the New Directors/New Films series presented by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Film Society of Lincoln Center. His recent project, *The Great Northwest*, screened at the Rotterdam International Film Festival and The Museum of Modern Art. **W** [rodeofilmco.com](#)

MACK MCFARLAND

Mack McFarland is an independent artist and curator for the Philip Feldman Gallery at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. His current focus examines experimental formalism and looks at dissent aesthetics and its relationship to Utopian thought. His works aim to develop a space for the viewer to experience an intersection of visceral aesthetic and cognition. These explorations manifest in the form

of exhibitions, postcards and sculptures. He has exhibited nationally and internationally, screening videos at Pixelodeon Festival at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles, La Enana Marron Film and Video Festival in Madrid and Cine Fantom in Moscow. McFarland has also created works for the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art’s Time-Based Art Festival and a three-month-long project for the Tacoma Art Museum, which Sheila Farr of *The Seattle Times* called “startling, nutty, and technologically relevant.” McFarland has been quoted as saying, “Wherever I am, I’m making.” His post-studio mantra has taken him to archives, karaoke microphones, canoes and into his studio. **W** [kinetocast.com](#)

AKIHIKO MIYOSHI

Born in Japan, Akihiko Miyoshi received a MFA in photography in 2004 from the Rochester Institute of Technology after taking a leave of absence as a PhD student in computer engineering at Carnegie Mellon University to pursue art. Miyoshi is an associate professor of photography and digital media at Reed College. His work has been exhibited nationally, including recent exhibitions at The Art Gym, Marylhurst University; The Department, Toronto; and Bowling Green State University, OH. He is the International Award Winner of Fellowship 12 at The Silver Eye Center for Photography in Pittsburgh and in 2012 received a Hallie Ford Fellowship from The Ford Family Foundation.

W [people.reed.edu/~miyos/art.html](#)

WENDY RED STAR

Wendy Red Star was born in Billings, Montana, just outside of the Crow Indian Reservation where she was raised. She grew up in a multicultural family. Her mother is of Irish descent, her father is a full-blood Crow Indian, and her older sister is Korean. Wendy left the Crow Indian Reservation when she was 18 to attend Montana State University in Bozeman, where she studied sculpture. She earned her MFA in sculpture at UCLA. Her work has been shown at the Missoula Museum of the Arts; Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City; Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis; Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis; Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, NM; The Fondation Cartier L’Art Contemporain, Paris; The CSULB Gallery, Long Beach, CA; Research & Development, Chicago; The Museum Tower at MOCA, Los Angeles; And/Or Gallery, Dallas; The UCLA New Wight Gallery, Los Angeles; the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery; The Domaine De Kerguehennec, Brittany, France; The Hudson D. Walker Gallery, Provincetown, MA; The Plush Gallery, Dallas; The Laura Bartlett Gallery, London; the Luckman Gallery, Los Angeles; The Volitant Gallery, Austin; Yellowstone Art Museum; and Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, NM. **W** [wredstar.com](#)

VANESSA RENWICK

Vanessa Renwick. Founder and janitor of the Oregon Department of Kick Ass. Daughter of the American Revolution. Born 1961 in Chicago, Illinois. Film/Video/Installation artist. Lives in Portland, Oregon. An artist by nature, not by stress of research. She puts scholars to rout by solving through Nature’s teaching problems that have fretted their trained minds. Working in experimental and poetic documentary forms, her iconoclastic work reflects an interest in place, relationships between bodies and landscapes, and all sorts of borders. She is a naturalist, born, not made: a true barefoot, cinematic rabble-rouser, of grand physique, calm pulse and a magnetism that demands the most profound attention. She just had her favorite show ever at the Museum of Jurassic Technology in LA and then headed to France for a show at the Centre Pompidou in April 2012, where Tara Jane O’Neil played live to a huge projection of the *Medusa Smack*. Renwick is represented by PDX Contemporary Art, Portland. Score composed and performed by Tara Jane O’Neil, partially comprised of sounds recorded by Harry Bertoia on his own Sonambient sound sculptures, as well as a recording of Athanasius Kircher’s *Bell Wheel* at the Museum of Jurassic Technology. Thanks to Val Bertoia and David Wilson, respectively, for permissions granted. Cinematography: Eric Edwards and Vanessa Renwick; Edit: Vanessa Renwick; Online Edit: Tim Scotten; Senior Aquarist at the Oregon Coast Aquarium and Jellyfish Fluffer: Evonne Mochon-Collura; Medusa screen: Philip Cooper with help from Dana

