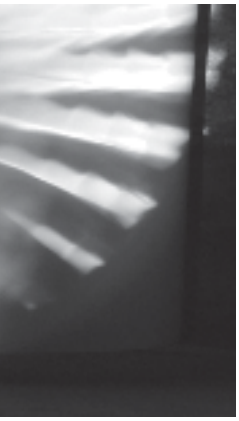
VOLUME

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR

Welcome to the inaugural issue of VOLUME, XPACE's annual anthology of exhibition essays and interviews that critically engage and explore programming from early 2009 to present. VOLUME marks a moment in which the artists, writers and performers that have come through our doors over the past six years have evolved into an integral part of Toronto's artistic community. VOLUME, quite literally, speaks to the number of talented emerging and student artists who have come through XPACE. In celebration of these achievements we invited past XPACE alumni Team Macho to create a limited edition project for VOLUME in conjunction with the launch. This collaborative project marks the 'full circle' of XPACE's past, present and future successes.

VOLUME would not have been possible without the support of XPACE's dedicated staff and OCAD Student Union. I would also like to give a special thanks to Stephanie Simmons for her insightful design and layout work, as well as Melissa Fisher, Serena Lee, Jennie Suddick and Matthew Williamson for their tireless work, criticality and ingenuity.



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STEPHANIE VEGH

Mis[place]d:
Animals Lost and Found

JANUARY 9th - 31, 2009

TANIA SANHUEZA, THE GREAT AUKS, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

This Must Be The Place (Naive Melody)

ELIZABETH UNDERHILL

"In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy." - Edward O. Wilson

Humanity is at a critical point in its history: we have actually stopped to consider how much we have destroyed and whether we will continue to do so. We are responsible for the world's sixth wave of mass extinction:1 wild animals are dying in irretrievable numbers from habitat destruction and fragmentation,2 environmental stressors,3 and extermination by those who consider them pests or desirable commodities,4 while domestic animals are being produced and consumed at a ridiculous rate.5 Mis[place]d: Animals Lost and Found features thirteen projects by emerging artists concerned with our damaging relationship with wildlife and companion animals. To be misplaced is to be accidentally lost from a place of belonging. This exhibition suggests that the notion of incorrect positioning may be applied to animals, as well as the pervading attitude that we possess them. The works in Mis[place]d act as sites of inquiry, places where new ways of thinking about animals can be found where misplaced attitudes have brought about loss.

Familiar Faces

"When the world crashes in to my living room/Television made me what I am" - Talking Heads

Exerting cultural and biological stressors onto animals to get them to fit into human societal structures is the basis of domestication, although recent practitioners have been accused of endangering animal and human welfare in so doing. 6 While these creatures, such as pets, seem an intrinsic part of our lives and happiness, the process of domestication simultaneously situates them as "objects of ownership, inheritance, purchase, and exchange."7 By defamiliarizing the animals we consider closest to us, works by Laura Paolini and Ian MacTilstra remark on losing pets within our homes.

Laura Paolini's *Crocodile Tears (Crying Cat)* situates a pet in its "natural habitat:" a seat in front of the television. A robotic cat watches a video of a real cat playing to the tune of *What a Wonderful World.* The robot cries constantly, suggesting that what it sees brings about feelings of sadness. Our dominance of the animal world is reflected by our desire to achieve within it aesthetic beauty, breeding animals that aren't really animals anymore, but rather pretty objects,continuously ascribed with human qualities and emotions. Also evident is a critique of art historical concerns with the power of beauty to achieve the sublime: the cat is gorgeous, but as fake as its tears, and deeply rooted in materiality.

Ian MacTilstra's digitized super-8 video *How I Lost My Virginity* shows a time-elapsed day in the life of a dog. The dog is captured sleeping on a couch, rarely getting up to move, and we hear its restless moans. This idle dog is one we're not unaccustomed to: the pet that spends its life sleeping. However, as time passes and the dog's moans become more insistent, this common scene becomes repulsive and disconcerting. Dogs are known as man's best friend, revered for their heroic loyalty. But this is a hero devoid of glory. As with losing virgin purity, something sacred has been stripped away from this animal.

Pest Problems

"Check what's in the trash bag/We're just another part of you" - Yeah Yeah Yeahs

"Pest" is a diminutive of pestilent, the word indicative of something deadly, yet the pesky creatures we fear and are disgusted by resemble us closely in terms of physiognomy, behaviour, and intelligence. The destruction of the world's resources is suicide, perhaps paralleled most poignantly in the way we treat pests. Works by Stephanie Vegh, Stephanie Kervin and Sylvana D'Angelo, and Christina Knox examine the problems with pests.

Plague Rats by Stephanie Vegh confronts our fear of rats in relation to their overwhelming pervasiveness of civic spaces and poor reputation as bearers of fatal disease. Spreading out from a stoney basement corner are rats drawn onto 71 pages of Rome and the Campagna, a Victorian treatise glorifying ancient architecture. Vegh's interventionist illustrations emphasize the incongruity between the text's claims of greatness and images of the remaining ruins, and seek to expose our historical tendency toward hubris while neglecting to credit the influential forces of animals. Vegh's drawings capture the reputation of the rat: they are monumental yet ephemeral, silent but "equal builders of civilization alongside human influence."8

Stephanie Kervin and Sylvana D'Angelo's *Making Bunnies* begins with a hundred small plaster rabbits that multiply during the exhibition. This intimidating family of rabbits is made from molds based on one Kervin's mother made for her as a child. *Making Bunnies* makes physical the process of reproducing that which is inherited. Playing on rabbits' ability to quickly reproduce, Vegh and D'Angelo liken this to the perpetuation of inherited values, particularly in relation

to the prejudicial act of speciesism that makes acceptable the mistreatment of pests and other animals.9 By staggering the installation, most will only have a limited view of the rabbits, as is the case when preordained attitudes toward masses of animals block us from individually interacting with each.

Losing animals in representational contexts is clear in Christina Knox's photographs, *Shooting the Mass Murder*. In blurry, obscured images we see Knox's attempts to document a mass murder of crows - between 16,000-32,000 - that congregate at dusk at a roosting site just outside Vancouver. These works may be regarded as a cooperative effort, with Knox bound by the shortcomings of her camera to get pale, gritty images of her subjects - which appear lost amongst residual distortion due to low light - without causing them duress from assistive lighting. Her photos engage us despite their compromised clarity, embodying a critique of the need for our ideals to be met at the cost of animals' well being.

Exotic Thrillers

"But you're innocent when you dream" - Tom Waits

Bizarre portrayals of animals range from pure fantasy claimed as authentic to the housebound representations of wild creatures we never physically interact with. Our habit of dreaming may seem benign, but it is indicative of a larger tendency toward the exploitation and consumption of animal life. Works by Ashley Andrews, Valerie Sabaliauskas, Aidan Dahlin Nolan with Meghan and Kelsey Speakman, Renee Nault, and Hannah Myall quote various representations of animals that note a strange desire to find pleasure in creatures that are by definition lost.

Taxidermy has roots in the study of natural sciences that spread to the phenomenon of trophy display by hobbyists, collectors and hunters. Ashley Andrews' paintings take up the absurd implications of this practice. Figures in *Sniffing Boar, Green Weasel*, and *Red Fox* are based on the moulds inserted into the hides of animals as well as the patterns in the wood painted on, but are barely identifiable as specific animals. In merging the components used in making trophies, Andrews' paintings become the anti-trophy. By removing the skin, an image we can identify and recognize, Andrews de-values this form of animal "preservation," while making attractive images, visually linking the grotesque with a desire render beauty into possession-form.

Our experience of wildlife is often from a distance, as with reading of it in books, the subject of Valerie Sabaliauskas' installation of children's encyclopedias. A sense of comfort is evoked by placing these objects, unquestioned from childhood, in our hands. However, within each book is a hollowed out space where a drawing of an endangered animal appears imprisoned, trapped in an unmoving stance.

Visiting animal sanctuaries and zoos is a fairly recent means of experiencing nature, though true wilderness is decidedly lacking in what are actually controlled and managed environments. *Legends of Chincoteague* by Aidan Dahlin Nolan, Kelsey Speakman and Meghan Speakman, is in the spirit of romantic, bucolic images captured on such visits, while drawing attention to the constructed aspect of these places. Large, hazy tourist-style snapshots of ponies in their fenced-in sanctuary and pens hang with sand and driftwood spread below. Legend has it that the ancestors of these ponies were shipwrecked off the coast of Virginia while being transported to South America. Children's books by Marguerite Henry increased their fame, and put descendants of Misty, her real-life protagonist, in demand by private owners. Dahlin Nolan and the Speakmans present the strange dichotomy between being swept up in the story of these ponies through their romantic portrayal, and the abrupt realization via the fake beach that it is fictive narrative that fuels their appeal.

Yeti are the mysterious humanoid creatures whose existence depends on being lost. In *I don't mind the sight of you*, Hannah Myall has scrawled these words alongside two identically posed yeti. She references the literary aspect of yeti's existence - the power of words, folktales and rumours that keep them alive in our imaginations. It is also something of a passive yet romantic statement of acceptance - not minding the propagation of stories as replacements for the real thing. Yeti seem to signify our hope that there is something still left out there in the world to discover, an intact portion of nature that has escaped us. Yeti features the same figure traced repeatedly, simultaneously denoting the iconic nature of this creature, and the forgery of forgeries that are required for it to exist.

Farewell to Beasts is a series of paintings by Renee Nault that portray extinct fantasy animals, and suggest the sense of loss that occurs upon discovering their non-existence. Otherworldly creatures such as mermaids and gruesome Romanesque chimeras held real significance in the mythologies and religions of early civilizations. Nault is interested in the point of departure from the influence of these images. Ultimately her work suggests that truth is in the eye of the beholder, and the choice to believe in or be influenced by representations of animals in their physical absence, though felt by individuals, has more to do with large-scale consensus.

Today's Fables

"The way we look to a distant constellation that's dying in a corner of the sky/These are the days of miracle and wonder/ And don't cry baby/Don't cry, don't cry, don't cry" - Paul

Misplaced attitudes granted animals in art significance only when anthropomorphized. A classic literary example, Aesop's Fables portray animals as caricatures of human vices and virtues to teach us lessons in morality. Yet their inclusion provides no wisdom for interaction between our species. Rapidly changing circumstances within the world demand that today's fables offer lessons in lives other than our own, as demonstrated by the works of Colleen Collins, Samuel Choisy, and Tania Sanhueza.

Colleen Collins' performance, seen documented in *The Summons Series*, simulates a hunter beckoning prey to shoot for food, so done by using a calling device that animals respond to for an encounter with the opposite sex. When we summon another for our sustenance, at what cost is it to them? Conversely, if a summoned being comes willingly to us, can their intentions be considered selfless? *The Summons Series* brings issues of misanthropy and altruism to the fore in our relationships with others and our need to co-exist for survival. Animals missing from these landscapes are from the past, present, and future (the particular sites where the performances took place are rich with fossils from the Triassic and Jurassic periods). Collins relates their non- appearance to the physical and psychological nature of the site: these landscapes have been "acted upon severely,"10 as inhospitable in their appearance as they are in our mental conception of them. Signified as radical psychic geographies, Collins' photographs allow us to move from image to the contents of our own minds, that sometimes mirror these rough landscapes.

Wonderfully ethereal, Samuel Choisy's staged photographs of taxidermy animals in cityscapes were developed from exposures captured by a pinhole camera. *Views of a Secret* is an ongoing series exploring beauty and otherness within controlled and foreign environments. Our time with these images feels fleeting; we have caught a moment of beauty and the freedom and wildness that go along with it. There is a distinct sense of otherness that occurs with the transformative power these animals have on the cityscape. Being introduced to a foreign environment brings with it the realization of difference, identifying oneself as an other, rather than one who fits with the rest. Choisy's work has connotations of the unseen, secret struggles animals and humans alike face to make a home in a new place when the old one has been left behind.

Focusing on Canadian wildlife, Tania Sanhueza's practice resembles animal activism. *The Great Auks* were constructed from reclaimed and recycled fabrics, stitched carefully together and filled with natural fibres. Using environmentally conscious materials, Sanhueza's work functions as an apology to this species ravaged by humans to the point of extinction. Docile in temperament, the flightless Great Auk was easily wiped out from its North Atlantic habitat where it once thrived in abundance. Using contradiction to raise awareness, the toy-like Auks are objects of desire, just as their real counterparts were to those who saw them as bankable commodities. Though the birds have been lost, their beauty is present for us to consider and engage with. This is the power of images: to influence our thinking about the world around us. For Sanhueza, it is as simple as making animals appeal to our sensibilities, so we stop taking them for granted, and become interested in learning about lives other than our own.

"If we choose to let conjecture run wild, then animals, our fellow brethren in pain, disease, suffering and famine - our slaves in the most laborious works, our companions in our amusements - they may partake of our origin in one common ancestor - we may be all netted together." - Charles Darwin

Perhaps it is still a wild idea that animal and human life could possibly be interconnected. Everything up to this point has been marred by attempts to keep us separate. Humanity's legacy smacks of this attitude that there is an "elsewhere," a place where responsibility to the world disappears and the consequences of our actions only matter if they serve our needs. But there is only one place. Could animals and humans be any more alike in sharing the desire to find somewhere to belong.

1We are to blame: http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/10/081020171454.htm

2 For factors causing mass extinction of species, including habitat destruction, fragmentation and ecosystem degradation: Foreman, Dave. Rewilding North America. Washington: Island Press, 2004.

3 This is an umbrella term used to describe various factors (like chemical pollution and climate change) that interfere with the productivity, reproductive success and ecological development of organisms. Freedman, Bill. Environmental Science A Canadian Perspective. Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001. pp270-271.

4 For a strong example of "pest" eradication: http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jul/19/nation/na-wolves19. One species driven to extinction through unrestrained harvesting is the passenger pigeon: Stutchbury, Bridget. Silence of the Songbirds. Toronto: Harper Perennial, 2007. pp25-26.

5 In the United States, half of all animals admitted to animals shelters are euthanized (between three and four million): http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/pet_overpopulation_and_ownership_statistics/hsus_pet_overpopulation_estimates.html

6 For criticisms and theoretically detrimental consequences of genetically engineering food animals: Boyens, Ingeborg. Unnatural Harvest. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2000.

7 http://www.fathom.com/course/21701781/session1.html

8 Interview with Stephanie Vegh via email, Thursday May 29, 2008.

9 Our poor treatment of animals is due to inherited values and attitudes toward them; the ongoing denial of ethical and moral treatment of animals because they are not human is speciesism and about as reprehensible as sexism and racism: Singer, Peter. Animal Liberation. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.

10 Interview with Colleen Collins via email, Tuesday October 14, 2008.

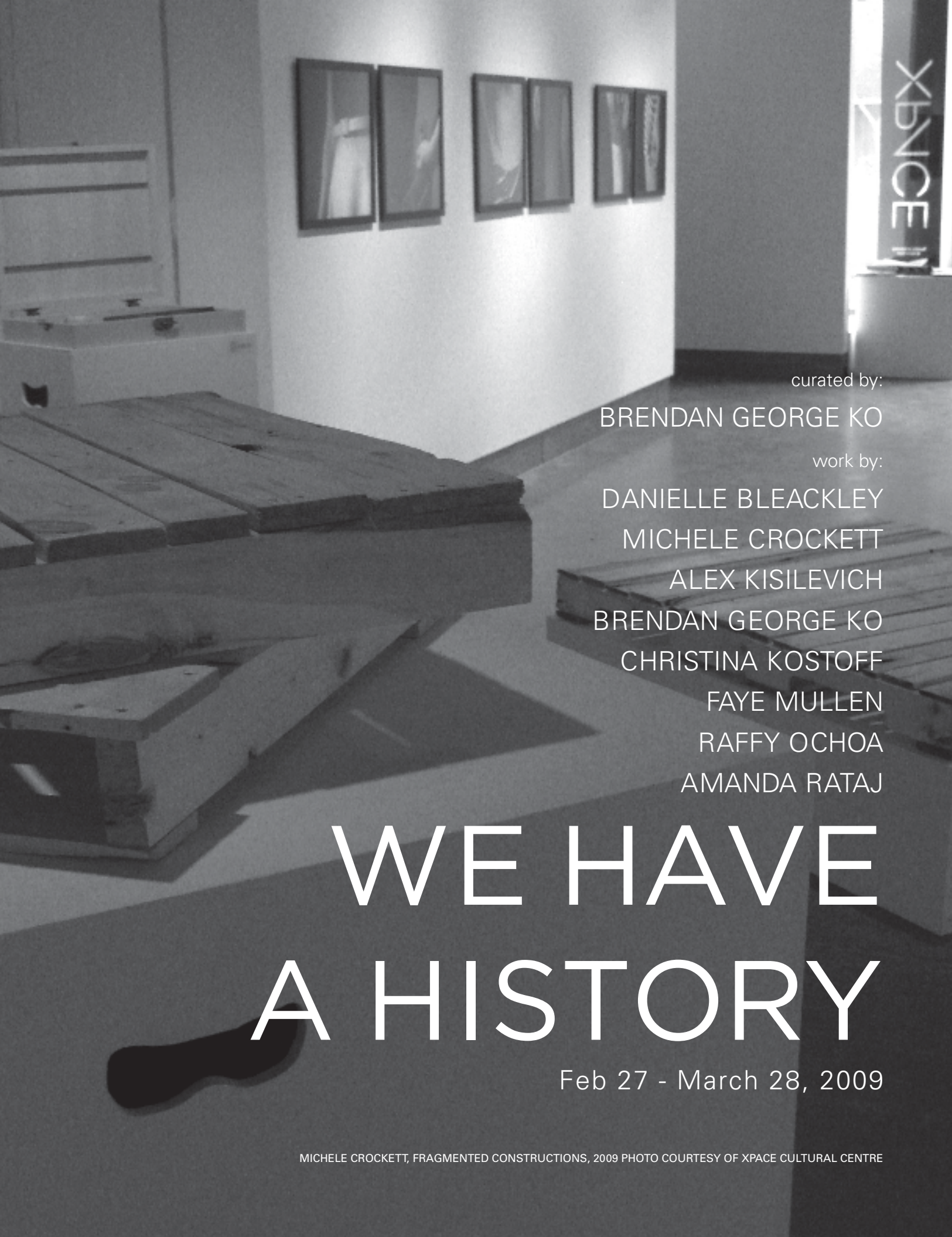
We Have a History

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

Interpersonal relationships come and go. The residue that lingers is a mark of their permanence, whether it is between person, object, or moment. Out of these relationships develops individualized notions of history estranged from traditional linear trajectories. Through themes of history and relationships, We Have A History presents a group of photographers and sculptors that explore relationships between individuals, generations, objects, and the past to the present.

SERENA LEE
PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

From lovingly refinished skid pallets to carefully composited family portraits, We Have A History explores moments and objects that are documented, collected, and cherished. These explorations allow the artists to access narratives peripheral to instituted notions of history. Eight projects from Photography and Sculpture Installation students at the Ontario College of Art & Design offer insight into the construction and mediation of modest and unwritten histories. They locate them in the folds of a dress, on a bedroom fl oor, a crack in the wall, or a patch of grass. While some artists intuit narratives through the tactility of hand-processing, others mediate their construction through the meticulous digital post-production. Each piece alludes to a personal experience which collectively we find solace in. With We Have A History, XPACE is pleased to launch a new catalogue series, inspiring dialogue and providing critical context to the practices of our exhibiting artists and designers.



curated by:

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

work by:

DANIELLE BLEACKLEY

MICHELE CROCKETT

ALEX KISILEVICH

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

CHRISTINA KOSTOFF

FAYE MULLEN

RAFFY OCHOA

AMANDA RATAJ

WE HAVE A HISTORY

Feb 27 - March 28, 2009

MICHELE CROCKETT, FRAGMENTED CONSTRUCTIONS, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

DANIELLE BLEACKLEY, THE DRESS SERIES, 2008 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

"A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away..."[1]

"somewhere in space this may all be happening right now."[2]

OUTER

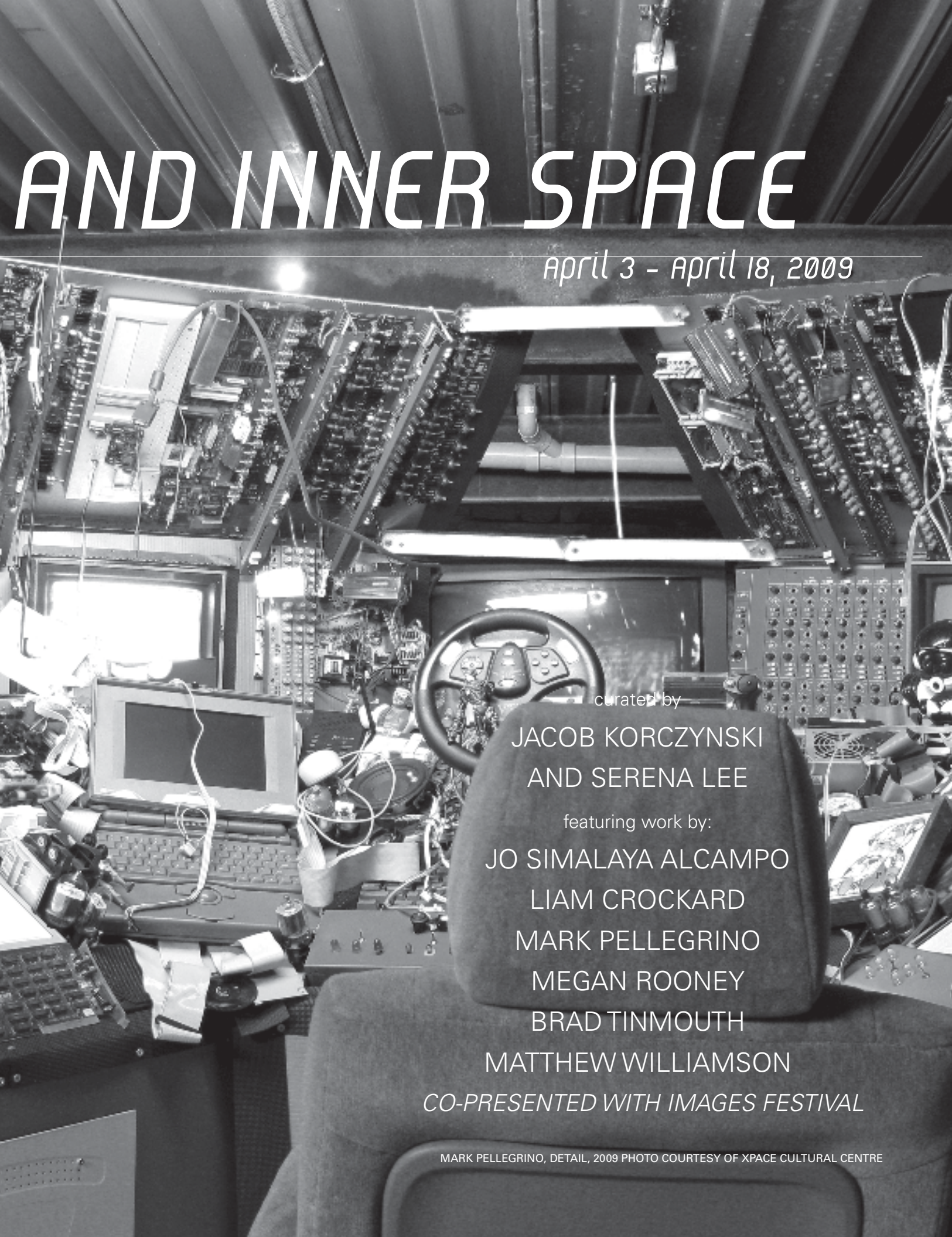
SERENA LEE, PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

We might be getting ahead of ourselves here, but considering that Outer and Inner Space runs on its own clock, it might be more interesting to look at the histories depicted in its media installations in terms of space, Foucault's space, which "takes the form of relations among sites", contiguous, illogical, wonder-full correlations that allow us to be in two places at once - a long time ago and right now – after all "we are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed", which sounds a lot like hyperdriven intergalactic dimension jumping, okay, montage, where "old habits of mind can be jolted into new perceptions of the obvious" as Taussig describes it in reference to anthropological history and as imaginative resistance to the "rosary bead religion of cause and effect"; Outer and Inner Space, occupying staunchly real space at 58 Ossington Avenue, suggests about seven heterotopias including itself - spaces that are distinctively any where other than here, a room full of skewed time zones and, compressing, accumulating, distorting, and re-imagining time and relations between distant homes and their respective economies, moments that go unnoticed while being broadcast to millions, the simultaneous celebration and mourning of analog aesthetics and silver spray paint; of course media installation is unlike the darkened apparatus cinema that is intended to recede behind your eyeballs as you enter a projected illusory space - media installation is a different breed of heterotopia which encompasses site and the audience's presence in relation to tangible screens that hold the potential for endless recall, perhaps as a monument to children with misplaced names and the pointing of gloved hands at the 1904 St. Louis World Fair, or to anachronistic punk relics washed up on Ontario shores in the wake of grunge, monuments unfolding at their own pace, allowing us to slow down and think; these spaces have a different tempo for foggy images of home, forced anonymity, collective broadcast elation, the X-wing drawn on a fourth-grade binder, and we haven't even mentioned the internet... as a "place within a place, that exists by itself", Foucault calls the ship "the greatest reserve of the imagination", ambling along as site, catalyst, and witness to unpredictable junctions, and as such, Outer and Inner Space offers limitless correlations, a time and a place for cutting and pasting threads of history that burn the eyes and warm to the touch.

1 Opening line of the Star Wars film franchise
2 Tagline from original trailer for Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope (1977), as seen on youtube http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gvqpFbRKtQ
Foucault, Michel. "Heterotopias" Of Other Spaces (Des Espaces Autres) 1967.
Taussig, Michael. "Violence and Resistance in the Americas: The Legacy of Conquest" The Nervous System.
Routledge, 1992.

AND INNER SPACE

April 3 – April 18, 2009



curated by

JACOB KORCZYNSKI
AND SERENA LEE

featuring work by:

JO SIMALAYA ALCAMPO
LIAM CROCKARD
MARK PELLEGRINO
MEGAN ROONEY
BRAD TINMOUTH
MATTHEW WILLIAMSON

CO-PRESENTED WITH IMAGES FESTIVAL

MARK PELLEGRINO, DETAIL, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

If someone is out there saying "here's what we should be doing to make a revolution" I turn and run as fast as I can. Anyone who is certain of that, in this day and age, is insane. - Sam Green, from "Interview With Sam Green," in Failure! Experiments in Aesthetic and Social Practice

Thinking about revolutions can be an uneasy and slightly awkward experience. Although revolution usually arises from inspiring political and social idealism, consideration of the revolutionary spirit ultimately leads to extreme violence and following that, extreme failure. In thinking about the futility of the attempt, and the likelihood for failure, Jean Luc Godard's 1967 film *La Chinoise* comes to mind. Described as eerily prescient of the student uprisings of 1968, the film follows a group of students in Paris, France. Under the influence of Chairman Mao's 'little red book' – the source of their misinterpreted and misguided ideological motivations – the students hold political meetings and plot a revolution. During a conversation between Véronique and her professor, it becomes clear that a plan of action for what to do after the initial revolt has never been considered. The film's climax involves a clumsy and inept assassination attempt. Through a simple mistake in misreading room numbers the wrong person is assassinated. The seemingly obvious and oblivious reaction is to simply go back and shoot the 'right' person.

"Shit, Shit, Stop. I made a mistake. I read Sholokov upside down all right, and the room number 23, but since it was upside down I inverted. That made it 32 so I went to room 32."
"You shot the guy in 32?"
"Yes."
"Go back."
"Yes, yes. But get the right one this time."

The absurdity of this response is combined with an exaggerated scene of the get-away driver making a very wide and laborious three-point turn in the courtyard, in front of the glass-windowed expanse of the crime scene. We want to point to these minute details, these ridiculous yet simple gestures, to alter the notion of revolution.

In its simplest definition revolution means to turn around. The assassination attempt in *La Chinoise* fails to provide the revolution that they were hoping for. The conclusion of the film shows the end of the summer bringing an end to their revolutionary group, the apartment being cleaned up. No explanations are being asked for, or offered, for their actions. Yet, in at least one simple way there was a successful revolution achieved: that of turning the car around.

This exhibition poses the question of what could be like a revolution, proposing glimpses into the almost and the not quite. This was not a determined avoidance of the type of grandiose revolution the word characteristically conjures, but rather a refocusing on other definitions – that of aspiring, pondering, turning, rotating, orbiting, cycles and measures of time. It is an attempt to think beyond: to the ideological, scientific, technological, and cyclical. We hope to inspire a shift in perspective. Like the car turning in *La Chinoise,* we need to pause and re-orient ourselves along the way in order to turn around or change our point of view. In a three-point turn there is no smooth motion. Each point in the turn adjusts your direction and is necessary to this act of revolution.

So we want to ask again, what is the point of thinking about revolution? What do we have to gain? When we think about revolution in its simplest and most achievable terms, perhaps a better question to ask would be: what do we have to lose?...

Six artists from the photography and integrated media programs at the Ontario College of Art & Design, responded to a call for revolution. This exhibition offers their interpretations of what it might mean to be like a revolution. The installation *This Eternal Frame/Flame* by Neelam Kler, places us within a visual mapping of the history of time, beginning with the big bang. With an abundance of diverse materials and inspired by revolutionary thinkers, Kler invites us to critically engage with the universe, to hypothesize, and to connect with our position within this history. Steve Shaddick presents an interactive projection of planetary revolutions, provoking us to change our perception of our own place in the universe, and offering multiple perspectives of a universal centre that can be infinitely re-centered. He reminds us that it wasn't so long ago that the Earth was *The Centre of the Universe*. Combining painting, video and installation, and using the image of a figure repeatedly jumping off of the roof of a building, Mike Juneau suggests the power in aspiring for something, for getting up after falling, and for trying again. The aspiration for the ability to fall easily off a building – to survive, to be able to get back up – offers a rethinking of the futile gesture. This repetition signifies a process of learning how to fall from increasing heights and survive. By removing the scream from the track *Love Rollercoaster* Marino Imperio examines the power of collective imaginations, and the endurance of urban myths. The ease with which the scream is removed and the song put back into play raises questions about the terms of our current technological revolution, and an erasure of history. In having the CDs available for sharing, Imperio also investigates the viral dispersion of reproducible material in the public realm. Adrian Furniss combines technological glitches with rap songs calling for a reconsideration of the role of technology in our lives. *StarChild* addresses the struggle for control between humans, nature and technology, and offers ideas to revolutionize human existence. In *No Lye*, Hakili Don communicates subtle revolts through a careful and aesthetic consideration of racial identity. Photographing hair as abstract and emblematic, Don explores its complex, codified, charged and symbolic representation, and questions how the subject negotiates confusing notions of sameness and belonging.

IT'S LIKE A REVOLUTION!

curated by

TERESA AVERSA

AMBER LANDGRAFF &

DEBORAH WANG

featuring work by

HAKILI DON

ADRIAN FURNISS

MARINO IMPERIO

MIKE JUNEAU

NEELAM KLER

STEVE SHADDICK

Through the advent of broadcast and recording media, music has become a part of everyday life. We experience it via concert halls, cinema, theatre, malls, parking garages, elevators, cars, restaurants, clubs, the street and the Internet. It is something we listen to but it also lingers in the background like an ongoing soundtrack. Being something that we experience alongside other moments, music becomes historically tied not just to its own timeline of production, but also to the timeline in which the individual encounters it. Even Rudd writes:

"The media industry distributes sounds and music as raw materials in a process of production of symbols. As symbols, music is locally and privately received and reworked, remixed or recombined. It could be generally stated that the end product is that music is constructed as a means of mapping a complex contemporaneity. Music integrates our lives vertically, as a significant part of life history.'

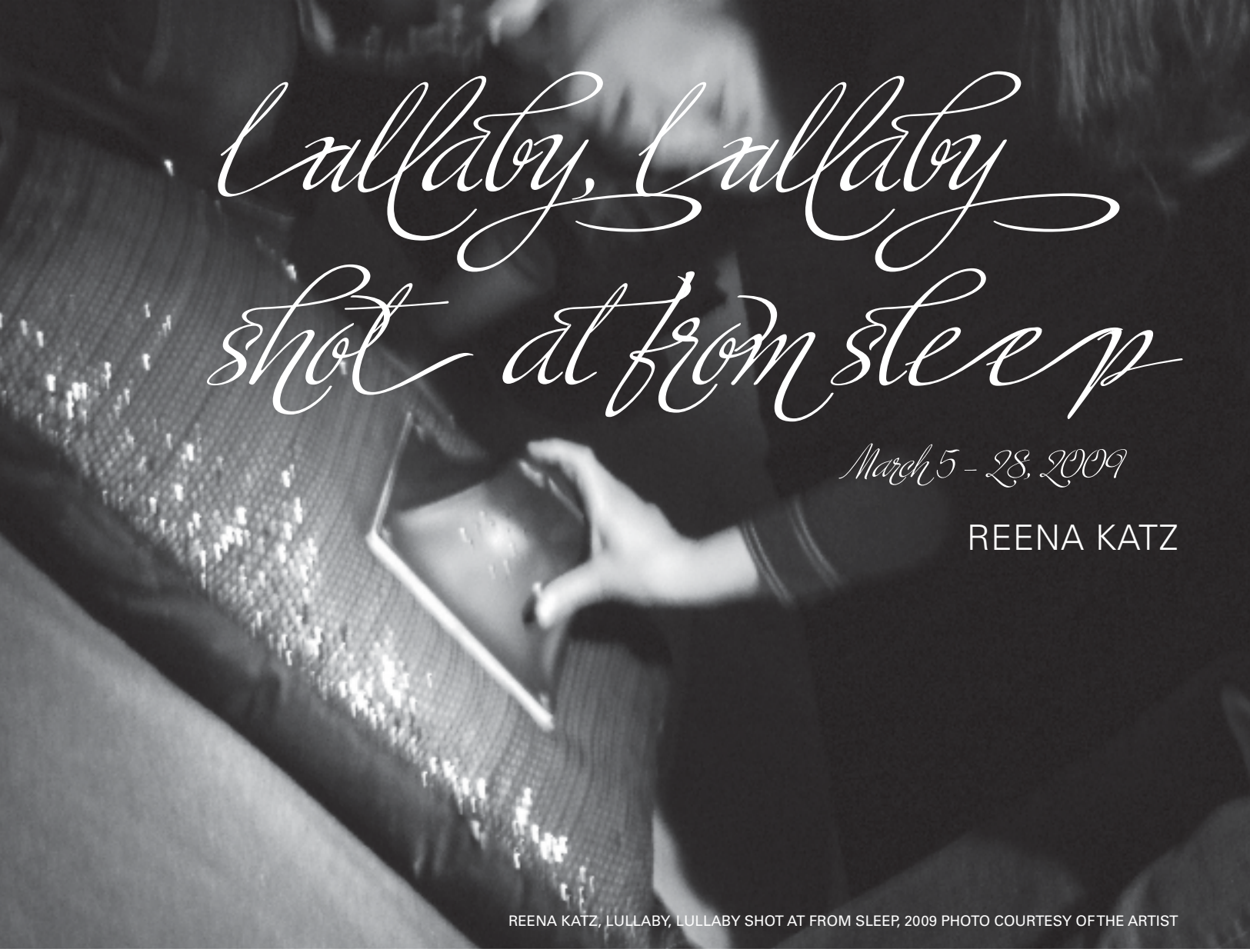
Music becomes a time machine, evoking vivid memories and associations. It is the part of our past that can be relived in a sense, connecting us back to other aspects of experience that we can't relive.

In the installation *lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep*, Reena Katz uses music and cassette tape materials to re-construct the bedroom setting of youth where she spent hours listening to The Police, Patti Smith, The Cure, Led Zeppelin, PJ Harvey, and others. The installation consists of fourteen pillows arranged on beds of plywood covered with wool blankets. Each pillow is covered with a pillowcase constructed from a woven material Katz developed which she calls Audiocloth. It is part wool and audio cassette tape woven together so that a tape-head hacked from a sports walkman can be run over the cloth and reveal the sounds recorded. The installation asks the viewer to enter the piece by gently running a rather fetishized rendition of the sports walkman playhead over the Audiocloth to hear the music of her adolescence. There is an intimacy in the engagement that is reinforced by the allusion to a bedroom setting, and the nostalgic quality of the audiotape itself. However, the intimacy also exists within an atmosphere of anxiety and vulnerability. The inherent bunker-like aesthetic of XBASE, complete with 5-foot ceilings and exposed brick, suggests both the safety of fortitude and also a refuge from some disaster. There's a sense of waiting something out.

Reena Katz's installation instantly brings me back to my own adolescent practice of laying in bed at night with my walkman listening to *Paradise City* by Guns N' Roses on a distant radio station or listening to a favourite mix tape. The radio brought music performance into the domestic domain, and the phonograph allowed people to possess moments frozen in time, memories to replay over and over again. But it was the tape recorder, especially the Walkman, which most radically shifted the practice of music listening into an increasingly private and personalized activity. Not only could you listen to your favourite album over and over again, you could combine your own selection of favourites through the creation of mix tapes. With the Walkman, your cassettes followed you like a best friend throughout key formative years of your life. In lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep Katz creates a double weaving of memory and material. A different kind of mix tape.

The impetus for the work is Katz's attempt to recognize and expose the vulnerability of her queer adolescent self as she struggled to come to terms with and construct her identity. Here, identity is not spoken of as fixed but one that is fluid, constantly being configured from moment to moment, capable of a multiplicity of culturally recognizable symbolic faces. Katz purposes the significance of having a place of refuge, bedroom and music, during a period where she was encountering the various dimensions of her own queerness. By queerness I am not only referring to sexual orientation but a range of practices and desires that fall outside of socially prescribed norms. Besides sexual and musical preferences one could also talk about heteronormative deviations in choice of sexual practice, fashion, recreational activities, hobbies, and work interests. Eve Sedgewick defines queerness as "the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically." This expands the idea of queer to include much more than a homosexual orientation but speaks to anything falling outside of socially prescribed norms. Defined in this way, Katz's queer voice is not exclusive. Katz brings her experience, which was a private activity, into a public setting where the audience can identify with the role of music as a soundtrack to the negotiation of their own identities. She welcomes the divergent projections of the audience by giving voice to the otherness of her own experience.

The material construction of Katz's installation with its synthesis of audiotape, weaving, pillowcases, and cassette player technology performs a number of intertwined deviations from more familiar socially defined practices. Technology has been a masculinized domain consistently throughout its development, or at least in how the narrative of that development is represented. Meanwhile, the production of textiles has been constructed as feminine and associated with the domestic sphere. In this narrative,



Lullaby, Lullaby shot at from sleep

March 5 – 28, 2009

REENA KATZ

REENA KATZ, LULLABY, LULLABY SHOT AT FROM SLEEP, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

work is tied to the construction of identity. Indeed, the movement of women into work traditionally held by men during the post-war era was threatening for this very reason, as it destabilized the basis for male identity and assessment of their position in the social power structure. Women in the workplace represented a new demographic of competition. In Katz's installation she engages in a hybridization of masculinized audio technology with the feminized craft of weaving. She transforms the public space of the gallery into a space that references the private and the domestic - the teenage bedroom. The cassette tape is taken further away from its technocentric identity and queered into a form of cozy textiles. Through the synthesis of materials Katz does not simply seek to reproduce a moment of her youth, but offers us an interesting vantage point.

Music has the ability to help us access long forgotten memories and experiences but the way Katz has integrated audiotape into the installation prevents us from hearing clearly what is on it. The weft of the wool crosses over the warp of the audiotape creating a distorted effect. The challenge in running the tape head along the Audiocloth at a regular speed further impedes the ability to recognize what is being played. Our desire to hear the music in a normative sense is denied by the configuration of the materials. The situation parallels Katz's early experiences where her own desires seemed unrecognizable and unattainable. Evidence of her desire is most explicitly represented in the pillow labels she has modified, baring suggestive excerpts from some of the songs she has woven into the pillowcases.

Lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep expresses today what could not be expressed publicly in the past. Through the materials, music, and intimacy of the installation Katz brings this queer adolescent moment forward. The audience is not only confronted with the memory of their own struggles and pleasures of constructing themselves through music, but with the experience of another's personal history of encountering desire.

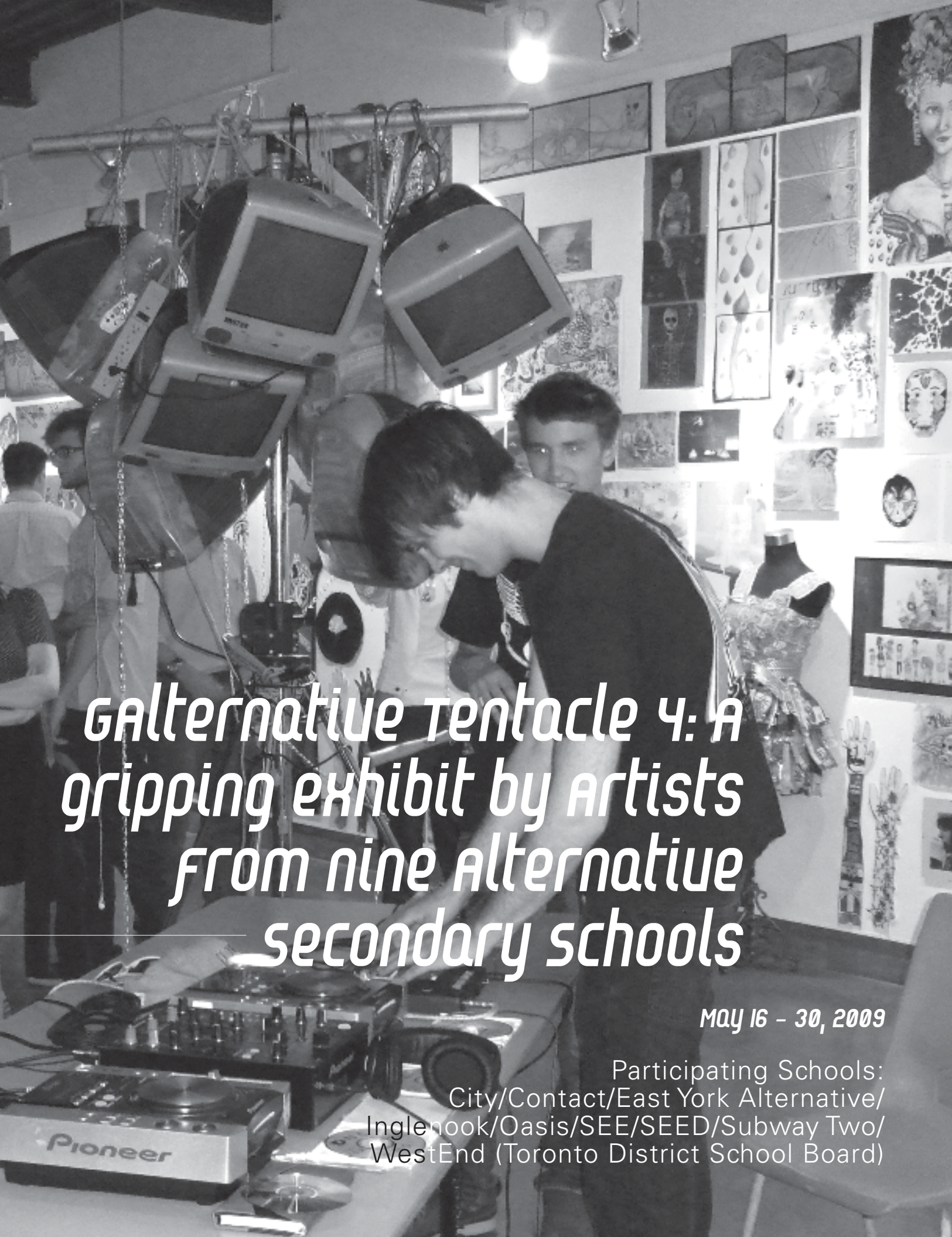
gripped by the alternative tentacle: the 4th annual alternative school art show

CRAIG MORRISON, OASIS

As we approach the fifth anniversary of Alternative Tentacle, we build on our ongoing partnership between XPACE Cultural Centre and a family of nine alternative highschools. This partnership provides a supportive educational experience for youth to learn and contribute to the local cultural community, and serves as a launching pad for young artists to share their unique creative voices with the broader public.

