2014
MFA
GRADUATE
THESIS
EXHIBITION

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VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
2014
MASTER OF FINE ARTS
GRADUATE
THESIS
EXHIBITION

3 CRAFT / MATERIAL STUDIES
Abram Deslauriers
Erika Diamond
Marisa Finos
Brian Fleetwood
Julie Malen
Jared Cru Smith
Andrea Vail

33 KINETIC IMAGING
Charli Brissey
Zachary Kurth-Nelson

43 PAINTING + PRINTMAKING
Tom Burkett
Adriane Connerton
Philip Hinge
Michael Hunter
Nick Irzyk
Aaron Koehn
Mike Linskie
Christine Navin
Aaron Storck

81 PHOTOGRAPHY + FILM
Cynthia Henebry
Janelle Proulx

91 SCULPTURE + EXTENDED MEDIA
Jake Borndal
Tal Gafny
Morgan Pearse
Roxanne Yamins
Omri Zin

Essays by Owen Duffy

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CRAFT / MATERIAL STUDIES

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ABRAM DESLAURIERS

Working with glass, Abram Deslauriers’s three-dimensional forms traverse genres to expand the technical and conceptual possibilities of this material. To make the *Scherzo* series, Deslauriers repeatedly uses Venetian cane, allowing the form to organically become a singular, endless network. As Deslauriers works, he freely and intuitively rotates each piece; an improvisational tactic informed by his background in music. Linked by black resin, the Uranium green and blood red glass tubular lengths of the *Scherzo* series call to mind the body’s circulatory or nervous systems. Dense in certain moments and open in others, *Mass of Black*, like the *Scherzo* series, produces sculptural form through a recurrent elongated gesture. This piece’s distinct liquid surface comes from the artist’s use of black Opaline glass, which Deslauriers draws with and then hastily fires until the glass puddles up like ink. Inevitably, the material resists the artist’s total control, and the end result can be described as a calculated action painting. The linear patterns the artist produced, spilling out like ink or paint, were then layered over and over to build the vacuous *Mass of Black*. Deslauriers’s process-driven art trusts in spontaneity, an approach that enables his work to continually shift from drawing to sculpture to painting.

*Scherzo II*
glass, magic sculpt
ABRAM DESLAURIERS

*Scherzo II, I, III*
glass, magic sculpt
ERIKA DIAMOND

Erika Diamond’s ethereal sculptures intentionally attempt to achieve the impossible: make permanent the fleeting physical connections that frequently occur between two human beings. Each work of art functions as a record of a moment of interaction and contact. Swathes of silk coated in gypsum create the ghostly calcified skin that forms Diamond’s numerous objects of intimacy. Situated on a pedestal so it engages viewers on a human scale, *Sitting Next to K.S.* displays the contours of two people during the moment they gently sat side by side. Whereas *Sitting Next to K.S.* could be evidence of a casual or affectionate juncture in time, *Truly Love Someone (#115 from The List of Ways to Live Forever)* is deeply personal, as its cascading chrome skin captures two hands, each holding while being held. In *Make a Deal with a Devil (#41 from The List of Ways to Live Forever)*, Diamond uses her materials to fossilize the common gesture of shaking hands, while serially implementing bronze to memorialize the literal physical space between this modest act in *Where We Meet (Inside)*. Because of her material choices, and methods of display, Diamond succeeds in attributing a sense of preciousness and meaning to an ordinary action. And, by materializing such immaterial moments, Diamond’s work as a whole asks viewers to reassess—and develop a greater understanding of— the everyday intimacies all too often taken for granted.
ERIKA DIAMOND

Make a Deal with the Devil
(#41 from The List of Ways
to Live Forever)
silk, hydrocal, copper plate

Where We Meet (Inside)
bronze casts

Truly Love Someone (#115 from
The List of Ways to Live Forever)
silk, hydrocal, copper plate, chrome plate
Dark and foreboding void-like humanoids surround viewers in Marisa Finos’s *Threshold*. Stemming, in part, from her investigations into near-death experiences, sensory deprivation tanks, sleep paralysis and other “in-between” states, Finos presents viewers with figures that are in a perpetual state of flux and becoming. Occupying a dimly lit gallery enriched by deep purple light, Finos’s sculptures, devoid of eyes, ears, arms and mouths, venture into the uncanny. Finos’s use of a charcoal and ink patinas provide the figures with a heady visual weight. And, given their bulbous protrusions, growing (or perhaps dissipating) like tumors on lean legs, these top-heavy works seem to defy gravity and impossibly remain standing. As one walks through *Threshold*, and her or his eyes adjust to the shadowy environment, one cannot help but notice the figures’ fibrous surfaces which reinforce the organic qualities of these otherworldly creatures. All of *Threshold’s* humanoids appear to be connected in some way to another. Two of these figures, conjoined by an arcing, billowing, column of black, create a literal and metaphorical gate or threshold that separates another pair. While the final pair stands almost back to back; so close, yet both are seemingly unaware of their counterpart. Ultimately, *Threshold* emphasizes the instability and ever-changing nature of being, as human consciousness constantly morphs and fluctuates depending on circumstance and environment.
MARISA FINOS

Threshold
ceramic, wood, nylons, polyester fiber, facial tissues, ink, charcoal
Brian Fleetwood's *Artificial Dissemination* plumbs the parallels existing between biological systems and those constructed by humans. On the exhibition's opening night, three of the imaginative flora pieces of the installation were actuated as jewelry worn by performers. Then, the performers distributed small spore and polyp-like brooches and pendants that could be detached from their wearable sculptures to gallery-goers. Mimicking the propagation methods of information or contagions, Fleetwood's art travelled with its audience like a “gentle infection” into every space of the Anderson Gallery, the Depot, and beyond.

