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Education

Utrecht University, BAK - Basis Voor Actuele Kunst, Utrecht, Netherlands
Summer School 2017

Yale University, School of Art, New Haven, CT, USA
May 2017
MFA Painting & Printmaking

IPAK Centar, Research Center for Cultures, Politics and Identities, Belgrade, Serbia
Summer School 2016

Purchase College, SUNY, Purchase, NY, USA
School of Art + Design
May 2014
BFA Painting & Drawing, Summa Cum Laude
School of the Humanities
May 2014
B.A. Art History, Summa Cum Laude

Siena Arts Institute, Siena, Italy
Summer 2013

Awards

2016 Barry Schactman Scholarship, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
Gloucester Travel Fellowship, Yale University, Gloucester, MA, USA
2014 Chancellors Award for Student Excellence, Purchase College, USA
Abbott Kaplan Award for Interdisciplinary Studies, Purchase College, USA
Public Art Commission for Purchase College, USA
2013 Honorable Mention in Best of SUNY Student Art Exhibition, Albany, NY, USA
Outstanding Junior in Painting & Drawing Award, Purchase College, USA
Public Art Commission for Purchase College, USA
2012 Public Art Commission for Purchase College, USA
2010 Presidential Artist Scholarship and Merit Scholarship from School of Art + Design,
Purchase College, USA

Solo/ Two Person Exhibitions

2018 *Forthcoming Solo Show*, Warte für Kunst, Kassel, Germany

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- 2017 *Second Date*, Field Projects Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Play, First, Disclaimer Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2016 *Read My Lips* with Kerry Downey curated by Ashton Cooper, Knockdown Ctr., Maspeth, NY, USA
- 2015 *French Kiss*, Field Projects Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Physical Sun, Studio Kura, Fukuoka, Japan
- 2014 *To Crown the Rainbow*, John Lyman Center, Southern CT University, New Haven, CT, USA
Shifter, Gallery 1989, Larchmont, NY, USA
Second Sight with Kyle Breitenbach, 1019A, Purchase, NY, USA
Hairy Queer, Forum Art Space, Purchase, NY, USA
- 2013 *Fresh Ground* with Travis Fairclough, Forum Art Space, Purchase, NY, USA

Group Exhibitions

- 2018 (*forthcoming*), *The Nature Lab* curated by Eric Wolf, LABspace, Hillsdale, NY, USA
Night Regulation/Storytelling in the Land of Text, Identity and Pictures curated by Patrick Neal, Radiator Arts, Long Island City, NY, USA
- 2017 *WeihnachtsWarte/Teilnahme*, Warte für Kunst, Kassel, Germany
Pelham Arts Center Benefit, Pelham, NY, USA
Close, but not touching, Biggercode Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Yale MFA Thesis Show, New Release Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Say-so curated by Bianca Boragi, EIK Project Space, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
Artspace Benefit Paris, Texas, Artspace New Haven, New Haven, CT, USA
CODA: Yale MFA Thesis Show, Green Gallery, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
The Joi of Lyfe: with Caroline Wells Chandler and Larry Lewis, Fred Giampetro Gallery, New Haven, CT, USA
Narrative Abstracts, Whitney Center Perspective Gallery, Hamden, CT, USA
- 2016 *Odds & Ends Book Fair*, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT, USA
Funkytown, Urbano Cellars, Berkely, CA, USA
LA x Kobe Exchange; My Life, Kobe Design University, Kobe, Japan
Esoteric Rodeo Yale MFA 2nd Year Show, Green Gallery, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
Risky Behavior, Field Projects Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Figure as Form, curated by Katie Bode, LTD Hollywood Hills House, Los Angeles, CA, USA
Boston Young Contemporaries, curated by Catherine Haggarty and Margaux Ogden, Boston University, Boston, MA, USA
Millionaires Can Be Trans//You Are So Brave**, Schwules Museum, Berlin, Germany

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Neumann Plus One, Project Studios, Hoboken, NJ, USA
Yale MFA Benefit Auction, Field Projects Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Insomnia, Pelham Arts Center, Pelham, NY, USA

2015 *The Gates Are Open Yale MFA 1st Year Show*, Green Gallery, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
109 Years since the Jungle curated by Lindsay Garcia,
The College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA, USA
NURTUREart Benefit, NURTUREart, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Sixty Minutes curated by Courtney Childress, Vanity Projects, New York, NY, USA
Magic Praxis curated by Clarity Haynes, Industry City, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Sixty Minutes curated by Courtney Childress, Vanity Projects, Miami, FL, USA
Double Visions curated by Christian Berman, The Active Space, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Capitalist Architecture in a Posthumanist World curated by Lindsay Garcia,
The College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA, USA

2014 *Improvised Showboat #4, Sangram Majumdar's Studio* co-curated with Zachary Keeting,
Brooklyn, NY, USA
Exchange Rates, Bushwick Showcase, Brooklyn Fire Proof, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Army of Lovers, w/Bushwick Art Crit Group, Echo Art Fair, Buffalo, NY, USA
Chronicle curated by Edgar Meza, Scott Charmin Gallery, Houston, TX, USA
Library Show w/Kyle Breitenbach & Travis Fairclough, Purchase College, Purchase, NY, USA
About the Body, Gallery 1989, Larchmont, NY, USA
Scrape, Cut, Smear curated by Kathy Bradford, Weeknights Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
The Loft, American Can Factory, Brooklyn, NY, USA

2013 *Best of SUNY Student Art Exhibition*, New York State Museum, Albany, NY, USA
Nocturnitos curated by Joie Pecoraro, Forum Art Space, Purchase, NY, USA
Spring 2013 SUNY Art Student Exhibition Series, (Best in Show) Albany Museum, Albany, NY, USA

2012 *Friends of Friends*, Weeknights Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Downtown Cabaret, One Arm Red, Brooklyn, NY, USA

Residencies

(Forthcoming) Nida Artist Colony, Nida, Lithuania, April 2018
Das Spectrum, Utrecht, Netherlands, July - August 2017
East Side International, Los Angeles, California, USA, July 2016
Starry Nights Residency, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, USA, May 2015
Studio Kura, Fukuoka, Japan, January 2015

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Public Collections

Leslie Lohman Museum of Gay + Lesbian Art, New York, NY, USA
Purchase College Library, Purchase, NY, USA
Purchase College Office of Residence Life, Purchase, NY, USA
Purchase College School of Art + Design, Purchase, NY, USA
Siena Arts Institute, Siena, Italy

Curatorial Projects

- 2018 *(forthcoming)* *Queering Space at Alfred University*, Curated by Loren Britton, Christie DeNizio, Asad Pervaiz, Res & Erica Wessmann, Alfred University Fosdick-Nelson Art Gallery, Alfred, NY, USA February – March 2018
- 2017 *Appetitive Torque*, Curated by Loren Britton + Rocket Caleshu, Eastside International, Los Angeles, CA, USA, March 2017
- 2016 *Queering Space at Yale*, Curated by Loren Britton, Shikeith Cathey, Christie DeNizio, Erik Freer, Johnathan Robert Payne, Asad Pervaiz, Res, Buzz Slutzky & Erica Wessmann, Yale University Green Gallery, New Haven, CT, USA, October 2016
Fragmented Gaze, Curated by Loren Britton, TSA Los Angeles, USA, July 2016
Trembling Halves, work by Brenda Goodman + Kate Gilmore, Curated by Loren Britton + Zachary Keeting, TSA Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, USA, Feb 2016
- 2015 *Improvised Showboat with Zachary Keeting*
Show #1, September 2014 – Zachary Keeting’s Studio, New Haven, CT, USA
Show #2, September 2014 – Katherine Bradford’s Studio, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #3, October 2014 – Underdonk Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #4, November 2014 – Sangram Majumdar’s Studio, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #5, March 2015 – Ashley Garrett + Brian Wood’s Studio, Manhattan, NY, USA
Show #6, April 2015 – Lisa Perez’s Studio, Providence, RI, USA
Show #7, May 2015 – Sharon Butler’s Studio, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #8, June 2015 – Julie Evan’s Studio, Hudson, NY, USA
Show #9, July 2015 – curated by Erika Ranee, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #10, July 2015 –curated by Clarity Haynes, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #11, August 2015 –curated by Josh Nusbaum, Brooklyn, NY, USA
Show #12, September 2015—Gary Stephan’s Studio, Tribeca, NY, USA

Curatorial Press

- 2017 *Appetitive Torque* at Eastside International by Genie Davis, Art and Cake LA, April 2017 - <https://artandcakela.com/2017/04/21/appetitive-torque-at-eastside-international/>

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- 2016 "Queering" spaces at Yale by Haewon Ma, Yale Daily News, October 2016 - <http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2016/11/02/queering-spaces-at-yale/>
A Look inside the first Queer Show at the Yale School of Art by Antwaun Sargent, October 2016 - Vice, Creator's Project - <http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/queering-space-yale-school-art>
Examining Queer @ Yale University by Rachel Farber, October 2016 - Two Coats of Paint - <http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2016/10/queer-yale.html>
Fragmented Figures Channel the Struggle of Being in a Body by Clarity Haynes, July 2016 - Hyperallergic
<http://hyperallergic.com/314718/fragmented-figures-channel-the-struggle-of-being-in-a-body/>
Trembling Halves at Tiger Strikes Asteroid by Todd Stong, February 2015 -Squeegee Platinum Blog - <https://squeegeeplatinum.wordpress.com/2016/03/02/trembling-halves-tiger-strikes-asteroid/>
Two Women, Bold and Bare by Liz Ayerle, February 2015 - Proximity Arts Press
<http://proximityarts.org/2016/02/16/two-women-bold-and-bare/>
- 2015 *Report: Command-Z at Improvised Showboat* By Sharon Butler, May 2015, Two Coats of Paint
<http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2015/05/report-command-z-at-improvised-showboa.html>

Press & Publications

- 2019 Forthcoming - *Queer Objects*, Otago University Press & Rutgers University Press, Spring 2019
- 2017 *A New Queer Abstractionist: Meet Artist Loren Britton* by Maya Chung, Art Maze Mag, December 2017 - <http://artmazemag.com/a-new-queer-abstractionist-artist-loren-britton/>
Justice to Dawn: Loren Britton in Conversation with Wen Tao by Wen Tao, artcritical, December 2017 - <http://www.artcritical.com/2017/12/03/wen-tao-with-loren-britton/>
One Artist in Two Galleries, by Cassidy Dawn Graves, Bedford and Bowery, November 2017
<http://bedfordandbowery.com/2017/11/new-exhibitions-one-artist-in-two-galleries-beautiful-soup-native-transformers/>
Queering Queer Abstraction, by Joseph Henry, The Brooklyn Rail, October 2017
<http://brooklynrail.org/2017/10/artseen/Queering-Queer-Abstraction>
Reclaiming Abstraction from the Dude Bros, Louise Fishman at Cheim & Read by Emily Colucci, September, 2017 - <https://filthydreams.wordpress.com/2017/09/13/reclaiming-abstraction-from-the-dude-bros-louise-fishman-at-cheim-read/>
Palimpsest, Risk, Yale Graduate Literary & Arts Magazine, Fall 2017

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Pinch Literary Journal, University of Memphis, Fall 2017

ASAP Journal, Special Issue-Queer Form: Aesthetics, Race and the Violence of the Social, John Hopkins University Press, 2017

- 2016 *Exhibition embodies abstraction in human forms* by Neil Chiragdin, Queens Chronicle, December 2016– http://www.qchron.com/qboro/stories/exhibition-embodies-abstraction-in-human-forms/article_ef02303c-050c-500a-8b14-d738b03fceb3.html
Potentials of Queer Abstraction: "Read My Lips" at Knockdown Center, by Osman Can Yerebakan, Filthy Dreams, November 2016–
<https://filthydreams.wordpress.com/2016/11/16/potentials-of-queer-abstraction-read-my-lips-at-knockdown-center/>
Post Road Magazine, Issue 31, Boston College Department of English, November 2016–
<http://www.postroadmag.com/index.phtml>
LAX Kobe Exchange Exhibition, "My Life" at Kobe Design University, Illust. Note, October 2016–
<http://www.illust-note.jp/information/item.cgi?Id=277>
Figure as Form at ltd Los Angeles, Hollywood Hills House, by Angella d'Avignon, August 2016–
http://ltdlosangeles.com/FaF_Review_Carla.pdf
While You Were Sleeping, They Made Art by Susan Hodara, New York Times, Feb 2016–
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/14/nyregion/while-you-were-sleeping-they-made-art.html?_r=0
- 2015 The Florence School of the Arts – Painters on Paintings
<http://florenceschoolofthearts.com/painters-on-painting.html>
Interview with Lauren Britton by Todd Stong, Squeegee Platinum Blog, August 2015–
<https://squeegeeplatinum.wordpress.com/2015/08/05/lauren-britton/>
- 2014 *A Race to the Finish Through Bushwick with Beat Nite* By Jillian Steinhauer, Hyperallergic
<http://hyperallergic.com/158549/a-race-to-the-finish-through-bushwick-with-beat-nite/>
John Lyman Center for the Performing Arts
<http://www.southernct.edu/lyman/artgallery.html>
Talking Shop: Heather McPherson talks contemporary painting with artist and writer Lauren Britton
<http://www.providence.edu/art/galleries/Pages/Hunt-Cavanagh-Gallery.aspx>
Get your Kixcks, with 6 Art Pix Bushwick Daily
<http://bushwickdaily.com/2014/04/get-your-kixcks-with-six-art-pix/>
Painting included in Miniature Magazine Edition Three
<http://www.miniaturemag.com/page/4>

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Talks

- 2017 *Write, EveryBody!*, Ely Center for Contemporary Art, New Haven, CT, USA
*Queer & Trans*gender Art & Artists*, Yale University Queer Center, New Haven, CT, USA
- 2016 *Conversing about the Other* in collaboration with Courtney Coombs, Los Angeles, CA, USA
Insomnia Artist Talk, Pelham Arts Center, Pelham, NY, USA
Alumni Talk, Purchase College, Purchase, NY, USA
- 2015 *Artists as Entrepreneurs* panel discussion moderated by Jennifer Samet, The New School, New York, NY, USA
- 2014 *Talking Shop: Heather McPherson talks contemporary painting with artist Lauren Britton* – Hunt-Cavanagh Gallery, Providence College, Providence, RI, USA
Bushwick Art Crit Group – Brooklyn Fire Proof, Brooklyn, NY, USA

Writing

- 2017 *Warte fur Kunst, Melanie Vogel interviewed by Loren Britton*, by Loren Britton on Two Coats of Paint, November 2017
<http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2017/11/melanie-vogel-interviewed-loren-britton.html>
Skulptur Projekte Orbits Munster by Loren Britton, on Two Coats of Paint, October 2017
<http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2017/10/skulptur-projekte-munster.html>
Documenta 14: The Emotional Thump by Loren Britton on Two Coats of Paint, September 2017
<http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2017/09/16856.html>
- 2016 *Caroline Wells Chandler and the in-between* by Loren Britton on Two Coats of Paint
<http://www.twocoatsofpaint.com/2016/03/caroline-welles-chandler-and-in-between.html>
- 2014 *Lauren Britton on Edvard Munch*, by Lauren Britton, Painters on Paintings Blog
<http://paintersonpaintings.com>

Loren Britton

I'd like the interviews both from Art Critical as well as Art Maze Mag to serve as statements about the works in *Night Regulation*, since this installation is a continuation of the works from my recent Field Projects show.

