

EMMETT RAMSTAD

LINDSAY RHYNER

HOLLY STREEKSTRA

STAR WALLOWING BULL

SAMUAL WEINBERG

JEROME

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EMMETT RAMSTAD

Emmett Ramstad's artwork investigates the intimate ordinary through sculptural representations of bodies and their detritus. Ramstad lives in Minneapolis and has exhibited artworks throughout the United States as well as in Amsterdam and Istanbul, including solo exhibitions at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and Rochester Art Center in Rochester, Minnesota. He is a recipient of several grants, including an Art and Change grant from the Leeway Foundation, and a Next Step Fund Grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. Ramstad has performed in productions by the BodyCartography Project, has made costumes and sets for five touring contemporary dance productions, and has curated and organized six gallery shows. His work is in collections at the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis, the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and Second State Press in Philadelphia. He holds a BA from Oberlin College and an MFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

emmettramstad.com

Ordinary objects have long been at odds with the prized and precious, often epitomized by works of fine art. But for the past one hundred years, the quotidian has snuck into hallowed white-walled galleries: from handbags to garbage bins, cans of soup to shiny vacuum cleaners, artists have enlisted mundane objects for paeans to popular culture and critiques of consumerism alike. Emmett Ramstad's work alludes to but also departs from such conceptual predecessors. His interest in ordinary objects focuses on those we touch and interact with, often daily, in intimate and rather idiosyncratic ways: consider the way you fold a pile of freshly laundered white socks. Or take note of the way you organize your underwear: by color? shape? frequency of use? And which do you prefer: a squirt of liquid soap or the feel of a bar between your hands? Ramstad is intrigued by such small, ritualized gestures of habit, convention, and convenience—and their material residue. Far from inconsequential, this archive of the seemingly negligible harbors a potential to reveal how bodies act, react, and interact in the very structures “that subject us—that is, both make us into subjects and subjugate us.”¹

Bathrooms, especially the cubicles we retreat to in public places to privately deal with the body's waste, feature prominently in his investigations. Not all experience the spaces designed for such necessary functions with equal ease. As profoundly gendered spaces, bathrooms continuously reiterate the inscription of cultural meaning onto anatomical difference; at times, they do so with a vengeance.² Ramstad's bathroom modifications, although they precede the notorious North Carolina legislation of 2016, could not be more timely in the contrast they conjure between the bathroom-as-refuge and the fraught, precarious space a public bathroom may represent to anyone who

does not conform to naturalized notions of what bodies “ought to” look like. Based on informal surveys, Ramstad has tried various alterations: providing more privacy and less visibility, supplying more amenities (from a wall-mounted phone, to a choice of soap, to the sound of a waterfall), and replacing conventionally gendered icons on doors with mirrors and text.

While Ramstad's work shares a sly humor and irreverence with artists equally interested in moving bathroom furnishings from the discrete periphery to the center of attention, his interventions aim to alter the experience of users rather than the object's meaning by a change of context. When Marcel Duchamp submitted *Fountain*, an upside-down urinal signed “R. Mutt,” to the inaugural exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in 1917, he caused a stir that changed the course of art history. But while the controversy then centered on the objectionable ordinariness of the factory-made urinal, on authorship and immorality,³ Ramstad's aesthetic unfolds in a different way.

Many of Ramstad's serial installations set up typologies reminiscent of 1960s conceptual art. The artist collects a type of well-worn object and displays this inventory of remains: a thirty-foot rack for nibs of soap, a holder for 180 donated toothbrushes. Each object embodies a history of touch and thus serves as a placeholder or inadvertent portrait of its user. Together, they embody an aesthetic Sianne Ngai calls “interesting”: “a style of serial, comparative individualization” devoted, explicitly, to make aesthetic variety visible. Awareness of available types reveals how a particular object or action can be perceived to deviate. It is a dialogic aesthetic, research driven and forensic.⁴ But while their differences—a sock worn through at the ball, not the heel; a toothbrush's bristles, flared, just so—

harbor small surprises that may intrigue the so inclined, the bodies whose touch shaped these items encounter difference differently. What seems like a study in idiosyncrasy in the context of art turns into an exercise in countering normativity elsewhere. Bodies are directed in certain ways more than others.⁵ Folding socks is not the same as performing gender: one defines a subject; the other is considered inconsequential, a matter of preference and habit. One may be a source of hatred and fear, the other of passing interest. What Ramstad's work offers, then, is a meditation on how social meaning is ascribed to daily acts that make a person.