After the performance, *Artificial Dissemination* lived on as a sculptural installation, cleverly drawing on elements of scientific display and classification. Signage, replete with illustrations and such fictitious but convincing scientific names as *piger herbaconum* and *flavovasculum consecesporum* allow viewers to hunt for and identify Fleetwood’s various works as they rested on a pedestal. Abstractions or amalgamations of organisms found in nature, each of the silk, cotton, or rubber pieces are formal or conceptual relatives of another. Although each work exists independently, they are all part of a larger, artificial evolutionary history inventively contrived by Fleetwood. *Artificial Dissemination* reminds viewers of the synthetic and constructed categories imposed by the scientific community on the natural world while simultaneously narrowing the longstanding gap between art and science.

*Artificial Dissemination*
sterling silver, stainless steel, silk noil, cotton duck, polyester, ink, rubber, ABS plastic, PLA plastic, wood, lacquer
BRIAN FLEETWOOD

Artificial Dissemination
sterling silver, stainless steel, silk noil, cotton duck, polyester, ink, rubber, ABS plastic, PLA plastic, wood, lacquer
The title of Julie Malen’s thesis exhibition, *Erratic Boulders*, refers to a geological process where glaciers can uproot, transport, and deposit vast swathes of earth and archaeological remains. *Erratic Boulders* outlandishly envisions this process as if it occurred today, sweeping up debris from different environments, cultures, and time periods. Dividing Malen’s installation into two spaces is a theatrical backdrop. On one side, viewers can observe the outcome of the aforementioned geological process as a conglomeration of bizarre objects litters the gallery floor. One such example would be the perturbing oversized foot, supported by an equally oversized sandal and sculpted with overgrown and meticulously painted toenails. Also included in this cultural sampling is a larger-than-life barbeque chicken leg, a bust of the musician Bobby Gillespie, and an ambiguous fossilized form that could be a meteorite or a boulder. On the verso of the backdrop is a disorienting digital collage, sutureing together an impossible scene of ancient ruins, residential architecture, the natural world, and the pieces from the other side. A bundle of tool handles, a speeding video of driving through suburbia, and a car undergoing cellular division comprise this side’s societal detritus. Malen’s accumulation of seemingly random and discordant subject matter conjures up the internet’s immense flows of random images and information, letting viewers navigate through a seemingly incongruous landscape.
JULIE MALEN

Erratic Boulders
ink jet prints on canvas, ceramic, granite, foam, wood, video, tool handles, architectural pedestal, cabinet
Phase 1, the single work in Jared Cru Smith’s show Inhale, Exhale reveals fresh possibilities of a ubiquitous material with a deep history: wood. Sixteen elongated timbers made of quarter-sawn white oak are carefully balanced by several hundred bass wood shims and smaller pieces of walnut and ash. Elevated by saw horses that are in fact taller than the stack itself, the varying tones and grains of the disparate woods create striking visual range and texture. Smith constructed Phase 1 in situ, gingerly building each layer piece by piece without the assistance of adhesive or a fastening system, all the while squaring the piece with the Depot’s industrial-looking walls. Logically, one might assume that Phase 1 is somewhat unstable, ready to collapse at any moment due to the weight and complexity of its many parts. In actuality, the work belies a false sense of precariousness. Stemming from his longstanding preoccupation with architecture, Smith has erected Phase 1 utilizing a flexible balancing system dependent on compression and friction that gives, moves, and shifts in response to changes in the surrounding environment, similar to how skyscrapers are designed to withstand the force of earthquakes. Phase 1’s weighty presence welcomes viewers to experience a multiplicity of perspectives and views which are generated by this intricate material investigation’s puzzling linear intersections.

Phase 1
white aak, ash, walnut, steel, shims
JARED CRU SMITH

Phase 1
white aak, ash, walnut, steel, shims
Panoramic Sham, Andrea Vail’s expansive installation, is comprised of separate works that repurpose thrift-store finds in order to examine why people continually seek to artificially integrate nature into domestic spaces. In Island, knotless netting binds floral patterned reticulated plates—collectable porcelain vessels whose function is negated by their decorate holes. Vantage, a montage of kitschy landscape paintings that depict idealized and unrealistic views of nature, acts as a horizon and backdrop for the installation. Vail recurrently deploys the power of repetition to complete her simulated environmental tableaux. Warm Shadows (along with Green Screen Sun Shine) provides light through its numerous lamps and is bound with more knotless netting that form Panoramic Sham’s jagged mountain peaks. Further lending itself to idea of a contrived environment, Vail employs several electric fans sprouting like mushrooms in Oscillate, filling the gallery with a gentle, cooling breeze. An accumulation of furniture, glassware, and figurines, A walk in the woods: 90 minutes of tape also fills the space with ambient nature sounds playing from a tape recorder. Vail’s Panoramic Sham, a recycling of what the artist calls “cultural and generational debris,” can also be understood as an investigation into the psychology and culture of collecting.