In addition, this transparency paper wall covering is an experiment in how to contextualize these works back within the space of a lined page. Transforming the corner of this exhibition into a form like a open book, or softening the edges of it, so the form of the corner feels more like a figure, jacket open, book open, waiting to be approached, an open gesture.

Sunday, December 3rd, 2017

Justice to Dawn: Loren Britton in conversation with Wen Tao

by Wen Tao

Second Date, Loren Britton's current show at Field Projects, is an enchanting garden of whispers. Thin, delicate, relatively small paper pulp sculptures line the walls of the gallery's intimate space. Each piece forms a color composition around words and fragmentary phrases in cursive script. The palette here is dominated by fleshy pinks, lustrous ochres and warm oranges. As a whole, these works recall both the quietly endearing hues of Marie Laurencin and the playfully amorphous forms of Joan Miró. Up close, the pulp exhibits a fine, skin-like texture that invites touch. From the web of wrinkles and creases, writings such as "*are you*" and "*Women, Wimmin, Womyn, Wymyn*" emerge, fade and sometimes get erased.

Partaking in the discourse of new queer abstraction, Second Date is a rarity among contemporary art trailblazers: in addition to its conceptual richness, it employs the poetic and visceral in its main mode of address. In comparison to the much-explored approach of queer archaeology, where abstraction serves to excavate visual references from queer cultural history, Britton looks to the future and explores abstraction as a medium for shared vulnerability. The artist is now based in Berlin, Germany; we were able to sit down during their brief sojourn in New York.

Loren Britton: Second Date, curated by Jacob Rhodes, is on view at Field Projects through December 16th, 2017. 526 W 26th Street, #807, between 10th and 11th avenues, New York City, fieldprojectsgallery.com



Installation shot, Loren Britton: Second Date at Field Projects, New York, 2017

WEN TAO: In the press release there's a letter from you to "Dawn" that is tender, charming and almost troubadourish. It sets the attitudinal undertone of the show. Who is Dawn and why this gesture?

LOREN BRITTON: The reference comes from the first issue of Transvestia, a transgender lifestyle magazine in the 1960s. Dawn wrote an ad seeking friendship and romance and signed "Love, Dawn". It's such a surprisingly open gesture given the impersonal nature of an ad, which made me want to respond "Love, Loren." I'm interested in such gestures of open vulnerability. It's how I envision the relationship between artworks and viewers.

Are there particular reasons for this strategy of non-aggressiveness, of eliciting care and exchanging vulnerability?

I used to work in a way that's a lot more bombastic and uses taking up space as mode of address. In that it was more about holding the viewer by physically immersing them. Now I'm more interested in how that can happen psychologically. It's more about the viewer's reading mind, about communicating short and honest sentiments. It suits this show as my main goal is to do justice to Dawn. I think about the distance between me as a young trans person in 2017 and what it must have been for a trans person in 1960. I want to have a reparative relationship to that distance.

In abstraction there's the notion of a visual element being able to elicit a psycho-physical response without referencing reality.

When you put a mark on a blank surface I don't think there's inherently a meaning in it. The meaning is imbued through how you contextualize it and the lineage you participate in. It's the way you use colors to quote and reference the culture context you come from. The question of reading and misreading, visibility and invisibility through color is a strategy of queer abstraction because colors reference experiences and feelings. There's an underlying code to the work.

How do your formal choices reflect your political sensibility?



Loren Britton, *We*, 2017. Paper pulp, 9-3/4 x 8-1/2 inches.
Courtesy of the artist and Field Projects

The state of mind that viewers have in this show is one of being visually aware and understanding how your body feels. It's a psycho physical experience. In a space like that, people are in a state of shared vulnerability, boundary dissolution, and shared empathy. I think categorization, or "us" against "them", is a useful political strategy but in a context like this we can forgo it temporarily. I want to explore how we can actually treat each other really well, from a micro level like this, and relate it to a global scale.

Abstraction affords a bodily experience. But figuration is a different strategy. In queer figurative art now, there seems to be an implicit responsibility to be celebratory towards the queer body, to render it positive and beautiful.

I think each artist's identity inevitably shifts our position. I'm not personally interested in figuration as a mode to explore shared vulnerability. I think artists like Louis Fratino and Doron Langberg approach empathy from the opposite direction, meaning they are interested in figuration as a mode towards inspiring empathy with a viewer via the figures in the frame of their work. I'm more naturally inclined to abstraction. I'm fascinated by space, color, and language.

You talk about many influences outside of the visual arts. Maybe those are influences more on a strategic or attitudinal level. What is your relationship to poetry?

Very much so. I have a strong relationship to poetry! I curated a show with Rocket Caleshu at Eastside International, Los Angeles, last spring called *Appetitive Torque* with 3 artists painters and four poets. I think I learned a lot from the publication we put together for this show because it paired writers and artists thinking and writing about taste and how it is made and shifted. The poems in that text with the artwork in the show suggested different strategies for thinking about

desire operating on both on a textual and visual level.

Right after the election last year I had a stressed-based reaction and I started making these big loud paintings. Someone came and said to me you are really a poet. That was really helpful because I realized what I was doing at that moment was really reactionary, the loud and bombastic urge to take up space was antithetical to who I am as an artist. I'm really not that kind of artist. I work on a more subtle level.

How do you choose the words to put into your works? And why do you use cursive script?

I'm interested in the cursive because it's a way of learning language. There's something very drawing-like about it. Also cursive is not being taught anymore and I'm interested in excavating that problem. The words come from conversations, poems I read and letters to friends.



Loren Britton, *preXpostX*, 2017. Paper pulp, 26-1/2 x 17 inches.
Courtesy of the artist and Field Projects

The mode of communication afforded by a letter is almost extinct now. In a letter there's the unconcealable charm of mere sincerity when someone talks and talks to the same person without response.

Yes that's similar to how I ask people to take time to invest in the work because of its necessary multiplicity. I'm interested in slowing down and inviting people to be in the present. We have continual fragmentation of attention. Although that's interesting, I'm more interested in a slower presentness, in getting in and committing to a longer conversation.

Why paper pulp?

I'm interested in the history of collectivity of the material. I'm concerned with what it means to be working in the contemporary art world on a budget, or as a person from a lower class. In the Disclaimer Gallery show, my dad and my grandfather helped me to make the table with floorboards of my dad's old basement. That was an incredible process of collaboration. I'm not interested in trying to pass as something that I'm not. I'm interested in the politics of middle class living. I think about material conditions of the present moment as it exists for me and don't try to participate in something that's not true to that experience.

I'm also interested in language as material for both the work and its idea. I don't think that everything has to exist in one artwork. I want to create a practice for myself where I can continue to shift my opinions and continue to ask questions. I want to stay with the messiness of the answers. Maybe there are no answers and I should stay with the questions.

There's a really wonderful slowness in the show. It allows people to focus on the present and not to be constantly obsessed about things improving in the future. Do you have any thoughts about utopianism?

My ideas about utopia were shaped by José Esteban Muñoz's book *Cruising Utopia*. He talks about how the idea of utopia is "not yet here". Being a queer person in a hetero-normative structure, there's no reproductive future. I'm interested in the failure of queerness as it relates to this idea. Utopia that's not yet here and will never be here. Utopia is more like a state that you can reach by being really present with where you are now.

That's very Buddhist.

Yeah. I think it can happen in small moments.



Loren Britton, Love, Dawn, 2017. Paper pulp, 19 x 15-1/2 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Field Projects

More from artcritical



J.S. (Je Suis/Jack Smith)



"I Paint Myself Out Of The Paintings": A Studio Visit with David Rhodes



The Autobiography of a Garden: Andrew Raftery in Conversation with Mary Jones



Résistance: Alain Kirili's Monument in Grenoble



Willard Boepple

[print](#)

A NEW QUEER ABSTRACTIONIST, MEET ARTIST LOREN BRITTON

BY MAYA CHUNG ([HTTP://ARTMAZEMAG.COM/AUTHOR/MAYA-CHUNG/](http://artmazemag.com/author/maya-chung/))



Germany-based artist Loren Britton is a medium-shifter. Loren's interests in language, naming, sexuality, and the political body are constantly carried out in different materials as they search for the form that best supports their ideas. A champion of queer art whose work communicates a quiet, radical politic, Britton is also influenced by histories of feminism and civil rights. As a New Queer Abstractionist, Britton re-contextualizes these histories in a modern sense.

Britton is currently grappling with the hegemony of language and naming through the use of paper pulp. Called *Second Date*, their current exhibition at the Field Projects Gallery in New York showcases a number of colorful paper pulp creations, which Britton sees as a way of digesting political urgency.

Join us in an interview with the artist as we learn about Britton's current work and influences – both historical and contemporary, and the thoughts on the state of queer art today.

AMM: Can you tell us about the inspiration for your current show at the [Field Projects Gallery](http://www.fieldprojectsgallery.com/show-46-loren-britton/) (<http://www.fieldprojectsgallery.com/show-46-loren-britton/>)?

LB: Something that's been really inspirational to me has been this old magazine called *Transvestia*. It was one of the first trans publications that was ever published in the United States and I've been looking at the language of desire in it. Politically at the time, Civil Rights was happening and it was the beginning of the gay rights movement as well. There were a lot of problems with the movements looking back at them in that they were often classist and exclusionary to trans folks, but there was a general feeling of liberation. The language of that time is very urgent. And I'm interested in the urgencies of language in both times and spaces. In some sense the paper pulp pieces started as a way to think about digesting this importance or the sincerity of these politically urgent moments. Within the pieces there are often phrases or dedications, or peoples name's or conversations that have been either shredded and turned into abstractions or have been reconstituted in the paper itself.



Image from exhibition 'Second Date' at Field Projects Gallery – 526 W 26th Street, #807, New York, NY, USA – November 9th – December 16th, 2017

AMM: Let's talk about your interest in naming and language. How do you think that comes through in your art?

LB: I'm really interested in thinking about structures of play as a way to get out of the hegemony of naming. The thing I've become particularly frustrated with is the way that in political organizing, we name ourselves in order to get rights, but that naming is only useful insofar as it brings us together. But I think that when we name ourselves in this way and we meet someone who's not named like us it actually separates us rather than brings us together. The structure of the work in general is about structures of play and structures of language as a way to get away from the necessary quality of naming, while also paying homage to what it can do. It's a tense relationship with what language is and how it marks us.

AMM: Tell us about your interest in histories of collectivity. How did those histories lead to your paper pulp work?

LB: The Field Projects work is kind of referring back to collective practices of feminism. So a lot of women's center work in the seventies and eighties around the same times that *Transvestia* was being published centered on the ideas of lesbian feminism and what it meant to have rights in the queer civil rights movement. The kind of work that was being made collectively was often paper pulp. I'm interested in the histories of collectivity and how to re-contextualize that in a contemporary sense. These are different ways that I'm thinking about collectivity and identity and structures of naming – similar ideas but in different manifestations.



Image from exhibition 'Second Date' at Field Projects Gallery – 526 W 26th Street, #807, New York, NY, USA – November 9th – December 16th, 2017

AMM: What are you hoping viewers take away from your current work?

I'm really thinking about what these histories of collectivity that I'm referencing are in a more art historical lens and also what the subtle shifts that destabilize the relationship that the viewer has to the object are. There's this kind of misunderstanding of the material process that I'm interested in. Because the language sometimes is fairly blatant but other times it takes a while to emerge. So there's this retinal experience of seeing through something and understanding something further about it, or maybe realizing that there's nothing there.

AMM: You shift between mediums quite a bit. What was the creative process for this particular body of work and this medium?

LB: Previous to this body of work I had been oscillating between making sculpture and painting for some time. I've been a student of painting; it's something I've studied for my entire academic career. And so the want to move into sculpture has been about a participatory question and how that can function for me. I guess that there's something urgently sincere that I'm trying to communicate with the work: I really mean what I say. Maybe as silly as that sounds, the gesture of the work is intended to be one of opening. I've been taking the drawings I'm making and actually pulping the ones that I didn't find to be successful. The work can be a little gross sometimes. And I like that because it feels to me to be closer to what language actually is, which is this kind of necessary evil. The material process for me always comes out of the ideas. The idea is the most prescient part of it and then whatever material will support the idea is where I will push the work.

AMM: Can you tell us about where your ideas come from? Who are your influences?

LB: I've been really interested in histories of epistolary traditions. I've been looking at a fair amount of poetry, and also correspondence in general. But some of the visual artists I've been looking at are Donna Nelson, Carrie Moyer, Sheila Pepe, and Harmony Hammond: strong women of the generation above mine. The question is not who are the fathers of who I'm referencing, but who are the mothers. I'm thinking about who the mothers of a contemporary trans movement are.



