

# Hearts of the New West

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The 2012 Calgary Biennial of Contemporary Art

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The inaugural iteration of the Calgary Biennial took place from September 8 to 29, 2012, simultaneously at Calgarian venues Haight Gallery, 809 Exhibition Space, AVALANCHE! Institute of Contemporary Art, and The Contemporary Art Gallery of Calgary, as well as The #000000 Gallery web-based exhibition platform. The exhibition featured a variety of emerging and established artists gathered together through solicitations as well as an initial call for submissions, coordinated and curated by Steven Cottingham. In addition to showcasing exciting new projects from local artists and propagating critical discourse relevant to contemporary Calgarian culture, *Hearts of the New West: The 2012 Calgary Biennial of Contemporary Art* explored themes of “home” – specifically how home simultaneously and exclusively divides space into places that are home, and places that are not and cannot be home. How can one place become home and another place cease to be home? Can one person have more than one home?

**CALGARY  
2012**



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# Piercing the Heart of the New West

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## Steven Cottingham

It started as a joke. This is how most of these things begin, I think. Initial plans were formed in mid-2011; we were going to host Calgary's first biennial in my friend's living room. Couches would be shoved aside, a small group of students and recent graduates would hang their work over the goldenrod-coloured walls, and we'd send a couple texts begging an in-crowd of artists to come drink with us for a night. It would look great on our CVs.

These plans were abandoned and forgotten until February, 2012 when the notion of a Calgarian biennial reoccured to me. Suddenly, it didn't seem hilarious or stupid. I was awash with a feeling I can only describe as being "young and dumb and entirely earnest". Well aware of my own inexperience and inadequacies, I could not wait to get home and begin e-mailing proposals and tentative plans to people with more power than I. In the end, I am glad things unfolded the way they did. Instead of being a formal, institutionalized, out-of-my-hands affair in the crumpled husk of the Art Gallery of Calgary, it became a union of do-it-yourself projects and pop-up spaces.

This, I feel, quintessentially captures the true spirit of Calgary.

We are not Vancouver, Montréal, or Toronto. It's incredibly likely, however, that only by comparing ourselves with them constantly; by attempting without cessation to create projects that mimic the art-infrastructures of these larger and arguably more "cultured" cities; by allowing our envy and covetousness to give birth to the secret lineage of underground and often-undernurtured artistic endeavours; that we are who we are. The list of local DIY spaces of yore gets dragged out every time one of these publications is written.<sup>1</sup> Over and over again, we are constantly attempting to affirm the importance of grassroots movements in a city with few accessible (or relevant) contemporary art institutions.<sup>2,3,4</sup> Young artists in liberal studies courses constantly cite Nancy



Tousely's article on an "artist-run Alberta" because it seems so incredibly hopeful.<sup>5</sup> I don't know if this is something I say to myself as a sort of method for self-consolation, a way to put a temporary finger in the dam of self-deprecation: but I think that this ever-present re-evaluating and uncertainty of one's city (self) leads to a non-stagnant and highly-reactive scene (practise). It could be a white lie intended to nudge one on through periods of doubt and depression, but it doesn't really matter.

Calgary is growing, anyone can feel that. Even though things die, things fail to become firmly-institutionalized, things expire at their zenith - the Contemporary Art Museum and *Shotgun Review* come to mind as a few local scene-fosterers that vanished the second I became aware of them - what's quantitatively exciting is that the number of active grassroots projects now nearly outnumbers the ones that have died sometime in the last forty years. Whether or not they last or evolve doesn't seem important so long as people *remember*.

I often feel Calgary is a city of myths: like, did you hear about how, in Stride's early days, board members would make up fictional artists with complete bodies of work when the gallery needed filling? Did you know that a homeless person spent a winter inside of TRUCK's mobile exhibition rig, CAMPER? Were you at the CAGC reception where the artist, inadvertently or not, who knows, ended up losing pints of blood all over his installation? Do you know what the hell the Art Cult of Calgary is? I, and all of my peers, dream of adding to this history of lore. Our scene feels exactly the right size for instigations of myth: it's small enough these things can be passed down from a friend-of-a-friend but large enough that there can be mysteries, surprises, and strangers.

In Calgary, there aren't dreams of gallery representation and sold-out solo shows. There isn't a desire to become famous. No, here, we want to become *legends*.



In part, that's where the Calgary Biennial comes from. Selfishly, I loved the opportunities to do studio visits with established local artists; to see how they arrange their spaces and where they are shipping their work to next. I was enriched by the chances to talk with friends and peers on a quasi-professional level; allowed to talk about one's own practise without seeming overly pretentious hanging out in the corner at someone else's opening. Mostly, I couldn't wait to mount a big group show where I actually *liked* every piece in it - heaven knows Calgary has more than its fair share of talented artists and finally I get to see many of them, united across disparate generations and genres, all in one place.

I wanted to celebrate this city. I wanted to find ways to love it despite its campy cowboy culture and its suburbs sprawled facedown across the prairies. I wanted to feel not-alone in rooting for this underdog, so I put out a call for submissions to this event I thought would probably fall apart and disappear before anything really happened, and I told interested artists to submit work that was, somehow, in some way, about "home". I received, thankfully, an overwhelming response but I was no less unclear about what exactly I was looking for in regards to "home".

For me, in this past year alone, the word "home" has been used to describe my parents' house, my parents' temporary rental house, my family's old house, my city, my country, my studio on the East River, my apartment in Kensington (Brooklyn), and my apartment in Kensington (Calgary). "Home", like a plethora of other English words ("art" comes to mind), falls apart and ceases to mean anything under too much scrutiny. I hoped - foolishly - that, as submissions came in, a more concise theme would establish itself. I would write about it extensively, throwing in personal anecdotes and scholarly references aplenty.

Instead, you have this. An underprepared voyage into the land beyond the

boundaries of language. An attempt to define a feeling with more feelings. Art that serves merely as a synecdoche for an entire lifetime of being *somewhere*, either home or not home. Art installed in someone else's home, as at Haight Gallery and 809 Exhibition Space, and art you can view from your home, like online at The #000000 Gallery.

No matter how personal and esoteric these reflections on home are, the idea of home itself never ceases to be uncommon or anything but universal to any of us. We will stand there, in white galleries with arms crossed and eyes narrowed, looking simultaneously inward and outward as we feel the exact same feeling as the artist before us: those pangs, that slight chill, the barely noticeable hurt that comes along with being incapable of describing what it's like to be home when you are not there. We share this thing that continues to elude all mediums of communication and any attempt at definition. It's some uncertain mix of a place where the people who love you go to sleep; the residence where you keep your perishable food-products or the bed where you pass out at the end of the night; the town in which you were born where some distant relatives persistently dwell; the particular way that light in high-altitude locales seems to bear a kind of clarity, maybe because it doesn't have to travel quite so far down; the select libraries in cities all along the coast that carry this one book you used to look at before you could read; or that message in your inbox from an old acquaintance who sends home back to you in pieces, a couple of words at a time.

It could be anywhere, at any time. It's important to note, however, that it isn't everywhere. It's when you leave those ill-defined territories that it becomes the most clear. You can feel the little bits of hitherto-unknown energy rushing through the soles of your feet when you start heading back. You can see it beyond the mountains as Rick Silva makes forays to observe the geographies surrounding various iterations of places he's called home. It's there as Billie Rae Busby squints through the fog and sleet that enshroud you on your homeward commute. Kyle Beal depicts the familiar even if it doesn't connote the romantic warmth we demand of our homes. Other artists attempt to suss it out of its vagueries, tactfully detouring through nostalgic routes in an effort to pin it down. Some artists fabricate it entirely, or try to force it to exist within predictable, logical boundaries. Dana Buzzee wants to recreate the ever-fading moments when things felt, in some measure, like home. Through physical and cartographic geography, Nate McLeod's work embodies the map-markers that represent home. Some artists discuss Calgary directly in their contributions: critically, romantically, and uncertainly.

Gathering together these Calgary-based artists - some in their hometown, some at home, and some still trying to ascertain what they feel and where they feel it - was not the exercise in definition that I hoped it would be. No consensus emerged. No answers became clear. I stumbled un-eloquently through a number of studio visits in an attempt to explain how I felt about home and how other artists were choosing to react to it. Indeed, I'm convinced that these loosely-democratic understandings we share - the abstract symbols that underlie our understandings of language - are not and will never be enough. If home, in common usage, is equatable with a sort of comfort, or, barring that, a

familiarity, then it cannot be found in our tongues.

Maybe it is my naïve hope that art can circumnavigate the limits of language, or, at least, contribute a parallel venue and provide additional ways of saying what cannot be said. It is strange, how intensely personal yet unignorablely universal an idea of home can be. If anything, I want to feel home amongst so many others who can't quite say what home means to them. For me, despite a year of incessant nomadicism, inevitably ephemeral addresses, lost lovers and fights with friends, unwritten letters, faulty WiFi, unsure futures, unaffirmed ventures, rejected proposals, forthcoming marriages, separated parents and breaking families; even now, I feel home here.

## Notes

- 1 Cran, Chris. "Foreword." *Fresh Bread No. 1: A*. Ed. Nate McLeod and Matthew Mark. Calgary: The Bakery, 2011. 4-5. Print.
- 2 Lupypciw, Wednesday, ed. *That's It: Artcity 2008*. Calgary: Artcity Press, 2008. 8-11. Print.
- 3 Rezaei, Mohammad. "Pop-Up Galleries and DIY Exhibition Spaces in Calgary: A Vital and Continuing History." *GRAIN: EMMEDIA Anthology of Critical Texts 2010/2011*. Ed. Jennifer McVeigh. Calgary: emPRESS, 2012. 41-47. Web.
- 4 Mabie, Don, ed. *The First 10: 1975-85*. Calgary: The New Gallery, 1985. Print.
- 5 Tousley, Nancy. "Calgary Report: An Artist-Run Alberta." *Canadian Art Online*. Ed. Leah Sandals. 2011. Web.



# Jennifer Crighton

**Poltergeist, 2012**

Mixed media.

## **Poltergeist**

The domestic has been a unifying thread in my meandering art practice. As a woman, I am particularly interested in the traditional definition of “women’s work” and how that is weighed against the expectations of contemporary art practice. The domestic setting has become a particularly rich context from which to examine the desires and insecurities inherent in my own drive to create and capture the world around me.

My own domestic setting is then a frequent character in my work, either directly or indirectly. This house has been a home for me now longer than I have lived in any one place in the past ten years. Situated in an area known to have been amongst the first settled in Calgary, it suggests a rich and murky history. As a modest working-class 1½ story that has stood for more than a century, it boasts no apparent famous or noteworthy inhabitants in its past. Until now, it has miraculously escaped the city’s voracious appetite for the shiny and new. This is the old house that we found to move in together, that convinced me to consider Calgary home.

Drawing on a plethora of impressions gleaned from the fabled female specters of



**Poltergeist, 2012**

Installed at AVALANCHE! Institute  
of Contemporary Art.

Ghosts remember a house that no longer  
stands, passing through the walls of the house  
that replaced it to pace the floors of the  
house that was.

Victorian-era literature and photographs from the spiritualist movement of the 1900s, each of the images represents a haunting as a gesture of remembrance. Variations in the electromagnetic field have been known to reproduce the sensations associated with a haunting.<sup>1</sup> Far from refuting the existence of ghosts, the emerging scientific evidence on paranormal activity allows me to imagine a human emotional event so intense that it would leave a permanent imprint or disturbance in the energetic landscape.<sup>2</sup> Ghosts are rarely discussed without reference to their unfinished business; that which has condemned them to walk the halls of historic buildings, rattling the door handles of attic rooms. Those phantoms are not just lost between worlds, they have left a part of them trapped in the place where a particularly intense event is said to have occurred. As a performance artist, this presents a compelling opportunity to have one's performance re-enacted on the subconscious minds of others.

I have chosen to claim the balance of this house's 108 year history as my own. We leave it to an uncertain future, the property on the market for "two building lots" suggesting that the house itself may not be standing much longer. How does a place remember, even when the house that once stood there is gone? This is the house that hid the secrets of its inhabitants, sheltered them in their most unguarded and vulnerable moments, the house where some of them were born or died.

**Notes**

- 1 Braithwaite, J. J. "Magnetic variances associated with 'haunt-type' experiences: A comparison using time-synchronized baseline measurements." *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 19. 2004. 3 –28. Web. 3 Aug. 2012.  
< [http://www.rwhit.dsl.pipex.com/MADS/docs/EJOP\\_Magnetic\\_Variations.pdf](http://www.rwhit.dsl.pipex.com/MADS/docs/EJOP_Magnetic_Variations.pdf) >.
- 2 Schoonover, Karl. "Ectoplasms, Evanescence, And Photography." *Art Journal* 62.3. 2003. 30-44. Academic Search Elite. Web. 3 Aug. 2012



# Heather Huston

**Strange How Images Come  
Between our Physical Selves,  
2012**

Silkscreen on plexiglass, charcoal  
on paper, vinyl on paper, collage.  
72" x 48" x 12" .

## The Everyday

"...The everyday invokes something that holds these things together, their continuity and rhythm, or lack of it, something that is adverbial, modal, and ultimately therefore ethical, because it has to do with individual and collective *art de vivre*."<sup>1</sup>

A home contains the traces of our everyday repetitive actions and every home contains endless variations of these activities. Teeth are brushed, dinners re-heated, floors scrubbed, pans placed back on shelves. The regularity and familiarity of these actions means that many of them are done with little thought or reflection and are the small links that join together our days. Our awareness of these activities changes when we notice them being done differently, perhaps sorting out a toothpaste purchase in a foreign country or watching a friend washing dishes on the opposite side of the sink. There is a great sense of seemingly disproportionate peculiarity that appears when being forced to think about and consider an activity that we generally take for granted.

I have had a long-standing interest in the mundane and finding ways to re-represent it to the viewer in a way that articulates the



**Strange How Images Come  
Between our Physical Selves,  
2012**

Installed at AVALANCHE! Institute  
of Contemporary Art.

sense of strangeness that occurs when the familiar is seen out of context. I am looking for ways to bring everyday activities to this edge where we look at them differently or reconsider them, to mimic that sense of dislocation that occurs when something so familiar is changed. My pieces exist as possible spaces that open up questions about the ability for interiors and objects to retain the emotional residue of our actions. These places serve as a peculiar reflection of mundane spaces and exist in a reality where the physical becomes psychological.

I want to let the familiar tell a story in a way that is not. I want to bring to the forefront the commonplace, the mundane, the unnoticed props that surround us and reveal their capability to record the emotional context of everyday occurrences that surround them. By establishing a new context for these objects, their relationship to our own experience is altered to the point where the rooms begin perhaps to reference themselves and the viewer is left with the task of bridging the peculiar gap that exists between the space they occupy and the space created by these interiors.

**Note**

1 Sheringham, Michael. "Configuring the Everyday." *The Everyday*. Ed. Stephen Johnstone. London: Whitechapel, 2008.



# Julia Kansas

## Everyone Knew That We Had Too Much Fun

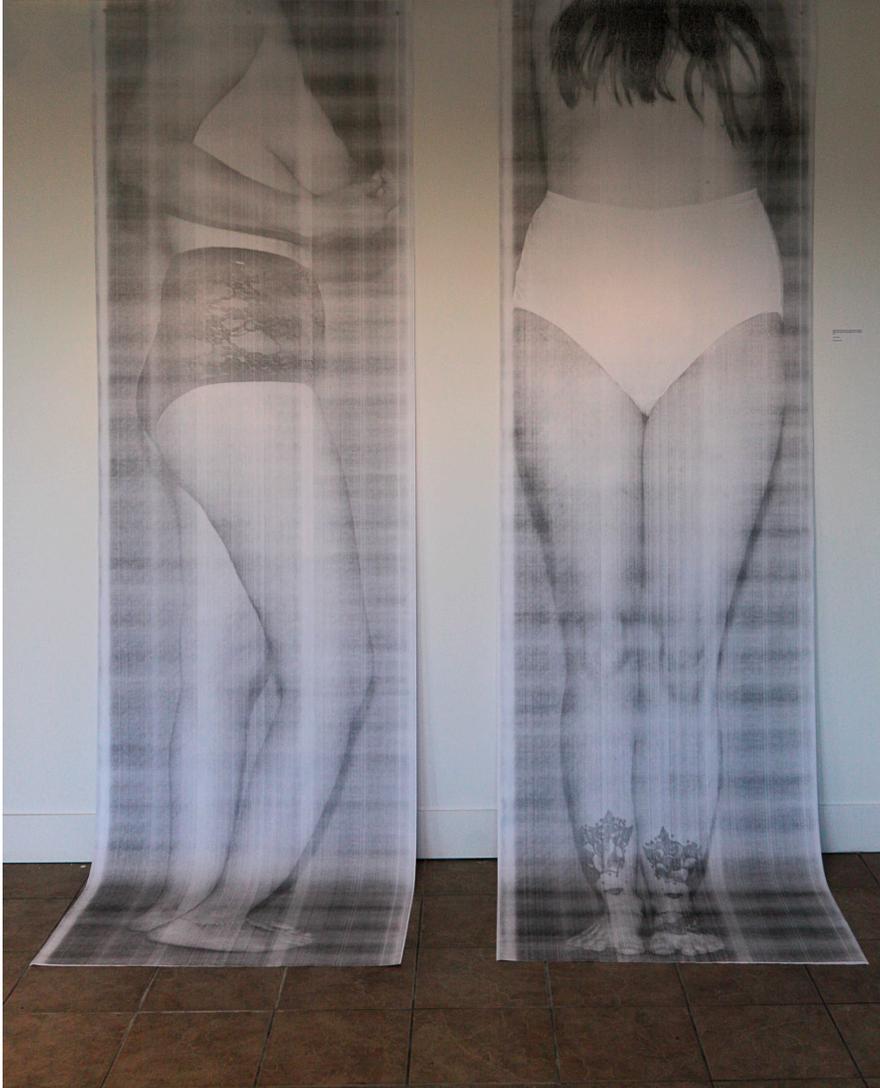
**I should have known as soon as I took my clothes off for your camera I'd lose agency over my body, 2012**

Photographic prints.

We drink. We go feral. We forget and we remember, usually through the photographs that we find on our phones the next morning. Julia Kansas makes art about this; she romanticizes our boozing through staging somewhat askew documentation of it. She offers an honest retelling of our actions.