Our fourth annual show in 2009 refined our tradition of packed to the rafters salon-style shows, highlighting the creative work done by students who do not fit into the mainstream school experience and have chosen an alternative. This show, an extension of a 40 year inclusive commitment to youth and the arts demonstrated by the existence and continued advocacy for Alternative Schools in the Toronto District School Board, acted as a springboard for young artists as they move on to other learning and creative experiences. The 2009 show was hung floor to ceiling without a hierarchy and occupied all nooks and crannies of the space; individual labels were ommitted to empahasize the collective power of the sheer volume of youth voices included.

Alternative Tentacle 4 also showcased the innovative art programs and creative educational projects at Oasis, SEED, Inglenook, City School, Contact, West End, Subway Two, SEE and East York Alternative; all these school-based art programs are designed by our art(ist)/teachers to re/engage youth and provide opportunities for students to participate in the real-world experience of being artists engaged with their diverse communities. In mentoring alternative school students in the planning and presentation of a public display, as well as providing young artists with the gallery space and enviable opportunity to exhibit in Toronto's Arts & Design District, the partnership between our nine schools and XPACE has proven supportive of emerging artists from diverse communities. Over the years many of our alternative highschool students have moved on to post-secondary arts education or arts-related careers in Toronto and beyond; Alternative Tentacle 4 was an opportunity for students to collaborate, participate in street level culture and continue to learn beyond the classroom walls, experiences well worth promoting as we plan for the fifth annual show this spring!



GAlternative Tentacle 4: A gripping exhibit by Artists from nine Alternative secondary schools

MAY 16 – 30, 2009

Participating Schools:
City/Contact/East York Alternative/
Inglenook/Oasis/SEE/SEED/Subway Two/
WestEnd (Toronto District School Board)

ALISON S.M. KOBAYASHI AND GINTAS TIRILIS, MOTEL (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

MOTEL

SUZANNE CARTE-BLANCHENOT

Thank you for smoking. Can I get a light? I remember a day when you could smoke freely in public without being shunned, ridiculed, and fined. In fact, you could smoke in theatres and restaurants, on airplanes, at school, work, and even in hospitals. Now gone, all gone, is the luxury of lighting up in a communal space. So when did the demise of smoking culture in Canada occur? Can we chronicle the downward spiral with the public appearance of the warning labels that went from chastising reminders to noxious images? The black and white cautionary statements gave way to grotesquely graphic images of dogs' teeth and disappointed children. Taxes skyrocketed to new heights vowing to eradicate the vice from Canadian diets, especially in the younger population. The most recent lobby to eradicate public cigarette consumption was put forward by the Toronto Transit Commission to prohibit smoking within nine meters of bus and streetcar stops. As the cartons became more pernicious so did the attitudes towards smokers. No longer the romantic James Dean's of society, the smoker is painted as an ugly, self-absorbed people. Not to underestimate or trivialize the effects of second-hand (or the newly coined third-hand) smoke on by standers and children, but the social "denormalization" strategy exercises humiliation tactics lacking mutual respect. The slow death of smoking leaves people huddled in corners rejected from the rest of the polite, pious public.

This is how our journey and (mis)adventure in Motel begins with Gintas Tirilis and Alison S. M. Kobayashi, looking for a light. Pushed to the darkened areas, the outlawed smokers went looking for refuge from the cold Canadian winds in search of a warm sheltered place to have a smoke. Exploring the Mississauga, Etobicoke suburbs for such a place led the pair to discover a strip of motels along Lakeshore Blvd, just on the edge of Toronto, abandoned. The location seems the perfect setting for any escapade, as motels proliferate American horror stories and often conjure up seductive images of anonymous sexual encounters, unsavory dealings and downtrodden souls.

Further exploration into these dilapidated structures became a nightly routine as they dared to gain greater access to the suites, removing the discarded vestiges. Taking that cigarette break allowed them to slow down and critically contemplate their surroundings. This time and clarity on the first inhale permitted both to look around their given space and see the potential in the grungy objects thrown around the murky rooms.

Inhale. Awaiting demolition the objects left in the rooms and offices held an eerie quality of a time capsule. Exhale. The unkempt rooms had already become mini museums holding valuable archives of the establishment's prosperous past. Inhale. Liberating the items and placing in a gallery context would give reverence to the humble objects and to the years of history that were imbedded on their very surfaces. Exhale.

Motel is a collection archiving the salvaged objects through display, photographs, dioramas, multiples, and narrative video installation based on their contravention experiences. Tirilis and Kobayashi keep an ongoing record, through documentation and scavenged relics, of their navigation through these once flourishing temporary habitats. The exhibition has been arranged as part collection and part exploratory fun house, recreating the fear and intrigue the two experienced that fateful evening. So there is an advantage of taking the time to smell the flowers and light a cigarette. Can I get an amen?

...continued from MOTEL

THE CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE MUSEUM

SU-YING LEE

"Museums are always fictional in that they are always created or constructed by us in a particular set of social and historical circumstances. They are negotiated realities." -Dr. Jeanne Cannizzo, Senior Lecturer, Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh Two twenty-somethings wander looking for a warm place to smoke on a cold night. They spot a row of boarded up motels scheduled for demolition, on the drab winter landscape of Mimico's Lakeshore Boulevard. They choose one; they break and enter. Success, a sheltered place to smoke! Once inside, it's forbidding and not without hazards, but they are compelled to press on - breaking and entering and scavenging cool nostalgic detritus left behind by the former owners. They return repeatedly to the site.

It is as plausible to establish a museum display based on aforementioned events as it is for a palaeontologist to produce an exhibit on the subject of the discovery of fossilized prehistoric life.

Museums are after all, under pressure to be many things to many people in order to get visitors through the door. Self-preservation and interactive learning have given rise to museums as sites for amusement, thrills and entertainment. This is a reality which the artists Alison S.M. Kobayashi and Gintas Tirilis mimic and capitalize on with their installation of the MOTEL project. The two smoking, shelter-seeking twenty-somethings, Kobayashi and Tirilis, have presented their adventures-in-trespassing through the common idioms of museum display. The resulting exhibition inventively combines documentary, fact and speculation with a measure of entertainment value.

The artists mount the artefacts of Lakeshore Boulevard's motel strip in familiar museologic manner. Although the motels themselves date back to Toronto's postwar era, the MOTEL museum is dedicated to the liminal period following their operation. Kobayashi and Tirilis present the motels as commercial ruins. They, themselves appear as excavators by happenstance, emboldened by nicotine addiction. Rather than a broad survey of Toronto's commercial waterfront heritage, a serendipitously uncovered micro segment in the timeline of this neighbourhood's development is presented.

Akin to the dioramas of archaeologists at work, the artists stage 3-dimensional illustrations of their "excavation" site in the motel ruins. Such animating devices conflate education with amusement. The dioramas of Kobayashi and Tirilis are executed with haunted house appeal, drawing viewers into the activities of the intrepid explorers. Once engaged by the display, the tools of an amateur break and enter, the atmosphere of impending demolition and the curious and familiar interiors of commercial ruins are revealed to the viewer.

The account presented by Kobayashi and Tirilis through their MOTEL museum, although amusing, is rather ordinary in a number of ways. It is the story of the not-uncommon impulsive adventure of youth and subsequently of a neighbourhood's gentrification. Presented by two individuals who are not archetypal museum professionals, Kobayashi and Tirilis represent a demand, and an evolution, in the manner in which our museums are governed.

Museums have originated from an especially particular worldview, social structure and economy, voiding the notion of museum as archive of collective heritage. Museum collections have customarily been loyally reverential toward these origins. Traditionally dominated by the elite, a democratization of museums is currently developing alongside global migration, ease of access to information and society's awareness and sensitivity to socio-economic realities. This juncture necessitates that the museum profession become more inclusive, diverse, community-orientated and socially aware. For museums, relevance and currency are becoming a matter of survival. Where museums aim to present people with their own culture, the MOTEL museum has achieved this imperative by taking matters into its own hands.

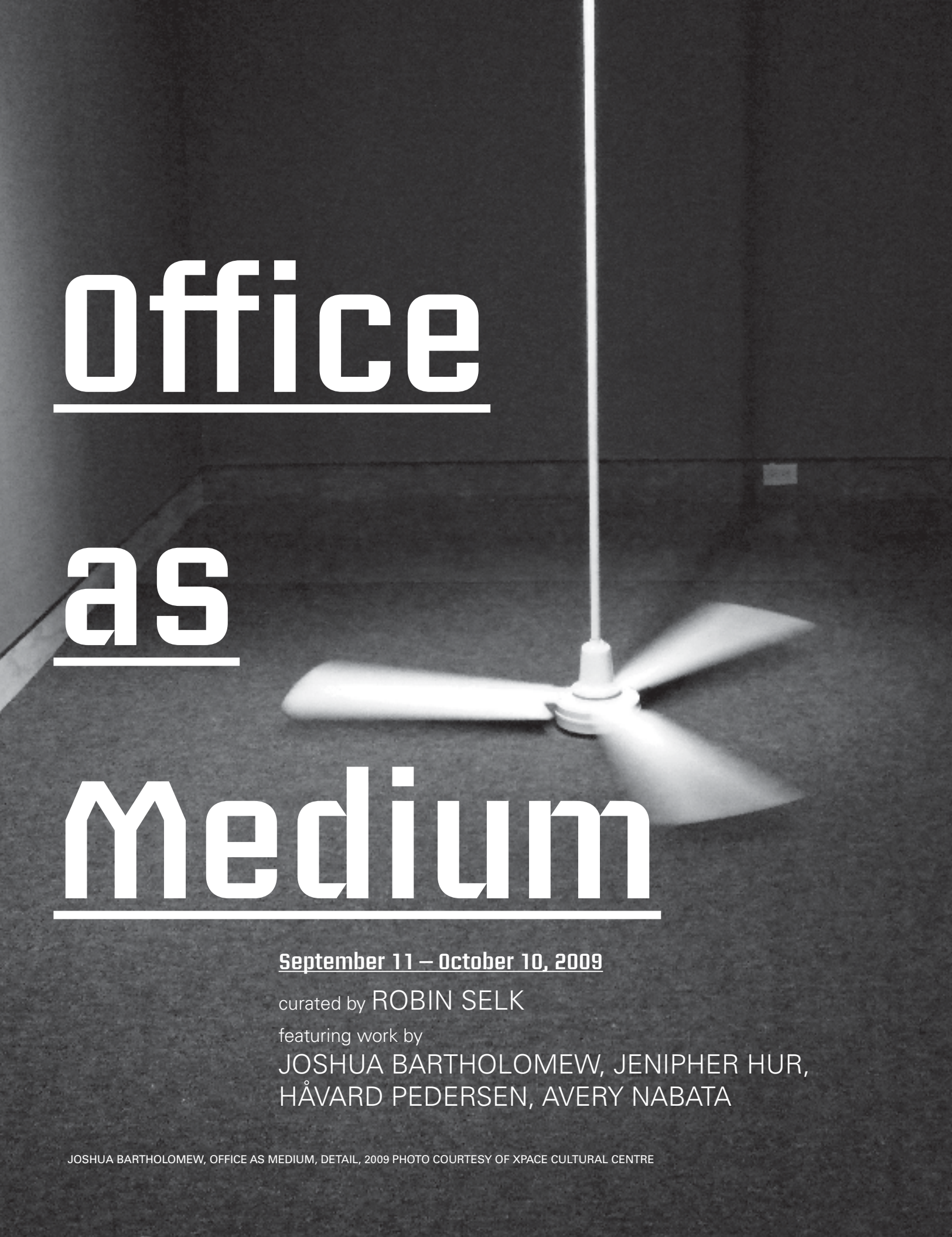
Although a somewhat tongue-in-cheek act of mimicry, the artists' installation effectively reflects upon the current status of the museum – a site where education and recreation coalesce; an institution which must move beyond elitist origins if it is to endure. In this setting, Kobayashi and Tirilis lead us to consider the personal, cultural and collective value of the human stories each one of us possesses.

BENJAMIN BRUNEAU
TARA DOWNS

PALIMPSEST

October 16 - November 14, 2009

BENJAMIN BRUNEAU & TARA DOWNS, PALIMPSEST, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



Office as Medium

September 11 – October 10, 2009

curated by ROBIN SELK

featuring work by

JOSHUA BARTHOLOMEW, JENIPHER HUR,
HÅVARD PEDERSEN, AVERY NABATA

JOSHUA BARTHOLOMEW, OFFICE AS MEDIUM, DETAIL, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

ROBIN SELK

Office as Medium is an exhibition of works that addresses the gallery's auxiliary role of being a lived and worked-in office devoted to the promotion of artists and their work as well as its own self, and not merely a space for exhibitions. A gallery is not simply a static space for the display of art; instead it is dynamic and operational, serving a multiplicity of roles and functions such as providing spaces for meetings, writing, the publication of catalogues, etc. Through the performance of these tasks those who work within the gallery actively inhabit and practice the space. If we apply Michel de Certeau's theory on spaces being the practice of place and compare it to Brian O'Doherty's ideas of the gallery as a cold sterile 'white cube' where only the eyes enter and not the outside world, we see the paradoxical nature of the gallery as functioning as one thing (an office) and envisioning itself as another (the white cube). de Certeau suggests that all lived spaces are inevitably dynamic and individualized to the people who inhabit them; and although the architecture of a place—or for the point of this argument the gallery and O'Doherty's conception of what that role of the gallery must be—may attempt to constrict against individual practices, that place will eventually become specific through the circumnavigation of intended use. Perhaps this paradoxical nature is the reason for the gallery's ambiguity in being half showroom and half business office. Although this line of questioning the roles played within the gallery inevitably aligns the show with institutional critique by the likes of Michael Asher (and followers) the exhibition differs in approach by using forms of humour and attempting to be relational to those who work at the gallery.

The office of XPACE, which has until now occupied the downstairs area and has always been kept separate from the exhibition space, will be temporarily implanted into the exhibition room for the duration of the show, so that it will reside with the art on display. This not only tests the limits of the traditional functions and associations of the gallery, but frees it in a way that an office is free – backroom employees implicitly possess the ability to decorate their desk space as they please, unhindered by notions of preservations to which galleries have often been subject according to a curator's whims. The office, often unfairly characterized as a drab, regimented space, beholds a creativity and flexibility that has often gone unnoticed –which is why it has now been chosen to reside in the forefront alongside the artists' works.

Many of the works in the exhibition take as their departure point archetypical and stereotypical views of the office place—much of which have been derived from pop culture depictions of office environments, such as in the movies Office Space (1999) and American Psycho (2000). For example Håvard Pedersen designed the show`s flyer in the form of generic business cards, which are a reference to scene in the movie American Psycho (2000), in which Christian Bale and Bill Sage exchange and admire their otherwise identical gold embossed business cards. Pedersen's interests are in "insider" languages that become perpetuated within insular groupings of people, such as in office culture—the difference between Sage's off-white and Bale's cream coloured business cards may go unnoticed by those not in the know—or for that matter the esoteric language the comprises a large majority of the discourse surrounding art history. Imbued in some of these works are hints of office humour or anxieties over office work environments such as in Avery Nabata's series of time based sculptures

using common office materials. Through working with these materials Nabata extends their intended function and possibilities—moving utilitarian objects into the realm of art objects. (In a way these sculptures are an extension of the doodles or objects made in procrastination that may exist or be formed by the xpace staff in the course of the show (should I include this)). In addition to these, she has chosen to carpet the gallery with cheap industrial grade carpeting, altering the normal expectations for a gallery. Other works in the show use the form of the office to branch out into more serious and encompassing topics such as globalization and consumerism.

Joshua Bartholomew`s works for the show relate to the drive taken from Vancouver to Toronto in that one of the pieces was made in Vancouver and personally shipped by the artist in his car; the other—a fabricated light box installed on top of his cars roof—turned the drive itself into an art piece—and served as documentation of the trip and as well as the document production and transportation inherent in globalized offices. The use of a light box—a common feature in advertisement and artistic practices—and its placement within the landscape, links the work to the conceptual office of Iain and Ingrid Baxter's N.E. Thing Company. The periodic practice of the Baxters served as critique for the raising corporatization and marketing of Vancouver starting in the mid 1960's. However instead of photographing and marketing the landscape as the Baxters did, Bartholomew's work serves to document the landscape by capturing it—the insects splattered across the once pristine surface of the light box can be viewed as a type of record for a journey taken.

The act of displacing the office of the gallery is played with in a critical and perhaps comedic manner by Jenipher Hur`s installation work that occupies the now vacant space of the downstairs office. Whereas once it was a typical office, the room now serves as a showcase for the imaginary ideation of fake production dinosaur bones, the kind intended to be sold to tourists. Ideas around authenticity and originality become apparent in Hur's questioning and confusing of the boundaries between ideation and production.

Office as Medium disrupts the normal and traditional operations of the gallery and subsequently repositions and creates the possibility for new opportunities for the gallery as a whole. Regular office employees of XPACE will inevitably become involved with the exhibition, out of need to use their "office." Through the displacement of the office, employees are subsequently left to reinvent how they operate and are forced to reconsider the space as a whole. A corollary of this enmeshing and redrawing of boundaries is a nod to relational aesthetics, which constructed spaces with the intent of shifting the role of viewers to more active participants. Relational aesthetics takes on the notion that the interactions between them being integral and necessary for the art to come to fruition. For example, the tables and food Rirkrit Tiravanija served at his dinner projects were not necessarily the art pieces themselves but instruments which facilitated interactions resulting from the provision of free dinners – a major component of relational aesthetics, played upon in Office As Medium by involving viewers, and employees, was to illustrate what can arise out of art. However, Office as Medium is not a mere echo of the relational aesthetics movement, as it includes autonomous works by artists that have decided to take the idea of the office as their model. Thus the show's relational components exist as supplements to the works on display. The show also does not attempt to reproduce or pick up the project of creating all encompassing spaces which the relational aesthetics artists attempted. Claire Bishop's critique of relational aesthetics was that the works' actual implementation was not relational to everyone per say, and that more often than not it preserved museum and galleries' privileged and exclusive role in society and the boundaries that have keep art separated from the majority of the public. With this in mind, the exhibition attempts to negotiate the problems inherent within relational works, and tries to operate on a more close circuit track in that it only seeks to be relational to the staff and employees at XPACE.

A gallery is not simply a static space for the display of art

OFFICE AS MEDIUM, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

November 20 – December 12, 2009

12-02-61

SHLOMI GREENSPAN, TALIYA COHEN AND CHISTOFER HUTCH

CHRISTOFER HUTCH, 12-02-61, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Staging Resistance

LEIA GORE

I know each of these artists well: each is driven by a prickling, restless energy that sets their creations apart from those of their peers. Taliya Cohen, Shlomi Greenspan, and Christofer Hutch are self-declared painters who push fearlessly against confines of their medium. There is a seductive quality to the naiveté in the work of this collective. Loosely inspired by an illustrated reverie from Italian director Federico Fellini's Book of Dreams, Cohen, Greenspan and Hutch have theatrically re-imagined the gallery as a stage ripe for exploration. The dream, dated 12-02-61, is reflected in the title of the show.

As a collective they are immediately recognizable for audcious departures from painting's historical preoccupation with the canvas. Today Cohen challenges traditional modes of painting via paint-free architectural installations made from urban detritus. Greenspan photographs and animates his cycle of creation and effacement in his abstract paintings—a technique familiar to William Kentridge. Traditional engagement with paint is allowed to exist only as traces projected onto the sanded then re-primed wooden panels that once held his paintings. A delicacy of pattern characterizes Hutch's large-scale plastered construction, somehow reminiscent of decayed wallpaper. It seems at first glance to be peeling away from the gallery walls, revealing the spine of its industrial supports.

This non-traditional approach and multivalent response to Fellini personally evokes the methodology of another European director, the Danish Lars von Trier. In a 1996 interview by Stig Bjorkman, von Trier asserted that his editing process was geared, "to increase the intensity of the performance, without regard as to whether the image is in focus." Von Trier cites Fellini as one of his primary influences, while Saša Perugini argues in "The Aesthetics of Fellini's Art as Seen through its Ties with Popular Entertainment" that Von Trier extends the Italian director's aesthetic legacy. An uncontested cinematic virtuoso, Von Trier is renowned for experimental

As a collective they are immediately recognizable for audacious departures from painting's historical preoccupation with the canvas.

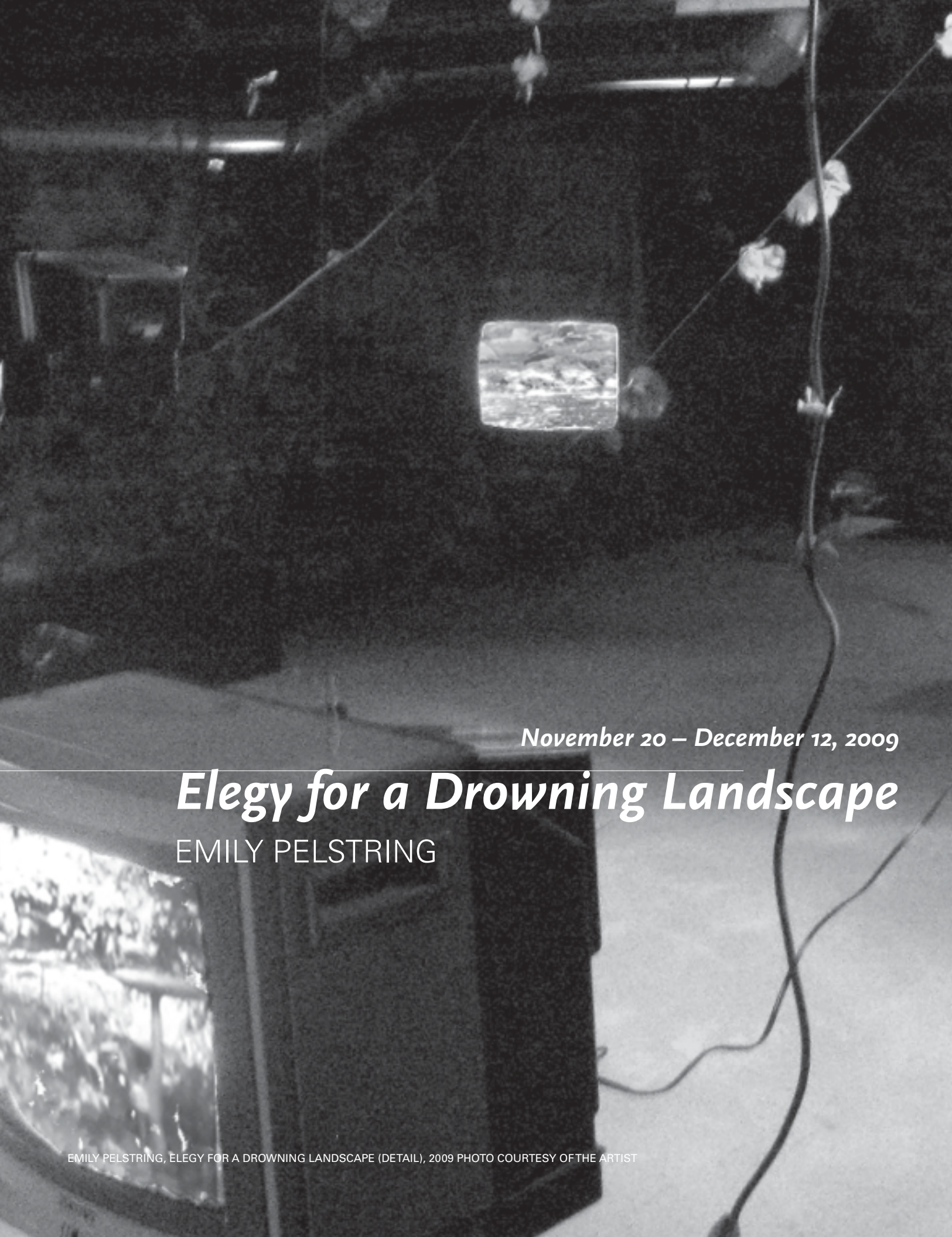
SHLOMI GREENSPAN, 12-02-61, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

films featuring spare, abstract sets appropriated from the realm of theater. Cohen, Greenspan and Hutch espouse his spirit of heady explorative resistance to tradition. Instead of fighting the limitations of painting, these artists eschew boundaries to focus like von Trier on the intensity of creation. Fellini's dream of December 2nd, 1961 reads: Here I am very close to my destination, but it still seems unreachable to me: I stop and maintain an extremely dangerous equilibrium without attempting to take so much as another step. Am I going to plummet down into the shadow of the courtyard, smashing myself? Fellini's city becomes ever more indeterminate and complex—as in many dreams his landscape is freshly created and crystalline as he moves through it, but its periphery crumbles irreverently with each step forward. The filaments of his dream unravel, revealing a specter of anxiety that gnaws at the edges of his confidence. Similarly, 12-02-61 manifests as a theatrical set rather than installation: the construction seems solid and reliable, yet pervasive blue light and partially destroyed materials insinuate a sly ephemerality. Each work is caught in an unscripted inevitable cycle of creation and destruction. Though different in its aesthetic, the set of Lars von Trier's *Dogville* (2003) is also brought to mind: it is another enigmatic space, created by lines of chalk on a black ground. This loosely delineated psychological stage is used throughout his American Trilogy where theater and cinema are irreverently collapsed to amplify the intensity of the acted and scopic experience.

As in the case of *Dogville,* the experience of this collaboration is tantamount. 12-02-61's interwoven environments float the audience over an unfamiliar cityscape whose lit windows invite visitors to explore a handcrafted set. The bird's eye view is interrupted by gallery walls that sweep forward, diminishing in scale as they peel away from their reliable structural purpose. Navigating the implications of the space is complex: Hutch's false wall mediating the layout is clean, gently burnished with possible outlines of windows while Cohen's city spreading throughout the space is created entirely from refuse.

Greenspan's painterly vignettes engage with psychoanalytic symbolism that can be found in both Fellini's oeuvre and Surrealist film. A game of chess played against background of oscillating painted noise features pieces that slowly melt—the rooks and queens puddling into a confluence with the board, invoking both Salvador Dali's melting clocks in The Persistence of Memory and a scene from the dada film *Entr'acte* by Francis Picabia and René Clair. *Entr'acte* (1924), a filmic attack on André Breton's Manifesto of Surrealism, depicts another chess scene, played by Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp.

Throughout 12-02-61, potentiality entwines with fluid meaning that slips easily through the viewer's grasp. Painting manifests as a cycle of creation and destruction, colliding with film, theater, stencil, set-building, installation, digital editing and reclaimed materials with deeply enigmatic results. The only certainty: purity of medium is the least of these artists' concerns.

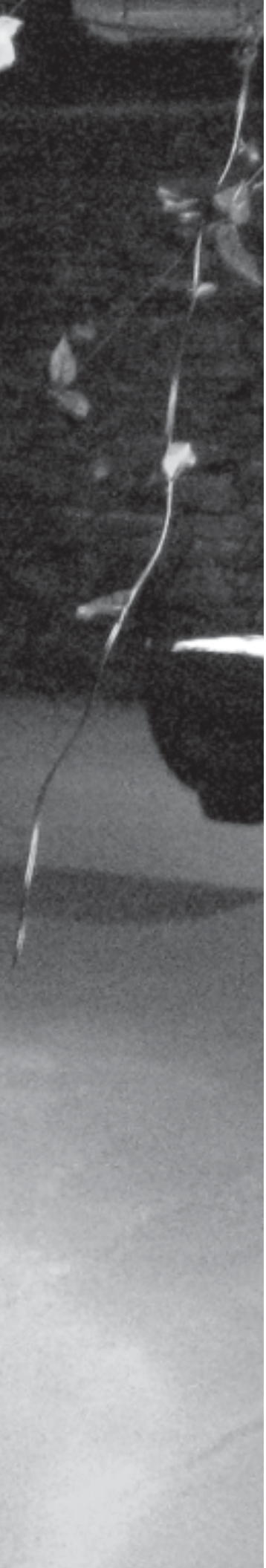


November 20 – December 12, 2009

Elegy for a Drowning Landscape

EMILY PELSTRING

EMILY PELSTRING, ELEGY FOR A DROWNING LANDSCAPE (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Synthetic Wilderness

MARISSA NEAVE

In *The Trouble of Wilderness*, William Cronon takes to pieces the myth that, "wilderness is the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilization that has lost its soul." We may think that nature is as pure as it is sublime; a place distinct from our self-imposed urban monstrosities, an escape where "we can recover the true selves we have lost to the corrupting influences of our artificial lives." But, Cronon argues, the "wilderness" is just as much a product of human interference as a crowded downtown street. Emily Pelstring's *Elegy for a Drowning Landscape* puts dismantling this myth into art, with six spatially arranged CRT monitors loop fragmented footage of wildlife and landscape alongside a droning, electronic sound track. The landscape at the core of *Elegy* is constructed, synthetic and carefully assembled, much like the "natural" landscape that we flee to when we desire convalescing.

Pelstring, a Montreal-based intermedia artist, reflects on living things and dying things, how the past haunts the present, and how physical movement within the installation space interacts with the cinematic images on the screens. With a dramatic theatricality reminiscent of natural history museum display, the low ceiling of XBASE adds to the intimate staging, where the walk down the narrow staircase into the installation adds a chance note of performativity to the piece.

Elegy for a Drowning Landscape readies a space where old and new duke it out. The CRT monitor stands in for the diorama, but instead of a static model that one would expect from a museum of natural history, the models move and glow, bursting out of the spaces they inhabit. And yet, in this updated, techno-version of display, the CRT monitor is as prehistoric as its visual contents.

Pelstring reimagines the archived wilderness, and places it within archival remnants of machine, literalizing Cronon's dismissal of nature as pristine and untouched, a point made even more clear by the synthesized noise dripping throughout the cave-like environment.

I interviewed Pelstring by email to ask her more about the origins of her installation.

Marissa Neave: Elegy for a Drowning Landscape contains a number of different aural and visual components. How was this piece conceived, and where did you start?

Emily Pelstring: When I started this piece, I (mistakenly) thought that it was about transposing an outdoor location into an exhibition space. However, all of this changed dramatically when I realized that what I had imagined just didn't come across in the physical and material world. The CRT monitors didn't feel like "windows" at all- there

was no sense that anything "real" was behind them. When you're walking around in a space, you aren't absorbed in the image on the screen, so the images are not really that illusionistic. In the first iteration of this piece, while I was walking around in the space, the screens felt more like dioramas in a museum display- or even living animals in a zoo. This realization freed me up to arrange monitors into a spatial composition that was conducive to wandering around, and inspired me to create a more musical soundtrack. It was no longer about accuracy or a structuralist experiment. It was about relating to materials on several levels.

MN: What is it about video and immersive environments that captures your interest as an artist?

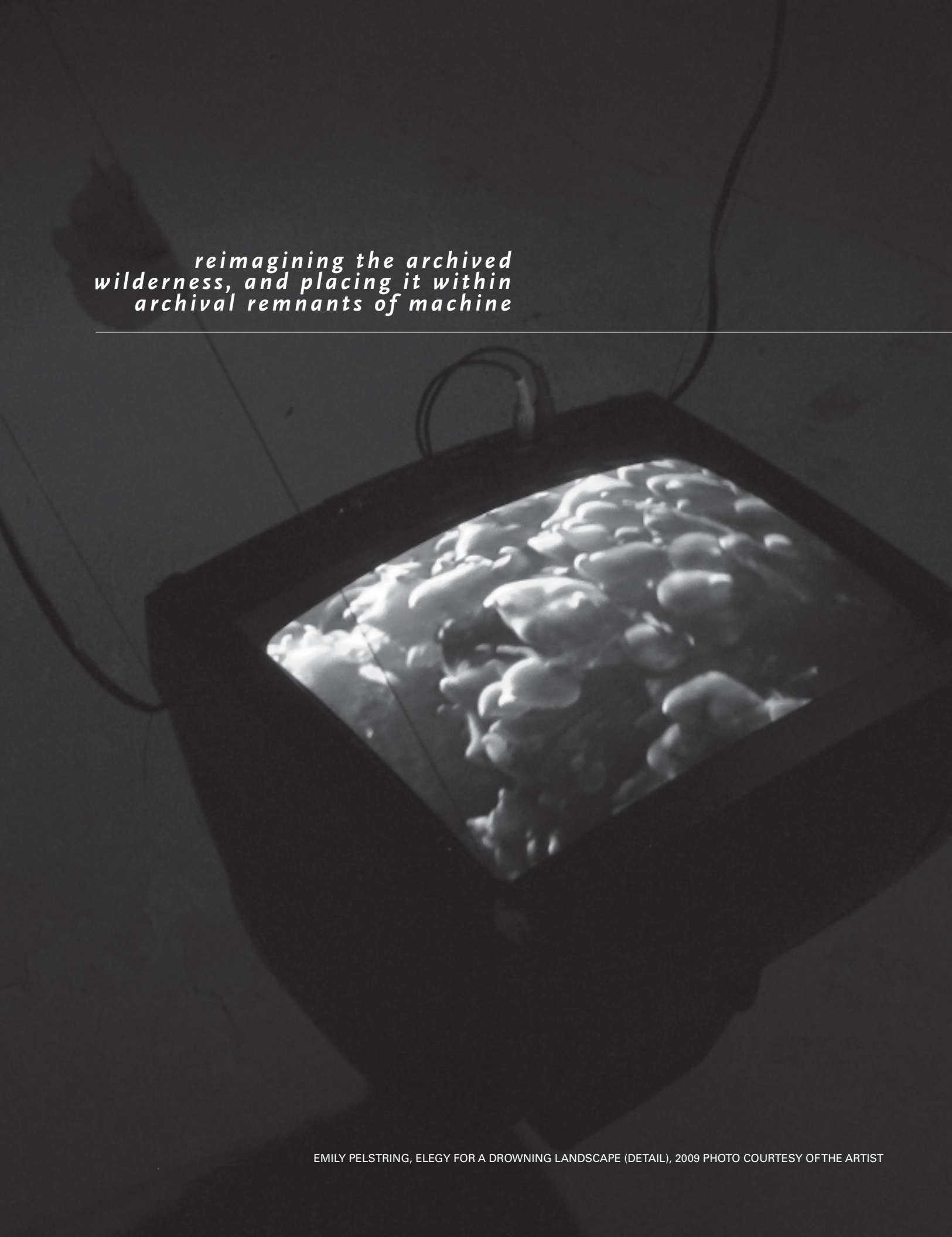
EP: In the end, I usually find the ways that people physically relate to screens as objects more interesting than whatever is communicated by the representational images on the screen. I spent a lot of time transforming the images and sounds emanating from the screens in Elegy, but only in order to manipulate the viewer's relationship to them, and to create a relationship between the multiple screens in the space. In the making of this piece, my own relationship to the video objects became more than physical; it was almost emotional.

MN: Can you speak a bit about obsolescence? It figures strongly in this piece, from the materials to the music to the video.

EP: During "moving season" in Montreal--when everyone's lease ends and we all switch apartments--I frequently see CRT monitors put out on the street with the garbage like some fat, dumb, abandoned pets, their little power cords sticking out like tails. I wanted to create a sort of reverent eulogy for these poor creatures. This is why the tone of the piece is somber. Most of the TVs I'm using for this iteration of *Elegy* were rescued by a friend of mine whose job is to clean out people's apartments after they move. It just tugs on my heartstrings. These losses seem unimportant compared to all of the horrible things that are actually going on in the world, and because of this I admit a sort of silliness to the work in the form of bubbly, colorful images and sounds. On one hand, it really is a silly and insignificant thing. On the other hand, I sense that humans abandon and discard things just like they abandon and discard each other. I really wonder how similar the impulse to throw away a large electronic object is from the impulse to hurt, forget, or ignore someone, and if we should look at our collective ability to throw things away as a sign of our more sinister capacities.

1 Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness, or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature. Ed. William Cronon. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995. 80.
2 Ibid.

reimagining the archived wilderness, and placing it within archival remnants of machine

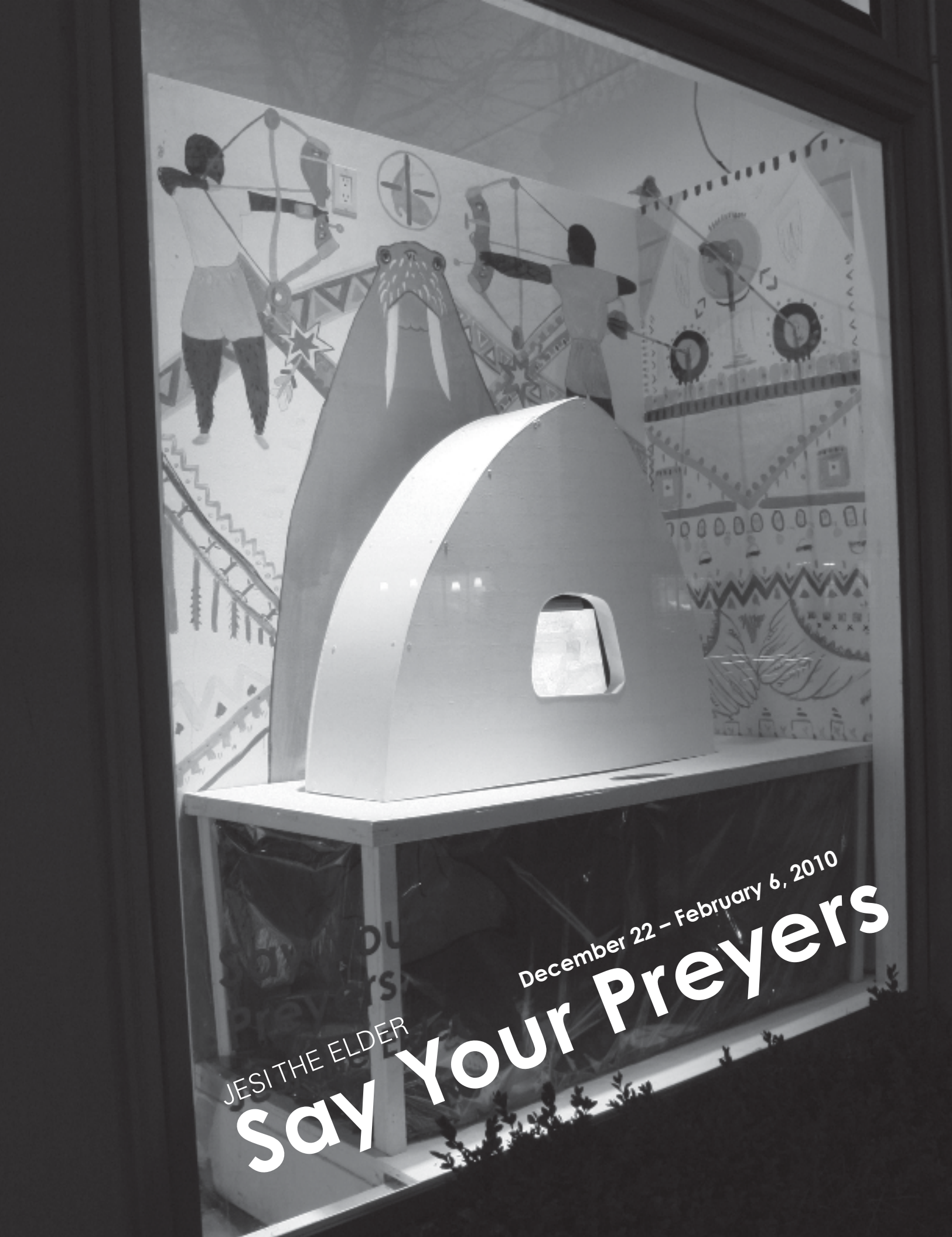


EMILY PELSTRING, ELEGY FOR A DROWNING LANDSCAPE (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

DONNA IRVINE

VARIANT III

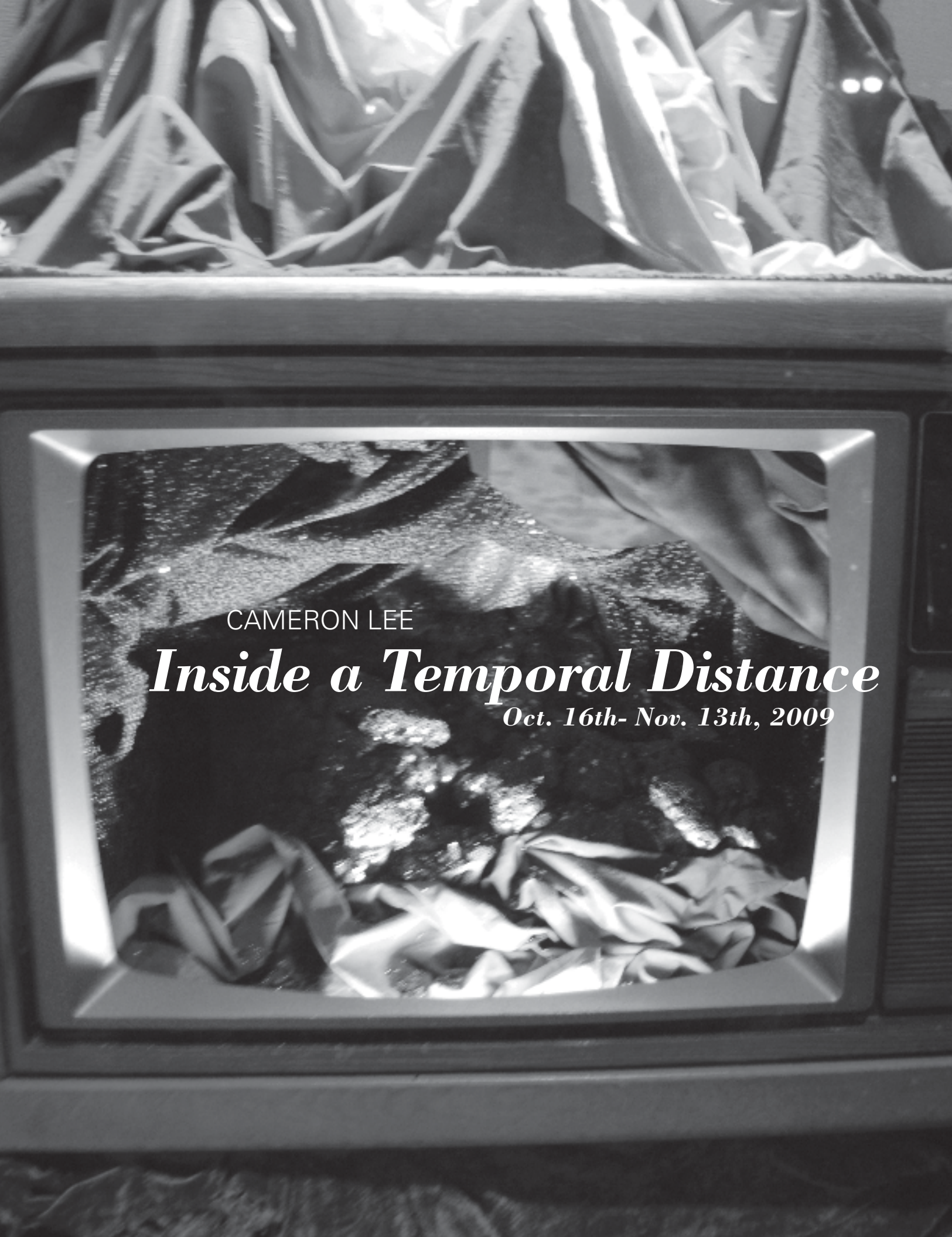
November 20 – December 12, 2009



JESI THE ELDER

Say Your Preyers

December 22 – February 6, 2010



CAMERON LEE

Inside a Temporal Distance

Oct. 16th- Nov. 13th, 2009

DUSTIN WENZEL

RECENT METAL WORK FROM THE "MULTIPLE OPENINGS" SERIES

SEPT 11 - OCT 10, 2009

BRANDON A. DALMER

INTEGRATION/ DIFFERENTIATION

March 26 – April 7, 2010

MARIE-MICHELLE DESCHAMPS

Figures

February 12 – March 13, 2010

Order/Chaos

THOMAS DEL BALSO
DAGMARA GENDA
SARAH KERNOHAN
ALEXANDRA MACKENZIE
JON NICOLAOU
DAN ROCCA
RYAN SOLSKI

October 16 – November 13, 2009

DAGMARA GENDA, UNTITLED (WALLPAPER) (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Rants of a drawer

DEREK LIDDINGTON, DIRECTOR XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

In response to Order/Chaos: I draw. Let me rephrase this, I use drawing as an artistic methodology. My sensibilities as an artist could, perhaps, be better associated with that of conceptualism; Bruce Nauman, Lawrence Weiner, John Baldessari and Sol Lewitt. As an artist I would argue that the very need to classify based on medium or context is to dismiss the openness of drawing's methodology. Drawing's strength is in our dependence on it at all phases of the creative (I use this word purposely- I am talking to you Richard Florida) process. We doodle, sketch, chart, map, write and take notes as a way of exploring and identifying our surroundings. Representation enables us to understand, to combine and to create potential.