Image from exhibition 'Second Date' at Field Projects Gallery – 526 W 26th Street, #807, New York, NY, USA – November 9th – December 16th, 2017

AMM: How does your identity color your artwork?

LB: I identify as a gender queer or trans person, and I was socialized as female when I was growing up. A friend of mine put it really eloquently: I'm interested in infusing the site of my work with a radical politic. The work becomes a vehicle for me to ask questions about histories of community and feminism and queer movements. I guess I've always been an artist and I've always been coming into my identity as a queer person. I'm interested in using the site of the exhibition as a space to have these conversations, and for my work to be something that's both aesthetic and participating in a conversation with our history. I'm not as political of an artist, but the kind of quiet insistence of the politics of my work is the way that I'm interested in infiltration.

AMM: Can you explain what the New Queer Abstraction movement is?

LB: The questions around New Queer Abstraction have a lot to do with histories of feminism as I'm interested in and also its relationship to Abstract Expressionism. The argument I've heard is that Abstract Expressionism is a movement, art historically speaking, that was meant to deal with the imbued meaning within the context of the "mark." It was because of the position of the person making the mark that the mark had meaning. You can see that in De Kooning, and in Lee Krasner, and in Jackson Pollock. And so the generation just above mine took up this idea and kind of reinterpreted it through its own position in a critique and also embrace of Abstract Expressionism. Abstraction is a relationship with failure to a dominant power structure, potentially. The idea of this New Queer Abstraction feels to me like it's not a failure of heterosexual abstraction; it's rather a potential of what form can do and what form can propose.

AMM: Have you seen the space for queer art grow over the years?

LB: I think that it's kind of a hot topic right now. I'm both interested in it and skeptical of it. I'm aware of the way that people could capitalize on it. I do think the space for queer art has grown and I know that there's a lot more support for young queer artists in both Berlin and New York than I've been aware of. I think it has a lot to do with what's happening politically now as well. A lot of rights have been gained for trans people and queer people, in the global West anyhow. Maybe not so much in the global South. And I think that obviously being in a New York context or a Western European context it's often easy to forget that. A lot of the work that I'm really interested in is being done in a context where it's actually not the case that the queer conversation is so accessible.

AMM: Every year, your art looks totally different. Do you have a niche or a style? How have you progressed artistically over the years?

LB: The ideas of the work are often very similar. To think about political body, to think about sexuality, the space of fluidity, the space of dissolving boundaries: those are all questions that have been sitting with me for quite some time. I'm kind of skeptical of a contemporary moment where we make one thing and that's what we become known for. I'm not afraid of shifting medium to what works for my ideas. I realize that's kind of antithetical to the way the contemporary art market functions. The idea is that I don't know if I will ever arrive at a medium. The reality for me is that the questions are really prescient and the objects become a way to embed those questions and to talk with histories that I'm interested in talking with. And so the medium in that sense becomes less important.

AMM: Do you have any projects that you're working on right now? Or any particular questions you're trying to answer?

LB: I'm writing these letters right now, and I'm not sure where this will lead me but it's a kind of interim project. I'm writing on a piece of transparency paper and then drawing on the back of the letter, and then it bleeds through to the front. I'm learning how to write backwards and then I can "read the bleed." I'm not sure where this is leading me, but I'm really interested in it as a form. I think I'm also going to continue to explore the paper pulp work because I don't know that I'm entirely done with it yet.

AMM: Outside of your solo work, what kind of collaborations do you engage in? How else are you participating in the art scene, and the queer art scene?

LB: I'm a part of a curatorial collective that's mostly Yale people that's called Queering Space. At Yale there was not a huge queer community or a real sense of history so we started this exhibition as a way to find that history together and to bring other people into that space. It was people whose ideas I really respected, and we had this energy to do something together so we blossomed into a collective.

Find out more about the artist: [www.lorenbritton.com](http://lorenbritton.com) (<http://lorenbritton.com>)

Interview by Maya Chung for ArtMaze Mag.



Image from exhibition 'Second Date' at Field Projects Gallery – 526 W 26th Street, #807, New York, NY, USA – November 9th – December 16th, 2017

Maria Dimanshtein

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B. in Riga, Latvia

Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

Selected Exhibitions and Projects

2017

Bushwick Open Studios Seeking Space Exhibition, Brooklyn, NY

Black and White, juried group exhibition, Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, Brooklyn, NY

Upstanders, group exhibition curated by Karen Dimit, LIC Factory, Queens, NY

Aphrodisiac, group exhibition, Arcilesi and Homberg, New York, NY

2016

Leaving the Universe, solo show supported by a grant from Queens Council on the Arts, Dougherty Gallery, Queens, NY

The Neighbors, 4 person exhibition, The Local gallery, Queens, NY

Maake Magazine Fall 2016 Exhibition, The Woskob Family Gallery, State College, PA

Terror Nenas, 4 person exhibition, Undercurrent Projects, New York, NY

The Alephs, 4 person exhibition, Local Project, LIC, Queens, NY

Valentine's Show, group show, Arcilesi and Homberg, New York, NY

2015

Small Works, juried group exhibition, Gallery 440, Brooklyn, NY

Holiday Salon, group exhibition, Lesley Heller Projects, New York, NY

Yourself, juried group exhibition, Local Project, Queens, NY

Small Works, group exhibition, Trestle Projects, Brooklyn, NY

Always On Tuesday, two person exhibition, curated by NYC Creative Salon, Wix Lounge, New York, NY

Seeking Space Exhibition, group exhibition, Bushwick Open Studios, Brooklyn, NY

Shangri-La, LIC Arts Open, group exhibition, curated by John Baber and Miguel Luciano, Queens, NY

Materials for The Arts Members Show, group exhibition, Queens, NY

Mood Cookies and Tea at Arcilesi and Homberg Fine Art, New York, NY

Just My Type, group show, Arcilesi And Homberg Fine Art, New York, NY

2014

Photographic Being II, curated group show, Jeffrey Leder Gallery, Queens, NY

Winter Secrets, group show, Local Project, Queens, NY

Because Art, curated group show, Any Squared Projects, Chicago, IL

Drawings Along Myrtle Ave, various venues in Bed-Stuy, curated by Will Hutnick for Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

Exquisite Collage, group show, Local Project, Queens, NY

Mood Cookies And Tea in Eastport, ME, site-specific community event

Divine, Mysterious And Unreal, solo installation exhibition, Studioworks, Eastport, ME

Balls To The Wall, group exhibition, Arcilesi & Homberg Fine Art, New York, NY

Mood Cookies And Tea at Smiling Hogshead Ranch, Queens, NY, site-specific community event

Mood Cookies And Tea at Vernon Cases Garden, Brooklyn, NY, site-specific community event

No place like home?, Institute for Humanities Research, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

2013

Two person show, Galesburg Civic Art Center, Galesburg, IL

Temporary installations downtown Galesburg, Galesburg, IL

Midsummer Night Tea Party, site-specific community event, Galesburg, IL

Emerging Illinois Artists, (juried by Bill Gross of 65Grand), McLean County Arts Center, Bloomington, IL

I said it. I couldn't say it., MFA thesis show, Gallery 214, DeKalb, IL

Blick Juried Show, Olson Gallery, DeKalb, IL

16th International Open, (juried by Kelli Connell), Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL

Stuck, pop-up group show by Arcilesi & Homberg Fine Art, New York, NY

Fountain Art Fair, represented by Arcilesi & Homberg Fine Art, New York, NY

Love Under Funnel Cake and Vengaboys, group show, Space Club HQ, Chicago, IL

2012

Winter Tea Party, site-specific community event, DeKalb, IL
MFA Juried Show, (juried by Dieter Roelstraete), Olson Gallery, DeKalb, IL
Push, group show, Arcilesi & Homberg Fine Art, Brooklyn, NY
Inspired By, (juried by Mary Stoppert), Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL
International Art Festival, juried international exhibition, Museum of Russian Art, Jersey City, NJ
Artists in Residence at the Pajama Factory, four person show, Williamsport, PA
Night Sky, national group show, (juried by Karen Hanmer and Vera Scekic), Evanston Art Center, Evanston, IL
Good Night Into Infinity, solo show, The Art Annex at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL
Solo Show, Berwyn Arts Council in conjunction with Route 66 Museum, Berwyn, IL
Head Space, group show, Gallery 214 at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL
We Work Art Talks We Offer, group show, DeKalb Area Women's Center, DeKalb, IL

2011

From Artemisia to Frida, juried group show, Koehline Museum of Art, Des Plaines, IL (catalog published)
Karen's Garage, group show, Bad Dog Gallery, DeKalb, IL
Abstractions, national group show, (juried by Sandra Perlow), Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL
Annual Juried Ars Nova Exhibition, Olson Gallery, DeKalb, IL
My Imaginable Friends and I, group show, Bad Dog Gallery, DeKalb, IL

2010

LindArt 2010, group show, Gallery-Museum Lendava, Slovenia
Transitions, juried group show, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
MFA Juried Show, (juried by Carol Jackson), Olson Gallery, DeKalb, IL (honorable mention)
22 H'orderves, group show, Pleasant Street Gallery, DeKalb, IL
No Place Like Home, juried group exhibition, Koehline Museum of Art, Des Plaines, IL (catalog published)
Chicago Bold And Personal, group show, Anita Miller Gallery, Chicago, IL
Graduate Arts Association Group Show, Bad Dog Gallery, DeKalb, IL

Residencies

Studio Residency at Local Project, Queens, NY, 2014-2015
Artist Residency at Studioworks, Eastport, ME, 2014
Artist Residency at Prairie Center of The Arts, Peoria, IL, 2013
Artist Residency at Studios Midwest, Galesburg Civic Art Center, IL, 2013
Artist Residency at Pajama Factory, Williamsport, PA, 2012
LindArt International Artist Residency, Lendava, Slovenia, 2010

Awards

Queens Council on the Arts artist grant for production of new work, 2016
Outstanding Graduate Student Award, School of Art, Northern Illinois University, 2013
Memorial Art Scholarship, Northern Illinois University, 2011
Graduate Assistantship, Northern Illinois University, 2011-2013
Tuition waiver, Northern Illinois University, 2010-2011
Honorable Mention, *MFA Juried Show*, Olson Gallery, DeKalb, IL, 2010
Study Abroad Scholarship, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2003

Professional Activities

Over The Bridge, co-curator with June Kosloff and Fountain Gallery, Local Project, Queens, NY
Your Presence Is Requested, curator, Resobox Gallery, Queens, NY
Single - A Valentine's Day Art Event, curator, Local Project, Queens, NY, 2015
Artist Talk, Galesburg Civic Art Center, Galesburg, IL, 2013
What A Long Night It Has Been at Gallery 214, curator, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, 2012

Education

Master of Fine Arts in Painting, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, 2013
Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2004
Minor in Germanic Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2004
Study Abroad, Lucerne School of Art and Design, Switzerland, 2003

Publications And Media

Studio Visit Magazine, Summer 2017.
Galesburg crafts vision before Obama visit, *TV Channel WQUAD 8* news segment, 7/18/2013
Community members helping artist create piece of work, Matthew Dutton, *The Register-Mail*, 7/1/2013
Another Kind of Tea Party, John Gallagher, *The New Zephyr*, 7/26/2013
Gallery 214 to host new exhibition 'What a Long Night it Has Been,' Tim Ashton, *Northern Star*, 10/16/2012
Public Art Academy's Artist-in-Residence exhibition, Matthew Parrish, *SunGazette*, 7/26/2012
Review: Night Sky/Evanston Art Center, Anastasia Karpova, *Newcity Art*, 6/19/2012
'Night Sky' visible at Evanston Art Center, J.T. Morand, *Northbrook Star*, 5/29/2012
Vol 5: Maria Dimanshtein, *InkWell Magazine*, 11/16/2012

Maria Dimanshtein

Artist statement

My work is about what it means to be a human in the context of the Universe; it's an attempt to locate myself in the vastness and endlessness of space and time while dealing with the routine of everyday life. How do you reconcile the mysterious and the mundane?

I like to observe and analyze feelings, people and situations I encounter. I wonder what drives us as human beings, what gives life meaning. I delve into the themes of darkness, desire, fear, freedom, romance and regular everyday moments. These are specific themes that are best expressed in written language. Creating tangible pieces gives the writing a physical presence. While stand-alone writing acquires meaning through the reader's imagination, the addition of visual elements augments it with visual story-telling and aesthetics.

Leaving the Universe ponders the irreconcilable dichotomy of the desire of freedom along with security. We yearn for freedom, which comes along with anxiety and fear over the unknown. At the same time, we need security and the comfort of knowing that we can arrange aspects of our lives into patterns that will make life go as planned: if this, then that. We look for formulas to predict the results of our actions and we draw a grid for a successful life. But somewhere in the back of our minds we may be asking: what is at the end of the Universe? I attempt to contain chaos and anxiety by arranging them into "grids" by creating patterns using the word "uncertainty" or stating that "I feel content." Even in our vernacular we have signage such as "Night Regulation," which, perhaps unwittingly, implies that we want to regulate that which is outside of our control. Does the desire to eliminate ambiguity leads us to making our lives mundane as we lock ourselves into the grid of predictable patterns.

The States of Mine – is a series of short poems that are integrated into visual pieces. In a traditional book, each poem is a small part of a bigger whole. In a visual piece it carries enough weight to stand on its own and command attention. By moving out of the book and onto the wall of a gallery the poem increases its chances to "see light of day" and encounter viewers. These poems celebrate the lyricism of the everyday life, delves into the mystery that is "the Self" and ponders the working of the Universe.

What Worries You? delves into some of the darker human experiences: fear of death, loss of meaning and faith. It mocks the self-help movement and positive psychology which promote the idea that we have control over how we feel and our life in general. A prompt in a hypothetical handbook asks the user to make a list of things that cause anxiety in order to address them. The answer, in this case, is "Death" – the ultimate, most powerful fear. Multiple pages restating the same question and answer underline the futility of repetitive attempts to resolve this "worry."