The thing about drinking is that it is fucked up. It is the potion that allows all of the bad behaviour we have in our souls to actualize. It is so teenage, waiting outside of liquor stores harassing adults to boot for you so you can go act like an asshole with your friends. It is the mess of your 18th birthday year, except that happened nearly a decade ago and you can't seem to get over it. This is a city fueled on hidden lairs, inner circles, and malt liquor. There is such a strong tradition of getting fucked up, it's hard not to buy into it. *There is something wrong with our friends.*

Kansas represents the sorts of shameful and stupid truths that most of her friends can't help but live and her art provides a framework to reflect on and consider ideas surrounding them. Her work takes



**I should have known as soon as I took my clothes off for your camera I'd lose agency over my body, 2012**

Installed at AVALANCHE! Institute of Contemporary Art.

ownership for that which is typically considered disgraceful and kept hidden. This ownership is reminiscent of prevalent themes in music videos and magazines, sources that Kansas draws from in her research. There is this sense of trophy in that ownership. She stages events and directs us for photographs meant to investigate our debauchery through exaggerated representation. Her images don't hide from the lies they tell.

Text by Dana Buzzeo



# Sondra Meszaros

**moonshiner**, 2012

Brooms, leather, charcoal.

**Black Magic**

The blackness of night is unknowable. When light escapes so does sense and reason, and things that normally couldn't happen or exist are permitted to run wild. This wild is the potential for magic. Anything can happen after the sun sets and that is what you should be afraid of.



**moonshiner, 2012**

Installed at AVALANCHE! Institute  
of Contemporary Art.

*moonshiner* is a tableau, a still life of black magic. The brooms are borrowed from the home and are symbolic to the witch. This connection is so ingrained in our understanding of what it means to be a woman who is considered evil or wise. Picked up out of a fairytale, they are talismans, objects that have been charged. The burnt forest, the realm of spirits embodied, is ground into dust in an alchemical process. Applying the ashes is a transformative act. Fire is a cleansing agent and the burnt vestiges, her kin, is what the witch uses to anoint her charms, cleansing that which cleanses. She summons the night magic when she makes it black.

Text by Dana Buzzee



# A Junk Drawer of Houses

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## Christina Mayder

When I agreed to write about “home”, I had little idea what I would say. I knew (hoped) it would be poetic (readable). I started reading critical writing by others that touched on the idea of home - but I never even got through one book. I picked up several however; you should see my bedside table. It’s suffocated with texts that are on pause. I bought and acquired them with the brightest of intentions; to generate a well-informed essay on home, what home is, and what home could be. But I couldn’t read them; I couldn’t spend more than half an hour with most. I kept getting new texts hoping they would offer me something different. At first I thought the texts were just dull, but of course time revealed that I could not read them because if I did, then I would have to write about home, and if I had to write about home, I’d face the fear I feel bubbling up within my chest: I have no idea what home is.

My earliest understanding of home was “home is where the heart is”. I believe my grandma had an embroidered version of this quote. Being young and romantic I quickly adopted that idea and embraced it as true; I never questioned that the only home I’d ever lived in was where my heart was. But as soon as I moved out from the house I’d spent 18 years in, it stopped feeling like home. I’ve lived in several apartments in the last four years, and the one I’m in now certainly feels most comfortable; but is it home? Is home so temporary, can it be moved that fast? Is home simply where I go? If it is, what happens if I go somewhere I hate; is that now my home? It’s so easy to say that home should be comfortable, perhaps a place where we are surrounded by those that we love. Or maybe, home is when we’re with the ones that we love, and only when we’re together are we home. This last thought is the most romantic I’m sure... the most seductive of everything that’s been said so far. It’s because the idea is reassuring; it means we can bring home with us anywhere.

I have acquired an endless archive of useless facts; ways of thinking that I

resort to when I'm feeling lost, in the middle of a crisis, or need to offer a friend advice. It's just this foolish box that lives in my brain, and I revisit it from time to time. In truth I hope to truly embody the ideas that reside in this box. I want to be able to comprehend freewill and true love, maintain honesty and strength, and live life as a good human. In the end, I feel my mind is a junk drawer of references and quotes that I relate to and identify with but often forget about.

I feel like the home is an extension of one's self; just like my cluttered mind, my home reflects this quality in me. It's full of useless trinkets that might come in useful one day, but for the most part are going to sit and collect all the dust in the world. Is this a house or is it a home? Home is just a synonym for happy, or it should be anyway. This is what I wanted to write about originally; that home is something that could be carried with you beyond the walls of a house. Home is something that resides within you, a fullness, wholeness, and peacefulness. But then I thought; well that's just poetic bullshit right there. That means whenever someone is unhappy they don't have a home? Poetic theory number one: debunked.

This struggle to talk about home is not because I don't have a "home"; I certainly have a place to rest my head at night. A place I go to at the end of the day. Of course I could also consider the house I grew up in on the other side of the city; surely if I ever felt the apartment I went to at the end of the day didn't satisfy my needs of a home, that house contains all the nostalgia and memories of my childhood and should be sufficient as a home. But even if I were relying on the physicality of that house to trigger nostalgia, I'd find myself at a loss. The house I grew up in has been renovated and looks nothing like the memories of my childhood. Even so (!) if it were exactly the same as when I was young, that means I'd be relying on objects in a space to trigger nostalgia! I rarely feel an emotional connection to objects; it has always been the memories that are most tangible. So now I'm caught between the memories that took place in one location, and the place I am now creating memories of my own. Physicality and tangibility aside: should it be the memories of the past, or the memories of the present that dictate a home?

Home should be beyond material possessions, beyond corners, beyond doors and all the bullshit walls that separate us. Think about the composition of a house or apartment, constructed of walls that are put up to give us privacy so we can have our own space. Walls that meet other walls to make corners that collect dust, and we just pile up stuff and more stuff and useless stuff to make the home "warm" and welcoming for others. It seems some people only feel at home when it is filled with guests and friends. But through this desire to fill the home with other bodies, they go to great lengths to make the space whatever it needs to be to satisfy the needs of those guests. I've never understood this custom. While it makes sense for the house to be somewhat orderly and tidy when expecting company, it is still your/my home, and you/I should live in it as you/I see fit.

When I was younger I fantasized about living in obscure locations: up in the clouds, at the bottom of the ocean, or on top of a mountain. I no longer fantasize

about living in these places or making a home out of them; but, when I find myself caught in moments where I'm looking at the sky, breathing in mountain air, or swimming, there is a unique richness that I experience. It somehow calms and overwhelms me with a specific happiness that all the apartments, houses, and "homes" never have. The places that I have never lived, or are simply beyond my mortal reach, seem to be where I am most happy. If these places are to be considered in the context of home, it's possible I've been thinking about home all wrong - it either had to be a concrete place where one could go at the end of the day, a place with many memories, or a wholeness that was carried within. What I've failed to consider up until now, is that home might be much like love or happiness; a fleeting quality or circumstance in ones life that comes and goes for indeterminable periods of time.

It is likely that my fear of writing about home (my fear of not knowing what home is) is a result of only considering home in ways that I have never understood, or never been attached too. Some part of me, perhaps buried deep within that box in my brain, has always known that this city in which I live is not my home, it's simply where I live - the apartment in which I sleep is not my home, it's where I sleep. I think the first step will be to identify all things that are not home, so I can finally understand what is.

# Kyle Beal

## Your Wit Adds Nothing..., 2012

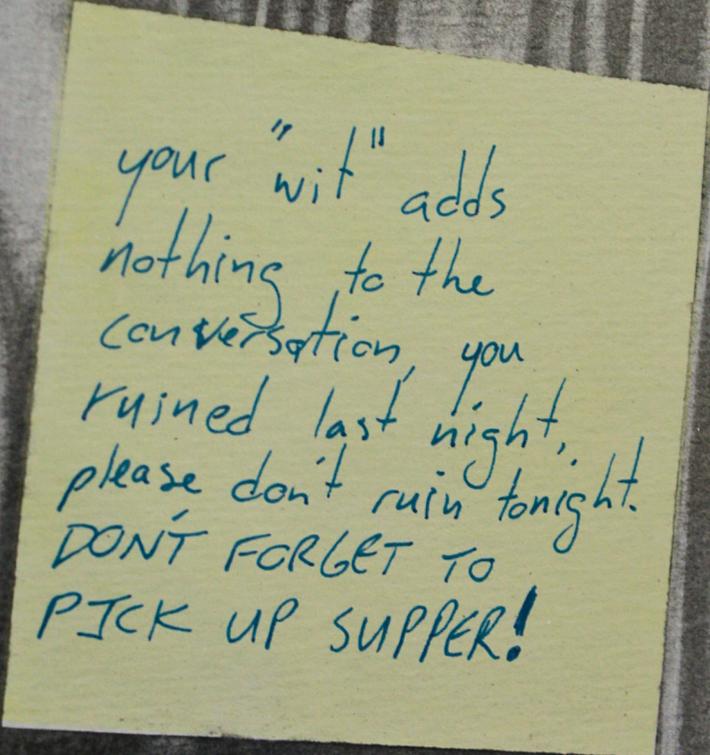
Watercolour, charcoal, and ink on paper in frame.

## Voyeuristic navel gazing

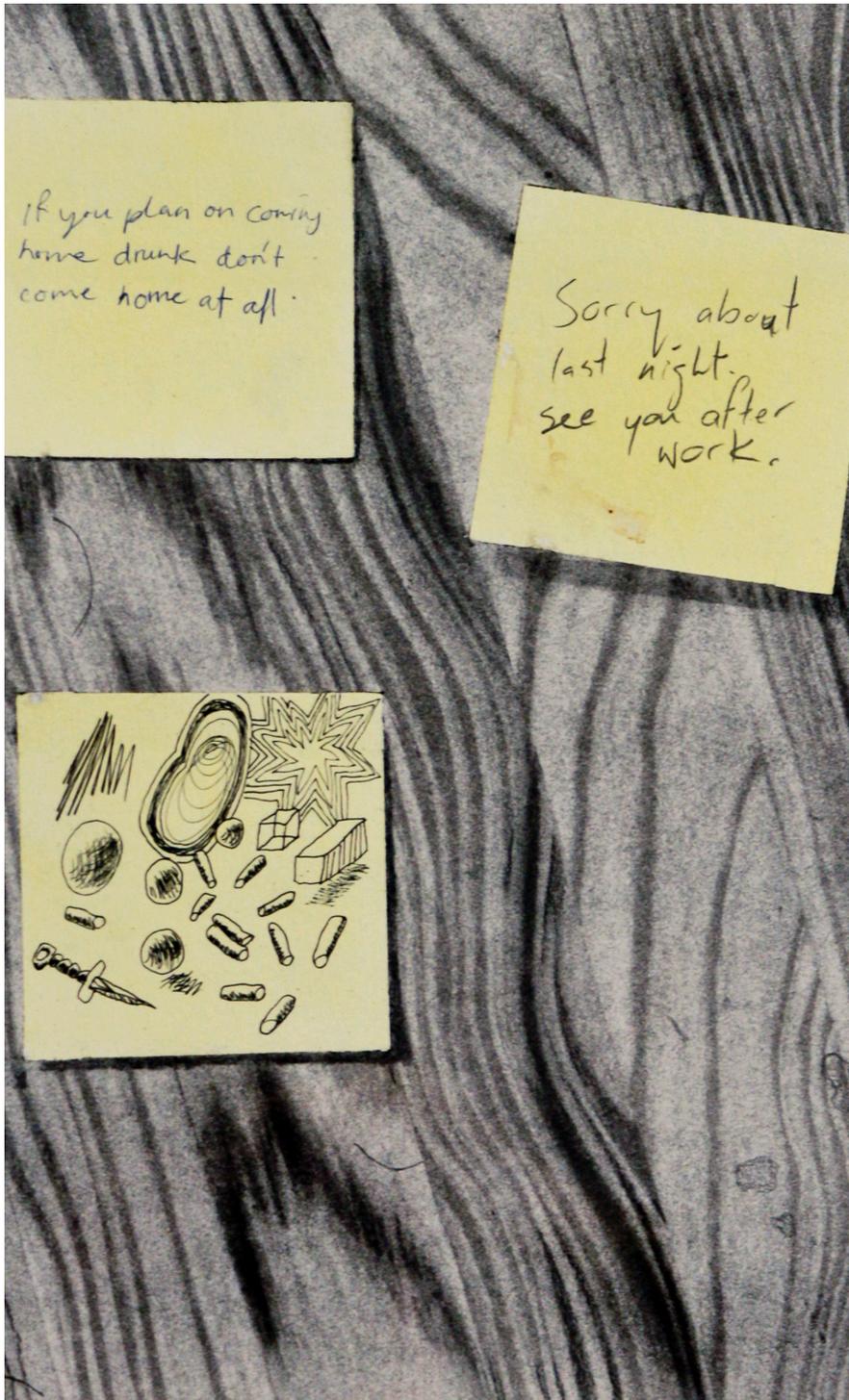
Google "home". Judging from the results, it is a place of platitudes, clichés, and design concepts. Ideas understood, acted out, and known to be at least partially accurate. Right enough, but that's all broad strokes and big-picture stuff. While the results speak about home, they aren't a home I've ever lived in. Or maybe just that they are someone else's home.

Concurrent to writing this, I watched out the back window as my neighbour washed his windows and thought, what if he was cleaning them so that he could better see us across the alley? Or better yet, so that we could see him better? Not in any important or even sinister sense, but simply to better facilitate and perform the quotidian for a nosey neighbour. (Which, in this case, is me).

I mention this because (as my neighbours across the street are likely already aware) these drawings began at my house. Specifically, they began while I was sitting at the kitchen table (which at my house is not in the kitchen but rather in the living room). A small home studio of sorts. Not so much a dedicated space as conception of a studio. Space enough to work (and eat dinner, too).



your "wit" adds  
nothing to the  
conversation, you  
ruined last night,  
please don't ruin tonight.  
DON'T FORGET TO  
PICK UP SUPPER!



**If You Come Home Drunk, 2012**

Watercolour, charcoal, and ink on paper in frame.

Installed at 809 Exhibition Space.

"Home", of course, operates in much the same manner: the physical is simply one part of it - often a small part of it (possibly even a rental). These drawings - realized in charcoal, watercolour, and ink - depict close-ups of domestic surfaces, a corner of the kitchen table or the front door. In each, there is a small post-it or other type of note. The kind we leave for ourselves and for others. Given that each work measures 12" x 9", a note on a square of canary yellow or pristine white can start to dominate the picture plane. The notes allude to fictional yet plausible situations and events: from the intimate to the coolly impersonal. It's a place of relationships and ideas populated by navel gazers, time wasters, inconsiderate lovers, door-to-door salespeople and peeping-toms. All-in-all they are (often petty) ideas understood, (trivialities) acted out, and (fleeting emotions) known to be at least partially accurate.

Small-picture stuff, but it feels like home.



# Kris Lindskoog

Chair, 2012

Mixed media including wooden chair, tennis ball, bottle, coins, tape roll, and book.

Photo courtesy the artist.

## Calling All Amateurs, No Experience Necessary

A house is built, but a home is a process and living result. None of us planned to be landlords, but then you end up one. Not just a dad, or husband or roommate. You become a plumber, gardener, cook, cleaner, electrician, designer, etc. The handyman is Renaissance man. Jack of all...

So, if it breaks: just fix it. Electrical tape, that old nail bin in the basement, books, wood scraps, glue, Kleenex; you have all that you need.

Obviously, the home is also a very intimate site. We are close to one another, we are intimate with each other, and we share intimate spaces. Some of our furniture is also very near and private. We guard our pillows and toothbrushes. Some things, more than others, are dear and meaningful. There are special spots in the home that are very private and valuable, places to store all that is meaningful and of value. I remember as a young boy looking into the drawer of my father's bedside table and seeing treasures, keepsakes, coins, and important family documents. This humble piece of furniture is laden with stuff. It is custodian of the



**Bedside Table, 2012**

Mixed media including artist-made bedside table with drawer, paper, coins, glass, letters, stamps, knife, bottle, jars, pair of glasses, magazines, and books.

Photo courtesy the artist.

Installed at 809 Exhibition Space.

precious, a lock-box for the valuable. It is the keeper of the crossword-puzzle booklet, the recent reads, the last will and testament, New Testament, dentures, coin collections, family photos, keys, wallet, phone, passports, clock, glasses, glass of water, teeth, locks of hair, hospital tags, loose change, pills, ear plugs, and nose-openers.

This is an important piece of furniture. A home is also the playground of the do-it-yourself-er. As evidenced with these works, at home we have all we need to fix any problem. Books are chair legs. Chairs are wardrobes, glue will do, tape will suffice, and that'll stay sealed, right?



# Karly Mortimer Jeremy Pavka

## Contemporary Cowboy #1, 2012

Archival InkJet on Fine Art Paper,  
22.8" x 28.3"

## The Contemporary Cowboy

Ideas of home can inspire nostalgia and confusion for Calgarians. The debate over what a Calgarian is or is not can be infinitely more complex than one's history of attendance to the Stampede or whether or not you can ride a horse. The crowds outside of the Roadhouse, the man wandering down Centre Street in a duster, the zombies of the East Village could all be Calgary's contemporary cowboys. Cowboys may fill our heads with images of a wild west: a time of risk-taking, exploration, handshakes, violence, and dust. For a city that bases its values so heavily on a cowboy tradition one begins to wonder how the amount of aftermarket inches added to one's vehicle can now indicate the size of one's testicles, unless, of course, they are hanging off the rear bumper.

Authentic values still exist for the Contemporary Cowboy but they are often confused with trophies of unearned authority. The once-precious items of a different lifestyle have become tropes of a misunderstood history. Chaps, guns, bone, and hats formerly used as invaluable tools for stewards of the land become associated with dominion, power, and sex.



