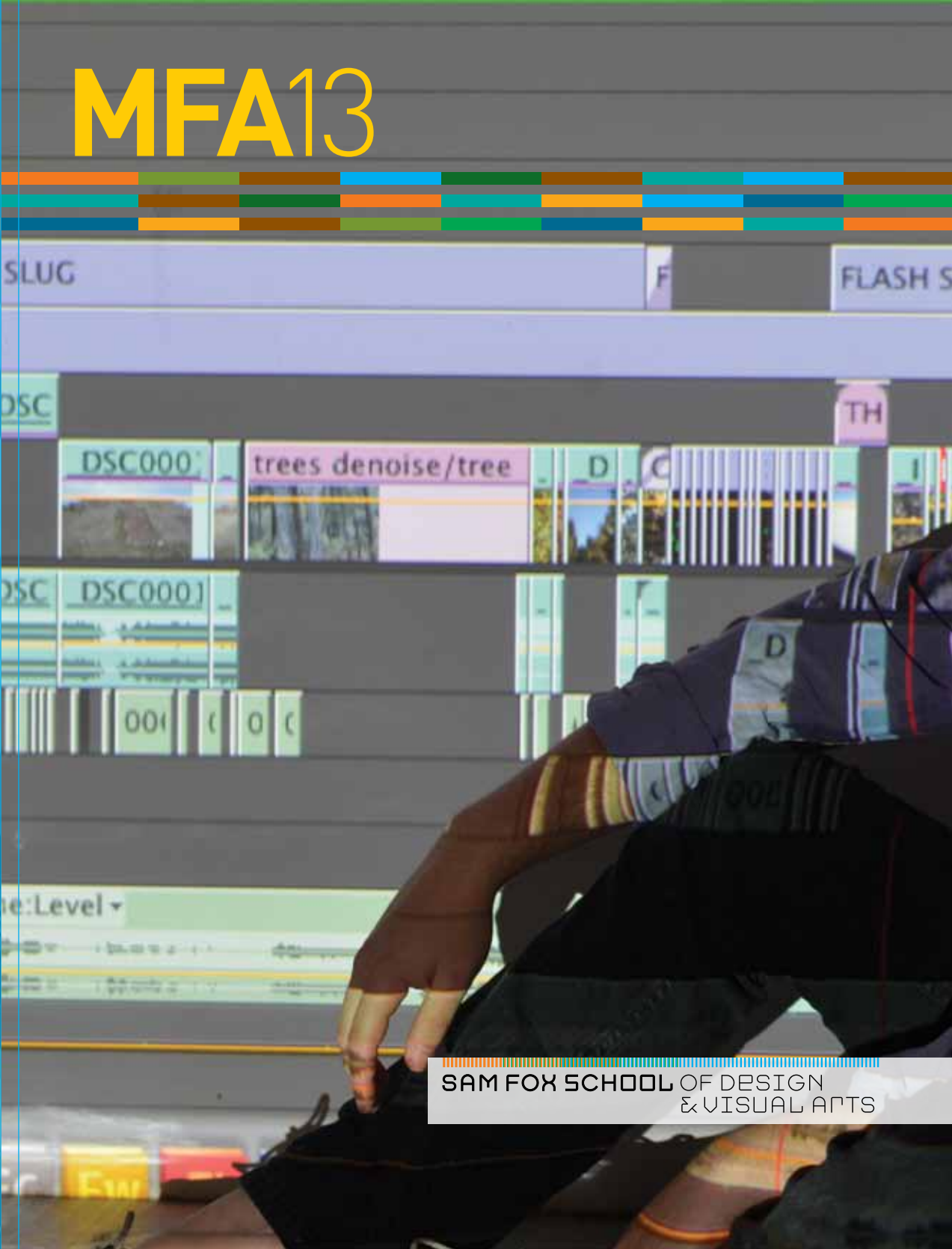
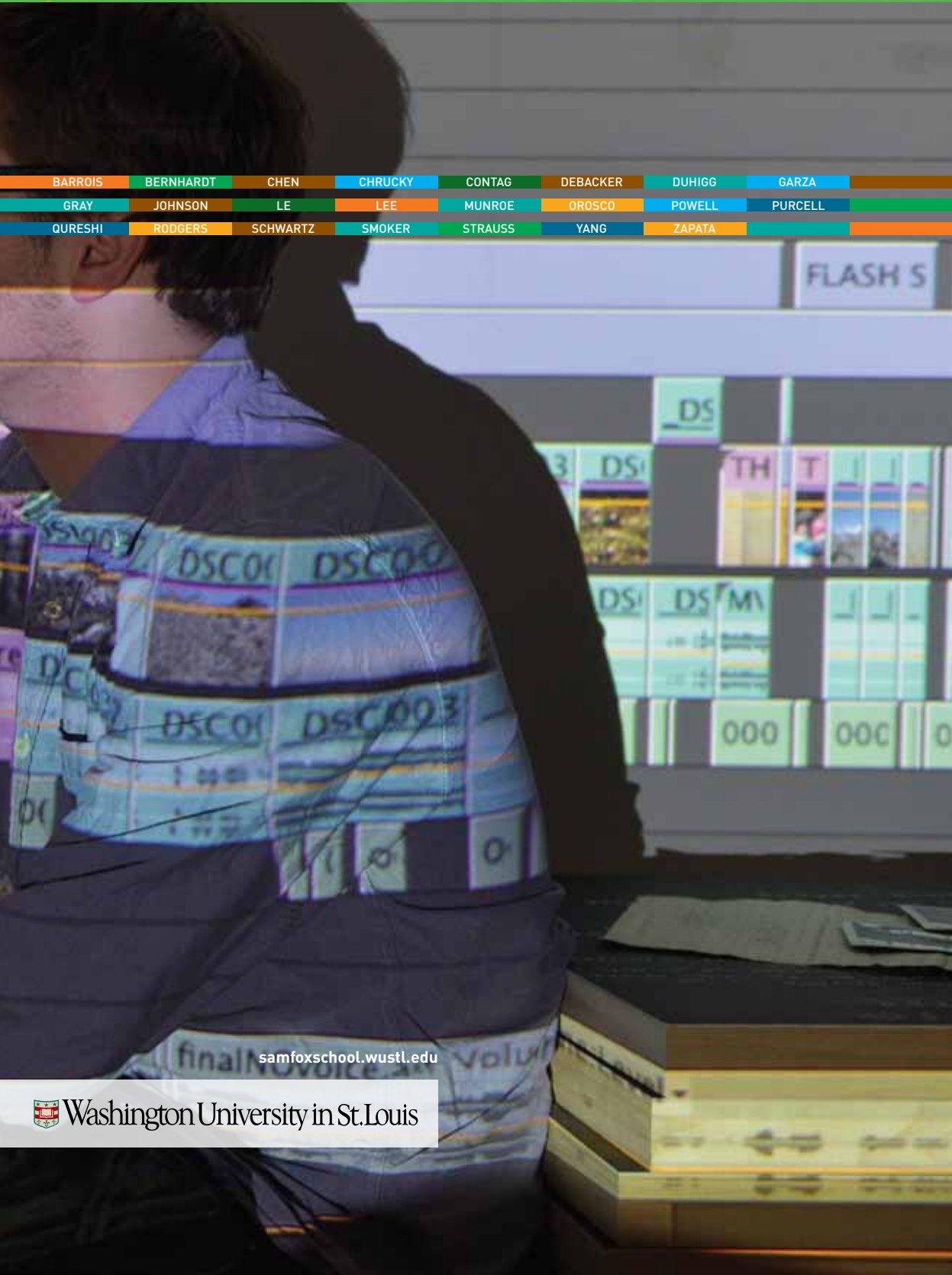




MFA13

- BARROIS
- BERNHARDT
- CHEN
- CHRUCKY
- CONTAG
- DEBACKER
- DUHIGG
- GARZA
- GRAY
- JOHNSON
- LE
- LEE
- MUNROE
- OROSCO
- POWELL
- PURCELL
- QURESHI
- RODGERS
- SCHWARTZ
- SMOKER
- STRAUSS
- YANG
- ZAPATA



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Washington University in St. Louis

SAM FOX SCHOOL OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS

MFA 2013 THESIS EXHIBITION
May 3–July 29, 2013

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BUZZ SPECTOR

*Dean, College and Graduate School of Art
Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts*

In order for there to be collaboration there must first be community. The Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts encourages collaboration among artists, between artists and architects, and among artists, designers, architects, and practitioners in other fields. This commitment to collaboration is as well a commitment to interdisciplinary conversations about art and ideas. The spirit of collaboration animates the conversations between artists and writers from several other programs of study at Washington University in St. Louis, resulting in a diversity of texts in line with the multiplicity of practices documented in this publication. Both the artworks and the discourses surrounding them reflect an expansive attitude about what art is and where its affects happen, in the gallery or museum and, beyond those institutions, into communities of various scope—in locations both real and virtual.

The thoughtful installation of the exhibition was directed by Meredith Malone, associate curator at the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, with the thorough assistance of Ron Weaver, exhibitions preparator, and Jan Hessel, facilities manager & art preparator. The documentation and forms were ably prepared and managed by Kimberly Broker, assistant registrar. The exhibit and catalog would not be possible without the support of Sabine Eckmann, William T. Kemper director and chief curator, and Carmon Colangelo, dean of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts.

This publication is a result of the shared belief in, and cooperation toward, interdisciplinary collaboration among many graduate students and faculty in the Graduate School of Art in the Sam Fox School and several academic areas in the College of Arts & Sciences. Foremost in supporting this endeavor are Patricia Olynyk, director of the Graduate School of Art and Florence and Frank Bush professor of Art, whose essay is a critical reflection on the rise and implications of interdisciplinary collaboration, and Dave Schuman, director of Creative Writing and lecturer in the department of English, who treats the ekphrastic relationship of artists and writers in so many words. Able support as well comes from Elizabeth C. Childs, Etta & Mark Steinberg professor and chair of the Art History & Archaeology department; and Jane E. Neidhardt, managing editor of publications at the Kemper Art Museum. The texts of writers and artists alike were edited by Eileen G'Sell, lecturer in the department of English, ably assisted by Holly Tasker, publications assistant at the Museum; and the images show professor of photography Stan Strebicki's commitment to capturing the creativity and energy of both the artworks and their makers.