Dart-McClean; Sea grass pillows: Natalie Barela; The Sandy Sea Bottom: Nick Storie; Installation Production Supervisor: Tomas Valladares; Projector Mapping: Tyler Centanni; Production Assistance: Corey Arnold, Mike Cobb and Kendall Core; Drape Saint: T.C. Smith. **W** [odoka.org](#)

BEN KILLEN ROSENBERG

Ben Killen Rosenberg is a printmaker, painter and sculptor. His first career was as an illustrator; clients included the *Portland Tribune*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Willamette Week* and the Internal Revenue Service. He received his BFA in printmaking from the Tyler School of Arts in Philadelphia and his MFA from Portland State University. Ben’s work has been exhibited in Portland at PDX Contemporary Art, Portland Community College’s Northview Gallery and at Portland State University. **W** [benkillenrosenberg.com](#)

JACK RYAN

Jack Ryan is an artist, writer and independent curator, as well as a member of Fugitive Projects in Nashville, and of Ditch Projects in Eugene, OR. Recent exhibitions include The American University Museum (Washington, DC), Powerhouse (Memphis), Brooks Museum (Memphis), Crawlspace (Seattle), Hunter Museum (Chattanooga), Portland Community College’s Cascade Gallery (Portland, OR), The Frist Center (Nashville) and Consolidated Works (Seattle). His films

have been screened at the Hirshhorn Museum (Washington, DC), MICA (Baltimore), The IMAFY (Cairo, Egypt), Dublin Electronics Arts Festival (Ireland), Ausstellungsraum Klingental (Basel, Switzerland), 21 Grand (San Francisco) and The Phillips Collection (Washington, DC). Research awards in 2011 brought him to residencies in Iceland and to the New Media Institute in Banff, Canada. Jack received his MFA from the University of Georgia. **W** [volcanophile.com](#)

SUSAN SEUBERT

Susan Seubert divides her photographic practice between fine art and journalism. She is equally at home with digital technology and such labor-intensive processes as collodion, which yields tintype and ambrotype images. She has tackled such subjects as domestic violence, environmental destruction, phobias and torture. She has exhibited work nationally and internationally, and her photographs have been included in both the Portland Art Museum and Tacoma Art Museum biennials. Susan received her BFA from the Pacific Northwest College of Art. She is represented by Froelick Gallery in Portland, Oregon, G. Gibson Gallery in Seattle and Joseph Bellows Gallery in La Jolla. **W** [seubertfineart.com](#)

MARIE SIVAK

Marie Sivak received her MFA degree in sculpture and extended media from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA. While her work frequently combines video

and sculpture, she is also interested in drawing and installation. She is inspired by women artists and writers of the 19th century and by video and performance pieces by Bill Viola and Carolee Schneemann. She has exhibited extensively in this country and in Europe, South America, and Japan. Her awards and residencies include an Individual Artist Fellowship from the Oregon Arts Commission as well as grants from the Regional Arts & Culture Council. **W** [mariesivak.com](#)

DUSTIN ZEMEL

Dustin Zemel graduated from Washington University, St. Louis, with degrees in biology and film and media studies. He received his MFA from Montana State University with an emphasis on natural history and science filmmaking. Zemel founded Grand Detour in Portland, as well as Experiments in New Media, and has exhibited in such galleries as The White Box at University of Oregon in Portland, Gallery Homeland, Disjecta Contemporary Art Center and the Littman Gallery at Portland State University. Zemel’s films have been screened at venues in this country, in Europe and in South America. He is the recipient of awards from the Regional Arts & Culture Council and has had numerous artist residencies. Zemel is currently an EDA scholar at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. **W** [dustinzemel.com](#)

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