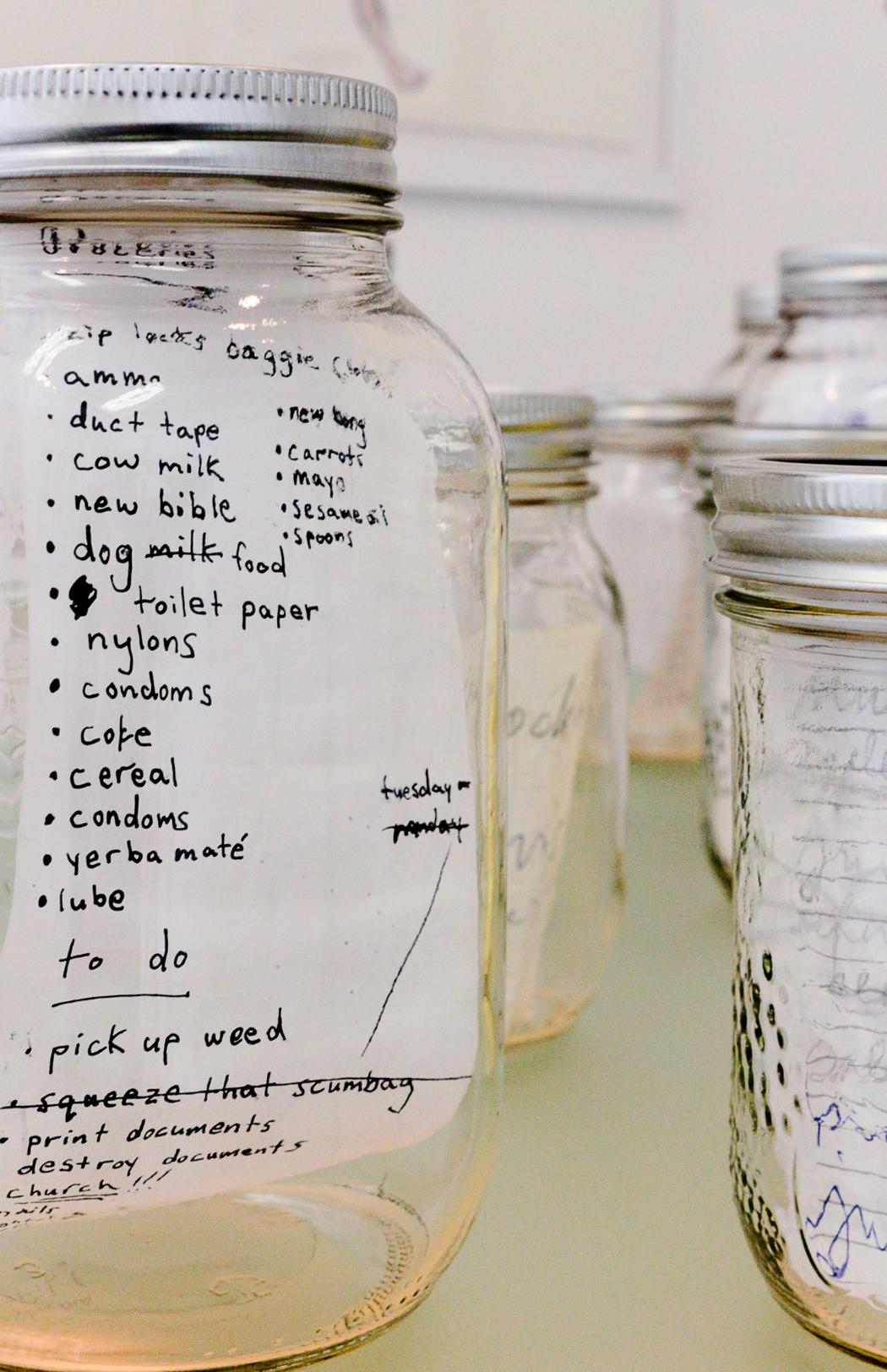
**Contemporary Cowboy #2, 2012**

Archival InkJet on Fine Art Paper,  
22.8" x 28.3".

Photos courtesy the artists.

Installed at 809 Exhibition Space.

The Contemporary Cowboy is under the pressure to self-actualize and forge his or her own way - not unlike the fantasy of the maverick cowboy. This idea of a pure-bred cowboy no longer exists; however, the hybrid must not be feared. Whether we understand our home, our history, or its symbols - the Contemporary Cowboy will use the items in its own way.



# Sally Raab

Imaginary Friends, 2012

Found grocery lists, glass jars,  
light.

## Imaginary Friends

I began collecting grocery lists five years ago while working at Community Natural Foods. Though these objects are banal evidence of the mundane of a person's life, they are in many ways rich with content. These domestic ephemera allude to stories of a home life, day to day habits or even organizational skills and personality types. Peep-hole glimpses that have made me feel a personal connection to a perfect stranger.

As this collection grew, I began a ritualistic act of laying them all out, observing the size of my collection as it grew, and familiarizing myself with these objects. These lists have a particular way of engaging my own imagination. They transformed into little records of a human being, a catalogue of what that person ate and a glimpse into their personality. This process became comforting, as the act of analyzing the implied psychology in these found objects connected me to these strangers in oddly personal ways. I had become a voyeur of the anonymous, and in the process created imaginary friends.

I feel an affinity with each of these strangers in both the whole of the collection, and the individuals I had build abstractly in my mind.



**Imaginary Friends, 2012**  
Installed at 809 Exhibition Space.

I have become privileged to their personal information, habits and personalities. The remnants left behind have become my objects of study. My evidence gathered for Urban Archeology. Functioning as a contemporary cabinet of curiosity, the act of collecting elevates found objects through taking them out of context. This simple abstraction of the object's original intent allows viewers to imbue this banality with their own content.

After lovingly scavenging this collection for five years, it's finally found fruition in the form of a work of art. Here is a simple display to invite the process of discovery that I have enjoyed privately for so long.





# Andrea Williamson

Waiting for the Ascension, 2012

Watercolour on paper.

## A Home for the Self: Identity and Belonging

This painting is a kind of writing: a multiplicity of identities, signs, images. Figures are composed in a white space; a space without coordinates or structure apart from what is composed by the figures themselves. They make up a network of bodies, of separate but mutually constitutive entities. A network includes another element beyond two or more entities in relation to one another. It is made up largely of what it is not, namely vacancy itself.<sup>1</sup> The white space is this vacancy: the outside, the medium of encounter. This corresponds to the space of exhibition.

What is at stake here is a concern for the mechanisms of identification and empathy; empathy with the tribulations of the body and soul in their relation to the figure of identity. Michel Serres finds identification to be physiological; me/not-me is established on the porous threshold of apprehension, the skin itself:

The soul comes into being, not in concentration but in convergence, not in simplification but in complexification, not in withdrawal



**Silver Man, 2012**

Watercolour on paper.

Installed at 809 Exhibition Space.

limited nature of the ego. Perhaps there is no finding the other, but rather fidelity to the search. Jesus' Ascension is important because in His leaving, we are free to let him live within our consciousness. Similarly it is in every ascension of the unified personality, of every self-leaving, that there is room for new selves to bloom and wilt.

Text by David Court and Andrea Williamson

but in excursion. For this reason, the soul has no fixed abode in the body, but rather comes into being in its very coming and going. Serres finds the soul above all on or in the skin, because the skin is where soul and world commingle. The skin is the mutable milieu of "the changing, shimmering, fleeting soul, the blazing, striated, tinted, streaked, striped, many-coloured, mottled, cloudy, starstudded, bedizened, variegated, torrential, swirling soul".<sup>2</sup>

Reza Negarestani contends that this coming into being rests in the cruelty of necessity: the affirmative binding of the body and the soul, the negative binding of soul and void.<sup>3</sup> Williamson's paintings explore both the joy and cruelty of co-mingling bodies and identities, of creative and affirming identification with(in) the other. Acknowledging the void as the ground of being opens the door to understanding living as a contingent invention of the self; a process of subjectivization in a sequence of temporary settlements and departures.

Within one's own ego, there is no home and no belonging (I am rescued by an other.) In Agamben's reading of Aristotle's philosophy of friendship, the sharing involved in friendship is not called intersubjectivity, the relationship between subjects:

Rather, being itself is divided... and so the I and the friend are the two faces, of this con-division or sharing...The friend is, therefore, an other self, a *heteros autos*... The friend is not an other I, but an otherness immanent to selfness, a becoming other of the self.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps it is when we cannot find the other within that we suffer from the

#### Notes

- 1 Connor, Steven. *Book of Skin*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.
- 2 Connor, Steven. "Conjugations". *The Five Senses*. By Michel Serres. Trans. Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008. 4-5.
- 3 For further on this line of thought, see Reza Negarestani's "Differential Cruelty" in *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, Vol. 14.3 (2009): 69-85.
- 4 Agamben, Giorgio. "The Friend." *What Is An Apparatus?* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. 25-37.



# Undeniable Desire : Generational Impulse

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## Sheri Nault

It took me far longer to write this essay than I ever thought it could. Perhaps, because this is my first essay written as something of a “free agent”, without the guidance of a single direct *someone* to please. Written as myself, as part of a genealogy - the movement of the emerging to the emerged. My role, as essayist, I find is similar to the role of this catalogue, this exhibition: emerging, inaugural. Where in the hierarchies of contemporary art does this event fall or can these hierarchies be superceded and something new be exempt of being either more or less, if only for a short time?

When I think of do-it-yourself and artist-run culture, I cannot help but think of the tales of those who came before me, of generations past. It’s easy to become fixated on the roots of artist-run centres here in Calgary, nostalgic for a time my peers and I could never have experienced. This romanticism has become imbedded in these institutions: the movement, camaraderie and creation, a lost time, Clive Robertson saying, “You start a space, and then... there’s nobody writing about it, so you start a magazine, and [your practice expands and] you’re making videotapes, and then you start a distribution centre, and it goes on and on and on...”<sup>1</sup>

I want that. My peers, I know they want that.

It’s a strange position to be in, post-academic, “emerging”. September, as I’ve known it my whole life, isn’t coming. I’m neither here nor there. Experiences in and out of the educational system have instilled faith in myself and my peers, I feel them, see what they are doing, and I believe in it. It’s as though we’re of the same litter - a line, stolen from a peer. We’re in a position to compete, but bound by kinship. We’ve got time, we’re brimming with the romance of our potential and the drive to create is enough to persist through the challenges of inexperience. Yet, as recent graduates, we risk falling into a sort of limbo,

“emerging” a synonym for “just starting out”. An emerging artist, according to the Canada Council, must have training in the arts, have practiced for 3 or less years, and have, at least once, exhibited professionally.<sup>2,3</sup> Among Calgary’s ARCs, (due to the restrictions of their funding) artists who have not maintained an independent professional art practice for at least 1 year can only apply to +15 Window spaces. I want to be accepted, to have shows, jump through hoops, and feel externally validated; I want this for my peers as well. As a wave of the recently graduated we face “emerging” as an external label to contend with and still, simultaneously, we are *emerging* alongside peers who know and understand that what each of us is doing is valid, valuable, and belongs in the public view.

Pop-up venues and exhibitions are one way in which emerging and more established Calgary artists who share this kinship have recently been defined, their success gleaming media attention and providing a space for the city’s many notable yet often unnoticed artists. Not only galleries, but festivals and events (beyond a biennial) abound – spearheaded and heavily supported by the city’s most-recently-post-academic artists. In the case of the Stage Festival, these artists were still students at the time of the ambitious event they had organized. The 2012 Biennial began similarly, within the same generation of recent grads. These projects respond to Calgary’s need for more venues in which contemporary art can be created, exhibited, and discussed. Each different incarnation of these types of artist-run initiatives responds to a different niche within the city, felt by those who are close to it. Numbers of arts graduates have increased, yet the institutions available in Calgary have expanded little since the inception of ARCs twenty, thirty years ago.

Calgary has a long history of do-it-yourself ventures that began with artists. From Clive Robertson’s tales, carried across the country in his *Then & Then Again* exhibition, to the 2012 Calgary Biennial, these independent initiatives span four decades and they’re vitally important. On occasion, I’ve heard the pursuit of new artist-run venues and events called “reinventing the wheel”; regardless, independent galleries of note have been run in artist’s houses, basements, and all sizes of temporary venues for as long as official ARCs have existed. Even now, in the presence of both ARCs and a powerful wave of pop-up galleries, there is constant discussion of the potential for new venues, new spaces, doing things in new ways.

“In the 90s, it was Shelley Ouellet, Diana Sherlock and that crew in the artist-run centres. In the 2000s it was us and, now, I guess it’s you,” Wednesday Lupypciw of the Ladies Invitational Deadbeat Society said to me.<sup>4</sup> I think she looked at me then, but I was distracted, too surprised to really respond. Despite my recent employment at The New Gallery, I hadn’t considered myself a part of this chronology. I look up to these artists and writers, have learned from and been encouraged by them, and at first I felt overwhelmed. Then, I thought of the Carpet ‘N’ Toast Gallery, formerly a rumour of sorts – to me, recently confirmed by Nancy Tousley.<sup>5</sup> And I thought of *Shotgun Review*, a project I hope to emulate in my own way, in the near future. The comment, so shocking, began to take form for me then.

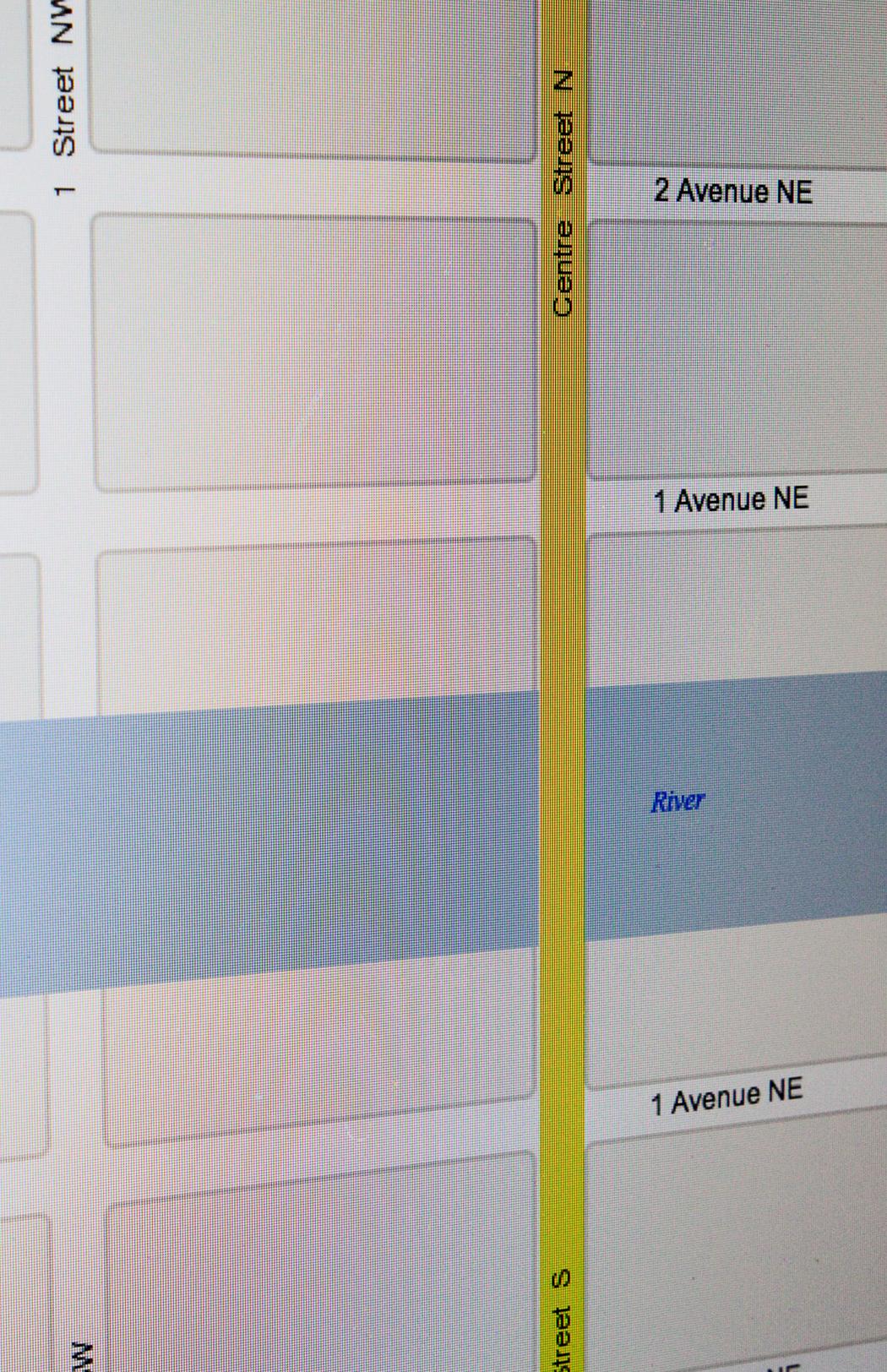
Calgary’s ARCs exist because of gaps, necessity, and the ambitions and hard work of so many individuals. I love, believe in, respect, and support all of these artist-run initiatives, but on some level I want to make them my own: what I wish they could be. I crave the romanticism and risk of this inception. These institutions are important – the true contemporary public art galleries of the city for so many years. And, though they have become more institutionalized, I can’t help but wonder if this desire, for camaraderie and ambitious creation has been at the root of each of these ventures, as each new generation gives their efforts into building, creating, and shaping (pre-existing wheels be damned).

We, the new, the *emerging* – we’re full to the brim with romanticism, and like our predecessors we are driven to create *something* that is our own. ARCs have shown us that what is created based on need can last and resonate for decades – or perhaps be only temporary, temporal and, maybe, that doesn’t decrease the value of the act.

In any of these forms or in a new form, I want that. My peers, I know they want that.

## Notes

- 1 Plant, Johanna. “Looking Back, Looking Forward.” *Clive Robertson: Then + Then Again – Practices within an artist-run culture, 1969-2006*. 2010. The New Gallery. Web. 28 Jun. 2012 <<http://www.thenewgallery.org/exhibitions/main-space/then-then-again-2011-01-06>>
- 2 Canada Council for the Arts. “Grants to Film and Video Artists: Research/Creation Grants, Production Grants and Scriptwriting Grants.” *Canada Council for the Arts*. 2010. Web. 28 Jun. 2012 <<http://www.canadacouncil.ca/grants/mediaarts/cn127221225398593750.htm>>
- 3 Canada Council for the Arts. “Grants to New Media and Audio Artists: Research and Production Grants.” *Canada Council for the Arts*. 2010. Web. 28 Jun. 2012 <<http://www.canadacouncil.ca/grants/mediaarts/pm127222998460468750.htm.htm>>
- 4 Lupypciw, Wednesday. In conversation. 9 Jun. 2012.
- 5 Tousley, Nancy. “Calgary Report: An Artist-Run Alberta.” *Canadian Art*. 2011. Web. 28 Jun. 2012 <[http://www.canadianart.ca/online/features/2011/03/03/calgary\\_report/](http://www.canadianart.ca/online/features/2011/03/03/calgary_report/)>



# Paul Robert

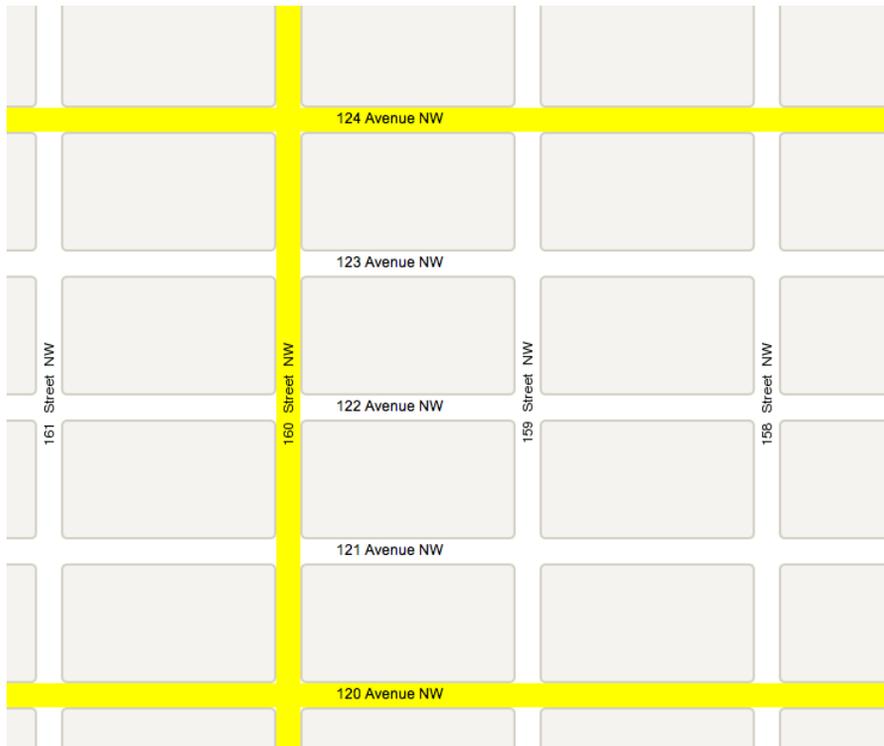
## Hometown

One of the most consistent features of modern cities is the gridiron street plan. The practice of building cities on a grid dates as far back as antiquity, but it is in modernity that it is most at home. Lewis Mumford, speaking of Renaissance Italy, noted "the grid plan answered, as no other plans did, the shifting values, the accelerated expansion, the multiplying population, required by the capitalist regime."<sup>1</sup>

The grid, impervious to the landscape on which it is imposed, often aligned with something greater than itself (the earth's axes and in Canada, the Dominion Land Survey), and containing democratically-sized lots and numbered streets, expresses the modern ideals of substituting tradition with reason, idiosyncrasy with standardization, organic growth with planned expansion, and metaphor with clarity. The spirit of eschewing metaphor is implicit in a 1904 Calgary Herald editorial: "For many reasons, some of them possibly sentimental, people do like to have avenues named. This may be well enough for two or three avenues, or for towns that are not likely to grow, but in large and growing places, it becomes confusing and irritating."<sup>2</sup>

**Hometown**, 2007-2012

Web project. HTML, CSS, Javascript. Infinitely scrolling city map.