Jonathan Santlofer: Just recently someone said to me—a non-art person, a layman—“Why do we need words to describe art?” I said that writing about art is a very different activity from making art. That’s all it is, two different activities.

Peter Schjeldahl: Yeah, you know, you like art, you’re very excited, you don’t want to talk about it. It’s like, why do we need sports writing when we have sports? To wake up in the morning and buy the paper, to read about it and have a good time all over again....¹

PATRICIA OLYNYK

Director, Graduate School of Art
Florence and Frank Bush Professor of Art
Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

The Collaborative Turn: New Models of Thinking, Making, and Learning

[The] expanded field of relational practices currently goes by a variety of names: socially engaged art, community-based art, experimental communities, dialogic art, littoral art, participatory, interventionist, research-based, or collaborative art. These practices are less interested in a relational aesthetic than in the creative rewards of collaborative activity—whether in the form of working with preexisting communities or establishing one’s own interdisciplinary network.

—Claire Bishop²

Collaboration in the arts has been on a steady rise for at least three quarters of a century. Some of the more memorable examples include the haunting dream sequences Salvador Dali designed for Alfred Hitchcock’s *Spellbound*; Jeremy Blake’s psychotropic color bleeds for Paul Thomas Anderson’s *Punch Drunk Love*; William Burroughs’s recital of the Lord’s Prayer to the grinding rhythms of Sonic Youth; and Ryan Trecartin’s video installations, a rambling visual and auditory assault on the senses, brought about with a little help from his friends.

Despite some of the lingering complications that arise primarily from questions of authorship, cross-media and cross-disciplinary collaborative arts have moved into the center of creative and cultural production, and

¹ Peter Schjeldahl and Jonathan Santlofer, “Mask of the Critic,” *Guernica*, January 30, 2006.

² Claire Bishop, “The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents,” *Artforum*, February 2006, 179-85.

necessarily into the heart of teaching and learning. Whether artistic collaborations work well or don’t depends on multiple factors that involve the nature and scope of the project, a history of past collaborative work, and a personality less inclined toward a singular approach to art-making.

Though by no means a new phenomenon, artists and writers especially seem to share an enduring affinity for one another. When asked by abstract painter and fiction writer Jonathan Santlofer why poets possess the ability to write about art, art critic and contemporary postmodern poet Peter Schjeldahl replied that “creative types” share a “sensitivity...[and] also the use of symbolically nuanced language.”³

Not unlike the various affinities between art and writing debated by Santlofer and Schjeldahl, the Graduate School of Art enthusiastically encourages students to expand their intellectual and creative reach across campus. Often, these conversations evolve into meaningful collaborations that range from placing artists in labs to community engagement to teaming up with architects on projects that focus on place and urbanism. Enhanced collaboration with disciplines outside the arts proposes new models of thinking, making, and learning for students in a critically engaged studio practice program. Whether inspired by modern scientific theory, appropriating new materials, or subverting ideas and methodologies housed in the humanities, students are increasingly prioritizing engagements with fields outside their own. These seem to provide not only a new theoretical apparatus with which to inform creative work, but also a deeper understanding of the ways in which we navigate the social conditions of the world in which we live.

Technoculture, open source, and the philosophy of universal access have also shifted the landscape for both singular and collaborative art-making. Students following the examples of video artists such as Christian Marclay and

Dara Birnbaum are sampling film and preexisting archives from, for example, Hollywood films and refashioning them into new forms and narratives of their own making. Such strategies of production themselves expand the conceptual boundaries of a studio practice in ways that can prompt engagement with a variety of disciplines beyond the arts.

The global network has also added an additional layer of complexity, as op-ed writer and blogger Maura Kelly posits in a recent article for *The Atlantic*: “In the age of the Internet, the word collaboration has taken on a sacred dimension. Through the miracle of electronic crowdsourcing, the Internet produced astonishing collective creations, such as Wikipedia. But these things were created by individuals sitting alone in their offices, communicating with other individuals across wires and cables. Electronic collaboration is very different from the in-person kind....”⁴

Though collaboration, whether electronic or in-person, isn’t for every artist, being around other artists often stimulates the generation of ideas, asserts Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can’t Stop Talking*.⁵ There is speculation that this is the primary reason Andy Warhol surrounded himself with other creative types in his Factory and also a key reason why the tight-knit community of MFA students occupying a dedicated graduate studio space can impact one another’s work so significantly.

It is an increasingly important priority for institutions of higher learning to find new modalities of exchange in order to enrich and broaden education. Though the Graduate School of Art neither overvalues the collaborative model nor privileges one strategy of production over another, the program observes the moves and strategies of the larger art world and further reflects the corresponding richness of encounters found therein through meaningful collaborative relationships across campus and beyond. This publication highlights but one of those that have been nurtured between the Graduate School of Art and various writing-based programs at the university. Echoing the sentiments of Schjeldahl in his conversation with Santlofer, “you never get tired [of] looking at pictures or reading words.”

³ Schjeldahl and Santlofer, “Mask of the Critic,” 2006.

⁴ Maura Kelly, “Does Artistic Collaboration Ever Work?” *The Atlantic*, July 25, 2012.

⁵ Cain, as quoted in *ibid*.



DAVID SCHUMAN

Director, Graduate Program in Creative Writing
Lecturer, English
College of Arts & Sciences

I once met a man who could not remember the word for *socks*. This happened in the parking lot of a strip mall—the man approached to admire my dog. This was always happening. He was a handsome little dog. The man was middle-aged, dressed appropriately for the crisp weather, even nattily. He looked like the kind of person you might find yourself seated next to at a matinee of an arty film. He told me his dog would often steal his—here he stopped, bent, pulled up the cuff of his trousers and pointed at the patch of argyle-patterned wool over his ankle—*these*. Embarrassed for both of us, I couldn't bring myself to fill in the word. I smiled and told him, yes, my dog stole *those* too. We spoke a few more minutes about dogs and other things, the weather probably. When I took my leave he looked bewildered, as if he'd expected to get in the car with me.

I realized the poor man's lethologica, taken along with the general attitude of puzzlement he radiated, was probably the result of some early dementia or a terrible brain event. It frightened me at the time and continues to resonate because I also occasionally suffer from momentary aphasia, a brain stutter that will cruelly snatch a word from memory. *Shallots*. *Nepotism*. These are words I often lose. Even now I can't remember the word *celibacy*. To write that last sentence I had to Google the phrase "priestly abstinence."

Another word that always seems to scamper behind a synaptic blip when I need it? *Ekphrasis*.

Ironic, if you think about it. To attempt to describe something when you can't think of the words is to enter the ekphrastic mode. In

ancient usage, the word meant description of any *thing* or *experience*, which brings to mind Adam dreaming up names for a divine parade of, well, everything; or, cartoonishly, our prehistoric forebears, hunched over *hot-thing*, roasting *eat-things* on *straight-things* until someone dreamed up *fire, meat, stick*.

The writers in this catalog were confronted with things that don't come conveniently packaged in words and, like the man in the parking lot, were forced into miracles of creative compensation, yanking, pointing. The results here are no mere descriptions, of course. The pieces gesture, accompany, and create notional ghosts between the objects and the writing. The artists who offered their works up for such consideration are no less bold for allowing interpretation with all of its risks. Over the last several years of collaboration with the Sam Fox School, MFA Creative Writing students and writers from other departments have returned to their work with their own aesthetics galvanized by the experience. The spirit has been one of creative investigation and generosity, and I'm glad to have been a part of it. I'm particularly grateful to Buzz Spector, Patricia Olynyk, and Eileen G'Sell for their work on this—and here I'm searching for the right word again, because *catalog* is a certainly a misnomer, a misrepresentation of the ambitions herein. *Document*. I like that. I'll leave it at that.







Lyndon Barrois, Jr.
Permutations of Personality, 2013
 Oil on foam and wood; wood; wool
 and cotton; and digital prints,
 dimensions variable



RICKEY LAURENTIIS
on Lyndon Barrois, Jr.

Black Gentleman

There are eyes, glasses even, but still he can't see
 what the world sees seeing him.
 They know an image of him they themselves created.
 He knows his own: fine-lined from foot to finger,
 each limb adjusted, because it's had to,
 to achieve finally flight—

though what's believed
 in him is a flightlessness, a sinking-down,
 as any swamp-mess of water I'm always thinking of
 might draw down again the washed-up body
 of a boy, as any mouth I've yearned for would take down,
 wrestler-style, the boy's tongue with its own. . .

What an eye can't imagine
 it can't find: not in blood, swollen in the knees
 of a cypress, not definitely in some dreaming man's wish—
 let's have his nature speak.
 What will the incredible night of him say here, to his thousand
 moons, now that he can rise up to any tree, but not fear it?

Sarah Bernhardt,
Abou Gayeyou, Esther Gayeyou,
Danait Gebremedhin, Fithawi Gebremedhin,
Lewam Gebremedhin, Merhawi Gebremedhin,
Bethsha Guragi, Khageshor Khatiwada,
Laura Knox, Sweta Subba, Grace Tartlue

Intersect K, 2012—ongoing
11 inkjet prints, 11 hand-written
statements in pencil on notebook
paper, and 52 color photographs
Inkjet prints: 24.9/16 x 32.9/16," each
Statements: 10 x 8" or 8 x 10" each
Photographs: 10 x 8" or 8 x 10" each



SARAH BERNHARDT



Visibility empowers. Balancing the individual and collective, the Intersect Project collaborates with St. Louis refugee and immigrant youth through a community-based arts initiative that uses art as a catalyst for dialogue about identity, belonging, and diversity. The Intersect portrait series raises awareness about individuals and their stories in our community while simultaneously facilitating a place of belonging for the youth involved.

