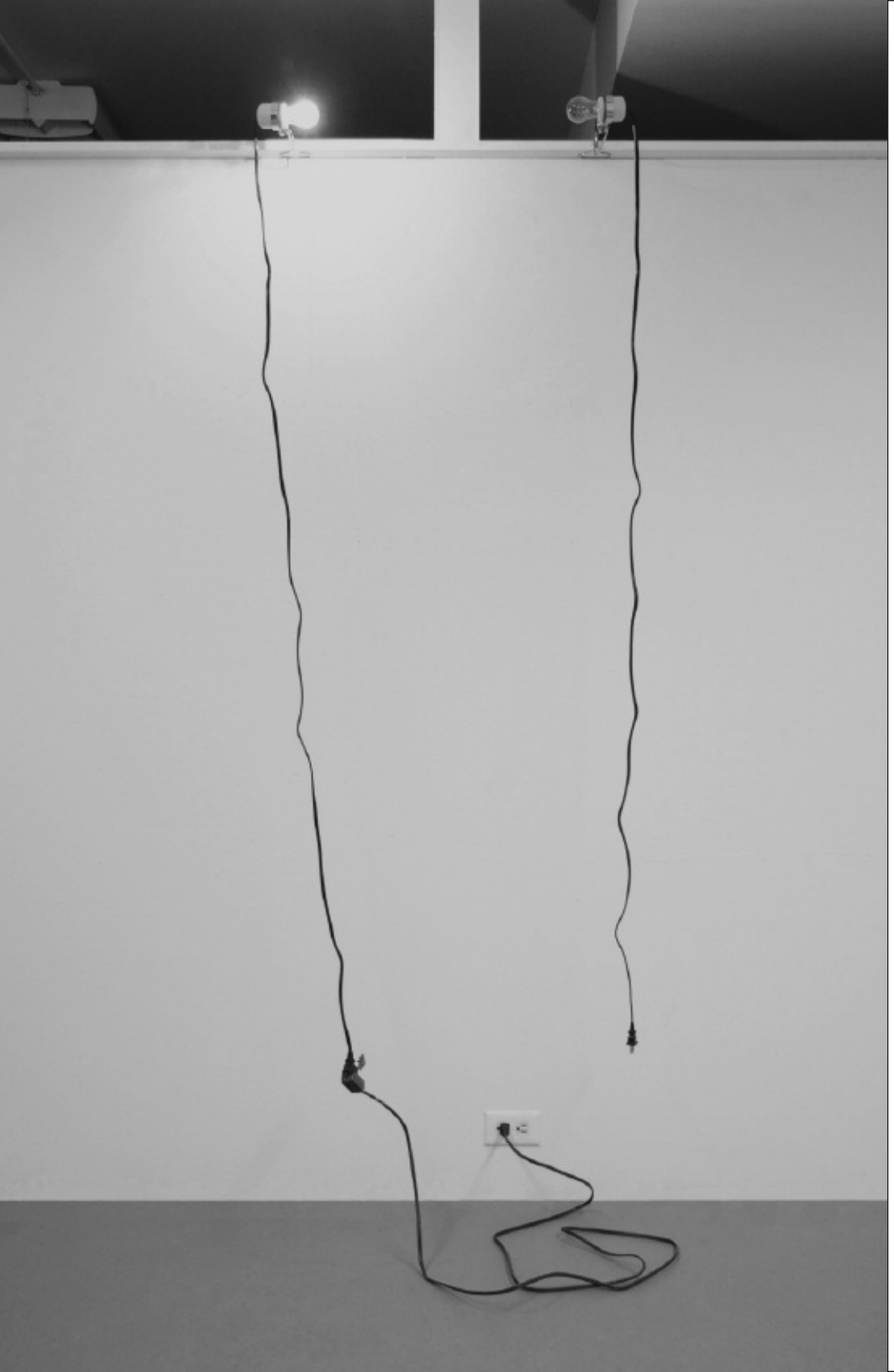
grupa o.k.

Group–Work



SAIC School of the Art Institute of Chicago

MFA 2012 GRADUATE EXHIBITION

Sullivan Galleries, 33 South State Street, 7th Floor, Chicago, IL 60603 www.saic.edu/exhibitions

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grupa o.k. (Julian Myers and Joanna Szupinska), Guest curators

Graduate Curatorial Fellows

Ionit Behar, MA, Modern Art History, Theory, and Criticism (2013)
Natalie Clark, MA, Arts Administration and Policy (2012)
Michaela Hansen, MDes, Fashion, Body and Garment (2012)
Laura-Caroline Johnson, Dual MA, Modern Art History, Theory, and Criticism, and Arts Administration and Policy (2012)

Participating Artists

Gregory Bae
Ramón Miranda Beltrán
Troy Briggs
Craig Butterworth
Erin Minckley Chlaghmo
Josh Dihle
Hope Esser
Anthony Favarula
Chiara Galimberti
Sarah Hasse
Lilly Hern-Fondation
Christalena Hughmanick
Seth Hunter
Justin Jacobson
Sarah Elizabeth Jones
Sean Lamoureux
Alfredo Martinez
Michaela Murphy
Nicholas Ostoff
Esteban Pulido
Sophia Rauch
Mario Romano
Leif Sandberg
William Sieruta
Winslow Smith
Clare Torina
Rafael Vega
Nicole White

Craig Butterworth, *Untitled I*, 2011, photograph

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Josh Dihle, *Drawing I* (detail), 2012, digital image

Group-Work: An Introduction

***grupa o.k.* (Julian Myers and Joanna Szupinska)**

This publication is a record of *Group-Work*, one of four sections in the MFA 2012 Graduate Exhibition at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The section includes twenty-eight artists, each graduating this year, in seven self-selected and self-organizing groups. Formed by students here at SAIC, these seven groups have various interests and social structures: some came together on the basis of shared theoretical interests; some derive from the camaraderie of artists working in a single discipline or medium; and others were based in friendships that have grown into generative conversations, if not shared opinion or form. Still others are new alliances of students who joined forces hoping they might preserve some autonomy by working together.

When SAIC invited us to contribute to the exhibition, visions of past student shows, juried exhibitions, and crowded art fairs flashed before our eyes. It is our belief that these disorienting scenes, over- and underwhelming at once, were what the organizers sought to avoid reproducing here, and we accepted the challenge in order to find out whether it was possible to curate a graduate exhibition—the result of so many competing interests and ideas, hopes and cynicisms—without replicating the troubles of past forms. SAIC's drive to innovate in the realm of art education and student exhibitions was compelling to us, and so we set about defining the terms for our section.

We chose to work with self-nominated groups of students, creating a frame for collaborative, group, or collective articulation in shared exhibition spaces. Our selection of artists drew on ongoing conversations in the studios and focused on those who articulated themselves in relation to other students. We selected not on our own taste, or any perceived content, theme, or aesthetic. We emerged from the process of selection with seven groups that had more or less advanced their own candidacy for our section of the exhibition. These groups were then offered a certain collective autonomy within their bounds, with the conditions that individual decisions would be submitted to group discourse and critique. We also suggested that each group imagine its space as common and relational, rather than simply subdividing their territories according to the individualizing logic of the exhibition at large.

We defined our curatorial position in this process as equals, critics and co-conspirators. The curatorial fellows with whom we worked—Ionit Behar, Natalie Clark, Michaela Hansen, and Laura-Caroline Johnson—were allied with particular groups. They acted both inside and outside the artist groups' discursive operations, as both advocates for the artists' proposals in the greater exhibition, and as narrators of their process. The texts included in this volume portray this activity from their perspective.

In a parallel project, we conducted research at the Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection and the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, honing in especially on SAIC's long and fascinating history of self-organized student activity. This research is brought to bear in the exhibition in a few different ways, each intended to build connections among contemporary forms of group-work, and those from the institution's past. Two micro-exhibitions, curated by Michaela Hansen with *grupa o.k.*, draw inspiration and materials from the Flasch collection. Interleaved throughout our groups' spaces will be photographs drawn from the institutional archives at the Ryerson, documenting exhibitions, studios, pageants, parties, club activities, and protests from the school's last century, thereby binding group activity in the present to its past forms. In this way, we hope to make visible the elaborations of social life at the school as a rich and persistent counter-thread to the individuations demanded by the systems of art education and graduate exhibition.

A Museum Without Frames
On the work of Chiara Galimberti, Lilly Hern-Fondation, Ramón Miranda Beltrán, and Winslow Smith

by Ionit Behar

The task of art today is to bring chaos into order.
—Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, 1951

"The attitude is what brought us together," expressed artist Ramón Miranda-Beltrán in one of our group meetings. Chiara Galimberti, Winslow Smith, Lilly Hern-Fondation, and Ramón Miranda Beltrán chose to work together as a group for the graduate exhibition, having not collaborated substantially before. They chose to put their works and attitudes into conversation—a conversation that would become both a form and a space.

My experience with these artists propels me to wonder if their common attitude is in an *in between* space, a space slippage somewhere between the self and the group. Can we say the same thing about each of their practices? How is it possible to reconcile both the self and the group? Perhaps trying to bridge the gap between these two extremes only reaffirms and stabilizes the division. The artists admire one another's works, and they seem to recognize each other's thoughts, even with no talking or meeting involved. The rather minimal correspondence among Chiara, Lilly, Ramón, and Winslow, and the few meetings they held have served as an interesting record of the collaborative process. While admittedly there were more conversations between Winslow and Ramón, it is not these exchanges but the shared attitude that brought the group together. Collectively, they claim to have a shared social awareness and perspective toward the world.

What I am narrating here is my own understanding of the "outsider/insider" perspective *grupa o.k.* proposed for us curatorial fellows, and of the time I have spent working with these four artists. The result of my experiences (too brief, perhaps) of visiting their studios, listening to their conversations, talking with them, texting, emailing, scheduling meetings, thinking about their work, and running into them at SAIC and at gallery openings around town, led me to write what follows.

In their own ways these artists each generate work that brings about an awareness of the many factors that construct the aesthetic event and experience of seeing. They also work with historical issues and documents or, conversely, perhaps, fictions—like stories, anecdotes, and histories—by exploring the relationships between individuals and the social world that surrounds them. The group shares a practice of re-examining traditional mediums, practices, and displays of objects in gallery space; they think not only about how art is seen in an exhibition space, but also about how people experience the environment outside of the art context and institution. They might ask, "How do we live in a certain environment, and how are we affected by it?"

Chiara Galimberti is concerned with issues of participation, social inequality, and the lived environment. She looks at public space as a place where a critical sense of ourselves, both as individuals and members of society, is in continual formation and reconsideration. Lilly Hern-Fondation's fragmented stories are enclosed mostly in layers of translucent, double-sided tape covering intimate materials, such as hand-written letters, collages, hair, and clothes. Ramón Miranda-Beltrán transfers archival photographic images to concrete, and uses other printmaking media to emphasize the links between present situations and historic events, making monuments of struggle for freedom in civic life. Winslow Smith is concerned with mediation and people's relationship to technology. His videos and photographic series take shape as a kind of montage: the superimposition of images and situations create something old-new that conflates the viewer's body with digital screens.

Working toward the graduate exhibition, Lilly has been thinking about what shape the group's exhibition space might take. In one of our email exchanges, she argued evocatively that the "space will be a museum without frames." She refers obliquely here to André Malraux's book *Le Musée Imaginaire* (1947), usually translated into English as *The Museum Without Walls*. According to Malraux the world of reproductions—particularly after the development of photography—forms a "museum without walls."[1] As Douglas Crimp has described, anything that can be photographed can be placed in Malraux's super-museum.[2] Photography not only opens the museum's doors to different species of objects, but also permits one to re-think the "organizing device" in institutions because, "it reduces the now even vaster heterogeneity to a single perfect similitude."[3] In the epigraph above, Theodor Adorno similarly intimates that a fragmented reality perceived as chaos might be unified in art. The group's idea of a museum without frames can be partly understood as the rejection of traditional techniques of display seen in museums and galleries. None of their works will be put behind glass or squared in frames, with the exception, we might say, of one of Winslow's videos that will appear flatly on a screen. Even this projection, though, might cross into the realm of three dimensions, part of its frame throwing an irregular shape of light across the floor and, possibly, other works. For Malraux, the museum—following the ideas of Walter Benjamin about the photographic reproduction and reproducibility—was a "mental museum": it was in one's head, interior, immaterial, and intimate.

Over the course of our discussions, the artists agreed that planning too far in advance would not be their working method. They want to react to a given space and only then, after trying and altering, will they know how their works will come to coexist in the space. The spontaneity and improvisation of the artists' shared attitude might be called a site-specific approach. For my part, I am looking forward to seeing and feeling how the space will live. I connect Chiara, Winslow, Lilly, and Ramón's works in my head, with an imaginary thread that leads to something like a *Musée Imaginaire*. I envision the space as sparse but also powerful. Handmade objects, sculptures, digital works, and ephemera will be displayed on the floor and walls. I imagine viewers engaging physically and mentally in ambiguous windings as they pass through the space, the spread of images preventing a single, linear comprehension. The viewer, I expect, will move through the space at different frequencies, looking from the floor to the wall, from seemingly rough, large, and sturdy pieces, to small and fragile ones. By taking up Malraux's dream as an exhibitionary principle, this group will bring unity to their disparate forms and mediums—in the mind of the viewer as much as the space of exhibition.