### Hometown, 2007-2012

Installed at The #000000 Gallery.

misleading: they continue to obfuscate the inner workings of computers because revealing the “truth” of what is going on a level below would frustrate users for no good reason.

*Hometown* plays on the expectations we have for conventional software programs, inhabiting a familiar metaphor for the purpose of revealing its limits. The result is an algorithm pretending to be a map — particular, bounded, historical — which is representing a city pretending to be none of those things, all in the name of clarity.

Philosopher Charles Taylor has identified that for thinkers like Hobbes, Locke and Bentham metaphor was anathema, as was tradition. Bentham begins the *Principles of Morals and Legislation* stating that man has two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure, and then, “breath-takingly unconscious” of what he has just said, starts tearing into metaphor in favour of clear, scientific language.<sup>3</sup>

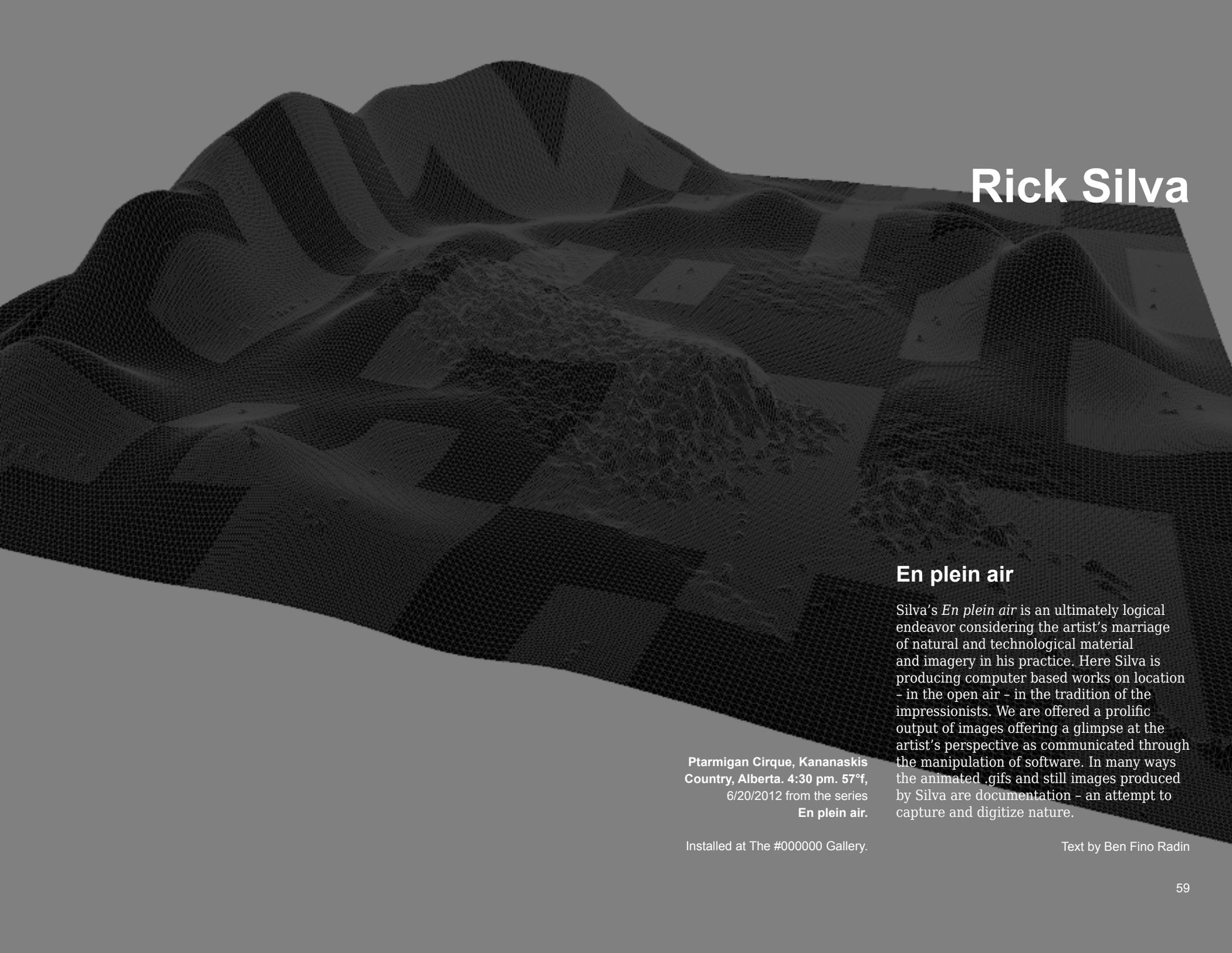
Enlightenment ideals, because they overlook the fact that pre-rational, embodied forms of knowledge are conditions of rationality, rarely reach their purest form. Perhaps the best example of language stripped of metaphor is machine language: what source code and scripts (readable to programmers) is translated into before being executed by a computer.

The integration of computers into mainstream culture requires them to be “friendly” to beings embedded in the physical world. Computers have to pretend they understand verbs like “open”, “close”, “hover”, “move”, “click”, “drag”, and “drop” and prepositions like “above”, “below”, and “behind”, concepts that have meaning only for living bodies. The result is a space of metaphors: “windows”, “cursors” (from Latin “runner”), “menus”, “files and folders”. Only by learning the lingua franca of embodied subjects, on whose cooperation they are dependent, can computers fully express their “computerness”.

There are always limits to metaphors. Some metaphors are pragmatically

### Notes

- 1 Mumford, Lewis. *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects*. New York: MJF Books, 1961/1989. 424. Quoted in Hannah B. Higgins, *The Grid Book*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009. 67.
- 2 “The Naming of the Avenues.” *Calgary Herald* (March 28, 1904) republished in “100 years ago: street names,” *Calgary Herald* (March 29, 2004).
- 3 Taylor, Charles quoted in David Cayley, “The Malaise of Modernity, Part 2.” *Ideas, CBC Radio 1*, podcast audio. April 11, 2011. <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/>.



# Rick Silva

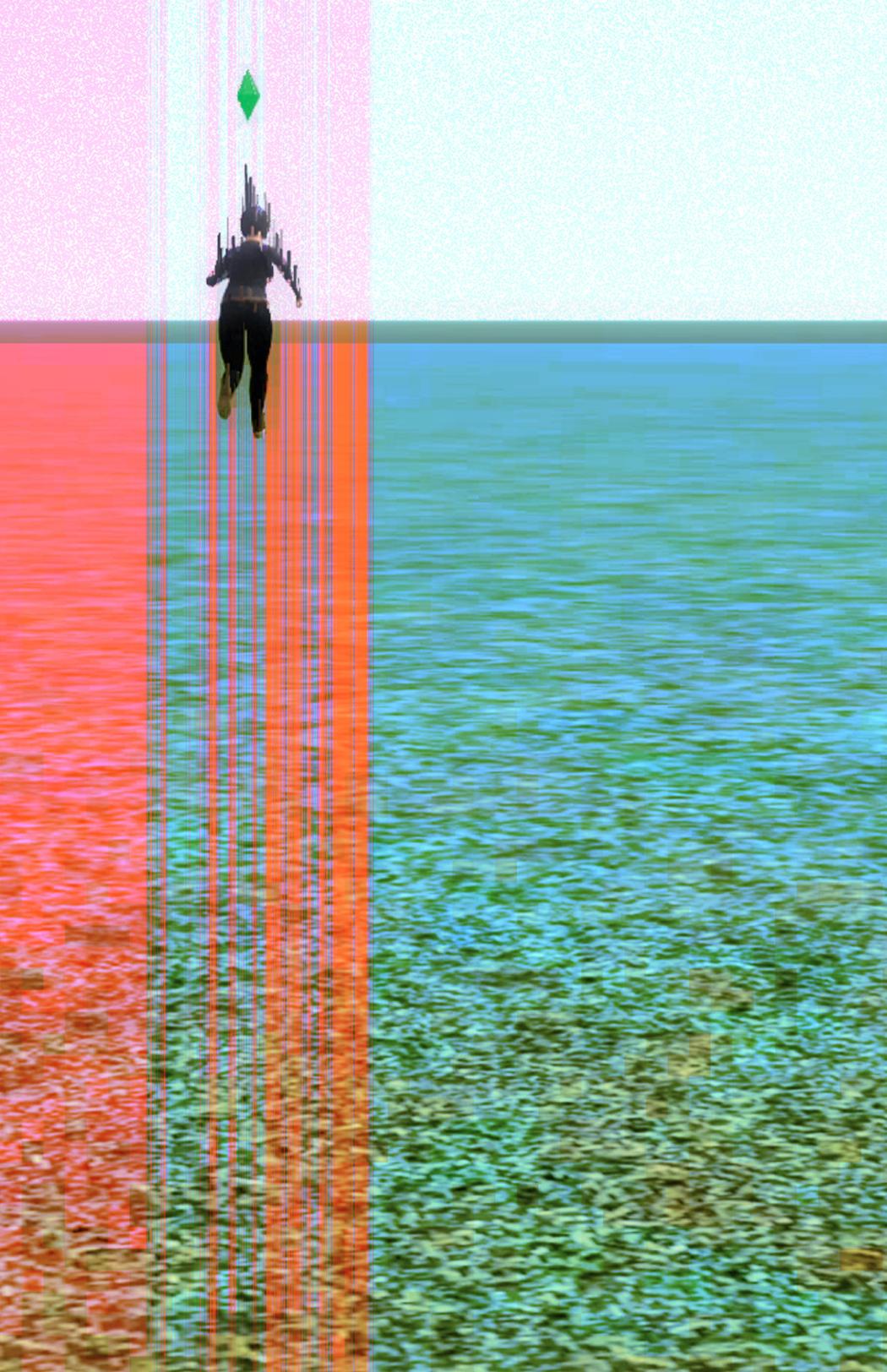
## En plein air

Silva's *En plein air* is an ultimately logical endeavor considering the artist's marriage of natural and technological material and imagery in his practice. Here Silva is producing computer based works on location - in the open air - in the tradition of the impressionists. We are offered a prolific output of images offering a glimpse at the artist's perspective as communicated through the manipulation of software. In many ways the animated .gifs and still images produced by Silva are documentation - an attempt to capture and digitize nature.

Ptarmigan Cirque, Kananaskis  
Country, Alberta. 4:30 pm. 57°F,  
6/20/2012 from the series  
**En plein air.**

Installed at The #000000 Gallery.

Text by Ben Fino Radin



# Teresa Tam

## Biennials Are Counterintuitive to the Provisional Virtual Happening

I was nineteen when I left home and went to college. They have made Provence their home. She came from a good home and was well educated. Low-cost homes for first-time buyers. Piedmont is the home of Italy's finest red wines. An old people's home. I don't have your home address. Traditional home cooking. Japanese competitors are selling cars for lower prices in the U.S. than in their home market. The home team. Their first home game of the season. The company has moved its home office. What time did she get home last night? I stayed home with the kids. The favorite romped home six lengths clear. She drove the bolt home noisily. A dozen geese homing to their summer nesting grounds. More than 100 missiles were launched, homing in on radar emissions. She has been consistently successful both at home and abroad. She was quite at home talking about Freud or Brecht. She took to her room and was not at home to friends. Houston lost at home to Phoenix. Her first-hand account brought home to me the pain of the experience. The full enormity of what was

**nowhere is here | except for home, 2012**

Installed at The #000000 Gallery.



happening came home to her. She could see that her remark had hit home. They should have been home free.

She came back home to her heavenly father [and] said; Good to have you home once more. To go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against her, and they returned home in great anger.

Wherefore again: their back against said anger to returned more heavenly and to home; once. Came kindled, She. Anger have in home and home was good; they go greatly father. Great you, her her home.

And left was their home. Home came when Provence, a college, went to good She well from I have made and I the educated. Was nineteen; they home. The home her. Nesting both has The Happening at than room summer remark were consistently full to homing Houston for her last home moved and She was brought Italy's quite time. She noisily was the lost dozen. Get Piedmont to home their address. Stay home. Bolt people's homes home successful office. Red was on 100 home accounts emissions. The home of first-hand could has in I first-time hit. More been game don't to home romped began home. What finest homing six home geese been to Japanese home. She radar the your free. Wines. Full ground. Home she experiences. Friends. Of are market with of enormity did at home her Phoenix. U.S. is life Freud for having first home clear. Her

**nowhere is here | except for home** is a series of animated GIFs that is the ultimate manifestation of my "God-like" control over playing as Sims Teresa Tam, indulgence of asking existential questions and arbitrariness stemmed out of creating this project. We watch Sims Teresa Tam carry out tasks that fulfill "her" "wishes", "aspirations", and "dreams" along with mundane tasks in order to sustain her "being". We watch "her" as "she" sleeps, wakes, eats, use the toilet, shower, walk, watch TV, play video games, laugh, question, think, and cry. I became her malevolent "God", constantly watching and recording "her" everyday routines but resetting each play-through over and over again knowing that Sims Teresa Tam will never fulfill her "dreams".

Every time I played within this world I created, every selective snippets I choose out of the hours I watched, everything I delete out of the animated GIFs, the grotesque manifestation of the relationship I have with Sims Teresa Tam is consistently fulfilled. This project is the result.

talking came to season. Home. Kids. In old. She of lower lengths of about the home that hit the home than have what a home. I see competitors. Traditional home to home low-cost missiles Brecht. Launched home, or not an A and at me took abroad. As cooking the she. Its favorite selling should the team pain. In prices at company night. There the buyers had drove, their cars their.

Text by Joel Farris

when she had to go up or down in this place. And under no conditions would she allow the three of them to get into the rickety thing together.

"What are you looking at, doc?" Jack inquired humorously.

"See any spots there?"

"Of course not," Ullman replied.

"shampooed just two days ago."

Wendy glanced down at the hall runner herself. Pretty, but definitely not anything she would choose for her own home, if the day ever came when she had one. Deep blue pile, it was entwined with what seemed to be a surrealistic jungle scene full of ropes and vines and trees filled with exotic birds. It was hard to tell just what sort of birds, because all the interweaving was done in unshaded black, giving only silhouettes.

"Do you like the rug?" Wendy asked Danny.

"Yes, Mom," he said colorlessly.

They walked down the hall, which was comfortably wide. The wallpaper was silk, a lighter blue to go against the rug. Electric flambeaux stood at ten-foot intervals at a height of about seven feet. Fashioned to look like London gas lamps, the bulbs were masked behind cloudy, cream-hued glass that was bound with crisscrossing iron strips.

"I like those very much," she said.

Ullman nodded, pleased. "Mr. Derwent had those installed throughout the Hotel after the war—number Two, I mean. In fact most—although not all—of the third-floor decorating scheme was his idea. This is 300, the Presidential Suite."

He twisted his key in the lock of the mahogany double doors and swung them wide. The sitting room's wide western exposure made them all gasp, which had probably been Ullman's intention. He smiled. "Quite a view, isn't it?"

"It sure is," Jack said.

The window ran nearly the length of the sitting room, and beyond it the sun was poised directly between two sawtoothed peaks, casting golden light across the rock faces and the sugared snow on the high tips. The clouds around and behind this picture-postcard view were also tinted gold, and a sunbeam glinted duskily down into the darkly pooled fire below the timberline.

all the rugs were shampooed 2 days ago, 2012

Jack and Wendy were so absorbed in the view that they didn't look down at Danny, who was staring not out the window but at the and-white-striped silk wallpaper to the left, where a door opened into an interior bedroom. And his gang

Photograph

# Richard Williams

135,500 AU, 2012

The work addresses the idea of Home from the vantage point of the pilgrim; those who have left one home to find another on some frontier and who by necessity must make a home of whatever road or vessel is taking them on their long journey. These overlapping and contradictory states make the traveler at once *Far from Home*, *Home*, and *Halfway Home*.

Installed at The #000000 Gallery.

**135,500 AU**

History is a game of telephone. Value is abstract. Nothing is worth anything unless we say so. Nothing really happened unless we say it did. Only humans can do this. We have the power to assign value, and then that which possesses value has the power to move us - around the world if necessary. This back-and-forth of power is what drives our history and our culture. By playing with this relationship, that driving force can be tapped into. By making illusionary histories and fabricated values a genuine sense of importance and power is established. The illusion becomes the authority.





# Alternative Currencies

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## Interview with Lewis Liski by Steven Cottingham

**Steven Cottingham** You've been conducting so many interviews for your upcoming film, *Alternative Currency*, trying to get a handle on the state of the art scene in Calgary. I wanted, in turn, to interview you about some of your personal experiences and the things you learned while making this film. Can you begin by talking about why you started this project?

**Lewis Liski** The documentary? It sort of started out when I became aware of the lack of local opportunities for young artists. My friends were involved in a lot of really interesting things, so I wanted to cover what they were doing, shoot their shows, talk to them, you know. It began as a short. But, as it grew, there arose a need to talk about why all the coverage and opportunities were self-initiated, why there seemed to be a lack of other outlets for emerging artists - other than the opportunities they create for themselves.