Over the past year, Intersect workshops have explored the intersection of the arts, reportage, education, social work, and activism. More importantly, these interactions explore the intersection of the self and other, converging art production with the process

of building relationships. Through a dynamic process of exchange, co-creation, and reciprocity, the Intersect Project offers agency to its participants through visibility in the community. Our project contextualizes identity and belonging across multiple locations, asking questions about the city's broader identity. Our artwork exposes the evidence of Intersect's efforts to become more interconnected and compassionate members of our diverse community.

SAM FOX SCHOOL MFA 13



Hsuan Ying Chen
Ground to Stand On, 2013
Mixed media, 60 x 120"

Shifting Shanghais

The only escape route is the elevator. One chance out of 39 that they guess the right floor. The first floor is out of question. I don't remember why. *Ben si le*. Anything above the 28th story is also risky. The stocky building ends there—from floor 29 up two glass towers sway in the wind. I can't decide whether my fear of being caught is greater than that of going up the towers.

Kuai yi dian! There is no time to think. I know the odds. I press 26.

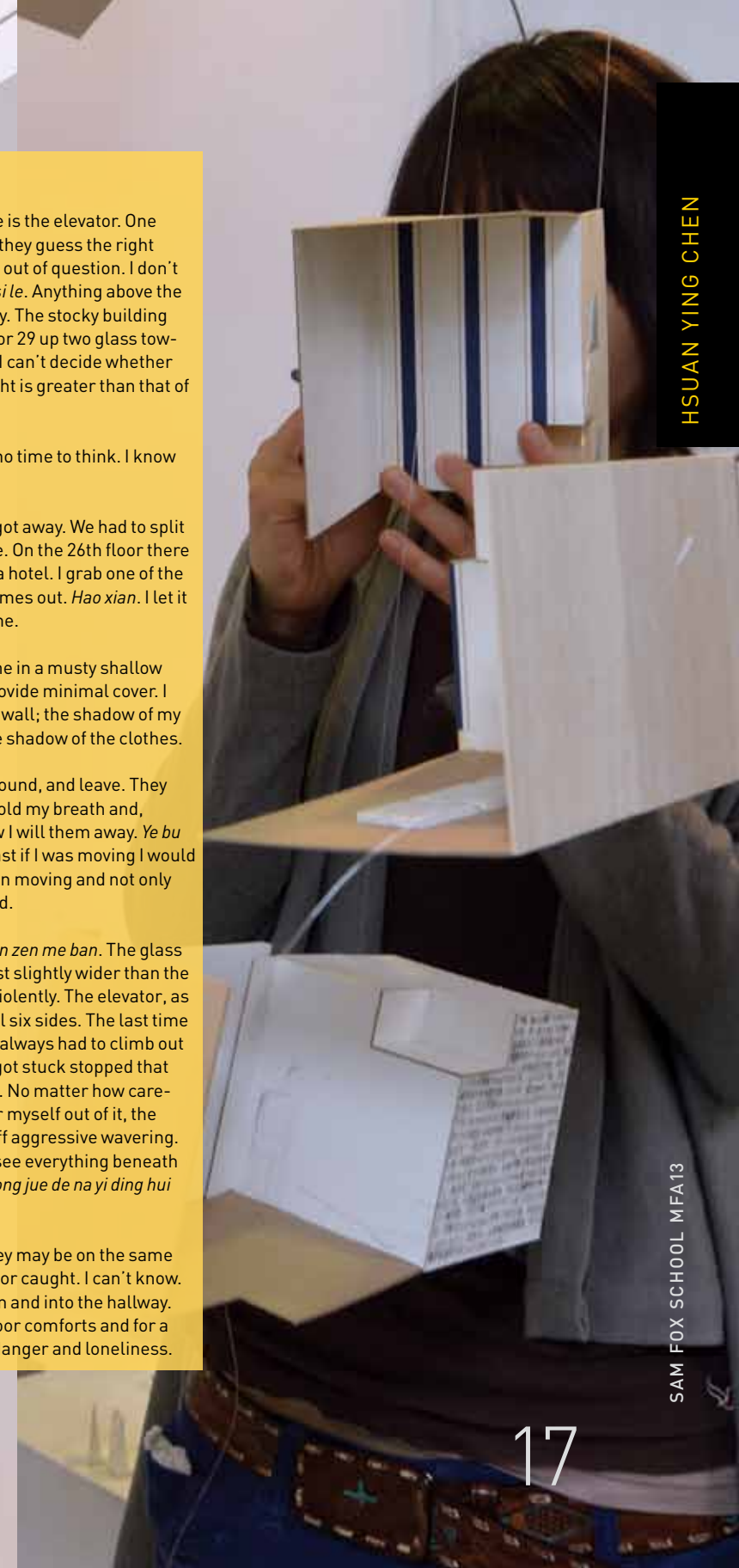
The others probably got away. We had to split up for a better chance. On the 26th floor there are many doors, like a hotel. I grab one of the doors as someone comes out. *Hao xian*. I let it close lightly behind me.

In the suite I hide alone in a musty shallow closet. Black suits provide minimal cover. I lean hard against the wall; the shadow of my head merges with the shadow of the clothes.

They come in, look around, and leave. They never see my feet. I hold my breath and, amazingly, this is how I will them away. *Ye bu neng jiu deng si*. At least if I was moving I would have to concentrate on moving and not only the fear of being found.

Zen me ban zen me ban zen me ban. The glass tower is so skinny, just slightly wider than the elevator, and bends violently. The elevator, as it goes up, turns on all six sides. The last time I was living up there I always had to climb out of it because it often got stuck stopped that way, opening upward. No matter how carefully I try to maneuver myself out of it, the motion always sets off aggressive wavering. Not to mention I can see everything beneath me: 35, 34, 33, 32... *Zong jue de na yi ding hui dao xia lai*.

I miss my friends. They may be on the same floor, or other floors, or caught. I can't know. I come out of the room and into the hallway. The creamy carpet floor comforts and for a moment I forget the danger and loneliness.





SERHII CHRUCKY

Serhii Chrucky
From the series *Blu-ray Skies*
EXT. CLOUDY SKIES—DAY, 2013
TRANSPORT PLANE—DAY, 2013
EXT. THE NIGHT SKY, 2013
EXT. ELEKTRA'S VILLA—DAY, 2013
C-prints mounted on Plexiglas,
27 x 64" each



JANAE CONTAG
on *Serhii Chrucky*

The pursuit is both a game and a burden. No one ever wins the game, yet everyone seems eager to keep playing. And the spectators don't matter. They are, as it turns out, not even necessarily aware of the rules. The rules are the game. The rules in this case are a series of meticulous parameters that delineate the source, the sequence, and the look of the game. Parameters are paramount.

There are many lists. One list enumerates locations with bridges crossing a dwindling river, ordered north to south. This list in particular might only be utilized on a sunny afternoon while another, concerned with films that deal with themes of nuclear paranoia, must only include those works that exist in the highest definition optical disk format available. Some lists contain the names of places, categorizing their range of access as public, quasi-public, or private. Each site on this list must exhibit dense foliage, real or artificial. There are still more lists, some that are incomplete, some discarded. When the content of a given list is reduced to its final

logical parameters, the momentary thrill of specificity takes over, like a risk that begs to be taken.

The parameters are limitless. That is to say, there are limitless amounts of limits. There is everything left to make, to photograph, to image, as much as and more than there are halftone dots that compose this page.

This is a game played by you and me and maybe *you*, in a quest to consider all the enigmas of life and land and living. Its meandering logic is still harnessed by cynical humor with a latent sincerity. It is noble yet indulgent, inquisitive yet fearful. It is life reduced, so it might be expanded. The game is everything to look at and the only thing left to play, so when are *you* going to start living?



JaNae Contag
Retail Requiem, 2013
 Installation with two videos
 with sound and granite tiles,
 17:06 and 5:56 min.