Panoramic Sham
polyester and mixed fabric, electric fans, extension cords, lamps, light bulbs, glassware, furniture, ceramic duck, decorative paintings
ANDREA VAIL

*Panoramic Sham*
polyester and mixed fabric, electric fans, extension cords, lamps, light bulbs, glassware, furniture, ceramic duck, decorative paintings
KINETIC IMAGING

Charli Brissey
Zachary Kurth-Nelson
On April 4th, 2014, Charli Brissey’s thesis performance, *queeranimal imaginary*, took place at Richmond’s Dogtown Dance Theatre. Brissey began the thirty minute performance by enveloping the space, performers, and the audience in darkness as sounds recorded at swamps—water sloshing and birds calling—resonated throughout the theatre. Brissey and her co-performer, Felix Cruz, then emerged from fetal positions and crawled, rolled, and moved about the stage as if primordial beings. As *queeranimal imaginary* progressed, the movements of Brissey and Cruz metaphorically “evolved,” and eventually the performers rose to their feet. Moving through different stages, Brissey and Cruz would control their counterpart’s actions, react intuitively to a recorded voice as it called out directions, and perform spasmodic gestures like physicalized GIFs, the image format widely used for looping short animations. Then, as *queeranimal imaginary* concluded, and the accompanying sounds and song clips faded away, Brissey and Cruz returned their performance to the floor. Darkness once again enveloped the Dogtown Dance Theatre, leaving only the echoes performers’ traipses and plods to fill the space.

If one considers Brissey’s longstanding research into queer (i.e. non-heteronormative) relationships and interactions between non-human species in conjunction with the fluid swings and changes of the performers’ bodies in *queeranimal imaginary*, then it is more than plausible to view Brissey’s thesis work as questioning the so-called “natural order of things,” revealing a broader spectrum of performed identities dependent on language and environment.
CHARLI BRISSEY

queeranimal imaginary

performance and sound; performers, Charli Brissey & Felix Cruz; lighting designer, Michael Jarett; 25 mins
Instilled with a sense of nostalgia, Zachary Kurth-Nelson’s video and sound installation, *nothings_nomeanings*, utilizes found film to create a cyclical sense of time. Kurth-Nelson, using his own words, “harvests samples” of open source footage and audio from PBS documentaries, educational films, and home videos. To produce *nothings_nomeanings*, he then layered and melded over two hundred video samples with varying degrees of transparency and opacity together with three hundred diverse audio samples. String instruments, laughter, scraping, voice, piano, and unidentifiable ambient clamor meld and clash at different moments throughout the piece. This rich sonic experience is complemented by equally sundry clips of vaguely familiar cinematographic shots of nature, cities, people; each offering glimpses of distinguishability that are swiftly lost. The result is a non-narrative film of complex textures that moves at fluctuating speeds, eventually slowing to almost a standstill, albeit for a few brief seconds. An amalgamation of media from disparate periods in history that is at once both eerie and endearing, Kurth Nelson’s work obfuscates origins and sources while challenging the oft customary role of sound as secondary and directly correlative to visuals. Moreover, Kurth-Nelson’s title, *nothings_nomeanings* underscores the openness of the work, and the space left for viewers to inscribe their own interpretations and experiences.

*nothings_nomeanings*
fixed media sound and video installation, stereo,
48:9, 4’47” continuous loop
ZACHARY KURTH-NELSON

*nothings_nomeanings*

fixed media sound and video installation, stereo, 48:9, 4'47” continuous loop
PAINTING + PRINTMAKING
PAINTING + PRINTMAKING

Tom Burkett
Adriane Connerton
Philip Hinge
Michael Hunter
Nick Irzyk
Aaron Koehn
Mike Linskié
Christine Navin
Aaron Storck
Integrating social protest with environmental practice, Tom Burkett’s work brings attention to the detrimental impact of coal use and its byproducts on local communities and the land. Utilizing the marquee-style letters of small town signs, *Hoop with Hallelujah* and *Sign for Walking at Night* greet viewers with illuminated evangelical text as they enter Burkett’s exhibition space. These solar powered signifiers of the rural communities affected by coal waste establish a context and setting through which the rest of Burkett’s work can be viewed. For his *Three measured walks across Virginia’s coal ash fields* Burkett trespassed on three of Virginia’s many coal ash ponds over the course of a year in the towns of Bremo, Chesterfield, and Clover—all managed by Dominion Power. Walking across these deregulated sites of noxious coal combustion waste, Burkett measured them with lengths of neon string that now sit in body-sized glass cases, tangled with the toxic ash, reeds, and sludge of the various coal ash ponds and landfills. Along with the documentation of his walks, and the measured thread, Burkett’s work provided the results of chemical analyses from the coal ash samples taken while walking the various landfills. The results are alarming: Burkett’s tests reveal that harmful trace metals like antimony, cadmium, lead and arsenic are leaching into water sources across Virginia at rates that significantly exceed Environmental Protection Agency health standards. These illegally generated analyses are a means through which the artist can push against current restrictions of public knowledge. Completing Burkett’s critical investigation are vibrantly colored prints of EPA disaster equations taken from agency’s own reports, thus functioning as aides-mémoires of a government weighing populations of people against the probability of environmental hazards. Burkett’s work is ominously urgent, especially in light of the pressing crisis of climate change and human displacement.
**TOM BURKETT**

*Hoop with Hallelujah*
solar powered basketball boards, marquee, and 12 volt batteries