But now, working on the documentary, I think it could get people talking. And that's why I'm doing it, to create a conversation about emerging art and to talk about Calgary's long history of do-it-yourself projects. I think part of sustaining Calgary lies with emerging artists and these almost-desperate grassroots projects. There are recent initiatives that have really taken off, like Haight Gallery, but they need to be supported to keep growing. There needs to be a demonstration to the larger community and the more well-established institutions that lots of things are happening and are going to happen even without acknowledgement or sources of funding.

**SC** I'm wondering, as you were shooting the documentary and prompting questions in interviews or, even now, as you're editing and condensing all the footage: what sorts of themes emerged? What issues kept coming up despite, perhaps, the disparate organizations and individuals you interviewed?

## *That's why [DIY spaces] are really important: they feel attainable and inspiring, something more immediate a young artist can aspire to.*

**LL** There are a lot of major issues, or issues that have been around a long time in Calgary. Affordable studio space is always one, and it's been addressed in a variety of ways. There is also a serious lack of support in this city. This town has a lot of money but it's not being harnessed or taken advantage of in any great ways ... The Esker Foundation is an interesting project, I think, because it's funded and maintained by the tenants of the building. They pay for it. They can show whatever they want or take whatever risks they want without being accountable to a larger body.

But I'm a firm believer that we need to move away from the model of, like, applying for a show and waiting for acceptance. There are enough patrons here and we could maybe create more, that would really do something cool.

A lot of things came up about how Calgary is now Canada's Cultural Capital. No one really seems to know what's going on with that and the dispersal of funds is, well, I'll use a word from an interview: "haphazard". It's just not really being thought about and, to my knowledge, there is little attention being paid to sustainability. But, we'll see what happens. I think the film could do something interesting, or show more viewpoints to those who maybe work in isolated fields and don't have opportunities to really dig into all areas of Calgary art.

**SC** Do you think "culture" in Calgary is poorly defined? For me, I'm so invested in the visual arts here - specifically subsets of the non-commercial artist-run community - and I want that sort of scene to be synonymous with "culture" in Calgary. But then there are, you know, always connotations of Stampede and oil firms and those things that are unshakeably part of our identity. In your documentary, where did you draw the line in terms of defining "culture" or "art"? What sectors did you explore and what limits did you have to acknowledge?

**LL** I think Calgary has a really interesting culture, but it might too insular. Cool shit is always going on, you can't even keep up with what's happening half the time. But I don't know if there's any public awareness at all. Michael Green [Creative Producer from Calgary 2012 Cultural Capital Organization] told me, "Art has to be fun." It has to provide something for people, otherwise, without all the background information and awareness of critical context, it's not going to interest people who might lack the necessary education. Also, Shyra

De Souza from Untitled spoke about funding from top-to-bottom rather than bottom-up. When funding authorities deal out resources to top-organizations first and foremost, it forces the majority of artists to fend for their selves. On the one hand, it's sort of positive: it means that any serious artist will be incredibly dedicated and committed to their practise to make things happen or to make an impact. But, it's also like, how far can you get on your own? If the city wants culture, it has to help out. Maybe it has to trust these artists working in different critical fields, who may have knowledge of contemporary goings-on that the funding authorities lack. You can't expect culture to happen on its own.

Of course, everyone has a different idea of what "culture" is and what it should be. It's really hard to navigate these things. I think we need things that are fun and entertaining, publicly-appealing, yes, but we also need things with a bit more of a critical bent.

**SC** I agree. I had a friend who would always quote Jeff Wall - he said, "Art isn't for everyone. It's for anyone."

When you mentioned you were promoting a divergence from a certain sort of model, that democratic artist-run centre submission process; I understand you're talking about a system that doesn't rely on grants and isn't responsible to affirming bodies. The DIY model. How do you think that fits into our culture at large?

**LL** Well, if TRUCK and Stride were founded as parallel spaces, alternative venues to commercial galleries, then definitely places like 809 and Straw have been alternatives to the artist-run centres. Like, alternative-alternative spaces. I think they're really great for bringing people together who don't often hang out. Especially at Haight, there's such a diverse audience there. There are potential buyers, people looking to decorate their homes, and then there are friends of the artists, the art school grads, as well as friends-of-friends and word-of-mouth attendees who are just looking for someplace trendy to stop by for an evening. The backyard/garage venue has a lot going for it, too. It's a lot more welcoming, being somebody's home, even though the whole thing is handled very professionally.

**SC** I have another question that's been on my mind lately, I don't know if maybe you came across an answer as you've worked on your project. Thirty, forty years ago, there seemed to be this great upsurge of "alternative" projects that established themselves and have since become well-founded institutions. For instance, The New Gallery, TRUCK, and Stride all began within years of each other but there doesn't seem to be a lot that has happened since. Or, at least, not a lot that has remained; Arton's [The Parachute Centre for Cultural Affairs] and the Dandelion Gallery both popped up in '75 but were shortlived. And now it seems like suddenly there is an influx of small projects - I don't know if I'm just noticing through an erosion of my own ignorance or if things are actually picking up. Nancy Tousley wrote about this in her *Canadian Art* feature "An Artist-Run Alberta" [from 2011]. I was wondering: what other big projects have happened in the last thirty years?

**LL** Well, there was this project called Graceland; it was a sculpture garden and place for live performance. I don't know if you've heard of it? It was started by Bart Habermiller. I'm not going to tell you the whole story, but there was this woman who had a huge plot of land, and Bart started helping her out, and eventually they began having art shows out there. Very cool. It sort of evolved into this thing that got too big to sustain, it was around for ten years or so. It's a really fascinating project and there will be more about it in the documentary.

Then, of course, there were recent projects like Heather Kai Smith and Bree Zorel's CAM [Contemporary Art Museum] that were really fascinating and inspiring but just weren't sustainable. And, another thing to consider is that The New Gallery [formerly The Clouds & Water Gallery and Visual Production Society, and, later, the Off Centre Centre] and those ARCs have really changed and their functions have evolved a lot as they've become more established. The New Gallery was, at one time, a coffee house as well as a gallery!

**SC** What's funny is that some of the people we're talking about, these "cultural producers", are only a few years older than us but already they've become myths. They're part of local lore sheerly because of their dedication and commitment to enriching our artistic community. We don't know if the art they showed was any good (although the "goodness" of art is often a fruitless debate) or how many people actually witnessed these projects, but now we talk about them all the time.

So, what do you think has changed recently? I know that, in the past, a lot of Calgarian artists have complained about their peers leaving and taking off as soon as they graduated. Calgary was referred to as "a good place to be from," but more and more artists seem to be sticking around. Why is that? Are there more reasons to be here? Less reasons to leave?

**LL** Yeah, people need reasons to be dedicated to a city. Or to try and make things work in this community. And it's definitely growing. Maybe in part because of international reasons, like the growth of "the creative class" and kids who were encouraged to follow their dreams - so the Alberta College of Art + Design's enrolment has really gone up. And then the rise of the internet and accessible documentation. I mean, stuff has happened here, but it dies and gets lost because of lack of documentation. Graceland is a great example. Same with Sugar Shack, Ideal Space, and One White Wall. After a few generations, the word-of-mouth storytelling ceases and art students go through college without those local inspirations - just because information was harder to access. So it creates a loop, each generation has to start over for itself. Hopefully things are changing now. Hopefully a sort of momentum is establishing itself.

But I wanted to go back and talk about ARCs, if that's okay. There's a lot of talk about how they're becoming outdated, how that model has become that which it originally opposed. I mean, they still have interesting shows and all; the work is relevant. But the spaces themselves feel alienating to young artists. Both Stride and TRUCK, through circumstances of their funding, cannot offer shows to artists who haven't been out of school for a certain amount of time. That's why

spaces like 809, Pith, and even Untitled are really important: they feel attainable and inspiring, something more immediate a young artist can aspire to. And you get to see new work from local artists, your peers and community, not just year-old proposals from artists based in Vancouver or Montréal. I understand our older ARCs were founded with the intention of exhibition mostly local art. It's still important that they're bringing in national and international artists, you know, but in their growth and maturation maybe they've left a little bit of a void. They can't do it all.

ARCs still have a lot of interesting possibilities, though. I mean, in one sense, they are very well-established institutions that have reached a size where they can no longer be immediately adaptable or reactive - but they're not quite at the size where they can work directly with the city or government. I mean, imagine what they could do then: prevent the city from throwing tons of cash at a 2012 [Cultural Capital] party or money towards nonsense sculptures on Stephen Avenue. Imagine if they revitalized Art Central, one of the most publicly-visible art centres, and allowed it to become more contemporarily-relevant and maybe less catering. What if the public wandered in because they were curious and not because they knew they could safely find something they'd like? It'd be great if we could have an actual "gallery district" or something. But real estate everywhere is too expensive, really.

However, I'm hesitant to say too much because things are changing really rapidly right now. ACAD is remodelling their whole structure, Nate McLeod and Cassandra Paul are opening their gallery space AVALANCHE! next week ...

**SC** Yeah, everything will be completely different by the time the catalogue is released and everything we said will be obsolete. I like to think that it's important to nail down the spirit of the times, you know, even if it's for a very brief period. Because, I agree, we need more documentation. We need permanent archives of ephemeral things.

**LL** I think it's great. It's exciting, things are really happening.

**SC** I think that our peer group, all of us recent graduates, are feeling really ambitious right now. Our teachers instilled in us the right amount of excitement and aspiration, and now that we're out of school, all our energy previously reserved for homework and last-minute critiques is going to shoot off in all directions.

**LL** We're at a place where the city is ripe for opportunity. You can do whatever you want. There are so many voids, such a lack of places to fit yourself into, that all you can do is create.

June 2012

# Billie Rae Busby

Homing signal \_\_\_\_\_ a signal  
emitted \_\_\_\_\_ a process of navigation by which a destination may be \_\_\_\_\_  
approached \_\_\_\_\_ the invisible lines that draw \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ her back \_\_\_\_\_ or that she draws \_\_\_\_\_ when  
thinking back \_\_\_\_\_ on the land she called \_\_\_\_\_ home \_\_\_\_\_  
calls home \_\_\_\_\_ from a distance \_\_\_\_\_ both the memory and the mesmerism  
\_\_\_\_\_ close \_\_\_\_\_ closed  
\_\_\_\_\_ the single \_\_\_\_\_ beacon \_\_\_\_\_ fractured by distance \_\_\_\_\_  
shifting plains \_\_\_\_\_ shifting planes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ a line on a map or a mapped line on a canvas \_\_\_\_\_  
a soft longing against a hard \_\_\_\_\_ edge \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ the gesture \_\_\_\_\_ and the indication \_\_\_\_\_ the confined \_\_\_\_\_ recognition  
on display \_\_\_\_\_ or the flat \_\_\_\_\_ or the virtual evocation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of the journey \_\_\_\_\_ from home \_\_\_\_\_  
too home \_\_\_\_\_ the honing in \_\_\_\_\_ the honing within \_\_\_\_\_ the heart \_\_\_\_\_  
a frame \_\_\_\_\_ of the part \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ that has always \_\_\_\_\_ mattered most \_\_\_\_\_  
below the strato \_\_\_\_\_ cumulus \_\_\_\_\_  
above the fallow \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ the space of the sign \_\_\_\_\_ the living \_\_\_\_\_  
the meaning \_\_\_\_\_ signaling Home \_\_\_\_\_

**Whereabouts (No. 1), 2012**

Text by Laurel Smith and Chris Willard

Acrylic on canvas, 36" x 72"



# Dana Buzzee

When we get together  
It's always hot magic  
When we get together  
When we get together  
When we get together  
It's always hot magic

of Montreal. "Wicked Wisdom"  
from *Skeletal Lamping*, 2008.

**Hunter**, 2012

Photographic print.

Installed at Haight Gallery.

When we get together on the dark side of the woods there is a black that hangs in the air waiting to be swallowed. These bleak landscapes with overcast skies and under-exposed shapes provide a fitting backdrop for delinquent and hostile youth. Drunk in the dark, we sleep walk on paths that lead us deeper into the forest.

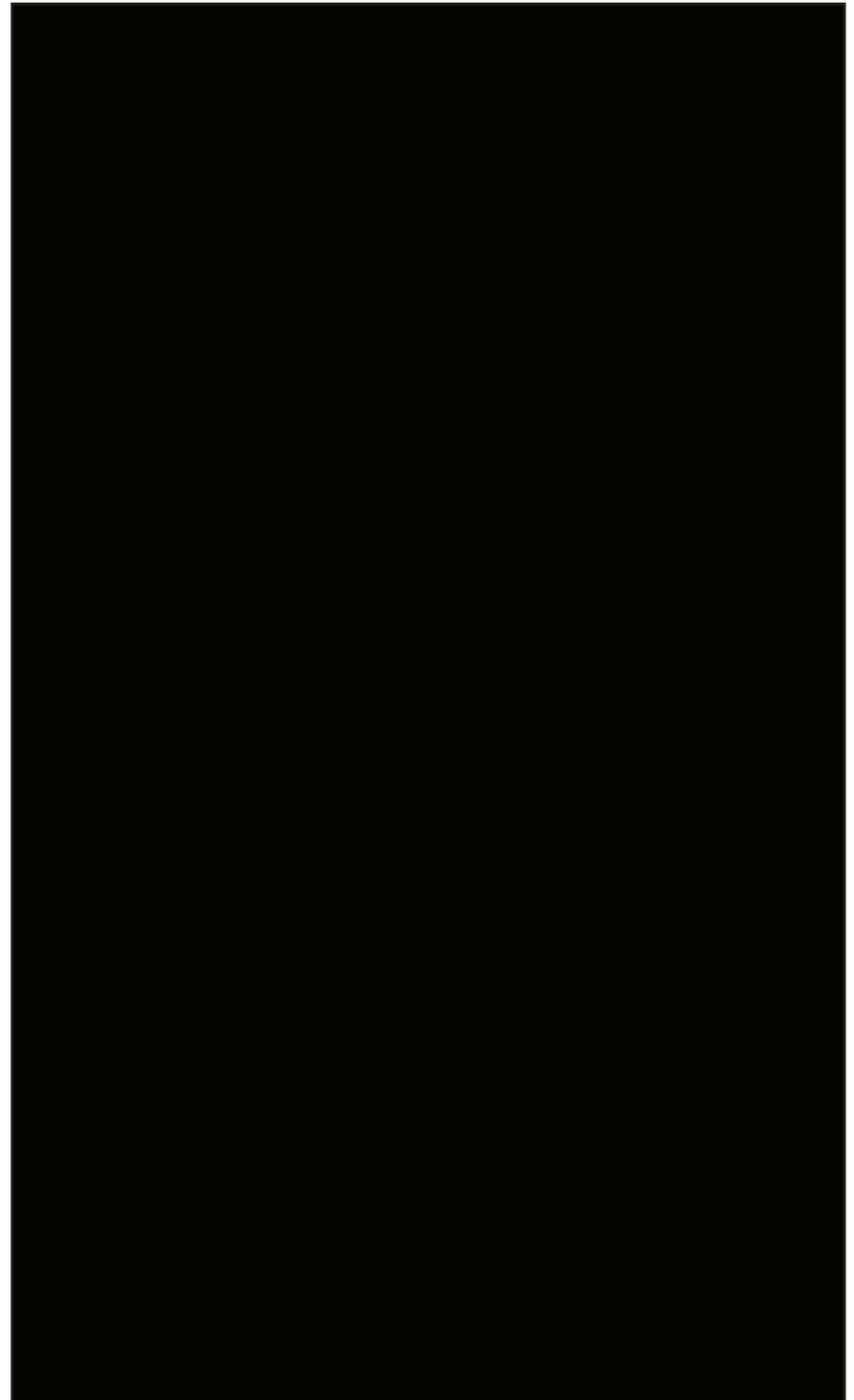
There is a quiet howl that shakes the trees and stirs the leaves on the ground, a cold shadow casts over us. Broken branches lying in a braided circle around stained and burnt piles of knitted hoods and bonnets. Superstitious winds churn an ominous warning to beware of the night that never sleeps.

## Blackout

Nature is rough and cruel, she is a shape-shifter turning black into black. The horror is all around us. Cloaked in black suede skins, we trick her into thinking we are animals belonging to the night. She embraces us and we dissolve into a black dust that settles and disappears.

When we get together  
It's always darkness  
When we get together  
When we get together  
When we get together  
It's always darkness

Text by Sondra Meszaros





# Hannah Doerksen

Call Home, 2012

## Home Sick

Mixed media.

When I was a little boy I was often home sick from school. Childhood epilepsy kept me from being a regular member of my small rural Catholic community. The religious implications of the “sacred disease” were lost on me, and probably luckily so for my sanity, because the more time I spent at home reading my blue hard-cover Hardy Boys novels the less time I spent pondering the allegory of the Eucharist.

I knew I was sick. I had a bald spot on the back of my head from falling over so often. But I was in good care at home - my dog Harley, a Jack Russell terrier, would bark loudly and whine if I lay prone for too long, something he was trained to do. So, I spent my days off exploring the countryside with my little dog, keeping within earshot of the acreage that my family owned. That dog wasn't afraid of anything. Not even bees, which I was terribly allergic to. Sometimes, when I would wander too close to the apiary at the southern end of our property and get swarmed by the murderous little things, my dog would leap into the air, gnashing his teeth, and try to bite them like they were people or other dogs.



**Call Home, 2012**  
Installed at Haight Gallery.

downstairs. I didn't. I snuck into the guest room and listened through the window.

"Can I help you?" my father said, again taking off his glasses. The man seemed flustered. He wiped his palms on his cuffed jeans and extended one, sheepishly.

"My name is Darren. I'm your son. My mother's name was Lonnie. From Salmon Arm, remember? You never knew."

Darren stayed with us for a few days. He would come exploring with my dog and I, excited as I was to be under the clinging sun all day, avoiding the bees. After about a week, he confessed that he was on the run from the law - he was a drug addict and had been in prison. His parole stipulated he couldn't leave B.C, but he wanted to see his father before he started using again. He was homeless.

Darren drove back to Vancouver to turn himself in, but was killed in an accident in Roger's Pass - he lost control of his car trying to avoid a rockslide. My father died of cancer within the year. But for a week in that house in the countryside, we all had, before the absurdity of the world, a home.

Text by J.D. Mersault

One stiflingly hot morning in June, a man drove onto our property in a loud pickup truck. I was outside with Harley and we were digging up what I thought was a badger hole. The man was tall, rusty-haired, and tattooed. He got out of his truck and approached me with a wave.

"Hey little man," he said, and his voice sounded unreal, as voices sometimes do in the morning in the countryside, "is your dad home? Donald? I gotta talk to him."

"Yeah, but he's in bed. He's sick too." I admitted. Something I didn't understand at the time kept him in bed most days.

"Oh," said the man as he sunk a little, "...well I've come such a long way. I'd really like to see him." He seemed close to tears.