I am a drawer. According to Google, this implies I am "a storage compartment in a piece of furniture such as a desk, chest, or table that slides in and out and is usually shaped like a shallow rectangular box." To be honest I like to think of my practice as an artist in terms of a storage unit for ideas, concepts and techniques (this, as I hope you have already noticed, is a sarcastic play on the term 'drawer' as both defining a person who draws and a vessel for storing undergarments – amongst other things). Since the tender age of three I have had difficulty pronouncing my R's. Its pronunciation has plagued me since early childhood when I would sit and watch Saturday morning cartoons and join Elmer Fudd in the impossible task of pronouncing 'Rascally Rabbit'. Wasscally Wabbit! Wasscally Wabbit! I would yell in enthusiasm. Perhaps I only find it ironic now that the early morning cartoons which lead me to drawing as a form or creative expression would also lead me, as an adult, to its continual mispronunciation. As a result I end up describing, in an excruciatingly roundabout way what I do as an artist; 'I am a Warwer'. Often when asleep at night I dream of how easy it would be to confidently state "I am a Painter", " I am a Sculptor", "I am a Video artist." However, this is not the case. It is due to this penchant for mispronunciation that we as artists find it so difficult to associate with the medium. In my assumption, it is drawing's lack of an adequate (and pronounceable) noun that lends the medium to its assumed state as merely a point of departure for other artistic disciplines; a sketch, draft, outline, proposal. Drawing then is never finite; it exists as a rhetorical medium in the arts.

Drawing has been used as a means to tell stories for centuries. There is something about the connection between imagination and the pencil that evokes from drawers the ability to form narratives and potentialities. The immediacy of the line seems to detach itself from the imbedded, and often-detrimental histories associated with other media, such as painting, photography and video. Going back to my statement that drawing is never finite it is easy to then estimate that the success of the work in Order / Chaos" lie in their ability to utilize the propositional nature of drawing. These drawings do not settle on mere representation, rather they offer us a space for contemplation of the unreal, popular and slightly peculiar. The works in the exhibition Order/Chaos draw out the potentiality of images.

If there is a stream connecting the work of Order/Chaos it is their ability to be simultaneously didactic and playful. All too often art (painting, I am looking at you) that is critical is plagued by a sense of overt cynicism, while hopeful art (painting, I am still looking at you) can fall into the trap of romanticizing. The very histories which offer painting, video, sculpture and performance its invariable cultural appeal end up bearing down on the artists like a black cloud. The drawers in Order/Chaos seem to have side-stepped art-historical cynicism. Order/Chaos is an exhibition of drawing. The process of drawing almost always precedes a balance of order and chaos. However, artists Thomas Del Balso, Dagmara Genda, Sarah Kernohan, Alexandra Mackenzie, Jon Nicolaou, Dan Rocca, Ryan Solski illustrate that such balance almost never occurs in equal portions. Thus, the slippage of language allows drawing to work in a conceptual space of a similar magnitude. As such, drawing is their tool for negotiating a creative equilibrium in which they announce, "I am a drawer."

Foucault en valise

MARC LOSIER

November 20 – December 12, 2009

SABRINA RICHARD
ARCHITECT, MUSEUM PLANNER, AND
INSTRUCTOR AT THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Transported within a vintage grey suitcase is an unusual assemblage of seemingly everyday objects; a stack of postcards documenting a dialogue between two men, a rotary telephone, a container of microscope slides, a series of manila envelopes, an office stamp, and a portable light box. This display of items has combined to create Foucault en Valise—an interactive installation by artist Marc Losier, which documents a fictitious time in the life of French theoretician Michel Foucault, through his dialogue with real life documentary media professor and artist, Edward Slopek.

At first glance this chaotic array of images, texts, and correspondence, resists comprehension as it defies many conventions of a work of art; it is located horizontally on a table, not set vertically before the viewer, it requires interaction as opposed to distanced observation, and it is visual, aural, and tactile. Direct engagement with an audience is how it conveys its research and intention, as one is invited to sort through the exploration of a Southern American Penitentiary by Foucault, exploring photographic negatives, images on microscopic slides, and the investigative process as explained through correspondence.

Yet Losier's work takes an idiosyncratic approach to the probing of particular events, artifacts, and historical information, and makes them physically present through a complex matrix of citations and juxtapositions, connecting what cannot be connected factually, with spatial connections within the world of the Valise. This artistic practice of assembling surprising material within a discrete container references the work of Joseph Cornell and his boxed assemblages created from found objects. In particular, the 'Medici Slot Machine' boxes, which were interactive and meant to be handled.

In many ways a shrine to Foucault's critical study of the institution, in particular the penitentiary, Foucault en Valise also displays what theorist Hal Foster has described as an "archival impulse"; the curation of interactive artifacts, the fictitious correspondence, the photographs of un-cited photographer Danny Lyon*, the allusions to scientific research, and the dialogue of Foucault, all conflate actual events with the artist's own storyline. Foucault en Valise can therefore, also be read as an informal archive, created through an indiscriminate sampling of historical and current reference material that effectively challenges the post modern notions of originality and authorship.

The still-life in art history often reflects the essence–of–time through the presentation of objects. Joshua Barndt takes this idea beyond the two-dimensional surface by creating an atmospheric installation that holds relevance to our current environmental and economic conditions. In *Limbo,* Barndt gathers and composes objects into a poetic and anthropological narrative.

Barndt's process is spontaneous in nature, however it is not without purpose. *Limbo* stimulates meditation about consumer by-products and nature; he gathers tires, wood, plastic bags, and other localized objects, such as the top of an abandoned pickup truck. The objects are literally artifacts of the surrounding environment.

Found objects are arranged in such a way that they relate to the installation space. In XPACE's basement, once belonging to a Vietnamese restaurant, Barndt establishes a narrative through his artwork by creating a path through the space. Similar to the Japanese garden, Barndt creates various points on a path with intentional vanishing points, where the viewer can visually experience the atmosphere Barndt has created. Furthermore, to address the height of this space he constructs wooden supports that are seemingly compressed by the weight of the floor above. This gesture reminds us of Atlas, the mythical man who carries the world on his shoulder.

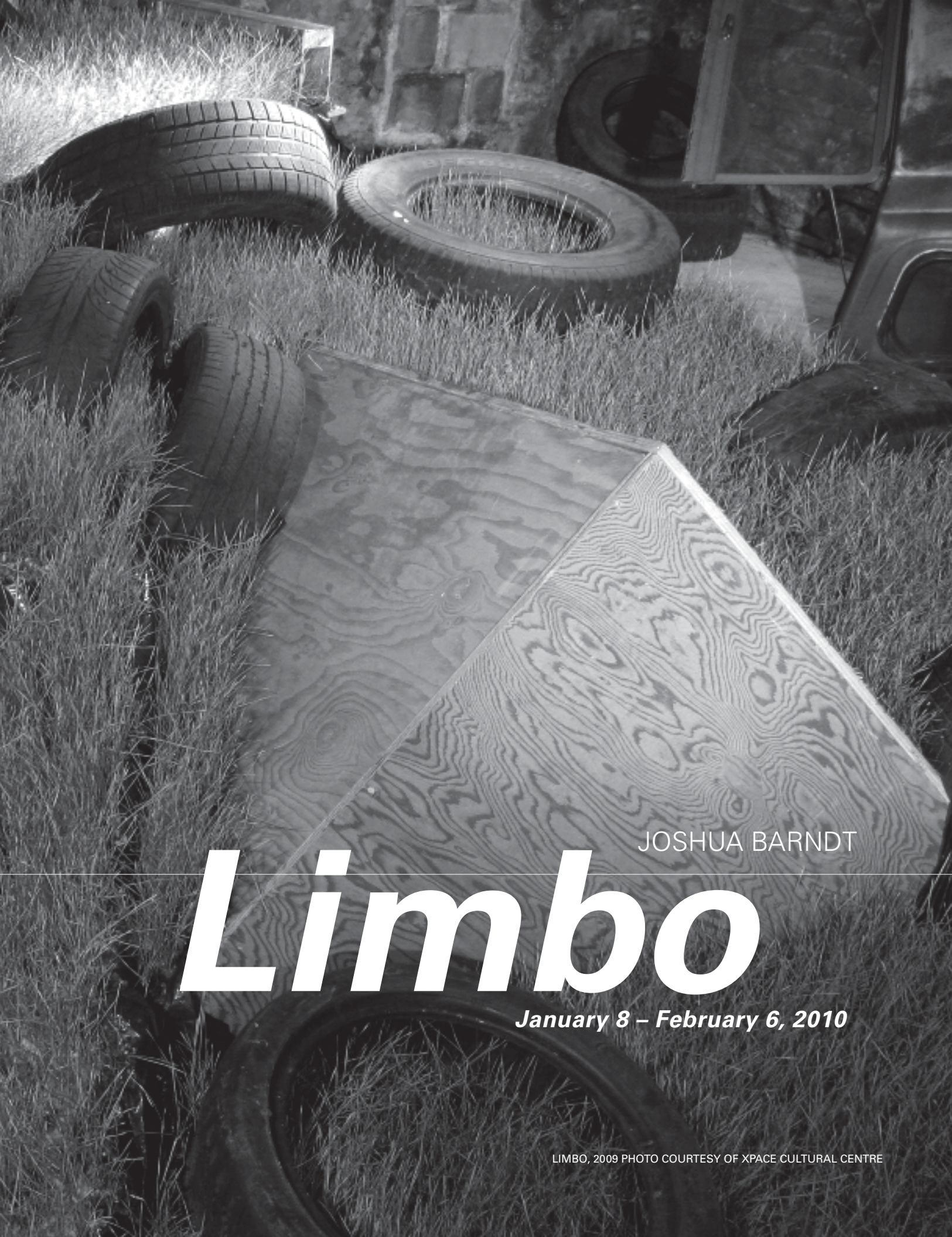
Similarly, other details hold poetic potential. Plastic garbage bags fascinate Barndt. When speaking with him about their significance he comments on the way "we collect our garbage in plastic bags to be forgotten". Though forgotten, garbage does not disappear. Instead it is stored in the metaphorical basement of our consciousness; and literally all over our planet. The light sculpture inside the remains of a truck represents the spirit of Barndt's grandmother, who can be seen as the spirit of our ancestors. Yet more, as the grass slowly spurts and comes into being, we are reminded of the cycle of nature and the symbolic seasons experienced in life. In this context, we enter the condensed space physically bowing to this cycle and to the fragrance of soil and life.

Lastly, the atmosphere Barndt has constructed is one absent of human life, yet still addresses the industrial by-product of society. In this way the installation could be said to be anthropological. Barndt portrays what is considered progress through human creations and industries. The installation portrays an abandoned landscape that symbolically echoes an abandoned dialogue with nature.

This fusion of tires, wood, soil, light bulbs, car parts and grass suggest a struggle for dominance between the artificial and the organic. The limbo between these two states might just be our future.

KELI LUI

An abandoned landscape that symbolically echoes an abandoned dialogue with nature.

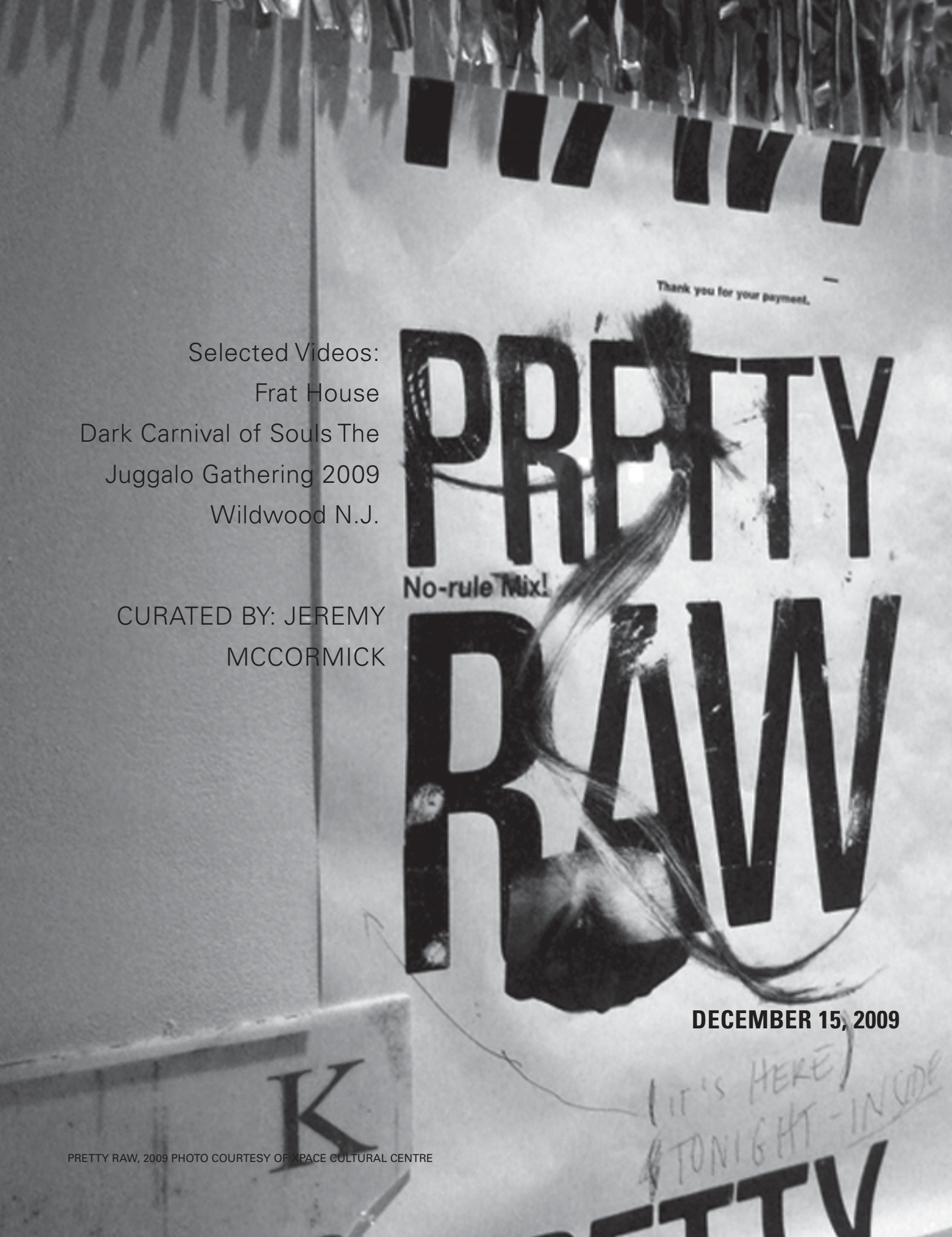


JOSHUA BARNDT

Limbo

January 8 – February 6, 2010

LIMBO, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



Selected Videos:
Frat House
Dark Carnival of Souls The
Juggalo Gathering 2009
Wildwood N.J.

CURATED BY: JEREMY MCCORMICK

DECEMBER 15, 2009

PRETTY RAW, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

PRETTY RAW

JENNIE SUDDICK, XPACE PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

On December 15, 2009, XPACE Hosted Pretty Raw, an event curated by Jeremy McCormick highlighting the common threads between 3 documentaries: *Frat House* by Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland, *Dark Carnival of Souls The Juggalo Gathering 2009* by Derek Erdman & David Wilcox, and *Wildwood N.J.* by Carol Weaks/Cassidy and Ruth Leitman. McCormick's selection of these films focuses on subjects who bluntly define themselves in their own visual, verbal and social language. The result is a frank portrait of sub-cultures who are defined by their members and cultural surroundings. Pretty Raw provided a forum for considering the portrayal of community, ritual, and the importance of fitting in, in relationship to the notion of 'extremes' in our current cultural milieu.

As spectators, we can't help but be intrigued by the fashions and behaviors of certain subcultures. This fascination with groups that do not easily fit in to our daily observations has started to become a predominant aspect of popular culture. More increasingly, documentaries and reality television have turned inspection towards youth subculture, in particular those groups whose activities remain guarded from the public eye. By their very nature 'subcultures' are surrounded by a sense of the unknown, which only increases our fantasies towards them. Yet, to their own members, they are serious and vital aspects of their identity and day-to-day life. Each of these subcultures and groups share in their desire to form unified bonds with people that are both like-minded and in the same social sphere. Often, members align themselves with these groups as a way to deal with transitions in their lives, when they are in most need of a support structure of others who identify with their situation or status.

Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland's *Frat House*, shows how each year countless hopefuls will go to extreme measures to be accepted into a fraternity house. New to college life and living away from home for the first time, these students are subjected to harsh and continuous hazing during the initiation process. Although often humiliated, members consider these extremes worth it, in order to earn the respect of the group. This is how they prove that they are worthy of the pride they can then feel once they are equals in the brotherhood of their fraternity. In the film, one of the frat members reflects on the recent hazing he had received by his brothers: "We are all one now, part of a family". Throughout the hazing, the senior brothers in the film repetitively chant "family" as they ritualistically strip the pledges of their individuality through uniform and mask, placing them in a role of total subservience. Just like many families, each fraternity has their own traditions and patterns, each deeply rooted in tactics of humiliation and intimidation. Interestingly, the pledges who seek membership are not your typical outsiders looking for social acceptance. As mentioned in the film, many of them were the popular kids in their high schools, coming from privileged backgrounds and large social circles. But now, faced with being removed from these reliable networks, they will go through extreme abuse to fit in with a group on campus. Perhaps this is a preventative measure to assure that they won't stand out for the first time in their lives, resulting in them easily reverting to the form of social structure that they can feel protected in. One brother refers to a social pattern that they

are following, stating that he and his brothers were inclined, at the different stages of their lives, to always find themselves in the popular groups, having been on sports teams and being used to getting the girls they wanted through their statuses. Through this strict framework they are guaranteed a sense of belonging that they believe will last for the rest of their lives.

As the documentary depicts, these tight-knit groups base so much importance on their closed social circle that those who try to gain access to their inner workings are often completely rejected. An example of this can be seen when the fraternity brothers turn against the filmmakers, insisting they shut down the production. During this transition in the film Blossom, one of the frat leaders, confides his support the film in confidence; suggesting a conscience for his actions. However, we see this conscience break down when the filmmakers attempt to make contact with Blossom in a group environment, surrounded by his fellow brothers. At this point we see Blossom revert back into the pattern of control and domination set by the fraternity.

The extreme dedication to a subculture grants members a much-desired sense of belonging and meaning that factor so largely into their lives that the subcultures can have patterns that mirror religious practices. The Juggalo subculture has defined pseudo-religious doctrines, based on the lyrics of Detroit-based 'horrorcore' band Insane Clown Posse (ICP). This includes parallel models of God and heaven, known respectively as the 'Dark Carnival' and 'Shangri-la', which Juggalos view as a reward for staying true to their lifestyle. They refer to fellow followers as brothers and sisters, as well as by terms taken out of ICP lyrics to mean the same thing, such as Ninjas and Ninjettes. The subculture invests consumer items with symbolic meaning, use symbols to express identity, community etc... They even proudly tout inexpensive soda pop, Faygo, as it is a stage favorite of the band. The members also display this worship by wearing clown inspired face paint in their daily lives, based on the stage makeup of ICP. Much like fraternity and sorority members wear their greek letters, Juggalos adopt ICP's aesthetic of face paint and urban street wear as a clear symbol they are members to a group that align themselves with particular values.

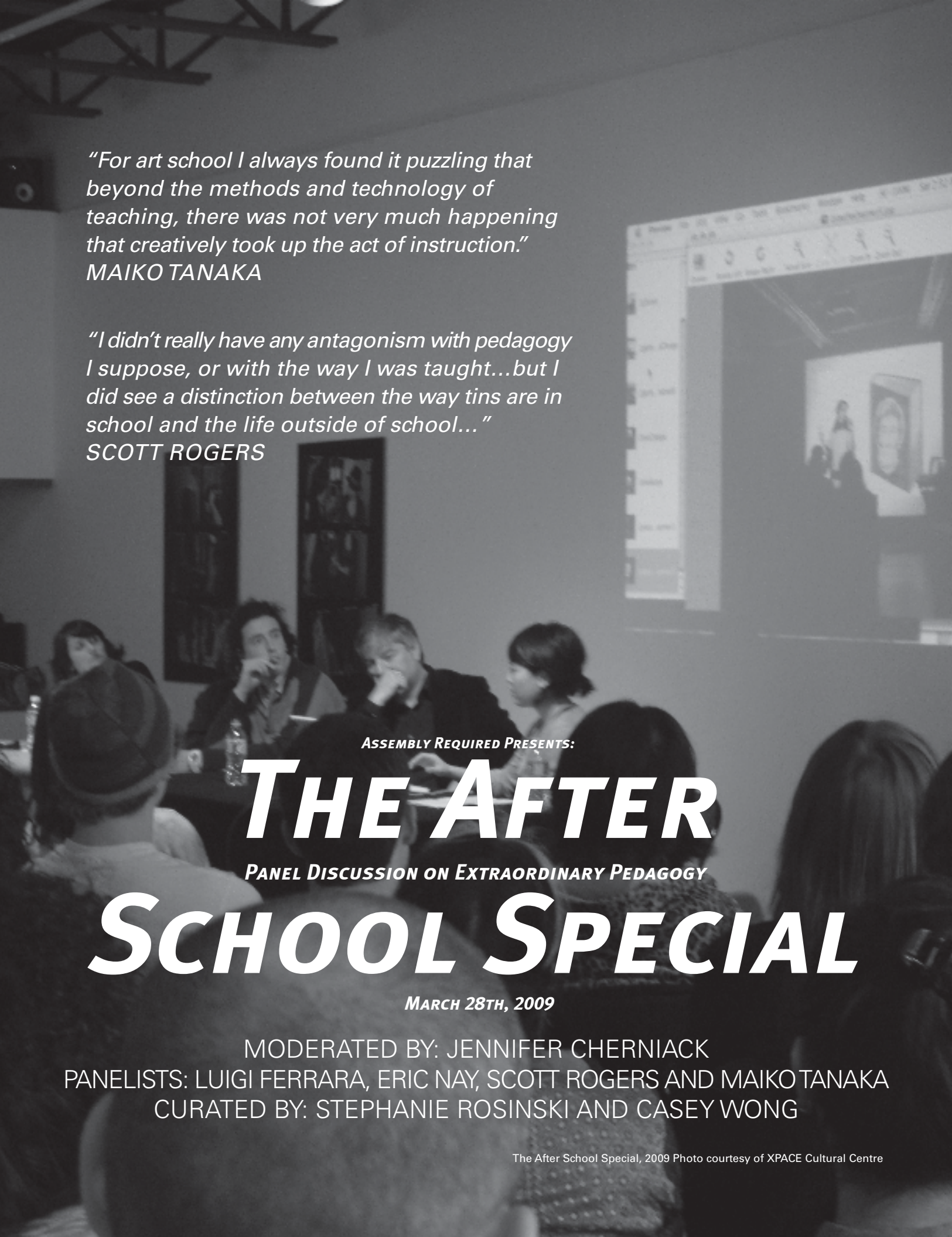
The members of the ICP, J and Shaggy 2 Dope, came from a background of poverty that eventually evolved to crime. Their success has made them an easy subject for a devout following of youth who relate to their plight. The band states that the rules outlined in their lyrics are to teach their followers how to change their previous 'evil ways', just like they have. They themselves have even gone as far as to say that being a Juggalo isn't about being a fan, rather it is an entire way of life. Even though ICP insists they are role models to Juggalo's, their lyrics continue to promote hard drug use, misogynist sensibilities and casual, excessive violence, which in turn is widely celebrated.

The annual Gathering of the Juggalos, is a four-day festival held in early August in Cave-In-Rock Illinois. This event is viewed as a mecca of sorts by Juggalos from around the world, referred to it as their 'family reunion'. Here, the debauchery preached by ICP is practiced in full force. Along with concerts, events are held around the festival grounds that include clown-themed wet t-shirt competitions and 'backyard wrestling' (which features fighters cracking chairs and bottles over one another).

Derek Erdman & David Wilcox's *Dark Carnival of Souls The Juggalo Gathering 2009*, shows two outsiders' experience at the yearly event. In contrast to the Frat members of Frat House overtly rejecting outsiders who tried to penetrate their circle, the Juggalos welcome the opportunity to show off their 'family values'. As illustrated though their extreme makeup and clothing worn in their daily lives, the Juggalos' show an incredibly overt sense of pride in their closeness to their adopted family. These definite gestures act as a way for them to always indicate their pride in a group that celebrates the lifestyle they once felt limited to having found him or herself in a certain demographic.

Though the Fraternity members and the Juggalos of the four mentioned documentaries actively chose to be aligned with their subculture or group, the women depicted in *Wildwood N.J.* were born into theirs. Following the women who populate this Jersey Shore town, Carol Weaks/Cassidy and Ruth Leitman question, on camera, their value structures, goals and coming-of-age experiences. As the women candidly talk patterns become apparent, including how they have embraced, to an exaggerated extent, socially constructed gender roles related to power and value, such as make-up. This re-appropriation of cultural forms from the mainstream, is spurred by a desire to resolve social incoherence, in a similar way that the Juggalo's use the symbol of a cheap local soda.

Having ritualistically spent summer after summer socializing and boy-chasing on the carnival town boardwalk, they are accustomed to a life of leisure and vanity, which they brag about in the film. They are all eager to talk about dating, hair, and nails, but it becomes apparent that even though they take pleasure in these shared interests and find great comfort in community, they seek to encounter a world beyond it. One of the filmmakers, Ruth Leitman, describes the film as "an exploration of lives that have been shaped by a lack of opportunity but who are survivors and thrive". Though they might have found themselves as part of this group by default, they can find the very thing that they feel limited by as a source of strength and power.



"For art school I always found it puzzling that beyond the methods and technology of teaching, there was not very much happening that creatively took up the act of instruction."
MAIKO TANAKA

"I didn't really have any antagonism with pedagogy I suppose, or with the way I was taught…but I did see a distinction between the way tins are in school and the life outside of school…"
SCOTT ROGERS

Assembly Required Presents:

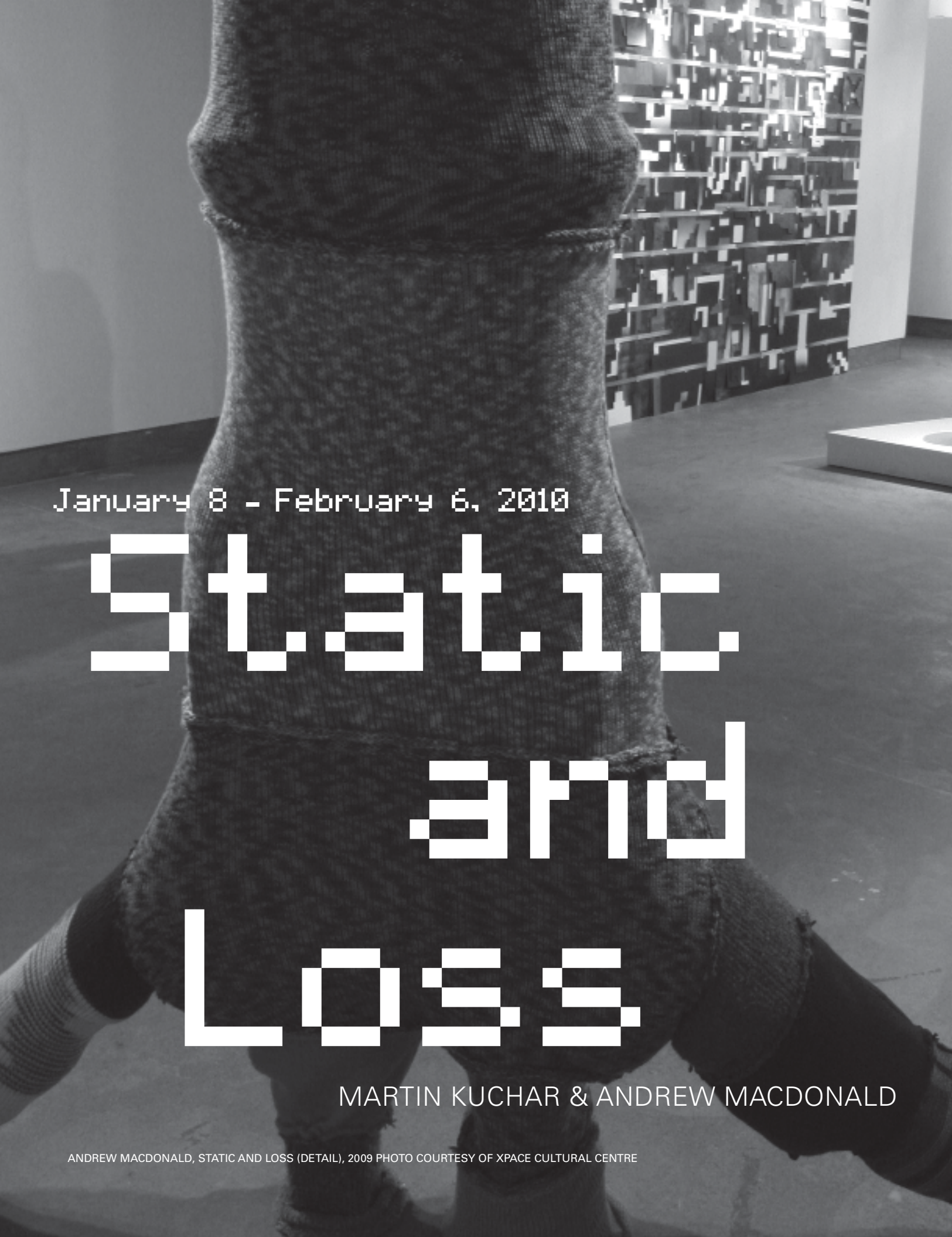
The After School Special

Panel Discussion on Extraordinary Pedagogy

March 28th, 2009

MODERATED BY: JENNIFER CHERNIACK
PANELISTS: LUIGI FERRARA, ERIC NAY, SCOTT ROGERS AND MAIKO TANAKA
CURATED BY: STEPHANIE ROSINSKI AND CASEY WONG

The After School Special, 2009 Photo courtesy of XPACE Cultural Centre



January 8 - February 6, 2010

Static and Loss

MARTIN KUCHAR & ANDREW MACDONALD

ANDREW MACDONALD, STATIC AND LOSS (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Static and Loss

STACEYLEE TURNER

"…There's more to learn from [instability] than something that never changes."
–Andrew MacDonald

OCAD Alumni Andrew MacDonald and Martin Kuchar collaborate in *Static & Loss t*o bring a playful and humorous tone to their multimedia exploration of states of change. The use of colour, peculiar materials and the juxtaposition of soft forms and hard edges create an immediate visual dialogue with the viewer in an anxious manner. While bright colours and familiar materials disarm, the underlying themes of loss, failure and impermanence create an unexpected tension for the viewer. Static & Loss embraces the natural experience of loss while satirizing the need for permanence.

Kuchar's simple paper squares and rectangles build up over one another to form complex wall installations. The tacked-on and transferable pieces embody transience and provoke the question 'how necessary is permanence?' Unlike painting, which remains fixed to a canvas, Kuchar's work is perpetually dismantled and reassembled, always presenting something new from the same material. This process can be perceived as loss, but also as revelation. Kuchar, in embracing transience, has developed a new practice of revisiting and recreating the same collection of papers differently with each.

MacDonald's drooping, soft hand-made sculptures examine human fallibility. Stretched over various household items stacked atop one another, MacDonald's works are reminiscent –but not representative– of the human figure. The forms appear to lament their individual failure of accurate human representation, creating a tone which MacDonald refers to as 'tragic-comic.' The nostalgic, kitschy comedy of second-hand sweaters dispels the seriousness of tragedy yet the melancholic aura remains in the sagging, stoic presence of form. Each piece stands on display for, and in the company of, the viewer; their lament as apparent and familiar as an old, warm sweater.

STACEYLEE TURNER: Martin, Your works have a sculptural quality about them, as if you are painting with cut paper. Why not just paint pixels?

MARTIN KUCHAR: What appealed to me about [the limitation of] working with paper was its flexibility as a media versus painting on canvas. Paper lets me start from zero and go back to zero with out any history left behind. Also the hard flat edges were a clear aesthetic connection to my interest in the pixel and the pixelized image. The work is always in process, each time it is deconstructed and reconstructed there are changes.

ST: Are the wall works a continual process of construction and de-construction or do you reach a point where you just stop pinning paper and let the work be complete?

MK: The work is always in progress, but there is a point where I call it quits. I know that in the future if I want to make changes to a piece that possibility is open. I never organize the pieces when I take down a work, that can be problematic at times but again it allows for continual change.

ST: Could you speak to the aesthetics of glitch? What drew you to explore concepts of failure and malfunction?

MK: I find failure and malfunction to have more possibilities. Sometimes I like to think of some of the images I create, as representations of an abstract image. But an abstract digital image that is in the middle of loading onto a computer and has stopped before it's fully realized on the screen. There's something in that unresolved digital image that leave a viewer with a lot of questions about what it could have looked like had it fully loaded.

ST: What is your relationship with the pixel? How did you arrive to this process of assembling and disassembling?

MK: Again it's like the digital image that isn't fully loaded. The pixels are still visible in this unrealized state of image assembly as it were. As I assemble and disassemble the works it's like I'm loading and unloading the images, over and over.

ST: Andrew, how did you arrive to using knitwear as a sculptural medium?

ANDREW MACDONALD: Several years ago, I was searching for a material other than paint, to cover or alter household objects made from plastic that I was using to build sculptures. I was stacking, altering and recontextualizing these plastic objects, creating aesthetic and formal links with modern and minimal sculpture. I was in a value village one day and came across some kitsch sweaters with patterns that resembled hard-edge modernist paintings so I just bought a few of them and brought them back to the studio and had them lying around for a few weeks. It just occurred to me one day to put some plastic storage boxes inside these sweaters.

The plastic boxes with the sweaters on them had this stiff bodily quality that was shocking to me, mostly because I had really tried to avoid the figure in my work. And it was this shock of the human form that suddenly appeared in the studio through these plastic objects wearing these sweaters, that left me no choice but to continue to explore this material and the human form. Currently I produce most of the knitted textile using a manually operated knitting machine, but sometimes I still employ sweaters and sweater parts in the work

ST: How does knitted textile speak to the theatrical qualities of your sculptures? What do you see in this material that is 'tragic-comic.'

AM: I don't think the knitted material is tragic, but rather it's a barrier or it attempts to alleviate this sense of the tragic I'm referencing. I think it does this by citing the kitsch sweater, which has comic qualities, also by its association to warm clothing. I try to pit the form of the sculpture and the material against one another, setting up an internal dichotomy within the work. The sad droopy shapes and figures suggest failure. I reference historic works like Rodin's *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, or Tim Hawkinson's Scout sculpture, which are figures made to reflect this kind of tragic or sad image of the human form. I think of the textile as the skin or the surface of the work, and it propels the formal nature of the work into the theatrical.

ST: Could you speak about what you refer to as the 'fallibility of human ambitions?'

AM: Yes, that is a bit of a mouth full and I guess I'm being a little facetious in referring to the over-determined nature of modernist figure sculpture that had ambitious aims of presenting grand narratives. However, I also think that when we strive as a species to travel beyond the moon and try to control the outcome of life and death in our own bodies, there's going to be some kind of failure in that. I'm also a big fan of the comedian and comedy and I find the best forms of comedy are where failure is involved. I don't specifically reference a kind of failure in my work, like the downfall of the stock market, or people losing their jobs. There are a few exceptions like my large piece Heavy Hands (2008) that reference boxing or fighting. I prefer to reference the fallible in general. Ambition is great, but in the end we have to keep ourselves in check with the possibility of failure.

ST: Could you speak a bit about feeling "lament and requiem in sculpture that is based on the human form"?

AM: Again I'm being a little facetious with that as well, but in truth I really get uneasy around representations of the human form. I particularly become uneasy when a figure in sculpture is static and has something to do with death or reverence of a past historic figure. Public art that memorialized war is a good example of this and again I'll reference Rodin's *Les Bourgeois de Calais* here as it functions in this way as well. Although I love most of this kind of sculpture, there is still something lacking, there must be a better way to remember this person and their life or, there must be a better way to talk about death and suffering rather than creating a still lifeless form. I'm not suggesting that my work is an answer to this question. My work still fails at this just like other sculpture. I at least want to project some sort of relief through the formal and material qualities and my sculpture has the added effect of producing some kind of pleasure.

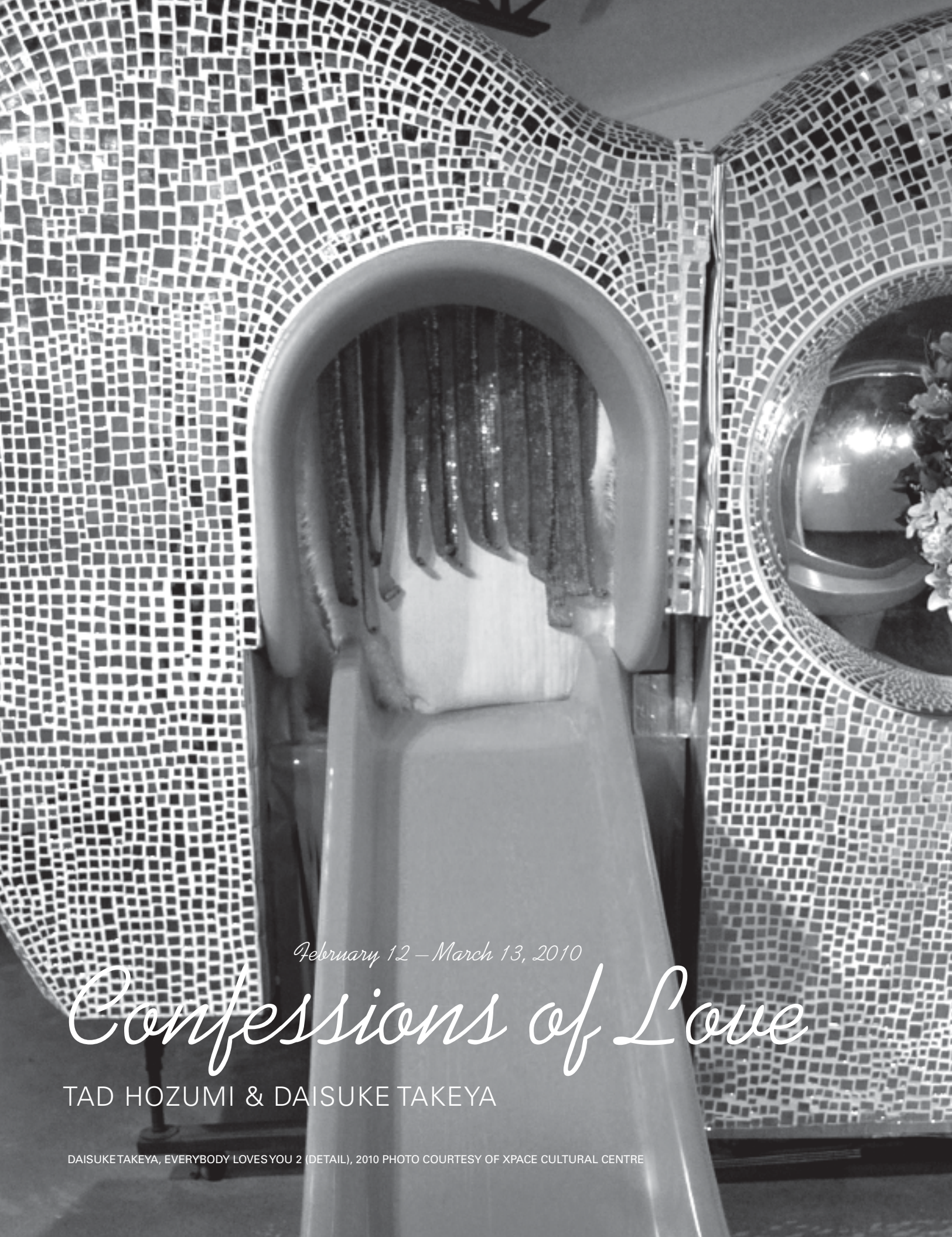
ST: Could you speak about this uneasiness you have with permanence? What is the appeal of transience and instability?