*Three Measured Walks Across Virginia’s Coal Ash Fields*
digital prints

*The Devil Can’t Find You If You Hum, Sign For Walking at Night*
fluorescent sign, and 12 volt battery

*Coal ash taken from Dominion Power’s landfills for analysis*
coal ash in test vial

*Three Measured Walks Across Virginia’s Coal Ash Fields*
digital prints
ADRIANE CONNERTON

Seven videos and a bass-thumping soundtrack immerse viewers in the club-like atmosphere of Adriane Connerton’s multimedia installation. To the tunes of Trey Songz and Kanye West, viewers can steer their way through six video monitors or become entranced by two projections, *Burberry Dive-in* and *Suspension*, looping on opposing walls. Burberry Dive-in and Suspension are digital worlds created by the artist, each with their own distinct motifs, characters, and environment. The former is an aquatic world mashed up with signifiers of conspicuous consumption populated with a fountain and marine creatures, exercise equipment, and Burberry’s trademark plaid patterning. On the other hand, *Suspension* is more sinister. As the camera moves through the video’s menacing dungeon realm, it soon settles on the artist as an image of her dangling body is gradually hoisted up by a chain.

The six monitors in the center of the gallery alternate between the five other videos at different intervals, letting viewers experience all of Connerton’s work at once. A recurring protagonist throughout her own work, in these videos Connerton becomes the principal subject. Vacuum sealing herself, drinking liquid from IV-bags on an Ab-Lounger, and occupying a massage chair as if it were a deity’s throne, Connerton creates an aura of power and sense of mystery for herself as she shifts identities. As a whole, Connerton’s thesis exhibition succeeds in recreating the simultaneous yet contradictory experiences of anxiety and enthrallment produced by the ever-encroaching mediascape that is the internet.

*Suspension*
HD Video, 1:24
ADRIANE CONNERTON

*Burberry Ab-Lounger*
HD Video, 1:43

*Ab-Lounger*
HD Video, 3:08

*Mummy*
HD Video, 3:15

*Vacuum Suit*
HD Video, 1:46

*Trance*
HD Video, 3:11

*Massage Chair*
HD Video, 2:49
The four vibrant large-scale paintings in Philip Hinge’s thesis exhibition dissect the heroism historically attributed to the act of painting, as well as issues concerning what constitutes good and bad taste. In Terminal Vacation, Hinge reinvigorates landscape painting by constructing the work’s tropic view using different painterly tropes. A Mark Rothko-like color field sunset and water shimmering with colorful Brice Marden squiggles contribute to the palliative mood of this scene, which calls to mind Gaugin’s imaginative renderings of French Polynesia. Whereas the anthropomorphic bowling ball coconuts and the domineering pineapple/palm tree hybrid push Terminal Vacation toward the fantastical, Dino Crisis 2 introduces a scene beyond the bounds of possibility. Raising a club into the air as if he is preparing for battle, a caveman rides a Velociraptor whose claws are dripping with acrylic viscera. A surrogate heroic male painter, the virile caveman and his mount are tightly and graphically rendered in certain places and in others loosely sketched; hence Dino Crisis 2 pulls from various painting styles to point out and lampoon painting’s prevalent machismo. In Self-Reflective, Hinge applies literal toilet humor to the moralizing classical myth of Narcissus (cited by artists throughout history), while Above Below questions the agency of painted subjects with a sense of self-criticism as the bikini-sporting swimmer floats helplessly, bobbing thanks to her oversized head. Ludicrous and humorous, Hinge’s works are effective critical examinations of the chauvinism and bravado pervasive throughout art’s history.

Above Below
acrylic on canvas
72 x 60 inches
PHILIP HINGE

Self Reflective
acrylic on canvas
70 x 68 inches

Dino Crisis 2
acrylic on canvas
90 x 70 inches

Terminal Vacation
acrylic on canvas
96 x 96 inches
Michael Hunter allows for intuition and chance to alter his process based approach to drawing. Initially, Hunter follows a serialized artistic method to create each of his untitled / numbered works. A floral pattern from the back of a shirt found in a thrift store—bringing to mind the leisure and relaxation of a tropical vacation—serves as the repeated motif, and is outlined in crayon over an unprimed canvas. Then, Hunter limits himself to approximately two-inch crayon marks in order to fill in what remains of the blank picture plane. Despite the repetition of a regulated system, and relying on a color palette predetermined by the set of 24 crayons, Hunter’s work yields subtle, but remarkable, variation. One can locate differences of color, hue, and saturation that fluctuate depending on the pressure of Hunter’s hand, but also slight discrepancies in terms of shape, line, and form. However, these imperfect clones are all united by their psychedelic patterning that generates a sense of vibration or aura. Through a creative process described by the artist as meditative and pleasurable, Hunter succeeds in producing work that is at once playful, standardized, and conscientious. Moreover, because of their decisively casual nature and leisurely undertones, these works project a sophisticated critique of an art world that often takes itself too seriously.