EMILY HANSON
on JaNae Contag

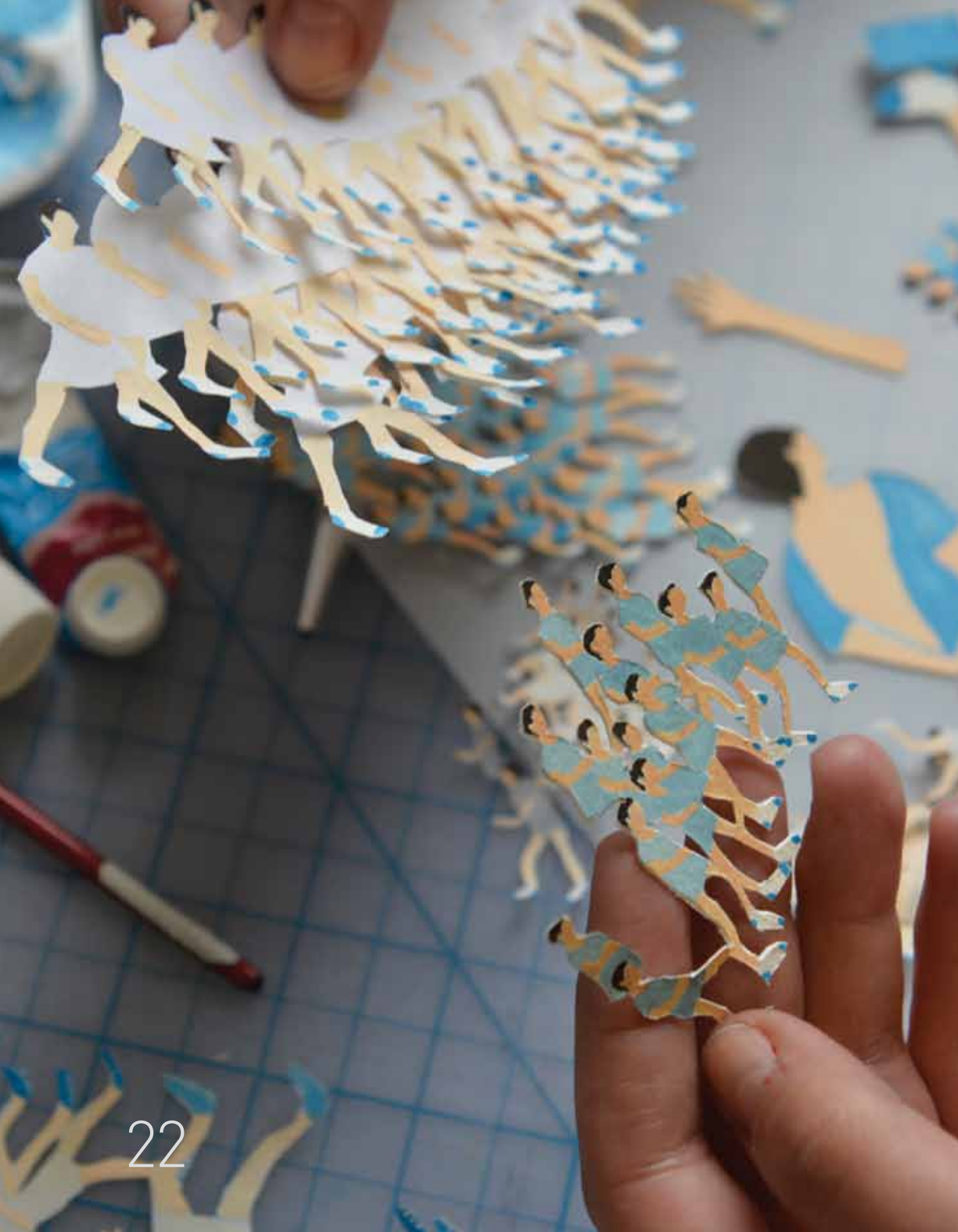
Phantoms of consumers past haunt JaNae Contag's work. Setting her visual funereal dirge in the abandoned regional shopping centers of exurban America, the artist calls our attention to the remains of former sites of the American Dream fueled by rampant consumerism. The statistics only serve to illustrate what we already know. Look around you. These abandoned sites are everywhere. This is the detritus of the myth of progress through expansion.

Yet the remains are surprisingly non-skeletal. The stores, the parking lots, the terrazzo-covered arcades, and the signage all remain, markers of their formal lives. A certain kind of idealism also remains—markers of their former lives. The impression of expansive space belies the dearth of its current contents. The buildings remain open, the parking lots empty or nearly vacant, for the occasional mall-walker or suburban explorer. But Contag offers another type of exploration altogether.

The images are familiar, yet surprising. Where one expects to see bustling commerce, instead there is vast emptiness. There exists

far less evidence of decay than one would expect from a deserted mall space. Signs still offer directions to what was once there. Contag reveals what usually goes unobserved in a conventional retail shopping experience. With the din of other shoppers, one cannot truly hear the eerie soundtrack reverberating through the space. Because of constant foot traffic, it would otherwise be impossible to discern the pattern of the tiles on the floor. The storefronts, filled with merchandise, distract from the dizzying tunnels of corridors. But through a slow navigation of the mall, this constructed experience unravels.

Contag presents an insightful, often uncanny, experience for the viewer. Videos loop, showing an expropriation of consumerist architecture. Her work insists upon a reappraisal of the space we inhabit, of behavioral norms, of the way we interact with a carefully architected consumer experience. By documenting both the interiors and exteriors of these sites, she penetrates our temples of consumer culture, compelling a consideration of the rise and fall of the highly American commodity of space.



GABRIEL FELDMAN
on *Carrie DeBacker*

Carrie DeBacker's work is an invitation. With its pastel blues and warm skin tones, one might be easily charmed. But that blue is the blue of a hospital gown, and those figures in miniature are not benign. This is an invitation to confront difficult truths. That your body can betray you. That deep within you, unknowable parts of yourself are multiplying. They are malicious. They mean you harm.

Your body becomes a battleground. You are told the tubes of red fluid they attach to you will kill a part to heal the whole. There will be the language of winners and losers, but you cannot imagine any outcome feeling like a victory. There is a new awareness of the body and the possibilities that lurk there.

You have been pardoned, but do not know how long the reprieve. Take a scalpel to the hospital gown. Cut with precision until fine lacework is revealed, and there is no disguising the fragile patient. Draw a figure facing utter darkness. Draw also a hole in that figure's chest, filled with the same darkness. Add the figures in miniature, and watch them swarm. You move forward, but there is no finish line. No cure. To be called a survivor doesn't sit right with you. It suggests something has been overcome, and is safely in the past. Recovery is a process. This is that process.

Carrie DeBacker
Reimission, 2013
Stop-motion animation,
2:02 min. (looped)





Everyday, while in studio, I stare at this quote:

“The brain baulks at non-meaning; meaninglessness, like formlessness, becomes the dominant scandal against reason, and reason, seeking to abolish it, generates fantasies.”

– Marina Warner¹

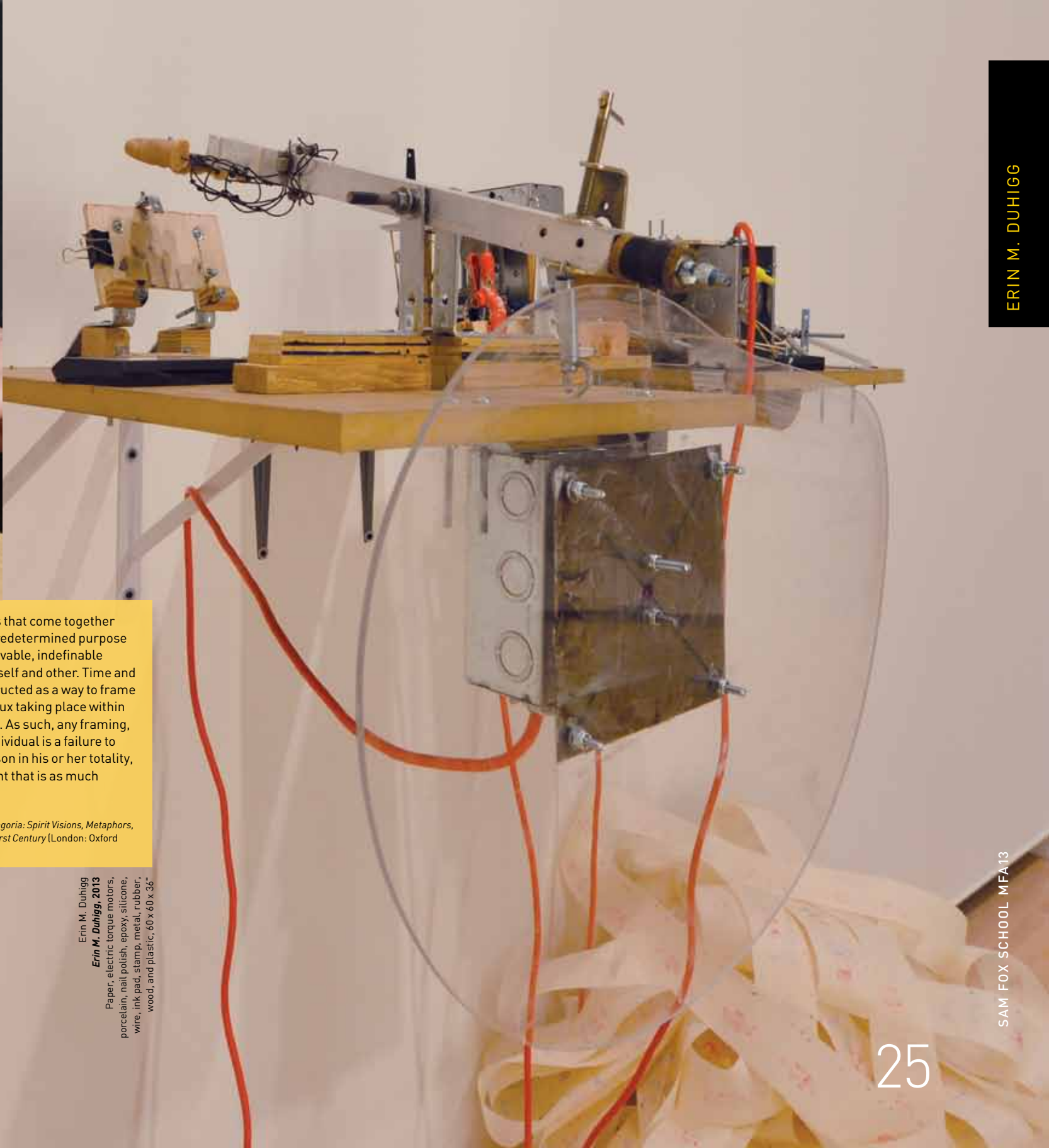
If the perception and performance of identity is in constant flux and cannot be fixed to one form, then a definition of a particular person’s identity can only be isolated into a singular, limiting moment. This definition is then nothing more than a fraction of a greater whole. The self and what is perceived as such will always be a failed fraction, a fantasy, unable to recognize its whole.

The self is a composite of understandings that come together based on experiences of externals throughout time. An antithesis of an autonomous whole, the self is an

assemblage of pieces that come together endlessly—with no predetermined purpose and through unperceivable, indefinable boundaries between self and other. Time and space are both constructed as a way to frame and understand the flux taking place within what is called the self. As such, any framing, any defining, of an individual is a failure to identify with that person in his or her totality, resulting in a fragment that is as much fantasy as fact.

¹ Marina Warner, *Phantasmagoria: Spirit Visions, Metaphors, and Media into the Twenty-first Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 2007), 17.