AM: I think it's arrogant that one can believe in the production of something that has a fixed stable meaning. Life is ever changing. I've always been interested in states of change, failure and death, there's more to learn from that than something that never changes. I'm not so sure that stability truly exists anyway. So I intentionally create open, ambiguous works that start with instability as a subject. I don't think that my work is particularly challenging for a viewer, but it does beg certain questions about what it is they are perceiving in relation to the figurative and what it means to make or look at the human form in art.

ST: At first glance it appears to be an odd-couple pairing, yet there is a strange connectedness there. How did this collaboration occur?

AM: Martin and I have been friends for many years and thinking back, when I started this work involving textiles, I remember that Martin was also beginning his series of wall-works. I didn't put two and two together until last year, when I came up with the idea to show our work in the same space. It was really the visual impact of the two bodies of work in the same space that in my mind, I wanted to see. After many studio visits and conversations over the last few years, I felt that our work was reaching toward the same horizon, although employing different materials and strategies. Martin working in abstraction and my quazi-figurative sculpture, trying to tell a similar story was enough of a push in the end to start putting together this show. I think it's going to be a visually exciting show, but it will also pose questions about impermanence through static forms of art, while having a bit of a laugh. The artists would like to acknowledge the support of the Ontario Arts Council.

MARTIN KUCHAR, STATIC AND LOSS (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



February 12 – March 13, 2010

Confessions of Love

TAD HOZUMI & DAISUKE TAKEYA

DAISUKE TAKEYA, EVERYBODY LOVES YOU 2 (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Confessions of Love: Interview with Tad Hozumi & Daisuke Takeya

MARISSA NEAVE

In their exhibition Confessions of Love, Toronto-based artists Tad Hozumi and Daisuke Takeya take on the Big L just in time for that saccharine holiday we all love to hate (or hate to love). But despite the patina of cynicism that tends to cling to this time of year, Hozumi and Takeya are sincere in their constructions (and deconstructions) of sentimentality and intimacy. Below, the artists discuss the significance of objects and architecture in their work, the nature of sentimentality, and how their thematic approaches in their respective works reverberate against each other.

Marissa Neave: For Confessions of Love, you've recreated symbolic objects from both Japanese soap operas and your own life ["Song of the Sky," "Endless Cassette," and "Dear Akiko"]. What is the significance of objects as stand-ins for sentimentality?

Tad Hozumi: The relationship between sentiments and the objects that act as their medium I think is a really interesting one because it really highlights the problem of being human. Feelings are fleeting and ever-changing. Objects are similarly transient, but their rate of decay is generally much slower. My feelings for my first love are really irrelevant to my life now, but my old love letter to her preserves the emotions that I once thought would be with me forever. Sentimental objects are reminders of the truth that your life is in a constant state of flux and of things that can never be the same again. I think the one era in your life that this constant change is kind of suspended is during teen-hood. I think that time in our lives is our last chance to stop time. Maybe that's why objects that were created during this period affect me so strongly—because they represent failure.

MN: What is the story behind "Dear Akiko"?

TH: The story goes, I was dating this girl in Toronto and we split basically when she returned to Japan. I visited Japan about a year or two later and found that she had run away from home. I was pretty crushed at the time. In hopes that someday I would regain contact with her, I left a mutual friend with a letter to be delivered to her if their paths crossed. Fast forward fifteen years later, she pokes me on Facebook. I was visiting Japan to install an artwork shortly after and Iplanned to meet up with her. Before our reunion, my mutual friend whom I was staying with reminded me of the letter and handed it to me. I never gave the original letter to her.

MN: There's something very obsessive about your process in creating these artifacts. Even though (in the case of the soap opera objects) they are copies of (unsentimental/transient/multiple) props, you've meticulously mimicked them. I can't help but think that some new symbolic meaning (or at least nostalgic evocation) must be drummed up while constructing them. Can you talk about the life of the objects outside of their referentialfunction?

TH: It's really hard for me now to write a straightforward love note. I'm probably just not that narcissistic anymore. I mean, even if I did, I would be hard pressed to ever exhibit that, because that's not art. I know it's kind of limiting to say that but I think it's important to make that distinction for myself. Making this series of work is way of cheating for me and come to close as writing that love note. I have to admit that while making these artworks sometimes all these unnamed bittersweet emotions would bubble up and I would cry just a bit. To be honest, I am not sure what's going on, but there must be something in these objects that resonates with some part of my personal history. I think working on these pieces was a way for me to live through them vicariously and tap in to my feelings. I think in a sense making these objects is an extension of the viewing experience of the drama in the same way that self-edited fan-vids are. At a glance it can seem like they are made for the appreciation of the original show, but on closer inspection they reveal themselves to really be about the creator's feelings and experiences.

MN: Viewing your architectural structures in Confessions of Love requires the visitor to have a physical interaction with the work, which can be quite an intimate (and intimidating) experience within the context of art in an art gallery. Can you speak about the significance of this physicality, and what you intend it to stand for?

Daisuke Takeya: In "Everybody Loves You 2," I was influenced by print club photo booths, which are popular in Japan. They are a social phenomenon of youth culture; young people enjoy the shared experience of taking photos together. The photos record a playful and intimate process. I wanted to take this idea of popular entertainment, and appropriate and transform it for inside an art gallery. The structure is a hybrid of a video-making booth and a confessional, which has deeply serious, religious connotations. Viewers are asked to interact with the installation, and be recorded saying the phrase "I love you." There is an inherent paradox, and a whole range of meaning, embedded in these words. The expression has become cliché through very public associations, such as movies and advertising. By making this sculpture interactive, viewers are actively constructing and deconstructing meaning as they engage with the structure.

MN: What role does sincerity play in this interaction?

DT: My name Daisuke has often been mispronounced as "Dai-su-ki", which means, "I like you very much." This is an indirect way of saying "I love you"—it's a common expression that comes out of shyness. But its implicit meaning is understood. So I wanted to recreate the experience of hearing the words "I love you" over and over, without a context of intent or intimacy. I wondered what alternative meanings would be evoked by this repetition.

MN: What about the formal aspects of your structures? What material qualities do you look for in order to build this kind of space?

DT: During my years as an elementary-school art teacher, part of my work was to develop the curriculum by incorporating new materials for the students to work with. Coloured clay, papier maché, and found objects have all made their way into my own practice. The work of children has inspired me to enrich my repertoire. One particular project I did with the students, using glass mosaics, led to "Kind of Blue" and "Everybody Loves You 2"—both of them feature thousands of mirror cut-outs which would be physically impossible to produce in the original classroom context. Each mirror is made by hand, so each one is unique, a reflection (if you'll forgive the pun!) of human individuality.

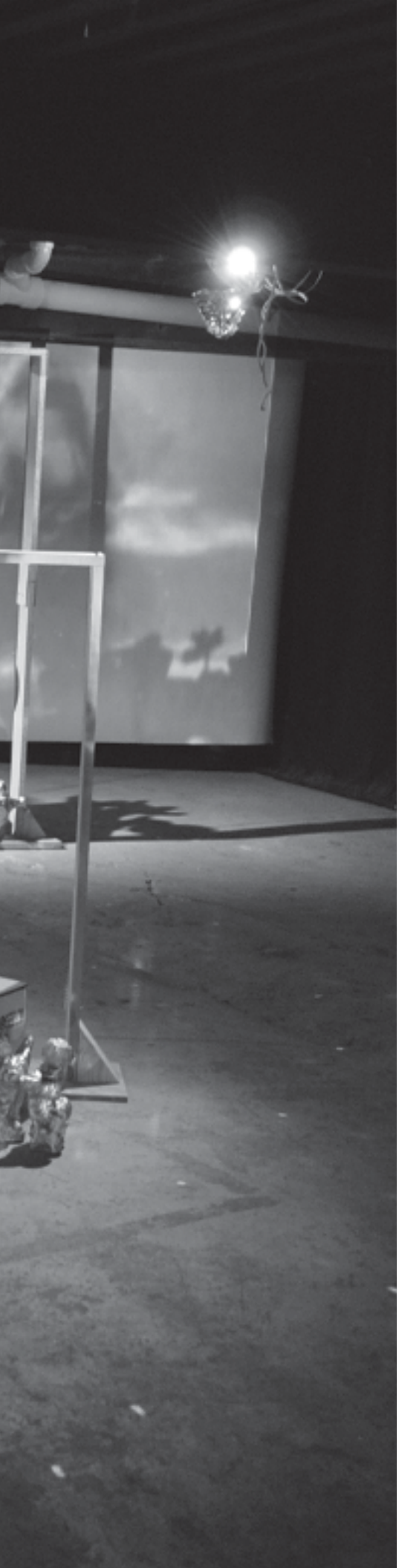
"My feelings for my first love are really irrelevant to my life now, but my old love letter to her preserves the emotions that I once thought would be with me forever."

TAD HOZUMI, CONFESSIONS OF LOVE (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

DEBORAH JENKINS

DISCO

FEBRUARY 12 – MARCH 13, 2010



SOFT ROCK

OLA WLUSEK

What does happiness look like and where does it reside? Is it hidden in some kind of an external magical place or is it buried within us, waiting to be discovered anew like a childhood photograph withholding a moment of comfortable discomfort? Acknowledgment of contentment often occurs in hindsight, it is only when intertwined with sadness, anger and frustration that our happiness to be recognized as...happiness. Can the state of bliss only be achieved through a nostalgic encounter? In her mixed media installation Disco, artist Deborah Jenkins speculates on the meaning and tangibility of this pursued emotion.

Sound

Descending down the staircase, we are greeted with the familiar tune of a universally recognizable song by famous trio of brothers. The Bee Gees are synonymous with the rise of disco music in the 70's and throughout most of the 80's but at this point we realize that this contagious song will remain with us for the rest of the present day. Staying Alive - what does it mean to stay alive and is living to see another day simply good enough? The song carries the burden of superficiality and nonsensical repetition. The notion of perseverance and survival of the fittest is the underlining message as is the sadness of carrying on without direction or defined purpose. The song suggests that any movement, not even forward, is adequate. Dancing is one of the ultimate forms of escapism and the Bee Gees advocate it as the appropriate solution to personal problems. But is dancing sufficient to end global injustice? Jenkins investigates her own part in the greater economic and political affairs of the world, in which she believes we are all of significant factor, whether we admit it to ourselves or not. By simply staying alive, we may or may not be the key players in the larger global crisis, however we are still responsible in a direct way to the internationalism of our immediate condition. So if living seems easy and is an unappealable decision, then a sense of care should follow.

So what are we doing to make our immediate surroundings better for ourselves and everyone else, besides staying alive? How are we striving to impact the world and our future? Perhaps these questions are at this point overly rhetorical, however Jenkins would like to revisit them again and again, very much like the Bee Gees who advocate the notion that as long as you keep on dancing, you cannot lose in the battle of life. So maybe if these all too familiar questions, which we often do ask ourselves, are repositioned as personal, then their rhetoric will become obsolete and the desire to address them on a political level will flourish. On what and whose terms do we want to keep staying alive?

Space

Even though XBASE is missing the colourful-checkered floor and the grandeur of a spectacular social venue, the humble disco balls are persistently projecting their glowing freckles onto the dungeon-like interior. The ironically gloomy exhibition space is transformed into

an intentionally makeshift discotheque, complete with dashing dancers in attendance. The lifeless clay figures spill onto the cold dance floor and their small silver bodies reflect the sparkling lights, adding illusion of movement into the otherwise stiff scene. They form a community, united by the shared reason for coming together in the spirit of dance. For Jenkins, the figures are empathetic. Should we feel sorry for Tony Manero's imitators who lack unique identities? After all, they are faceless figures trapped in the repetitious activity enforced by their surroundings. Who are they dancing for? In actuality, they are not moving at all. They create an illusion of dancing. In fact, they are frozen in a somewhat meditative pose.

Some of the figures are stuck on top of cardboard boxes used for packaging oil. The oil has become equated in contemporary society, western and eastern alike, with political and religious conflict. It has become a symbol for the pain and suffering of the masses. It is integrated into the media and will remain a current affair for a very long time. The physical hierarchy of the figures hints at the global and individual races that take place over materials goods and financial success. Jenkins challenges the equality in dance suggested by the song by segregating the dance floor into visual strata where not all dancers are equal and the inequalities vary on their, and our, life goals and definitions of happiness.

Sight

The mountainous shadows of the dancers are cast onto the wall and overlap onto the awkwardly projected film. We can distinguish our silhouettes among the footage and all of a sudden we are a part of the performance. We join the characters on their journey to see the wizard of Oz. The film, just like song, carries a sense of overly romanticized nostalgia peppered with tragic undertones. Dorothy's frustration in trying to find her way home can be translated into minor obstacles of the everyday and even life's major struggles often accompanied by unexpectedly pleasant discoveries made along the way. Our egos suggest that we are all like Dorothy; ambitious and lost at times, and her three amigos represent the people we meet along the way to find our own version of the wizard, the distant unknowable source of our happiness, and eventually our way home, or a path to fulfillment. But what if the pursuit of happiness is the source of all unhappiness?

The looped scene portrays the characters stumbling out of the black and white version of the film and onto a pastel field of poppies where they collapse and fall asleep. Are we asleep right now? If so, then to what extent and for how long? Dorothy and her friends are woken up by the good witch with her magical wand so that they can carry on with their journey, however as individuals we must do the awakening ourselves. As viewers we can delight in the delectable treat Jenkins prepared for our consumption; the glittery figures beneath our feet, the spinning disco balls, the illuminated room and snow filled scene from the film. The aesthetic connections between the different visual layers signify Jenkins' premeditation and control over the setting, which in itself is what Bourriaud refers to as "journey-form": The components of a journey-form are not necessarily united in a unified space-time. A journey-form may refer to one or more absent elements, which may be physically distant, past, or yet to come. It may be composed of an installation with connections to future events or other places. Conversely, it may bring together in a single-time the dispersed coordinates of a path. In both cases, the artwork takes the form of an unfolding, an arrangement of sequences that place its objective presence in doubt and cause its "aura" to flicker.

Such flickering suggests the complexity of the piece and signifies that we are experiencing something very particular to this specific conditions negotiated by the artist. An event is about to occur, links are going to be made and we are about to obtain a glimpse to an alternative reality. Stay a while, watch, listen, and feel.

Sense

How do we make sense of this layered nostalgia? Disco takes us on a journey where initially we find ourselves grinning and rolling our eyes at the spectacle. There is humour in the assemblage stretching before us and we may experience slight annoyance, as well as relief in response to the familiar: "ah ha ha staying alive, staying alive". The longer we remain with the piece, the faster we allow sadness to sneak up on us and time to loose its course only to become "this is then, now". The Wizard of Oz carries the stigma of an unfulfilled fantasy because it is a reminder of the ongoing search for perhaps a brain, a heart, or courage. And the static dancers cannot free themselves from the persistence of the song. It is our shadows, and not theirs, that intermingle between the ray from the projector and the glimmering ceiling. Jenkins is a storyteller and an adventurer who invites the viewer to come along and explore new realizations about the present day with her. Through the mixing of the various media, Jenkins sets up a black hole that swallows up our certainty of the outside world and we are spat back somewhat affected. Does the return to old fictions verifies them as valid and positions them as true? This is time travel. Jenkins (like many of contemporary artists who refer to pop culture, reuse ephemera and display a fascination with archival materials) is showing us, layer upon layer, that our desires have not changed since 1939.

I was told before, that life is not a fairytale, yet, perhaps nostalgia is not entirely negative, and when finally all does fall into place we will be able to look back on our journey in a once-upon-a-time kind of way.


5W-30

VIDEO EXCHANGE

XPACE Cultural Centre
TORONTO, ON

Dylin North	Road Trip
Steve Shaddick	And Now
Robert Lendrum	Dudes
Tara Downs	Hypercube
Anna May Henry	Shower Singing
Liam Crockard	untitled

Spark Contemporary Art Space,
SYRACUSE, NY

Evan Paschke	Informed Movements
Esther Maria Probst	Ophelia's Second Stage
Holly Rodricks	Lapse
K Erik Ino	The Wall
Katie Micak	God, The Universe, and Everything Else
Scandalishous	"My Butt" Official Music Video
Thon Lorenz	Bad Whopper
Christine Negus	Blue Water
Nathaniel Sullivan	On Cute

White Water Gallery
North Bay, ON

Clayton Windatt	1 Year at White Water Gallery
John Graham	Hidden Cities
Rosemary Laff	Man Being Hit By Piano
Eric Boissouneault	Death Of A Rose
Mercedes Cueto	Impaired States Due to Inactivity = Rust
Addison Wylie	Don't Think About It
Gil Chalykoff	Humberdale & Friends
Amy Lockhart	The Collagist
Russell Chartier	Confined 10-01-2
Paul Botelho	

Artspace,
PETERBOROUGH, ON

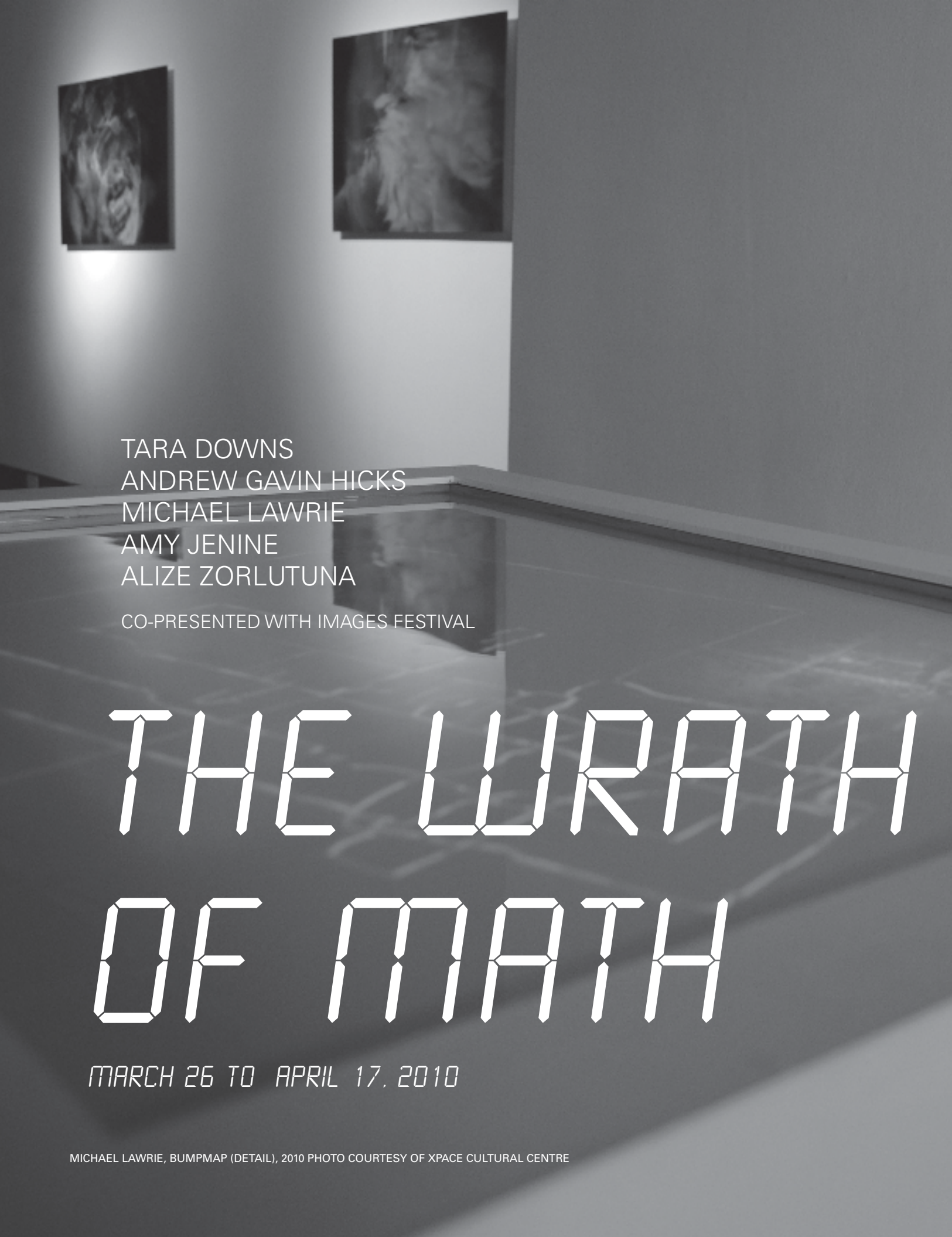
Sacha Archer	1 2 3 4 5
Ryan Kerr	Drill
Brian Mitolo	
Eardley Wayne	Summer On Superior
Ray O'Keefe	The Soccer Kid
Dan English	Knife Monkey Night
Sarah Decarlo	Land of the Silver Birch, Home of the Beaver
Shelah Young	Red

Ed Video
GUELPH, ON

Angus McLellan	Nice Dream
Sam Silversides	Snow
Jenn E Norton	Very Good Advice
Smearballs	Sweatin' Like A Farm Animal, Cool as a Daisy

AKA
SASKATOON, SK

Shanell Papp	Unicorn
Angela Edmunds	Tumbleweed
Francis Theberge	Creatures
Troy Gronsdahi	The generosity of mechanics
Brian Longfield	Take It Easy
David LaRivere	A Trip To The Mall
Ian Campbell Paul Atkins	Lost Dog
Freida Abtan and Erin Gee	Death of A Muse
Scott Rogers	a divine light



TARA DOWNS
ANDREW GAVIN HICKS
MICHAEL LAWRIE
AMY JENINE
ALIZE ZORLUTUNA

CO-PRESENTED WITH IMAGES FESTIVAL

THE WRATH OF MATH

MARCH 26 TO APRIL 17, 2010

MICHAEL LAWRIE, BUMPMAP (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

THE WRATH OF MATH

MATTHEW WILLIAMSON,
PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

"Teacher: So y = r cubed over 3. And if you determine the rate of change in this curve correctly, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.
[The class laughs except for Bart who appears confused.]
Teacher: Don't you get it, Bart? Derivative dy = 3 r squared dr over 3, or r squared dr, or r dr r." From "Bart The Genius" episode (7G02) of The Simpsons

Mastery of mathematics involves the interactions of multiple developmental pathways1. Much of these interactions must overlap, if not parallel, with those developed during creative growth. This understood, perhaps 'developmental paths' founded in art and math education are art not so different. Arguably some of these skills are transferable, even desirable; at the very least the way we talk about math affects our vocabulary and creative abilities. In conceptualizing maths connection to vocabularly, specifically 'art', let us consider the following:

Addition is a mathematical operation that enables the theorization of combining – in this process collections of objects are combined into larger collections3. Like pouring two glasses of water together to fill a larger glass, addition is not synergistic; two plus two probably4 can't equal five. The sum is not greater than its parts. As a tactic for creating art, addition requires a delicate hand, one that does not contaminate through juxtaposition.

Subtraction has been an integral part of mathematics, going as far back as the beginnings of the printed page5. Some consider it to be the inverse of addition. However, this way of thinking denies subtraction's unique privilege. Subtraction enables difference6. To continue this thought, one could deduce that we have subtraction to thank for our most highly respected philosophies7.

Multiplication has been most popularized as a means to determine surface area. To break it down a rectangle's area is the product of its length times its width. Unless one is a two-dimensional creature8, this is not useful in and of itself. Luckily, by simply including the multiple of height into the

equation volume can be determined in much the same manner as surface area. It's not hard to see how this is applicable to art practices, in particular installation and sculpture.

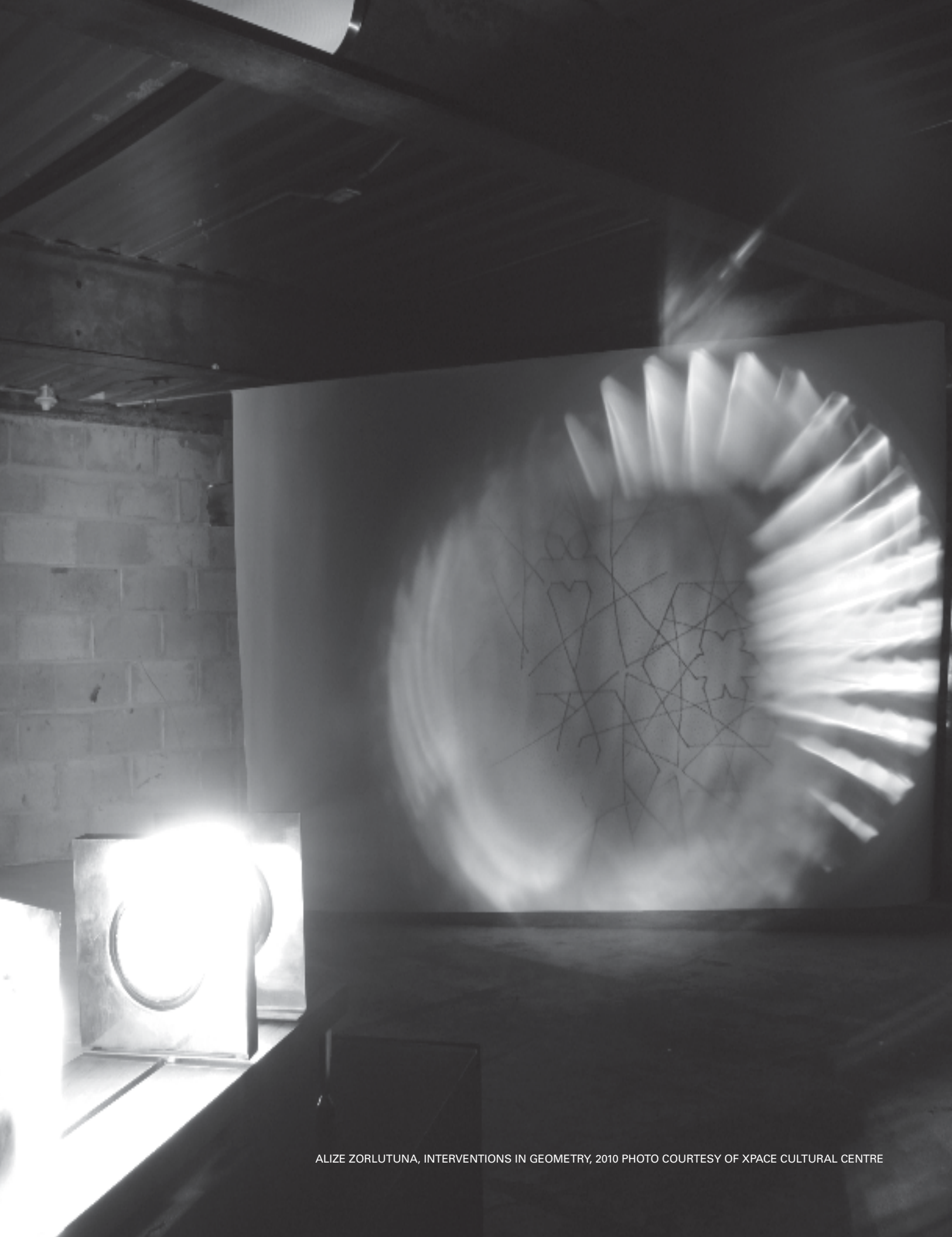
Division, like the relationship between subtraction and addition, is considered the opposite action to multiplication. Dividing numbers and values typically leaves you with a quotient smaller than the numbers you began with. However the same is not the is not the case in cell division9. In this process the end result of division induces growth. Equally, in art there are many reductive methods found in creative processes that might have their roots in this primordial mathematical lesson.

Exponentiation is notable for its visual representation. Shown as a superscript above and to the right of its base. Exponents also make aesthetically pleasing graphs: cubed numbers are very striking. Exponential growth10 (seen in Moore's Law11) increases proportionally to the base number. Note example:

"one guy tells another guy something
then he tells two friends,
and they tell two friends,
and they tell their friends,
and so on, and so on..." Wayne's World 2

The graphic and generative possibilities of exponents seem to indicate mind expanding possibilities. Thus it represents both a creative process and aesthetic growth. So, what is to be taken away from all of this? To think broadly, perhaps we can use mathematical perspectives to open up a new appreciation for curriculum development. Eight years of elementary level math serve us more than to teach us basic equations; they teach us how to understand abstract concepts. If only we could learn both with the same pencil.

1 paraphrased from the abstract to "The wrath of math. Deficiencies in mathematical mastery in the school child." http://www.find-health-articles.com/rec_pub_1574357-the-wrath-math-deficiencies-mathematical-mastery-school-child.htm
2 I make no claim to be an expert in math, just an enthusiastic fan.
3 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addition
4 for an explanation of the why this might be probable see Star Trek: The Next Generation episode 6x10-11 Chain of Command Parts I and II
5 Subtraction in the United States: An Historial Perspective, Susan Ross, Mary Pratt-Cotter, The Mathematics Educator, Vol. 8, No. 1.
6 The traditional names for the parts of the formula
c – b = a are minuend (c) – subtrahend (b) = difference (a)
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subtraction
7 Consider Deleuze's Difference and Repetition
8 Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions http://xahlee.org/flatland/index.html
9 An amoeba is an example of a organism that reproduces that way, Bertrand Russell said of amoebas "A process which led from the amœba to man appeared to the philosophers to be obviously a progress — though whether the amœba would agree with this opinion is not known."
10 for an interesting representation of exponential growth see the Star Trek episode The Trouble with Tribbles.
11 A long term trend in computers in which the number of components that can be places of a circuit has doubled every two years.



ALIZE ZORLUTUNA, INTERVENTIONS IN GEOMETRY, 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Celebrate XPACE Cultural Center!

This has been the most exciting, energetic year yet! XPACE Cultural Centre has grown on and off campus with the addition of the resource center and XPACE Window Space, launching the online XBlog, and installing the external exhibition space in OCAD's new Student Lounge.... And now XPACE presents, VOLUME!!!

A special thank you to Derek Liddington, who, through his role as Director, is an inspiring leader. Thank you for your dedication to creating new opportunities for emerging and student artists in Toronto. Much appreciation and a BIG thank you also go to the extraordinary staff, and brilliant individuals at the gallery. XPACE would not be the landmark is it today without all of your hard work and talent.

The OCAD Student Union has had the pleasure of experiencing a transformation at XPACE, and are in awe of what the space has achieved in such a short period of time.
Congratulations on all your success.

Cheers!

Amanda Almeida
Executive Director
OCADSU

The central purpose of the OCADSU is to enrich the lives of the students at OCAD. We do our best to create responsible, democratic, cooperative student representation at the university — promoting the interests of both students and the university as a whole — in the context of a healthy community. We promote artistic, educational, social, professional, recreational and charitable activities for the advancement of our members. This sometimes takes the form of funding special events and organizations like XPACE!

Contact:

OCADSU
51 McCaul St.
studentu@ocad.ca
http://www.ocadsu.org

Nothing to Declare: A visit to The Power Plant

Sunday April 10th, 2010 by Edison Osorio

With no preconception of what would be showing at The Power Plant, I ventured in towards my first encounter with this Gallery of contemporary art. Upon entering one of the exhibition spaces I came across a didactic text panel that read: "Nothing to Declare". After quickly reading the title, I decidedly omitted the curatorial statement underneath it. Free of otherwise inflicted ideas about the show, I walked up to the first piece that caught my eye.

Stack of Trays (2009), an installation by Liz Magor, is composed of a bizarre grouping of objects (divided in two sets). On one end of a white table, a pile of multicoloured dirty trays serves as a dead-bed for a rat's corpse. When looked at closely, one may notice that some of the objects are of cast pieces of garbage such as; cigarette butts, cupcake wrappers, and the dead rat. Actual objects, however, accompany those cast objects: two whiskey bottles, a cigarette box, and an ashtray. Standing a meter or farther away, one wouldn't be able to tell the cast from the actual objects.

On the other end of the table the narrative is repeated through a slightly dissimilar aesthetic and set of objects. The almost total lack of colour in this part of the installation is evident from afar. A thick and slightly wrinkled white cloth lies underneath two objects: a grey tray that serves as dead-bed for a dead white raccoon. But a more vibrant component lights up this composition, a few handfuls of candy wrapped in shiny blue paper are scattered around the raccoon's corpse.

Although physically more appealing than the first set of objects, the composition on the table, when compared to the pile of trays, is equally as striking. Admittedly though, much of this composition's physical character is tainted by the depiction of the dead animals. In both cases disorder and demise get a spotlight. Instinctively, it could be said that the death of these two animals was caused by what could have been food poisoning. Or perhaps more appropriately, an eating disorder.

Stack of Trays presents, through repetition and variance, the aesthetic of death. However, considering the implications put forth by the rest of the works components, such as the bottles of whiskey, the cigarette box, and the candy, the subject of habits might become tightly associated to this piece. Habits are actions in which you become accustomed. And although the word habit has positive and negative connotations, it generally infers the negative. Magor's Stack of Trays is an illustration of both mild and fatal habits such as gluttony, alcoholism, and smoking, among others. And yet the most important message underlying this installation's narrative is that these two types of habits can lead to similar ends: death.

An even more complex insight into the works nuances is in its ability to illustrate two perspectives within a biased formulation. Habits are destructive being the biased formulation, and habits come in appealing and in morbid presentations being the two perspectives. Seen from this angle, the meaning in this work becomes inescapably funneled through the paradigm of death.

All and all, this is only a little taste into a single piece in an exhibition; one full of bizarre and variable physical qualities. In a broader frame, the artworks that surrounded Stack of Trays had a tendency to present to the viewer some sort of ambiguity such as the one I referred to in my commentary on Magor's piece. In a way the exhibition title wasn't lying in that there is no fixed narrative: there is Nothing to Declare.

COMMENTS (9)

SUBMISSIONS

XPACE accepts proposals in every medium, from student and emerging artists, designers, and everyone in between. XPACE programming is juried by a committee two times a year. We encourage curated group exhibitions, and although we are not mandated for solo exhibitions, we accept proposals from individual artists for curatorial consideration and for XBASE. A up-to-date submission package can be downloaded from *xpace.info/submissions*

DEADLINES: XPACE has two deadlines a year, in May and November. Exact dates are available at *xpace.info/submissions*

GALLERY INFORMATION: XPACE has several different programming spaces. Please consider which space you are applying for when you are preparing your application. Layouts for these spaces are available on the xpace website.

XPACE MAIN GALLERY: XPACE's primary space, programmed for group exhibitions, panel discussions, workshops and other events.

XBASE BASEMENT GALLERY: A raw space programmed for solo exhibitions, including works-in-progress that respond to the environment.

XPACE WINDOW SPACE: Facing out on Ossignton Avenue, our window space provides unique opportunity for solo and collaborative installations that can be viewed around the clock.

OFF-SITE MEDIA SPACE: Located in OCAD's Jim Meekison Student Lounge, this screen is programmed for video and interactive artworks with an empathize on student and emerging artists work.

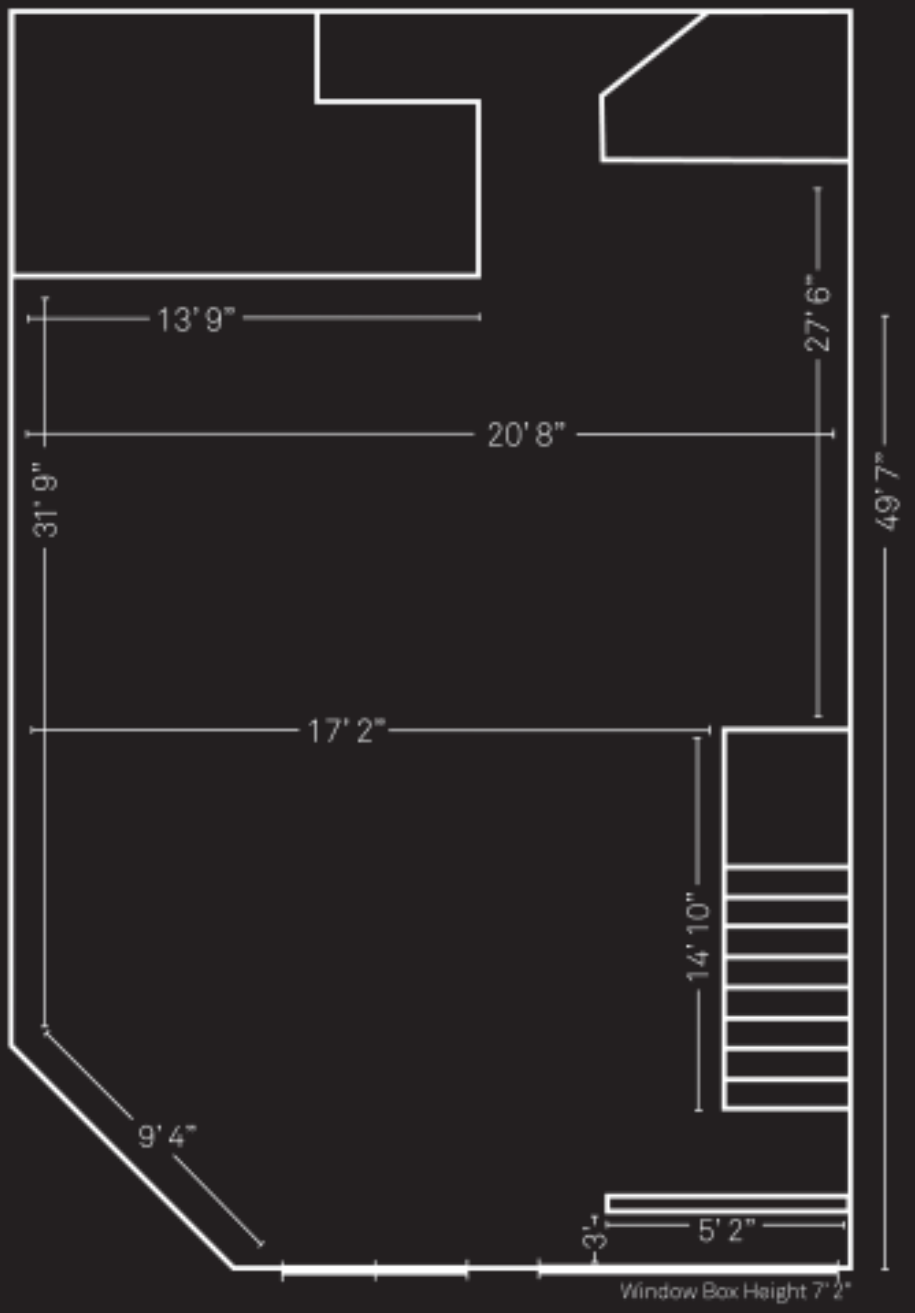
WEB-BASED PROJECTS: Online and web-based artworks hosted on our website.

PLEASE MAIL PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS TO:

XPACE Cultural Centre Programming Committee
c/o XPACE Cultural Centre
58 Ossington Ave.
Toronto, ON
M6J 2Y7

Incomplete applications sent via email or fax will not be considered. Feel free to discuss proposals and the application process with XPACE staff. Contact us at 416 849 2864

GALLERY LAYOUT - Main Gallery



CONTRIBUTORS

STAFF Matthew Williamson
Jennie Suddick
Derek Liddington
Stephanie Simmons
Edison Osorio
Anam Ahmed
Vladimir Milosevic
Jacky Challenger
Elise Windsor
Ngqabutho Zondo
Jonathan Wheeldon
Stephanie Fielding
Stephanie Rosinski
Casey Wong
Mireille Osbourne
Serena Lee
Melissa Fisher

ARTISTS Ashley Andrews, Samuel Choisy, Colleen Collins, Stephanie Kervin, Sylvana D'Angelo, Christina Knox, Ian MacTilstra, Hannah Myall, Renee Nault, Aidan Dahlin Nolan, Kelsey Speakman, Meghan Speakman, Laura Paolini, Valerie Sabaliauskas, Tania Sanhueza, Stephanie Vegh, Elizabeth Underhill, Danielle Bleackley, Michele Crockett, Alex Kisilevich, Brendan George Ko, Christina Kostoff, Faye Mullen, Raffy Ochoa, Amanda Rataj, Reena Katz, Michelle Irving, Jo SiMalaya Alcampo, Liam Crockard, Mark Pellegrino, Megan Rooney, Brad Tinmouth, Matthew Williamson, Jacob Korczynski Serena Lee, Teresa Aversa, Amber Landgraff, Deborah Wang, Hakili Don, Adrian Furniss, Marino Imperio, Mike Juneau, Neelam Kler, Steve Shaddick, Cameron Lee, Su-Ying Lee and Suzanne Carte-Blanchenot, Alison S. M. Kobayashi, Gintas Tirilis, Robin Selk, Joshua Bartholomew, Jenipher Hur, Håvard Pedersen, Avery Nabata, Thomas Del Balso, Dagmara Genda, Sarah Kernohan, Alexandra Mackenzie, Jon Nicolaou, Dan Rocca, Ryan Solski, Tara Downs, Ben Bruneau, Shlomi Greenspan, Taliya Cohen, Christopher Hutch, Leia Gore, Emily Pelstring, Marissa Neave, Donna Irvine, Dustin Wenzel, Marc Losier, Sabrina Richard, Dylin North, Robert Lendrum, Anna May Henry, Evan Paschke, Esther Maria Probst, Holly Rodricks, K. Erick Ino, Katie Micak, Scandalishious, Thon Lorenz, Christine Negus, Nathaniel Sullivan, Clayton Windatt, John Graham, Rosemary Laff, Eric Boissouneault, Mercedes Cueto, Addison Wylie, Gil Chalykoff, Amy Lockhart, Russell Chartier, Paul Botelho, Sacha Archer, Ryan Kerr, Brian Mitolo, Wayne Eardley, Ray O'Keefe, Dan English, Sarah Decarlo, Shelagh Young, Shanell Papp, Angela Edmunds, Francis Theberge, Troy Gronsdahi, Brian Longfield, David LaRivere, Ian Campbell and Paul Atkins, Freida Abtan and Erin Gee, Scott Rogers, Angus McLellan, Sam Silversides, Jenn E Norton, Smearballs, Martin Kuchar, Andrew MacDonald, Staceylee Turner, Joshua Barndt, Keli Liu, Jesi the Elder, Daisuke Takeya, Tad Hozumi, Deborah Jenkins, Ola Wlusek, Brandon A. Dalmer, Andrew Gavin Hicks, Michael Lawrie, Amy Jenine, Alize Zorlutuna, Marie-Michelle Deschamps

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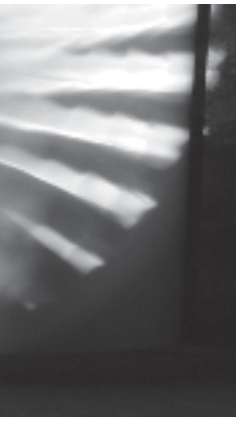

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Mis[place]d:
Animals Lost and Found

JANUARY 9th - 31, 2009

TANIA SANHUEZA, THE GREAT AUKS, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

This Must Be The Place (Naive Melody)

ELIZABETH UNDERHILL

"In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy." - Edward O. Wilson

Humanity is at a critical point in its history: we have actually stopped to consider how much we have destroyed and whether we will continue to do so. We are responsible for the world's sixth wave of mass extinction:1 wild animals are dying in irretrievable numbers from habitat destruction and fragmentation,2 environmental stressors,3 and extermination by those who consider them pests or desirable commodities,4 while domestic animals are being produced and consumed at a ridiculous rate.5 Mis[place]d: Animals Lost and Found features thirteen projects by emerging artists concerned with our damaging relationship with wildlife and companion animals. To be misplaced is to be accidentally lost from a place of belonging. This exhibition suggests that the notion of incorrect positioning may be applied to animals, as well as the pervading attitude that we possess them. The works in Mis[place]d act as sites of inquiry, places where new ways of thinking about animals can be found where misplaced attitudes have brought about loss.