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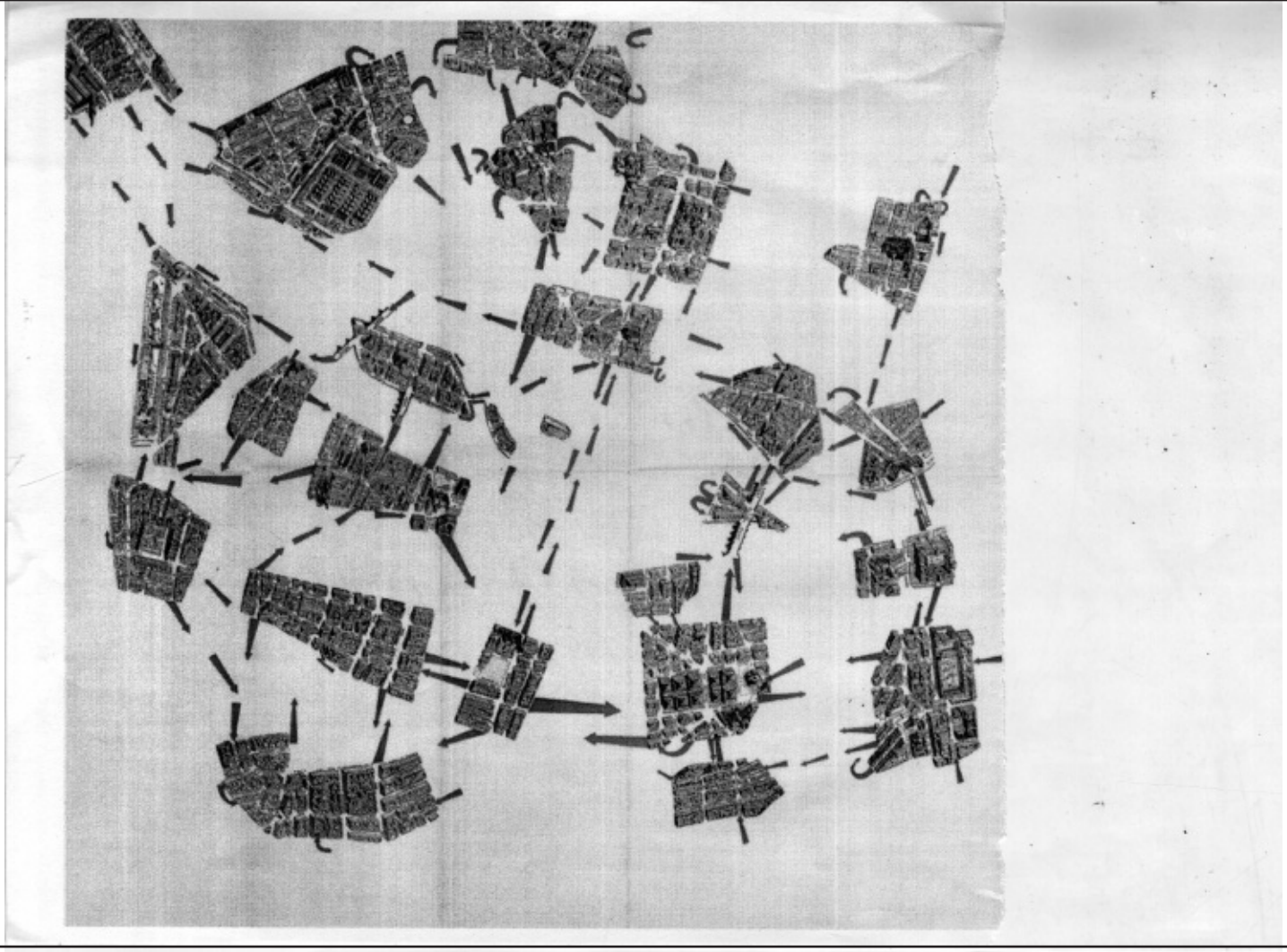
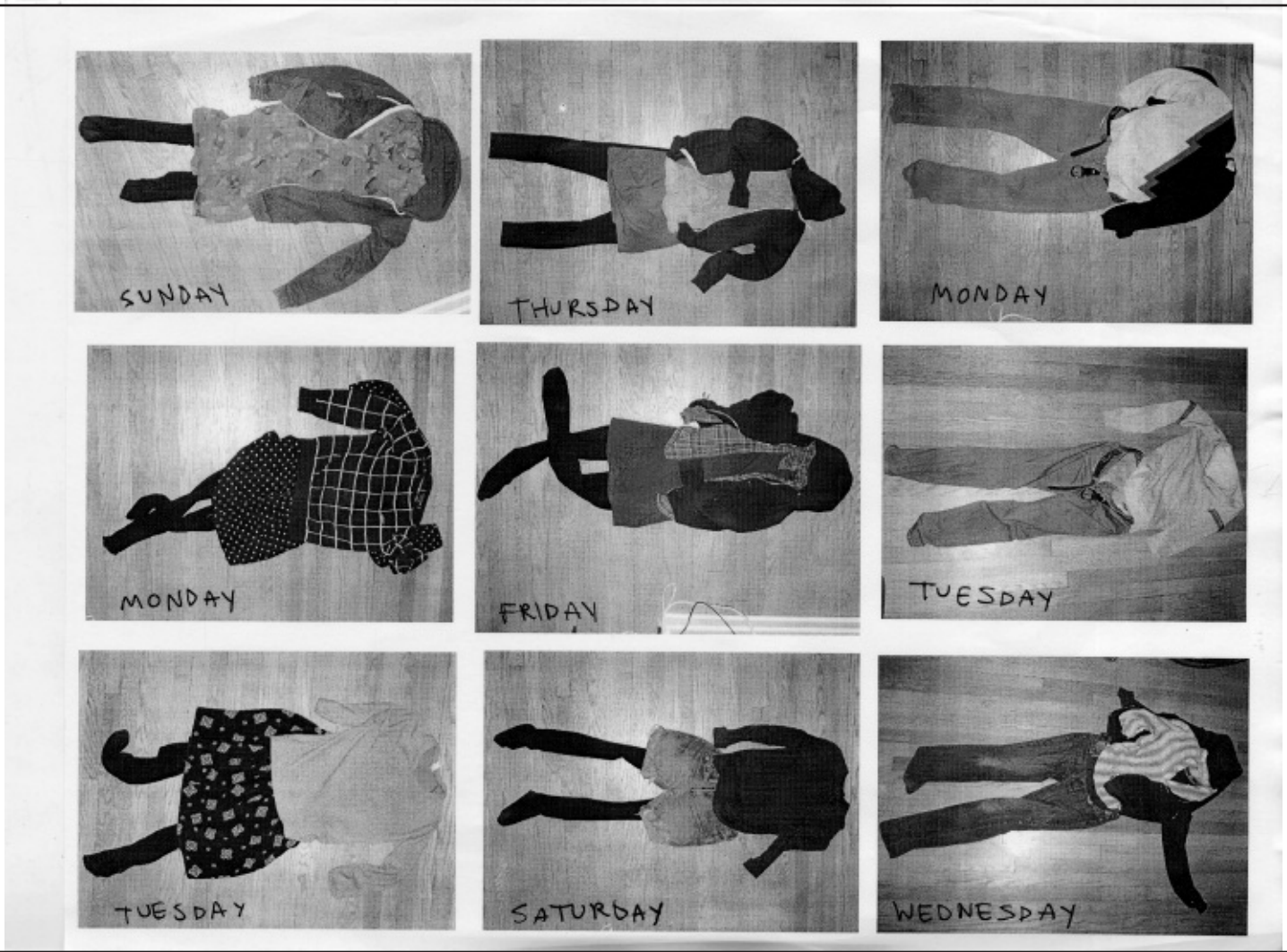
1. André Malraux, *Le Musée Imaginaire* (Paris: Albert Skira, 1947).
2. Douglas Crimp, "On the Museum's Ruins," *October, 13* (Summer 1980): 50.
3. Ibid.

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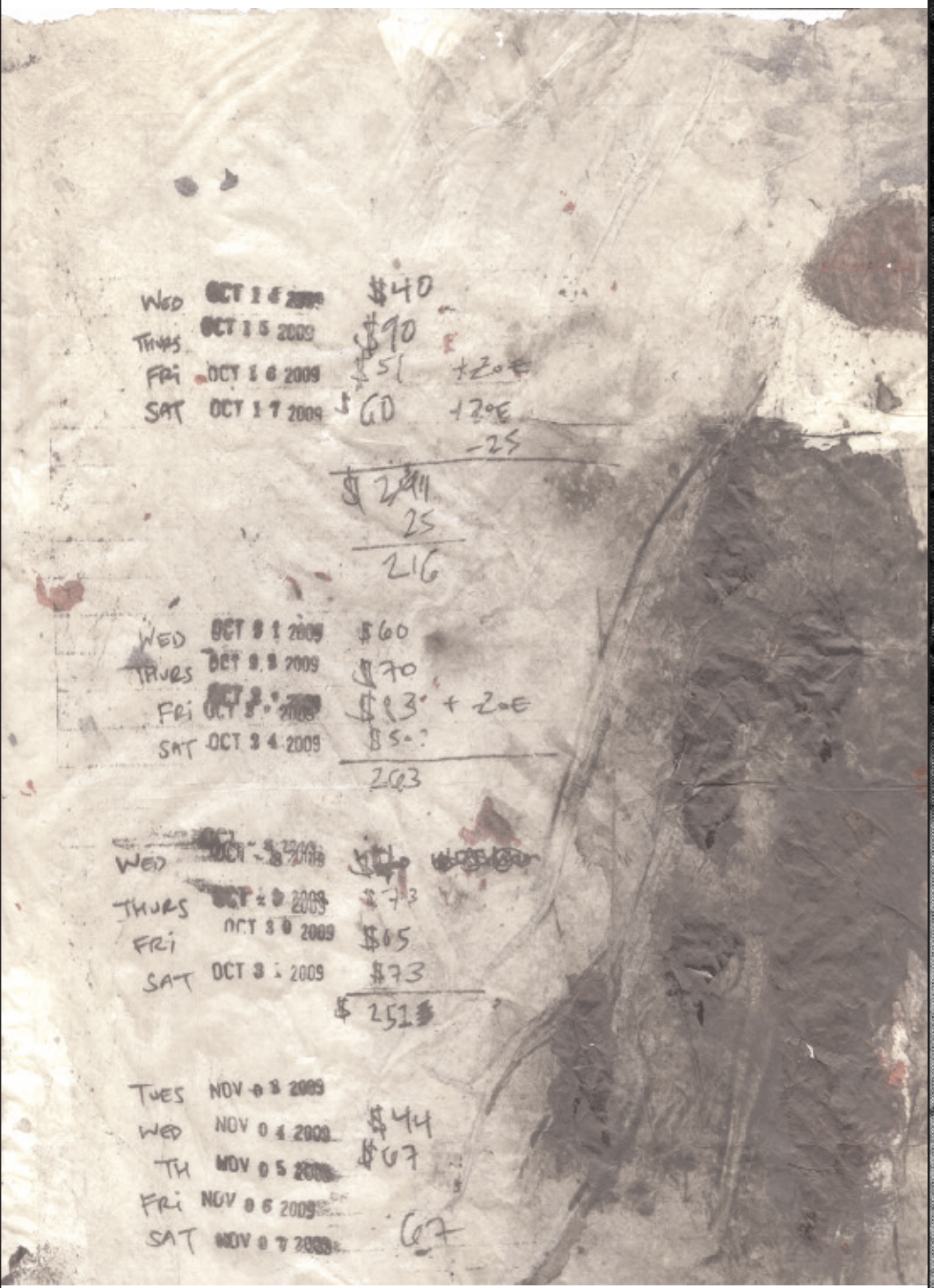
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Video screen ascending
in reverse, 11/14/11;
16 video stills,
2011-2012

Proximities and Intents
On the work of Gregory Bae, Troy Briggs, Josh Dihle, Michaela Murphy, and Seth Hunter

by Laura-Caroline Johnson

"I feel like I control too much, so it is nice to have things like that, that are not so… known."
—Seth Hunter

This statement could stand, in various complex ways, for each of the five artists in this group. For them the graduate exhibition is in many ways about letting go. This is a group of thinkers and planners, whose work is considered down to the most miniscule of its details, even to the point of obsession. An exhibition is, therefore, a difficult but exciting prospect for them: work elaborately considered in their individual studios will be brought into an aggregate situation, where each is influenced by the others in unexpected and hopefully productive ways. Yet to do so involves a certain exhalation—a letting-go of what (or how) the works might mean, alone.