Erin M. Duhigg
Erin M. Duhigg, 2013
 Paper, electric torque motors, porcelain, nail polish, epoxy, silicone, wire, ink pad, stamp, metal, rubber, wood, and plastic, 60x 60x 36”





SERHII CHRUCKY
on José Garza

A neatly delineated rectangular pile of rubble glows blue under the light of an identically sized wall projection with no signal input. Two figures donning Ghillie suits, rifles at their sides, stand guard in front of three mirrored panels. One remains deathly still; the other twitches and shifts balance. George W. Bush repeats the *Mission Accomplished* speech on a portable television inside of a pup tent. Red, white, and blue helium balloons cascade down from the ceiling above the tent in slow motion free fall as they deflate around us. A YouTube video of boy scouts enacting a ritual flag burning is mirrored and slowed down. The undulating licks of flame begin to take on a demonic countenance. A grid of charcoal rectangles the size of flat-screen televisions cover an entire wall, their surfaces worked over so heavily that any visibility through the smoke screen is impossible. A fertilizer bomb made with American money and human urine sits on a pedestal, tethered to an iPhone employed as a remote detonation device. A nearby television shows the bomb being manufactured. In this universe there are no flashes of violence, only the moments immediately before and after. Slices of time in stasis are pinned down, explosions move like glaciers, and terror remains constant. Mouths ajar in simultaneous fear and awe, the residue forms a death mask of a culture at war with its own image.



José Garza
A Study for a Monument, 2013
Wood, metal, fluorescent lights,
and cotton flag, 168 x 60 x 72"

ARIEL LEWIS
on Eric Gray

November 20, 1979. The sky purples with dawn. The center of the world, Kaaba, The Cube, Sacred House, black box like a chest of jewels. Surrounding it are the walls of Masjid al-Haram, white with windows like shaded figures. Beyond, the city fans low to the desert, a few miles from the sea on one side. Light slants into the valley, into Mecca. The worshippers bob their heads in unison, slow tide. The imam chants to 100,000 ears. Out of the silences step robed men with weapons. This day the peace will cough into violence. Morning will break like the collision of two unstoppable objects. History will name this day The Grand Mosque Seizure, but in those first urgent moments it is only an incomprehensible act done in faith. Six hundred miles away, in the sleepy desert hamlet of al-Kharj, an infant born in the night takes his first long sucks after milk, cries and fusses to his mother.

The infant grows into his name: Muhammed al Qahtani. His mother nurses him until he is strong and can go to school with the other gapped-tooth children. He skips through dust, peers into the vast desert and sees nothing. Much preferred: the nearby valley, lush with fruits and vegetables, the colors of dates, cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, oranges, grapes, melons. In school he thinks of the valley and reaches for paints, laying the bright hues onto paper, carrying the colors home in his backpack like the whole vivid world in a box. His father, a policeman, bends in reverence on a prayer mat brushed clean each day of dust. The mat's patterns whorl, jewel-shades. His father faces west, in the direction of the Sacred House, in the direction of the center of the world.

He graduates from Koran school and feels aimless. He attends an agriculture school, remembering with nostalgia the rich fields spread open like palms. He sweats. He attends night school and completes a computer applications certification. He moves between home and elsewhere. He starts a company with a cousin, which shudders briefly then falls to dust. He drives an ambulance to and



from the military hospital at Prince Sultan Airbase, where Americans in pressed blue suits and hats shaped like bunkers salute him at the gate. Men die in the back of his truck, faces thick with shrapnel, too much pepper. In him a movement is already beginning—he thinks of the desert, he thinks of the sea. The Sacred House tugs at him like a new and urgent love.

The desert is wide and dry as a mouth. It is the largest in the world of its kind; no roads pass through its womb. To reach Mecca one must follow the single highway for ten hours—if the vehicle is good, if stops are not too frequent. Upon arrival he performs hajj: first, ihram, the white clean garment of equality. The mosque floods his eyes like tears, white and wonderful as fruit, with Kaaba at the center like a sweet black seed. He walks seven times around the Sacred House, counterclockwise, and feels meaning tick in him. Seven times he points with his right hand at the stone, unable to kiss it from this distance, held away by the crowds pressing close. His lips, dry and cracked, speak the words: "Here I am at Thy service O Lord, here I am. Here I am at Thy service and Thou hast no partners. Thine alone is All Praise and All Bounty, and Thine alone is The Sovereignty. Thou hast no partners."

Eric Gray
I am Mohammed al-Qahtani, 2013
Latex on fiberboard, wood door, mirror, recorded audio, surveillance camera, and live surveillance video, 96 x 60 x 48"



ERIC GRAY



BLAIR ALLYN JOHNSON
on Meghan Allynn Johnson

to or towards

Stuck in can't-think static. Hitting a wall. Blank. Stuck. Static. Hitting a blank wall. Sense of / buried. Wandering in your subterranean at will. Leaving its blank echoes. Start moving. The car projects any narrative you want to move in—the movement unravels sounds from their folded knot: straightening threads, drawing them out from inside your folded-mind. Keep driving—this scene contains infinite directions—the end never quite vanishes—you're about to detach from static—from one thought pasted in a line across your mind like an unrolled filmstrip—faster—(you won't have to flit between the dark spaces, between images in the labyrinth of stalled motion)—faster—watch—no emotion can stay inside its own name any more—your mind inches out of itself—leaking forward out of its frame—winding steadily: When you come back (engine quiet, headlights dark) you will be somewhere else.

Meghan Allynn Johnson
A Private Voyage, 2013
Oil on canvas with fluorescent light;
video with sound; clamp light, tripod,
Plexiglas, velvet, and toy car
Painting: 78 x 66"
Video: 6 min. (looped)
Sculpture: 54 x 30 x 42"



MEGHAN ALLYNN JOHNSON



SAM FOX SCHOOL MFA13



MARIA XIA
on Hoa Le

Now we are alone, aren't we, daughter. If you have inherited anything from me, let it be this. I like best to walk in the early morning, the sky a cold sheet over a cold country. In the white fields there is room for memory, for my life to open and close.

Once, I slept under the sky of a different country. I spoke in my sleep, my grandmother spoke back to me. She did not know flames ran cool tongues over my fingers in the night. She said I kicked out and cried, *there is nothing there*. Fire came down upon Hanoi. I came to miss my mother. In summer, I held a bird, warm and tufted, to my heart. I took the stone steps softly, one at a time.

The long train carried us out and away. Still we were licked by flame, until light passed through us. I passed through the needle's eye and came here, into this cold country, where leaves are black against the field. In this country I dream, but there is no one to speak back to me. I seek her in the water, on the wall. I dream of Hanoi, of my mother in a clap of ash. Make note of this, daughter: we calm our shaking by tying back our hair. Once, my hair grew long and burdened. I woke each day from flame and, at night, returned. Daughter, make note of this.





Christine Eunji Lee
Plastic Nature, 2013
Acrylic, screen print, spray paint,
and tape on film attached to
chicken wire, 144 x 40 x 60"

A garden is an expression of personal creativity, a formation of orders, and a structure of sensibility. All artists do a kind of gardening in a way. I am inspired by gardening and the way that the natural form can be changed into any other form.

Through my work, I examine the conceptual aspect of manipulated nature and the lushness in its formal rhythm and synthesis. I order and arrange my fragments of materials, display in a space, create forms. Shimmering, colorful plastic in stylized patterns creates an artificial,

rhythmic garden. The sculptural collage of modular components penetrates space like an organic growth—continuously growing and changing like all forms in nature, transforming, expanding, continuing.

My artistic enterprise is geared toward a pursuit of beauty and pleasure, which can be discovered in the process of existing, sensing, and making. The pleasure felt in sensory exploration is further excited by the discovery of beauty. Similarly, the garden exists to give us pleasure. Through my work, I hope to deliver a sensational platform on which viewers can luxuriate in the choreography and experience what I do when creating the work: unconstrained, spontaneous, and intuitive.



Lavar Munroe
A Hero's Journey to a Distant Land, His Brush with Death, His Slaying of a Monster, His Erotic Encounter, and His Succession of His Father, 2013
Cardboard, duct tape, wood, cloth, feathers, fur, string, synthetic hair, and acrylic paint, 108 x 100 x 74"



PATRICK JOHNSON
on Lavar Munroe

The Black Superhero when Everyone Was Looking for the Scapegoat

The lace from a wedding dress that surrounds Lavar Munroe's *Bed No. 1* has been affixed to an array of cardboard with duct tape. In another piece, a scrap of fabric depicting a Victorian scene hangs behind caution tape, next to more layers of cardboard. It hangs behind a towering black human figure equipped with a shield and cape, his enormous member erected through his underwear and rested on a dog, which happens to comprise his legs.

How do these substances cohabit a body of work that resists being described as post-colonial, or painterly, or postmodern, or neo-expressionist, or folk, even while deploying each of these strategies?

The installation *BIG C: Goddess of Coke (Heaven's Dust)* depends on stereotypes of the poor even as it transforms them. Because blacks have been historically stereotyped as primitive and animalistic, the lackeys appear with goat horns. But remember that the followers of Dionysus (the Greek god of ritual and ecstasy) were half-man, half-goat satyrs. That satyrs sang at festivals in Dionysus's name and that tragedy comes from the word for "song of the goats" because the winning tragedian received a goat as a prize. Or that the Dionysian Mysteries were rituals involving intoxicants to liberate those marginalized from Greek society.