Familiar Faces

"When the world crashes in to my living room/Television made me what I am" - Talking Heads

Exerting cultural and biological stressors onto animals to get them to fit into human societal structures is the basis of domestication, although recent practitioners have been accused of endangering animal and human welfare in so doing. 6 While these creatures, such as pets, seem an intrinsic part of our lives and happiness, the process of domestication simultaneously situates them as "objects of ownership, inheritance, purchase, and exchange."7 By defamiliarizing the animals we consider closest to us, works by Laura Paolini and Ian MacTilstra remark on losing pets within our homes.

Laura Paolini's *Crocodile Tears (Crying Cat)* situates a pet in its "natural habitat:" a seat in front of the television. A robotic cat watches a video of a real cat playing to the tune of *What a Wonderful World.* The robot cries constantly, suggesting that what it sees brings about feelings of sadness. Our dominance of the animal world is reflected by our desire to achieve within it aesthetic beauty, breeding animals that aren't really animals anymore, but rather pretty objects,continuously ascribed with human qualities and emotions. Also evident is a critique of art historical concerns with the power of beauty to achieve the sublime: the cat is gorgeous, but as fake as its tears, and deeply rooted in materiality.

Ian MacTilstra's digitized super-8 video *How I Lost My Virginity* shows a time-elapsed day in the life of a dog. The dog is captured sleeping on a couch, rarely getting up to move, and we hear its restless moans. This idle dog is one we're not unaccustomed to: the pet that spends its life sleeping. However, as time passes and the dog's moans become more insistent, this common scene becomes repulsive and disconcerting. Dogs are known as man's best friend, revered for their heroic loyalty. But this is a hero devoid of glory. As with losing virgin purity, something sacred has been stripped away from this animal.

Pest Problems

"Check what's in the trash bag/We're just another part of you" - Yeah Yeah Yeahs

"Pest" is a diminutive of pestilent, the word indicative of something deadly, yet the pesky creatures we fear and are disgusted by resemble us closely in terms of physiognomy, behaviour, and intelligence. The destruction of the world's resources is suicide, perhaps paralleled most poignantly in the way we treat pests. Works by Stephanie Vegh, Stephanie Kervin and Sylvana D'Angelo, and Christina Knox examine the problems with pests.

Plague Rats by Stephanie Vegh confronts our fear of rats in relation to their overwhelming pervasiveness of civic spaces and poor reputation as bearers of fatal disease. Spreading out from a stoney basement corner are rats drawn onto 71 pages of Rome and the Campagna, a Victorian treatise glorifying ancient architecture. Vegh's interventionist illustrations emphasize the incongruity between the text's claims of greatness and images of the remaining ruins, and seek to expose our historical tendency toward hubris while neglecting to credit the influential forces of animals. Vegh's drawings capture the reputation of the rat: they are monumental yet ephemeral, silent but "equal builders of civilization alongside human influence."8

Stephanie Kervin and Sylvana D'Angelo's *Making Bunnies* begins with a hundred small plaster rabbits that multiply during the exhibition. This intimidating family of rabbits is made from molds based on one Kervin's mother made for her as a child. *Making Bunnies* makes physical the process of reproducing that which is inherited. Playing on rabbits' ability to quickly reproduce, Vegh and D'Angelo liken this to the perpetuation of inherited values, particularly in relation

to the prejudicial act of speciesism that makes acceptable the mistreatment of pests and other animals.9 By staggering the installation, most will only have a limited view of the rabbits, as is the case when preordained attitudes toward masses of animals block us from individually interacting with each.

Losing animals in representational contexts is clear in Christina Knox's photographs, *Shooting the Mass Murder*. In blurry, obscured images we see Knox's attempts to document a mass murder of crows - between 16,000-32,000 - that congregate at dusk at a roosting site just outside Vancouver. These works may be regarded as a cooperative effort, with Knox bound by the shortcomings of her camera to get pale, gritty images of her subjects - which appear lost amongst residual distortion due to low light - without causing them duress from assistive lighting. Her photos engage us despite their compromised clarity, embodying a critique of the need for our ideals to be met at the cost of animals' well being.

Exotic Thrillers

"But you're innocent when you dream" - Tom Waits

Bizarre portrayals of animals range from pure fantasy claimed as authentic to the housebound representations of wild creatures we never physically interact with. Our habit of dreaming may seem benign, but it is indicative of a larger tendency toward the exploitation and consumption of animal life. Works by Ashley Andrews, Valerie Sabaliauskas, Aidan Dahlin Nolan with Meghan and Kelsey Speakman, Renee Nault, and Hannah Myall quote various representations of animals that note a strange desire to find pleasure in creatures that are by definition lost.

Taxidermy has roots in the study of natural sciences that spread to the phenomenon of trophy display by hobbyists, collectors and hunters. Ashley Andrews' paintings take up the absurd implications of this practice. Figures in *Sniffing Boar, Green Weasel*, and *Red Fox* are based on the moulds inserted into the hides of animals as well as the patterns in the wood painted on, but are barely identifiable as specific animals. In merging the components used in making trophies, Andrews' paintings become the anti-trophy. By removing the skin, an image we can identify and recognize, Andrews de-values this form of animal "preservation," while making attractive images, visually linking the grotesque with a desire render beauty into possession-form.

Our experience of wildlife is often from a distance, as with reading of it in books, the subject of Valerie Sabaliauskas' installation of children's encyclopedias. A sense of comfort is evoked by placing these objects, unquestioned from childhood, in our hands. However, within each book is a hollowed out space where a drawing of an endangered animal appears imprisoned, trapped in an unmoving stance.

Visiting animal sanctuaries and zoos is a fairly recent means of experiencing nature, though true wilderness is decidedly lacking in what are actually controlled and managed environments. *Legends of Chincoteague* by Aidan Dahlin Nolan, Kelsey Speakman and Meghan Speakman, is in the spirit of romantic, bucolic images captured on such visits, while drawing attention to the constructed aspect of these places. Large, hazy tourist-style snapshots of ponies in their fenced-in sanctuary and pens hang with sand and driftwood spread below. Legend has it that the ancestors of these ponies were shipwrecked off the coast of Virginia while being transported to South America. Children's books by Marguerite Henry increased their fame, and put descendants of Misty, her real-life protagonist, in demand by private owners. Dahlin Nolan and the Speakmans present the strange dichotomy between being swept up in the story of these ponies through their romantic portrayal, and the abrupt realization via the fake beach that it is fictive narrative that fuels their appeal.

Yeti are the mysterious humanoid creatures whose existence depends on being lost. In *I don't mind the sight of you*, Hannah Myall has scrawled these words alongside two identically posed yeti. She references the literary aspect of yeti's existence - the power of words, folktales and rumours that keep them alive in our imaginations. It is also something of a passive yet romantic statement of acceptance - not minding the propagation of stories as replacements for the real thing. Yeti seem to signify our hope that there is something still left out there in the world to discover, an intact portion of nature that has escaped us. Yeti features the same figure traced repeatedly, simultaneously denoting the iconic nature of this creature, and the forgery of forgeries that are required for it to exist.

Farewell to Beasts is a series of paintings by Renee Nault that portray extinct fantasy animals, and suggest the sense of loss that occurs upon discovering their non-existence. Otherworldly creatures such as mermaids and gruesome Romanesque chimeras held real significance in the mythologies and religions of early civilizations. Nault is interested in the point of departure from the influence of these images. Ultimately her work suggests that truth is in the eye of the beholder, and the choice to believe in or be influenced by representations of animals in their physical absence, though felt by individuals, has more to do with large-scale consensus.

Today's Fables

"The way we look to a distant constellation that's dying in a corner of the sky/These are the days of miracle and wonder/ And don't cry baby/Don't cry, don't cry, don't cry" - Paul

Misplaced attitudes granted animals in art significance only when anthropomorphized. A classic literary example, Aesop's Fables portray animals as caricatures of human vices and virtues to teach us lessons in morality. Yet their inclusion provides no wisdom for interaction between our species. Rapidly changing circumstances within the world demand that today's fables offer lessons in lives other than our own, as demonstrated by the works of Colleen Collins, Samuel Choisy, and Tania Sanhueza.

Colleen Collins' performance, seen documented in *The Summons Series*, simulates a hunter beckoning prey to shoot for food, so done by using a calling device that animals respond to for an encounter with the opposite sex. When we summon another for our sustenance, at what cost is it to them? Conversely, if a summoned being comes willingly to us, can their intentions be considered selfless? *The Summons Series* brings issues of misanthropy and altruism to the fore in our relationships with others and our need to co-exist for survival. Animals missing from these landscapes are from the past, present, and future (the particular sites where the performances took place are rich with fossils from the Triassic and Jurassic periods). Collins relates their non- appearance to the physical and psychological nature of the site: these landscapes have been "acted upon severely,"10 as inhospitable in their appearance as they are in our mental conception of them. Signified as radical psychic geographies, Collins' photographs allow us to move from image to the contents of our own minds, that sometimes mirror these rough landscapes.

Wonderfully ethereal, Samuel Choisy's staged photographs of taxidermy animals in cityscapes were developed from exposures captured by a pinhole camera. *Views of a Secret* is an ongoing series exploring beauty and otherness within controlled and foreign environments. Our time with these images feels fleeting; we have caught a moment of beauty and the freedom and wildness that go along with it. There is a distinct sense of otherness that occurs with the transformative power these animals have on the cityscape. Being introduced to a foreign environment brings with it the realization of difference, identifying oneself as an other, rather than one who fits with the rest. Choisy's work has connotations of the unseen, secret struggles animals and humans alike face to make a home in a new place when the old one has been left behind.

Focusing on Canadian wildlife, Tania Sanhueza's practice resembles animal activism. *The Great Auks* were constructed from reclaimed and recycled fabrics, stitched carefully together and filled with natural fibres. Using environmentally conscious materials, Sanhueza's work functions as an apology to this species ravaged by humans to the point of extinction. Docile in temperament, the flightless Great Auk was easily wiped out from its North Atlantic habitat where it once thrived in abundance. Using contradiction to raise awareness, the toy-like Auks are objects of desire, just as their real counterparts were to those who saw them as bankable commodities. Though the birds have been lost, their beauty is present for us to consider and engage with. This is the power of images: to influence our thinking about the world around us. For Sanhueza, it is as simple as making animals appeal to our sensibilities, so we stop taking them for granted, and become interested in learning about lives other than our own.

"If we choose to let conjecture run wild, then animals, our fellow brethren in pain, disease, suffering and famine - our slaves in the most laborious works, our companions in our amusements - they may partake of our origin in one common ancestor - we may be all netted together." - Charles Darwin

Perhaps it is still a wild idea that animal and human life could possibly be interconnected. Everything up to this point has been marred by attempts to keep us separate. Humanity's legacy smacks of this attitude that there is an "elsewhere," a place where responsibility to the world disappears and the consequences of our actions only matter if they serve our needs. But there is only one place. Could animals and humans be any more alike in sharing the desire to find somewhere to belong.

1We are to blame: http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/10/081020171454.htm

2 For factors causing mass extinction of species, including habitat destruction, fragmentation and ecosystem degradation: Foreman, Dave. Rewilding North America. Washington: Island Press, 2004.

3 This is an umbrella term used to describe various factors (like chemical pollution and climate change) that interfere with the productivity, reproductive success and ecological development of organisms. Freedman, Bill. Environmental Science A Canadian Perspective. Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001. pp270-271.

4 For a strong example of "pest" eradication: http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jul/19/nation/na-wolves19. One species driven to extinction through unrestrained harvesting is the passenger pigeon: Stutchbury, Bridget. Silence of the Songbirds. Toronto: Harper Perennial, 2007. pp25-26.

5 In the United States, half of all animals admitted to animals shelters are euthanized (between three and four million): http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/pet_overpopulation_and_ownership_statistics/hsus_pet_overpopulation_estimates.html

6 For criticisms and theoretically detrimental consequences of genetically engineering food animals: Boyens, Ingeborg. Unnatural Harvest. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2000.

7 http://www.fathom.com/course/21701781/session1.html

8 Interview with Stephanie Vegh via email, Thursday May 29, 2008.

9 Our poor treatment of animals is due to inherited values and attitudes toward them; the ongoing denial of ethical and moral treatment of animals because they are not human is speciesism and about as reprehensible as sexism and racism: Singer, Peter. Animal Liberation. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.

10 Interview with Colleen Collins via email, Tuesday October 14, 2008.

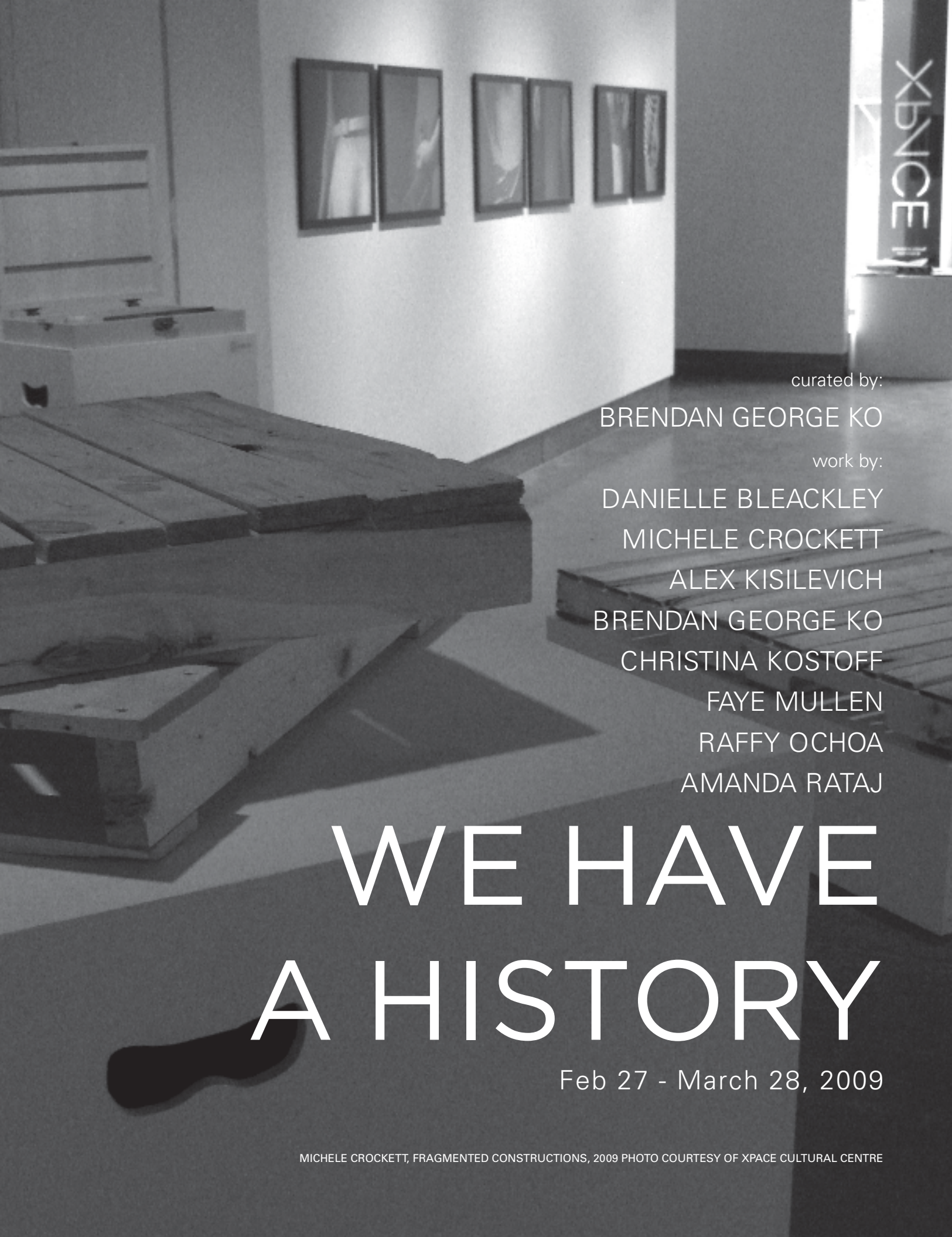
We Have a History

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

Interpersonal relationships come and go. The residue that lingers is a mark of their permanence, whether it is between person, object, or moment. Out of these relationships develops individualized notions of history estranged from traditional linear trajectories. Through themes of history and relationships, We Have A History presents a group of photographers and sculptors that explore relationships between individuals, generations, objects, and the past to the present.

SERENA LEE
PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

From lovingly refinished skid pallets to carefully composited family portraits, We Have A History explores moments and objects that are documented, collected, and cherished. These explorations allow the artists to access narratives peripheral to instituted notions of history. Eight projects from Photography and Sculpture Installation students at the Ontario College of Art & Design offer insight into the construction and mediation of modest and unwritten histories. They locate them in the folds of a dress, on a bedroom fl oor, a crack in the wall, or a patch of grass. While some artists intuit narratives through the tactility of hand-processing, others mediate their construction through the meticulous digital post-production. Each piece alludes to a personal experience which collectively we find solace in. With We Have A History, XPACE is pleased to launch a new catalogue series, inspiring dialogue and providing critical context to the practices of our exhibiting artists and designers.



curated by:

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

work by:

DANIELLE BLEACKLEY

MICHELE CROCKETT

ALEX KISILEVICH

BRENDAN GEORGE KO

CHRISTINA KOSTOFF

FAYE MULLEN

RAFFY OCHOA

AMANDA RATAJ

WE HAVE A HISTORY

Feb 27 - March 28, 2009

MICHELE CROCKETT, FRAGMENTED CONSTRUCTIONS, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

DANIELLE BLEACKLEY, THE DRESS SERIES, 2008 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

"A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away..."[1]

"somewhere in space this may all be happening right now."[2]

OUTER

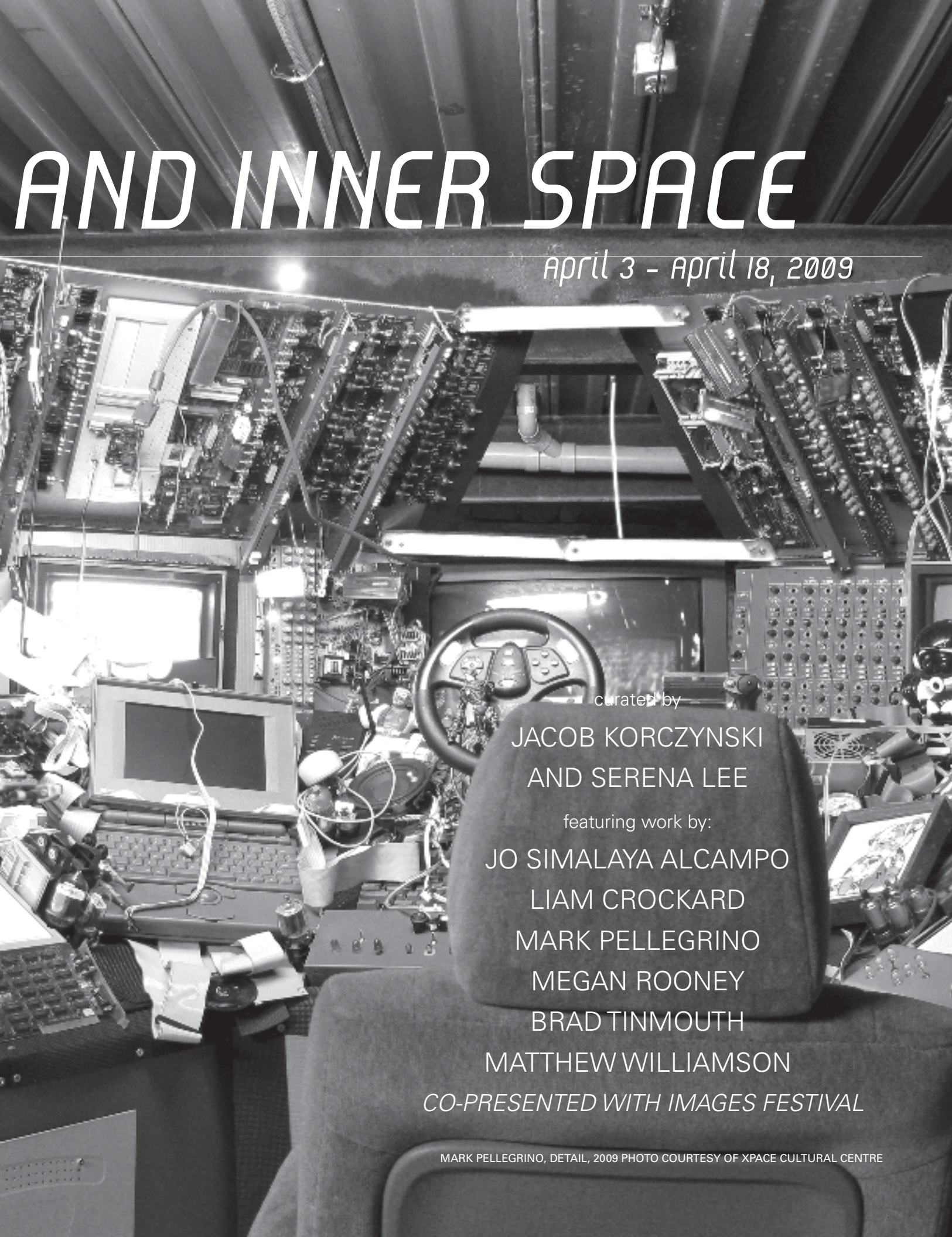
SERENA LEE, PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

We might be getting ahead of ourselves here, but considering that Outer and Inner Space runs on its own clock, it might be more interesting to look at the histories depicted in its media installations in terms of space, Foucault's space, which "takes the form of relations among sites", contiguous, illogical, wonder-full correlations that allow us to be in two places at once - a long time ago and right now – after all "we are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed", which sounds a lot like hyperdriven intergalactic dimension jumping, okay, montage, where "old habits of mind can be jolted into new perceptions of the obvious" as Taussig describes it in reference to anthropological history and as imaginative resistance to the "rosary bead religion of cause and effect"; Outer and Inner Space, occupying staunchly real space at 58 Ossington Avenue, suggests about seven heterotopias including itself - spaces that are distinctively any where other than here, a room full of skewed time zones and, compressing, accumulating, distorting, and re-imagining time and relations between distant homes and their respective economies, moments that go unnoticed while being broadcast to millions, the simultaneous celebration and mourning of analog aesthetics and silver spray paint; of course media installation is unlike the darkened apparatus cinema that is intended to recede behind your eyeballs as you enter a projected illusory space - media installation is a different breed of heterotopia which encompasses site and the audience's presence in relation to tangible screens that hold the potential for endless recall, perhaps as a monument to children with misplaced names and the pointing of gloved hands at the 1904 St. Louis World Fair, or to anachronistic punk relics washed up on Ontario shores in the wake of grunge, monuments unfolding at their own pace, allowing us to slow down and think; these spaces have a different tempo for foggy images of home, forced anonymity, collective broadcast elation, the X-wing drawn on a fourth-grade binder, and we haven't even mentioned the internet... as a "place within a place, that exists by itself", Foucault calls the ship "the greatest reserve of the imagination", ambling along as site, catalyst, and witness to unpredictable junctions, and as such, Outer and Inner Space offers limitless correlations, a time and a place for cutting and pasting threads of history that burn the eyes and warm to the touch.

1 Opening line of the Star Wars film franchise
2 Tagline from original trailer for Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope (1977), as seen on youtube http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gvqpFbRKtQ
Foucault, Michel. "Heterotopias" Of Other Spaces (Des Espaces Autres) 1967.
Taussig, Michael. "Violence and Resistance in the Americas: The Legacy of Conquest" The Nervous System.
Routledge, 1992.

AND INNER SPACE

April 3 – April 18, 2009



curated by

JACOB KORCZYNSKI
AND SERENA LEE

featuring work by:

JO SIMALAYA ALCAMPO
LIAM CROCKARD
MARK PELLEGRINO
MEGAN ROONEY
BRAD TINMOUTH
MATTHEW WILLIAMSON

CO-PRESENTED WITH IMAGES FESTIVAL

MARK PELLEGRINO, DETAIL, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

If someone is out there saying "here's what we should be doing to make a revolution" I turn and run as fast as I can. Anyone who is certain of that, in this day and age, is insane. - Sam Green, from "Interview With Sam Green," in Failure! Experiments in Aesthetic and Social Practice

Thinking about revolutions can be an uneasy and slightly awkward experience. Although revolution usually arises from inspiring political and social idealism, consideration of the revolutionary spirit ultimately leads to extreme violence and following that, extreme failure. In thinking about the futility of the attempt, and the likelihood for failure, Jean Luc Godard's 1967 film *La Chinoise* comes to mind. Described as eerily prescient of the student uprisings of 1968, the film follows a group of students in Paris, France. Under the influence of Chairman Mao's 'little red book' – the source of their misinterpreted and misguided ideological motivations – the students hold political meetings and plot a revolution. During a conversation between Véronique and her professor, it becomes clear that a plan of action for what to do after the initial revolt has never been considered. The film's climax involves a clumsy and inept assassination attempt. Through a simple mistake in misreading room numbers the wrong person is assassinated. The seemingly obvious and oblivious reaction is to simply go back and shoot the 'right' person.

"Shit, Shit, Stop. I made a mistake. I read Sholokov upside down all right, and the room number 23, but since it was upside down I inverted. That made it 32 so I went to room 32."
"You shot the guy in 32?"
"Yes."
"Go back."
"Yes, yes. But get the right one this time."

The absurdity of this response is combined with an exaggerated scene of the get-away driver making a very wide and laborious three-point turn in the courtyard, in front of the glass-windowed expanse of the crime scene. We want to point to these minute details, these ridiculous yet simple gestures, to alter the notion of revolution.

In its simplest definition revolution means to turn around. The assassination attempt in *La Chinoise* fails to provide the revolution that they were hoping for. The conclusion of the film shows the end of the summer bringing an end to their revolutionary group, the apartment being cleaned up. No explanations are being asked for, or offered, for their actions. Yet, in at least one simple way there was a successful revolution achieved: that of turning the car around.

This exhibition poses the question of what could be like a revolution, proposing glimpses into the almost and the not quite. This was not a determined avoidance of the type of grandiose revolution the word characteristically conjures, but rather a refocusing on other definitions – that of aspiring, pondering, turning, rotating, orbiting, cycles and measures of time. It is an attempt to think beyond: to the ideological, scientific, technological, and cyclical. We hope to inspire a shift in perspective. Like the car turning in *La Chinoise,* we need to pause and re-orient ourselves along the way in order to turn around or change our point of view. In a three-point turn there is no smooth motion. Each point in the turn adjusts your direction and is necessary to this act of revolution.

So we want to ask again, what is the point of thinking about revolution? What do we have to gain? When we think about revolution in its simplest and most achievable terms, perhaps a better question to ask would be: what do we have to lose?...

Six artists from the photography and integrated media programs at the Ontario College of Art & Design, responded to a call for revolution. This exhibition offers their interpretations of what it might mean to be like a revolution. The installation *This Eternal Frame/Flame* by Neelam Kler, places us within a visual mapping of the history of time, beginning with the big bang. With an abundance of diverse materials and inspired by revolutionary thinkers, Kler invites us to critically engage with the universe, to hypothesize, and to connect with our position within this history. Steve Shaddick presents an interactive projection of planetary revolutions, provoking us to change our perception of our own place in the universe, and offering multiple perspectives of a universal centre that can be infinitely re-centered. He reminds us that it wasn't so long ago that the Earth was *The Centre of the Universe*. Combining painting, video and installation, and using the image of a figure repeatedly jumping off of the roof of a building, Mike Juneau suggests the power in aspiring for something, for getting up after falling, and for trying again. The aspiration for the ability to fall easily off a building – to survive, to be able to get back up – offers a rethinking of the futile gesture. This repetition signifies a process of learning how to fall from increasing heights and survive. By removing the scream from the track *Love Rollercoaster* Marino Imperio examines the power of collective imaginations, and the endurance of urban myths. The ease with which the scream is removed and the song put back into play raises questions about the terms of our current technological revolution, and an erasure of history. In having the CDs available for sharing, Imperio also investigates the viral dispersion of reproducible material in the public realm. Adrian Furniss combines technological glitches with rap songs calling for a reconsideration of the role of technology in our lives. *StarChild* addresses the struggle for control between humans, nature and technology, and offers ideas to revolutionize human existence. In *No Lye*, Hakili Don communicates subtle revolts through a careful and aesthetic consideration of racial identity. Photographing hair as abstract and emblematic, Don explores its complex, codified, charged and symbolic representation, and questions how the subject negotiates confusing notions of sameness and belonging.

IT'S LIKE A REVOLUTION!

curated by

TERESA AVERSA

AMBER LANDGRAFF &

DEBORAH WANG

featuring work by

HAKILI DON

ADRIAN FURNISS

MARINO IMPERIO

MIKE JUNEAU

NEELAM KLER

STEVE SHADDICK

Through the advent of broadcast and recording media, music has become a part of everyday life. We experience it via concert halls, cinema, theatre, malls, parking garages, elevators, cars, restaurants, clubs, the street and the Internet. It is something we listen to but it also lingers in the background like an ongoing soundtrack. Being something that we experience alongside other moments, music becomes historically tied not just to its own timeline of production, but also to the timeline in which the individual encounters it. Even Rudd writes:

"The media industry distributes sounds and music as raw materials in a process of production of symbols. As symbols, music is locally and privately received and reworked, remixed or recombined. It could be generally stated that the end product is that music is constructed as a means of mapping a complex contemporaneity. Music integrates our lives vertically, as a significant part of life history.'

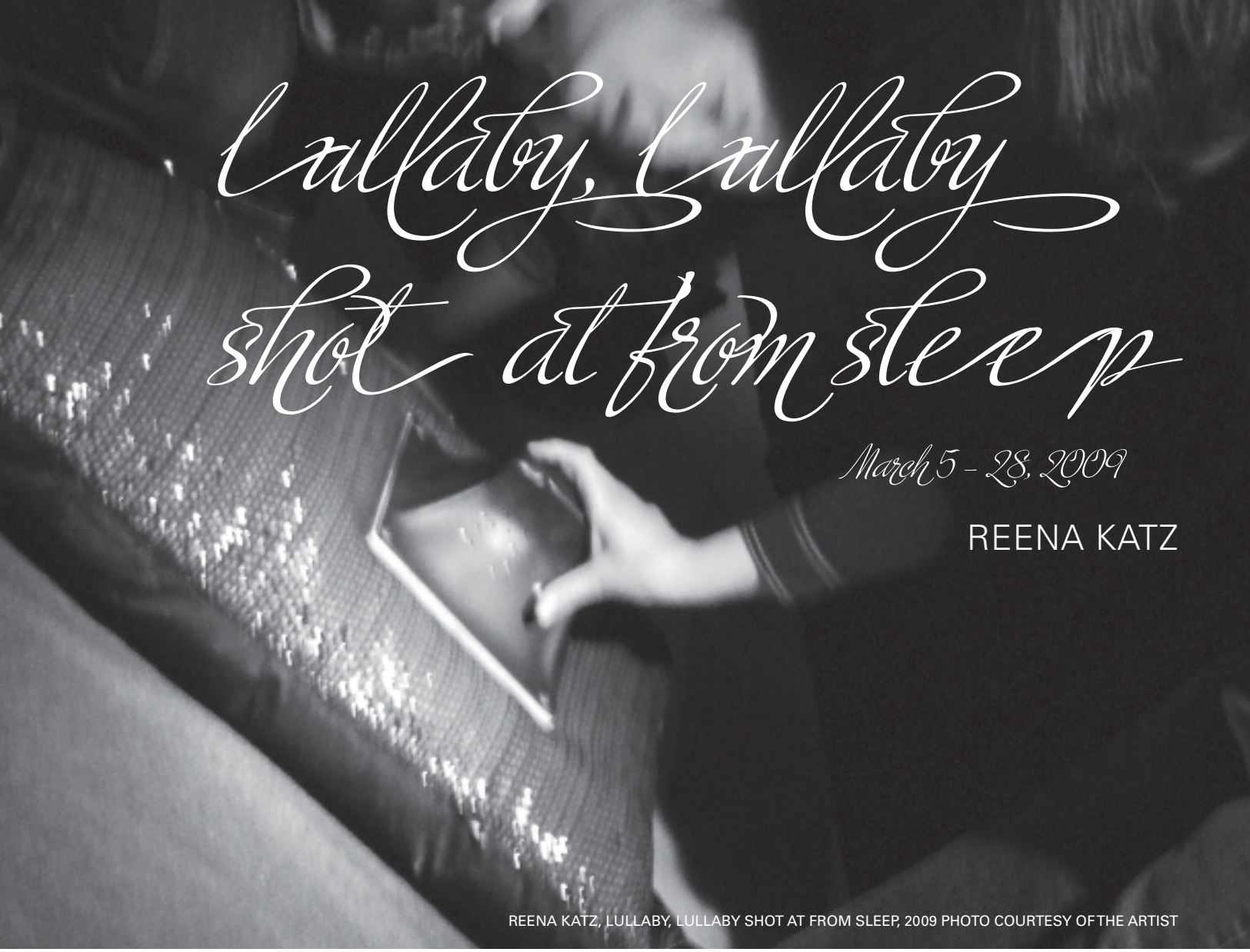
Music becomes a time machine, evoking vivid memories and associations. It is the part of our past that can be relived in a sense, connecting us back to other aspects of experience that we can't relive.

In the installation *lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep*, Reena Katz uses music and cassette tape materials to re-construct the bedroom setting of youth where she spent hours listening to The Police, Patti Smith, The Cure, Led Zeppelin, PJ Harvey, and others. The installation consists of fourteen pillows arranged on beds of plywood covered with wool blankets. Each pillow is covered with a pillowcase constructed from a woven material Katz developed which she calls Audiocloth. It is part wool and audio cassette tape woven together so that a tape-head hacked from a sports walkman can be run over the cloth and reveal the sounds recorded. The installation asks the viewer to enter the piece by gently running a rather fetishized rendition of the sports walkman playhead over the Audiocloth to hear the music of her adolescence. There is an intimacy in the engagement that is reinforced by the allusion to a bedroom setting, and the nostalgic quality of the audiotape itself. However, the intimacy also exists within an atmosphere of anxiety and vulnerability. The inherent bunker-like aesthetic of XBASE, complete with 5-foot ceilings and exposed brick, suggests both the safety of fortitude and also a refuge from some disaster. There's a sense of waiting something out.

Reena Katz's installation instantly brings me back to my own adolescent practice of laying in bed at night with my walkman listening to *Paradise City* by Guns N' Roses on a distant radio station or listening to a favourite mix tape. The radio brought music performance into the domestic domain, and the phonograph allowed people to possess moments frozen in time, memories to replay over and over again. But it was the tape recorder, especially the Walkman, which most radically shifted the practice of music listening into an increasingly private and personalized activity. Not only could you listen to your favourite album over and over again, you could combine your own selection of favourites through the creation of mix tapes. With the Walkman, your cassettes followed you like a best friend throughout key formative years of your life. In lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep Katz creates a double weaving of memory and material. A different kind of mix tape.

The impetus for the work is Katz's attempt to recognize and expose the vulnerability of her queer adolescent self as she struggled to come to terms with and construct her identity. Here, identity is not spoken of as fixed but one that is fluid, constantly being configured from moment to moment, capable of a multiplicity of culturally recognizable symbolic faces. Katz purposes the significance of having a place of refuge, bedroom and music, during a period where she was encountering the various dimensions of her own queerness. By queerness I am not only referring to sexual orientation but a range of practices and desires that fall outside of socially prescribed norms. Besides sexual and musical preferences one could also talk about heteronormative deviations in choice of sexual practice, fashion, recreational activities, hobbies, and work interests. Eve Sedgewick defines queerness as "the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically." This expands the idea of queer to include much more than a homosexual orientation but speaks to anything falling outside of socially prescribed norms. Defined in this way, Katz's queer voice is not exclusive. Katz brings her experience, which was a private activity, into a public setting where the audience can identify with the role of music as a soundtrack to the negotiation of their own identities. She welcomes the divergent projections of the audience by giving voice to the otherness of her own experience.

The material construction of Katz's installation with its synthesis of audiotape, weaving, pillowcases, and cassette player technology performs a number of intertwined deviations from more familiar socially defined practices. Technology has been a masculinized domain consistently throughout its development, or at least in how the narrative of that development is represented. Meanwhile, the production of textiles has been constructed as feminine and associated with the domestic sphere. In this narrative,



Lullaby, Lullaby shot at from sleep

March 5 – 28, 2009

REENA KATZ

REENA KATZ, LULLABY, LULLABY SHOT AT FROM SLEEP, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

work is tied to the construction of identity. Indeed, the movement of women into work traditionally held by men during the post-war era was threatening for this very reason, as it destabilized the basis for male identity and assessment of their position in the social power structure. Women in the workplace represented a new demographic of competition. In Katz's installation she engages in a hybridization of masculinized audio technology with the feminized craft of weaving. She transforms the public space of the gallery into a space that references the private and the domestic - the teenage bedroom. The cassette tape is taken further away from its technocentric identity and queered into a form of cozy textiles. Through the synthesis of materials Katz does not simply seek to reproduce a moment of her youth, but offers us an interesting vantage point.

Music has the ability to help us access long forgotten memories and experiences but the way Katz has integrated audiotape into the installation prevents us from hearing clearly what is on it. The weft of the wool crosses over the warp of the audiotape creating a distorted effect. The challenge in running the tape head along the Audiocloth at a regular speed further impedes the ability to recognize what is being played. Our desire to hear the music in a normative sense is denied by the configuration of the materials. The situation parallels Katz's early experiences where her own desires seemed unrecognizable and unattainable. Evidence of her desire is most explicitly represented in the pillow labels she has modified, baring suggestive excerpts from some of the songs she has woven into the pillowcases.

Lullaby, lullaby shot at from sleep expresses today what could not be expressed publicly in the past. Through the materials, music, and intimacy of the installation Katz brings this queer adolescent moment forward. The audience is not only confronted with the memory of their own struggles and pleasures of constructing themselves through music, but with the experience of another's personal history of encountering desire.

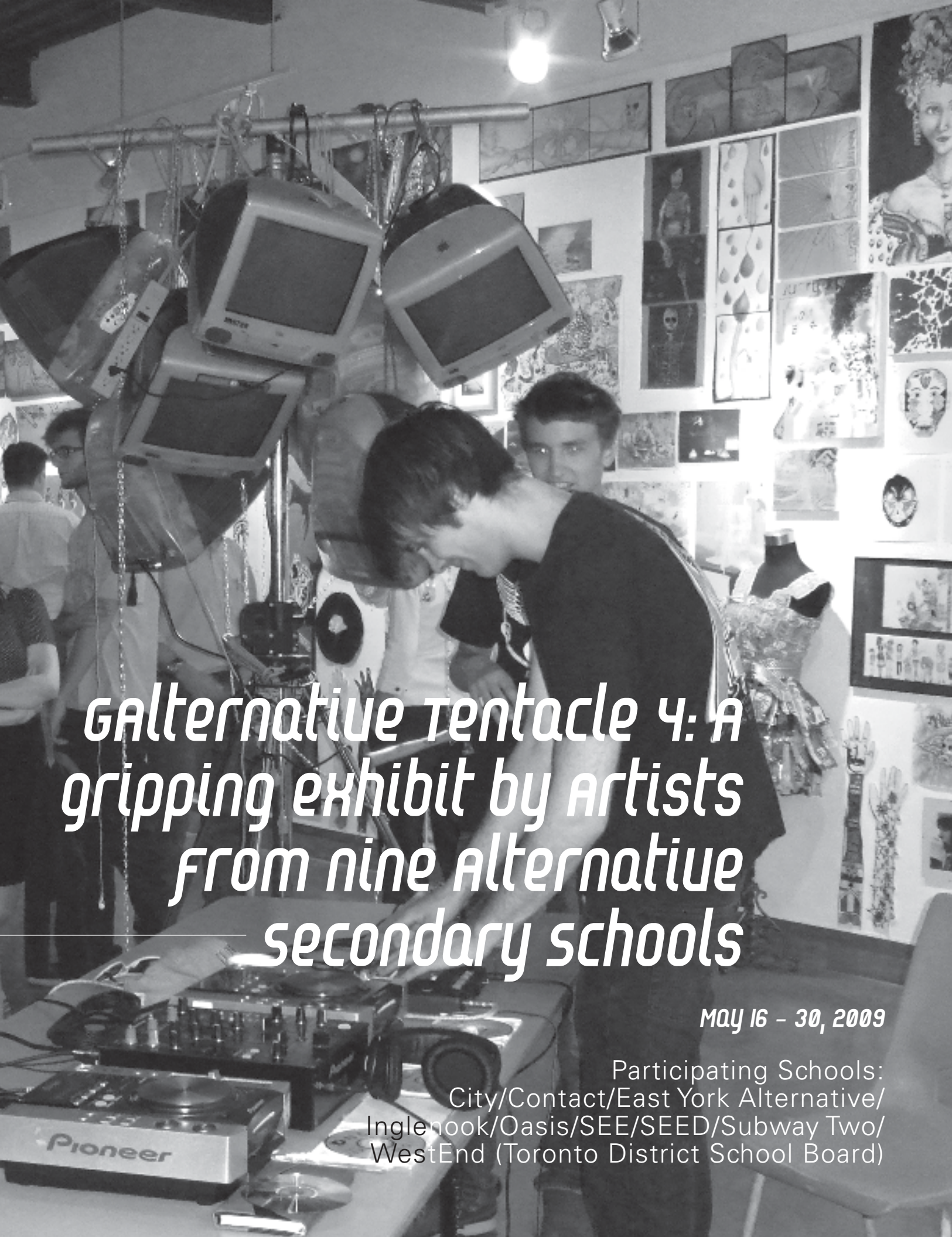
gripped by the alternative tentacle: the 4th annual alternative school art show

CRAIG MORRISON, OASIS

As we approach the fifth anniversary of Alternative Tentacle, we build on our ongoing partnership between XPACE Cultural Centre and a family of nine alternative highschools. This partnership provides a supportive educational experience for youth to learn and contribute to the local cultural community, and serves as a launching pad for young artists to share their unique creative voices with the broader public.