This group is distinguished by an intense introspection in service of their work. They constantly question what connections could be made, what balances struck, in order to continually present a better practice. Their feverish inquiry and exploration means that in discourse and in the studio artworks are constantly being imagined and carried out. By contrast, working and exhibiting together seems to enable a different possibility. That is, for the artworks and ideas to just *be* and be together in the most interactive and stimulating way. As they've imagined it, their exhibition space will be a collection of individual works, while also a total, relational space that encompasses their works' individual borders and limits. As the group has described it, "There [will be] no clear boundaries between works, no serial displays, but rather a series of relationships governed by proximities and intents."

This idea strikes me as especially important, given the close-knit collective that these artists had already formed before my own entry into their conversation as a curatorial interloper or co-conspirator. I entered the conversation in the middle, as it were. In our first studio visits, Josh (to cite just one example) met me with immediate questions about his works and my thoughts about them. I attempted to suppress my sudden anxiety as I realized the broad range of forms represented throughout this entire group: traditional painting, wall paintings, sculptures, sound works, performances, and other interventions. Their group comprises an incredibly diverse range of talent. I questioned them—as they had done many times themselves—on how to effectively show so many different approaches within a single area of the exhibition. We discussed how their artworks might be orchestrated and how, given the free-for-all that graduate exhibitions often present, the group might retain some degree of autonomy and control.

All of them had already determined, more or less, which of their works they would show in the MFA exhibition. Their ability to explain these

decisions in detail compelled my thoughts on how these practices might articulate themselves. For instance, the intervention by Seth Hunter of a wooden plank within the space would automatically pose the questions: Which artifacts are artworks, which are readymades, and which are simply vehicles for viewing? For her part, Michaela plans to install a one-inch slit into the corner of the gallery with a vacuum inside the wall. This work will occupy the exhibition space (that is, the voided form of the gallery corner will literally be sucking the air from the room, thus activating the entire bay), while simultaneously actuating a presence on the opposite side of the wall in the form of the vacuum mechanism itself. Troy will produce a similarly confounding space through the use of sound: a live, binaural recording of the sound inside a child's closet. This presents a mysterious, if in some ways rather creepy intrusion; alongside the nostalgia that is evoked by the memory of playing in one's own closet as a youngster, there will inevitably come a moment of realization for listeners that they have, in fact, become the monster in the closet, simply by plugging into the headphone jack.

I felt a similar sense of heightened consciousness as I traversed Gregory's studio, where he paints intricately staged abstractions directly onto the walls, exploding the work. His compositions of prosaic materials project out into his studio. I was made to duck and sway around the hyper-geometries of his constructions, such that even the smallest bit of Mike and Ike's candy glued to the wall or the envelopes hanging from ledges became serious elements for my contemplation. This lesson in observation continued as I began examining Josh's studio, where even an unassuming work, such as a study in pastel colors on the front of a triangular board, hilariously and uncomfortably revealed a sea of fornicating quasi-sculptural bodies, writhing and piled on top of one another on the panel's opposite side. The seemingly traditional paintings he will contribute to the exhibition, then, will demand close looking to reveal the multifarious images throughout in their quasi-patterned abstractions.

How long will these artists walk the line between our frenetic questioning and resolving solutions? What is clear is that their work asks its viewers to inhabit the same questioning state of mind, the same interrogative attention, as the artists when they look for the gestures, which may reveal their meanings. I hope, too, that the moment will come for all of these artists, perhaps in a silent gallery just before the opening when a deep exhale of satisfied, collective, and accomplished relief may emerge, before each of them reengages with their feverish consciousness of creativity, as they are all wont to do.

the parent: #1

Your character is the father of one of the graduating MFA students. Your clothing should be as if you normally don't dress up but are wearing something nice.
-jacket
-tie, no clip
-slacks that don't match jacket

your attitude should be one of reminiscent joy, a tinge of regret.

as preperation for the role I would like for you to spend some time on line researching solar flares and emission theory.

The performance will consist of a 30 minute cycle of taske repeated in form but differing in details depending on the constraints and opportunities. the cycle will repeat throughout the opening. (2-3 hours)

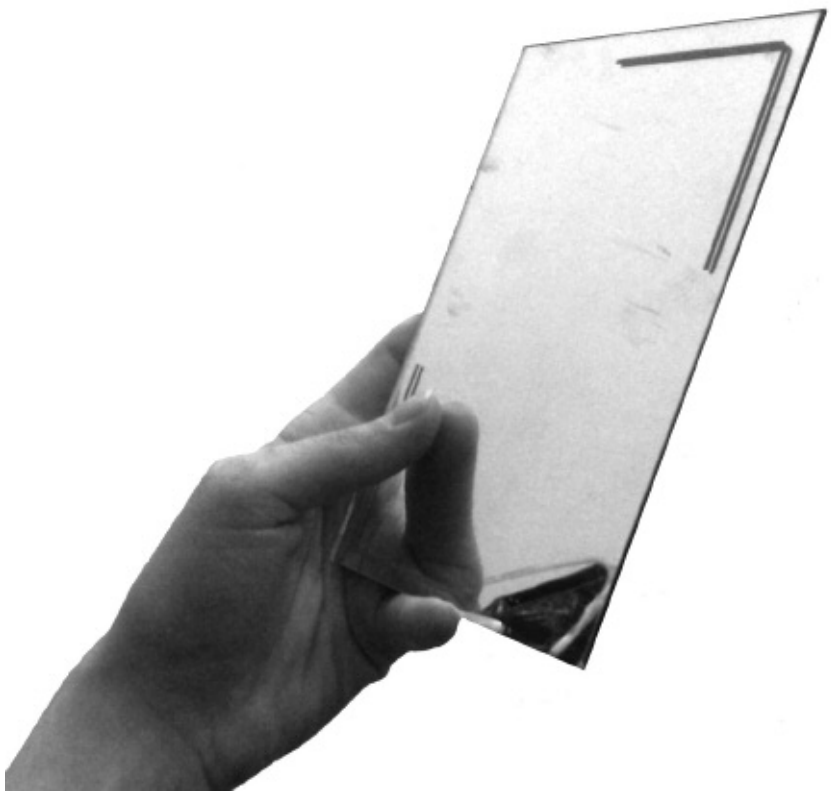
before beginging choose a work of art that is not in the same room as the title card for this piece. we will call that work the keystone.

1 begin by getting a drink and walking to a window, look out as if you
2 are looking at the sky.
3
4
5 go for a cheese plate, fill it with as much cheese as you can.
6 forget it at the table.
7
8
9
10 begin a conversation by asking for a favor, earlier that evening you
11 leaned against a post that you realized had a wet paint sign on it,
12 ask your helpfull stranger if they wouldn't mind telling you if there
13 is a mark on the back of your jacket. (there won't be) thank them and
14 move along. (thank them with consistant eye contact)
15
16
17 wave towards a crowd as if you are finally seeing someone you love,
18 smile and walk towards them.
19
20-30. spend this time at the keystone, silently con sidering it.
try not to engage in conversation about it.
repeat cyle.

if you find yourself in a conversation about the show and what you have enjoyed descibe a work that is somehow making a wall shiver, almost imperceptibly.

EDITION

NON-EDITION



Relations In Space
On the works of Craig Butterworth, Nicholas Ostoff, Sophia Rauch, and William Sieruta

by Laura-Caroline Johnson

Safe Space: The Trust Issue with a Curatorial Fellow

Craig Butterworth, Nicholas Ostoff, Sophia Rauch, and William Sieruta have a strong sense of mutual trust that comes from exhibiting together under multiple circumstances, as well as having a deep and shared perspective. And so, entering into their conversation, especially as a "curatorial fellow," was a delicate process that took more than a quick conversation. I immediately noticed in discussions that words like "MFA Exhibition" and "curator," for these artists were cause for wary reserve. Their circumspection toward this type of showcase, however, is neither surprising nor unwarranted. The notion of being thrown into an exhibition that is so large and, at times, so reductively over-thought is understandably threatening to any artist. But as a fellow student, I also understood these artists as my peers. It was my job to make them feel comfortable—if not with the operations of the graduate exhibition in general, then at least with me serving as a trusted advocate for their interests in the negotiations that would follow. I knew that this trust would need to be earned before we could enter into any real conversations in the subsequent months.

Under these conditions, our studio visits started slowly. Usually quite vocal in such circumstances, with these artists I remained an ardent listener, posing delicate questions to prompt further descriptions of their works and approaches. During our first encounter, I found myself questioning how such distinct artists could produce from their conversation, however shared, a group dynamic. Some impressions follow that provide at least a provisional answer.

Social Space: The Relationships Between Artists and Artworks

Sophia's works evince the most direct ties to those of the other artists, inasmuch as her works often animate or respond to other artworks, as well as their physical surroundings. As she has explained, "My practice is a reflection of the social and architectural spaces of exhibition. Each work is site-specific, and my art for the MFA show will be completed once I know the works of my collaborators." She recently installed a mural as both an immediate response to the colors and formal elements present in Nicholas's paintings, and to the exhibition space in which she was showing. (This interest in incidental material conditions links Sophia's work to that of both Craig and Nicholas.) In another collaboration, Sophia created small ceramic sculptures that hung in close proximity to, and thus in dialogue with, William's paintings. Therefore, I had to get to know and fully understand the details of the others' work in order

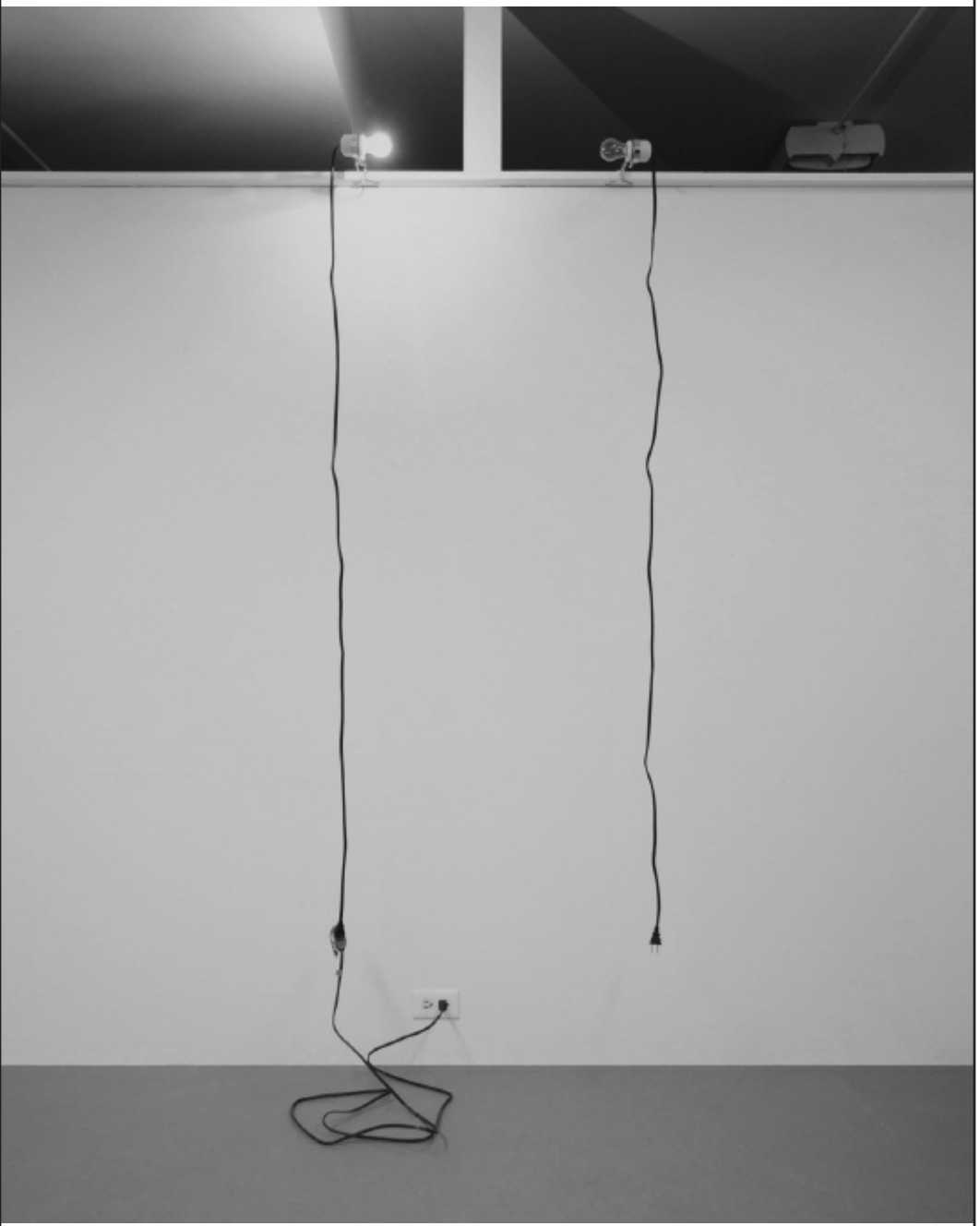
to grasp the nuances of Sophia's responses to them. There was clearly a set of relationships being explored here—but on what basis and with what as their subject?