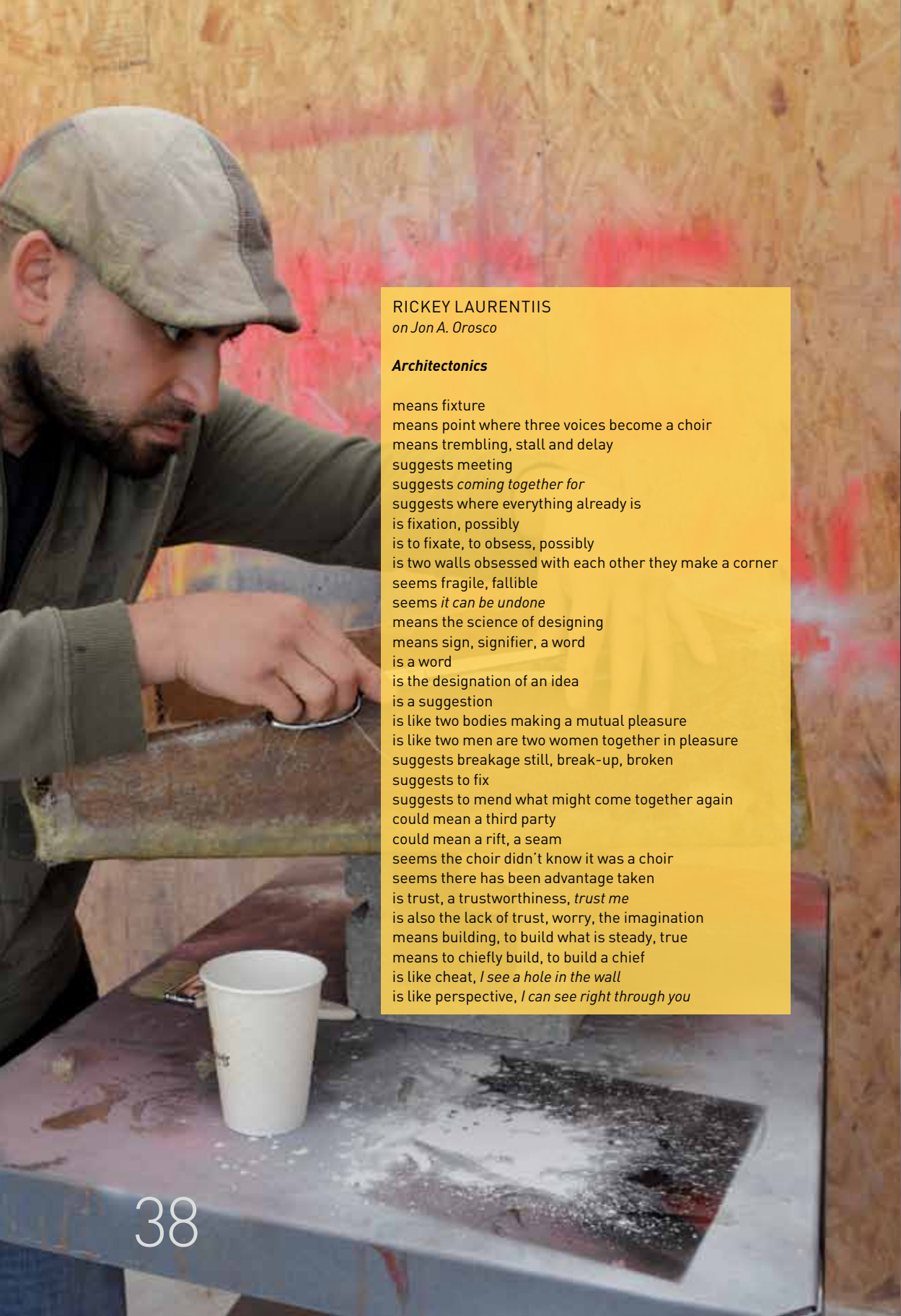
The Goddess of Coke is not a Greek deity, but Munroe's installation stages meaning with a similar lexicon. Cocaine functions like a word that Socrates uses, *pharmakon*, which translates best as "drug" but signifies remedy and poison, substance and nonsubstance, spell and curse. Cocaine both takes away and gives pain. It helps and hurts the ghetto.

A similar cohabitation of opposites occurs in *Boy Predator, Boy Prey*, in which three dogs fight with a humanoid dog. The humanoid's penis penetrates the dog's side even as the humanoid appears to be overcome by the dogs; meanwhile, neon pink x-marks cover the dogs' eyes. In Greek, *pharmakon* also means paint, or artificial tint. The *pharmakon*—indeed because it resists definition—allows these opposites to cohabit a space without being easily subsumed under the concepts whose borders it in fact redraws.

Pharmakon also translates as scapegoat. Society brings a scapegoat from outside a certain conflict into public consciousness and then exterminates the scapegoat in order to eliminate the conflict—a performed, symbolic solution to the problem at hand. Yet, the scapegoat was not responsible for causing the problem because it never had the power to do so.

In *To Protect and Serve*, the animalistic, well-endowed, criminal stereotype of the black male appears as a superhero (complete with shield and cape), as an agent for safety rather than a cause of danger. The painting has transformed the presumed scapegoat of a socioeconomic problem and made it a champion of its solution. *A Hero's Journey to A Distant Land, His Brush With Death, His Slaying of a Monster, His Erotic Encounter, and His Succession of His Father* celebrates this character on a majestic scale.

These transformations characterize Munroe's work and its ability to transform concepts: cardboard earns permanence, humans turn nonhuman, and thugs become gods. The ambivalence of the *pharmakon*, which means substance and nonsubstance, opens both a labyrinth and an abyss of possibility.



RICKEY LAURENTIIS
on Jon A. Orosco

Architectonics

means fixture
means point where three voices become a choir
means trembling, stall and delay
suggests meeting
suggests *coming together for*
suggests where everything already is
is fixation, possibly
is to fixate, to obsess, possibly
is two walls obsessed with each other they make a corner
seems fragile, fallible
seems *it can be undone*
means the science of designing
means sign, signifier, a word
is a word
is the designation of an idea
is a suggestion
is like two bodies making a mutual pleasure
is like two men are two women together in pleasure
suggests breakage still, break-up, broken
suggests to fix
suggests to mend what might come together again
could mean a third party
could mean a rift, a seam
seems the choir didn't know it was a choir
seems there has been advantage taken
is trust, a trustworthiness, *trust me*
is also the lack of trust, worry, the imagination
means building, to build what is steady, true
means to chiefly build, to build a chief
is like cheat, *I see a hole in the wall*
is like perspective, *I can see right through you*

Jon A. Orosco
Pline, Rotate, and Extrude, 2013
Installation with drywall, plywood, exposed
metal studs, and latex paint on foam rubber,
fiberglass, and cardboard, 22 x 144 x 20"



NICHOLAS TAMARKIN
on Michael Powell

Simone Weil once wrote that vice is “a desire to consume the beautiful—to eat what we should only look at.” Michael Powell’s work, if it is anything else, is a brave exploration of this desire, but also of space, time, and scale. The Berkeleian formulation *esse est percipi* is the guiding principle here: materiality, action, and sequence are the structural components; video is the medium.

We approach a complicated narrative structure envisioned through meticulous landscapes experienced too quickly for recognition and too slowly for true contemplation. The original score recalls George Crumb and Pauline Oliveros, invading the placid trees and deer and rocky piles with sharp sounds and long phrases; Powell’s long, steady pans and provocative (seemingly endless) long shots confound the viewer’s desire for action and identification with the beautiful.

And by the end of the work, the eye blinks, shutters for a moment, and finally turns back to the gallery space. The metonym of the eye, for both subjective vision and the world, has telescoped and contracted too often for waking analysis. But the “optical unconscious” sees beauty unerringly, even in Powell’s defiantly remote aerial shots and uncomfortable close-ups that reflect, as does a monitor’s glass, like a gallery window, our failure to obscure our desire. Instead it tears us out from our metaphor, and we are at last back in our bodies, perhaps contented only to look—not to eat.





ANDY CHEN
on Bridget A. Purcell

Welcome Home

The countertop: polished to marble mirror.
The spills: picked up, put away. The tiles:
what a world of difference minus all that

glass. You come in, sigh a day's
relief through air you know,

not stopping to think how
it got this dustless. Not seeing
these bleach-wrinkled palms or the citron

chemical-made mist it hurts to smell.
Common house dust is skin and hair.

It can be made—recycled, even. Breathed
in and put out someplace else, new
and improved. You don't want to know

what's between this full set of teeth.
Crevice isn't always absence. Many cages

keep nothing safe. The unseen
multitudes right before you. Even now
I'm but the thought you almost have.

I'm the natural light. I cascade in
blades that look frozen in place.



Bridget A. Purcell
Everything in Excess, 2013
Acrylic on plaster, clay, foam,
paper, and wood, 144 x 72 x 60"



My work investigates the selective portrayal and pervasive essentialization of Muslims and Arabs, focusing on traditional and contemporary Western sources (specifically American), particularly from mass media and popular culture. Even out of a global population of about 1.6 billion (approximately one in five people in the world), Muslims are still portrayed with harsh caricatures and stereotypes or, as Arab American author and media critic Jack Shaheen calls them, "repetitive yet invisible myths."¹ These myths make up an overall "master narrative" that has come to embody the Muslim and Arab peoples as a whole—a narrative generally linked to historic Western accounts of the Middle East as well as to centuries-old Middle Eastern folk tales such as *Tales from a Thousand and One Nights*. Both types of narratives have helped proliferate the exoticized and "otherized" notion of the "Orient" perpetuated in contemporary Western society.

My current body of work confronts, appropriates, and reconstructs these inaccuracies and biases through different modes of address. One of these modes is mimesis. By literally mimicking the tropes of certain stereotypes and myths, deconstructing them, and digressing from the expected outcome, their validity is questioned. My work further attempts to rouse an open exchange of discourse on subjects typically swept under the rug. I utilize many mediums in order to do this, including collage, sculpture, print-making, graphic design, and installation.

¹ *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*, directed by Sut Jhally (2006; Media Education Foundation: Northampton, MA).



Malahat Qureshi
Overview of the Master Narrative, 2013
Photocopies, inkjet prints,
and gold thread, 42 x 60"



KATIE MCGINNIS
on Natalie Rodgers

The Stoics believed in tangibility, in the existence of things, but they did not believe in the corporality of the void. So whenever we look out the window we are confronting some massive object as dense as a cannonball that is not space, but only assumes its character, like an actor on stage. One might say that the earth is a sort of false lover. Or, perhaps it's better explained like this: birds do not slice the sky with their beaks; their beaks are extensions of the sky. Go and trace a leaf with a stick of chalk. Once the wind has carried the leaf away, a false moment, as empty as a ghost, remains. But were one to trace the leaf throughout its existence as a green tree-wing to crumbled brown bits and through reincarnation into atoms into soil into root or husk or flighted bird, one would traverse the city, the sky, the sea, and we would choke on the chalky fumes of movement. No leaf can be still enough to be anywhere; leaves are always moving a step or two ahead of space.