Maria Dimanshtein

Bio

Maria Dimanshtein was born in Latvia and is currently based in New York. Her installations, mixed media works and paintings have been shown in exhibitions throughout NYC and across the country at venues including Arcilesi and Homberg Fine Arts and Lesley Heller Projects in New York, Local Project in Queens, Trestle Gallery and Gallery 440 in Brooklyn, Arizona State University, Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, Evanston Art Center and Galesburg Civic Art Center in IL. She participated in 5 funded artist residency programs, including LindArt in Slovenia and Studioworks in Eastport, ME. In 2016 she was a recipient of Individual Artist Grant from Queens Council on the Arts. Maria holds an MFA in Painting from Northern Illinois University.

Residencies/Fellowships/Curated Programs

- 2016 Art Omi Residency, Ghent, NY
- 2015 Bronx Museum AIM Program, Bronx, NY
Chashama Studio Program AIR, ongoing
- 2014 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Digital/Electronic Media
- 2012 BRIC Media Fellowship, Brooklyn, NY
Sculpture Space Residency, Utica NY
Artist-in-Residence program of the 2nd Ural Industrial Biennial, Ekaterinburg & Nizhny Tagil, Russia
- 2011 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Swing Space Studio Residency on Governors Island, New York
- 2008 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME

Education

- 2008 MFA, School of Visual Art, New York, NY
- 1995 BFA, Atlanta College of Art, Atlanta, GA, Summa Cum Laude, Sculpture and Painting

Projects/Public Works/Exhibitions

- 2017 *You Are Here NYC: Art, Information, and Mapping* – Pratt Manhattan Gallery, curated by Katharine Harmon
Digital Profiling, presented by NYFA at The Media Center – DUMBO, NY
Those Who Can Do, York Faculty Show – Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning – Jamaica, NY
Those Who Can Do, York Faculty Show – York College (CUNY) Fine Arts Gallery – Jamaica, NY
Spring/Break Art Show – Chashama Booth – Times Square, NY
- 2016 *Left Hanging* – Rosenberg Gallery, Hofstra University – solo show
Jameco Exchange – No Longer Empty – Jamaica, NY, curated by Rachel Gugelberger
sited video installation in a Jamaica storefront
Jamaica Flux: Workspaces & Windows – Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning – Jamaica, NY
curated by Heng-Gil Han and Kalia Brooks
BRURAL: Crossroads of Equality and Irregularity – Brooklyn Fire Proof Temporary Storage Gallery
Brooklyn, NY, curated by Ilya Shipilovskikh and Irina Danilova
Ars Nova – Chashama/Tabla Rasa Gallery – Brooklyn, NY
- 2015 *All Consuming* – sited installation for FLOW.15 Outdoor Art Exhibit on Randall's Island, NY
Bronx Calling: Third AIM Biennial – Bronx Museum, NY

Projects/Public Works/Exhibitions con't

- 2015** *Recall: 2015* – Art in Odd Places – New York, NY – curated by Sara Reisman and Kendal Henry
We Are Creating a Secure Connection, York College (CUNY) Fine Arts Gallery, Jamaica, NY – solo show
- 2014** *The Intuitionist* – Drawing Center, New York, NY
curated by Heather Hart, Steffani Jemison and Jina Valentine
VECTOR Issue 3 – 10 page project for a literary/arts journal. Featured at Interstate Projects, Brooklyn, NY
SP Weather Reports – Annual 12 artist portfolio of work based on one month's weather data.
Exhibited at Center for Book Arts, Flux Factory, Queens, Shifting Communities at Bronx Art Space
and StudioPlace Arts, Barre, VT.
- 2012** *Ground Rules*-The 2nd Ural Industrial Biennial – Ekaterinburg & Nizhny Tagil, Russia
Nevsky Prospekt & Animal Behavior, site specific installations, Art Prospect Festival – St Petersburg, Russia.
- 2011** *7th Annual PixelPops Video Show* – Gallery Nouvel Organon, Paris.
FIVAC International Festival of Video Art – Camagüey, Cuba.
Branding Projects #1-3 – Site specific alterations, Governors Island. New York, NY.
30 fire-branded tree stumps on the grounds near Ft Jay – Ongoing.
Extra Limb – A site specific installation in a former munitions warehouse, Governors Island. New York, NY.
Mixed Messages – La Mama La Galeria, New York, NY – curated by John Chaich
Videos on the Front – Interstate Projects, Brooklyn, NY
- 2010** *See What I Mean* – Taller Boricua, New York, NY – curated by Marcos Dimas & Christine Licata
Self Destructing Art Show – Flux Factory, Queens, NY
Giguk Video Art Festival – Gießen, Germany
Videophagy / Videofagia – Function13 & Hotshot Gallery, Toronto – curated by e-fagia collective
Escape From New York – Paterson, NJ – curated by Olympia Lambert
CONVERSIONs, I'm Caught up... – BronxArtSpace, Bronx, NY – curated by Melissa A. Calderón
Give Me a Minute – The Shirey, Brooklyn, NY – curated by Amber Boardman
- 2009** *Unfixed/Unfixable* – Art in Odd Places (numerous sites on 14th Street) – New York, NY –
curated by Erin Donnelly and Radhika Subramaniam
A Very Loud Silence – Le Flash Festival, Atlanta, GA – curated by Avantika Bawa
A Minus Suitcase – Brain Factory, Seoul
- 2008** *A Minus Suitcase* – Jack the Pelican Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Boundaries and Left and Leaving – School of Visual Arts Gallery, New York, NY
Color Commentary – Performance/installation, SVA MFA Studios, New York, NY

Projects/Public Works/Exhibitions con't

- 2008 *A Number of Things* – MFA Thesis Show, SVA Gallery, New York, NY
- 2007 CAA MFA Exhibition – Hunter College/Times Square Gallery, New York, NY
Immediate Release – Guerilla action and website, 34 Chelsea galleries, New York, NY
This Is Berlin Not New York – curated by Lifebomb, Mastul e.V., Berlin
- 2006 *Touchy Feely*, New Work – Gallery Sklo, Atlanta, GA – solo show
Invisible Devices – Site specific installations in subway stations, New York, NY
Assemblation – Eyedrum Gallery, Atlanta, GA – curated by Karen Tauches
- 2005 *Touchpoint, the Corporate Show* – Eyedrum Gallery, Atlanta, GA
New Sculpture Preview – Gallery Sklo, Atlanta, GA
- 2000 *Sculpture by Nicholas J. Fraser, Jr.* – Flatiron Gallery, Atlanta, GA – solo show
- 1999 *Something Not Quite Completely Different: Tradition, Innovation and Their Uncanny Discontents* – Eyedrum Gallery, Atlanta, GA – curated by Jerry Cullum
- 1995 *The November Show* – Hastings Seed Gallery, Atlanta, GA – curated by Dan Cameron
Known Extremes – Block Candy Gallery, Atlanta, GA – solo show
Square – Gallery 100, Woodruff Arts Center, Atlanta, GA
4th Annual King Plow Sculpture Show – King Plow Art Center, Atlanta, GA
- 1993 *3rd Annual King Plow Sculpture Show* – King Plow Art Center, Atlanta, GA.

Lectures/Visiting Artist/Panel Discussions

- 2015 Visiting Artist Lecture, School of Visual Art MFA Program, New York, NY
Visiting Artist Class Lecture, New School at Parsons, New York, NY
Artist Presentation, York College/CUNY, Jamaica, NY
- 2014 *Spontaneous Interventions*, Art in Odd Places, Governors Island, Panelist
- 2012 Artist Presentation, Yekaterinburg College of Engineering, Yekaterinburg, Russia
Visiting Artist lecture of *Ground Rules*, Ural College of Art and Design, Nizhny Tagil, Russia
- 2012 *Quiet Infusion: Public Performances and the Performing Public*, lecture and panelist,
Symposium of the Biennial, 2nd Ural Industrial Biennale, Yekaterinburg, Russia
Art in the Urban Environment: New Forms of Community, Panelist, Etazhi, St Petersburg
Sculpture Space Resident Artist Visit and Lecture, Mohawk Valley Community College, Utica, NY

Selected Bibliography

- 2016** *Going to (Jamaica) Queens: An Old Rapper Hangout Gets an Art-World Assist*
Village Voice, June 14, 2016, Siddhartha Mitter
- No Longer Empty Invigorates Jamaica, NYC's Art Scene With Jameco Exchange*,
Untappedcities.com, June 24, 2016, Jenna Bagcal
- Jamaica arts exhibition celebrates temporary run*, TimesLedger.com, Patrick Donachie, July 14, 2016
- Editors' Picks: 6 Art Events to See in New York This Week*, Artnet.com, May 23, 2016, Rain Embuscado
- From Brooklyn to Russia's Ural Region, Artists Cross Political and Geographic Borders*
Hyperallergic.com, March 1, 2016
- 2015** *Art in Odd Places Revisits a Decade of Fleeting Experiences*, Hyperallergic.com, October 12, 2015
- Bronx Museum Showcases (and Helps) Emerging Artists* – New York Times, July 10, 2015
- Emerging Artists Take the Bronx* – Time Out New York, July 15, 2015
- 2014** *Story Lines: "The Intuitionists" at the Drawing Center* – Hyperallergic.com, Thomas Micchelli, July 19, 2014
- The Intuitionists and 'Small'* – New York Times, Ken Johnson, July 31, 2014
- The Intuitionists* – The New Yorker, August 4, 2014
- 2012** *The Culture Industry* – Scene & Herd, Artforum.com, Kate Sutton, October 3, 2012
- American Artists Learn Petersburg* – Voice of America.ru, Anna Plotnikova, September 23, 2012
- Baseball in Tagil* – Channel 4, Yekaterinburg, Russia, September 12, 2012
- Festival 'Art Prospect'* – Time Out: Moscow, Anna Matveeva, September 10, 2012
- 2011** *MIXED MESSAGES: 'A(I)DS, Art + Words* – New York Times, Holland Cotter, June 23, 2011
- Critic's Pick* – Artforum.com, Ara H. Merjian, June 26, 2011
- Clarity through mixed messages* – Chelsea Now, Lily Bouvier, June 15, 2011
- 2010** *Escape from New York* – NYC Art Blog, Chris Rywalt, May 20, 2010
- NYC in Paterson, N.J.: Escape from New York, at the Fabricolor Building*, C-Monster Blog, May 17, 2010
- Why We Should Ditch Manhattan's Art Scene and Head to New Jersey*
Runnin' Scared Blog on VillageVoice.com, Araceli Cruz, May 14, 2010
- Interview: Nicholas Fraser* – The New Noise Blog, Emily Cameron & Patrick Taylor, February 1, 2010
- Art Uncovered-Interview* – Break Thru Radio with DJ Piera
- 2009** *Tea for Two at Art in Odd Places* – TimeOutNY.com, October 8, 2009
- Memories of Daily Life in Now Empty Storefronts* – EV Grieve Blog, September 14, 2009
- 2008** *Artist of 2:29 PM* – TryHarder Blog, August 29, 2008
- 2007** *Dear Nicholas Fraser* – Oly's Musings Blog, October 25, 2007

Selected Bibliography con't

- 2006 *Finding Answers* – Jerry Cullum, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, December 24, 2006
Assembly Required – Jerry Cullum, Access Atlanta, December 28, 2006
- 2005 *Is it Art?* – Creative Loafing, November 30, 2005
- 1999 *Innovation, 'Discontents' Get an Airing* – Catherine Fox, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, July 25, 1999
Annals of the ACA Alumni – Christina Kline, Atlanta Press, July 29, 1999
Name Game: Bodies and Urns at Eyedrum – Cathy Bird, Creative Loafing, July 3, 1999
The Wiley Eye – Christina Kline, Atlanta Press, June 24, 1999

Academic/Teaching Work

2014-present

York College Fine Arts Department, Jamaica NY.
Adjunct Professor, Fine Arts Gallery and Studio Manager

Collections

The Center for Book Arts
Nevada Museum of Art Center for Art + Environment Archives Collections
University of Michigan Library, School of Art & Design Collection
Virginia Commonwealth University Library

Nicholas Fraser

Left Hanging

Left Hanging quotes unanswered messages I sent on internet dating sites. These failed efforts to spark a connection are hand cut into various materials, the letters left attached and dangling. Often hung off the wall and lit with a spot, the shadows are more clearly legible than the object casting the shadow.

The viewer knows nothing of the writer or recipient, though an intimate portrait gradually emerges: a struggling middle-aged creative, whose tireless sense of hope (and humor) belies a weary awareness of the artificial, projected nature of these online communications. Initially intended for a private singular audience, these personal notes are transformed into public shrines to longing.

Two variations use two materials: black tyvek and printed advertising banners found in Brooklyn and Queens. Each material allows for a different approach. The tyvek messages are warped and wrapped, generating illusionistic shadow forms. The stretched letters echoing the author's initial efforts to shape the message for its intended recipient. Thin and delicate, they are fastened only at the top, so viewer's movements cause the material to ripple, individual letters to flutter and shake, further activating the forms.

The printed banners are found objects advertising Rap, Reggae, Bollywood or other events, often with a dense pastiche of typography and a medley of artist faces printed on the surface. A 'more is more' aesthetic guides the designs, with vast quantities of information offered, far more than could be consumed by the passing motorists who constitute the primary audience. My dating messages are then cut into the material in dense blocks, forming a screen over the imagery. All the texts and images remain visible, but the holes and dangling letter-forms disrupt the ability to easily read or interpret any element. Coherence breaks down and the surface buzzes and vibrates.

Overlaying dating site messages onto banners merges two forms of advertising, two carefully crafted projections intent on moving an audience to action. Both undergo a functional shift in the process: the once private messages are writ large and hung for all to see, reveling/wallowing in a peculiar contemporary phenomenon and its inevitable failures. The banners, having served their initial purpose, remain artifacts of the city's vibrant cultural landscape but are transformed into something reflecting the multi-layered, everything-at-once nature of that landscape, its private layers and public proclamations merged into a singular cacophonous display.