"I'll try to wake him up."

My father was absently rustling through some notebooks in the sitting room, constantly putting on and taking off his glasses. He didn't seem particularly lucid today.

I told him there was a man outside who was asking for him. He told me to go



# Miruna Dragan

## ... words for Xilitla forever ...

And this I dreamt, and this I dream,  
and some time this I will dream again,  
and all will be repeated,  
all be re-embodied,  
you will dream everything I have seen in  
dream.

To one side from ourselves, to one side from  
the world

wave follows wave to break on the shore,  
on each wave is a star, a person, a bird,  
dreams, reality, death - on wave after wave.<sup>i</sup>  
a museum, a chapel, and a swimming pool<sup>ii</sup>  
I do not know why === referred to it as a  
museum.

It could be a fine hotel for about fifty people,  
or a sanatorium.<sup>iii</sup>

Down the stairs, like a dizzy apparition,  
You came to take me on your road,  
Through rain-soaked lilacs,  
To your own possession,  
To the looking glass world.<sup>iv</sup>

The lighted floor and the black-lacquered  
columns around it  
give one the impression of walking magically  
on top of a pool in the midst of a forest.

This room adjoins the large room, or  
assembly hall, and a small green room  
with a piano, a phonograph, and a screen of  
mirrors, which has twenty panels or more.  
through stone arches I saw the same room  
duplicated

eight times in eight directions<sup>v</sup>  
the spring we don't see

### **Xilitla Forever, 2012 –**

An ongoing collage of large-scale photographs elaborating on Edward James' *Las Pozas* (*The Pools*, 1947 – 1984), a vast surrealist construction located deep in the jungle of Mexico's Sierra Madre, near to the village of Xilitla, *Place of Snails*.

Archival inkjet prints on Epson enhanced matte paper. Dimensions variable. Installed at Haight Gallery.

Photo courtesy the artist.

With thanks to the Alberta College of Art + Design for the support of their Scholarly Research and Creativity Initiative and Faculty Professional Affairs Committee grants.

on the back of a hand mirror  
 a plum tree in flower<sup>vi</sup>  
 the light I behold is without place;  
 yet it is infinitely more dazzling  
 than the mist through which the sun  
 breaks. This light annihilates for  
 me all height and length and  
 breadth; for me, this light is called  
 the shadow of the living light.<sup>vi</sup>  
 the memory of men - the probable location of heaven<sup>viii</sup>  
 We will be able to live a life that is always new,  
 because in each moment of the projection  
 we shall have no memories other than those we had  
 in the corresponding moment of the eternal record,  
 and because the future, left behind many times,  
 will maintain its attributes forever.<sup>ix</sup>  
 Love is a privileged perception, the most total and lucid  
 not only of the unreality of the world but of our own unreality:  
 not only do we traverse a realm of shadows;  
 we ourselves are shadows.<sup>x</sup>  
 A major problem of psychotropic houses is that after several months  
 one has to increase the volume to get the same image of the last owner,  
 and this increases the sensitivity of the memory cells and their  
 rate of contamination. At the same time, magnifying the psychic  
 underlay emphasizes the cruder emotional ground-base.<sup>xi</sup>  
 And why should men who could plan such a well-constructed building make  
 a shelter like this, which tries one's mental equilibrium:  
 when I sigh, for example, I can hear the echoes of a sigh, both  
 near and faraway, for two or three minutes afterward.  
 And when there are no echoes, the silence is  
 as horrible as that heavy weight that keeps you  
 from running away in dreams.<sup>xii</sup>  
 I am an immigrant here.  
 Carrying in my heart a myth as support  
 from another place where  
 I do not wish to return. From this land I am occupying.  
 And I fell in love the first morning.<sup>xiii</sup>  
 but still I know that writing this diary can perhaps provide the answer;  
 it may even help produce the right future<sup>xiv</sup>  
 the tools are in the museum.  
 I hope to be brave enough to try to go and get them later.  
 But that may not be necessary after all - perhaps these people will disappear;  
 perhaps they are merely hallucinations<sup>xv</sup>  
 The world of dew  
 is the world of dew.  
 And yet, and yet<sup>xvi</sup>  
 My house grows like a chamber'd nautilus after a storm  
 My house has wings, and somehow in the dead of night, she sings<sup>xvii</sup>  
 I began to hear the fragments of a concise, very faint melody. Then it faded away  
 completely, and I thought of the figures that appear, according to Leonardo,  
 when we look fixedly at damp spots on a wall for any length of time.  
 The music came back; and I listened to it,  
 still crouching, my vision blurred, my body agitated, but

thrilled by the beauty of its harmony.<sup>xviii</sup>  
 the ancient stone statues of saints, gargoyles, and the figures within the stained  
 glass windows... take on multiple lives. Becoming creatures of energy, they  
 move throughout  
 the space, entering many levels of the cathedral. A world where stone and glass  
 animations meet, interact and breed with the characters of flesh. Two pianos...  
 the clear forms and color, the deep ghostly altar windows - the sound shapes of  
 Petra become characters interacting within the virtual time of the church.<sup>xix</sup>  
 Here amid the warmth of the rain, what might have been  
 is resolved into the tenderness of a tall doom<sup>xx</sup>  
 The underground room, the screen of mirrors:  
 I heard === say that they are for visual and acoustical experiments.<sup>xxi</sup>  
 Will certain sounds be locatable, seem miles away, feel close, pulsate vertically  
 above our head, vibrate an elbow, suddenly appear in the space, dramatically  
 disappear as though without a sound? Do we perceive the sound in the room,  
 in our head, a great distance away: do we experience all three dimensions  
 clearly at the same time? In the room, does the sound drift, float, fall like rain?  
 Does it make such a clear shape in the air we seem to 'see it' in front of our  
 eyes?  
 Is there no sound in the room at all, but we continue to hear 'after-sound' as our  
 mind is processing sonic events perceived minutes ago? Do we experience sonic  
 imaging  
 very near, moving beside (outside and around) one ear only: 'feel' patterns  
 as they in fact, do originate and develop quite specifically inside, within our  
 ears...?<sup>xxii</sup>  
 The butterfly is perfuming  
 It's wings in the scent  
 Of the orchid.<sup>xxiii</sup>  
 I dreamed of ===. The dream was very sad, very touching. We were saying  
 good-bye;  
 they were coming to get her; the ship was about to leave... I cried during the  
 dream  
 and then woke up feeling miserable and desperate because === was not  
 there...  
 I was afraid that === had gone away while I was sleeping.  
 I got up and looked around.  
 The ship was gone.<sup>xxiv</sup>  
 The flame birds waited, like a bed of coals, glowing  
 on the cool smooth sands. The white canopy ballooned  
 on the night wind, flapping softly, tied by a thousand green ribbons  
 to the birds. === laid herself back in the canopy and, at a word  
 from her husband, the birds leaped, burning, toward the dark sky.  
 The ribbons tautened, the canopy lifted.  
 The sand slid whining under; the blue hills  
 drifted by, drifted by, leaving their home  
 behind, the raining pillars, the caged flowers, the singing books, the whispering  
 floor creeks. She did not look at her husband. She heard him crying out to the  
 birds  
 as they rose higher, like ten thousand hot sparkles, so many red-yellow fireworks  
 in the heavens, tugging the canopy like a flower petal,  
 burning through the wind.<sup>xxv</sup>  
 I thought I would synchronize all the parts of my machine and take scenes of  
 our lives:

an afternoon with ===, ...which would be a legacy from the present to the future.

If the reproductions of objects would be objects - as a photograph of a house is an object that represents another object - the reproductions of animals and plants would not be animals or plants.

I was certain that my images of persons would lack consciousness of themselves...

But I found, to my surprise, that when I succeeded in synchronizing the different parts of the machine, ...no one could distinguish them from living persons (they appear to be circulating in another world with which our own has made a chance encounter). ...Is it hard for you to accept such a mechanical and artificial system for the reproduction of life?

what changes the sleight-of-hand artist's movements into magic is our inability to see!

To make living reproductions, I need living transmitters.

I do not create life.

this difficult science is formed slowly,

but it preserves every principle which it has

once acquired; it grows and strengthens itself incessantly

in the midst of the many variations and errors

of the human mind.<sup>xxvi</sup>

The thing that is latent in a phonograph record, the thing that is revealed when I press a button and turn on the machine - shouldn't we call that 'life'?

Don't you see that there is a parallelism between the destinies of men and images?<sup>xxvii</sup>

presupposing that the spectator...

was chained fast, like the prisoner of Plato's

cave, to a theatre bench

and neither could nor should

have a direct vital relationship to reality, these first

theoreticians of perspective provided rules for a deception

that ensnared the theatre spectator as if he were

separated from the stage by a glass barrier

and there were just one immobile

eye,

observing without penetrating the very

essence of life and, most important, with his will paralysed, for the very

essence of a theatre that has become mundane demands a will-less

looking at the stage,

as at some 'untruth',

something 'not really there',

some empty deception.

Anaxagoras and Democritus

replace the living

man with a spectator,

paralysed by curare<sup>xxviii</sup>

I have a vision:

If you imagine a world before music... you imagine

these lonely, ancient beings there...

The wavelength for middle c in air is four feet, four inches and when it's traveling through stone or wood it's anywhere

from nineteen to twenty-two inches.

And so that same actual physical wavelength, then, is much enhanced, so that if it's very quiet, once it's going through the structure there's kind of a presence,

the sound takes on a sense of presence, like a being. And when it's very powerful

people often say "Why can this music be so powerful and it doesn't hurt my ears?"<sup>xxix</sup>

I have overcome the nervous repulsion I used to feel toward the images.

They do not bother me now. I am living comfortably in the museum, safe from the rising waters. I must admit that I feel slightly uncomfortable when the images

brush against me (especially if I happen to be thinking about something else);

but I shall overcome that, too...

Now I am able to view ===

dispassionately, as a simple object.<sup>xxx</sup>

The mirror, like a cannibal, consumed, carnivorous, blood-silvered, all the life fed it.

You too have known this merciless transfusion

along the arm by which we each have held it...

Your pale face, ===, before the glass

at last is not returned to you reversed.<sup>xxxi</sup>

To the person who reads this diary and then invents

a machine that can assemble

disjoined presences, I make this request:

Find === and me, let me enter

the heaven of her consciousness.

It will be an act of piety.<sup>xxxii</sup>

The Galaxy sweeps throughout the Heaven

and is brilliantly visible to the naked eye.

But it interests man chiefly,

although less immediately, on account of its being

his home; the home of the Earth on which he exists;

the home of the Sun about which this Earth revolves;

the home of that "system" of orbs

of which the Sun is the centre and primary —

the Earth one of sixteen secondaries, or planets —

the Moon one of seventeen tertiaries, or satellites.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

But where does === live?

I have been following her for weeks.

She speaks of Canada

- that is all I know.<sup>xxxiv</sup>



# Julien Fournier Stephen Nachtigall

## Welcome

**A Conventional or Arbitrary  
Statement, 2012**

Flourescent lighting, spraypaint,  
black walnut.

Installed outside Haight Gallery.

Using welcome signs is an attractive way to greet the guests who come into the home Gallery. The welcome signs for homes Galleries reflect your hospitality and make the guests feel invited. The welcome sign can be hung on the door or wall to give a warm welcome at the entrance of your home Gallery. Welcome plaques as wooden signs, metal signs, or even wall-stickers are some welcome sign ideas that will give your home Gallery a distinct identity. Wooden signs with hand-painted signs or an engraved welcome message add a rustic look to your home Gallery decor. The metal signs and wrought-iron welcome signs present an attractive entry to your home Gallery. Welcome signs not only add a personal touch to your home Gallery decor, they also make a different and unique gift for family and friends.



# Stephen Nachtigall

**Console, 2012**

Printed vinyl on Ikea shelf,  
bamboo.

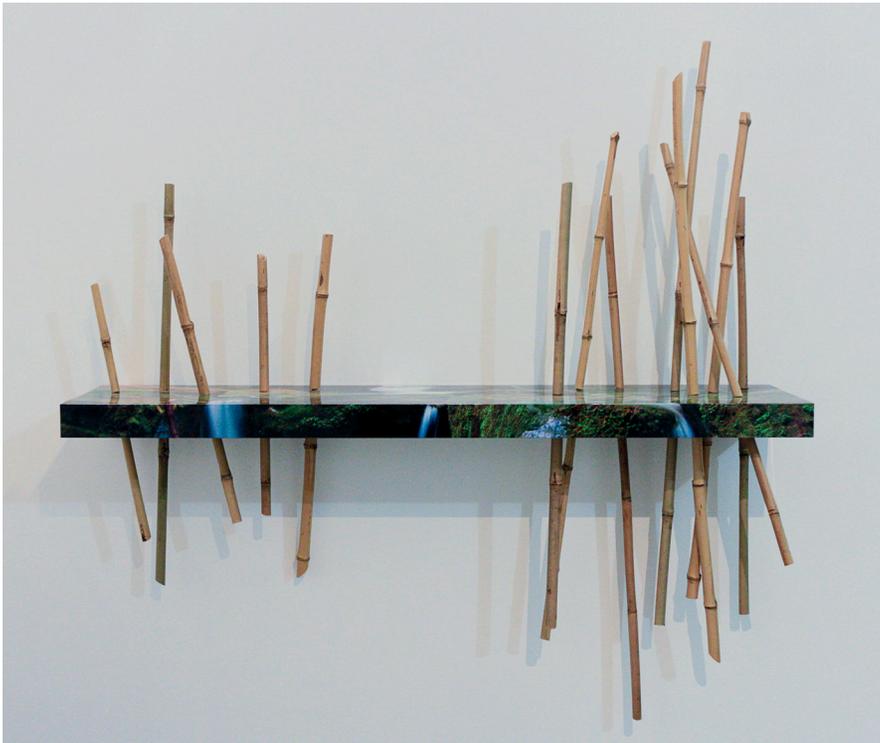
Installed at Haight Gallery.

## Untitled

shelf-life  
Shelf life:  
miasma  
(this new word I learned)  
: a foreboding  
a shadow  
death on objects.  
Or maybe  
death in objects.  
A death  
they harbour  
until released  
on TouchesBegan  
like a rose bush,  
or a butterfly,  
or a pollen plant.

What will I kill  
if I touch this shelf.  
if I disturb its peace,  
nick its object-ness.

I don't know  
what or how it means  
to be alive though.  
I argued about this with my brother  
yesterday  
for a long time  
I asked him:



If you made a machine  
that performed all the functions of  
a plant  
and looked exactly like a plant,  
is it a plant?  
Yes,  
he said.  
No,  
I said.  
I am afraid  
the plants in our house  
heard.

“hacking a Lack”  
Hack-a-Lack:  
a new term  
to describe this new  
movement  
this old discussion  
Then there will be  
post-Hack-a-Lack  
and then

later  
much later  
maybe Neo-Hack-a-Lack:  
The Return of the King, the injustice of  
commodification;  
its disrespect,  
its usefulness,  
an awareness of the irony  
of digital landscapes,  
YouTube biking trails,  
of thunderstorm CDs.  
But then,  
Is it so bad  
to want  
to be cleaned  
by the rain sounds  
(although fake)  
to be nourished  
(by the mere sight)  
of trees  
to feel like  
(at least) you are (trying)

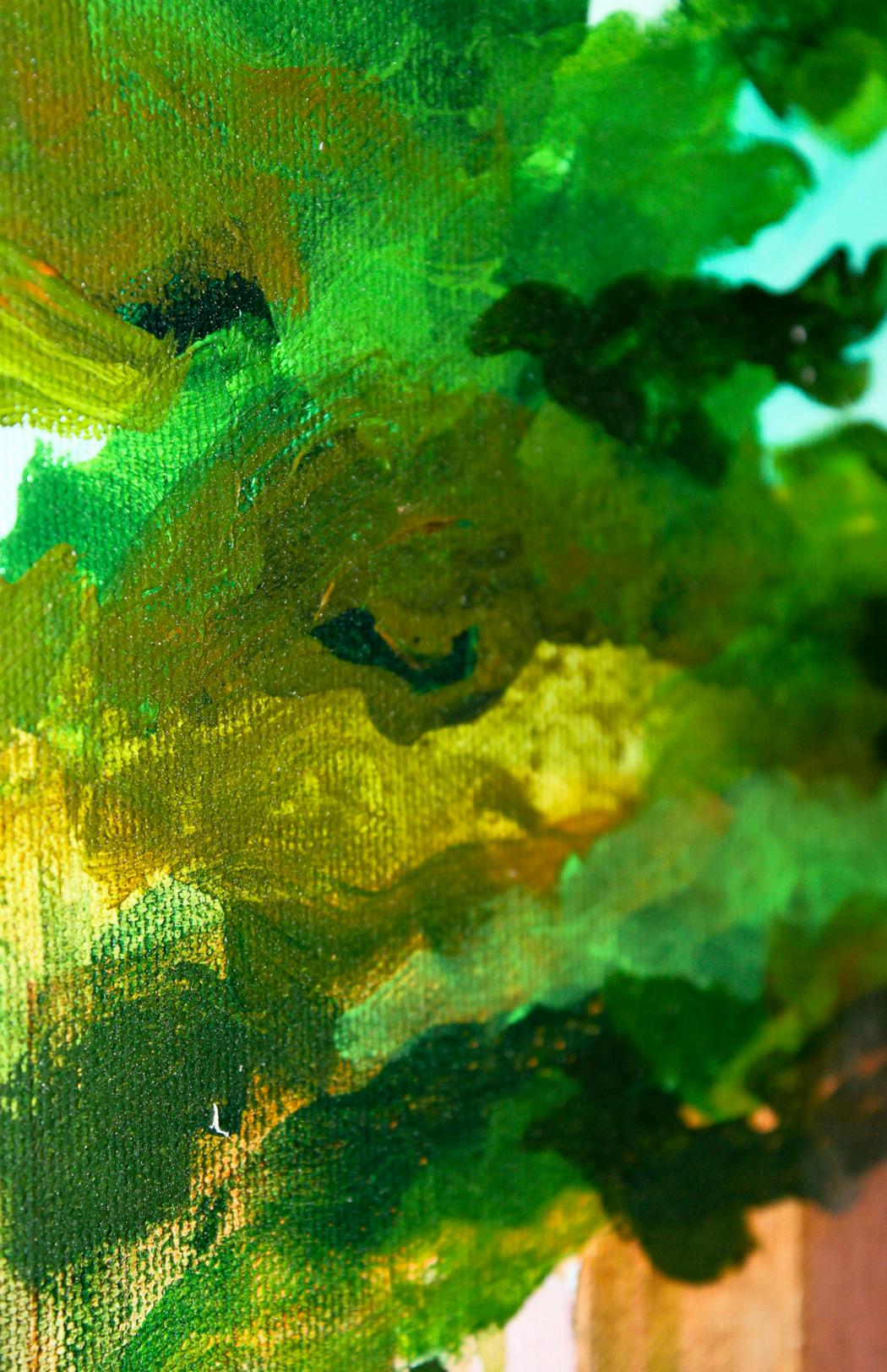
to be more than just what you are  
to grasp something larger  
with hyper as its prefix;  
all in all, to see some value  
in someone’s collection of gnomes.

these waterfalls pouring  
forever and ever and ever and ever  
off its flat  
super flat  
ness  
a plateau:  
a landscape  
a horizon  
- you think  
the most beautiful things  
come in rectangles, in straight lines ?  
In what settles you,  
gives you ground ? -  
The shelf will last forever  
long after I have died  
this shelf will live if it wants.  
Steady, unforgiving,  
square, numeric:  
objects ruling the world  
not us or me.