untitled

crayon on canvas on panel
MICHAEL HUNTER

*untitled*
crayon on canvas on panel

*untitled*
crayon on canvas on panel

*untitled*
crayon on canvas on panel

*untitled*
crayon on canvas on panel
Jutting out from the wall, and slightly offset so as to hint at the open space behind it, Nick Irzyk’s *Untitled*—as well as his exhibition’s two other *Untitled* works—propose an inquiry into the conventions associated with paintings and their display. During installation at the Anderson Gallery the week before his thesis exhibition opened, Irzyk sliced into the white partition that divided the second floor and removed from it a six by eight foot rectangle of drywall. Repeating this transgressive deed on the other side, Irzyk carved out matching thirty by thirty-eight inch panels. Irzyk then altered and embellish the surfaces of the three thin sections, layering them with disorderly passages of abstract paint, such familiar motifs as stars and interwoven lines, and (in the case of the two-paneled *Untitled*) collaged them with squares of origami paper. Working against the deadline of opening night, Irzyk returned to the gallery space and reinstalled the works using a system of pipes. Allowing the paintings to oscillate inward or outward from the wall intended to evenly support them, this system revealed to gallery goers the conceptual and literal support system of painting normally concealed from view. Also interrogating the gallery wall and its limitations, Irzyk’s *Untitled*, generated from digital prints of the artist’s drawings, screenprints, and acrylic paint, sardonically conforms to the exact width of a small dividing wall in the exhibition space. Irzyk’s paintings wryly and necessarily expose the gallery as a wholly artificial system dependent on the works that populate them.

*untitled*
acrylic and collage on drywall, galvanized aluminum, hardware.
NICK IRZYK

no title
acrylic, silkscreen and UV-cured inkjet on canvas

untitled
acrylic and silkscreen on drywall, galvanized aluminum, hardware

untitled
acrylic and collage on drywall, galvanized aluminum, hardware

untitled
acrylic and collage on drywall, galvanized aluminum, hardware
For the twenty-eight and a half second elevator ride to the second floor of the Depot, passengers were unexpectedly greeted by Aaron Koehn’s *The audience is listening*—a rendition of George Lucas’s well-known THX introduction that debuted before *The Return of the Jedi*—an event which elevated the mundane elevator journey to the spectacular and heightened viewer expectations for the artwork to come.

United by their use of substrate printing to refabricate mundane experiences, Koehn’s objects and installations peppered the Depot, all of which invite viewers to imagine themselves in the work of art’s world. At the center of the exhibition is *here*, a curiously rounded prism veneered with a mind-bending image of the surrounding space. Pretending to mirror the world around it, *here* is a faux reflection peculiarly devoid of human presence. On the wall adjacent to *here*, *swimming pool* presents viewers with an impossible view of a ubiquitous icon of suburban accomplishment: water crowds the bottom half of the pool as if it were literally reacting to gravity, suspended vertically. While *here* and *swimming pool* command serious visual weight and presence, one could walk by Koehn’s subtle *Target® brands* and *WalMart Icons* installations. For these works, Koehn arranged two of the Depot’s empty office spaces with carefully chosen furniture and plants. Koehn also installed shelves and frames purchased from these retail stores on which the artist printed imagery from dating websites and advertisements. The *Target® brands* and *WalMart Icons* installations, like *here* and *swimming pool*, are without the human presence that would activate these service industry spaces—as the offices were locked, these works ask the viewer to imaginatively place their bodies where only the mind can go.Tacitly elevating the banal to the powerful, Koehn’s art is an inquiry into the narrow, but imperative, interstice that separates art and the everyday.

*airplane window*

UV cured ink on panel, melamine
AARON KOEHN

swimming pool
UV cured ink on canvas

here
direct-to-substrate print on PVC, wood
MIKE LINSKIE

Quirky and charming, Mike Linskie’s re-imagination of *The Wizard of Oz* uses sentimental camp aesthetics to question the relationship between decoration, arrangement, and art. *Lion* demonstrates a novel use of site-specificity as Linskie stretched fabric over the Depot’s uniquely raised gallery wall, and then adorned it with artificial flora. Like readymade brushstrokes, various textiles were stitched together to create the jungle setting where the cowardly lion attempts to hide. A thickly painted canvas—complete with fur-trimmed ears and a touch of glitter—functions as his grimacing face that peers out from the fabric foliage. Linksie reinvents the *Tin Man in Frog Oil for the Heart* by conflating him with Kermit the Frog. The result is a metallic, resin-coated madcap frog prince. With the body of a chiseled male mannequin, this hybridization of three different fictions greets viewers from his personal swamp setting. In *Resting Scarecrows*, the scarecrow is manifested in the form of pillows—made with fabric bearing his likeness—taking respite in a gallery nook. Hanging on the adjacent wall are *Dorothy’s Back*, *Snarling Dorothy*, and *Cheesecake Dorothy*, loosely painted watercolors in bright blue frames that recast Dorothy from the television series *Golden Girl* as Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. Through his heartfelt retelling of one of Hollywood’s most loved films and implementation of gaudy home décor, Linskie implores viewers to rethink not only these characters and what they represent, but also the connections between the gallery and domestic space.