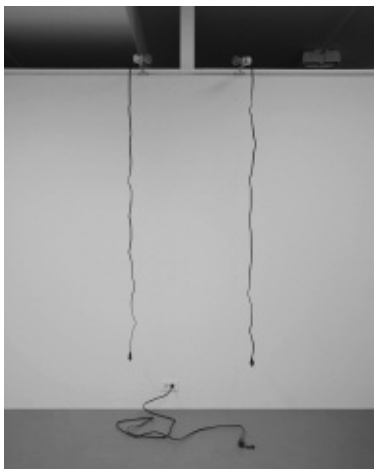
Sophia has worked most frequently with William, it seems. William's brightly colored canvases often depict a single object: a green jar of lima beans with a sculptural appendage, a dissected rattlesnake, or an animal print rug. Entering his studio, I was struck by the rapture of colors in his paintings. So, when he divulged in a studio visit that the works he would produce for the graduate exhibition would take the form of large, completely gray-scale paintings, I was a bit taken aback. Working with large canvases was a recent change for William and, from the looks of his studio display, suited him well. But to omit his use of vivid color seemed to me a small tragedy. Yet, as he explained and others agreed, this muted palette would create stronger forms and better links to the soft hues of Nicholas's paintings, making the group's installation ultimately more cohesive.

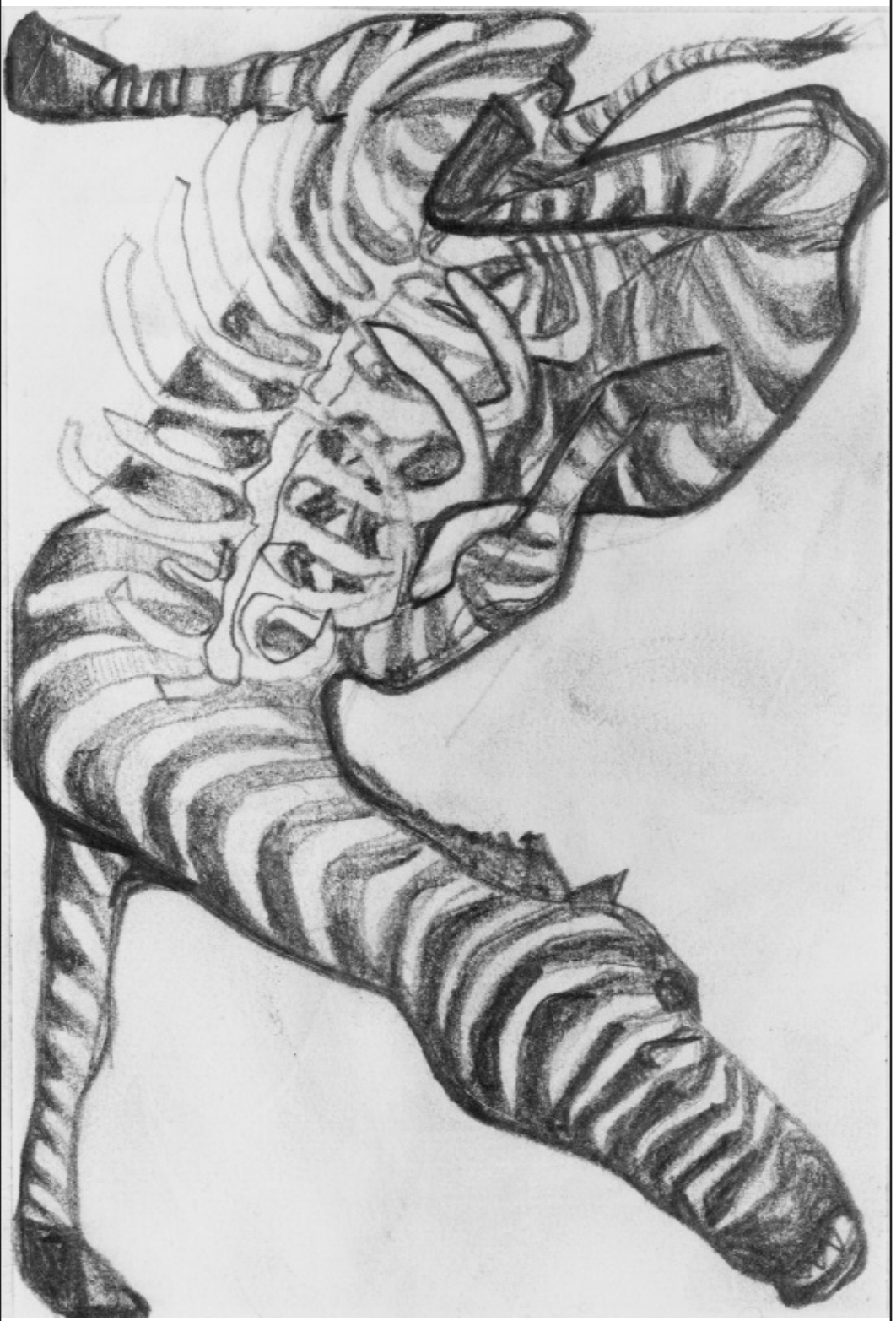
In contrast to my experience with William, upon entering Nicholas's studio for the first time, I was greeted with the neat lines and shadows of his small, muted paintings—paintings that immediately exuded a mysterious air. Nicholas's voice almost directly matched the soft and careful qualities of his works as he explained that his art reflects different magnified and abstracted elements from his own domestic environment. These formal qualities, along with the subdued colors and his narration, created a half-enchanting, half-dark impression. His explanations conjured ideas of what these ordinary objects, now serving as Nicholas's muses, would look like in person. For this artist, these abstractions act out his observation of everyday things, but in a fashion that acknowledges life's strangeness. The most mundane object—a window or a wicker chair—slowly elaborates upon its own stories.

This sustained attention to the everyday is continued in Craig's photographs of his home; these appear to result from their own terms, of similar inspiration as Nicholas's paintings. But it was Craig's kinetic wooden sculptures, shaped something like antique elevator doors, which struck me first. Craig announced that he would contribute these sculptures to the exhibition, and proceeded to demonstrate their ability to be altered. So it was not color or other formal elements that would tie his works to those of the rest of the group. Instead, like Sophia, it was Craig's physical use of the space between his works and the others' that would engage the viewer's attention within this group's display within the larger MFA exhibition.

My role within this group has been to serve as a critical voice from outside of their already-existing conversation, and as an insider attempting to translate to others these artists' playful concepts of space, color, and form. Nicholas and William's color and shape integrates their works into the group, and present new means of observation. For Craig and Sophia, the manipulation of the exhibition space is key, so it is about the placement of their works in physical and conceptual proximity to the others. The responsiveness of each of these artists to each other's practices creates a careful chess game of moves and counter-moves, as well as a subtle form of mimesis—all developed from their close and often subtly irreverent, artistic conversation.







Today I got lost contemplating the shape of a chunk of Swiss cheese. It was like a miniature modernist sculpture made out of moonroc—a pretty wild and remarkable shape, if you allowed yourself to *really* look. I don't know what it was about the shape of this particular cheese chunk that led me to stare longer than I had ever stared at any of the previous cheeses in my life, but for a moment, I was captivated. Now I have reason to make a painting.

My paintings often begin this way, with an attraction to a shape. Maybe while I'm on the bus, or at a deli, or at the museum—my imagination doesn't discriminate—I'll notice myself getting engrossed in the strangeness of a peculiar shape. Often, I'll discover these shapes by re-examining familiar objects. The other day, I noticed the profile of a milk jug and suddenly its function and conventional form fell away and the jug became a strange and alien thing. The point is that I select my imagery based on how I see it and not based on what it literally is. I don't bother to allegorize or impose meaning on the objects I paint. I'm free to paint anything I want. I just try to find the extraordinary moments in ordinary things. It doesn't even have to be a shape; it could be color, form, whatever. Any visual experience that I become deeply engrossed in fully meets my criteria for a worthwhile painting subject, from the contour of Christ's feet in a Manet painting to a pickle jar in the back of my fridge.

I paint from memory instead of using a photograph or prop. This allows me to imagine things the way I would prefer them to be, instead of focusing on how they are. What they actually are probably isn't that great, anyway. A concrete reference kills that wonderful delusion of unlimited possibility, and reinforces reality's shortcomings. Without a document to confine the idea, I'm free to "correct" reality, to interject my own color sense, to idealize shapes, and to exaggerate the features I find most distinctive. You could say that I paint from a position of optimistic dissatisfaction: I'm navigating between the real, the remembered, and the ideal, and trying to synthesize them into something entirely mine.

When I attempt to actually paint the chunk of Swiss—oh, shit—the cheese starts to look much more like a school bus than I intended. Now I have to contend with the school bus-ness of the cheese shape, and figure out what's making it that way. Will I still see the bus if the shape becomes taller? There is only one way to know—by sacrificing the initial idea in favor of the impulse. I go for it, and the result is that my shape now looks more like a very tall igloo. I turned a blind corner and I'm now in the confused middle of a cratered, cream-colored igloo, but that is the beauty of making a painting. I now have a shape that is not just one thing. It's a simultaneous multiplicity: cheese/ bus/ igloo.

Now the painting is pulling me in divergent directions. The cheese wants a red wax rind, the bus needs a tire, and an igloo obviously calls for a snowdrift. The whole situation has completely opened up, and I am free to play it out. In the end, I might end up with an image of Swiss cheese or I might not. Who cares? Either way, I know the result won't be anything I could have imagined had I not surrendered to the impulse and process.

My imagination distorts reality and initiates a particular trajectory, but the material reality of the paint pushes back, and reroutes my ideas in ways I could never preordain. I discover my images, rather than try to faithfully illustrate my preconception.

There's no narrative, no allegory, no underlying message. It's just a painted reconciliation of different ways of thinking. It's my visual experience, the images in my memory, and the ideal version I project, mediated and interrupted by an impulsive response to the unfolding painting.

It's a tightrope walk between representation and abstraction, and I know that in order for the show to be interesting the rope has to really shake.

It's no fun if the tightrope walker doesn't almost fall.

Photography and Exchange
On the work of Anthony Favarula, Sean Lamoureux, Esteban Pulido, and Nicole White

by Natalie Clark

Anthony Favarula, Sean Lamoureux, Esteban Pulido, and Nicole White have been working closely throughout their graduate studies. Though their practices have taken individual paths in the past two years, their relationship has served as a central force of debate, theory, and response. Their work has evolved through each other and has been formed in part by that development. These are the reasons why these artists chose to show their work together in the MFA exhibition. The juxtaposition of their works creates a rich context for their practices; each of their works informs the others' production, and together their practice tells a story distinct from what might be perceived from the individual artists' work alone.

Writing from the perspective of an insider/outsider participant in the group, it's difficult to unravel fully how the artists have both contributed and responded to one another. Our time spent together has been limited to a handful of studio visits, emails, and phone conversations over the past few months. One thing that has been abundantly clear from the beginning, though, is that each of them knows the other's work inside and out, and can speak to it just as insightfully as they discuss their own. These artists spend a lot of time in each other's studios, where their relationship as a group of peers truly coalesces. Sitting on the floor of Sean's studio one Sunday morning, the five of us discussed some ideas for the exhibition. Having already spent a lot of time hashing out the possibilities together—thoroughly rejecting and revising each idea before arriving at any conclusions—their proposals were refined, with individuals speaking in unison and continuing each other's statements. Their concerns were always for the benefit of the whole, and ideas put forward by one warranted the careful consideration of each participant. Anthony's works, in his own words, "monumentalize family." Spontaneous, candid moments at home are removed from their private world of domestic settings to be staged as idealized replays. Sean, too, works with the concept of idealized memory. His photographs often recall his upbringing in Massachusetts and nearby travels. He allows these moments to be captured directly, forcing little manipulation over the elements of light and landscape. Nicole's work at times appears to directly correspond with Sean's through the use of composition and light. Her experiments with photograms and smoked glass evoke a vague sense of landscape. She credits her preference for experimental photography techniques to the unpredictability of the process and the visibility of the artist's hand in the final product. Esteban works under a premise that he calls "psychodrama," which places him as the third-party interpreter of an occurrence that he has observed. He is interested in the psychology behind an image, especially in conventional forms of

portraiture. His subjects are figures whose psychological states he can interpret and later narrate through portraiture, by way of observing them in the moments leadings up to a photo shoot. Actors whose performances he has just witnessed, his girlfriend's arrival home after a long day of work, a psychologist and patient whose session has just concluded: these subjects carry with them the weight of their most recent, prior experience, and through Esteban's proximity, can be understood, if ambiguously, through narrative interpretation.