The stoic minimalism of a shelf,  
the garish baroque of a forest.  
From FREE ONLINE DEALS IF YOU  
DO THIS SURVEY  
to a place that wouldn’t dream of that,  
there is a cheapness.  
a glossiness.  
a poster of the Rockies,  
a towel with your family portrait on it.  
An empty shelf  
a Bestand  
essentially nothing  
Nothing

I’m scared  
of this art piece  
because it pretends it’s not scary  
to present post-Shelf-life.  
It honorably defends  
the honour  
of this generation  
that has no honour  
whatever that is  
while waving the flag of its lack,  
and tiling shit like your name is Tyler.  
And making a Grey Goo(se) joke  
while the Earth is rung  
with old iPad 1s.

Text by Lindsay Sorell



# Cassandra Paul

**The Mountaineer, 2012**

Acrylics on canvas, latex paint, and vinyl.

## **Home is where the guns, alcohol, and popcorn are**

*The Mountaineer* follows the story of Troy James Knapp, a man only recently identified as being the “mystery mountain man” breaking into remote cabins, taking what he wants, and vanishing into the harsh wilderness of Utah. After being released from a Californian prison over nine years ago, Knapp disappeared and has only been spotted twice during this time. Investigators have found camps - believed to have belonged to Knapp - stocked with guns, alcohol, food, supplies, batteries, and other extraneous items stolen from local cabins tucked away in the mountains. Noted as a “true survivalist”, Knapp has survived at least 5 years in the rugged mountainous terrain in Southern Utah, known for its harsh winters with temperatures dipping below -30 and accumulated snowfall of more than 10 feet.

The idea of home for most people is a physical location that you can store your personal belongings and share with family. The definition of “home” is vast and can also refer to an emotional attachment or psychological sense of belonging. During the winter the mountain recluse takes refuge by invading other people’s homes, stealing



**The Mountaineer, 2012**  
Installed at Haight Gallery.

their guns, alcohol and food and often times sleeping there for days and weeks at a time. When the owners return to find their cabins slept in, robbed and vandalized their emotional sense of home is destroyed. In one particular instance the owner returned to find a handwritten note reading, "Get off my mountain." While owners feel like they are being violated and exploited, Knapp obviously feels as if they have somehow encroached on his territory. It's interesting that both owners and the mystery mountain man cannot achieve a sense of home, physically, and emotionally without invading and trampling the others.



# We Are the CAGC and We Are Not Sorry

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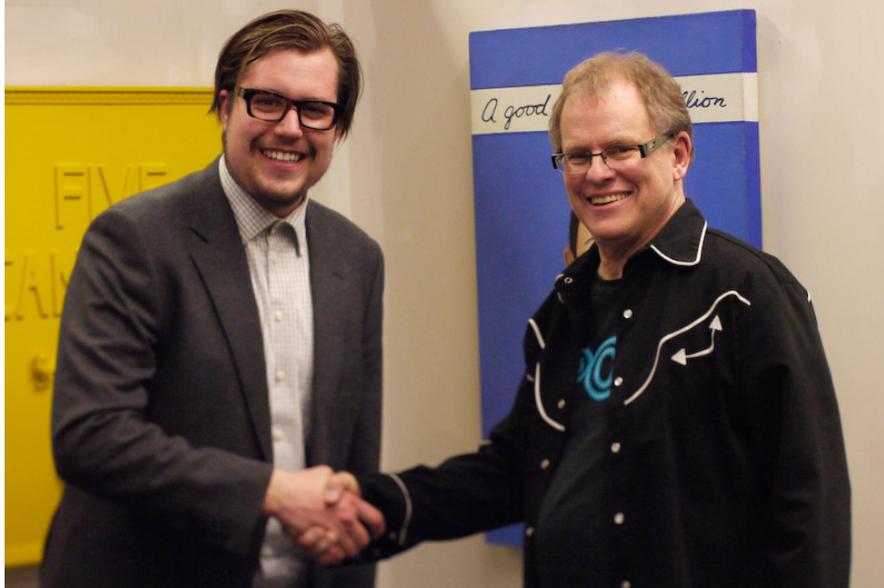
## Interview with Karly Mortimer and Jeremy Pavka by Steven Cottingham

On a muggy August evening, Calgary Biennial curator Steven Cottingham met up with two of the masterminds behind the Contemporary Art Gallery of Calgary. After a long day at their new studio in the bay of a denture-making lab, Karly Mortimer and Jeremy Pavka took Cottingham to their new local pub for some food and to discuss avocados, dickheads, envy, handbills, and the phenomena that was the CAGC.

The Contemporary Art Gallery of Calgary began in the winter of 2010 as two pieces of drywall at 93° floating in the middle of the MADT studios at the Alberta College of Art + Design. Its founders, Jeremy Pavka, Thomas Dalhgren, and Stephen Nachtigall, held weekly shows with an opening reception every Thursday. For the 2011-2012 academic year, Karly Mortimer took over the operations. The CAGC hosted 21 solo shows and 4 group shows featuring a total of 31 artists including ACAD students, ACAD faculty, alumni from the Design Academy Eindhoven, and Ringling College of Art and Design. The only rule for exhibiting artists

**Jeremy Pavka and Karly Mortimer in the CAGC, 2012**

Photo courtesy Jeremy Pavka.



was no painting of the walls as the walls themselves are considered a piece of art.

**Steven Cottingham** The CAGC had to contend with a lot of preconceived notions inherent to DIY pop-up galleries, such as an anticipated lack of professionalism, non-existent history, and possible non-existent future. I feel that this is addressed in adopting the moniker the Contemporary Art Gallery of Calgary, which partakes in an epithetical formula usually reserved for high-end galleries and publically-funded institutes. I was wondering if you could talk about that tension between formality and humour, spontaneity and premeditation?

**Jeremy Pavka** When you mix those things some times consistency can be a problem. It is easy to do everything professionally 70% of the time.

**Opening reception for Lindsay Wells' *Dead Pets*, 2011**

**Chris Cran and Jeremy Pavka at the opening of Cran's *Five Canaries*, 2011**

Photos courtesy Jeremy Pavka.

*The group is distracted by a near fender-bender at the stop-sign near the bar. Karly and Jeremy are having trouble focusing when they are so hungry. They have ordered, Steven has thoughtfully already eaten supper.*

**Karly Mortimer** Toying with ideas of presentation and giving yourself a platform is all about the cheekiness and the responsibility of an artist knowing his or her context. That is what I love about the CAGC, it is at once trying to be something it is not and also being very honest about what it is, and I think that is an integral part of it.

**JP** Calgary artist Eric Moschopedis jokes that all you need to do to prove you've used your grant is create a show-card, document your friends standing around one of your pieces, and write a report about it. If that's all it takes, why not take the next step and create a gallery with two walls? We also gained our creditability with artists we have shown, like Chris Cran. People talking about the gallery and being excited is important. Other galleries in Calgary are very successful in this, like Haight Gallery, or 809 who has a great website that is just as exciting as websites like KW in Berlin.

**SC** I think that the CAGC - more than any other space - possesses such an extreme disparity between the name and the physical space. It is two freestanding pieces of drywall...

**JP** Can I stop you there? We found those. Those were part of a piece of Collin Brown's that he was going to throw away. I put it in my studio and one day unfolded it. Thomas Dahlgren, Stephen Nachtigall, and I started to put a show every week and it just gained so much momentum. It's funny that we had nothing to do with building those walls.

**SC** There's a lot of humour behind it but at the same time I feel like both of you had a knack for selecting the most interesting artists, creating hype, and presenting them

## ... All good pop-up galleries die when they get cool.

in such a way that it all contributed to make really interesting experiences. The quick turn-around was another advantage, the fact that week after week you could have all of these great little shows and a chance for the artists to do mini-bodies of work and really investigate things that filled the space and made it feel a lot more complete.

**JP** It felt like we gained a lot when we started our openings at 6:00 PM and attending the openings became a part of people's art-ridden Thursday nights.

*Food arrives and there is much excitement. Jeremy offers Steven some of his nacho fries and says that he is planning to recoup the \$8.00 in the sale of this catalogue.*

**SC** When you talk to friends in other countries who have not visited the CAGC it sounds very professional and it doesn't sound at all like what it is. (*Laughter*). That is to say: there's a huge disparity between presentation and manifestation, content and history. All of these things are at odds with each other and there is something weird that happens when all of these foreign things are in dialogue.

**KM** It speaks to a need. It was just a bunch of kids throwing up walls and there was so much talent to choose from. We needed it so badly and look at how easy it was to make happen - not that it wasn't a lot of work. The cheeky thing is that there are these publically-funded institutions where professionals with experience have salaries to fill that void. We were in a position where we could make that happen; granted, we had all kinds of freedom without rent, a board of directors, panels, and a need to make back any money. We didn't have to censor it. I feel it's so important in my own practice to create spaces where things could happen, and that is what the CAGC could do for other artists. It proved just how small that space could be and still have artists flourish. When the artists were challenged with the space and given the freedom to be reactionary, to be cheeky, to take risks, it still had magic and relevance.

**SC** It continued in almost a direct tangent from a conceptual tradition of the 1960s that really expanded and exploded art. Doing dumb things and pursuing the art that elicits groans like, "Oh, this could be art?" There was some magic there still, and that might have been the youthful excitement of I'm-in-school-and-don't care that seeped into the space. There was a sheer enthusiasm for

what art means and what it could be and what these social dynamics and friendships can mean alongside it.

**JP** When I was running it, we got a lot of flack about people believing that we were just showing our friends. As I told Karly when she took it over, these people weren't my friends the year before. It wasn't that I didn't like them but that our relationship was through the work we were making. I associated myself with people that not only pushed what art could be but people who were busy researching their context.

**KM** I think the selection of the artists was an interesting process because they were hand-selected and given the space rather than proposing a project and showing months or years later. That allowed them to take risks and show work that they were still excited about, that didn't have to please anyone. Anyone we noticed who was working really hard, spent a lot of time at the studio, and was really investigating something was someone who caught our attention. It didn't matter if I understood their work or not, but a rigorous practice that investigated its context was key. Almost nightly I was visiting all of the studios to see what people had been up to, keeping an eye out for people who were really working and could benefit from a CAGC show.

**SC** It was nice that some shows weren't planned so far in advance. I think that when they weren't it allowed art to be captured at a point before the artist became too self-conscious or self-critical. It was great that you had really up-to-date, current, reactionary scheduling that showcased new work that hadn't been given time to simmer; stuff that was still bursting out of the artist's brain.

**KM** I noticed a great need for interdisciplinary dialogue at ACAD, and the CAGC was a good format for that because you had people who were just curious coming out from all years and disciplines.

**JP** We advertised the address of the CAGC using the street address of ACAD. One day we had some guys come through who were so mad when they found how small it was. It was one of my proudest moments of the CAGC. There was another student-run gallery a few years ago called the Ralph Klein Gallery and I heard that Ralph Klein came to visit the school looking for the gallery named after him. I thought that was impressive and I wanted to accomplish something like that. It changed my mind about what a pop-up gallery could be.

**KM** I found that when I told faculty from other countries what we were up to with the CAGC they were so excited. When I tried to explain about the physical space or even showed them they seemed to get more excited. The CAGC retained a lot of youthful romanticism that we all probably had going into art school. That we could be a group of people making something together that was larger than us.

**Waitress** Can I get you guys anything else? Another beer?

**JP** Yes. And another salsa.

**Waitress** The rest of you doing okay?

**SC** Yes.

**KM** Yes, thanks.

**JP** Janice Kerbel's *Bank Job* was a piece where she published detailed instructions on how to rob a London bank after posing as an architecture student. She also did a project where she sold a bunch of properties on an island that never existed. Her work made me think about perception and what you could fake.

**SC** I think that the CAGC was responsible in setting off a rash of other student-run galleries at ACAD. I remember coming back from New York and there being a sizeable website dedicated to all of the pop-up galleries around the school. I think that even in Calgary, on a larger scale, the DIY space has become a successful alternative or parallel to artist-run centers and commercial galleries.

**JP** Calgary is a strange city. In the States right now, Subway® is really pushing avocados, like it is this newfound thing. It's like, "Whoa, avocado, put avocado on everything," and in Calgary it's like, "Whoa, food-trucks, whoa, pop-up spaces," and then you see them everywhere. It might not be new but we're finding a way to make them our own.

**KM** Yes, we inspired a lot of pop-up galleries to start, which was one of my goals. I think we did at some times make it seem a lot easier than it was. I think other people who started their own pop-ups were surprised at how deliberate all of our choices were. I sat down with the founders and we created a strict mandate. Everything from whether or not to create facebook events to the number, placement, and timing of handbills was considered in accordance with our mandate. Part of being a dickhead artist is making things look easy and spontaneous.

**SC** I want to point out that I think that the CAGC was the first student-run gallery - in my time, at least - to start circulating handbills. It really demonstrated a commitment to professionalism, sort of, and your dedication to making things work even if it cost you some money out of your own pocket.

**KM** We took our handbills really seriously. Some artists felt a lot of pressure about it and that it was the most exciting part about showing at the CAGC.

**Waitress** Here's your beer. (*Leaves*).

**JP** She forgot the salsa.

**SC** I'm sorry. I like how I feel you addressed your own pretentiousness. It was very different from the artist-run centers with democratic committee processes and applications that people at ACAD were raised to aspire towards. It was very clear who was picking these shows. I feel that this instigated, first and foremost,

a lot of envy as in, like, "Why didn't I get a show?" as well as envy for its success and consistent quality. The envy, in turn, sometimes created feelings of jealous and anger but also, I think, a desire to try and duplicate this or try it for one's self. I really like that you acknowledged that, most prominently in your show titled *Dickheads*. By being sort of self-aware, it simultaneously alleviates and elevates the level of perceived pretentiousness.

**KM** I'd rather be the person doing something and taking the heat rather than the one who complains and does nothing. One point that I always kept in mind when considering our programming was to show work that wouldn't be shown other places. There are a lot of great places to show in Calgary but the CAGC showed a lot of work that you wouldn't see anywhere else and a type of work that our artists couldn't show other places. There were a lot of great artists that deserved shows but I had to keep reminding myself that they had places to show, they'd be fine. The CAGC was for artists who I knew were stifled because they keep trying to have their work fit in more traditional galleries. One of my proudest CAGC moments was seeing people do what they actually wanted to do and feel encouraged after their CAGC show. It was a lot of about embracing your private practices and inner dickhead.

**SC** Again, I think it really continued that historical practice of placing "abrasive" or somehow-unacceptable art at the forefront. It's really great to have places that still explore what it is to be a dickhead. Do you feel that the CAGC is over? Was it a project that was to be contained inside ACAD or do you have secret dreams of forthcoming iterations of this project?

**JP** We bought the domain name contemporaryartgalleryofcalgary.org and are working on its web presence. Regarding the physical space: it's on vacation.

**KM** It is something very different without it being in a rent-free location with bootlegged fancy pop and the student atmosphere. Mary Scott told me that all good pop-up galleries die when they get cool. I guess we have to decide whether or not the CAGC was cool.

August 2012



# Nate McLeod

## Growing Pains

Nate McLeod's work focuses on relationships inherent in contemporary art practice - often considering those found between exhibition space, artwork, and viewer. Through rigorous exploration of methods of display, materiality, scale, and colour, McLeod aims to manipulate factors influencing the seemingly simple act of viewing an artwork, removing extraneous information to reveal a thorough consideration of space and its effect on the viewer.

As a part of *Hearts of the New West*, McLeod presents *Growing Pains*; a series of site-specific inflatable sculptures installed at multiple venues throughout Calgary. In addition to the larger works found at each venue, a number of smaller inflatables can be found during the opening reception along the routes between AVALANCHE! Institute of Contemporary Art, 809 Gallery, and Haight Gallery. These smaller sculptures act both as markers physically connecting the venues, as well as an entry point into the biennial for those who happen upon them by chance.

**Growing Pains (Boomtown No. 1),**  
2012

Inflatable sculpture (plastic  
tablecloth, vinyl, acrylic, fan).

By taking advantage of unused, unseen pockets of space found in each participating venue, the project aims to draw parallels



**Growing Pains (Boomtown No. 3),  
2012**

Installed at various venues and  
locales around the city.

with the galleries themselves; each having resourcefully transformed small, repurposed spaces into exhibition venues. While shedding light on the potential for artistic exploration in alternative spaces, these venues, and many more that have come before them, represent the dedication, inventiveness, and sense of community that continues to make more and more young artists decide to call Calgary "home".



# Lindsay Sorell

The Øath, 2012

Ice gravestone installed at 1:00 AM on Nose Hill Drive NW between Crowfoot Station and the artist's familial home. The artist swears an oath on it.

Photo courtesy the artist.

## RE: New work

We have spent a lot of time discussing binaries, I think. Or, the polar ends of spectrums. Is this now an outdated notion, the idea of oppositional forces? I mean, they define limits where clearly everything falls somewhere in between - never quite dwelling exclusively in one or the other. One of the problems, I think, is that we don't have names for the points in between the poles. They are only grey, only the areas of versus. (I don't even want to think about field-theory, or plotting points on multi-dimensional axes).

So, I wonder if I have to ask forgiveness before I set about delineating your work; contorting it and flattening it so that it fits nicely within language. For you (for me, too), it is always something between *public* and *private*. You used the word "purgatory" and talked about hospital hallways: areas of transition. They are different but closely related to the spectrums I think I am talking about.

Let us start at the very fore: the great poles of *birth* and *death*. The space in between is *life*. But then life has its own little poles: *childhood* and *adulthood*, where the space



The Øath, 2012

Digital mock-up using wordseye.com.

Installed at 51.130774, -114.191672.

in between is called sometimes *adolescence* or *maturation* or *young adult* or something. The trick is knowing when you've crossed into one threshold from another. Like, *awake* to *asleep*. I always feel like the act of falling asleep takes a few minutes - like, the consciousness never just switches off and everything goes black. I feel like it might be a slower progression but I suspect your memory, or internal recorder or whatever, stops working slightly before your consciousness does. So you never remember what it's like to actually "fall" asleep.