ART

Going to (Jamaica) Queens: An Old Rapper Hangout Gets an Art-World Assist

by SIDDHARTHA MITTER

JUNE 14, 2016



The 165th Street Mall, a pedestrian block lined with two-story storefronts smack in the middle of downtown Jamaica, Queens, has had a few heydays and some down times. Perhaps the last glory era, culturally speaking, was in the late Eighties and early Nineties, when the area was a hub of New York's hip-hop scene.

"This was where the rappers used to hang out," says Saiku Branch, who grew up four blocks over. "Any day out of school, you could see Biz Markie, Run-D.M.C., L.L. Cool J, Salt 'N Pepa — they're from the neighborhood too. People came from all the boroughs to take pictures of rappers." At the block's north end, the Colosseum Mall, at the site of an old Macy's, was home to the Shirt Kings, whose tees, emblazoned with graffiti-style portraits, were a Queens hallmark. Jamaica was in transition back then: The department stores were gone, and the elevated MTA train lines along Jamaica Avenue had been torn down; CUNY's York College campus and the Parsons/Archer underground subway terminus were still brand-new.

Today, downtown Jamaica has the hum of a core business district that also serves as a gateway to the vast hinterland of far Queens. Since its hip-hop heyday, though, cultural production has been more scarce, says Richard Parker, who runs a nearby tattoo studio. As a teen in the Aughts, he says, "All I knew on this block was beef patties, sneakers, clothes, and fights. Never have I walked down this block and seen anyone doing an art exhibit."

It's in the middle of this bustle — right on 165th Street, in the former premises of a women's apparel store — that pedestrians will stumble across an engaging art exhibit called Jameco Exchange. It features mixed-media, installation, and performance pieces (including many new commissions) by both local talent and artists from elsewhere in New York City and beyond, all responding to Jamaica's history and role in the city's economy. (The show is named after an old Native American long-distance trade route that once passed through the area; "Jameco," which eventually morphed into "Jamaica," was the Canarsie Indian word for beaver.)

The exhibit adeptly blurs the line between the streetscape — with its flux of shoppers, aggressive hawkers, and people just hanging around — and the art space. In the window, a video by the artist Nicholas Fraser projects images of storefronts from across the city, with the actual pedestrian mall serving as an uncanny background. A work by Ezra Wube consists of a paired canvas and stop-motion animation depicting 165th Street, while an installation by Antonia A. Perez, a Queens-based artist, asks viewers to slow down and crochet forms using an unexpected material: strips of plastic bags from neighboring shops.

The inclusion of participatory works is intentional. "At the beginning, it was meant to be a project about the building, the street, and how it radiates out to the borough," says Rachel Gugelberger, the show's curator. "As we started talking with artists, it became about [the idea of] exchange in an explicit way — projects where people can interact with the work and really become part of the piece." Community members, including Parker and Branch (whose late father, Baba John Watusi Branch, founded the Afrikan Poetry Theatre, a neighborhood arts

Poetry Theatre, a neighborhood arts institution linked to the Black Arts movement), were consulted, too.

It's no surprise, then, that Jameco — which is co-organized by No Longer Empty, a nonprofit that puts on exhibits in disused urban spaces, and the Downtown Jamaica Business Improvement District — doubles as a local history lesson. Two minimalist portraits by Rico Gatson honor the writer Amiri Baraka, who spoke at the Afrikan Poetry Theatre and was close to the elder Branch, and John Coltrane, who moved to the nearby neighborhood of St. Albans in 1959. Another piece, by Carolina Caycedo, depicts the black activist Assata Shakur, who grew up in Jamaica. Other works make more allusive connections, such as Mary Valverde's geometric *Tesseract*, with its gold lines that echo the area's pawnshops and jewelry stores.

Stepping back, the show's full value lies in how it treats Jamaica's families, workers, and shoppers as contributors, not passive subjects. Like Downtown Brooklyn before it, Jamaica sits at the cusp of changes that make its future land-use and development patterns uncertain. According to Trulia, the median home sale price in the area rose 10 percent last year, and the city's Jamaica Now plan, approved last year, is leveraging the proximity to JFK airport to usher in housing, hotels, and retail developments. "We're hoping we can contain it, so that what happened to Brooklyn or Harlem doesn't happen to Jamaica, Queens," says Branch. "[The area] has to move forward, but we want everybody communicating with each other."

The artist Azikiwe Mohammed hopes to do just that. His project, on the show's upper level, is presented as a thrift store carrying nostalgic objects. It's set in an imaginary town that he conceives as a happy, healthy black community — the kind that so many families sought in moving to places like Queens. Visitors write their “memories” of this utopia on the backs of postcards; Mohammed then adds pieces to his installation that match their descriptions. Through this reverse-engineering, he says, he aims to find out what makes a place successful and stable. “This is a real, functioning community — it's not transient,” he says. “I'm hoping I can find out some of the secret answers to what has worked here.”

Jameco Exchange

89-62B 165th Street (between Jamaica and 89th avenues), Queens

Open Thursday–Sunday, noon–6 p.m.

nolongerempty.org

Through July 17

HYPERALLERGIC

Sensitive to Art & its Discontents

From Brooklyn to Russia's Ural Region, Artists Cross Political and Geographic Borders

by [Peter Malone](#) on March 1, 2016

Nicholas Fraser presents videos, tee shirts designed for impromptu baseball teams, and a signed ball, all titled "Ground Rules" (2012). Fraser drew a baseball diamond in chalk on a lot in Nizhny Tagil, an industrial city in the Ural region not unlike Brooklyn's Bush Terminal area. Teams were formed and the game was played for the first time by players who had only a brief outline of the rules. In the artist's words, "Despite minimal training and no prior experience, knowledge of the game [became] less important than the willingness to try something unfamiliar, without concern if the results [were] pretty or professional."

3/1/2016

From Brooklyn to Russia's Ural Region, Artists Cross Political and Geographic Borders



Nicholas Fraser, "Ground Rules" (2012), Tee shirts, softball, video

Margaret Roleke's "McDonaldland" (2014) is an octagon of shallow relief made of war toys

Education

2011 M.F.A. (with distinction) Pratt Institute, Brooklyn NY
2002 B.F.A. Art Institute of Boston, Boston MA

Residencies

2013 & 2014 Contemporary Arts Center at Woodside, Troy NY

Relevant Affiliations:

Pierogi Gallery - Flat File Artist, NY NY 2016 - current
PaintingsIsDead.com – Contributor – 2014-current
Apt Literary Magazine – Contributing Visual Arts Editor – 2006- 2014
Botanic Gallery, Bushwick Brooklyn – Curator – 2011 – 2013

Press & Acknowledgments

Making History/ Bushwick - Arts in Bushwick/ David & Schweitzer Contemporary ISBN 978-1532308680
Artnet News: Insider's Guide to Bushwick Open Studios (by Benjamin Sutton) 2014
<http://news.artnet.com/art-world/insiders-guide-to-bushwick-open-studios-2014-29043>
Presentations/ artist talks given: Sarah Lawrence College, Muhlenberg College, Bushwick Art Crit Group (multiple), Fowler Arts, Pratt Institute, Botanic Gallery, Apt Literary Journal

Select Exhibitions:

2016 *(SOLO) Whisper Party*–Martin Gallery at Muhlenberg College, PA

2015 *Group Salon* – c: John Baber Lesley Heller Workspace NY,NY
ChiChi Factory Show- c: Kira Bucca - ChiChi Factory Industry City BK NY
Making History- c: Krista Saunders & Dexter Wimberly, Storefront Ten Eyck Gallery, BK NY

2014 *Echo Art Fair* – c: Christopher Stout, BACG, Buffalo NY
Kiki Bouba – c: John O'Connor, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY
BACG loves... – c: Christopher Stout & Drew Van Deist, Brooklyn FireProof East
Pratt MFA Alumni Exhibit – c: Honey Ramka Gallery, Pratt Institute Brooklyn NY

2013 *RANSOM* – Brooklyn Wayfarers, Brooklyn NY
Bushwick Art Crit Group – inaugural presentation – Brooklyn Fire Proof, Brooklyn NY
For Music's Sake – Rogue Space New York, NY
100 NY Artists – Pop Up Art Shop, Barranquilla, Colombia

2012 *Of Mind, Body & Soul* – c: Peter Gynd, Fowler Arts, Brooklyn, NY
Pledge-a-sketch (NYFA Relief Benefit) –Times Square Art Sq, New York, NY
Year Two (Sandy Benefit) – c: Lia Post, Fowler Arts, Brooklyn, NY

2011 *A Strange Sense of Calm* – c: P.M. Nicholson Botanic Gallery, Brooklyn NY
Additional Matter – c: May Shetrit, Lyons Wier Project Space, NY NY
Chain Letter – Samsøn Projects, Boston, MA
Pratt Harlem Project – c: Heather Darcy Bhandari & Elissa Levy, NY NY
(SOLO) First Appearance: J.F. Lynch – DeKalb Gallery, Brooklyn NY

2010 *Tedx Exhibit*- c: Shane McAdams - Steuben Gallery, Brooklyn NY

Artist's Statement

There's a sort of contradiction in writing a clarifying statement about work that is designed to disorient, but that is the task at hand. My primary focus is on three-dimensional letterforms that I created and sculpted models of to draw from. I had worked with text and images for years, but I came to believe that if I wanted text to actually feel like it existed in space, it would require a form that could rotate in space and still be legible. It is not uncommon for a sculptor to make a drawing of a sculpture to help them envision it— I just did the opposite.

I use these letterforms in assemblages, installations, and elaborately-staged photographs (all of which I consider to be simply drawings), in a manner that is designed to throw off the viewer's sense of space, asking: "what is flatness as opposed to depth?" and "what is drawing as opposed to writing?" The goal is to make something that's interesting to look at, but fun to try to pick apart. My titles always include pictured word or phrase in parentheses, as a small mercy to a frustrated hypothetical viewer as well as an acknowledgement that the word or phrase is the subject of the work, though not necessarily what the work is about. If what I mean is unclear, think of 1871's "Arrangement in Gray and Black No. 1" (more commonly referred to as "Whistler's Mother").

Whatever form the piece takes, be it charcoal on paper or elaborate temporary installation, the impetus for all of my work is rooted in my relationship to language. Words haunt me and are constantly rolling around in my head. I don't think I am alone in this—I believe it is a basic human condition. We receive the world through our five senses but assimilate it largely through language. Most of our daily experiences may be routine enough that we don't have to reconsider them, but any time anything new appears we have to take it in and understand it through association, simile, and metaphor (i.e., "Is that place new? It looks like an Italian restaurant", "Was that a gunshot or a car backfiring?", "She is here because David couldn't be.") This reality can be vexing when trying to describe the world through only static visual means, but that is the challenge my work undertakes.



Seth Apter Thu, Aug 4, 2011 Follow

Material Transformed in 'Additional Matter' at Lyons Wier



Timothy Gasbarro/Courtesy of Lyons Wier

Event Details: Wed Aug 17, 2011 - 6:00pm at Lyons Wier Gallery Project Space (175 7th Avenue) [+ Add To Calendar](#)

Additional Matter, the third and final installation of their summer group series, opens Aug. 17 at [Lyons Wier Gallery Project Space](#) in Chelsea. Curated by May Shetrit, this exhibition highlights the work of five artists: Myles Bennett, Zac Braun, Timothy Gasbarro, John F. Lynch and Christopher Stout.

The collection showcases recent pieces by these emerging artists whose work explores the nature of material and its effects once transformed. In the act of creation, artists have always extended the boundaries of the material used for creation. The participating artists explore materials in their minor effects: changing the form of the raw canvas, taking threads apart, or examining the affect of different materials when in contact with one another. The exhibit validates the possibilities of continuous exploration of material and form.

The artists pay great attention to the individual form of their subjects, either through manipulation or through transformation. In contrast to the work of the great masters of the 1960s and 1970s – who explored the nature of their materials by performing rough or extreme changes on them – the pieces on display in *Additional Matter* examine the subtleties of material in greater detail to create a different whole. In so doing, the artists grant a narrative to their transformed material; or perhaps, capture a narrative that was always there, living within the raw matter.



JF Lynch

Additional Matter opens on Aug. 17 with an opening reception from 6-8 p.m. The exhibition runs through Sept. 5.

Lyons Wier Gallery Project Space: 175 7th Ave., bet. W 20th & 21st Sts. 212-242-6220. Gallery hours are Wednesday to Sunday, 12-6 p.m.



Interview with J.F. Lynch

📅 April 06, 2021 💬 No Comments

1/There's a great amount of movement in *Some Produce* and *Stranger Glances*, which is impressive since you capture that animation in both charcoal and oil paint. Is that an effect that you strive for in all your work or was it a facet of this specific pair?

It really depends on the subject of the picture. Movement was an important aspect for both of those pieces. *Some Produce*, for example, is primarily about a still life; a bowl of fruits and veggies. I was staring at these plants and thinking about their individual forms. How the curve of a banana tells the story of its growth and the gnarly top shows how it was twisted and torn free from its branch. Each item—cucumber, zucchini, tomato—contained in itself the evidence of where it came from and how it got here. To really look at it was to watch it grow and arrive. Calling such a grouping “still” seemed grossly inappropriate. So the letters of that word are tucked around the forms in the picture.

But on the whole the presence of movement in my work has become more important. Whether it manifests as the appearance of a moving object or the movement of my hand rendering a stationary object, I think movement is a defining characteristic of a thing.

2/You have an undergraduate degree in illustration and will soon be completing your MFA in painting. Does your background in illustration lead to any themes in subject matter or composition choices?

Most definitely. One thing that I find many fine arts educations lack is the tenets of visual storytelling. At least this was the case when I was an undergrad, it may not be as true as it once was. But having studied illustration at that time allowed me to assimilate certain fundamentals of picture making, particularly treating a picture as a narrative. This heavily informs my compositions. I have a flitting notion that illustrators preserved many of the most important organizational techniques of both the Classical and Renaissance periods when Modern art had little use for them.