*Frog Oil For My Heart*  
mannequin, frog mask, resin, epoxy, spray texture, spray paint, enamel, artificial plants, moss, Kermit the frog t-shirt, Calvin Klein jeans, found Clark boots, wooden base, novelty yoga frog fabric, dimpled fabric, sequin appliqué hearts
MIKE LINSKIE

Lion I
faux fur and both wood and clay beads

Lion II
oil on canvas, sand, glitter, faux fur and fabric

Snarling Dorothy
watercolor on paper
Past and present, virtual and real, and black and white all collide in Christine Navin’s thesis exhibition. The *Shrimp Cocktail Shooter* works appear, at first glance, to be four unique drawings of various culinary renditions of the ancient crustacean; however, these are actually copies as Navin scanned, enlarged, and color matched these prints so they pretend to be the original smaller drawings. Flanking the *Shrimp Cocktail Shooters* are three wall works of airbrushed graphite, applied in an exacting process so the blackish powder creates a rich visual effect that imitates three-dimensional texture. Sized to the dimensions of *Shrimp Shooters*, these works function as surrogates or stand-ins for their printed neighbors. Across the gallery hangs *B.C.*, an immense airbrushed graphite drawing of two powerful letters—long demarcating the Western sense of history—bordered by a seamless paper-faced frame. Between them rests *Untitled*, a massive, hollow, and artificial looking rock, covered in concrete and pristine white paint. Connecting these works are not only their shared black and white aesthetic, but their engagement with signifiers of time. For instance, shrimp (prehistoric creatures that have existed since “B.C.”) are ironically updated and dressed as fancy cocktails to appear new and current. *Untitled* evokes a sense of monumental geological timelessness, yet this is complicated by the work’s overtly faux surface quality. As a whole, Navin’s exhibition questions the culturally constructed authenticity of the past while underscoring the historical continuity between disparate temporalities.

*Shrimp Cocktail Shooter (w/Bamboo Twist)*
inkjet print mounted to acrylic, aluminum bracket
CHRISTINE NAVIN

“B.C.”
airbrushed graphite on paper

Shrimp Cocktail Shooter (w/Bamboo Twist)
inkjet print mounted to acrylic, aluminum bracket

Shrimp Cocktail Shooter (w/Cellophane Frill)
inkjet print mounted to acrylic, aluminum bracket

Shrimp Cocktail Shooter (w/Lemon Wedge)
inkjet print mounted to acrylic, aluminum bracket

Shrimp Cocktail Shooter (w/Plastic Sword)
inkjet print mounted to acrylic, aluminum bracket

“untitled”
airbrushed graphite
AARON STORCK

Somewhere between a single, total installation and a cacophonous exhibition of discrete works of art, Aaron Storck’s thesis show amalgamates painting, sculpture, sound, architecture and photography. Out of this ambitious discord, several groupings of objects with such deadpan titles as *Pieces A, Sculpture C and Fountain*, and *Sculpture F* emerge. *Pieces A* consists of four sculptures of uniform height. Made from sheetrock and wood, their design brings to mind both the modernist architectural forms of Le Corbusier and the construction materials of the surrounding exhibition space. Assuming the shape of the letter T, a rectangle, or zigzags, these diminutive architectures place viewers in a position of voyeuristic power, as they gaze down at their painted and collaged surfaces, layered with images of eyes, mouths, vegetables, and sculpted genitalia. Equally architectural, *Sculpture C and Fountain* and *Sculpture F* introduce sonic elements into Storck’s artistic foray. The former relays an ever-present and gentle trickling, originating from a kidney shaped fountain. In stark contrast, *Sculpture F* cycles through a chaotic soundtrack of moaning, drumbeats, and other clamor that could be understood as a witty stand in for the artist’s (or critic’s) presence and her or his stereotypically unrelatable opinions and interpretations. Cohesive and immersive, Storck’s work acutely communicates a sense of artistic transparency, a do-it-yourself aesthetic, and the potential for harmony to arise out of dissonance.

POEM CITY:

**SCULPTURE C AND FOUNTAIN**
cut lumber, sheetrock, canvas, screws, staples, latex paint, acrylic, inkjet print collage, power strip, fountain pumps and mist-makers, plastic fountain-form

**BIGGER ARCH PAINTING**
crylic, latex paint, and graphite on canvas drop cloth
AARON STORCK

POEM CITY:

PIECES A
cut lumber, sheetrock, screws, fluorescent light, latex paint, acrylic, inkjet print collage

BIGGER ARCH PAINTING
cut lumber, sheetrock, canvas, screws, staples, latex paint, acrylic, inkjet print collage, power strip, fountain pumps and mist-makers, plastic fountain-form

SCULPTURE C AND FOUNTAIN
cut lumber, sheetrock, canvas, screws, staples, latex paint, acrylic, inkjet print collage, power strip, fountain pumps and mist-makers, plastic fountain-form

PAINTINGS B
cut lumber, sheetrock, archival paper
PHOTOGRAPHY + FILM

Cynthia Henebry
Janelle Proulx
CYNTHIA HENEBRY

As art historian Robert Hobbs notes, “childhood in the past has been presumed to be a time of innocence, [but] innocence is only one of many roles that children have played in their obstacle-ridden journey to adulthood.” Cynthia Henebry’s absorbing large-format photographs challenge this widely held assumption Hobbs rightly identifies by illuminating the complexities of children and questioning their historical position as “other” in relationship to adults. Henebry’s own history led her to photograph children of divorce. The transition and adjustments triggered by such a fracture can be viewed in her works as metaphors for the countless trials one must confront throughout all stages of life. In addition, these images remind us of the ways in which children do not have agency over their own lives; yet despite this fact the children of Henebry’s photographs convey a profound sense of strength and autonomy. *Mavis in the backseat* captures the conflicted emotions within Henebry’s seven-year-old subject while *Marshall* depicts another child with an intensely confrontational expression and posture. In *Kieran, self-portrait in the car* Henebry conferred the power of representation to her subject. She allowed eleven-year-old Kieran to choose the moment the camera’s shutter opened and captured her likeness, rather than taking the photograph herself. *The Marriage Oaks* and *Beware, Ghosts* establish a sense of context for the other photographic subjects. One can find in the latter image a caveat written by a child’s hand that allows for multiple interpretations—consequently stressing the unknowability of a child’s intentions and psychology from an adult’s perspective. *Lily*, a theatrical portrait of an infant, dramatically underscores that the power relations between adult and child are constructed from birth. Sensitive and gripping, Henebry’s photographs work to dismantle the longstanding binaries between child and adult.