Our fourth annual show in 2009 refined our tradition of packed to the rafters salon-style shows, highlighting the creative work done by students who do not fit into the mainstream school experience and have chosen an alternative. This show, an extension of a 40 year inclusive commitment to youth and the arts demonstrated by the existence and continued advocacy for Alternative Schools in the Toronto District School Board, acted as a springboard for young artists as they move on to other learning and creative experiences. The 2009 show was hung floor to ceiling without a hierarchy and occupied all nooks and crannies of the space; individual labels were ommitted to empahasize the collective power of the sheer volume of youth voices included.

Alternative Tentacle 4 also showcased the innovative art programs and creative educational projects at Oasis, SEED, Inglenook, City School, Contact, West End, Subway Two, SEE and East York Alternative; all these school-based art programs are designed by our art(ist)/teachers to re/engage youth and provide opportunities for students to participate in the real-world experience of being artists engaged with their diverse communities. In mentoring alternative school students in the planning and presentation of a public display, as well as providing young artists with the gallery space and enviable opportunity to exhibit in Toronto's Arts & Design District, the partnership between our nine schools and XPACE has proven supportive of emerging artists from diverse communities. Over the years many of our alternative highschool students have moved on to post-secondary arts education or arts-related careers in Toronto and beyond; Alternative Tentacle 4 was an opportunity for students to collaborate, participate in street level culture and continue to learn beyond the classroom walls, experiences well worth promoting as we plan for the fifth annual show this spring!



GAlternative Tentacle 4: A gripping exhibit by Artists from nine Alternative secondary schools

MAY 16 – 30, 2009

Participating Schools:
City/Contact/East York Alternative/
Inglenook/Oasis/SEE/SEED/Subway Two/
WestEnd (Toronto District School Board)

ALISON S.M. KOBAYASHI AND GINTAS TIRILIS, MOTEL (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

MOTEL

SUZANNE CARTE-BLANCHENOT

Thank you for smoking. Can I get a light? I remember a day when you could smoke freely in public without being shunned, ridiculed, and fined. In fact, you could smoke in theatres and restaurants, on airplanes, at school, work, and even in hospitals. Now gone, all gone, is the luxury of lighting up in a communal space. So when did the demise of smoking culture in Canada occur? Can we chronicle the downward spiral with the public appearance of the warning labels that went from chastising reminders to noxious images? The black and white cautionary statements gave way to grotesquely graphic images of dogs' teeth and disappointed children. Taxes skyrocketed to new heights vowing to eradicate the vice from Canadian diets, especially in the younger population. The most recent lobby to eradicate public cigarette consumption was put forward by the Toronto Transit Commission to prohibit smoking within nine meters of bus and streetcar stops. As the cartons became more pernicious so did the attitudes towards smokers. No longer the romantic James Dean's of society, the smoker is painted as an ugly, self-absorbed people. Not to underestimate or trivialize the effects of second-hand (or the newly coined third-hand) smoke on by standers and children, but the social "denormalization" strategy exercises humiliation tactics lacking mutual respect. The slow death of smoking leaves people huddled in corners rejected from the rest of the polite, pious public.

This is how our journey and (mis)adventure in Motel begins with Gintas Tirilis and Alison S. M. Kobayashi, looking for a light. Pushed to the darkened areas, the outlawed smokers went looking for refuge from the cold Canadian winds in search of a warm sheltered place to have a smoke. Exploring the Mississauga, Etobicoke suburbs for such a place led the pair to discover a strip of motels along Lakeshore Blvd, just on the edge of Toronto, abandoned. The location seems the perfect setting for any escapade, as motels proliferate American horror stories and often conjure up seductive images of anonymous sexual encounters, unsavory dealings and downtrodden souls.

Further exploration into these dilapidated structures became a nightly routine as they dared to gain greater access to the suites, removing the discarded vestiges. Taking that cigarette break allowed them to slow down and critically contemplate their surroundings. This time and clarity on the first inhale permitted both to look around their given space and see the potential in the grungy objects thrown around the murky rooms.

Inhale. Awaiting demolition the objects left in the rooms and offices held an eerie quality of a time capsule. Exhale. The unkempt rooms had already become mini museums holding valuable archives of the establishment's prosperous past. Inhale. Liberating the items and placing in a gallery context would give reverence to the humble objects and to the years of history that were imbedded on their very surfaces. Exhale.

Motel is a collection archiving the salvaged objects through display, photographs, dioramas, multiples, and narrative video installation based on their contravention experiences. Tirilis and Kobayashi keep an ongoing record, through documentation and scavenged relics, of their navigation through these once flourishing temporary habitats. The exhibition has been arranged as part collection and part exploratory fun house, recreating the fear and intrigue the two experienced that fateful evening. So there is an advantage of taking the time to smell the flowers and light a cigarette. Can I get an amen?

...continued from MOTEL

THE CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE MUSEUM

SU-YING LEE

"Museums are always fictional in that they are always created or constructed by us in a particular set of social and historical circumstances. They are negotiated realities." -Dr. Jeanne Cannizzo, Senior Lecturer, Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh Two twenty-somethings wander looking for a warm place to smoke on a cold night. They spot a row of boarded up motels scheduled for demolition, on the drab winter landscape of Mimico's Lakeshore Boulevard. They choose one; they break and enter. Success, a sheltered place to smoke! Once inside, it's forbidding and not without hazards, but they are compelled to press on - breaking and entering and scavenging cool nostalgic detritus left behind by the former owners. They return repeatedly to the site.

It is as plausible to establish a museum display based on aforementioned events as it is for a palaeontologist to produce an exhibit on the subject of the discovery of fossilized prehistoric life.

Museums are after all, under pressure to be many things to many people in order to get visitors through the door. Self-preservation and interactive learning have given rise to museums as sites for amusement, thrills and entertainment. This is a reality which the artists Alison S.M. Kobayashi and Gintas Tirilis mimic and capitalize on with their installation of the MOTEL project. The two smoking, shelter-seeking twenty-somethings, Kobayashi and Tirilis, have presented their adventures-in-trespassing through the common idioms of museum display. The resulting exhibition inventively combines documentary, fact and speculation with a measure of entertainment value.

The artists mount the artefacts of Lakeshore Boulevard's motel strip in familiar museologic manner. Although the motels themselves date back to Toronto's postwar era, the MOTEL museum is dedicated to the liminal period following their operation. Kobayashi and Tirilis present the motels as commercial ruins. They, themselves appear as excavators by happenstance, emboldened by nicotine addiction. Rather than a broad survey of Toronto's commercial waterfront heritage, a serendipitously uncovered micro segment in the timeline of this neighbourhood's development is presented.

Akin to the dioramas of archaeologists at work, the artists stage 3-dimensional illustrations of their "excavation" site in the motel ruins. Such animating devices conflate education with amusement. The dioramas of Kobayashi and Tirilis are executed with haunted house appeal, drawing viewers into the activities of the intrepid explorers. Once engaged by the display, the tools of an amateur break and enter, the atmosphere of impending demolition and the curious and familiar interiors of commercial ruins are revealed to the viewer.

The account presented by Kobayashi and Tirilis through their MOTEL museum, although amusing, is rather ordinary in a number of ways. It is the story of the not-uncommon impulsive adventure of youth and subsequently of a neighbourhood's gentrification. Presented by two individuals who are not archetypal museum professionals, Kobayashi and Tirilis represent a demand, and an evolution, in the manner in which our museums are governed.

Museums have originated from an especially particular worldview, social structure and economy, voiding the notion of museum as archive of collective heritage. Museum collections have customarily been loyally reverential toward these origins. Traditionally dominated by the elite, a democratization of museums is currently developing alongside global migration, ease of access to information and society's awareness and sensitivity to socio-economic realities. This juncture necessitates that the museum profession become more inclusive, diverse, community-orientated and socially aware. For museums, relevance and currency are becoming a matter of survival. Where museums aim to present people with their own culture, the MOTEL museum has achieved this imperative by taking matters into its own hands.

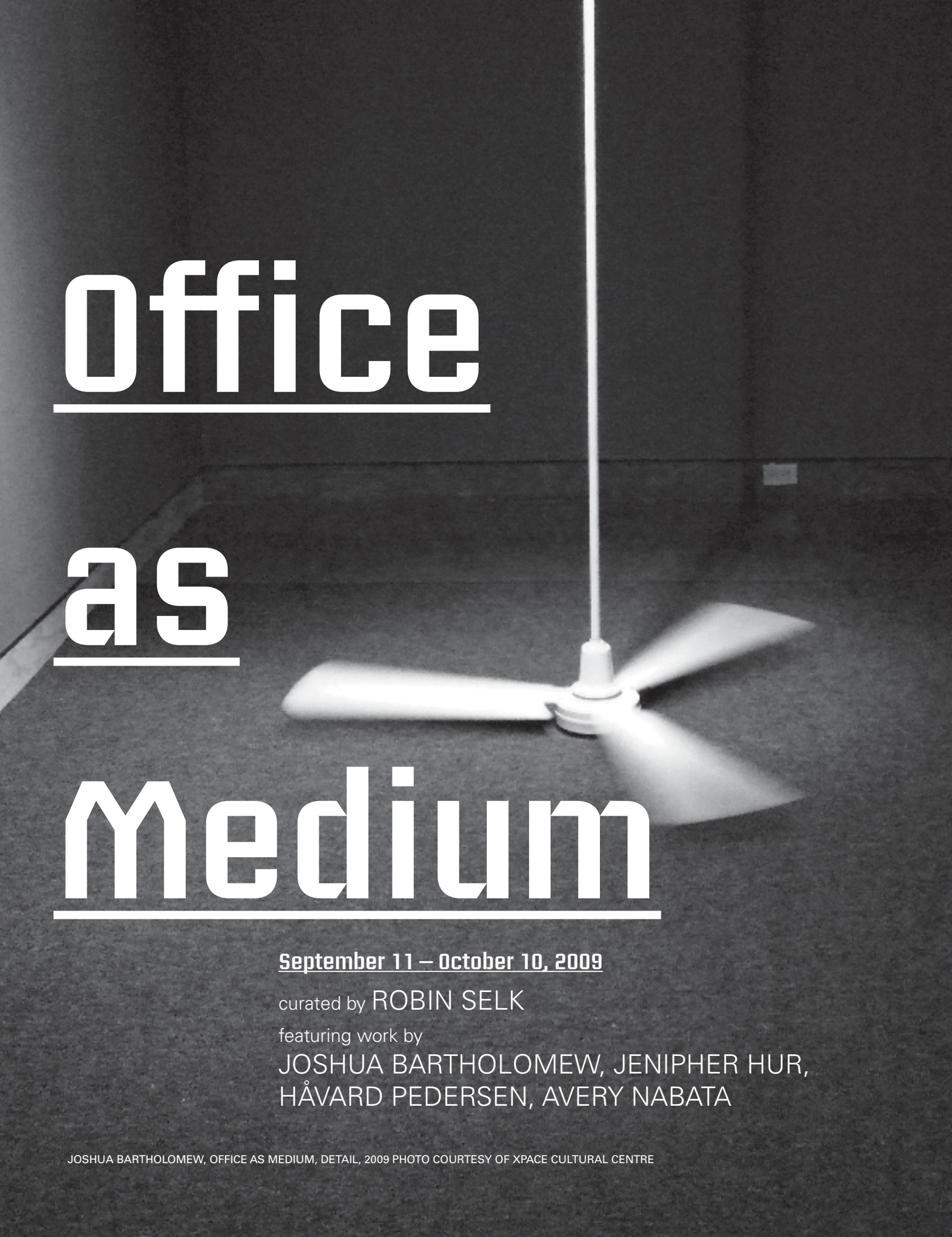
Although a somewhat tongue-in-cheek act of mimicry, the artists' installation effectively reflects upon the current status of the museum – a site where education and recreation coalesce; an institution which must move beyond elitist origins if it is to endure. In this setting, Kobayashi and Tirilis lead us to consider the personal, cultural and collective value of the human stories each one of us possesses.

BENJAMIN BRUNEAU
TARA DOWNS

PALIMPSEST

October 16 - November 14, 2009

BENJAMIN BRUNEAU & TARA DOWNS, PALIMPSEST, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



Office as Medium

September 11 – October 10, 2009

curated by ROBIN SELK

featuring work by

JOSHUA BARTHOLOMEW, JENIPHER HUR,
HÅVARD PEDERSEN, AVERY NABATA

JOSHUA BARTHOLOMEW, OFFICE AS MEDIUM, DETAIL, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

ROBIN SELK

Office as Medium is an exhibition of works that addresses the gallery's auxiliary role of being a lived and worked-in office devoted to the promotion of artists and their work as well as its own self, and not merely a space for exhibitions. A gallery is not simply a static space for the display of art; instead it is dynamic and operational, serving a multiplicity of roles and functions such as providing spaces for meetings, writing, the publication of catalogues, etc. Through the performance of these tasks those who work within the gallery actively inhabit and practice the space. If we apply Michel de Certeau's theory on spaces being the practice of place and compare it to Brian O'Doherty's ideas of the gallery as a cold sterile 'white cube' where only the eyes enter and not the outside world, we see the paradoxical nature of the gallery as functioning as one thing (an office) and envisioning itself as another (the white cube). de Certeau suggests that all lived spaces are inevitably dynamic and individualized to the people who inhabit them; and although the architecture of a place—or for the point of this argument the gallery and O'Doherty's conception of what that role of the gallery must be—may attempt to constrict against individual practices, that place will eventually become specific through the circumnavigation of intended use. Perhaps this paradoxical nature is the reason for the gallery's ambiguity in being half showroom and half business office. Although this line of questioning the roles played within the gallery inevitably aligns the show with institutional critique by the likes of Michael Asher (and followers) the exhibition differs in approach by using forms of humour and attempting to be relational to those who work at the gallery.

The office of XPACE, which has until now occupied the downstairs area and has always been kept separate from the exhibition space, will be temporarily implanted into the exhibition room for the duration of the show, so that it will reside with the art on display. This not only tests the limits of the traditional functions and associations of the gallery, but frees it in a way that an office is free – backroom employees implicitly possess the ability to decorate their desk space as they please, unhindered by notions of preservations to which galleries have often been subject according to a curator's whims. The office, often unfairly characterized as a drab, regimented space, beholds a creativity and flexibility that has often gone unnoticed –which is why it has now been chosen to reside in the forefront alongside the artists' works.

Many of the works in the exhibition take as their departure point archetypical and stereotypical views of the office place—much of which have been derived from pop culture depictions of office environments, such as in the movies Office Space (1999) and American Psycho (2000). For example Håvard Pedersen designed the show`s flyer in the form of generic business cards, which are a reference to scene in the movie American Psycho (2000), in which Christian Bale and Bill Sage exchange and admire their otherwise identical gold embossed business cards. Pedersen's interests are in "insider" languages that become perpetuated within insular groupings of people, such as in office culture—the difference between Sage's off-white and Bale's cream coloured business cards may go unnoticed by those not in the know—or for that matter the esoteric language the comprises a large majority of the discourse surrounding art history. Imbued in some of these works are hints of office humour or anxieties over office work environments such as in Avery Nabata's series of time based sculptures

using common office materials. Through working with these materials Nabata extends their intended function and possibilities—moving utilitarian objects into the realm of art objects. (In a way these sculptures are an extension of the doodles or objects made in procrastination that may exist or be formed by the xpace staff in the course of the show (should I include this)). In addition to these, she has chosen to carpet the gallery with cheap industrial grade carpeting, altering the normal expectations for a gallery. Other works in the show use the form of the office to branch out into more serious and encompassing topics such as globalization and consumerism.

Joshua Bartholomew`s works for the show relate to the drive taken from Vancouver to Toronto in that one of the pieces was made in Vancouver and personally shipped by the artist in his car; the other—a fabricated light box installed on top of his cars roof—turned the drive itself into an art piece—and served as documentation of the trip and as well as the document production and transportation inherent in globalized offices. The use of a light box—a common feature in advertisement and artistic practices—and its placement within the landscape, links the work to the conceptual office of Iain and Ingrid Baxter's N.E. Thing Company. The periodic practice of the Baxters served as critique for the raising corporatization and marketing of Vancouver starting in the mid 1960's. However instead of photographing and marketing the landscape as the Baxters did, Bartholomew's work serves to document the landscape by capturing it—the insects splattered across the once pristine surface of the light box can be viewed as a type of record for a journey taken.

The act of displacing the office of the gallery is played with in a critical and perhaps comedic manner by Jenipher Hur`s installation work that occupies the now vacant space of the downstairs office. Whereas once it was a typical office, the room now serves as a showcase for the imaginary ideation of fake production dinosaur bones, the kind intended to be sold to tourists. Ideas around authenticity and originality become apparent in Hur's questioning and confusing of the boundaries between ideation and production.

Office as Medium disrupts the normal and traditional operations of the gallery and subsequently repositions and creates the possibility for new opportunities for the gallery as a whole. Regular office employees of XPACE will inevitably become involved with the exhibition, out of need to use their "office." Through the displacement of the office, employees are subsequently left to reinvent how they operate and are forced to reconsider the space as a whole. A corollary of this enmeshing and redrawing of boundaries is a nod to relational aesthetics, which constructed spaces with the intent of shifting the role of viewers to more active participants. Relational aesthetics takes on the notion that the interactions between them being integral and necessary for the art to come to fruition. For example, the tables and food Rirkrit Tiravanija served at his dinner projects were not necessarily the art pieces themselves but instruments which facilitated interactions resulting from the provision of free dinners – a major component of relational aesthetics, played upon in Office As Medium by involving viewers, and employees, was to illustrate what can arise out of art. However, Office as Medium is not a mere echo of the relational aesthetics movement, as it includes autonomous works by artists that have decided to take the idea of the office as their model. Thus the show's relational components exist as supplements to the works on display. The show also does not attempt to reproduce or pick up the project of creating all encompassing spaces which the relational aesthetics artists attempted. Claire Bishop's critique of relational aesthetics was that the works' actual implementation was not relational to everyone per say, and that more often than not it preserved museum and galleries' privileged and exclusive role in society and the boundaries that have keep art separated from the majority of the public. With this in mind, the exhibition attempts to negotiate the problems inherent within relational works, and tries to operate on a more close circuit track in that it only seeks to be relational to the staff and employees at XPACE.

A gallery is not simply a static space for the display of art

OFFICE AS MEDIUM, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

November 20 – December 12, 2009

12-02-61

SHLOMI GREENSPAN, TALIYA COHEN AND CHISTOFER HUTCH

CHRISTOFER HUTCH, 12-02-61, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Staging Resistance

LEIA GORE

I know each of these artists well: each is driven by a prickling, restless energy that sets their creations apart from those of their peers. Taliya Cohen, Shlomi Greenspan, and Christofer Hutch are self-declared painters who push fearlessly against confines of their medium. There is a seductive quality to the naiveté in the work of this collective. Loosely inspired by an illustrated reverie from Italian director Federico Fellini's Book of Dreams, Cohen, Greenspan and Hutch have theatrically re-imagined the gallery as a stage ripe for exploration. The dream, dated 12-02-61, is reflected in the title of the show.

As a collective they are immediately recognizable for audcious departures from painting's historical preoccupation with the canvas. Today Cohen challenges traditional modes of painting via paint-free architectural installations made from urban detritus. Greenspan photographs and animates his cycle of creation and effacement in his abstract paintings—a technique familiar to William Kentridge. Traditional engagement with paint is allowed to exist only as traces projected onto the sanded then re-primed wooden panels that once held his paintings. A delicacy of pattern characterizes Hutch's large-scale plastered construction, somehow reminiscent of decayed wallpaper. It seems at first glance to be peeling away from the gallery walls, revealing the spine of its industrial supports.

This non-traditional approach and multivalent response to Fellini personally evokes the methodology of another European director, the Danish Lars von Trier. In a 1996 interview by Stig Bjorkman, von Trier asserted that his editing process was geared, "to increase the intensity of the performance, without regard as to whether the image is in focus." Von Trier cites Fellini as one of his primary influences, while Saša Perugini argues in "The Aesthetics of Fellini's Art as Seen through its Ties with Popular Entertainment" that Von Trier extends the Italian director's aesthetic legacy. An uncontested cinematic virtuoso, Von Trier is renowned for experimental

As a collective they are immediately recognizable for audacious departures from painting's historical preoccupation with the canvas.

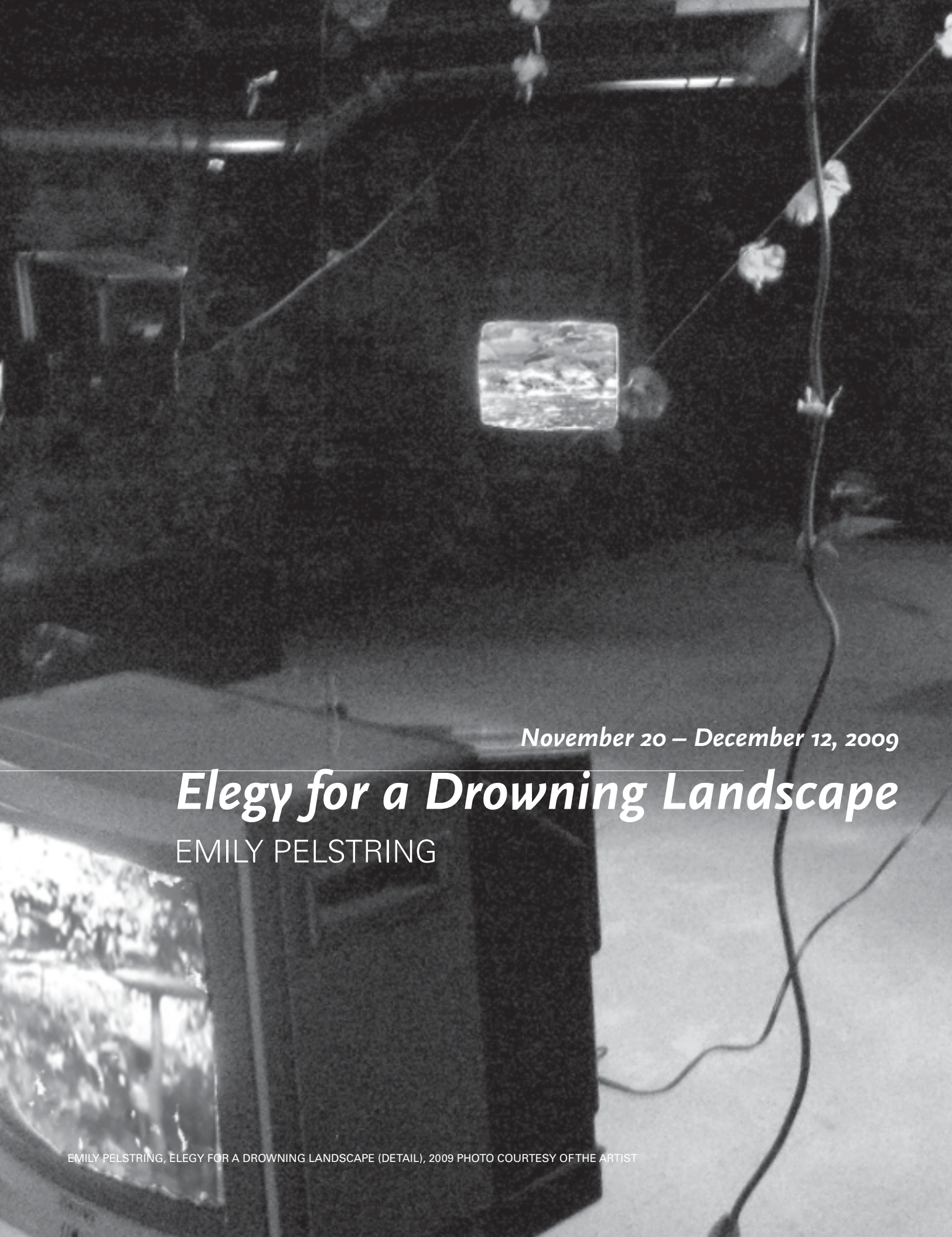
SHLOMI GREENSPAN, 12-02-61, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

films featuring spare, abstract sets appropriated from the realm of theater. Cohen, Greenspan and Hutch espouse his spirit of heady explorative resistance to tradition. Instead of fighting the limitations of painting, these artists eschew boundaries to focus like von Trier on the intensity of creation. Fellini's dream of December 2nd, 1961 reads: Here I am very close to my destination, but it still seems unreachable to me: I stop and maintain an extremely dangerous equilibrium without attempting to take so much as another step. Am I going to plummet down into the shadow of the courtyard, smashing myself? Fellini's city becomes ever more indeterminate and complex—as in many dreams his landscape is freshly created and crystalline as he moves through it, but its periphery crumbles irreverently with each step forward. The filaments of his dream unravel, revealing a specter of anxiety that gnaws at the edges of his confidence. Similarly, 12-02-61 manifests as a theatrical set rather than installation: the construction seems solid and reliable, yet pervasive blue light and partially destroyed materials insinuate a sly ephemerality. Each work is caught in an unscripted inevitable cycle of creation and destruction. Though different in its aesthetic, the set of Lars von Trier's *Dogville* (2003) is also brought to mind: it is another enigmatic space, created by lines of chalk on a black ground. This loosely delineated psychological stage is used throughout his American Trilogy where theater and cinema are irreverently collapsed to amplify the intensity of the acted and scopic experience.

As in the case of *Dogville,* the experience of this collaboration is tantamount. 12-02-61's interwoven environments float the audience over an unfamiliar cityscape whose lit windows invite visitors to explore a handcrafted set. The bird's eye view is interrupted by gallery walls that sweep forward, diminishing in scale as they peel away from their reliable structural purpose. Navigating the implications of the space is complex: Hutch's false wall mediating the layout is clean, gently burnished with possible outlines of windows while Cohen's city spreading throughout the space is created entirely from refuse.

Greenspan's painterly vignettes engage with psychoanalytic symbolism that can be found in both Fellini's oeuvre and Surrealist film. A game of chess played against background of oscillating painted noise features pieces that slowly melt—the rooks and queens puddling into a confluence with the board, invoking both Salvador Dali's melting clocks in The Persistence of Memory and a scene from the dada film *Entr'acte* by Francis Picabia and René Clair. *Entr'acte* (1924), a filmic attack on André Breton's Manifesto of Surrealism, depicts another chess scene, played by Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp.

Throughout 12-02-61, potentiality entwines with fluid meaning that slips easily through the viewer's grasp. Painting manifests as a cycle of creation and destruction, colliding with film, theater, stencil, set-building, installation, digital editing and reclaimed materials with deeply enigmatic results. The only certainty: purity of medium is the least of these artists' concerns.

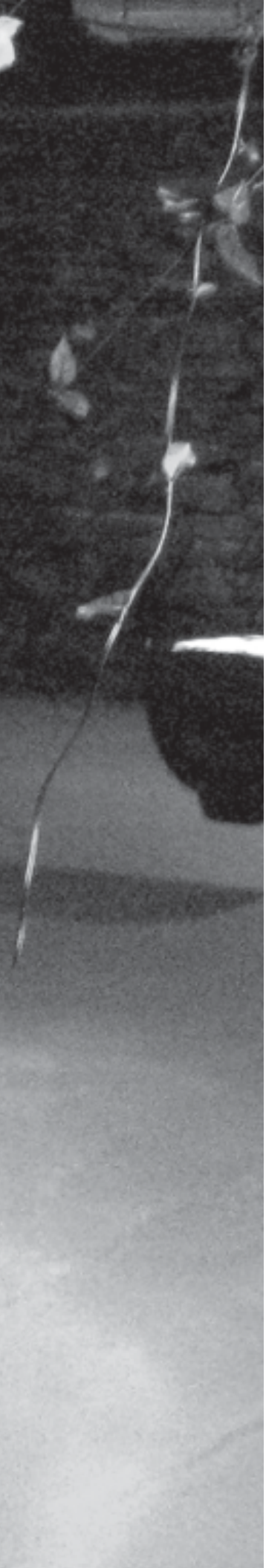


November 20 – December 12, 2009

Elegy for a Drowning Landscape

EMILY PELSTRING

EMILY PELSTRING, ELEGY FOR A DROWNING LANDSCAPE (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Synthetic Wilderness

MARISSA NEAVE

In *The Trouble of Wilderness*, William Cronon takes to pieces the myth that, "wilderness is the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilization that has lost its soul." We may think that nature is as pure as it is sublime; a place distinct from our self-imposed urban monstrosities, an escape where "we can recover the true selves we have lost to the corrupting influences of our artificial lives." But, Cronon argues, the "wilderness" is just as much a product of human interference as a crowded downtown street. Emily Pelstring's *Elegy for a Drowning Landscape* puts dismantling this myth into art, with six spatially arranged CRT monitors loop fragmented footage of wildlife and landscape alongside a droning, electronic sound track. The landscape at the core of *Elegy* is constructed, synthetic and carefully assembled, much like the "natural" landscape that we flee to when we desire convalescing.

Pelstring, a Montreal-based intermedia artist, reflects on living things and dying things, how the past haunts the present, and how physical movement within the installation space interacts with the cinematic images on the screens. With a dramatic theatricality reminiscent of natural history museum display, the low ceiling of XBASE adds to the intimate staging, where the walk down the narrow staircase into the installation adds a chance note of performativity to the piece.

Elegy for a Drowning Landscape readies a space where old and new duke it out. The CRT monitor stands in for the diorama, but instead of a static model that one would expect from a museum of natural history, the models move and glow, bursting out of the spaces they inhabit. And yet, in this updated, techno-version of display, the CRT monitor is as prehistoric as its visual contents.

Pelstring reimagines the archived wilderness, and places it within archival remnants of machine, literalizing Cronon's dismissal of nature as pristine and untouched, a point made even more clear by the synthesized noise dripping throughout the cave-like environment.

I interviewed Pelstring by email to ask her more about the origins of her installation.

Marissa Neave: Elegy for a Drowning Landscape contains a number of different aural and visual components. How was this piece conceived, and where did you start?

Emily Pelstring: When I started this piece, I (mistakenly) thought that it was about transposing an outdoor location into an exhibition space. However, all of this changed dramatically when I realized that what I had imagined just didn't come across in the physical and material world. The CRT monitors didn't feel like "windows" at all- there

was no sense that anything "real" was behind them. When you're walking around in a space, you aren't absorbed in the image on the screen, so the images are not really that illusionistic. In the first iteration of this piece, while I was walking around in the space, the screens felt more like dioramas in a museum display- or even living animals in a zoo. This realization freed me up to arrange monitors into a spatial composition that was conducive to wandering around, and inspired me to create a more musical soundtrack. It was no longer about accuracy or a structuralist experiment. It was about relating to materials on several levels.

MN: What is it about video and immersive environments that captures your interest as an artist?

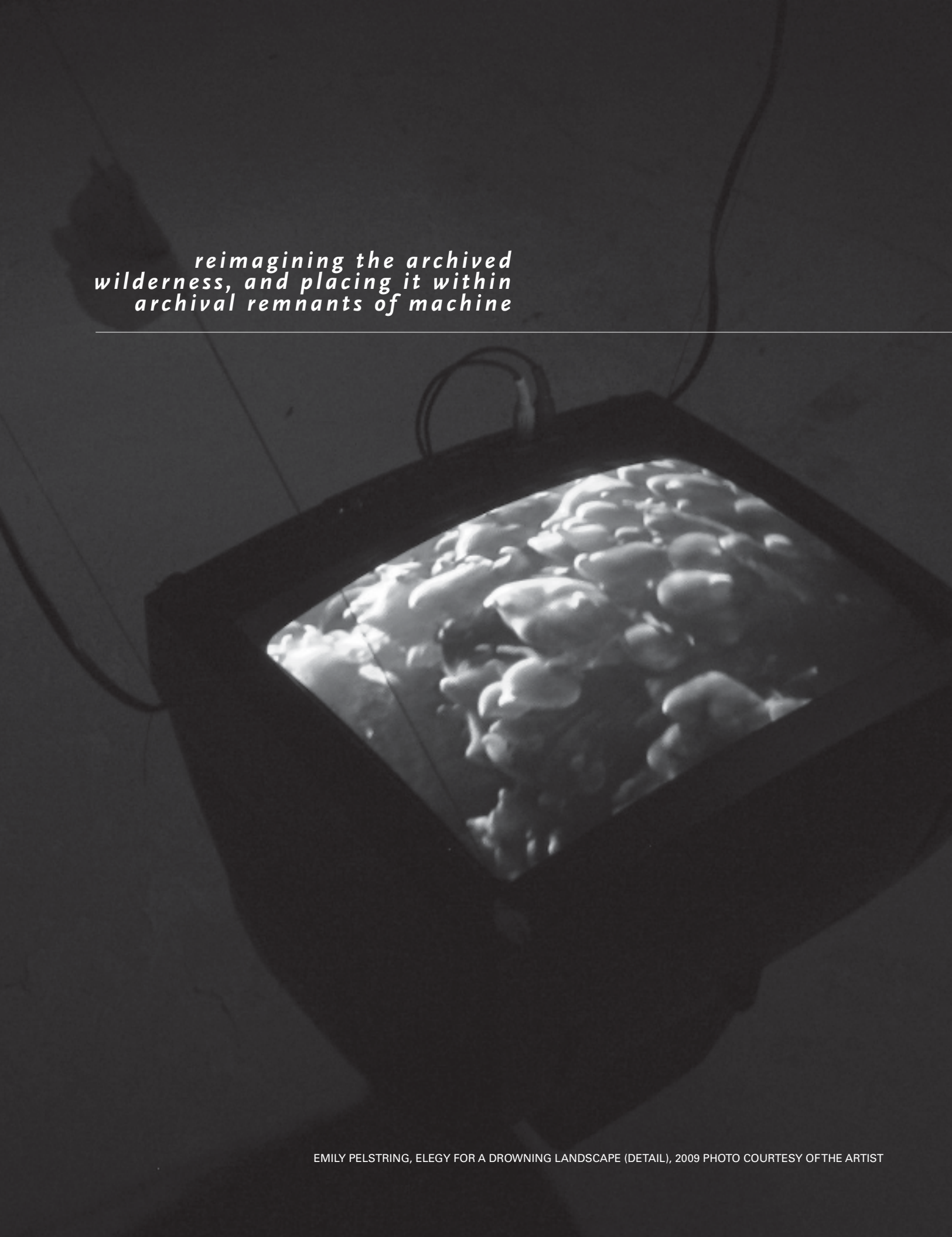
EP: In the end, I usually find the ways that people physically relate to screens as objects more interesting than whatever is communicated by the representational images on the screen. I spent a lot of time transforming the images and sounds emanating from the screens in Elegy, but only in order to manipulate the viewer's relationship to them, and to create a relationship between the multiple screens in the space. In the making of this piece, my own relationship to the video objects became more than physical; it was almost emotional.

MN: Can you speak a bit about obsolescence? It figures strongly in this piece, from the materials to the music to the video.

EP: During "moving season" in Montreal--when everyone's lease ends and we all switch apartments--I frequently see CRT monitors put out on the street with the garbage like some fat, dumb, abandoned pets, their little power cords sticking out like tails. I wanted to create a sort of reverent eulogy for these poor creatures. This is why the tone of the piece is somber. Most of the TVs I'm using for this iteration of *Elegy* were rescued by a friend of mine whose job is to clean out people's apartments after they move. It just tugs on my heartstrings. These losses seem unimportant compared to all of the horrible things that are actually going on in the world, and because of this I admit a sort of silliness to the work in the form of bubbly, colorful images and sounds. On one hand, it really is a silly and insignificant thing. On the other hand, I sense that humans abandon and discard things just like they abandon and discard each other. I really wonder how similar the impulse to throw away a large electronic object is from the impulse to hurt, forget, or ignore someone, and if we should look at our collective ability to throw things away as a sign of our more sinister capacities.

1 Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness, or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature. Ed. William Cronon. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995. 80.
2 Ibid.

reimagining the archived wilderness, and placing it within archival remnants of machine

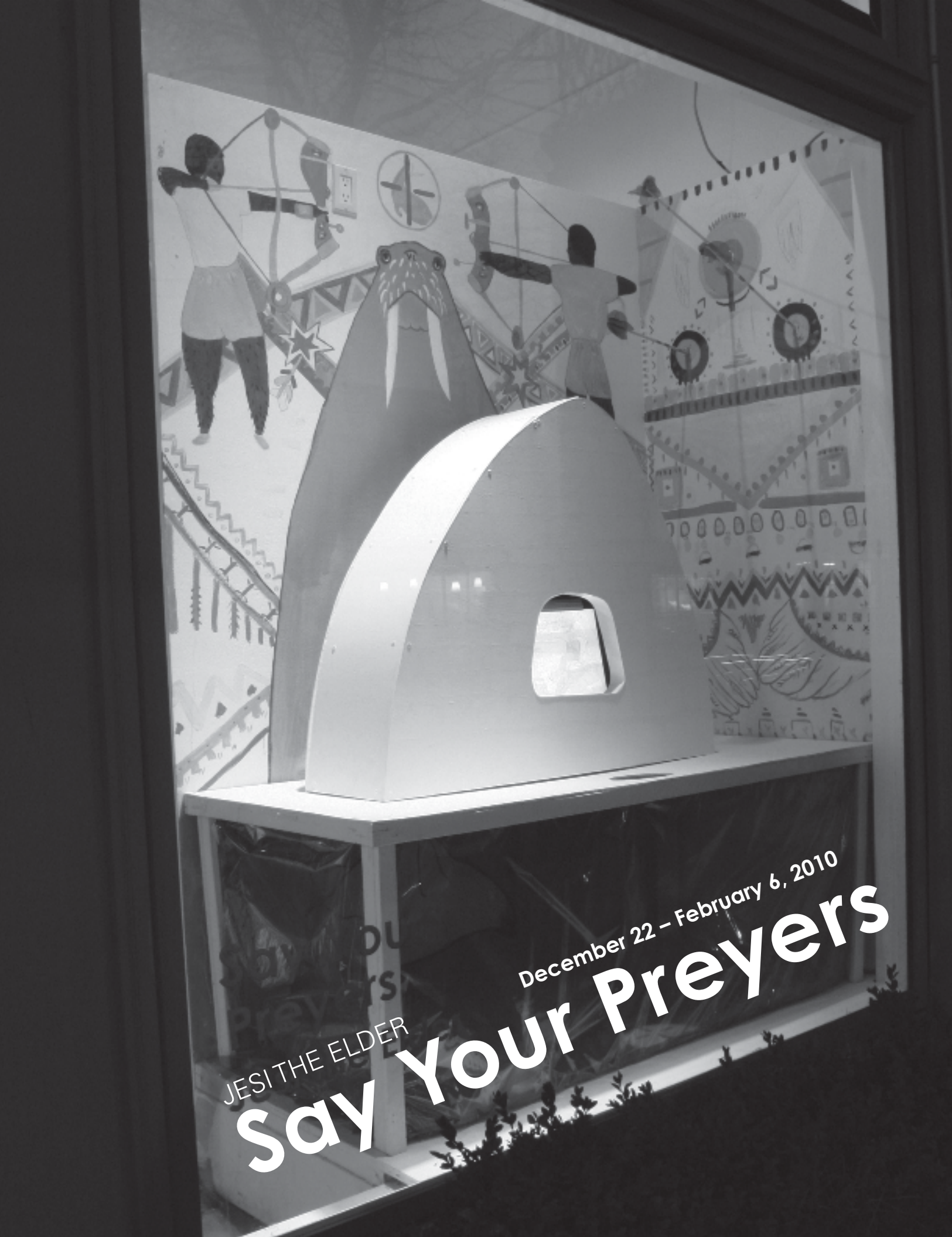


EMILY PELSTRING, ELEGY FOR A DROWNING LANDSCAPE (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

DONNA IRVINE

VARIANT III

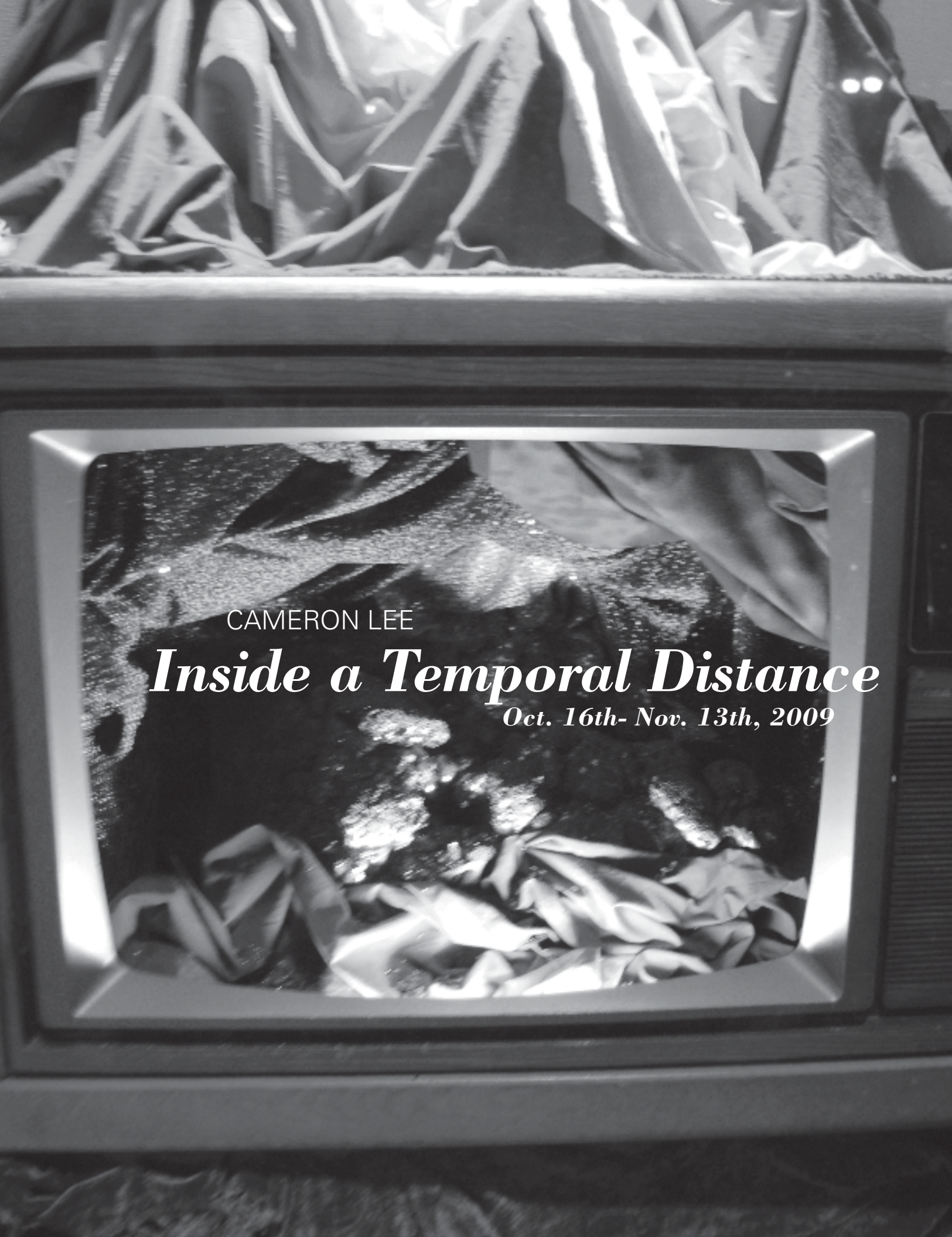
November 20 – December 12, 2009



JESI THE ELDER

Say Your Preyers

December 22 – February 6, 2010



CAMERON LEE

Inside a Temporal Distance

Oct. 16th- Nov. 13th, 2009

DUSTIN WENZEL

RECENT METAL WORK FROM THE "MULTIPLE OPENINGS" SERIES

SEPT 11 - OCT 10, 2009

BRANDON A. DALMER

INTEGRATION/ DIFFERENTIATION

March 26 – April 7, 2010

MARIE-MICHELLE DESCHAMPS

Figures

February 12 – March 13, 2010

Order/Chaos

THOMAS DEL BALSO
DAGMARA GENDA
SARAH KERNOHAN
ALEXANDRA MACKENZIE
JON NICOLAOU
DAN ROCCA
RYAN SOLSKI

October 16 – November 13, 2009

DAGMARA GENDA, UNTITLED (WALLPAPER) (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Rants of a drawer

DEREK LIDDINGTON, DIRECTOR XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

In response to Order/Chaos: I draw. Let me rephrase this, I use drawing as an artistic methodology. My sensibilities as an artist could, perhaps, be better associated with that of conceptualism; Bruce Nauman, Lawrence Weiner, John Baldessari and Sol Lewitt. As an artist I would argue that the very need to classify based on medium or context is to dismiss the openness of drawing's methodology. Drawing's strength is in our dependence on it at all phases of the creative (I use this word purposely- I am talking to you Richard Florida) process. We doodle, sketch, chart, map, write and take notes as a way of exploring and identifying our surroundings. Representation enables us to understand, to combine and to create potential.