3/How does literature affect your work?

Whereas literature used to be an inspiration for my paintings, my recent drawings and paintings are in many ways an exploration of painting as literature. Seeing what it can mean to write in illusion, which is probably an asinine way of saying that I am testing the relationships between a real object, a written word, a drawn object, and a “real” word (spoken or thought).

4/Sum up your work in apt in five words: go!

No, really, what is that?

J.F. Lynch's work can be seen in the first print issue of apt, which can be purchased [here](#).

artnet® news

Exhibitions

Insider's Guide to Bushwick Open Studios 2014

Twenty must-see studios during this year's massive art weekend in Brooklyn.

Benjamin Sutton, May 29, 2014

[artnet.com/insider](#)

The Wayne White-like 3D Text Additions: [JF Lynch](#) (41 Varick Avenue, #202).



JF Lynch, *Untitled* (2013).
Courtesy the artist.

JUMET
PARIS



Liens collection

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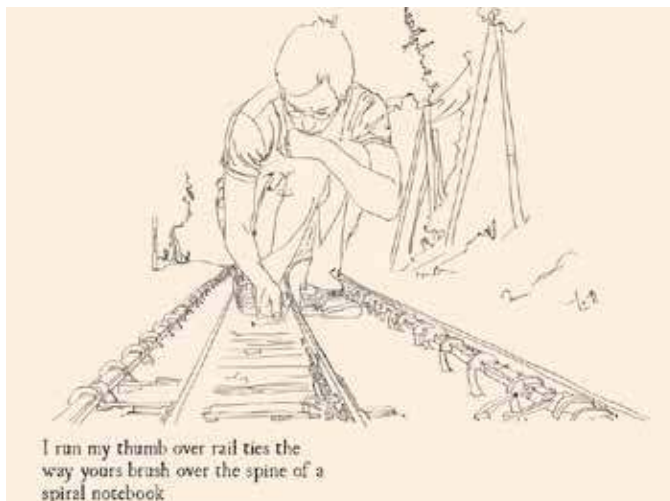


Originally Published August 13th 2012

A Curious Conversation: J.F. Lynch interviews Neil Dvorak

All aesthetes share a common trait: the constant search for creative work that transcends its medium. A few months ago at the Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art's annual Art Festival, I saw a glint of that sought after transcendence. Amid the carelessly drawn and digitally colored indie books, beside portfolios teeming with unlicensed drawings of Marvel characters, and across from big-name publishers that seemed to simultaneously legitimize and trivialize the purpose of the event, was a table covered in books so thin, I initially mistook them for tear sheets.

There were half a dozen or so, all printed on the same timeless cream-colored paper. The images were rendered in a meticulous line work that ran the gamut of linear elaboration, from a single basic contour floating on an expanse of blank page to intricate city maps that left barely a millimeter inkless, expressing a familiarity with both minimalism and decadence. They were delicate and possessed a subtlety few comics ever seem to. I purchased one and walked away.



I run my thumb over rail ties the
way yours brush over the spine of a
spiral notebook

The book I bought was So Have You, part of a series titled, Easy Pieces. From the first page, which serves double-duty as the cover, I suspected that the artist, Neil Dvorak, was the real thing.

The theme of the six-page story is succinctly stated in its first sentence: "I have been enormous." Put simply, it is a series of poetic observations on what it would be like to be gigantic. The ideas were so cleanly conveyed that they felt like my own. I ran back, bought the lot, and introduced myself to Neil Dvorak.

After reading everything he had and exploring the depths of his [website](#), I contacted him and arranged an interview.

From outside his Brooklyn studio, hidden as it is above a functioning woodshop in an industrial neighborhood, one could never imagine the work Dvorak produces within. To gain entry, I had to find a buzzer by feeling around a darkened hole that had been cut out of a chain-link fence and a perennial shrubbery. (Yes, I'm serious.) The studio itself is a modern renovation of what I suspect was once a living space built exclusively for the most basic necessities, its new, sleek woodwork framing a still functional wood-burning stove.

We sat across from one another on high stools, the kind used at drafting tables. Dvorak perched beside a drool-inspiring Wacom tablet.

J.F. Lynch: I'm trying to think of a way to describe your comic, *Easy Pieces*. Would it be safe to say that each issue is a kind of sequential vignette that uses conceptual surrealism as a vehicle for metaphor?

Neil Dvorak: In short, I don't know. You call them "sequential vignettes." I have referred to them as vignettes often, but as far as sequential, I'm not sure. The vignettes are serving a much larger whole, but I'm not sure of the shape and size of that whole. It could very well be that it is not a linear shape, but that the vignettes I'm creating now will fall, chronologically, later in the story, or a vignette could be an island universe, uncoupled from the larger whole. That's part of the excitement for me, how the vignettes might refer to one another.

I like "metaphor." I like the idea that these comics are poems or metaphors. Phrases like "conceptual surrealism," while sometimes incredibly useful and effective, almost always feel to me like they have collapsed the piece (or pieces) of art into something understood, categorized, seen.

JFL: Fair enough. Would you say that phrases like "conceptual" and "surreal" collapse the work because of their eponymous art movements? Like saying a contemporary work is "surreal" anachronistically places it in a camp with Breton's poetry or deChirico's mannequin paintings? I see the word "surreal" as a useful tool for referring to something that wants to create a sense of realism but the poetry of the thing has been given enough power that it unhinges that reality when necessary.

ND: You're getting at the characteristics inherent in those movements, which is fascinating, rather than "shelving" a piece of art into its corresponding "section." You have enlightened me, sir. I thank you.

JFL: Ha. I guess that was an indirect way to reveal that we agree on what the work is or what it does—to an extent—but the nomenclature might make for an interesting discussion. In *Easy Pieces*, you have a recurring character, or group of characters, called The Jupiter Organization. Could you tell me a bit about them?

ND: Well, the Jupiter Org describes itself as follows [clears throat]: “A group of like-minded individuals organized around a myriad multitude of instruments that are infinitely accurate. We are proud planetary parents, beaming bastions of the ‘heavens,’ collectors of all there is.”

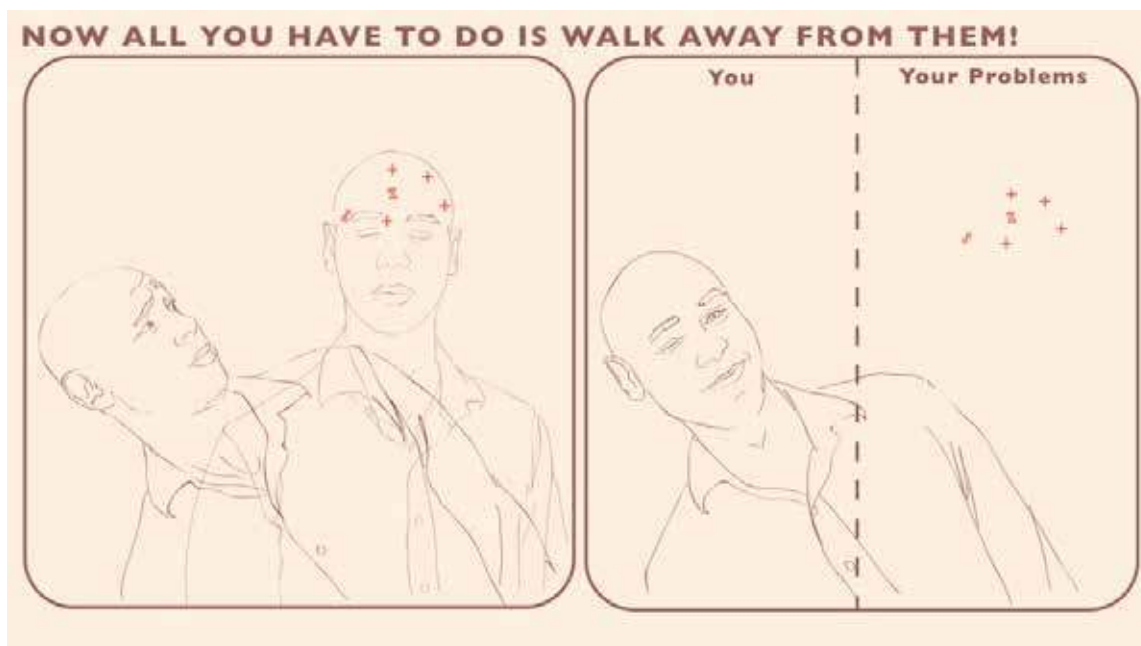
All Jupiter Org claims are authenticated at the ELENCHUS headquarters, a division of the Jupiter Org.

I like to read that statement aloud really fast and in my best Dan Aykroyd voice.

JFL: [Long pause, followed by an awkward laugh.] It’s interesting to do an impression of someone who is so—in my estimation—outstandingly average. But I guess I’ve seen several Dana Carvey impressions as well, though, it now it occurs to me that I might have to justify that statement if I were ever to cross paths with either Dan Aykroyd or Dana Carvey.

ND: Aykroyd, outstandingly average? I disagree! But that’s for another time.

JFL: You outline one of the products of the Jupiter Organization’s “infinitely accurate instruments” in [Treatment #304](#), wherein a client (patient?) submits a form that indicates their various mental ailments. Using this information, the Jupiter Org locks those ailments in space, allowing the client to walk away emancipated. While the fine print warns the client not to return to that same position, doesn’t that create a risk that others might walk into the exact same position in space and contract those ailments?



ND: Great question. I like the idea that the abandoned woe is unique to the person who abandoned it. It's a floating key (read: poison) that can penetrate only your specific lock (read: head). Walking through another's woe may very well make you feel uneasy. Likely it will be a somewhat undefined unease or

anxiety. It may feel like when someone you love says, "I have bad news." You'll wait for an anxiety. It will never come because it's someone else's. Perhaps this has happened to you. But, as a consultant, I can only speculate. The Jupiter Org is the entity to query.

JFL: Wow, that's pretty intense. But it sounds oddly likely, doesn't it? Although I can't say that I have had that experience exactly as you have described it—being a hypothetical and all—it does seem to indirectly suggest signs of depression, no? Like a person walking down the street and suddenly being overwhelmed with an unprecedented sense that all was not right in the world. If I didn't fear legal action, it might be interesting to conduct a study that compares Jupiter's client records with incidents of manic depression by locality. It's always possible that there are people that, instead of being depressed, actually just have an innate dowsing rod for unfinished mental business?

ND: Who can say for sure what the origin of unexpected woe is? I know this: I often feel good; my general mental state is happy, interested and wondrous. If I feel a spike of joy, I never question the origin. I know where it comes from. But woe, for some reason, can creep up on you and the origin is often not known. A lot of my comic is about trying to make sense of the world, and that my ideas and your ideas and our ideas are all equally valuable takes on just what is going on.

JFL: Is it safe to assume we'll be seeing more helpful treatments from the Jupiter Organization in the near future? I presume as a representative, the information you are privy to must already be at a certain level of development. Any hints that can be revealed?

ND: I hope so. I will say that we will see much more of the Jupiter Org in general as the vignettes unfold. I see it as a thread running through the work, in some ways binding it. There are many branches of the Jupiter Org, aside from the treatment center. The thoughts running around in my head now involve a form of nighttime abduction in order to collect data, and a meeting between myself and a Jupiter Org member. I love the idea that the Org may or may not have all the answers.

JFL: That's somewhat cryptic.

I apologize if you get this a lot, but I have to ask: Is the title of your comic consciously derivative of the title of the film *Five Easy Pieces*? I think it's a perfect title for the book, I just wondered if you were aware of the movie when beginning the book and whether or not you considered or reconsidered using it because of that?

ND: No apologies. It's actually derivative of Richard Feynman's book *Six Easy Pieces*. Feynman was a physicist, a very creative and unique one. Actually a comic was just written about his life—I have to check it out soon. Feynman's book is subtitled *Essentials Of Physics*. It's a pseudo-transcription of his lectures that outlined the most basic principles of physics, something I am deeply interested in. The *most basic*. I always found it fascinating that if you inquire long enough about how something works, it almost always ends in, "Well, that's

just what atoms do." How things work all comes down to natural phenomena: what the universe is up to. There's a simultaneous feeling to me of "Wow! And we can harness and control that?" and "We have NO idea what we are dealing with here." I love that.

For me, *Easy Pieces* began with an experiment in graduate school. Up to that point in my life, I'd spent my time making drawings that were huge, [year-long productions](#). I decided one day that if I got an idea for a drawing that could be completed in a day, that I would do it that day.



That little experiment brought forth these pieces called "[Six Easy Pieces.](#)" after Feynman's book. I felt like all the things I'd been trying to say with these huge, epic, year-long productions were being said in these simple, tiny drawings. So to me, these new pieces felt like my *Six Easy Pieces*, my most basic parts, artistically. I like them as quiet, abstract, stand-alone drawings, and they eventually morphed into what is now the *Easy Intro*.

JFL: That is a much more satisfying reference to draw upon. I have to say that I often feel somewhat excited to live in a time where the uncertainty principle has become the golden rule. I feel it has taken the centuries-old arguments between theology and science, glared at them through the rearview like an irritated parent, and threatened to "turn this car around."

ND: That excites me as well. I feel like we have accepted that we live in a completely and utterly subjective universe. I love the dual, contradicting truths—the universe cannot be truly pinned down in any way.

Scientifically, there will always be great unknowns, and we know that now. But socially we must make decisions, take sides and take steps in a direction we want to move in. And in life, we *must* try to uncover and explore, even though we know there is no end to the search. That is the best and most beautiful, strange impulse.

JFL: I have to say that—having never seen them before now—your original *Six Easy Pieces* make for a pretty impressive display. Had they been my introduction, I think I would have been as drawn to your work as I was initially in comic form.

Clearly, several of these images existed finished, as a complete work, before they became integrated (repurposed?) in the *Easy Pieces Intro*. Can you talk about the process of turning those visuals into a comic and how those pieces were altered by the inclusion of text?