Scale is a shared concern for the group. Each of the artists utilizes it deliberately, as the imagery depicted in their photographs relies on a decisive use of scale to alter the viewers' experience with the work. Critical elements of their works are realized as intended only when they are at the appropriate size and the viewer is provided necessary proximity. As their practices have developed and changed over the past two years, conversations around scale have provided a critical frame that pushes each of them to make thoughtful choices about how the production size relates best to their works. Although last year Tony began printing his photographs at a large scale, now he has moved on to a smaller size evocative of the intimacy he suggests in his imagery. Nicole has experimented with size as well, adjusting the scale according to the experiment. Her recent works have taken a shape that truly suits them—small enough to demand careful examination, yet with enough space to bring out the subtleties of shadow and grain. Exhibited together, these artists' photographs are meant to interrelate while still maintaining their own autonomy and identity, so size was a critical concern during their exhibition planning.

Yet at the same time, the divergence in technique and subject matter among their work has been a strong factor in their group relationship. The juxtapositions that those differences provide have challenged the choices each make in their work, with an incredible insight that only comes with closely working together. Classroom conversations carry over into their studios, and departmental critiques are subsequently reevaluated as a group. While their practices are aesthetically distinct, these artists' individual works embody a relatively brief but rich history of shared experiences and conversations.

As we sat there on Sean's studio floor, discussing possibilities for their installation, it became clear that their exhibition should reflect (locate and make visible) this shared conversation. To accomplish this, their photographs will be arranged in a series of interlocking vignettes in which each set implies an ambiguous, singular narrative. Taken together in the space of exhibition, these suites of pictures will reproduce something—some impression—of the considered, intricate, attentive self-containment of the group that produced them.

Hybrid Forms
On the work of Sarah Hasse, Erin Minckley Chlaghmo, and Alfredo Martinez

by Natalie Clark

Sarah Hasse, Erin Minckley Chlaghmo, and Alfredo Martinez work within, and yet outside of, the boundaries of painting. Their practices employ a range of traditional painting techniques, but bring them into contact with media that the artists refer to as "low materials," including textiles, used clothing, acrylics, and craft supplies. They also share a particular history in SAIC's interdisciplinary graduate programs: each began in SAIC's painting department to which they felt a certain distance from the culture and techniques taught there; yet despite an attention to pattern, fiber, and textiles, none were inclined to adopt a practice strictly based in Fiber and Material Studies either. Their practice fell somewhere between the two, in a transitional and trans-disciplinary space, which led them to seek critical conversation and support from each other. Together and beside one another, they pursue a hybrid practice.

Our communication has been conducted, in the last few months, in various forms: in studio visits, over email, and together in composing their plans and proposal for the graduate exhibition. My position as an outside figure within the group has provided me enough distance to have a clear sense of their working dynamic, while still enjoying enough proximity to get to know their work through the experiences that have shaped it. Yet our time together has not been sufficient enough to know their work very well. By comparison their understanding of each other's practices is thorough: no one is quite as qualified to speak of their work as they are. They have a particularly acute understanding of each other's artistic choices, and a keen sense of each other's ambitions and processes. On one memorable occasion, Sarah was unable to meet for a group studio visit, and so Erin introduced her work instead—and the inverse has been true on other occasions.

During our conversations over the course of the past few months, it has become clear how different their attitudes are towards fiber media. Sarah has wholly adopted fiber as her medium, but constructs her works with the compositional sensibilities that she brought with her from her former painting practice. Erin's practice is a graceful fusion of painting, fiber structures, and craft techniques. Alfredo, by contrast, contends that his practice is painting in a strict sense, but composed through layers of drawing, fabric, and paint that remain true (in a complex and critical way) to the support of a stretched canvas.

To say more about their individual practices: Sarah's is concerned with the life cycle of clothing and its planned obsolescence. She composes wall installations from discarded clothing, found fabric, and yarn. The

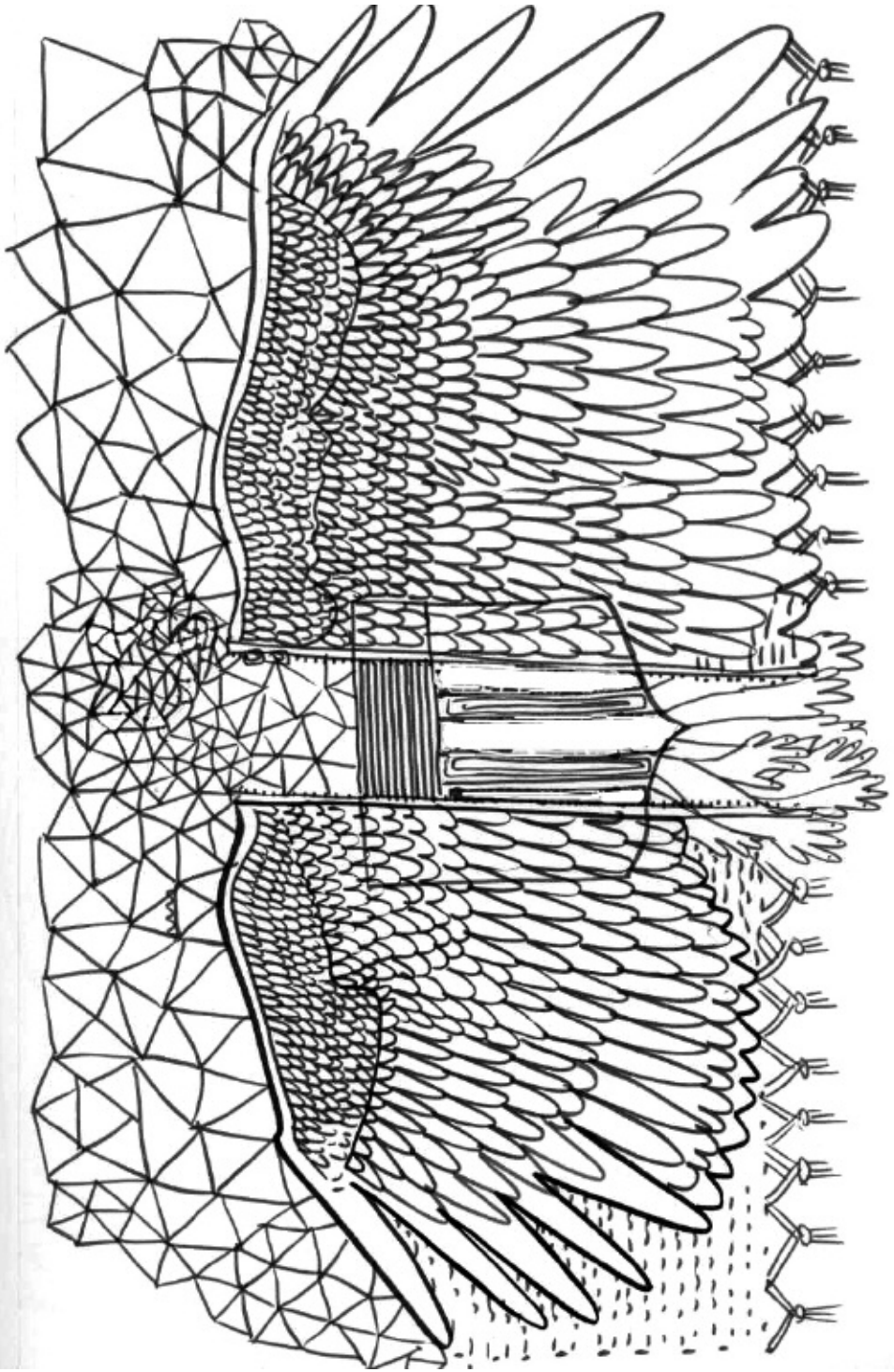
materials point towards our cultural acceptance of mass production and consumption, binging and purging of clothing. The artist positions herself between painting and quilting, a formal exploration of cloth and the truth of its status as a manufactured commodity. She is interested in blurring the boundary between technical labor and intuitive experimentation.

Erin constructs ambiguous warrior figures through layers of handmade and commercially printed fabrics, often deployed in large-scale, quasi-sculptural wall hangings. She is interested in pattern and its relationship to self-defense; repetition of forms, such as armor and scales; and camouflage as a method of crypsis (a term derived from ecology, which describes ways that animals avoid being seen or observed).

Whereas the others emphasize a conceptual framework for their practice, Alfredo is primarily interested in form. His paintings are made of multiple layers of acrylic paint, scribbles in oil pastel, personal and found photographs, and other flat layers. His works saturate the confines of a canvas with layers of color, intuitive drawing, and playful cutouts inspired by the playful abstraction of rhythm and motion of life in Venezuela.

As a group, they have stated that their practices address their individual conflicts with the limitations of traditional painting practices, and seek to redefine their material and cultural identities as artists. Central to each of their practices is a devotion to labor in their craft, embodied by layers of repeated gestures. They reference the formal conventions of composition and color inherited from their painting backgrounds, yet employ techniques and materials that abandon these conventions and provide space for movement between disciplines.

Though they have each in different ways moved away from certain aspects of painting as a discipline, they retain its basic framework and forms of attention. Despite their rebellion from their painting backgrounds, they share a reluctance to leave behind entirely the rules of painting and sculpture, and they hold no devotion to any one fiber-based tradition. This complex attitude, a critical relationship to a medium whose boundaries they nevertheless aim to challenge, leads them to create hybrid forms of textiles, sculpture, painting, and collage that achieve a confident new vocabulary of formal elements.



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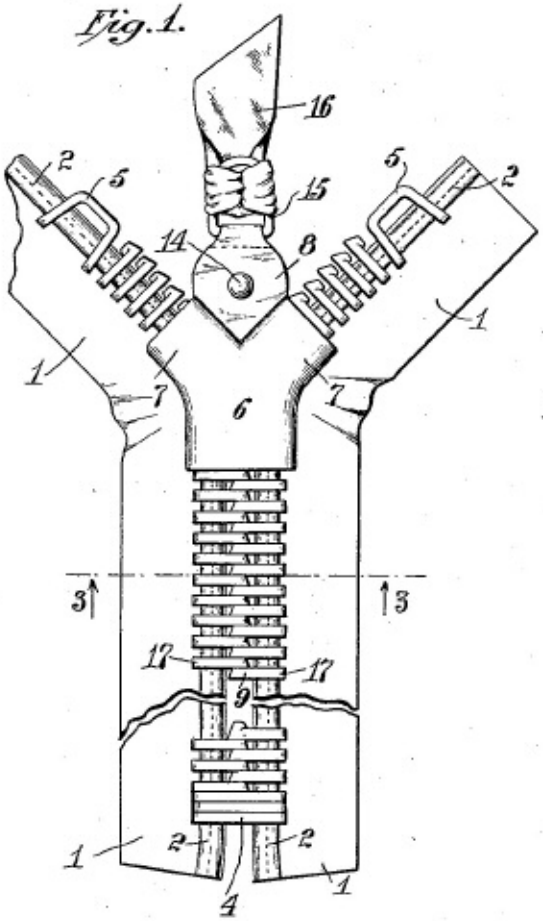

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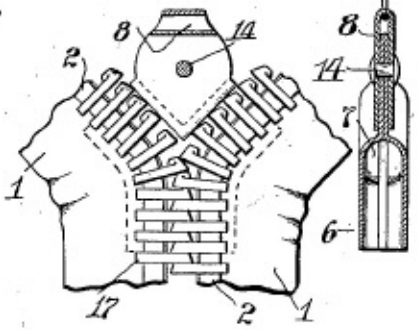

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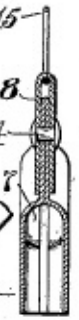

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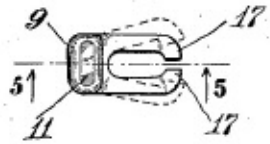

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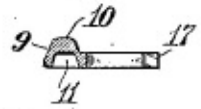

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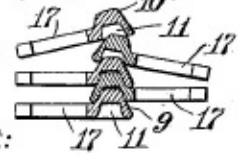

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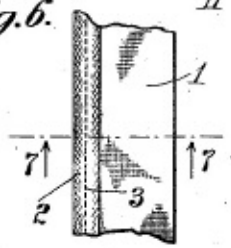

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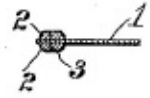

Attest:

J. D. Connolly, Jr.

Inventor:

Gideon Sundback,

by Edwards, Sager & Wooster

Attys.