*Lily*
archival inkjet print

*The Marriage Oaks*
archival inkjet print
CYNTHIA HENEBRY

Kieran’s first self portrait
archival inkjet print

Beware Ghosts
archival inkjet print

Marshall
archival inkjet print

The Marriage Oaks
archival inkjet print

Lily
archival inkjet print

Mavis
archival inkjet print
REVERB, Janelle Proulx’s immersive, multi-sensorial, and relational installation gently guides willing subjects through a maze-like structure where they have mediated encounters between themselves and strangers. Positioned as an outsider, the participant can experience serenity, alarm, anxiousness, and bewilderment as she or he journeys through four different rooms, each of which constructs a different sense of time and verve.

Beginning in what feels like a waiting area, individuals contemplate a pulsating spherical projection while listening to ambient and sedative sound. When the orb turns pink, the participant steps into a fabric-walled room of the same vivid color; here, a soothing male voice leads the individual through a meditation. This particular color, known as Baker-Miller pink, was determined through testing in the 1970s to effectively reduce heart-rate and aggression, but overexposure could accomplish the opposite. Despite enveloping the party in pacifying words, resonances, and visuals, this first part of REVERB potentially elicits a spectrum of responses. Darkness at first envelops the participant as she or he moves into REVERB’s third, grittier, space. On triggering a motion sensor, fluorescent lights illuminate this environment and reveal an intimidating wrestler so statuesque his reality is temporarily doubted. When one attempts to move past this human barrier, he breaks posture and moves along with; suddenly, he explodes up from his stance—only to give the temporary interloper a hug and step aside. In the final room, one can turn light switches on and off, manipulating two subjects so they hug one another. REVERB returns a sense of agency to the participant when entering this final space, thus the multifaceted experience of REVERB comes full circle.

Over the course of its installation, REVERB also functioned as a dynamic and flexible site of public engagement. Among other events, a guided tour of REVERB and a class on Michael Phelps’s swimming technique were held here and led by persons who sent proposals to Proulx. Referencing self-help culture, behavioral science, and nouveau spiritualism, REVERB operated at once as a cerebral artistic experiment and a location for expanded social experimentation.
JANELLE PROULX

REVERB
installation and performance with custom sound, video, and fabrication
SCULPTURE + EXTENDED MEDIA
SCULPTURE + EXTENDED MEDIA

Jake Borndal
Tal Gafny
Morgan Pearse
Roxanne Yamins
Omri Zin
The title of Jake Borndal’s thesis exhibition *psychic on vibrate, received on phantom limbo* plays on its words, suggesting permeable mutations of text, disembodied bodies and space, and reflects the artist’s ongoing interest in the relationship between art and language. Three forms made primarily with vinyl modular fencing hover a few feet above the Anderson Gallery’s second floor. Borndal approaches these as a “found logic” which he adopts as the works physical footprint. The structures are dotted with numerous geometric cut-outs, containing an assortment of brightly colored sundries: small bottles of liquor, sodium acetate heating pads, glue pours, neon casts of varicose veins, and fragments of knots. As passersby walk near and through the work, they can curate their own views and crops. Borndal’s intensely saturated hues come from his inventive use (or misuse) of printer cartridge inks—the same material that brings digital forms of images and languages into the physical world. Two knotted cast-iron ropes coated in the same inks, *rope tales*, whirl along the gallery wall, leaving smudges of vibrant residue on the surrounding white surface. *judge(mint)*—a shield-shaped sculpture of vinyl fencing, molded glue, and a 3-D printed object—seems to be stitched into the gallery wall like a shirt pocket or preside over the room like a balcony. Purposefully ambiguous and associative, Borndal’s art mirrors the unstable and constantly changing character of language and meaning.
JAKE BORNDAL

judge (mint)
Vinyl, ink, glue, aluminum, 3D printed plastic

rope tales
aluminum, glue, ink, coffee.
Sitting on Tal Gafny and Perrin Turner’s custom-made stadium seating, viewers are invited to watch their film *Double Take* alongside several of the artists’ sculptural objects. *Double Take* is about several parallel relationships evolving out of Gafny’s initial investigation into the American writer Paul Auster and his estranged son Daniel. While the film’s passages about the Austers are fictional, *Double Take’s* narrative about Turner and his father are intensely personal, following the artist as he attempts to form a connection with him after many years without contact. Complimenting these chronicles of relationships are the artists’ interactions with their collaborative sculptures, which become like actors in the film. For instance, scenes follow the conception and transformation of Gafny and Turner’s two spheres; a glass one as it is stained with soot from an open flame and a foam one as it blanketed with charcoal. In another instance, *Double Take* focuses on Gafny and Turner as they discuss how to install the large felt eyebrow (hanging on the wall behind viewers) so that it best conveys anger. Not just actors, Gafny and Turner’s enigmatic objects also are an audience for *Double Take*—turned to watch the film with their human counterparts in the amphitheater style seating the artists constructed to mimic the Anderson Gallery’s tile floor. Gafny and Turner’s collaboration is a revealing look into relationships between humans, but also the objects which connect us to each other and the world.
TAL GAFNY & PERRIN TURNER