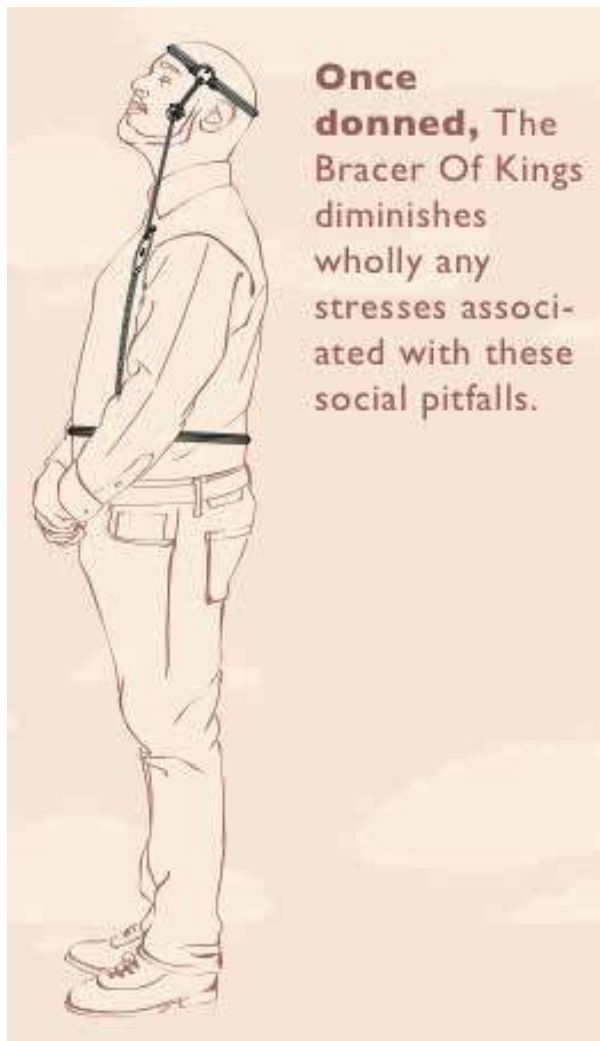
ND: Sure! I'm glad you say you were drawn to them in comic form. The great trial for me with the comics is the text. The original, textless *Easy Pieces* got, like anything, really mixed responses. So, when it came time to add text, though it felt natural, I was nervous. How do I include text without killing the piece, i.e., without over-explaining it? So regarding the process: all I can say is that I've re-written nearly every single one of those spreads twenty to thirty times, and I just tried to be patient. *Easy Intro* will likely never feel done to me.

JFL: When you say that the *Easy Intro* will never feel done, does that mean you may publish future altered editions?

ND: I'm sure I will. I already read it and get angry at what is written and drawn. I want to let it go. But I gotta tweak. The Artist: I tweak, therefore I am.

JFL: When you are creating new pieces now, do you start by developing the images first? Or, now that the comic is established, do you find they more frequently develop in tandem?

ND: Most of the *Pieces* still start with a sentence or an idea, i.e. the next Jupiter Org story in my head exists like this: "[The Bracer Of Kings](#): a Jupiter Org device to aid in [alleviating] the embarrassing physical bracing that occurs prior to an impending physical or mental mishap. The device covers both a physical or mental bracing." In my head, I have a pretty good idea of what the device will look like. So that's the whole idea as it exists now in my head. Soon I will storyboard and then shoot the photos for reference. Now that the comics are established, the sense that arises is not so much that story and visuals develop in tandem, but a sense of which stories are actually going to become finished pieces. Five percent of my ideas end up as finished pieces—it's nice to start to be able to see which ones have a better chance of making it. But it's extremely important to surprise yourself, sometimes that means saying the hell with it and developing a risky piece, that's how you grow (thank you, Bill Watterson).



Regarding the text and the visuals, I still struggle with devising text that will compliment the visuals rather than collapse.

JFL: On that note, your website has an “other work” section that collects a decent array of highlights from your past work. It includes sculptures, design, maps from your childhood, et cetera. Are your *Easy Pieces* the product of this, or another branch of it?

ND: I feel like the *Easy Pieces* are actually sort of separate. I’ve been keeping a sketchbook of ideas for my whole life. I wanted to give any idea at least that much, to write it down in a book that I keep up with. I noticed that as I kept this book, some of the ideas would stir me, but sometimes an entire 100 page double-sided sketchbook would go by without a single idea developing. *Easy Pieces* allows me to develop almost anything, and that really excites me. I can take a sketchbook entry that interests me, and simply aim it at a reader/viewer,

rather than just at myself. I would in the past often get bogged down by over-producing an idea in my head to the point that its execution had to be painfully specific.

So the *Easy Pieces* come from the sketchbooks, whereas a lot of my drawings and maps you mentioned start with a shape idea, and then unfold via me playing with compasses, stencils, rulers, ruling pens, etc. I love tools. The Jupiter Org literature seen throughout *Easy Pieces* employs this old-school drafting style of drawing that I’ve been doing my whole life. (see: the new story, [“Enough.”](#))

JFL: I love The Jupiter Org’s branding. There is a fun dialogue between the visual style of the *Easy Pieces* world: clean, linear and rendered while Jupiter’s literature is addled from reproduction, diagrammatically designed and verbally redundant. Phrases like “the processing process will occur at the time from sec B.” lay in wait to amuse the thorough reader.

Would you say that quirks like these are suggestions of Jupiter’s aforementioned fallibility?

I'll have to do this myself.



ND: I'm not in any way at liberty to discuss the (alleged) failings/miscommunications/fallibility of The Jupiter Organization. I find them to be a most agreeable and knowledgeable organization and I am honored to receive their great wisdom.

JFL: When numerals occur in your work, such as on Jupiter's forms and on your website, they are presented in a really interesting font. There is a single design that seems to be an overlay of the digits 0-9, so each number shares at least one curve or angle with another.

Did you create these? Are they a manifestation of your tool fascination?

ND: Yep. I've seen clocks like that, in some kind of Art Deco style, perhaps. They have what looks to be a tiny neon (usually orange-colored) array of overlapped numerals and certain sections glow to create the image of a single numeral. So that's my take on it. I can't take credit for the original idea. And yes, it allows me to obsessively (and safely) create oodles of shapes with rulers and stencils. There are probably close to a hundred of those numerals on the—


Unfortunately, this is where the interview suddenly ended. Over the course of the conversation, Dvorak had been turning in space on a sort of invisible axle, moving almost imperceptibly forward—toward me—and down. Everything below his nose had become embedded in the wide, pine floor.

This is a strange thing to suddenly reveal, but honestly it took me a while to notice myself. At first I'd believed he was leaning forward out of intensity, but once I could see the top of his head without leaving my seat, I knew something was off. He continued speaking, unfazed, so I tried to assume a professional distance and pretend that there was nothing awry, though the logistics of the situation eventually got the better of me. For the entire time that his ears were still visible, I reverted to asking basic questions to see if I could get any physical response, but none came. I just walked around in a circle

for about twenty-five minutes while his back disappeared with an invisible slowness, like a sunset.

I had a few more questions that I had hoped to ask, so I waited in his studio while the desk stool made its way around. It was an hour and a half before I saw the front of the stool begin to surface, but it was clear that it was now empty.

I found a sheet of paper, scrawled my remaining questions thereon, and taped it to the studio door. The only response I received came two weeks later in the form of a memorandum from the Jupiter Organization:


The Jupiter Org.

Dear JF,

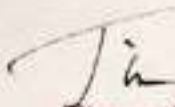
Thank you for your inquiry into "NEIL DVORAK g-00008956234716 ! We regret to say we cannot process your request without some further information. Please locate g-00008956234716 N. Dvorak and input his A-Node readings below! <Approximations may result in partial holding retrieval and/or extended wait times>

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | |

A-Node refresher:
1. Holding's position w/respect to planetary center
2. Planetary center w/respect to nearest star
3. Star's center w/respect to galactic center
4. Galactic center w/respect to Nexus: J.Org. Headquarters
please be precise!

I.E.

| | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 4097 | 6169 | 1214 | 808, |
| | | | |


-Tim g-00009
FORMSERF DIVISION

J.F. Lynch is a visual artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. He received his MFA from Pratt Institute in 2011 and is the Visual Arts Editor for *apt*. More information can be found at www.jflynch.com.

Neil Dvorak's sequential and [animated](#) art can be viewed at his [website](#) and at [ACT-I-VATE](#).



Originally Published October 21st 2011

The Elegance of Gesture by J.F. Lynch

This is about food, but consider the following a necessary introduction.

I am an artist, a painter. My work is primarily about blurring the lines between written language and picture making. I make pictures that combine text and image. I also happen to agree with the notion that writing and drawing are secondary or “sign” languages; they require reference to a primary language to convey meaning.

Speech would be an obvious example of primary language. Speech exists in what we refer to as “real time.” As this is the case, it simultaneously responds to and affects the situation in which it exists.

In a primary language, the subconscious has just as large a role as—if not larger than—consciousness. But secondary languages are by nature more heavily anchored in the conscious mind (no matter how much you may believe in the divination of Automatic Writing, one still has to admit that mark-making is a conscious act). When one person is speaking to another, both are multitasking: counterbalancing another live being who is responding with tonal changes, gesticulations, facial expressions, other surrounding influences, and (last and least) word choices.

But when one leaves a note for someone else, it is the word choices that rule absolute. Admittedly, they are composed with the reader in mind and therefore have undertones and expectations, but the reader must always refer back to the words themselves for a second appeal.

It may be this role of the subconscious that imbues me with a fascination for experimenting with art and language. I mean, if the condition of these two is as described above, then they constitute the primary and possibly only exclusively conscious conveyance. They are as close in proximity as we can get to pinpointing and passing on an observation of the world.

They are *Arts*, as opposed to *arts*.

It is probably this same condition that has, for me, always quietly categorized other media—things like culinary arts and fashion—as art with a lowercase *a*.

Okay, that having been said, if you agree with that last bit, then you may find the following interesting. If not, fret not; I’m about to be proven wrong.

A couple weeks ago, my wife decided to treat us to cocktails and dessert at our local neighborhood fanciness. It’s the kind of place that has the names of its suppliers’ farms on the wall. All local of course. The Gibson I had was delicious but, as all bootleg era recipes seem to be for me, a little too heavily poured to finish in an hour.

As we debated the virtues of the two dessert options, a chocolate torte or lemon ricotta fritters, we sat in the lower bar furnished with fashionable rustic paneled walls and taxidermied deer heads.

I disinterestedly agreed to the fritters and asked if my wife minded me ordering an eight-dollar beer so she may adopt my twelve-dollar Gibson. This request was presented as humbly as I could muster; bear in mind

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Solo Exhibitions

2016

Andrew Prayzner: Horizontals, Morgan Lehman, New York, NY

2015

One Hundred Views of Nothing, Studio Kura, Itoshima, Japan

2013

Passage, Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY

2012

Anomies, Ethel Walker School Gallery, Simsbury, CT

2011

New Pictures, Work Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

2002

The Future Decays, Visual Research, New Haven, CT

Selected Group Exhibitions

2018

Night Regulation, Radiator Gallery, Long Island City, NY

2017

The Collectivists, Brand Library Art Center, Glendale, CA

Points of Entry, Scotty Project Space, Berlin, Germany

ArtText, Labspace, Hilldale, NY

2016

In This Place, C2CWC, San Francisco, CA

Fabulous You, Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY

Lost Cause, Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY

2015

This Dust, GSL Projekt, Berlin, Germany

Parallels, Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT

April 11th, 2015 / Pawtucket, Improvised Showboat, Pawtucket, RI

Deep End, Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY

Reactivator, Active Space, Brooklyn, NY

Ten Part Invention, Jaus, Los Angeles, CA

Text Me, Hazan Projects, New York, NY

Outlet Annual Invitational, Outlet, Brooklyn, NY

Befana's Secret Booty, Orgy Park, Brooklyn, NY

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2014

Grab Bag, Trestle Projects, Brooklyn, NY
Exchange Rates: This Dust, curated by GSL Projekt, TSA, Brooklyn, NY
One Plus One, Schelfhaudt Gallery, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT
Wonder + Awe, curated by Margaret Vaughn, Silpe Gallery, University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT

2013

In Search Of..., organized by Dustin Dennis, Amanda Lechner and Christopher Ulivo; Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY
Correspondence, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Philadelphia, PA

2012

In Search Of..., organized by Dustin Dennis, Amanda Lechner and Christopher Ulivo; The Art and Design Gallery at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS

2011

Overnighter curated by Leigh Ruple, Vaudeville Park, Brooklyn, NY
Discrete Power, organized by Vizkult, Judson Memorial Church, New York, NY
The Unsettled, University of Delaware Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

2010

Defining Moments, Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT
Art Sync, NHTC, New Haven, CT

2009

A Taste of Young New York, Dvorak Sec Contemporary, Prague, Czech Republic
Viking Mountain Funeral, Celestial Suitcase Presents, Brooklyn, NY
Morsel Remains, Morsel Art Space, Long Island City, NY
Manifest Destinations, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Philadelphia, PA (* Two-person exhibition)

2008

Night of 1000 Drawings, Artists Space, New York, NY
Dream Tigers, curated by Brian Zegeer, Vaudeville Park, Brooklyn, NY

2007

Memory Minister, curated by Tracy Candido, Chashama, New York, NY
Boxtown Miami, Secret Project Robot, Miami, FL
Flatfile Portfolio, David Krut Projects, New York, NY
American Idyll, LaPelle Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

2006

Subdivision: Visions of Suburbia, curated by Matthew Best, District of Columbia Arts Center, Washington DC
Images of the North, SIM Gallery, Reykjavík, Iceland

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2005

Operation: RAW, curated by Jane Irish, Icebox Project Space, Philadelphia, PA
SCOPE: Miami, Townhouse Hotel, Miami Beach, FL
SCOPE: London, St. Martin's Lane, London, England
Introductions, Irvine Contemporary Art, Washington, DC
Voxennial, Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA
University of Pennsylvania MFA Thesis Show, Icebox Project Space, Philadelphia, PA