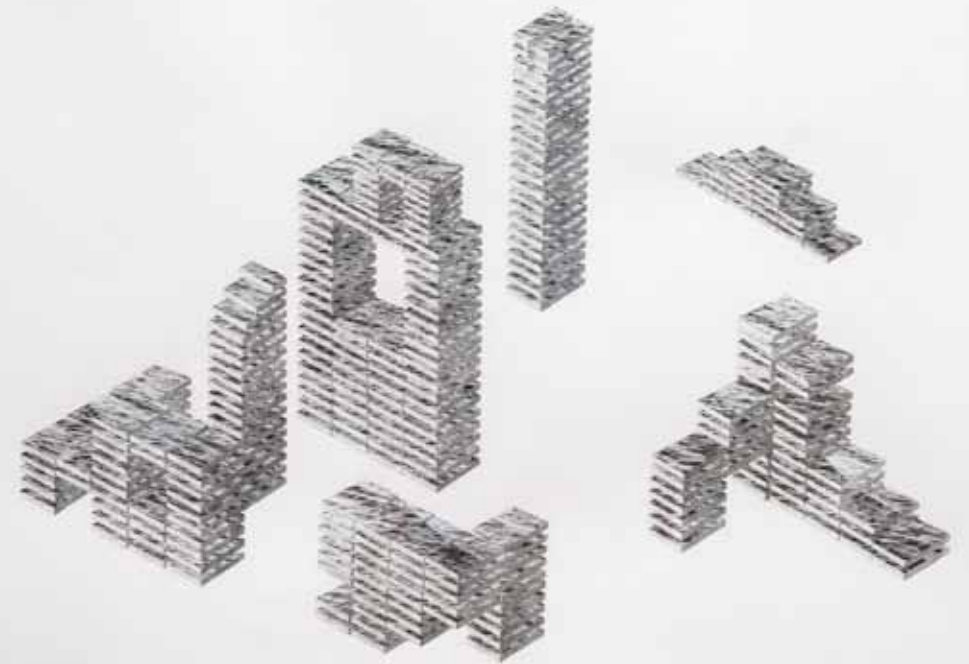
NATALIE RODGERS



Natalie Rodgers
Untitled (Circumambulation), 2013
Untitled (Overpainted Shower Drawing), 2013
Acrylic on digital inkjet prints,
22 x 29 1/4" each
Untitled (Trace), 2013
Digital inkjet print, 22 x 29 1/16"




Carla Fisher Schwartz
From the series *We Do Not Profess to Construct Planets*, 2013
19°15'S 159°55'E, 2013
A Gray Unbroken Line, 2013
The Smallest World You Would Care to Inhabit, 2013
Without the Least Vestige of Land, 2013
Pencil, photocopy/transfer, and watercolor on paper, 36 x 48" each



JENNIFER PADGETT
on Carla Fisher Schwartz

The works of Carla Fisher Schwartz complicate boundaries between reality and fiction, mapped territories and uncharted lands, actual sites and imaginary models. She subtly references both historic and modern cartographic practices, evoking previous efforts to map the world and to construct knowledge through a deliberate arrangement of visual forms. Shapes and lines originally marking borders or landmasses in the diagrammatic logic of a map are made strange in their transference to a new context, as we become more conscious of their formal qualities and less able to derive any geographic significance from them. In this process, the works disrupt our usual reading of maps by highlighting the fictionality of boundaries within schematic representations of space.

At the same time, her images establish the potential for a creative reworking of space and its depiction. The expanse of the white paper's surface creates a void, dotted by fragmentary representations of land or bodies of water that evoke a sense of alienation or incongruity. Created through a combination of techniques such as pencil drawing, photocopy transfer, and watercolor, the works layer and blur distinctions between media. The hybrid quality of the material processes echoes the complex dynamic of representation that the works engage; these visual forms could suggest certain configurations of the physical world yet are the product of imaginative workings and reworkings. Floating on the white walls of the gallery, Schwartz's drawings / prints punctuate space with visions of an elusive realm. The blank areas of the wall and the sheet could symbolize emptiness, but instead hint toward the possibility of undiscovered land, summoning the spirit of earlier maps in which unmarked areas represented what was yet to be explored.



The quantification and qualification of things in relation to the arbitrary scale of the human body extends not only over the artificial and architectural world.

And where is Ned Ludd?

Rolling in his grave quite possibly.

Everything from fossil fuels and natural mineral deposits, to geographic territories, even the water table itself, have and are evaluated in relation to what they could potentially afford humans at any given moment in time.

Or the deterioration of his being is feeding on the roots of the plant that is subject to the loom.

Aiding in this utilitarian calculus, the Olympic Games themselves became a means of more finely calibrating what this fluxuating unit (the body) is or could represent.

That is, if being is constituted by the body.

The efficiency of the Information Age has extended and blurred the boundaries of object, agent, an idea past the point of re-cognition.


An allergic reaction to the prosthetic nature and development of artifice.

God bless the loom that fruited you ;)

Self-bound-and-gagged individuals clinch tightly to the objects responsible for the facilitation of whatever type of human interaction they receive, know, and desperately crave.

A measuring tape of sutured night crawlers, an elastic standard.

For once we have prescribed a "thing" purpose, we have inherently defined what it affords as a tool. The determination of what a "thing" affords is a direct admission of its potential impact on one's agency. If a "thing" alters the fundamental characteristics of another's agency, their relationship results in the realm of the prosthetic.



Zak Smoker
Warm Olympics, Summer Games, 2013
Video with sound, 5 min.



MAURA PELLETTIERI
on *Laurencia Strauss*

I can be projected or installed. I am a moving tree. Turn this corner. Turn this corner again. Again. Now stop here and wait. Wait slower. This is a photograph of speech. This one is you. If you were a bird here. If you were a hat. If you witnessed or if you participated. When it was your idea. When you asked. When I gave permission. When it was still my body. I rode. When I reclined. If you knew where you were. If you were at home. When I was the only one who felt it. If I shared it. Turn this corner. Again. Now stop here and wait. Wait slower. If my body took a new direction from me. If your body turned away. You know the names of trees. You have a present tense. If you share it with me. You do, you share it. If I share my fence. I share my body. We remember together, childhood. What reminds us, composes our blood. We have a disparate memory.

If you land here. When you come by airplane. If I wait here. When I come by bicycle. If you are afraid. If it doesn't matter. When you say, sable palm. When you say, sausage tree. When the image blurs. If the blurred image speaks. If the blurred image says come. Once the blurred image said yes. If the whole world was water. If I am an image. I can be projected or installed. I am a moving tree. I turn corners and corners turn. My body is installed. My body is remembered. You stop here, wait. I am here now. I was not there that day. If the blue sky. If the blue veins. If movement. If we were children. If we remember. When I am reminded. You remind me.

I can be projected or installed. I wait turn wait slower, ride in circles, the channels of my veins like waterways. I ask permission. You give it. There are arteries everywhere. If I am an artery. If I know escape. If we are lucky. We are lucky. If we are free. We are free. If it is time. If we had more. This is a video of downtime. This is a video of stop. If we had a mission. We had a mission. If we asked for help. We asked for help. If we could be free.

When we were lucky. We were children. Again. If we have a mission. We have a mission. If we ask for help. We ask for help. If we could be free. If we could take the chain off. If I could help you do this. We turn a corner. Again. We balance. Slow. If we waited. Slower still. If we went around again. If we turned. If we waited. Slower.

Laurencia Strauss
Interdependence, 2012-13
Video of members of Washington University Cycling Team listening to conversation between sisters, Forest Park, St. Louis; video of tandem bicycle ride with sister, Tower Grove Park, St. Louis; audio recording of conversation between sisters; altered tandem bicycle
Videos: 25 min., each
Audio recording: 25 min.
Bicycle: 42 5/8 x 92 x 29"



I am a synthesis of two very powerful cultures, and over time what began as conflicting identities have merged into a comfortably unified one. I make art as a means of exploring this identity and giving it visual, tangible manifestation. Creating art provides a heightened opportunity for self-discovery; my most recent work seems to emerge almost without conscious intervention or scheme. This unfiltered, unfettered creativity is important as it establishes a dynamic connection between my inner self and my finished work, which I embrace for its purity.

My core philosophy arises from a Taoist-centered upbringing, calling for focus and commitment to discovery of my true path. The Taoist path encourages synchronicity of what one does and who one is. My art has provided the vehicle to propel me along the journey—the more deeply I immerse myself in art creation, the clearer my path becomes. As I progress, I see strong influences from both Chinese and Western cultures merging,

recalling my heritage while emphasizing how I have infused it with an intense contemporary vision. One influence in particular—the ancient Chinese landscape paintings that formed my dominant childhood memories—has resurfaced in a multitude of contemporary details informing my recent works. These details include the flow and transition from simple and elemental to highly complex, from earthy and organic to humanistic and urban. There is always a clear central theme running through each piece, strong threads of my path to enlightenment that I identify amidst the distraction of everyday life.

I have chosen paper as my primary medium, a choice that evolved naturally as it represents one of the most revered materials in ancient Chinese art. I grew up looking at many types of works on paper and finally discovered for myself the great versatility and pliancy that it provides. Paper grants the rich opportunity to let works evolve organically, suggesting themselves first in simple two dimensions then morphing into more complex shapes. Without any prescribed formula or method, I experiment with ancient techniques, such as paper-folding and cutting, applying geometric forms as representation of human interaction in the natural environment. My color choices are similarly organic, with my primary palette being of earthen tones often digitally separated into yellows, browns, and reds, representing sun, soil, and veins of red iron or blood as another representation of humanity intertwining with nature. Whereas this interaction in many ancient Chinese landscapes was gentle and unobtrusive, my work suggests a more dramatically felt human presence. The expanse of pure white space on which these landscapes float represents the greater universe—and also the intellectual unity achieved when purity of path, or Tao, is finally realized, and all impurity and chaos are melted away.