Doubletake
film: 31 mins
installation: mixed media
MORGAN PEARSE

Morgan Pearse’s singular video installation, *four seasons*, commands its room on the third floor of the Anderson Gallery. This video follows a hypnotic animated ceiling fan, situated against a light blue background, as it recites a script composed of found text from various sources on the internet. The script brings to life a relatable yet distinct character who talks about ideas as large as love, life, and death in addition to such minutiæ as the shape of dog kibble. The face of an indeterminate and genderless animal offers viewers such general and often humorous guidance as “This too shall pass,” and “Don’t try too hard when looking for inspiration,” in addition to bizarre musings like “would a dog like an egg-shaped meatloaf?” Occasionally turning on and becoming completely yellow except for the character’s emerald green eyes, there is an apparent disconnect between these words of wisdom uttered by the fan’s equally androgynous voice and the nuanced variations in its facial gestures. Just as the fan speed fluctuates, the face raises its eyebrows, becomes cross-eyed, seems to fall asleep, yawns, and even drools at particular moments. The sleek, digital animation of the *four seasons* transforms Pearse’s anthropomorphized ceiling fan into a memorable and eccentric avatar. On a more particular level, *four seasons* provides poignant observations about the internet as a psychological space where people seek anonymous answers to life’s more pressing questions.

*Four Seasons*
HD animation, sound
MORGAN PEARSE

*Four Seasons*
HD animation, sound
Potential energy, tension, and an air of danger are palpable conceits in Roxanne Yamins’s thesis exhibition, *The Three Odalisques*. Although never activated, *Odalisque for Two* and *Stand and Odalisque* invite viewers to envision themselves engaging with these entrancingly sinister apparatuses. In *Odalisque for Two*, dual nude-colored sleds are connected by a scissor-like system built on compression and expansion. Yamins has situated this elaborate contraption on a mirrored pedestal that appears as if it could rotate, but this possibility is negated when one notices an unplugged electrical cord trailing out from the sculpture without an outlet in sight. Furthermore, *Odalisque for Two* is devoid of human bodies that could drive the system. *Stand and Odalisque* likewise evokes issues related to the display of the human body and potential interaction. Reminiscent of a padded cell, a curved, flesh-tone, upholstered form claustrophobically envelopes viewers while they contemplate a neutral and uninhabited body suit—stitched together from various medical supplies—suspended before them. Given the suggestion of a human presence in *Odalisque for Two* and *Stand and Odalisque*, one could infer *Odalisqing'*s mannequin, frozen on a spring-loaded cushion with an awkwardly posed leg, “completes” the other works as the requisite body. Taking into consideration all of these factors, *The Three Odalisques* creates significant expectations of action and dynamism only to render them inert.

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*Stand and Odalisque*

steel, fabric, vinyl, petroleum foam, trade show carpeting, mannequin
ROXANNE YAMINS

Odalisque For Two
steel, fabric, vinyl, petroleum foam, trade show carpeting, mannequin
Odalisqing
steel, fabric, vinyl, petroleum foam,
trade show carpeting, mannequin
Emanating sounds of dripping and whirring, *Standoff*, at one level, offers viewers a glimpse into the artist’s studio. But rather than providing clarity, Omri Zin presents a convoluted inventory of his sculptural installation’s own existence. The purpose and function of this self-sustaining contraption is initially ambiguous, but closer looking divulges an intricate system that takes on an ancient problem—displacing and transforming water. Various windows and openings let one witness the mysterious cyclic system in action. Driven by a computer program, water moves from a large barrel through hoses and tubes, eventually entering a kettle. Here, a boot humorously kicks the kettle, and the water is moved through a steamer and into the copper pipes of a distillery, either evaporating or condensing as it travels. It is then poured out and pushed through a cherub fountain, finally making its way to another reservoir. Sensors signal when the water level is too high and so the liquid is looped back into the initial basin and, from there, sent back into Zin’s mechanism. Hence, *Standoff* is a system that is sensitive to itself, responding to its own status, condition, and needs in order to ensure continued operation. Surrounding the machine are Zin’s tools, materials, plans, and other detritus that contributed to *Standoff*’s creation. A self-evident index of process, *Standoff* emphasizes the fluidity of the artist’s studio and its life as a dynamic site of experimentation.

*Standoff*
mixed media with wood, drywall, wax cast of work-boot, scaled model replica of 1940’s NORTHWEST cable digger’s boom and dipper, cable digger model diagrams, steam boiler, pumps, pluming parts, rubber hoses, copper tubing, old milk jug, 1970’s sink, windows, infrared motion detector, PING sensors, weight sensors, Arduino microcontrollers, electronic components, mechanical components, readymade putto statue
OMRI ZIN

Standoff
mixed media with wood, drywall, wax cast of work-boot, scaled model replica of 1940’s NORTHWEST cable digger’s boom and dipper, cable digger model diagrams, steam boiler, pumps, plumbing parts, rubber hoses, copper tubing, old milk jug, 1970’s sink, windows, infrared motion detector, PING sensors, weight sensors, Arduino microcontrollers, electronic components, mechanical components, readymade putto statue
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COVER IMAGE:
Janelle Proulx, REVERB, installation and performance with custom sound, video, and fabrication (pgs 80–83)