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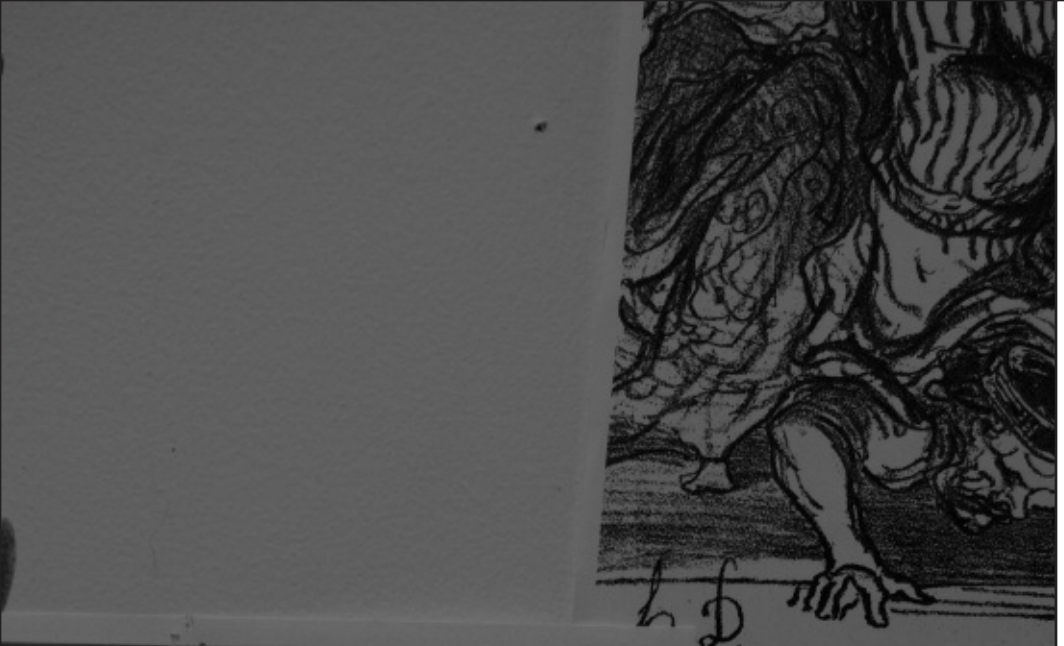


L'HISTOIRE REVUE

En avant deux

Humor, Activity, Motion
On the work of Hope Esser, Christalena Hughmanick, and Sarah Elizabeth Jones

by Michaela Hansen

Artists Hope Esser, Christalena Hughmanick, and Sarah Elizabeth Jones have long-standing, collaborative art-making relationships, and so realizing their thesis show in the format of self-organized group activity was a natural extension of an existing—even daily—conversation among these artists, as well as a fitting culmination of the group work they have undertaken over the course of their time as students. Their individual practices explore different ideas of accumulation, myth, history, cult activity, gender, labor, and repetitive action; their dialogue stems less from similarities in the content of their works than from a shared, joyful, and engaged attitude towards the process of making and performing art. Furthermore, each group member approaches her work with a similar inclination towards humor, activity, and motion.

Hope's current work explores ideas of romance by comparing her personal ideals, formed during adolescence and learned from nineteenth-century novels, with contemporary pop culture representations of love. Playing characters that are both painfully vulnerable and broadly stereotyped, she examines her own disillusionment with these ideals in video and live performance. Christalena's work extends her studio practice into the gallery space, using the exhibition as a site for physical labor. Pieces of found furniture are arranged and rearranged into endless configurations—in her own words examining ideas of "desire and continual pursuit for physical sensation and fulfillment." Through a process of "urban excavation," Sarah gathers and arranges fragments of asphalt, bricks, and glass. After "mining transitional spaces like construction sites," the found materials are combined with purchased foam, plaster, and steel to create large-scale sculptures. Together with a video component, Sarah's work seeks "the sublime within physicality."

While the artists' concepts are varied, their individual points of view were not immediately evident when I began working with the group. Instead, they presented a unified front that, as an outsider, was challenging to access. During our first studio visit, rather than spending time in each artist's space, as I had expected, we conducted a viewing of the group's video work inside another MFA student's studio in order to use that student's projector. This pre-planned format created a more formal setting than I had first anticipated; the group's work was not personalized by a context of possessions, materials, or unfinished projects. Not every video shown was a final, edited version, but neither was I invited into the world of their process or decision-making. I was seeing only exactly what the artists wanted me to see.

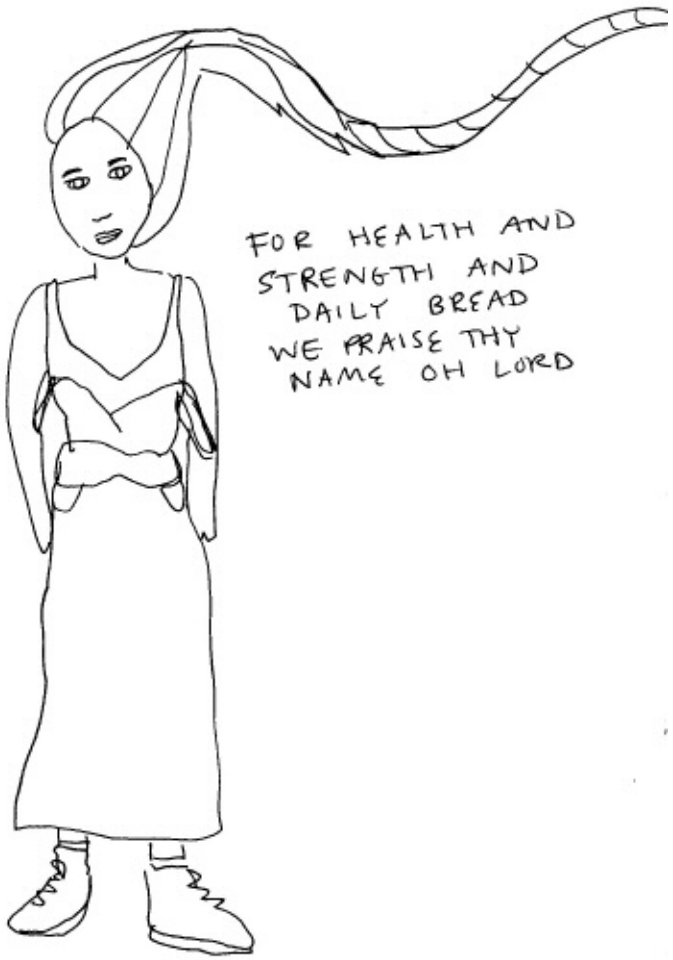
Through the entire process of planning toward the MFA show, this group has remained resolute in its approach. While I have had the opportunity to visit each artist's studio, most of my interactions with the group have been from a distance. Our communication is generally conducted over email, and I usually receive a group email as a response to my messages—one voice speaking for all three. Rather than hold discussions in my presence, the group first talks things over, and only replies to my questions once they have formulated a collective position. If there have been disagreements among the artists, I have never been made aware of them; they work as a tightly knit, relatively univocal partnership.

The true cooperative spirit of this group was evident early on in their proposal. Written together by the artists, the plan for their gallery space was to create a total environment, not a compromise or competition among the artwork: "Though each artist is contributing individual works [for] one [shared] space, close attention will be paid to how they interact with one another and ultimately activate the environment." The group's goal is not to draw attention to the artists as individuals, but to create a successful, dynamic setting for performance, installation, video, and sculpture within the overall MFA show.

The group questioned how to keep the MFA exhibition active and alive for the duration of the show, and how to keep audiences returning to the space. How could they make art that will not be "finished" by the opening night, but will be allowed to evolve over time, sparking more activity and new work? Attempting to achieve this goal, the group has designed an environment that will function as an extension of studio practice and a site of active exploration, work, and play. The artists will participate in one another's programmed performances, and return for scheduled "work sessions" in the space, storing props on site and leaving evidence of process, activity, and modification behind, thereby transforming the space through accumulation and movement. Sculptures and other objects will be reconfigured throughout the course of the exhibition, breaking, colliding, or forming new combinations. Their changing gallery will ensure that the MFA show is a site of artistic production and physical action, encouraging audiences to make multiple visits, and providing different experiences for repeat viewers—all while addressing ideas of labor, accumulation, documentation, and timekeeping.

Since the group's proposal was so well defined, my contribution came in helping to secure an appropriate space within the gallery for their exhibition. In the original proposal, the group made it clear that they were not hoping for any one space in particular, as long as they could inhabit a gallery that would provide the amount of space required for their performances and audiences. As their projects developed, it became clear that rather than allowing their works to respond to a space in the gallery, we needed to design a space specifically for the work, so we sought the circular window on the far north end of the Sullivan Galleries. This space, we hope, will allow the group to situate their work as a destination within the MFA show, and as an incentive for audiences to explore the entirety of the exhibition as they walk in that direction. Furthermore, by placing the group's work near these windows at the zero-zero point of Chicago's city grid, we are able to open the experience of the group's work to public audiences beyond the gallery space (at least conceptually), a realization that has enhanced the individual artists' original concepts, as well as the experience of the group's work as a whole. Planning the works around a specific location has allowed us to create the best environment to realize the group's durational performances and accumulative installations. The group's contribution to the exhibition also includes a performance scheduled for the opening night. Inspired by choreographer Charles Moulton's synchronized performance *Precision Ball Passing* (first enacted in 1980), the three artists will pass pieces of Sarah's sculpture between one another, the many components of each individual's work combining to create one unified event.

Working with this group of artists is a bit like stepping into a piece of carefully practiced choreography. They all respect and admire one another as artists, they want what is best for one another's work, and they understand how to get the results they desire. In working together I never got the sense that any one of them had to sacrifice their individual practice to make the group a successful whole. Instead these artists take the position that what is necessary to make an artwork successful can only positively contribute to making the group successful. These three artists recognize and take advantage of the fact that, through collaborative combination, their singular works are strengthened and enhanced. It was important for me to take a role in helping the group to realize their plans, while being careful to preserve the existing and fruitful dynamic already happening among them.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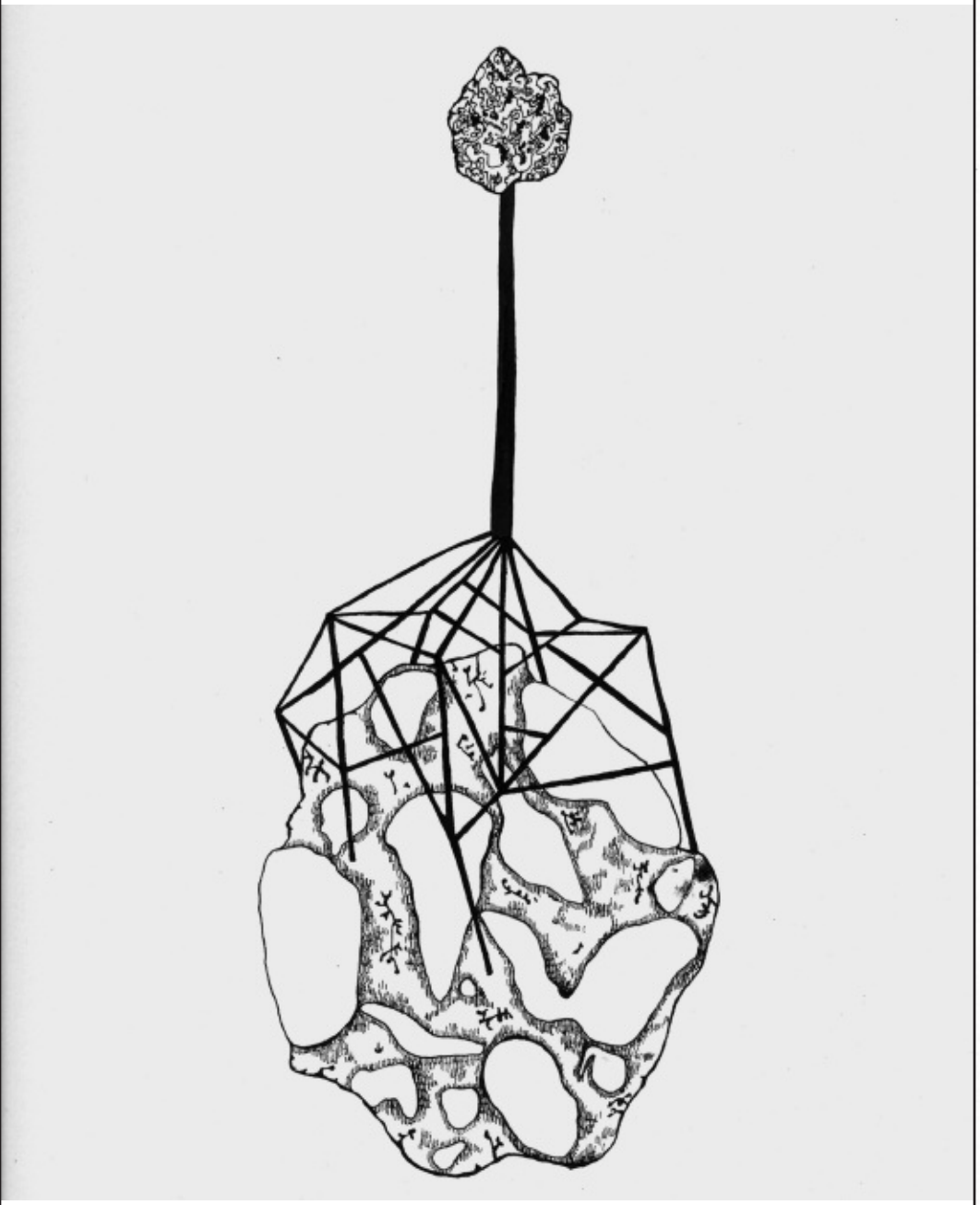