I am a drawer. According to Google, this implies I am "a storage compartment in a piece of furniture such as a desk, chest, or table that slides in and out and is usually shaped like a shallow rectangular box." To be honest I like to think of my practice as an artist in terms of a storage unit for ideas, concepts and techniques (this, as I hope you have already noticed, is a sarcastic play on the term 'drawer' as both defining a person who draws and a vessel for storing undergarments – amongst other things). Since the tender age of three I have had difficulty pronouncing my R's. Its pronunciation has plagued me since early childhood when I would sit and watch Saturday morning cartoons and join Elmer Fudd in the impossible task of pronouncing 'Rascally Rabbit'. Wasscally Wabbit! Wasscally Wabbit! I would yell in enthusiasm. Perhaps I only find it ironic now that the early morning cartoons which lead me to drawing as a form or creative expression would also lead me, as an adult, to its continual mispronunciation. As a result I end up describing, in an excruciatingly roundabout way what I do as an artist; 'I am a Warwer'. Often when asleep at night I dream of how easy it would be to confidently state "I am a Painter", " I am a Sculptor", "I am a Video artist." However, this is not the case. It is due to this penchant for mispronunciation that we as artists find it so difficult to associate with the medium. In my assumption, it is drawing's lack of an adequate (and pronounceable) noun that lends the medium to its assumed state as merely a point of departure for other artistic disciplines; a sketch, draft, outline, proposal. Drawing then is never finite; it exists as a rhetorical medium in the arts.

Drawing has been used as a means to tell stories for centuries. There is something about the connection between imagination and the pencil that evokes from drawers the ability to form narratives and potentialities. The immediacy of the line seems to detach itself from the imbedded, and often-detrimental histories associated with other media, such as painting, photography and video. Going back to my statement that drawing is never finite it is easy to then estimate that the success of the work in Order / Chaos" lie in their ability to utilize the propositional nature of drawing. These drawings do not settle on mere representation, rather they offer us a space for contemplation of the unreal, popular and slightly peculiar. The works in the exhibition Order/Chaos draw out the potentiality of images.

If there is a stream connecting the work of Order/Chaos it is their ability to be simultaneously didactic and playful. All too often art (painting, I am looking at you) that is critical is plagued by a sense of overt cynicism, while hopeful art (painting, I am still looking at you) can fall into the trap of romanticizing. The very histories which offer painting, video, sculpture and performance its invariable cultural appeal end up bearing down on the artists like a black cloud. The drawers in Order/Chaos seem to have side-stepped art-historical cynicism. Order/Chaos is an exhibition of drawing. The process of drawing almost always precedes a balance of order and chaos. However, artists Thomas Del Balso, Dagmara Genda, Sarah Kernohan, Alexandra Mackenzie, Jon Nicolaou, Dan Rocca, Ryan Solski illustrate that such balance almost never occurs in equal portions. Thus, the slippage of language allows drawing to work in a conceptual space of a similar magnitude. As such, drawing is their tool for negotiating a creative equilibrium in which they announce, "I am a drawer."

Foucault en valise

MARC LOSIER

November 20 – December 12, 2009

SABRINA RICHARD
ARCHITECT, MUSEUM PLANNER, AND
INSTRUCTOR AT THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Transported within a vintage grey suitcase is an unusual assemblage of seemingly everyday objects; a stack of postcards documenting a dialogue between two men, a rotary telephone, a container of microscope slides, a series of manila envelopes, an office stamp, and a portable light box. This display of items has combined to create Foucault en Valise—an interactive installation by artist Marc Losier, which documents a fictitious time in the life of French theoretician Michel Foucault, through his dialogue with real life documentary media professor and artist, Edward Slopek.

At first glance this chaotic array of images, texts, and correspondence, resists comprehension as it defies many conventions of a work of art; it is located horizontally on a table, not set vertically before the viewer, it requires interaction as opposed to distanced observation, and it is visual, aural, and tactile. Direct engagement with an audience is how it conveys its research and intention, as one is invited to sort through the exploration of a Southern American Penitentiary by Foucault, exploring photographic negatives, images on microscopic slides, and the investigative process as explained through correspondence.

Yet Losier's work takes an idiosyncratic approach to the probing of particular events, artifacts, and historical information, and makes them physically present through a complex matrix of citations and juxtapositions, connecting what cannot be connected factually, with spatial connections within the world of the Valise. This artistic practice of assembling surprising material within a discrete container references the work of Joseph Cornell and his boxed assemblages created from found objects. In particular, the 'Medici Slot Machine' boxes, which were interactive and meant to be handled.

In many ways a shrine to Foucault's critical study of the institution, in particular the penitentiary, Foucault en Valise also displays what theorist Hal Foster has described as an "archival impulse"; the curation of interactive artifacts, the fictitious correspondence, the photographs of un-cited photographer Danny Lyon*, the allusions to scientific research, and the dialogue of Foucault, all conflate actual events with the artist's own storyline. Foucault en Valise can therefore, also be read as an informal archive, created through an indiscriminate sampling of historical and current reference material that effectively challenges the post modern notions of originality and authorship.

The still-life in art history often reflects the essence–of–time through the presentation of objects. Joshua Barndt takes this idea beyond the two-dimensional surface by creating an atmospheric installation that holds relevance to our current environmental and economic conditions. In *Limbo,* Barndt gathers and composes objects into a poetic and anthropological narrative.

Barndt's process is spontaneous in nature, however it is not without purpose. *Limbo* stimulates meditation about consumer by-products and nature; he gathers tires, wood, plastic bags, and other localized objects, such as the top of an abandoned pickup truck. The objects are literally artifacts of the surrounding environment.

Found objects are arranged in such a way that they relate to the installation space. In XPACE's basement, once belonging to a Vietnamese restaurant, Barndt establishes a narrative through his artwork by creating a path through the space. Similar to the Japanese garden, Barndt creates various points on a path with intentional vanishing points, where the viewer can visually experience the atmosphere Barndt has created. Furthermore, to address the height of this space he constructs wooden supports that are seemingly compressed by the weight of the floor above. This gesture reminds us of Atlas, the mythical man who carries the world on his shoulder.

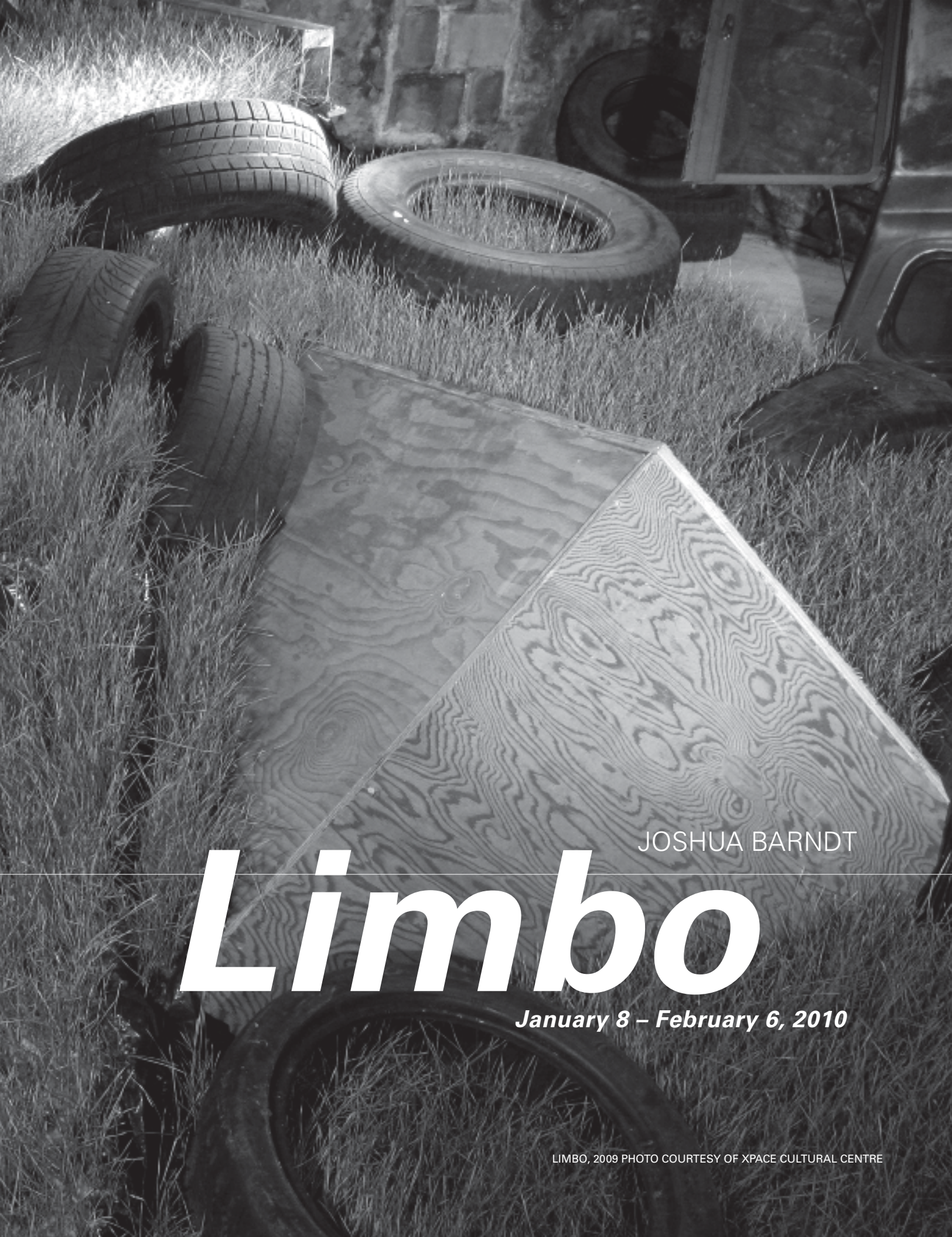
Similarly, other details hold poetic potential. Plastic garbage bags fascinate Barndt. When speaking with him about their significance he comments on the way "we collect our garbage in plastic bags to be forgotten". Though forgotten, garbage does not disappear. Instead it is stored in the metaphorical basement of our consciousness; and literally all over our planet. The light sculpture inside the remains of a truck represents the spirit of Barndt's grandmother, who can be seen as the spirit of our ancestors. Yet more, as the grass slowly spurts and comes into being, we are reminded of the cycle of nature and the symbolic seasons experienced in life. In this context, we enter the condensed space physically bowing to this cycle and to the fragrance of soil and life.

Lastly, the atmosphere Barndt has constructed is one absent of human life, yet still addresses the industrial by-product of society. In this way the installation could be said to be anthropological. Barndt portrays what is considered progress through human creations and industries. The installation portrays an abandoned landscape that symbolically echoes an abandoned dialogue with nature.

This fusion of tires, wood, soil, light bulbs, car parts and grass suggest a struggle for dominance between the artificial and the organic. The limbo between these two states might just be our future.

KELI LUI

An abandoned landscape that symbolically echoes an abandoned dialogue with nature.

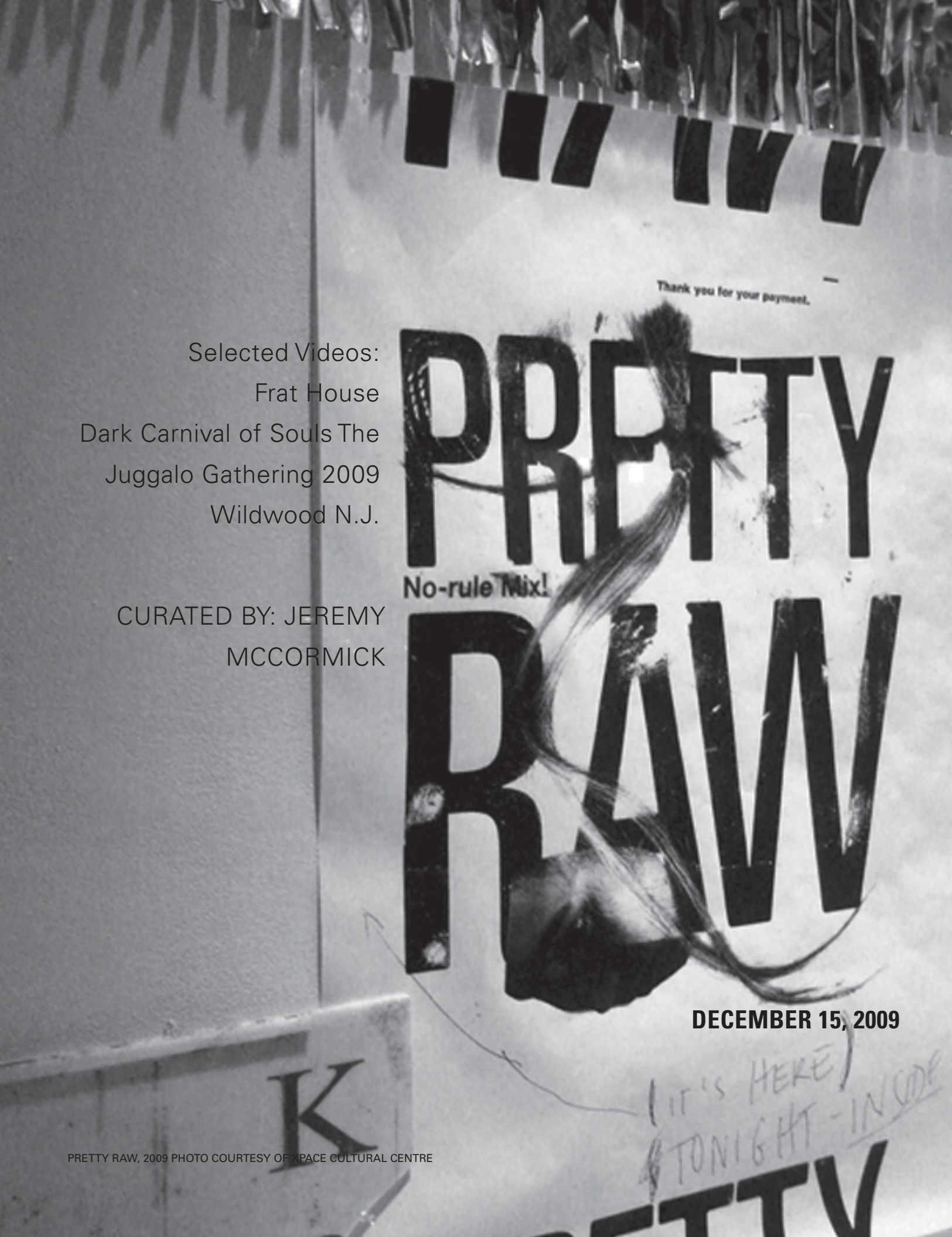


JOSHUA BARNDT

Limbo

January 8 – February 6, 2010

LIMBO, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



Selected Videos:
Frat House
Dark Carnival of Souls The
Juggalo Gathering 2009
Wildwood N.J.

CURATED BY: JEREMY MCCORMICK

DECEMBER 15, 2009

PRETTY RAW, 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

PRETTY RAW

JENNIE SUDDICK, XPACE PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

On December 15, 2009, XPACE Hosted Pretty Raw, an event curated by Jeremy McCormick highlighting the common threads between 3 documentaries: *Frat House* by Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland, *Dark Carnival of Souls The Juggalo Gathering 2009* by Derek Erdman & David Wilcox, and *Wildwood N.J.* by Carol Weaks/Cassidy and Ruth Leitman. McCormick's selection of these films focuses on subjects who bluntly define themselves in their own visual, verbal and social language. The result is a frank portrait of sub-cultures who are defined by their members and cultural surroundings. Pretty Raw provided a forum for considering the portrayal of community, ritual, and the importance of fitting in, in relationship to the notion of 'extremes' in our current cultural milieu.

As spectators, we can't help but be intrigued by the fashions and behaviors of certain subcultures. This fascination with groups that do not easily fit in to our daily observations has started to become a predominant aspect of popular culture. More increasingly, documentaries and reality television have turned inspection towards youth subculture, in particular those groups whose activities remain guarded from the public eye. By their very nature 'subcultures' are surrounded by a sense of the unknown, which only increases our fantasies towards them. Yet, to their own members, they are serious and vital aspects of their identity and day-to-day life. Each of these subcultures and groups share in their desire to form unified bonds with people that are both like-minded and in the same social sphere. Often, members align themselves with these groups as a way to deal with transitions in their lives, when they are in most need of a support structure of others who identify with their situation or status.

Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland's *Frat House*, shows how each year countless hopefuls will go to extreme measures to be accepted into a fraternity house. New to college life and living away from home for the first time, these students are subjected to harsh and continuous hazing during the initiation process. Although often humiliated, members consider these extremes worth it, in order to earn the respect of the group. This is how they prove that they are worthy of the pride they can then feel once they are equals in the brotherhood of their fraternity. In the film, one of the frat members reflects on the recent hazing he had received by his brothers: "We are all one now, part of a family". Throughout the hazing, the senior brothers in the film repetitively chant "family" as they ritualistically strip the pledges of their individuality through uniform and mask, placing them in a role of total subservience. Just like many families, each fraternity has their own traditions and patterns, each deeply rooted in tactics of humiliation and intimidation. Interestingly, the pledges who seek membership are not your typical outsiders looking for social acceptance. As mentioned in the film, many of them were the popular kids in their high schools, coming from privileged backgrounds and large social circles. But now, faced with being removed from these reliable networks, they will go through extreme abuse to fit in with a group on campus. Perhaps this is a preventative measure to assure that they won't stand out for the first time in their lives, resulting in them easily reverting to the form of social structure that they can feel protected in. One brother refers to a social pattern that they

are following, stating that he and his brothers were inclined, at the different stages of their lives, to always find themselves in the popular groups, having been on sports teams and being used to getting the girls they wanted through their statuses. Through this strict framework they are guaranteed a sense of belonging that they believe will last for the rest of their lives.

As the documentary depicts, these tight-knit groups base so much importance on their closed social circle that those who try to gain access to their inner workings are often completely rejected. An example of this can be seen when the fraternity brothers turn against the filmmakers, insisting they shut down the production. During this transition in the film Blossom, one of the frat leaders, confides his support the film in confidence; suggesting a conscience for his actions. However, we see this conscience break down when the filmmakers attempt to make contact with Blossom in a group environment, surrounded by his fellow brothers. At this point we see Blossom revert back into the pattern of control and domination set by the fraternity.

The extreme dedication to a subculture grants members a much-desired sense of belonging and meaning that factor so largely into their lives that the subcultures can have patterns that mirror religious practices. The Juggalo subculture has defined pseudo-religious doctrines, based on the lyrics of Detroit-based 'horrorcore' band Insane Clown Posse (ICP). This includes parallel models of God and heaven, known respectively as the 'Dark Carnival' and 'Shangri-la', which Juggalos view as a reward for staying true to their lifestyle. They refer to fellow followers as brothers and sisters, as well as by terms taken out of ICP lyrics to mean the same thing, such as Ninjas and Ninjettes. The subculture invests consumer items with symbolic meaning, use symbols to express identity, community etc... They even proudly tout inexpensive soda pop, Faygo, as it is a stage favorite of the band. The members also display this worship by wearing clown inspired face paint in their daily lives, based on the stage makeup of ICP. Much like fraternity and sorority members wear their greek letters, Juggalos adopt ICP's aesthetic of face paint and urban street wear as a clear symbol they are members to a group that align themselves with particular values.

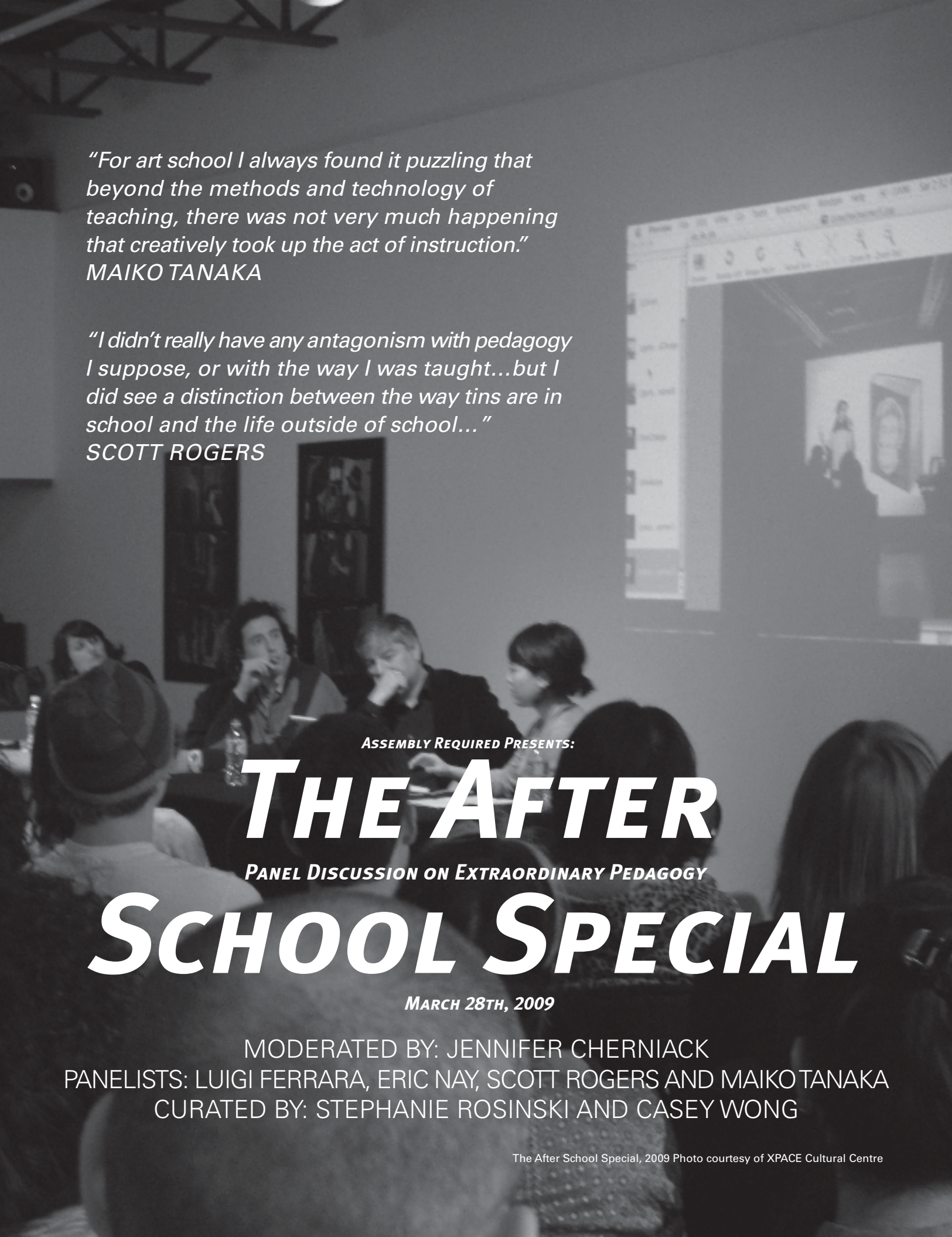
The members of the ICP, J and Shaggy 2 Dope, came from a background of poverty that eventually evolved to crime. Their success has made them an easy subject for a devout following of youth who relate to their plight. The band states that the rules outlined in their lyrics are to teach their followers how to change their previous 'evil ways', just like they have. They themselves have even gone as far as to say that being a Juggalo isn't about being a fan, rather it is an entire way of life. Even though ICP insists they are role models to Juggalo's, their lyrics continue to promote hard drug use, misogynist sensibilities and casual, excessive violence, which in turn is widely celebrated.

The annual Gathering of the Juggalos, is a four-day festival held in early August in Cave-In-Rock Illinois. This event is viewed as a mecca of sorts by Juggalos from around the world, referred to it as their 'family reunion'. Here, the debauchery preached by ICP is practiced in full force. Along with concerts, events are held around the festival grounds that include clown-themed wet t-shirt competitions and 'backyard wrestling' (which features fighters cracking chairs and bottles over one another).

Derek Erdman & David Wilcox's *Dark Carnival of Souls The Juggalo Gathering 2009*, shows two outsiders' experience at the yearly event. In contrast to the Frat members of Frat House overtly rejecting outsiders who tried to penetrate their circle, the Juggalos welcome the opportunity to show off their 'family values'. As illustrated though their extreme makeup and clothing worn in their daily lives, the Juggalos' show an incredibly overt sense of pride in their closeness to their adopted family. These definite gestures act as a way for them to always indicate their pride in a group that celebrates the lifestyle they once felt limited to having found him or herself in a certain demographic.

Though the Fraternity members and the Juggalos of the four mentioned documentaries actively chose to be aligned with their subculture or group, the women depicted in *Wildwood N.J.* were born into theirs. Following the women who populate this Jersey Shore town, Carol Weaks/Cassidy and Ruth Leitman question, on camera, their value structures, goals and coming-of-age experiences. As the women candidly talk patterns become apparent, including how they have embraced, to an exaggerated extent, socially constructed gender roles related to power and value, such as make-up. This re-appropriation of cultural forms from the mainstream, is spurred by a desire to resolve social incoherence, in a similar way that the Juggalo's use the symbol of a cheap local soda.

Having ritualistically spent summer after summer socializing and boy-chasing on the carnival town boardwalk, they are accustomed to a life of leisure and vanity, which they brag about in the film. They are all eager to talk about dating, hair, and nails, but it becomes apparent that even though they take pleasure in these shared interests and find great comfort in community, they seek to encounter a world beyond it. One of the filmmakers, Ruth Leitman, describes the film as "an exploration of lives that have been shaped by a lack of opportunity but who are survivors and thrive". Though they might have found themselves as part of this group by default, they can find the very thing that they feel limited by as a source of strength and power.



"For art school I always found it puzzling that beyond the methods and technology of teaching, there was not very much happening that creatively took up the act of instruction."
MAIKO TANAKA

"I didn't really have any antagonism with pedagogy I suppose, or with the way I was taught…but I did see a distinction between the way tins are in school and the life outside of school…"
SCOTT ROGERS

Assembly Required Presents:

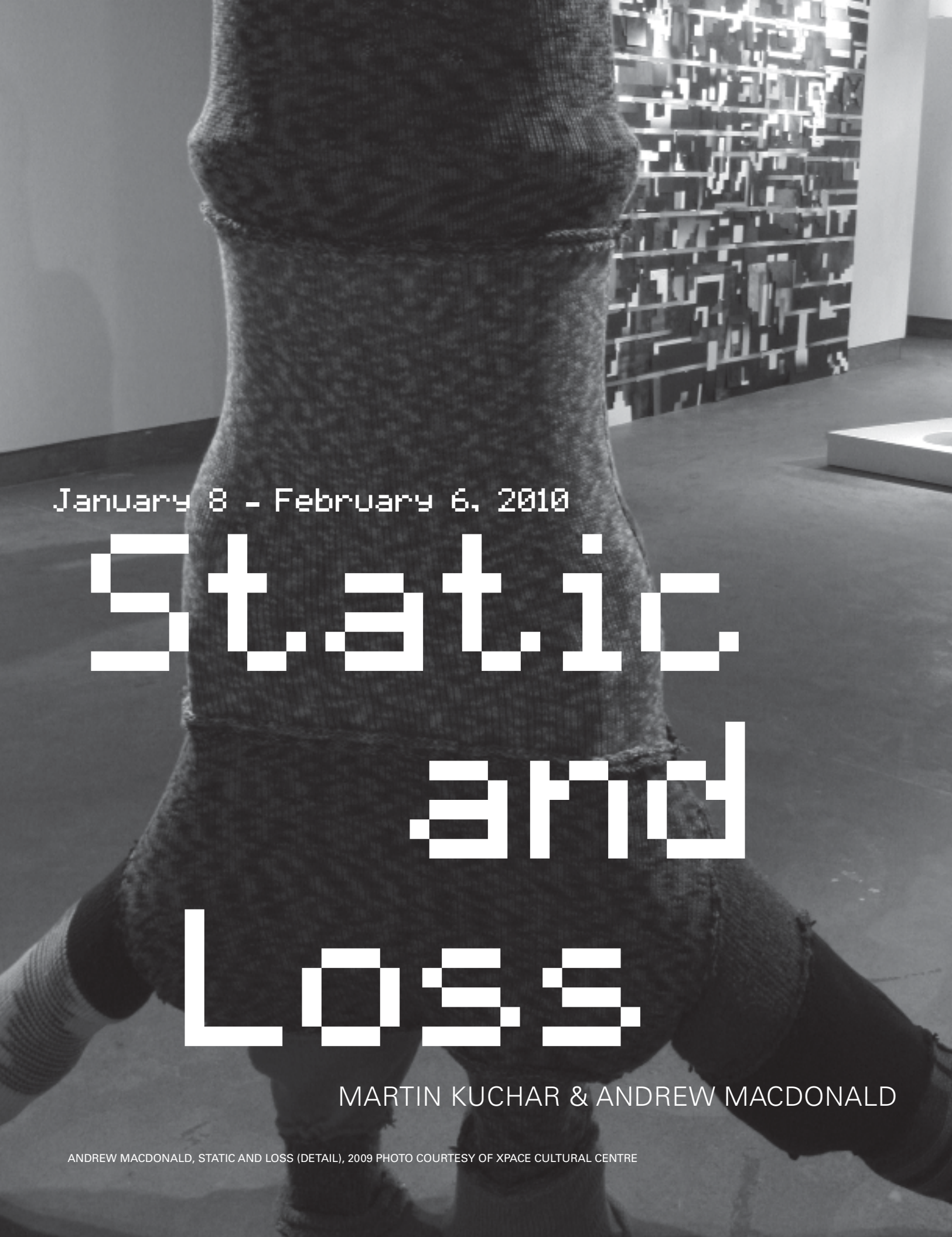
The After School Special

Panel Discussion on Extraordinary Pedagogy

March 28th, 2009

MODERATED BY: JENNIFER CHERNIACK
PANELISTS: LUIGI FERRARA, ERIC NAY, SCOTT ROGERS AND MAIKO TANAKA
CURATED BY: STEPHANIE ROSINSKI AND CASEY WONG

The After School Special, 2009 Photo courtesy of XPACE Cultural Centre



January 8 - February 6, 2010

Static and Loss

MARTIN KUCHAR & ANDREW MACDONALD

ANDREW MACDONALD, STATIC AND LOSS (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Static and Loss

STACEYLEE TURNER

"…There's more to learn from [instability] than something that never changes."
–Andrew MacDonald

OCAD Alumni Andrew MacDonald and Martin Kuchar collaborate in *Static & Loss t*o bring a playful and humorous tone to their multimedia exploration of states of change. The use of colour, peculiar materials and the juxtaposition of soft forms and hard edges create an immediate visual dialogue with the viewer in an anxious manner. While bright colours and familiar materials disarm, the underlying themes of loss, failure and impermanence create an unexpected tension for the viewer. Static & Loss embraces the natural experience of loss while satirizing the need for permanence.

Kuchar's simple paper squares and rectangles build up over one another to form complex wall installations. The tacked-on and transferable pieces embody transience and provoke the question 'how necessary is permanence?' Unlike painting, which remains fixed to a canvas, Kuchar's work is perpetually dismantled and reassembled, always presenting something new from the same material. This process can be perceived as loss, but also as revelation. Kuchar, in embracing transience, has developed a new practice of revisiting and recreating the same collection of papers differently with each.

MacDonald's drooping, soft hand-made sculptures examine human fallibility. Stretched over various household items stacked atop one another, MacDonald's works are reminiscent –but not representative– of the human figure. The forms appear to lament their individual failure of accurate human representation, creating a tone which MacDonald refers to as 'tragic-comic.' The nostalgic, kitschy comedy of second-hand sweaters dispels the seriousness of tragedy yet the melancholic aura remains in the sagging, stoic presence of form. Each piece stands on display for, and in the company of, the viewer; their lament as apparent and familiar as an old, warm sweater.

STACEYLEE TURNER: Martin, Your works have a sculptural quality about them, as if you are painting with cut paper. Why not just paint pixels?

MARTIN KUCHAR: What appealed to me about [the limitation of] working with paper was its flexibility as a media versus painting on canvas. Paper lets me start from zero and go back to zero with out any history left behind. Also the hard flat edges were a clear aesthetic connection to my interest in the pixel and the pixelized image. The work is always in process, each time it is deconstructed and reconstructed there are changes.

ST: Are the wall works a continual process of construction and de-construction or do you reach a point where you just stop pinning paper and let the work be complete?

MK: The work is always in progress, but there is a point where I call it quits. I know that in the future if I want to make changes to a piece that possibility is open. I never organize the pieces when I take down a work, that can be problematic at times but again it allows for continual change.

ST: Could you speak to the aesthetics of glitch? What drew you to explore concepts of failure and malfunction?

MK: I find failure and malfunction to have more possibilities. Sometimes I like to think of some of the images I create, as representations of an abstract image. But an abstract digital image that is in the middle of loading onto a computer and has stopped before it's fully realized on the screen. There's something in that unresolved digital image that leave a viewer with a lot of questions about what it could have looked like had it fully loaded.

ST: What is your relationship with the pixel? How did you arrive to this process of assembling and disassembling?

MK: Again it's like the digital image that isn't fully loaded. The pixels are still visible in this unrealized state of image assembly as it were. As I assemble and disassemble the works it's like I'm loading and unloading the images, over and over.

ST: Andrew, how did you arrive to using knitwear as a sculptural medium?

ANDREW MACDONALD: Several years ago, I was searching for a material other than paint, to cover or alter household objects made from plastic that I was using to build sculptures. I was stacking, altering and recontextualizing these plastic objects, creating aesthetic and formal links with modern and minimal sculpture. I was in a value village one day and came across some kitsch sweaters with patterns that resembled hard-edge modernist paintings so I just bought a few of them and brought them back to the studio and had them lying around for a few weeks. It just occurred to me one day to put some plastic storage boxes inside these sweaters.

The plastic boxes with the sweaters on them had this stiff bodily quality that was shocking to me, mostly because I had really tried to avoid the figure in my work. And it was this shock of the human form that suddenly appeared in the studio through these plastic objects wearing these sweaters, that left me no choice but to continue to explore this material and the human form. Currently I produce most of the knitted textile using a manually operated knitting machine, but sometimes I still employ sweaters and sweater parts in the work

ST: How does knitted textile speak to the theatrical qualities of your sculptures? What do you see in this material that is 'tragic-comic.'

AM: I don't think the knitted material is tragic, but rather it's a barrier or it attempts to alleviate this sense of the tragic I'm referencing. I think it does this by citing the kitsch sweater, which has comic qualities, also by its association to warm clothing. I try to pit the form of the sculpture and the material against one another, setting up an internal dichotomy within the work. The sad droopy shapes and figures suggest failure. I reference historic works like Rodin's *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, or Tim Hawkinson's Scout sculpture, which are figures made to reflect this kind of tragic or sad image of the human form. I think of the textile as the skin or the surface of the work, and it propels the formal nature of the work into the theatrical.

ST: Could you speak about what you refer to as the 'fallibility of human ambitions?'

AM: Yes, that is a bit of a mouth full and I guess I'm being a little facetious in referring to the over-determined nature of modernist figure sculpture that had ambitious aims of presenting grand narratives. However, I also think that when we strive as a species to travel beyond the moon and try to control the outcome of life and death in our own bodies, there's going to be some kind of failure in that. I'm also a big fan of the comedian and comedy and I find the best forms of comedy are where failure is involved. I don't specifically reference a kind of failure in my work, like the downfall of the stock market, or people losing their jobs. There are a few exceptions like my large piece Heavy Hands (2008) that reference boxing or fighting. I prefer to reference the fallible in general. Ambition is great, but in the end we have to keep ourselves in check with the possibility of failure.

ST: Could you speak a bit about feeling "lament and requiem in sculpture that is based on the human form"?

AM: Again I'm being a little facetious with that as well, but in truth I really get uneasy around representations of the human form. I particularly become uneasy when a figure in sculpture is static and has something to do with death or reverence of a past historic figure. Public art that memorialized war is a good example of this and again I'll reference Rodin's *Les Bourgeois de Calais* here as it functions in this way as well. Although I love most of this kind of sculpture, there is still something lacking, there must be a better way to remember this person and their life or, there must be a better way to talk about death and suffering rather than creating a still lifeless form. I'm not suggesting that my work is an answer to this question. My work still fails at this just like other sculpture. I at least want to project some sort of relief through the formal and material qualities and my sculpture has the added effect of producing some kind of pleasure.

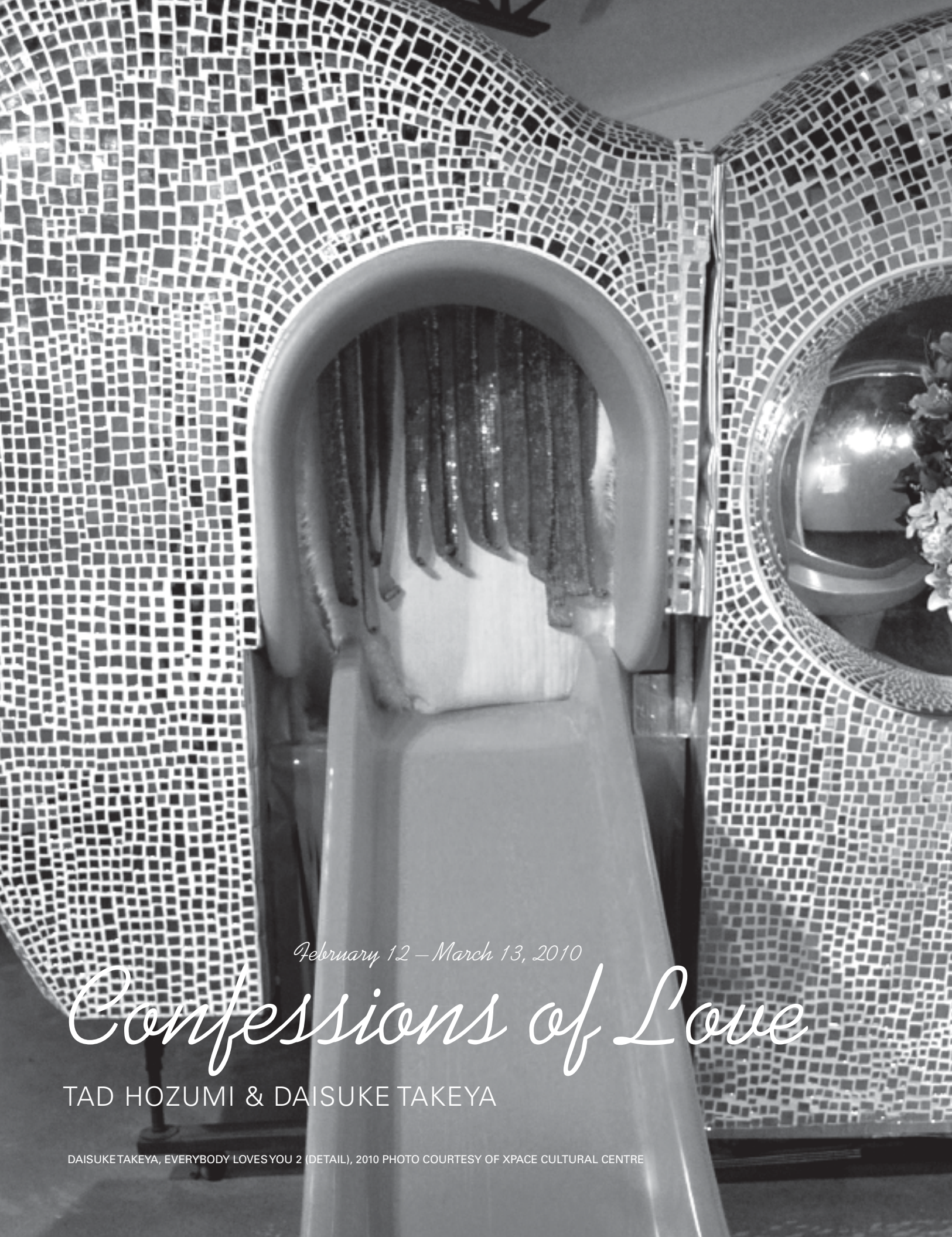
ST: Could you speak about this uneasiness you have with permanence? What is the appeal of transience and instability?