2004

The Rain Event: Postcards to the CAC, Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans, LA
Works on Paper 2004, juried by Jordan Kantor, Arcadia University Art Gallery, Glenside, PA

2003

Radius, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
Product: Comments on Consumer Culture, Athens Institute for Contemporary Art, Athens, GA
ArtWork, CHELA Gallery, Baltimore, MD

2002

Group Show, The Dealership, Brooklyn, NY
Urban/Suburban, Gallery 13, Danbury, CT (* Two-person exhibition)

2001

Salon III, Oni Gallery, Boston, MA
Contemporary 3, Period Gallery, Omaha, NE

2000

Refugees + Immigration, Gallery of Social/Political Art, Boston, MA
Vital Signs: Drawing as Inquiry, Creative Art Workshop Gallery, New Haven, CT

1998

No England, No Amsterdam, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT
Contemporary Visions, The University Gallery, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT

Education

MFA , University of Pennsylvania, 2005

BFA , University of Hartford, 1996

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Press

Rene Kaiser, "This Dust" review, *this is tomorrow*, March 18, 2015

Benjamin Sutton, "Making Cents of Exchange Rates Bushwick", *Hyperallergic*, October 27, 2014

Gorky's Granddaughter, studio visit interview, www.gorkysgranddaughter.com, September 2013

Gorky's Granddaughter, studio visit interview, www.gorkysgranddaughter.com, March 2011

Edith Newhall, "Galleries: Dark Duo", *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 19, 2009

Libby Rosof, "First Friday- an Introspective Fourth of July", Fallon and Rosof ArtBlog, July 7, 2009

Libby Rosof, "Survival Plan for First Friday", Fallon and Rosof ArtBlog, May 5, 2007

Libby Rosof, "Summer in the City: American Idyll at LaPelle", Fallon and Rosof ArtBlog, August 10, 2006

Susanne Utzt, "Provincial Art? Surprises in DC" (translated from German), WELT Online, January 26, 2006

Libby Rosof, "RAW Bits-more Ice Box Morsels", Fallon and Rosof ArtBlog, September 24, 2005

JT Kirkland, "DC Roundup", Thinking About Art, August 12 2005

Roberta Fallon, "Vox to the System", *Philadelphia Weekly*, June 15-21, 2005

Libby Rosof, "Art Camp", Fallon and Rosof ArtBlog, June 6, 2005

Rondeau, James, *New American Paintings: MFA Annual 2004*, Boston, MA, February 2005

Angell, Marisa, "Sense of Place: Architecture and Built Landscape in Contemporary Connecticut Art", *Art in New England*, Brighton, MA, February/March 2000

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Residencies

Studio Kura, Fukuoka, Japan, June 2015

The Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY, July 2014

Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY, July-August 2012

Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY, June 2011

Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT, January 2008

SIM, Reykjavik, Iceland, November 2005

Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughn, Ireland, June-August 1994

Teaching Experience

2018-2007

Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, CT

2018-2015

Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

2018-2012

Kingsborough Community College, Brooklyn, NY

2018-2013

Suffolk County Community College, Selden, NY

2014-2011

Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

2005

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Related Experience

2018-2014

Co-Director, Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY

2016

Juror, Visiting Artist, Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY

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2016

Panel Discussion Moderator, *Autonomy*, New York Creative Salon, New York, NY

2015

Panel Discussion Moderator, *Artist as Curator*, Select Art Fair, New York, NY

Curatorial Projects

2018

Antonio Serna; The Same Sun, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Brooklyn, NY

2017

x≠y (curated with Naomi Reis), Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY

2016

Field Studies (curated with Naomi Reis), Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY
Dissolution, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Brooklyn, NY

2015

The Two States of W.W., Tiger Strikes Asteroid NY, Brooklyn, NY
World is New (curated with Yin Ho), Space Available, Brooklyn, NY

2010

True Singing is a Different Breathing, Vaudeville Park, Brooklyn, NY

2008

Avatar Atavistic, Vaudeville Park, Brooklyn, NY

ANDREW PRAYZNER

Passage

This body of work is titled *Passage*. The title refers to Jacques Lacan's concept of the *passage à l'acte*, as interpreted by Slavoj Žižek, as "an impulsive moment into action which can't be translated into speech or thought and carries with it an intolerable weight of frustration."

This series of paintings sets forth the notion of painting as a system of communication, albeit a flawed one of layered codes that compete among each other in the picture plane. They invite the question, "Is a painting a solitary entity or does it now act as a screen – a medium that is part of a larger network of signifiers?"

The paintings in *Passage* begin with text and gestures that are collected from conversations, notes, choreography and subconscious physical movement such as tapping, shaking, flicking and are drawn with tape into the substrate of the painting. Then, images taken from random photographic sources are painted over the layer. The tape is removed and the images are "interrupted" or "cancelled" by text and gestures, building competing systems of signs that render different interpretations of the painting.

Documenting the process of making modes of representation and abstraction visible to the eye, and referring to the dictionary definition of the word, *Passage* is a passing of time, an opening through a space, a notation of a text, or in the Cubist sense, a technique to break up spatial relationships in painting.

Horizontals

These landscape paintings, called *Horizontals*, are a continuum with my previous work that examines the relationship of language and image. The images from that series were, for the most part, chosen at random, as were the text references, though the pairing of words, gestures, and images were more deliberate. With the newer work, a minimal landscape with a single horizon line was applied at first, but now has evolved to landscapes with a sun setting (or rising) on the horizon.

A landscape painting with a sunset presents a different kind of psychology for the viewer than a mid-day scene. Often, aspirational or religious connotations are imputed to the image of a sunset due to mass-produced motivational ephemera, relegating the sunset to a cliché, but the power of landscape as a metaphor of spiritual power has precedents in Romantic painters from Germany and England, and the Hudson River School painters in America.

The sunsets I paint, however, do not reference nature, but the representation of nature, as they are sourced from Instagram. The ubiquity of social media, through memes, democratic accessibility, and sheer volume of content has accelerated the process where a novel image becomes platitude, thoroughly testing Walter Benjamin's premise on the aura of an image. Everyone will admit that the sunset is a cliché, yet they are still seduced by the beauty and the connection to nature, and by extension, the suggestion of something larger beyond the ordinary is possible. The sunset image is a place for subjective projection.

Before the paint is applied, the text element is written onto the canvas with tape. The image is then painted over and when the painting is finished, the tape is removed to reveal text incised in the surface. The text in these paintings are loose mediations on political and economic discourse, and in contrast to the universality and symbolism of the landscape, represent private axioms of the author.

this is art

(<http://thisistomorrow.info/>)

Contemporary Art Magazine

This Dust (<http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/this-dust>)



Title : This Dust, Installation view at GSL Projekt, 2015

Website : <http://www.galerielehtinen.com/> (<http://www.galerielehtinen.com/>)

Credit : Courtesy of GSL Projekt

This Dust

Marie Von Heyl, Hanna Ljungh, Joey Holder, Alana Lake, Yin Ho, Naomi Reis, Andrew Prayzner, Rita Macedo, John Lawrence

GSL Projekt, Berlin

20 February - 20 March 2015

Review by Rene Kaiser

In 'This Dust', together with TSA New York, Suvi Lehtinen and Alana Lake have put together a beautifully multilayered exhibition. Fourteen artworks by nine artists come together to create a unique 'laboratory of images' that takes the viewer on a journey, interrogating the systems and logics that they use to structure the world.

The artworks selected in 'This Dust' deal with pressing questions of contemporary philosophy, mostly originating from the field of New Materialism. The strong influences of such thinkers as Karen Barad and Gilles Deleuze are clearly visible, worked through in innovative and engaging forms. The artists guide viewers to ask critical questions about what they see, do, and think, while the works drive them towards realising how they (inter)relate with, and create the world around them and the objects in it - shifting the focus of the questions from what one is to how one is.

The exhibition starts with an 'Untitled' (2012) video work by John Lawrence, which features looped stock footage of the seaside. Affected by a sudden moment of distortion, the scenery fractures and a complex layering of images is created. Like the sea shown, new layers of distorted images wash over, leaving behind artefacts and creating new sceneries for decoding.

What starts as a questioning of layers and surfaces (also through Lawrence's second work, 'Grave with Coffin and Owl', 2012), gains depth and form with Yin Ho's 'Retable' (2015). Poking out of the wall mid-air, its unusual shape and sheen prompt the viewer to think about where objects are located and connected to their uses.

Hanna Ljungh's freestanding sculptures 'Untitled' (2014) resemble drilled cores. Their sedimentary, layered textures form a cross section of a history of experiences, there for revisiting.

Marie von Heyl's 'Ouroboros' (2014), consists of a slide show displayed on a carousel projector that tracks down the symbol of the Ouroboros (the ancient icon of a serpent eating its own tail) in our world. It observes it in personalised experiences, for instance inscribed on bodies through tattoos, and in culturally coded systems. It also picks it up in the sciences and the symbol's compositional similarity to the chemical structure of

certain molecules, which sets the stage for the next part of the exhibition.

In 'OTB' (2015), Andrew Payzner disrupts the neat order of a black and white chessboard with colour. As a three-dimensional piece, it denotes coming alive and its cosmology, which is subsequently developed further in works by Naomi Reis and Alana Lake. 'Geodesics' (2011), and 'Dark Matter' (2012) can be seen as efforts towards a localisation of the human in space through the orderly systems of science, that are still eclipsed (literally!) by the uncontrollable forces of space itself in Alana Lake's 'The Flag of Bonnie Tyler' (2014).

Those systems and their alternatives are discussed in Rita Macedo's short film 'Implausible things' (2014), which narrates a chance discovery of a box containing 16mm films that gives rise to the various parts that follow. It deals with the topics of mortality and fear of the loss of the self. It is also a critical engagement with human efforts of 'world-making' and demonstrates the potentials in random systems through their internal logics to distort linear temporality by reassembling us and our surrounding objects and environment.

In the following work, Joey Holder considers the im/possibilities of cyber-nature in 'Strombus Gigas', 'Next is the E' and 'BH-55' (all 2012). Nature, culture and their connections are deconstructed to create new ecosystems in the digital realm, allowing life to take on alternative contours in the beautiful prints.

Marie von Heyl's looped video 'L.M.F.A.O.' (2014) and inkjet print 'Cabinet(Nippes)' (2013), invite us to play with the tools of de/re-construction that 'This Dust' has handed the viewer so far. It explores the opportunities of angle and contour, giving up shape and form. Closing the exhibition full circle is Alana Lake's 'Untitled' (2015) work of a plate with crystals printed on it, precariously balanced on a breezeblock wrapped in cellophane. It highlights the complexity of the world around us, already visible for instance, in such organic crystalline forms, which grow in all directions. They are coming from solid stone, yet unimpressed by their unsteady foundation (the breezeblock), inspiring a kind of (re)working of our world.

'This Dust' forms a mobile ethnography of efforts to systematise experiences and thoughts, time and space. Like a myriad of pieces of dust dancing in sunlight, it invites viewers to consider alternative, innovative systems with new chaotic internal logics - a multiverse of potential besides and beyond immediate reality.

Patrick Neal NYC based curator, arts writer and painter holds an MFA from Yale University, New Haven, CT and a BS from The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY. He also attended Yale Summer School of Music and Art, Norfolk, CT, New York Studio School, NY, NY and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME.

In 2016, Neal organized *Beautiful Object: Upsetting Still Life* at Jeffrey Leder Gallery in Long Island City, Queens, a show of contemporary still life painting and sculpture that was accompanied by a full color catalog. He served as curator of the Chocolate Factory's art gallery in Long Island City, NY during the Spring and Fall Seasons of 2007. Notable exhibitions included: *Judy Rifka; Nostos* which received favorable reviews by critic Lily Wei in *Art in America* and Cassandra Neyenesch in *The Brooklyn Rail*. Others were *Iannis Delatolas, Darkness Visible, Richard Garrison, Perimeter Walks (Strip Malls), Linda Post, Level* and *Royalayne Ward-Davis, 'it goes without saying'*.

Neal is a contributing writer for *Hyperallergic* and has written essays for several gallery and museum catalogs. He has written monographs on artists Franklin Evans for his exhibition *Franklin Evans: juddrules* at Montserrat College of Art, 2014 and Zoe Pettijohn Schade's exhibition *CROWDS* at Kai Matsumiya Gallery, 2015. In 2017, he contributed a lengthy essay examining the prints and paintings of New Hampshire based artist Scott Schnepf that was included in *Tether 3*, the annual arts journal edited by artists Trevor Winkfield and Brice Brown. Neal's catalog essay, *At Play in the Fields of Sea Stars and Katydids* will accompany the upcoming exhibition, *The Nature Lab* at LABspace in Hillsdale, NY an exhibition honoring RISD's Nature Lab and it's founder Edna Walsh. Recent art reviews include, *How an Artist's Activism Nurtured His Painting*, *Hyperallergic*, October 20, 2017; *Listening to Anonymous Confessions in an Art Gallery*, *Hyperallergic*, August 24, 2017 and *Artworks Woven on the Loom and in Looping Video*, *Hyperallergic*, July 6, 2017.

Neal's paintings were included in the recent group shows, *The Unstilllife*, curated by Trevor Winkfield, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, April 10–July 28 2017; *Explorations of Audubon: The Paintings of Larry Rivers and Others*, 101 Exhibit, Los Angeles, CA, April-May 2017 *Stark Naked*, curated by Franklin Evans and Robert Moeller, Gallery Kayafas, Boston, MA, October 2016; *Solar Vortex*, curated by Phil and Sue Knoll, Geoffrey Young Gallery, Great Barrington, MA, July 2016; *New York Studio School Alumni Exhibition*, NYSS School Art Gallery, New York, NY, July-August 2016; *A Decalogue of Tenebrous Luminaries*, curated by William Norton, Art Helix, Brooklyn, NY, July 2016 and *Yearning Upwards*, curated by Emily Berger, The Painting Center, New York, NY, September 2014. Neal will have a solo show at the Oremán Gallery, Smith College, Northampton, MA in December 2018.