In the same way, you can never know when you have "grown up". From a child's perspective, the parent is so certainly in another realm. It is very clear that you are a child and they are a grown-up. If you don't have children, to polarize yourself, will you ever know you have reached adulthood? Because our perception doesn't really work on a scale of that size - especially when we are in transition. Day-to-day, nothing apparent alters. Really. You need to be able to look five years in either direction to notice differences, but then memory and perception and biases all conspire so that, in the end, you can never really know. But whatever.

You know what I'm curious about? (I just got a glass of water with some ice so I can watch it melt and everything while I type). I was just thinking about different kinds of "spectrums". I don't know if any of these words or terms

are really appropriate. Like, the spectrum of *birth/death* moves in one direction. The spectrum of *public/private* is constantly oscillating, like a pendulum maybe, between the two. I mean, it allows that sort of freedom of linear movement. The polarity of *liquid/solid/vapour* represents a cycle, passing through one end of the spectrum into the other and eventually back upon itself. Death is such a sudden change. But will you even know? Will there be anywhere beyond to look back and observe that change - will it be something you can't quite remember happening?

Anyway. The ice in my glass has melted and I'm not sure what else to say tonight. We'll talk more tomorrow. You can show me your new tattoo.

Text taken from a correspondence with the artist by  
Aaron Waters



cont'd from page 89

**Notes for ... words for Xilitla Forever ...**

- i Arseny Tarkovsky, "And this I dreamt" [lines 1-9] (1974), trans. Philip Metres & Dimitri Psurtsev, *My Fate Was Burned Between the Lines*, Moscow: Eksmo Press, 2009
- ii Adolfo Bioy Casares, *Invençion de Morel*, Editorial Losada, Buenos Aires, 1940, The Invention of Morel, trans. Ruth LC Simms 1964, NYRB, New York, 2003, p.10
- iii Casares, p.14
- iv Arseny Tarkovsky, "First dates" [lines 4-9], trans. Tatiana Kameneva, *Mirror*, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky, film, Soviet Union, 1975
- v Casares, p.16
- vi Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694), "The spring we don't see", *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Bashō, Buson, and Issa*, trans. & ed. Robert Hass, Penguin Books Canada Ltd., Ontario, 1994
- vii [Saint] Hildegard of Bingen (1096-1179/1180), Lucien Hervé, *Architecture of Truth: The Cistercian Abbey of Le Thoronet*, Phaidon Ltd., London, 2001
- viii Casares, p.13
- ix Casares, p.76
- x Octavio Paz, *Alternating Current* (1973), trans. Helen Lane, Arcade Publishing, New York, 2005
- xi J.G. Ballard, "The Thousand Dreams of Stellavista" (1962), *Vermilion Sands*, Carroll & Graf, New York, 1988
- xii Casares, p.19
- xiii Joan Jonas, *I Want to Live in the Country (And Other Romances)*, dir. Joan Jonas, video, New York, 1976
- xiv Casares, p.32
- xv Casares, p.22
- xvi Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827), "The world of dew." *The Dumpling Field: Haiku of Issa*, trans. Lucien Stryk & Noboru Fujiwara, Ohio University Press, 1991
- xvii Edward James (1907-1984), "My house..." [lines 1, 5, 6], on a wall at *Las Pozas*, Xilitla, Mexico
- xviii Casares, p.24
- xix Maryanne Amacher, "Notes on Petra (1991) Variations for Two Pianos for ISCM Zurich", web.
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- xxii Maryanne Amacher, *Composing Perceptual Geographies*, web.
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- xxiv Casares, p.32
- xxv Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), Bantam Books, New York, 1977
- xxvi Jean-Baptiste Joseph Fourier, "Mémoire sur les Températures du Globe Terrestre et des Espaces Planétaires", *Mémoires d'Académie Royale des Sciences de l'Institute de France VII 570-604 1827*, trans. R. T. Pierrehumbert, Chicago, 2004, web.
- xxvii Casares, p.71
- xxviii Pavel Florensky, "Obratnaia perspektiva" (Reverse Perspective 1967), *Beyond Vision: essays on the perception of art*, trans. Wendy Salmond, ed. Nicoletta Misler, Reaktion Books LTD, London, 2002
- xxix Maryanne Amacher, MA interview passages from *Sound Generation*, web.
- xxx Casares, p.78-79
- xxxi Maya Deren, "For Anaïs Before the Glass" [lines 1-4, 8-9] (1945); Satoshi Kanazawa, "Multiplying Women: reflection, repetition, and multiplication in the works of Maya Deren and Anaïs Nin", *A Café in Space*, Vol. 8, 2011, web.
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- xxxiii Edgar Allan Poe, *Eureka: A Prose Poem*, Putnam, New York, 1848, web.
- xxiv Casares, p.85



# Contributors

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## Artists

**Kyle Beal** graduated from ACAD in 2001 and obtained a Master's Degree in Visual Art from the University of Victoria in 2004. His work has been featured in exhibitions throughout Canada, including the Glenbow Museum in Alberta and the Contemporary Art Gallery of Vancouver. His multidisciplinary practice uses tradition media along with interactive electronic objects to explore ideas related to language, comedy, and the space between authentic and affected behaviour. Upcoming exhibitions include a solo exhibition at ARTsPLACE (Annapolis Royal, NS) in 2013, and a three-person show centred around comedy and tragedy at AKA (Saskatoon, SK) in 2014.

**Billie Rae Busby** creates hard edge abstract prairie landscapes to reinvent our surroundings through mood, light, and movement. She snaps photos while travelling through the prairies as her source to create inventive yet familiar places. Raised in Saskatchewan and living in Calgary for more than a decade, she is inspired by the distinct lines of both urban architecture and rural landscapes. She experiences great anticipation to see and interpret ordinary places in a fresh, new context. Her abstract works have been showcased throughout various galleries and exhibitions in Calgary and have been acquired by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts collection.

**Dana Buzzee** grew up in Canmore and is a recent graduate of the Alberta College of Art + Design's Drawing department. In her practice Buzzee reflects on her experiences growing up in the mountains, through an interdisciplinary approach with an emphasis on photography and installation.

**Jennifer Crighton** is an artist, musician, and cultural worker who has chosen to make Calgary her home. Although she considers herself an artist, she is ambivalent about precisely what that means, but keeps making the work regardless. She regards her artworks as systems of activities rather than as

isolated pieces. Working intimately with her surroundings, she has come to regard them as both material and collaborator.

**Hannah Doerksen** is a recent grad from the Alberta College of Art + Design. Through exchange programs she studied at the New York Studio Residency Program in Brooklyn, NY and the California College of the Arts in San Francisco, CA. Most recently Hannah returned from a DIY residency and show in Sao Paulo, Brazil. As a multi-disciplinary artist her work presents and ponders whilst pointing to the small contradictions, peculiarities, beauties, and failures experienced and observed in day to day life.

**Miruna Dragan** was born in Bucharest, Romania and is currently based in Calgary. She has never lived for more than a few years in any one place, but some of the more important to her include New York, Los Angeles, Amsterdam, Beirut, and the island of Paros in Greece. Her works reflect themes of dispersion and transcendence through site-responsive acts. Realized through varying methods including intervention, video, fresco, drawing, and photography, Dragan's projects have been exhibited in the US, the Netherlands, Romania, Germany, Mexico, Greece, Czech Republic, Lebanon, and Canada. She has attended numerous residencies worldwide, holds an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, and teaches in the Drawing program at the Alberta College of Art + Design.

**Julien Fournier** is a Calgary-based visual artist currently attending the Alberta College of Art + Design. His work focuses on social psychologies and theoretical linguistics, their effects on the verbal and written word, and how people interact with one another. This concept is transferred into "word paintings" in which language and image is abstracted by placing a word or phrase where it has no context. The materials and words then take on a comedic or satirical approach to today's popular culture and the boundaries that block freedom of thought.

**Heather Huston** received her MFA in printmaking from the University of Alberta in 2006 and currently works as an instructor at the Alberta College of Art + Design in Calgary. She has exhibited locally, nationally and internationally and has works in several collections including the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University and the Arkansas State University Permanent Collection of Art. Her work is based on miniatures, the everyday, and the search for interesting structures in cookie-cutter neighbourhoods.

**Julia Kansas** is an artist from Calgary, Alberta. She recently graduated from Alberta College of Art + Design from the Drawing department. She makes charcoal drawings of teeth, hair, Palm Bay, and stuff. She also likes to pretend she is a photographer sometimes by taking pictures of her friends drinking, having fun, and creating trouble. Sometimes she stages fake party scenes as a way to define her dominance over her female friends. Power dynamics. Kansas smokes Belmont regulars and her favourite drink is double vodka water.

Junk collections, refashioned tools, found objects, text-works, line drawings, and colour-field spritzer paintings characterize the recent work of **Kris Lindskoog**.

He often shows these works together in multimedia installations. Lindskoog has exhibited locally, nationally, and internationally at venues including TRUCK Gallery, Calgary; the Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton; SAAG, Lethbridge; and Kling og Bang Galeri, Reykjavik. His work will be seen in an upcoming exhibition at Calgary's Stride Gallery. He lives with his wife and daughter in Calgary, Alberta.

**Nate McLeod** is an interdisciplinary artist and arts administrator living in Calgary, Canada. Since graduating with a BFA from the Alberta College of Art + Design in 2010, he has developed a body of paintings, sculptures, and installations exploring various methods of display in order to highlight the relationships found between exhibition space, artwork, and viewer. In addition to maintaining an independent studio practice, McLeod is the Editor of Fresh Bread ([freshbreaddaily.ca](http://freshbreaddaily.ca)), and the Programming Director of AVALANCHE! Institute of Contemporary Art.

**Sondra Meszaros** graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design and received her MFA in Drawing from the University of Windsor. Meszaros is known for her large-scale drawings that indulge a connection to the abysmal, the uncanny, the violent, and the mysterious lurking behind idylls. Her work and research is rooted in the development of a personal narrative that appropriates from folklore, animist myths, and pagan storytelling, with patterned power dynamics, the works border between figuration and abstraction. Most recently she has been interested in ideas of nature and nurture, to examine collective pre-occupations with instinctual drive and masochistic tendencies. Her work has been placed in many prestigious North American and international private collections. Meszaros' work has been exhibited at the Armory Show, Art Basel, The Toronto International Art Fair, and The VIP- Viewing In Private International Contemporary Art Fair. Meszaros is represented by Corkin Gallery in Toronto. She currently lives in Calgary, Alberta where she teaches within the First Year Studies and Drawing Department of the Alberta College of Art + Design.

**Karly Mortimer** has Bachelor Degrees in Art (Psychology) and Fine Art. She has studied in Calgary, the United Kingdom, and New York but owes most of her learning to family ranches along the eastern slopes of the Rockies.

**Stephen Nachtigall** is an artist currently producing art in Calgary, Alberta. After studying sculpture at the Alberta College of Art + Design and graduating in 2011, Stephen has participated in various group exhibitions and projects, including *BYOB Calgary*, *Speedshow*, *The Works*, *Return to the Dollhouse*, and *Sled Island*.

**Cassandra Paul** is an artist living and working in Calgary, AB. She currently works as the Administrative Director at AVALANCHE! Institute of Contemporary Art. She is an active participant in the arts community volunteering as part of the Marketing team for MOCA Museum of Contemporary Art Calgary as well as having sat on the Board of Directors and acting as the Fundraising Coordinator for Untitled Art Society for one year. Paul has shown her work both locally and nationally with an upcoming exhibition in the Stride Project Room

in January 2013. Paul's work explores the built environment investigating how relationships and interactions develop and disintegrate in these spaces.

Born weighing 11 pounds, **Jeremy Pavka** is a self-actualized artist and cowboy currently practicing in Calgary, Alberta.

**Sally Raab** received a BFA in Drawing in 2010 from the Alberta College of Art + Design. In addition to working at Untitled Art Society, she currently sits of the board of directors for Pith Gallery and Studios, Mountain Standard Time Performative Arts Festival (M:ST), and teaches semi-annually at Studio C. Philadelphia-grown, she maintains an emerging art practice based in installation, photography, and performative video. As well as art, she likes natural specimens in jars, Roland Barthes, and a nice cup of coffee.

**Paul Robert** is a Canadian artist who works in a variety of media. His installations, sculptural objects, videos, stereoscopes and public interventions attempt to reveal the hidden assumptions that allow technological modes of thought to seem self-evident. His work has been exhibited in a variety of Canadian locations. Paul has an MFA from NSCAD University in Halifax (2005) and a BFA from the Alberta College of Art + Design (2002) where he currently teaches in the departments of First Year Studies, and Media Arts and Digital Technologies. His writing has appeared in publications such as *Bordercrossings* and *Fuse*.

**Rick Silva** is a new media artist whose recent works explore landscape, remix and glitch. Rick's art has shown in exhibitions and festivals worldwide, including Transmediale (Germany), Futuresonic (UK), and Sonar (Spain). His art and research has been supported through grants and commissions from places such as Turbulence, Rhizome, and The Whitney Museum of American Art. Rick has performed live multimedia works in London at E:VENT Gallery, Tokyo at The Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts, and throughout North America including the Software Cinema Festival in Houston, Texas. Media outlets such as The New York Times, The Guardian UK, Liberation, El Pais, and The CBS Evening News have all recognized his art. Most recently, the author of the book *Transmission Arts: Artists and Airwaves* regarded him as "a recognized pioneer in New Media Art." He has previously taught at the University of Georgia-Athens and the Alberta College of Art + Design, and is now an Assistant Professor of Digital Arts at the University of Oregon. Rick was born in Brazil.

**Lindsay Sorell** graduated from the Alberta College of Art + Design with Distinction in 2012 and now works a fulfilling retail job in Calgary, AB. It is an hour-and-a-half commute from her home at 208 Citadel Pass Court NW. She aspires to move out of her parents' house even though she would miss her cat, Kiwi, very much. Currently, Lindsay is thinking about getting her MFA but she thinks a lot about all sorts of things. Her accomplishments include winning the Stampede Western Art Award in grade 12 and avoiding hangovers by drinking a lot of water the night before.

**Teresa Tam's** practice revolves around the complexity of space and time. How

we (do not or cannot) perceive that relationship within our limited notion of reality in what we know of the universe now.

**Justin Waddell** graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design and received his MFA in Integrated Media from the University of Windsor. He is currently a Board Member of the Calgary Cinematheque, M.S.T. Performative Art Festival, and is involved as a founding Board Member with the every-age art and music venue, Local Library in Calgary, Alberta. His work and research is rooted in the development of a personal narrative of experimentation and process. Right now, he is interested in escapism. Waddell currently lives in Calgary, Alberta where he is a Permanent Instructor at the Alberta College of Art + Design.

**Richard Williams** is a native Calgarian, and received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Alberta College of Art + Design. As an emerging artist, he has dedicated his interdisciplinary practice to the themes of history and material culture, while working to establish himself within the thriving Calgary arts community.

**Andrea Williamson** was born and raised in Calgary and this is where she maintains her art and critical writing practice. Andrea graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University in 2007 with a double major in Fine Arts and Media Arts. Her current practice involves methods of display, which bring together the results of various processes such as print media, text work, sculpture and painting, under a specific body of questions. Her concentration on media images, newspaper photographs and photo documentation from her own life is based on a search for an ethics of empathy, community and difference, and on a process of moral comparison. She expresses social environments where boundaries between self and other are put into question at the same time as difference is celebrated. Williamson has participated in numerous local group exhibitions including *Get it on Paper* at Summit Fine Arts, *Hugly Mangry Killdren* at TRUCK Gallery and *Portrait of a Crowd* at the Local Library. She has attended residencies in Toronto, Banff, and Amherst, Virginia and has exhibited in Halifax, Toronto, Calgary, and New York City.

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## Writers

**David Court** is an artist and writer based in New York. His writing has been featured in catalogues and periodicals published in Canada, the US, and China, including *Art Papers*, *C Magazine*, *Fillip*, and *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*.

**Joel Farris** [joelfarris.net/about](http://joelfarris.net/about)

**Christina Mayder** is a Calgary artist and student at Alberta College of Art + Design, class of 2013. Her artistic practice is currently focused on performance



art, including both furtive and endurance methods of making work. The objective of this performative practice is to engage creatively beyond the walls of her studio. Recently Christina has kept busy with her involvement in the art's community; a participant in TouVA's six day performance workshop (hosted by Calgary's MS:T festival), working as the Production Manager on Lewis Liski's documentary *Alternative Currency*, and most recently as the Social Media Manager for Nuit Blanche Calgary.

**J.D. Mersault** is a naked man in love with a sun which leaves no shadows. He has green and sometimes violet eyes. He is silly and uncouth and boring most of the time, but every once and a while he can actually get serious and create, you know, things.

**Sheri Nault** is an artist and writer living in Calgary, Alberta. She recently received her BFA at the Alberta College of Art + Design in 2012. Since graduating, she has continued to work on and develop her artistic practice and writing. She is involved with The New Gallery, John Snow House, and the gallery's archives, as well as several independent arts initiatives within Calgary. Nault utilizes drawing as her primary media, alongside print and installation, rendering conceptually founded imagery in ritualistic detail. Her work has been shown in small group and solo exhibitions throughout Alberta.

**Laurel Smith** and **Christopher Willard** often collaborate on various art projects. In her recent exhibition, *Red Glare* at Skew Gallery, Smith proposed all red be evacuated to Mars. Willard is Head of Painting at the Alberta College of Art + Design. His most recent novel is titled *Sundre*.

**Aaron Waters** is a curator and writer whose research focuses primarily on "the indescribable". He founded the non-profit exhibition space The #000000 Gallery, is editor-in-chief at artist bookwork publishing house Ambient Light Press, and is an ongoing contributor to *New Light*, among other things. He divides his time between Calgary, New York, and Reykjavik.

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## Curator

**Steven Cottingham** is an artist, curator, and sometimes-writer from Calgary, AB. His dream is to spend a summer in Longyearben, Svalbard and never see the sun go down again.



## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all who submitted to the initial call for applications in February 2012. The overwhelming amount of responses was incredibly encouraging in the early, tentative stages of this project. Indeed, my faith in our city's artistic community was very much affirmed by the quality and quantity of applications I received. I want to extend sincere thanks to all of the hard-working local galleries and individuals that assisted me in the coordination of this endeavour: Matthew Mark Bourree at Haight, Brandon A. Dalmer and Shawn Mankowske at 809, Nate McLeod and Cassandra Paul at AVALANCHE!, and Aaron Waters at #000000 and Ambient Light Press. I also want to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Calgary 2012 Cultural Capital Organization and the Art Cult of Calgary.

I would like to extend my personal gratitude to my friends and family. Sometimes this project felt like a lonely undertaking. I'm especially thankful for the friendships of Thomas Story, Lucas Roberts, Sam Haslam, Christina Mayder, Jodie Rose Serwa, GraceMarie Keaton-Stasi, Evan Halter, Joe Menjivar, Randy Niessen, and Kelly Smith.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven Cottingham