THINGS WILL HAPPEN

HOPE ESSER
CHRISTALENA HUGHMANICK
SARAH JONES

FRIDAYS AT FIVE

PERFORMANCES BY ONE, TWO OR THREE PEOPLE

APRIL 27 - 5PM
MAY 4 - 5PM
MAY 11 - 5PM

WORK SESSIONS

CONDUCTED BY CHRISTALENA HUGHMANICK

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2 - NOON TO 3PM
SATURDAY, MAY 5 - 3PM TO 6PM
MONDAY, MAY 7 - 9AM TO NOON
WEDNESDAY, MAY 9 - 3PM TO 6PM
WEDNESDAY, MAY 16 - NOON TO 3PM

CIRCULAR WINDOW AT THE NORTH-WEST CORNER OF THE SULLIVAN GALLERY
33 NORTH STATE ST. 7th FLOOR

Tricks of the Eye
On the work of Justin Jacobson, Mario Romano, Leif Sandberg, Clare Torina, and Rafael Vega

by Ionit Behar

Between illusion and flatness; it turns out that both are present in each... the difference, then reduces itself to distinct kinds of spatial illusion.
– Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art, 1972*[1]

As disparate writers as we are, the friendship existed because we had a shared passion for books.
– Adolfo Bioy Casares, *La otra aventura, 2004*[2]

A few months ago, I had the chance to begin working with five painters. Over the time that followed, I got to know their work very closely, but mainly I came to understand better their artistic and social relationships. Meeting Justin Jacobson, Mario Romano, Leif Sandberg, Clare Torina, and Rafael Vega for the first time was very different than becoming acquainted over the course of the following weeks and months. My first studio visits with these artists happened all in one week, which helped me to keep each encounter and conversation fresh. Some of them talked first about themselves and their work, and then turned to talk about the group, how they saw themselves working with the others, and how they would like to use their shared exhibition space in consideration of the other members of the group. Others, conversely, started by talking about the group and then about their own practices. All of them, however, spoke about a shared art and human experience.

While each artist works in a different aesthetic, they share a consistent use of the languages of painting and an exploration of the potential of the medium. They are concerned, too, with how contemporary painting is seen in terms of exhibition space. In Leo Steinberg's words, "what is constant is art's concern with itself, the interest painters have in questioning their operation."[3] The self-critical question, "Where is painting today," was a constant refrain in group meetings, and it led them dialectically to explore a number of connected subjects: the push and pull of art history, the potential for relationships in space, and putting across their self-awareness in the space of exhibition. Line, color, form, process, time, space: in abstract dialogues on these crucial matters, these artists challenged each other's work but always with the shared purpose of collaborative thinking.

The artists are deeply engaged in their chosen medium, sometimes to the point of obsession and anxiety. If painting developed a reactionary character during the '60s and '70s (in the aftermath of painting's primacy in the stories of modernism), it seems to be just as reactionary today. For this group, painting is a sort of ideology in support of painting. What can art (still) do? Is art only what we see or is there also art in the invisible? Often they found answers in a reinvigorated discussion of *trompe l'oeil* painting, and—by way of an embrace of illusionism—in a complex blurring-together of truth and fiction. In Mario's large-scale works, brushstrokes are concentrated and migrate to the edges of the picture plane, thereby creating color passages. Cutting, collaging, and mismatching within a painting's field points a finger at itself as an object and, at the same time, points toward Mario as the author. Justin

also creates large-scale paintings. Film and video collide with the pictorial, producing an unfinished feeling that speaks of a futility of representation in the act of mediating reality. Rafael, by comparison, asks for the slowing down of everything by using a limited palette and repetition of forms. His paintings raise again the Greenbergian problem of painting as an illusionary window versus its status as surface or wall. His works ask the viewer to attend to the painting's material support, and to the question of authorship.

Clare's work on rugs adopts the transfer of work from vertical window to horizontal surface described eloquently by Steinberg among others. The mere objecthood evoked by Clare's illusionism induces and allows a tactile interaction—yet its true nature is revealed in this transaction, once the viewer notices that it is both a rug *and* a painting of that rug. Is it a sort of trick, lie, or fake—or is it art? Finally, Leif's proto-scientific projects continually test the viewer's beliefs. In the mode of a magician, his works each present a sort of "trick," forcing the viewer to look twice, almost in a double-take; his ideas suggest other ways of approaching reality, transforming it, and revealing its existence under a different appearance in astonishing ways.

Of the artists in this group, only Rafael and Clare have engaged an explicit collaboration. It consists of a subtle intervention in which Clare will paint a *tromp-l'oeil* shadow on the wall, as if produced by one of Rafael's paintings. In general, however, the artists work individually while thinking collaboratively. Their works are open to dialogue with one another, but they are not specifically made, or supposed to be seen, together.

The viewer is always present in these artists' thoughts and conversations. The group shares a concern about how any viewer can see as massive an exhibition as the MFA show. "I'm so exhausted of art!" once wrote the poet Jules Laforgue: "I repeat myself: what a headache…!"[4] And surely Laforgue's headache would be worsened by the labyrinthine structure of the contemporary graduate exhibition. In their proposal for their installation, the artists have expressed the idea that "in terms of audience, we are more interested in our work adapting to the viewer than the viewer adapting to our work"—a statement as elliptical and self-reflexive as their paintings. To achieve this complex goal, the artists will create an installation with a sense of play, rest, and tension, induced through the use of rigorous symmetry and theatrical lighting. They will orchestrate an environment that allows the viewer to enter and slowly investigate, but that will ultimately carry a sinister quality. Through this meticulous and thorough stagecraft, painting and exhibition together might produce a new kind of new experience—or at the very least, perform the timely renewal of an old one.

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1. Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77.
2 Adolfo Bioy Casares, "Libros y amistad" in *La otra aventura*, quote trans. Ionit Behar Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2004), 170.
3. Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77.
4. Jules Laforgue, "Hamlet ou les suites de la piété filiale" in *Oeuvres Complètes, III, Moralités légendaires*, quote trans. Ionit Behar (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1979), 27.


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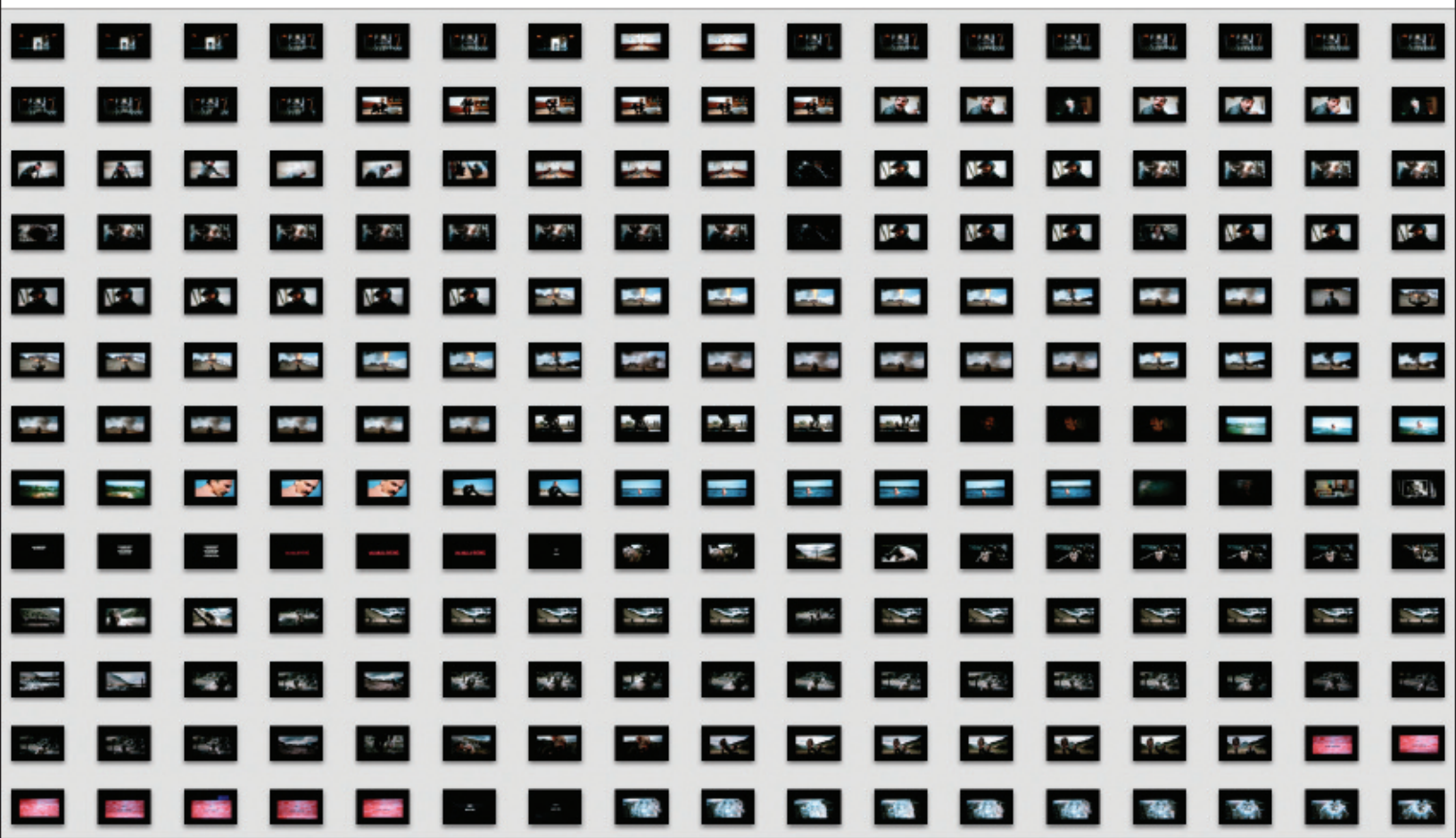


Congratulations!
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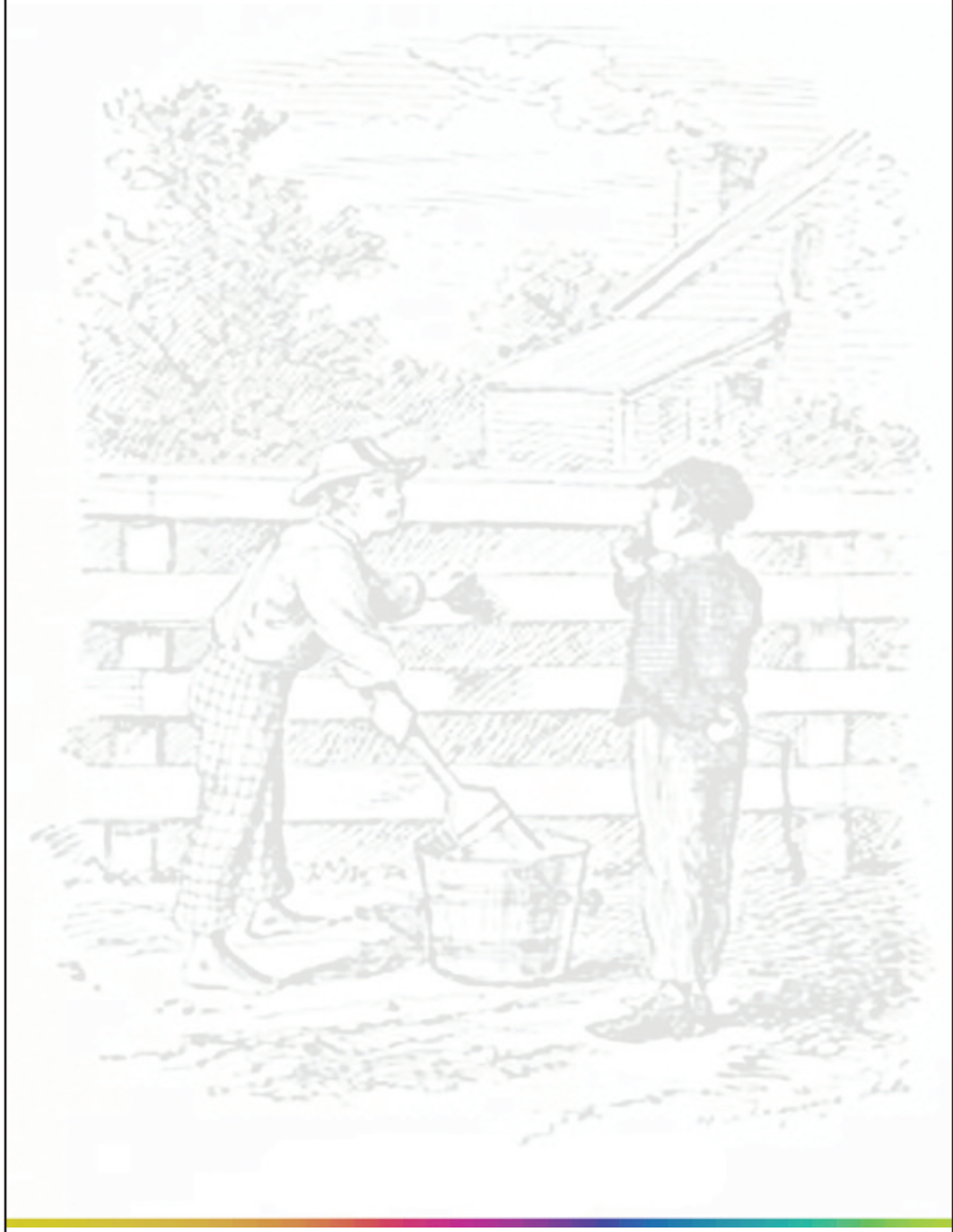
You Are A
Business,
Man