Lili Yang
The New Path, 2013
Installation with acrylic, tape,
and paper collage, 78 x 156"



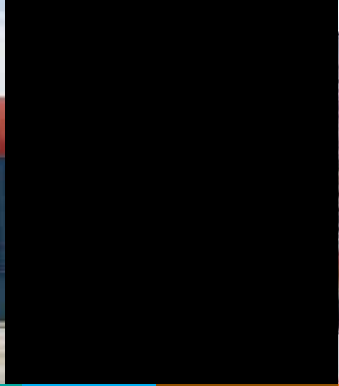
Rolling rivers, lush forests, bright flowers, chirping birds, the sun glistening through a dense canopy, the slopes of a distant hill, the cool ambient colors after heavy snowfall. What is nature? Both a physical presence in the world and a cultural construct. My work is concerned with metaphorical representations of nature, and can be contextualized within the work of modern and contemporary artists who create artificial representations that reference natural landscapes.


I am conscious of humanity's anthropocentrism. It is evident in the way our culture relates to nature that it has a secondary status. We value it mostly for its material worth as a means of our subsistence and comfort. Nature, in the context of my oeuvre, is not a passive, mythical, mechanistic entity to be controlled and manipulated at will; contrarily, my work endows nature, the animal and plant realm, with a bodily presence that is fantastic, spectacular, sentient, and reactive. It is a body undeniably analogous to our own.

As a contemporary Romantic, I identify with nature and also recognize our increasing distance from it. In the act of imagining narrative scenarios in which nature has agency, I simultaneously project more individualized concerns and emotions regarding our present condition. Art has the capacity to ascribe to nature metaphorical meaning that can speak potently to our own human chauvinism. The environmental crisis of our time requires us to think about the natural realm with renewed respect and wonder, and art can help us accomplish this task.



Vivian Zapata
Yellow Box, 2013
Mixed media,
120 x 96 x 96"





CONTRIBUTORS

Page numbers listed indicate writing contribution

Lyndon Barrois, Jr., MFA Visual Art 2013, was born in New Orleans. He received a BFA in painting from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2006 and has studied at Studio Art Centers International in Florence, Italy, and Santa Monica College. For more interest, consult lbarroisjr.blogspot.com.

Sarah Bernhardt, MFA Visual Art 2013, is originally from Wisconsin, now lives and works in St. Louis. She is passionate about community and collaboration; beyond art, she is interested in international affairs, travel, hiking, horseback riding, and music.

Andy Chen, MFA Creative Writing 2014, grew up in the pretty part of New Jersey. He holds a BA from the University of Chicago and writes poetry.

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Hsuan Ying Chen, MFA Visual Art 2013, is from Taipei, Taiwan. She received a BFA from Boston University, and has lived and worked in Shanghai, China.

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P. 18

Carrie DeBacker, MFA Visual Art 2013, was born in the Chicago area. In 2008, she received a BA in studio art with distinction from Carleton College in Northfield, MN. Her recent work is primarily in drawing and stop motion animation.

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Gabriel Feldman, MFA Creative Writing 2014, writes fiction.

P. 23

José Garza, MFA Visual Art 2013, served in the United States Navy from 1996 to 2004 before pursuing degrees in fine arts. Garza was stationed at Naval Station Mayport near Jacksonville, FL; and upon being honorably discharged attended the University of Florida, completing a BFA in Drawing in 2008. His theoretical and studio practice center around modern wartime conditions, political conflict, and their mediation through electronic mass media.

Eric Gray, MFA Visual Art 2013, was born in San Diego, and spent his formative years in Japan, Hawaii, and the Midwest. He has worked at a wool mill, built mortarless rock walls, was a chainsaw operator felling trees, and has initiated a number of social art projects. He will be moving to Vermont as part of the Central Vermont Waldorf High School Initiative.

Emily Hanson, PhD Art History & Archaeology, is focusing her studies on the Italian Renaissance. Her MA thesis examined the reputation of Leonardo da Vinci as a sculptor. She is interested in the historiography of artistic reputation and plans a dissertation dealing with the subject as it relates to both Michelangelo and Leonardo.

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P. 31

Meghan Allyn Johnson, MFA Visual Art 2013, is originally from Madison, WI. Her work in film, painting, and stop-motion animation has been featured or is forthcoming at the Milk Factory, Des Lee Gallery, and APOP Records. In 2013, her film *Howdy House* was chosen for The Wisconsin 2013 Film Fest and Citrus Cel Animation Fest.

Patrick Johnson, MFA Creative Writing 2014, studies poetry. His research interests include burial mounds, theory, animals, material culture, and cancer.

P. 37

Rickey Laurentiis, MFA Creative Writing 2013, is a recipient of fellowships from the Poetry Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. His poetry can be found in journals such as *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Callaloo*, *Feminist Studies*, *Indiana Review*, *jubilat*, *Oxford American*, and *Poetry*.

P. 13, 38

Hoa Le, MFA Visual Arts 2013, was born in Hanoi, Vietnam. Le received a BFA from the University of Arizona, graduating summa cum laude in 2010. Her interdisciplinary work, exhibited extensively in the Southwest and Midwest, employs painting, installation, video, film and performance, and has a deep connection to contemporary Vietnamese history as well as to her memories of her country of origin and to universal human themes.

Christine Eunji Lee, MFA Visual Art 2013, is a native Korean and received her BA in painting from Seoul National University in 2011. During her tenure in the MFA program, she explored a wide range of artistic practices such as installation, printmaking, and sculpture.

Ariel Lewis, MFA Creative Writing 2014, was born and raised in Northern California. She graduated with a BA in Creative Writing from Oberlin College in 2012. While attending Oberlin, she was a two-time NCAA Division III All-American tennis player.

P. 28

Katie McGinnis, MFA Creative Writing 2014, grew up in Kearney, NE, and graduated from Tulane University in 2012 with a BA in English Literature. Whenever possible, she dances in the rain.

P. 46

Lavar Munroe, MFA Visual Art 2013, was born in Nassau, Bahamas, and received a BFA at The Savannah College of Art and Design. He has received grants and fellowships from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Kraus Family Foundation, the Central Bank of The Bahamas, and the National Endowment for the Arts: Nassau Bahamas. In 2010 he represented the Caribbean in the Liverpool Biennial.

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Jennifer Padgett, PhD Art History & Archaeology, graduated from the University of Notre Dame as a double major in art history and English. Her research interests focus primarily on American art, including painting, design, and the decorative arts from the early to mid-twentieth century.

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P. 53

Bridget A. Purcell, MFA Visual Art 2013, was born and raised in Pennsylvania, and received a BFA from Tyler School of Art, majoring in painting and drawing and minoring in art history. Her work has been shown in various art institutions in both Philadelphia and St. Louis. Her interests include literature, downhill skiing, and the space between painting and sculpture.

Malahat Qureshi, MFA Visual Art 2013, received a BA in International Affairs and a BFA in Graphic Design from Florida State University. Her graduate work investigates social and political concerns pertinent to American Muslims.

Carla Fisher Schwartz, MFA Visual Art 2013, received her BA in studio art with a minor in the history of art and visual culture from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in 2009. A California native, she specializes in print media and drawing.

Zak Smoker, MFA Visual Art 2013, was born on the second floor of a three-bedroom house in Southern Michigan. He received a BFA in sculpture from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2010, and lives, works, and plays in Cleveland, OH.

Laurencia Strauss, MFA Visual Art 2013, has a BA in sculpture from California College of the Arts, an MA in landscape architecture from Rhode Island School of Design, and has studied at Penland School of Crafts. Her work interrupts routines of seeing and learning by asking people to reconsider their relationships to local social and ecological systems.

Nicholas Tamarkin, PhD Comparative Literature, is a native of New Haven, CT, and earned his MFA at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He has been a practicing theater actor and director for many years, and is privileged to add his voice to this catalog.

P. 40

Maria Xia, MFA Creating Writing 2014, is from New Jersey.

P. 33

Lili Yang, MFA Visual Art 2013, grew up in China and later came to the United States to study art. She received her BFA in 2010 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Vivian Zapata, MFA Visual Art 2013, is a multimedia artist presently creating large-scale sculptures. These works are made with wood, found furniture, foam, newspaper, artificial flowers, and paint. Her body of work investigates the ruptured relationship between western culture and the natural environment, demonstrating an interest in narratives, symbols, and also the grotesque body, a major theme within the history of the carnivalesque.

SAM FOX SCHOOL OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE	GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN	COLLEGE OF ART	GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ART	MILDRED LANE KEMPER ART MUSEUM
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Today's vastly expanded context for art-making requires artists to understand various modes of critical analysis and strategies of production, distribution, and reception of creative work. The Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts is an interdisciplinary and diverse community of architects, artists, and designers dedicated to excellence in learning, creative activity, research, and exhibition. The School's unique structure allows it to build on the strengths of each unit—Art, Architecture, and Museum—and to draw on the resources of Washington University.

As a result, students have access to expanded opportunities for critical dialogue and collaboration, and are singularly positioned to shape 21st-century culture through contributions to creative activity and research in design

and the visual arts. The Graduate School of Art encourages students to investigate the relationship between thinking and making throughout the program, and prepares them to incite progressive social change and assume their roles as global citizens.


As a collaborative project between the Graduate School of Art and the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, this publication presents twenty-three artists whose creative work thoughtfully confronts the challenges and optimistically engages the possibilities of our world.

This catalog was published in conjunction with the MFA 2013 exhibition at the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, May 3–July 29, 2013.

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