AM: I think it's arrogant that one can believe in the production of something that has a fixed stable meaning. Life is ever changing. I've always been interested in states of change, failure and death, there's more to learn from that than something that never changes. I'm not so sure that stability truly exists anyway. So I intentionally create open, ambiguous works that start with instability as a subject. I don't think that my work is particularly challenging for a viewer, but it does beg certain questions about what it is they are perceiving in relation to the figurative and what it means to make or look at the human form in art.

ST: At first glance it appears to be an odd-couple pairing, yet there is a strange connectedness there. How did this collaboration occur?

AM: Martin and I have been friends for many years and thinking back, when I started this work involving textiles, I remember that Martin was also beginning his series of wall-works. I didn't put two and two together until last year, when I came up with the idea to show our work in the same space. It was really the visual impact of the two bodies of work in the same space that in my mind, I wanted to see. After many studio visits and conversations over the last few years, I felt that our work was reaching toward the same horizon, although employing different materials and strategies. Martin working in abstraction and my quazi-figurative sculpture, trying to tell a similar story was enough of a push in the end to start putting together this show. I think it's going to be a visually exciting show, but it will also pose questions about impermanence through static forms of art, while having a bit of a laugh. The artists would like to acknowledge the support of the Ontario Arts Council.

MARTIN KUCHAR, STATIC AND LOSS (DETAIL), 2009 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE



February 12 – March 13, 2010

Confessions of Love

TAD HOZUMI & DAISUKE TAKEYA

DAISUKE TAKEYA, EVERYBODY LOVES YOU 2 (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Confessions of Love: Interview with Tad Hozumi & Daisuke Takeya

MARISSA NEAVE

In their exhibition Confessions of Love, Toronto-based artists Tad Hozumi and Daisuke Takeya take on the Big L just in time for that saccharine holiday we all love to hate (or hate to love). But despite the patina of cynicism that tends to cling to this time of year, Hozumi and Takeya are sincere in their constructions (and deconstructions) of sentimentality and intimacy. Below, the artists discuss the significance of objects and architecture in their work, the nature of sentimentality, and how their thematic approaches in their respective works reverberate against each other.

Marissa Neave: For Confessions of Love, you've recreated symbolic objects from both Japanese soap operas and your own life ["Song of the Sky," "Endless Cassette," and "Dear Akiko"]. What is the significance of objects as stand-ins for sentimentality?

Tad Hozumi: The relationship between sentiments and the objects that act as their medium I think is a really interesting one because it really highlights the problem of being human. Feelings are fleeting and ever-changing. Objects are similarly transient, but their rate of decay is generally much slower. My feelings for my first love are really irrelevant to my life now, but my old love letter to her preserves the emotions that I once thought would be with me forever. Sentimental objects are reminders of the truth that your life is in a constant state of flux and of things that can never be the same again. I think the one era in your life that this constant change is kind of suspended is during teen-hood. I think that time in our lives is our last chance to stop time. Maybe that's why objects that were created during this period affect me so strongly—because they represent failure.

MN: What is the story behind "Dear Akiko"?

TH: The story goes, I was dating this girl in Toronto and we split basically when she returned to Japan. I visited Japan about a year or two later and found that she had run away from home. I was pretty crushed at the time. In hopes that someday I would regain contact with her, I left a mutual friend with a letter to be delivered to her if their paths crossed. Fast forward fifteen years later, she pokes me on Facebook. I was visiting Japan to install an artwork shortly after and Iplanned to meet up with her. Before our reunion, my mutual friend whom I was staying with reminded me of the letter and handed it to me. I never gave the original letter to her.

MN: There's something very obsessive about your process in creating these artifacts. Even though (in the case of the soap opera objects) they are copies of (unsentimental/transient/multiple) props, you've meticulously mimicked them. I can't help but think that some new symbolic meaning (or at least nostalgic evocation) must be drummed up while constructing them. Can you talk about the life of the objects outside of their referentialfunction?

TH: It's really hard for me now to write a straightforward love note. I'm probably just not that narcissistic anymore. I mean, even if I did, I would be hard pressed to ever exhibit that, because that's not art. I know it's kind of limiting to say that but I think it's important to make that distinction for myself. Making this series of work is way of cheating for me and come to close as writing that love note. I have to admit that while making these artworks sometimes all these unnamed bittersweet emotions would bubble up and I would cry just a bit. To be honest, I am not sure what's going on, but there must be something in these objects that resonates with some part of my personal history. I think working on these pieces was a way for me to live through them vicariously and tap in to my feelings. I think in a sense making these objects is an extension of the viewing experience of the drama in the same way that self-edited fan-vids are. At a glance it can seem like they are made for the appreciation of the original show, but on closer inspection they reveal themselves to really be about the creator's feelings and experiences.

MN: Viewing your architectural structures in Confessions of Love requires the visitor to have a physical interaction with the work, which can be quite an intimate (and intimidating) experience within the context of art in an art gallery. Can you speak about the significance of this physicality, and what you intend it to stand for?

Daisuke Takeya: In "Everybody Loves You 2," I was influenced by print club photo booths, which are popular in Japan. They are a social phenomenon of youth culture; young people enjoy the shared experience of taking photos together. The photos record a playful and intimate process. I wanted to take this idea of popular entertainment, and appropriate and transform it for inside an art gallery. The structure is a hybrid of a video-making booth and a confessional, which has deeply serious, religious connotations. Viewers are asked to interact with the installation, and be recorded saying the phrase "I love you." There is an inherent paradox, and a whole range of meaning, embedded in these words. The expression has become cliché through very public associations, such as movies and advertising. By making this sculpture interactive, viewers are actively constructing and deconstructing meaning as they engage with the structure.

MN: What role does sincerity play in this interaction?

DT: My name Daisuke has often been mispronounced as "Dai-su-ki", which means, "I like you very much." This is an indirect way of saying "I love you"—it's a common expression that comes out of shyness. But its implicit meaning is understood. So I wanted to recreate the experience of hearing the words "I love you" over and over, without a context of intent or intimacy. I wondered what alternative meanings would be evoked by this repetition.

MN: What about the formal aspects of your structures? What material qualities do you look for in order to build this kind of space?

DT: During my years as an elementary-school art teacher, part of my work was to develop the curriculum by incorporating new materials for the students to work with. Coloured clay, papier maché, and found objects have all made their way into my own practice. The work of children has inspired me to enrich my repertoire. One particular project I did with the students, using glass mosaics, led to "Kind of Blue" and "Everybody Loves You 2"—both of them feature thousands of mirror cut-outs which would be physically impossible to produce in the original classroom context. Each mirror is made by hand, so each one is unique, a reflection (if you'll forgive the pun!) of human individuality.

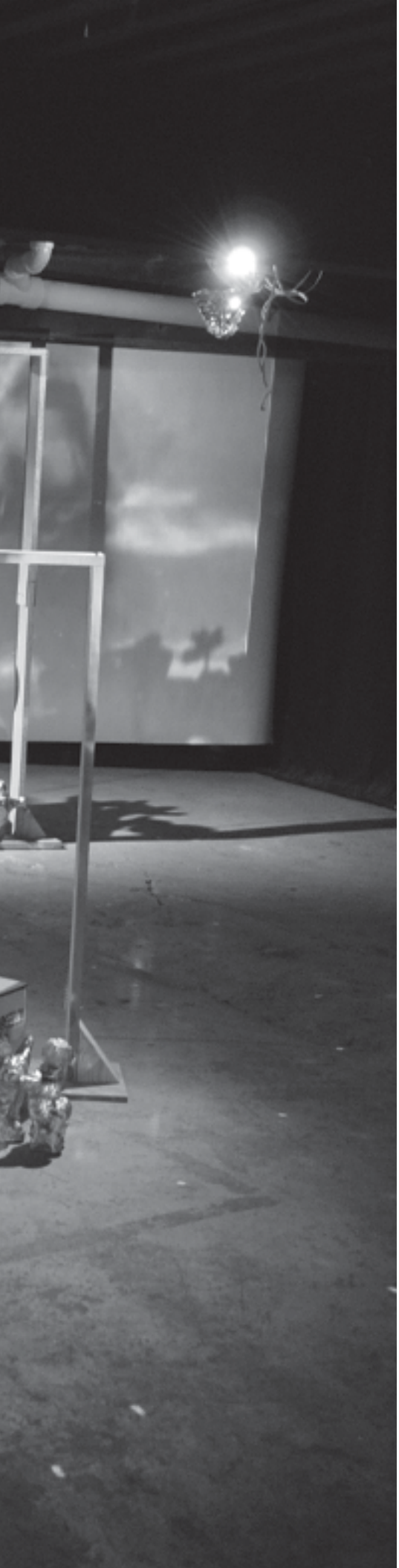
"My feelings for my first love are really irrelevant to my life now, but my old love letter to her preserves the emotions that I once thought would be with me forever."

TAD HOZUMI, CONFESSIONS OF LOVE (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

DEBORAH JENKINS

DISCO

FEBRUARY 12 – MARCH 13, 2010



SOFT ROCK

OLA WLUSEK

What does happiness look like and where does it reside? Is it hidden in some kind of an external magical place or is it buried within us, waiting to be discovered anew like a childhood photograph withholding a moment of comfortable discomfort? Acknowledgment of contentment often occurs in hindsight, it is only when intertwined with sadness, anger and frustration that our happiness to be recognized as...happiness. Can the state of bliss only be achieved through a nostalgic encounter? In her mixed media installation Disco, artist Deborah Jenkins speculates on the meaning and tangibility of this pursued emotion.

Sound

Descending down the staircase, we are greeted with the familiar tune of a universally recognizable song by famous trio of brothers. The Bee Gees are synonymous with the rise of disco music in the 70's and throughout most of the 80's but at this point we realize that this contagious song will remain with us for the rest of the present day. Staying Alive - what does it mean to stay alive and is living to see another day simply good enough? The song carries the burden of superficiality and nonsensical repetition. The notion of perseverance and survival of the fittest is the underlining message as is the sadness of carrying on without direction or defined purpose. The song suggests that any movement, not even forward, is adequate. Dancing is one of the ultimate forms of escapism and the Bee Gees advocate it as the appropriate solution to personal problems. But is dancing sufficient to end global injustice? Jenkins investigates her own part in the greater economic and political affairs of the world, in which she believes we are all of significant factor, whether we admit it to ourselves or not. By simply staying alive, we may or may not be the key players in the larger global crisis, however we are still responsible in a direct way to the internationalism of our immediate condition. So if living seems easy and is an unappealable decision, then a sense of care should follow.

So what are we doing to make our immediate surroundings better for ourselves and everyone else, besides staying alive? How are we striving to impact the world and our future? Perhaps these questions are at this point overly rhetorical, however Jenkins would like to revisit them again and again, very much like the Bee Gees who advocate the notion that as long as you keep on dancing, you cannot lose in the battle of life. So maybe if these all too familiar questions, which we often do ask ourselves, are repositioned as personal, then their rhetoric will become obsolete and the desire to address them on a political level will flourish. On what and whose terms do we want to keep staying alive?

Space

Even though XBASE is missing the colourful-checkered floor and the grandeur of a spectacular social venue, the humble disco balls are persistently projecting their glowing freckles onto the dungeon-like interior. The ironically gloomy exhibition space is transformed into

an intentionally makeshift discotheque, complete with dashing dancers in attendance. The lifeless clay figures spill onto the cold dance floor and their small silver bodies reflect the sparkling lights, adding illusion of movement into the otherwise stiff scene. They form a community, united by the shared reason for coming together in the spirit of dance. For Jenkins, the figures are empathetic. Should we feel sorry for Tony Manero's imitators who lack unique identities? After all, they are faceless figures trapped in the repetitious activity enforced by their surroundings. Who are they dancing for? In actuality, they are not moving at all. They create an illusion of dancing. In fact, they are frozen in a somewhat meditative pose.

Some of the figures are stuck on top of cardboard boxes used for packaging oil. The oil has become equated in contemporary society, western and eastern alike, with political and religious conflict. It has become a symbol for the pain and suffering of the masses. It is integrated into the media and will remain a current affair for a very long time. The physical hierarchy of the figures hints at the global and individual races that take place over materials goods and financial success. Jenkins challenges the equality in dance suggested by the song by segregating the dance floor into visual strata where not all dancers are equal and the inequalities vary on their, and our, life goals and definitions of happiness.

Sight

The mountainous shadows of the dancers are cast onto the wall and overlap onto the awkwardly projected film. We can distinguish our silhouettes among the footage and all of a sudden we are a part of the performance. We join the characters on their journey to see the wizard of Oz. The film, just like song, carries a sense of overly romanticized nostalgia peppered with tragic undertones. Dorothy's frustration in trying to find her way home can be translated into minor obstacles of the everyday and even life's major struggles often accompanied by unexpectedly pleasant discoveries made along the way. Our egos suggest that we are all like Dorothy; ambitious and lost at times, and her three amigos represent the people we meet along the way to find our own version of the wizard, the distant unknowable source of our happiness, and eventually our way home, or a path to fulfillment. But what if the pursuit of happiness is the source of all unhappiness?

The looped scene portrays the characters stumbling out of the black and white version of the film and onto a pastel field of poppies where they collapse and fall asleep. Are we asleep right now? If so, then to what extent and for how long? Dorothy and her friends are woken up by the good witch with her magical wand so that they can carry on with their journey, however as individuals we must do the awakening ourselves. As viewers we can delight in the delectable treat Jenkins prepared for our consumption; the glittery figures beneath our feet, the spinning disco balls, the illuminated room and snow filled scene from the film. The aesthetic connections between the different visual layers signify Jenkins' premeditation and control over the setting, which in itself is what Bourriaud refers to as "journey-form": The components of a journey-form are not necessarily united in a unified space-time. A journey-form may refer to one or more absent elements, which may be physically distant, past, or yet to come. It may be composed of an installation with connections to future events or other places. Conversely, it may bring together in a single-time the dispersed coordinates of a path. In both cases, the artwork takes the form of an unfolding, an arrangement of sequences that place its objective presence in doubt and cause its "aura" to flicker.

Such flickering suggests the complexity of the piece and signifies that we are experiencing something very particular to this specific conditions negotiated by the artist. An event is about to occur, links are going to be made and we are about to obtain a glimpse to an alternative reality. Stay a while, watch, listen, and feel.

Sense

How do we make sense of this layered nostalgia? Disco takes us on a journey where initially we find ourselves grinning and rolling our eyes at the spectacle. There is humour in the assemblage stretching before us and we may experience slight annoyance, as well as relief in response to the familiar: "ah ha ha staying alive, staying alive". The longer we remain with the piece, the faster we allow sadness to sneak up on us and time to loose its course only to become "this is then, now". The Wizard of Oz carries the stigma of an unfulfilled fantasy because it is a reminder of the ongoing search for perhaps a brain, a heart, or courage. And the static dancers cannot free themselves from the persistence of the song. It is our shadows, and not theirs, that intermingle between the ray from the projector and the glimmering ceiling. Jenkins is a storyteller and an adventurer who invites the viewer to come along and explore new realizations about the present day with her. Through the mixing of the various media, Jenkins sets up a black hole that swallows up our certainty of the outside world and we are spat back somewhat affected. Does the return to old fictions verifies them as valid and positions them as true? This is time travel. Jenkins (like many of contemporary artists who refer to pop culture, reuse ephemera and display a fascination with archival materials) is showing us, layer upon layer, that our desires have not changed since 1939.

I was told before, that life is not a fairytale, yet, perhaps nostalgia is not entirely negative, and when finally all does fall into place we will be able to look back on our journey in a once-upon-a-time kind of way.


5W-30

VIDEO EXCHANGE

XPACE Cultural Centre
TORONTO, ON

Dylin North	Road Trip
Steve Shaddick	And Now
Robert Lendrum	Dudes
Tara Downs	Hypercube
Anna May Henry	Shower Singing
Liam Crockard	untitled

Spark Contemporary Art Space,
SYRACUSE, NY

Evan Paschke	Informed Movements
Esther Maria Probst	Ophelia's Second Stage
Holly Rodricks	Lapse
K Erik Ino	The Wall
Katie Micak	God, The Universe, and Everything Else
Scandalishous	"My Butt" Official Music Video
Thon Lorenz	Bad Whopper
Christine Negus	Blue Water
Nathaniel Sullivan	On Cute

White Water Gallery
North Bay, ON

Clayton Windatt	1 Year at White Water Gallery
John Graham	Hidden Cities
Rosemary Laff	Man Being Hit By Piano
Eric Boissouneault	Death Of A Rose
Mercedes Cueto	Impaired States Due to Inactivity = Rust
Addison Wylie	Don't Think About It
Gil Chalykoff	Humberdale & Friends
Amy Lockhart	The Collagist
Russell Chartier	Confined 10-01-2
Paul Botelho	

Artspace,
PETERBOROUGH, ON

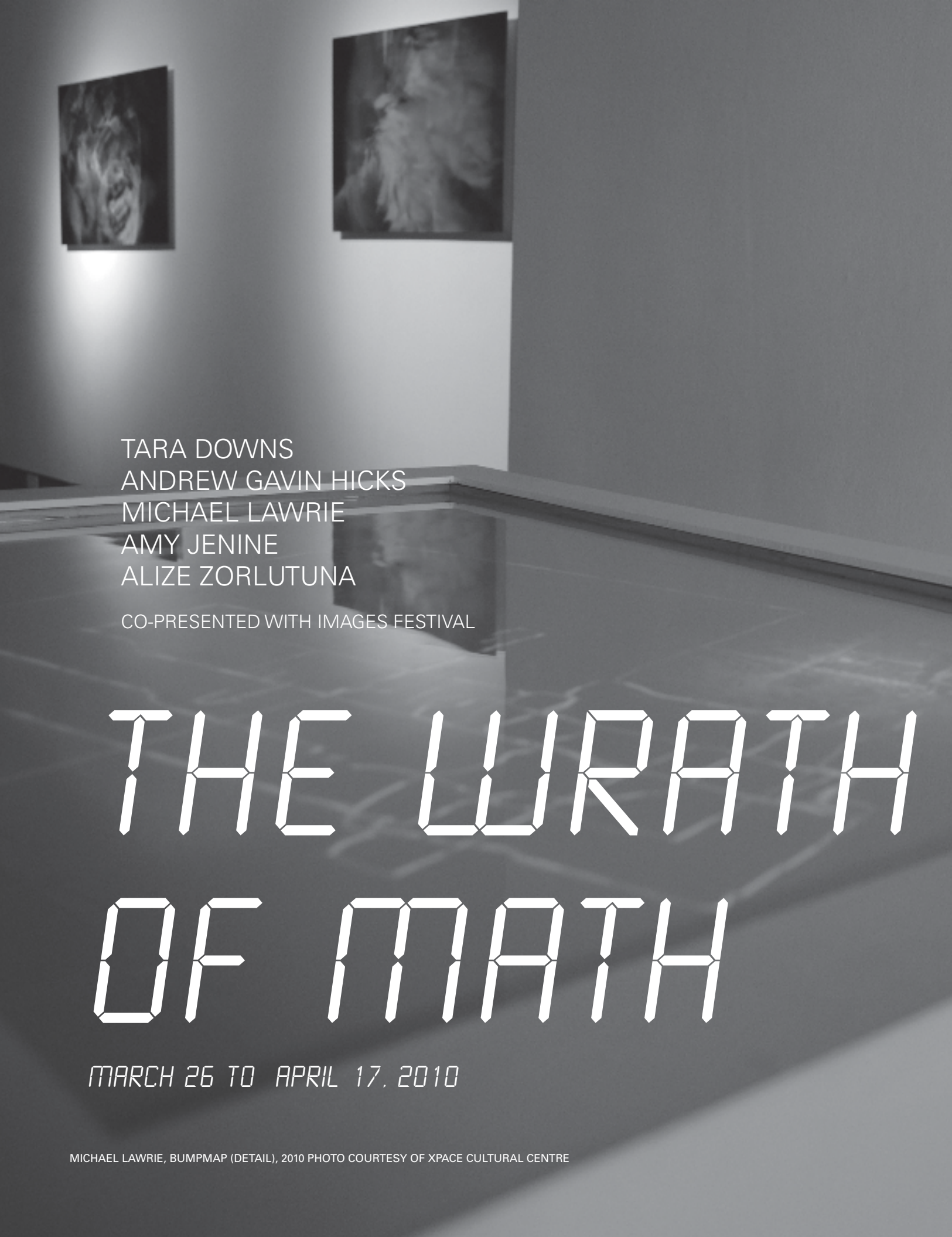
Sacha Archer	1 2 3 4 5
Ryan Kerr	Drill
Brian Mitolo	
Eardley Wayne	Summer On Superior
Ray O'Keefe	The Soccer Kid
Dan English	Knife Monkey Night
Sarah Decarlo	Land of the Silver Birch, Home of the Beaver
Shelah Young	Red

Ed Video
GUELPH, ON

Angus McLellan	Nice Dream
Sam Silversides	Snow
Jenn E Norton	Very Good Advice
Smearballs	Sweatin' Like A Farm Animal, Cool as a Daisy

AKA
SASKATOON, SK

Shanell Papp	Unicorn
Angela Edmunds	Tumbleweed
Francis Theberge	Creatures
Troy Gronsdahi	The generosity of mechanics
Brian Longfield	Take It Easy
David LaRivere	A Trip To The Mall
Ian Campbell Paul Atkins	Lost Dog
Freida Abtan and Erin Gee	Death of A Muse
Scott Rogers	a divine light



TARA DOWNS
ANDREW GAVIN HICKS
MICHAEL LAWRIE
AMY JENINE
ALIZE ZORLUTUNA

CO-PRESENTED WITH IMAGES FESTIVAL

THE WRATH OF MATH

MARCH 26 TO APRIL 17, 2010

MICHAEL LAWRIE, BUMPMAP (DETAIL), 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

THE WRATH OF MATH

MATTHEW WILLIAMSON,
PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

"Teacher: So y = r cubed over 3. And if you determine the rate of change in this curve correctly, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.
[The class laughs except for Bart who appears confused.]
Teacher: Don't you get it, Bart? Derivative dy = 3 r squared dr over 3, or r squared dr, or r dr r." From "Bart The Genius" episode (7G02) of The Simpsons

Mastery of mathematics involves the interactions of multiple developmental pathways1. Much of these interactions must overlap, if not parallel, with those developed during creative growth. This understood, perhaps 'developmental paths' founded in art and math education are art not so different. Arguably some of these skills are transferable, even desirable; at the very least the way we talk about math affects our vocabulary and creative abilities. In conceptualizing maths connection to vocabularly, specifically 'art', let us consider the following:

Addition is a mathematical operation that enables the theorization of combining – in this process collections of objects are combined into larger collections3. Like pouring two glasses of water together to fill a larger glass, addition is not synergistic; two plus two probably4 can't equal five. The sum is not greater than its parts. As a tactic for creating art, addition requires a delicate hand, one that does not contaminate through juxtaposition.

Subtraction has been an integral part of mathematics, going as far back as the beginnings of the printed page5. Some consider it to be the inverse of addition. However, this way of thinking denies subtraction's unique privilege. Subtraction enables difference6. To continue this thought, one could deduce that we have subtraction to thank for our most highly respected philosophies7.

Multiplication has been most popularized as a means to determine surface area. To break it down a rectangle's area is the product of its length times its width. Unless one is a two-dimensional creature8, this is not useful in and of itself. Luckily, by simply including the multiple of height into the

equation volume can be determined in much the same manner as surface area. It's not hard to see how this is applicable to art practices, in particular installation and sculpture.

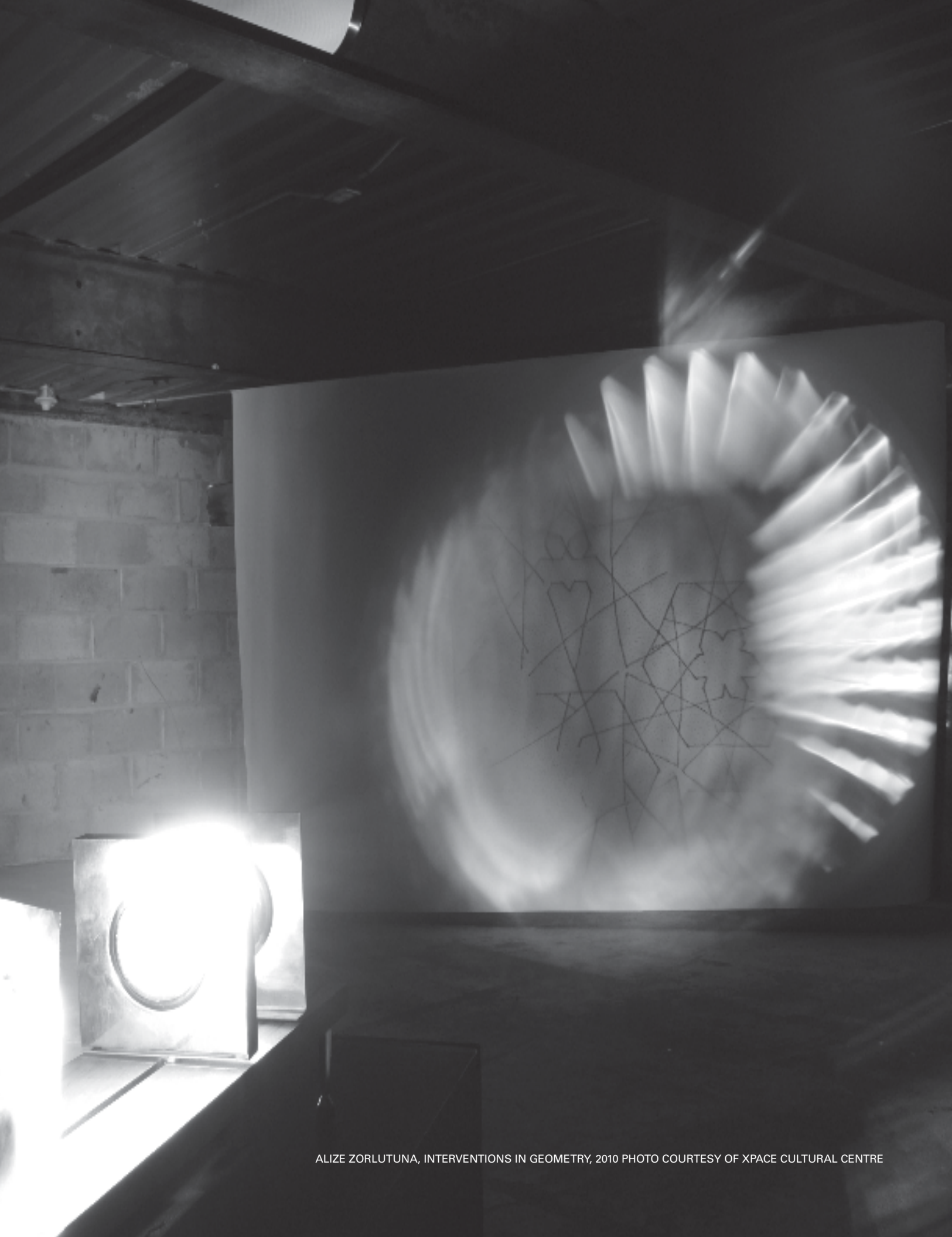
Division, like the relationship between subtraction and addition, is considered the opposite action to multiplication. Dividing numbers and values typically leaves you with a quotient smaller than the numbers you began with. However the same is not the is not the case in cell division9. In this process the end result of division induces growth. Equally, in art there are many reductive methods found in creative processes that might have their roots in this primordial mathematical lesson.

Exponentiation is notable for its visual representation. Shown as a superscript above and to the right of its base. Exponents also make aesthetically pleasing graphs: cubed numbers are very striking. Exponential growth10 (seen in Moore's Law11) increases proportionally to the base number. Note example:

"one guy tells another guy something
then he tells two friends,
and they tell two friends,
and they tell their friends,
and so on, and so on..." Wayne's World 2

The graphic and generative possibilities of exponents seem to indicate mind expanding possibilities. Thus it represents both a creative process and aesthetic growth. So, what is to be taken away from all of this? To think broadly, perhaps we can use mathematical perspectives to open up a new appreciation for curriculum development. Eight years of elementary level math serve us more than to teach us basic equations; they teach us how to understand abstract concepts. If only we could learn both with the same pencil.

1 paraphrased from the abstract to "The wrath of math. Deficiencies in mathematical mastery in the school child." http://www.find-health-articles.com/rec_pub_1574357-the-wrath-math-deficiencies-mathematical-mastery-school-child.htm
2 I make no claim to be an expert in math, just an enthusiastic fan.
3 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addition
4 for an explanation of the why this might be probable see Star Trek: The Next Generation episode 6x10-11 Chain of Command Parts I and II
5 Subtraction in the United States: An Historial Perspective, Susan Ross, Mary Pratt-Cotter, The Mathematics Educator, Vol. 8, No. 1.
6 The traditional names for the parts of the formula
c – b = a are minuend (c) – subtrahend (b) = difference (a)
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subtraction
7 Consider Deleuze's Difference and Repetition
8 Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions http://xahlee.org/flatland/index.html
9 An amoeba is an example of a organism that reproduces that way, Bertrand Russell said of amoebas "A process which led from the amœba to man appeared to the philosophers to be obviously a progress — though whether the amœba would agree with this opinion is not known."
10 for an interesting representation of exponential growth see the Star Trek episode The Trouble with Tribbles.
11 A long term trend in computers in which the number of components that can be places of a circuit has doubled every two years.



ALIZE ZORLUTUNA, INTERVENTIONS IN GEOMETRY, 2010 PHOTO COURTESY OF XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE

Celebrate XPACE Cultural Center!

This has been the most exciting, energetic year yet! XPACE Cultural Centre has grown on and off campus with the addition of the resource center and XPACE Window Space, launching the online XBlog, and installing the external exhibition space in OCAD's new Student Lounge.... And now XPACE presents, VOLUME!!!

A special thank you to Derek Liddington, who, through his role as Director, is an inspiring leader. Thank you for your dedication to creating new opportunities for emerging and student artists in Toronto. Much appreciation and a BIG thank you also go to the extraordinary staff, and brilliant individuals at the gallery. XPACE would not be the landmark is it today without all of your hard work and talent.

The OCAD Student Union has had the pleasure of experiencing a transformation at XPACE, and are in awe of what the space has achieved in such a short period of time.
Congratulations on all your success.

Cheers!

Amanda Almeida
Executive Director
OCADSU

The central purpose of the OCADSU is to enrich the lives of the students at OCAD. We do our best to create responsible, democratic, cooperative student representation at the university — promoting the interests of both students and the university as a whole — in the context of a healthy community. We promote artistic, educational, social, professional, recreational and charitable activities for the advancement of our members. This sometimes takes the form of funding special events and organizations like XPACE!

Contact:

OCADSU
51 McCaul St.
studentu@ocad.ca
http://www.ocadsu.org

Nothing to Declare: A visit to The Power Plant

Sunday April 10th, 2010 by Edison Osorio

With no preconception of what would be showing at The Power Plant, I ventured in towards my first encounter with this Gallery of contemporary art. Upon entering one of the exhibition spaces I came across a didactic text panel that read: "Nothing to Declare". After quickly reading the title, I decidedly omitted the curatorial statement underneath it. Free of otherwise inflicted ideas about the show, I walked up to the first piece that caught my eye.

Stack of Trays (2009), an installation by Liz Magor, is composed of a bizarre grouping of objects (divided in two sets). On one end of a white table, a pile of multicoloured dirty trays serves as a dead-bed for a rat's corpse. When looked at closely, one may notice that some of the objects are of cast pieces of garbage such as; cigarette butts, cupcake wrappers, and the dead rat. Actual objects, however, accompany those cast objects: two whiskey bottles, a cigarette box, and an ashtray. Standing a meter or farther away, one wouldn't be able to tell the cast from the actual objects.

On the other end of the table the narrative is repeated through a slightly dissimilar aesthetic and set of objects. The almost total lack of colour in this part of the installation is evident from afar. A thick and slightly wrinkled white cloth lies underneath two objects: a grey tray that serves as dead-bed for a dead white raccoon. But a more vibrant component lights up this composition, a few handfuls of candy wrapped in shiny blue paper are scattered around the raccoon's corpse.

Although physically more appealing than the first set of objects, the composition on the table, when compared to the pile of trays, is equally as striking. Admittedly though, much of this composition's physical character is tainted by the depiction of the dead animals. In both cases disorder and demise get a spotlight. Instinctively, it could be said that the death of these two animals was caused by what could have been food poisoning. Or perhaps more appropriately, an eating disorder.

Stack of Trays presents, through repetition and variance, the aesthetic of death. However, considering the implications put forth by the rest of the works components, such as the bottles of whiskey, the cigarette box, and the candy, the subject of habits might become tightly associated to this piece. Habits are actions in which you become accustomed. And although the word habit has positive and negative connotations, it generally infers the negative. Magor's Stack of Trays is an illustration of both mild and fatal habits such as gluttony, alcoholism, and smoking, among others. And yet the most important message underlying this installation's narrative is that these two types of habits can lead to similar ends: death.

An even more complex insight into the works nuances is in its ability to illustrate two perspectives within a biased formulation. Habits are destructive being the biased formulation, and habits come in appealing and in morbid presentations being the two perspectives. Seen from this angle, the meaning in this work becomes inescapably funneled through the paradigm of death.

All and all, this is only a little taste into a single piece in an exhibition; one full of bizarre and variable physical qualities. In a broader frame, the artworks that surrounded Stack of Trays had a tendency to present to the viewer some sort of ambiguity such as the one I referred to in my commentary on Magor's piece. In a way the exhibition title wasn't lying in that there is no fixed narrative: there is Nothing to Declare.

COMMENTS (9)

SUBMISSIONS

XPACE accepts proposals in every medium, from student and emerging artists, designers, and everyone in between. XPACE programming is juried by a committee two times a year. We encourage curated group exhibitions, and although we are not mandated for solo exhibitions, we accept proposals from individual artists for curatorial consideration and for XBASE. A up-to-date submission package can be downloaded from *xpace.info/submissions*

DEADLINES: XPACE has two deadlines a year, in May and November. Exact dates are available at *xpace.info/submissions*

GALLERY INFORMATION: XPACE has several different programming spaces. Please consider which space you are applying for when you are preparing your application. Layouts for these spaces are available on the xpace website.

XPACE MAIN GALLERY: XPACE's primary space, programmed for group exhibitions, panel discussions, workshops and other events.

XBASE BASEMENT GALLERY: A raw space programmed for solo exhibitions, including works-in-progress that respond to the environment.

XPACE WINDOW SPACE: Facing out on Ossignton Avenue, our window space provides unique opportunity for solo and collaborative installations that can be viewed around the clock.

OFF-SITE MEDIA SPACE: Located in OCAD's Jim Meekison Student Lounge, this screen is programmed for video and interactive artworks with an empathize on student and emerging artists work.

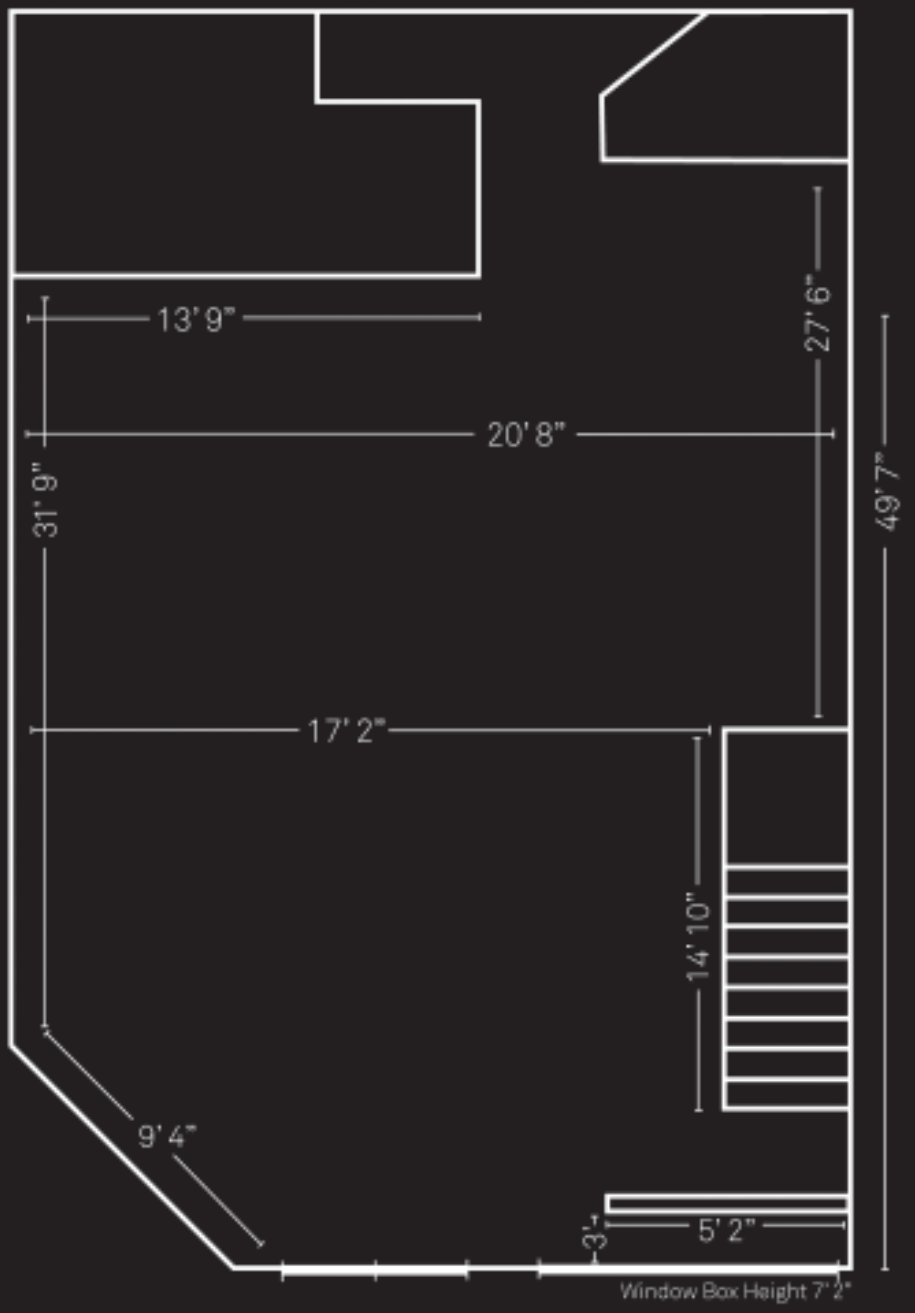
WEB-BASED PROJECTS: Online and web-based artworks hosted on our website.

PLEASE MAIL PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS TO:

XPACE Cultural Centre Programming Committee
c/o XPACE Cultural Centre
58 Ossington Ave.
Toronto, ON
M6J 2Y7

Incomplete applications sent via email or fax will not be considered. Feel free to discuss proposals and the application process with XPACE staff. Contact us at 416 849 2864

GALLERY LAYOUT - Main Gallery



CONTRIBUTORS

STAFF Matthew Williamson
Jennie Suddick
Derek Liddington
Stephanie Simmons
Edison Osorio
Anam Ahmed
Vladimir Milosevic
Jacky Challenger
Elise Windsor
Ngqabutho Zondo
Jonathan Wheeldon
Stephanie Fielding
Stephanie Rosinski
Casey Wong
Mireille Osbourne
Serena Lee
Melissa Fisher

ARTISTS Ashley Andrews, Samuel Choisy, Colleen Collins, Stephanie Kervin, Sylvana D'Angelo, Christina Knox, Ian MacTilstra, Hannah Myall, Renee Nault, Aidan Dahlin Nolan, Kelsey Speakman, Meghan Speakman, Laura Paolini, Valerie Sabaliauskas, Tania Sanhueza, Stephanie Vegh, Elizabeth Underhill, Danielle Bleackley, Michele Crockett, Alex Kisilevich, Brendan George Ko, Christina Kostoff, Faye Mullen, Raffy Ochoa, Amanda Rataj, Reena Katz, Michelle Irving, Jo SiMalaya Alcampo, Liam Crockard, Mark Pellegrino, Megan Rooney, Brad Tinmouth, Matthew Williamson, Jacob Korczynski Serena Lee, Teresa Aversa, Amber Landgraff, Deborah Wang, Hakili Don, Adrian Furniss, Marino Imperio, Mike Juneau, Neelam Kler, Steve Shaddick, Cameron Lee, Su-Ying Lee and Suzanne Carte-Blanchenot, Alison S. M. Kobayashi, Gintas Tirilis, Robin Selk, Joshua Bartholomew, Jenipher Hur, Håvard Pedersen, Avery Nabata, Thomas Del Balso, Dagmara Genda, Sarah Kernohan, Alexandra Mackenzie, Jon Nicolaou, Dan Rocca, Ryan Solski, Tara Downs, Ben Bruneau, Shlomi Greenspan, Taliya Cohen, Christopher Hutch, Leia Gore, Emily Pelstring, Marissa Neave, Donna Irvine, Dustin Wenzel, Marc Losier, Sabrina Richard, Dylin North, Robert Lendrum, Anna May Henry, Evan Paschke, Esther Maria Probst, Holly Rodricks, K. Erick Ino, Katie Micak, Scandalishious, Thon Lorenz, Christine Negus, Nathaniel Sullivan, Clayton Windatt, John Graham, Rosemary Laff, Eric Boissouneault, Mercedes Cueto, Addison Wylie, Gil Chalykoff, Amy Lockhart, Russell Chartier, Paul Botelho, Sacha Archer, Ryan Kerr, Brian Mitolo, Wayne Eardley, Ray O'Keefe, Dan English, Sarah Decarlo, Shelagh Young, Shanell Papp, Angela Edmunds, Francis Theberge, Troy Gronsdahi, Brian Longfield, David LaRivere, Ian Campbell and Paul Atkins, Freida Abtan and Erin Gee, Scott Rogers, Angus McLellan, Sam Silversides, Jenn E Norton, Smearballs, Martin Kuchar, Andrew MacDonald, Staceylee Turner, Joshua Barndt, Keli Liu, Jesi the Elder, Daisuke Takeya, Tad Hozumi, Deborah Jenkins, Ola Wlusek, Brandon A. Dalmer, Andrew Gavin Hicks, Michael Lawrie, Amy Jenine, Alize Zorlutuna, Marie-Michelle Deschamps

Alternative Tentacles

Participating Schools: City, Contact, East York Alternative, Inglenook, Oasis, SEE, SEED, Subway Two, West End(Toronto District School Board)

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A free annual anthology of XPACE exhibition essays and support material.

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