4. Effects of confinement on the phase separation in emeraldine base polyaniline - Sergey Filippov, F.M. Aliev and N.J. Pinto - Annual EPSCoR Meeting - Dorado, Puerto Rico (April 2001).
5. Electrospinning ultrafine fibers of polymers and their characterization - N.J. Pinto, Departmental Seminar (May 2001).
6. Electric field influence on the conductivity in an organic electronic polymer-Building an all polymer field effect transistor (FET)- D. Cersosimo, R. Vega, S. Ortiz, M. Ortiz and N.J. Pinto, J. Lu, A.T. Johnson and A.G. MacDiarmid - National Minority Research Symposium, Cancún Mexico (October 2001)
7. Dependency of Conductivity of Selected Doped Conducting Polymers on Unusual "Through Space" Electric Field Effect-Alan G. MacDiarmid, H. Okuzaki, Jin Lu, S. K. Manohar, E. Bashari, D. M. Temple, and N. J. Pinto and A.J. Epstein, American Physical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana (2002).
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9. Shadow mask evaporation and its application to nanoelectronics, Y. Zhou, J. Hone, A.T. Johnson, W.F. Smith and N. Pinto, American Physical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana (2002).
10. Dependency of Conductivity of Selected Doped Conducting Polymers on Unusual "Through Space" Electric Field Effect-Alan G. MacDiarmid, H. Okuzaki, Jin Lu, S. K. Manohar, E. Bashari, D. M. Temple, and N. J. Pinto, American Chemical Society, Orlando, Florida (2002).
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12. ELECTRIC FIELD INFLUENCE ON THE CONDUCTIVITY IN AN ORGANIC ELECTRONIC POLYMER – BUILDING AN ALL POLYMER FIELD EFFECT TRANSISTOR (FET)- Rafae Vega, D. Cersosimo and N.J. Pinto, University of Puerto Rico, J. Lu*, A.T. Johnson* and A.G. MacDiarmid, National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Wisconsin (2002).
13. Electric field dependence of the diameter of PEO fibers prepared via electrospinning-Carlos E. Martínez, Rafael Vega, Dario Cersosimo, Nicholas J. Pinto and A.G. MacDiarmid, National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Wisconsin (2002).
14. Novel "through space" field effect in conducting polymers and characterization of fibers prepared via electrospinning" - N.J. Pinto, Invited seminar at The University o Akron (2002). View presentation (.pdf)
15. Characterization of conducting polymers prepared via electrospinning - N.J. Pinto, Y.X. Zhou, M. Freitag, A.T. Johnson and A.G. MacDiarmid, The Fiber Society Meetin Natick, MA (2002). View presentation (.pdf)

A Short History of the Locker Gallery

by Michaela Hansen

There is a strong history of experimental, self-organized exhibitions among students at SAIC which has played out in various ways on the premises of the school and across Chicago. These activities range from school-supported, student-run exhibition spaces—such as the Student Union Galleries (SUGs) located on campus and directed by students—to completely independent, off-site apartment galleries and exhibition initiatives like InCUBATE, a research group founded by SAIC students to explore new methods of curatorial practice and creative arts administration.

In the past the school's publicly engaged venues for student work—1926 Space at the Roger Brown Study Collection on North Halsted St., and Gallery 2 and Project Space on West Jackson Blvd., now reincarnated as the Sullivan Galleries—provided opportunities for public discourse and participation in the community at large. The Sullivan Galleries, the site of the 2012 Graduate Exhibition, exhibit work by both student and professional artists—even sometimes blurring the line between the two, as in exhibitions like *Department (Store)* (2008), a collaboration across SAIC organized by artist J. Morgan Puett. An open invitation to the SAIC community to participate in the collaboration. "Invitation to Play" (now hosted on *Department (Store)*'s blog) states, "At SAIC there are many aspects of departments, programs, and individuals not on view; departments within departments, special collections, and things of material culture. Working with each and any part of the institution, we could expose what is hidden and make them for a time transparent."[1]

Group-Work is an exhibition organized by one of four curatorial teams in the 2012 Graduate Exhibition. In addition to presenting the work of seven self-selected groups of graduating artists, *Group-Work* includes a modest presentation of archival materials. Selected from the Ryerson Library and Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection, this component of *Group-Work* brings into view material culture from the school's history with an emphasis on historical forms of self-organization among students at the institution that might otherwise go unnoticed in the exhibition's emphasis on the "right now."

In *grupa o.k.*'s particular path through the institution's history, the Flasch Collection, with its artist books, 'zines, video work, art objects, exhibition catalogues, artists' multiples, mail art, and sound recordings, became a central source of inspiration. A special collection library established in 1989, the archive contains both acquired and donated works from around the world, as well as hundreds of works by SAIC students, alumni, faculty, and staff. This collection does not offer a comprehensive

document or annual record of the school's entire history; nevertheless, it presents a multi-dimensional picture of the school's past, illuminating personal, subjective, and specific experiences and points of view.

Over the course of our visits, one artifact especially caught our attention: a 'zine-style document which catalogues the activities of the Locker Gallery. Founded by SAIC student Brendan deVallance in 1982, the Locker Gallery was an exhibition space located in the tight confines of his personal locker (number 0-216) in the Columbus Building. By implementing a unique and clever solution to fulfill his affection for miniature, experimental exhibitions (in one correspondence with the author, for example, he described an exhibition space currently organized in his cubicle at work)[2], deVallance offered with his Locker Gallery a distinct perspective. Similarly this project participated in a discourse on miniature exhibitions in the vein of Marcel Duchamp's portable retrospective *Boîte en valise* (1935-41), Robert Filliou's *Galerie légitime* (Museé d'art contemporain, Geneva, 1968), and Jens Hoffmann's Rolodex exhibition *The Show Must Go On* (Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1998).

DeVallance used the 'zine format as an ersatz catalogue to document Locker Gallery exhibitions. The publication includes a statement by deVallance, a list of artists with their exhibition dates, reproductions of flyers for the shows, and drawings, collages, and writing produced by the participating artists. The artist explains in his introduction that he was frustrated with the art world, and "totally turned off by the whole idea of museums and galleries... [T]o be affiliated with any of it would be a contradiction of all the things I believe about art." For deVallance, art meant autonomy. "It is this idea of freedom that I was most interested in focusing on at the Locker Gallery," he writes. "I wanted to give artists a place to do art that they felt was important." He found the bureaucracy and rules of official exhibition spaces limiting to his art-making and exhibition process, so he conceived of the Locker Gallery as a space for autonomy and experimentation, as "a totally free gallery with no rules."

In the first iteration of the gallery, deVallance describes simply hanging a sign on the outside of his locker, explaining that it was now a gallery, and communicating the process through which artists could submit work. Originally he intended to exhibit "anything and everything that was submitted," but the proposals he received through this method were disappointingly anonymous, or of "questionable intentions." The turning point for the Locker Gallery was when the artist Werner Herterich (current faculty in SAIC's Performance Department) proposed a video installation and performance piece inside the Locker Gallery for his final graduate critique in 1981. Following this pivotal exhibition, deVallance created a more structured format: each artist would exhibit for one week, while deVallance would distribute flyers for each show and provide any equipment the artists needed. An opening was held every Friday around 4:30 pm, with snacks and drinks, for a total of fifteen shows from January to May 1982. Within this framework, deVallance "told the artists that they were free to use the space in what ever [sic] way they chose... I chose artists that I knew and trusted and gave them my locker for a week." The final exhibition displayed work by the artist Ben Llarete, who represented the opening of his show in the 'zine with a nearly blank page, on which he simply typed the phrase, "We drank beer and listened to the Talking Heads. It was the end."

Five months after the opening of the Chicago-based Locker Gallery, students in the art department at Arizona State University opened what they dubbed "Locker Gallery West," a new gallery based on deVallance's model under the direction of a student known as Atlas Pattrocious. Artists wishing to display their work could slip something though the vents in the locker, or telephone "Patt" using the number listed on the outside. An article in the ASU paper *The State Press* reviewed Locker Gallery West, mentioning plans to exchange work with the original Chicago-based Locker Gallery, but our research has not revealed that such an exchange ever occurred. Locker Gallery West has recently been revived by art department students and faculty, and continues to stage shows today.

Speaking with deVallance now, he stresses that the Locker Gallery was a purely student-organized endeavor, not affiliated with or supported by SAIC in any way, beyond the fact that it was located in a school-issued locker. In bypassing traditional exhibition procedures, the Locker Gallery served as a platform for deVallance and his cohort to experiment with exhibition models and start a conversation with fellow art students across the country. Despite the Locker Gallery's more-or-less rogue status within the school, deVallance's documentary artifact is housed within the school's official archives, where now it might take its place as a precocious and instructive episode in the story of student-initiated projects at the school.

As part of its presentation of historical materials, *grupa o.k.* will commemorate deVallance's project as an image of the small autonomies one might discover in the spatial matrix of large institutions. Inside a school locker, works contributed by artists included elsewhere in *Group-Work* will evoke the self-determined exhibition strategies of students who have long since graduated. This exhibition's version of the Locker Gallery, therefore, imagines a dialogue across time and audiences, interrogating the meaning of an archive, the role of an art student, and the purpose of graduate exhibitions.

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1. "Invitation to Play," Department (Store), http://deptstore.blogspot.com (accessed April 8, 2012).
2. Brendan deVallance, correspondence with the author, March 27, 2012.

Images in order of appearance:

"A Museum Without Frames," Ionit Behar

Chiara Galimberti, *no title*, 2012, paper

Chiara Galimberti, *no title*, 2012, paper

Lilly Hern-Fondation, *Money List*, 2011, Xerox lithograph on tissue paper with ink

Ramón Miranda Beltrán, *the order established by class domination*, 2012, appropriated photograph

Winslow Smith, *Out of Time Out of Place*, 2011–12, 16 video stills with text

"Proximities and Intents," Laura-Caroline Johnson

Gregory Bae, *Traveling*, 2012, jar with aluminum foil, acrylic, colored pencil, collage, ball point pen, rubber band, twig, blood, finger nail clippings, hair, and live ant; aluminum foil and short story in aluminum can with string and burned cd of selected love songs; on embroidered canvas; on acrylic, wood with fork

Troy Briggs, *First Draft of Father for Performance*, 2012

Josh Dihle, *Drawing I*, 2012, digital image

Josh Dihle, *Drawing IV*, 2012, digital image

Seth Hunter, *edit*, 2012

Michaela Murphy

"Relations In Space," Laura-Caroline Johnson

Craig Butterworth, *Untitled I, II, III, IV*, 2011, photographs

Nicholas Ostoff, *Untitled*, 2012, graphite

Nicholas Ostoff, *Untitled*, 2012, graphite

Sophia Rauch, *Fragment*, 2012, paint on inkjet print

William Sieruta, *Zebra*, 2012, graphite

William Sieruta, *Artist's Statement*, 2012

"Photography and Exchange," Natalie Clark

Anthony Favarula, *Augey*, 2011

Sean Lamoureux, *Wolf*, 2012

Esteban Pulido, *Wife*, 2012

Nicole White, *Range 1*, 2011

"Hybrid Forms," Natalie Clark

Erin Minckley Chlaghmo, *Untitled*, 2012

Sarah Hasse, *Zipper Patent Drawings by Gideon Sundback*, 1917

Alfredo Martinez, *Untitled (Switch Off)*, 2012

Alfredo Martinez, *Untitled (L'histoire revue)*, 2012

"Humor, Activity, Motion," Michaela Hansen

Hope Esser, *Untitled*, 2012

Christalena Hughmanick, *Untitled*, 2012

Sarah Elizabeth Jones, *Untitled*, 2012

Hope Esser, Christalena Hughmanick, Sarah Elizabeth Jones, *Performance Schedule*, 2012

"Tricks of the Eye," Ionit Behar

Justin Jacobson

Mario Romano, *In the middle of time*, 2012

Leif Sandberg, *Business, Man*, 2012, photograph

Clare Torina, *no title*, 2012, created with jpegs combined in Photoshop

Rafael Vega, *untitled*, 2012, Artist's screen shot of Publicaciones en Departamento de Física y Electrónica, UPR-Humacao

Following page: Ramón Miranda Beltrán, *Practical People and Practical Ideals*, 2011