Void of sentimentality, the objects are still displayed with affection: a limp white tennis sock, darned in exuberant yellow, hangs from a wall-mounted peg. A far cry from a no longer useful and hence garbage-bound commodity, the sock is repaired and refigured as a small sculpture. In a series of workshops, held over the course of the past few years and titled “Mend With Me,” Ramstad has been teaching how to patch holes in socks. An antidote to throw-away consumerism, the mending serves as a reminder that individuation not only happens through shopping—“more ways to be you,” a Minneapolis mall advertises, as if identity without commodities was simply unthinkable—but through treasuring, fixing, and sustaining what you already have.

Despite its formal restraint that conjures minimalist aesthetics, the hand and the haptic figure prominently in Ramstad's work. Reminiscent of conceptual art's investigations, his practice singles out moments and ordinary objects whose significance far outpaces their seeming banality. Subtly, Ramstad reshuffles a pervasive political economy of attention that defines whose experiences matter and which objects are worthy of attention.

NOTES

1. Amanda Boetzkes, *The Ethics of Earth Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 9.

2. In the history of the United States, bathrooms have also been intensely racialized spaces.

3. “Mr. Mutt's fountain is not immoral, that is absurd, no more than a bathtub is immoral. It is a fixture that you see every day in plumbers' shop windows. Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view—created a new thought for that object.” Anon., “The Richard Mutt Case,” *Blind Man*, New York, no. 2, May 1917, 5; <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/duchampfountain-t07573/text-summary>.

4. “The interesting is thus an aesthetic experience that enables us to negotiate the relationship between identity and difference, the unexpected and the familiar,” writes Sianne Ngai in *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 136. For a more in-depth discussion of Ngai's analysis of the interesting as an aesthetic category, see pages 122–46.

5. Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 15, 31–32.

*Untitled (Kelley), 2015*

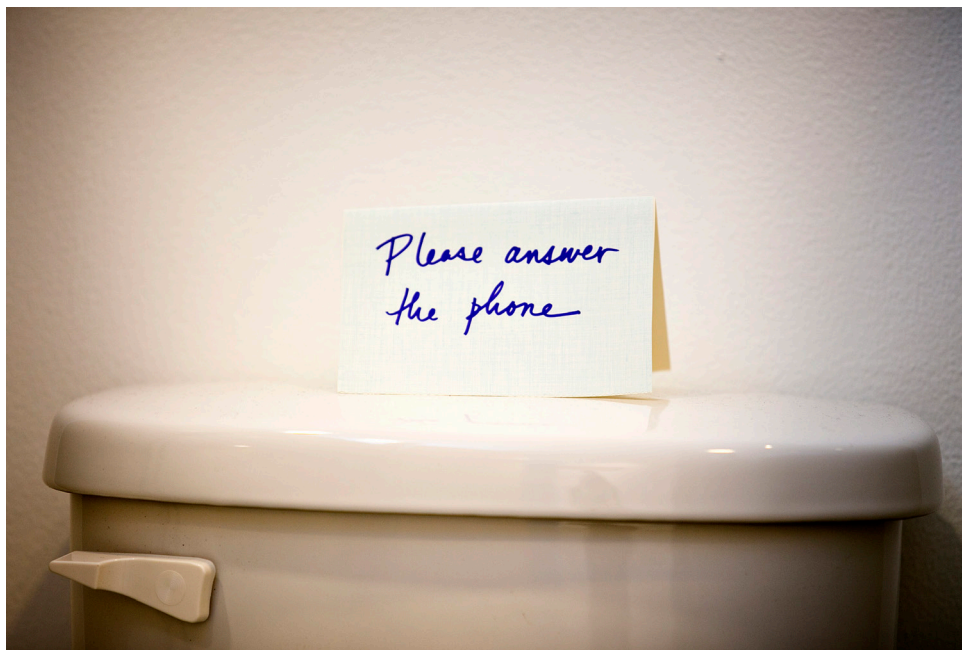
Darned sock, darning egg

10 x 3 x 10 in.

*Untitled (James), 2015*

Folded underwear, shelf

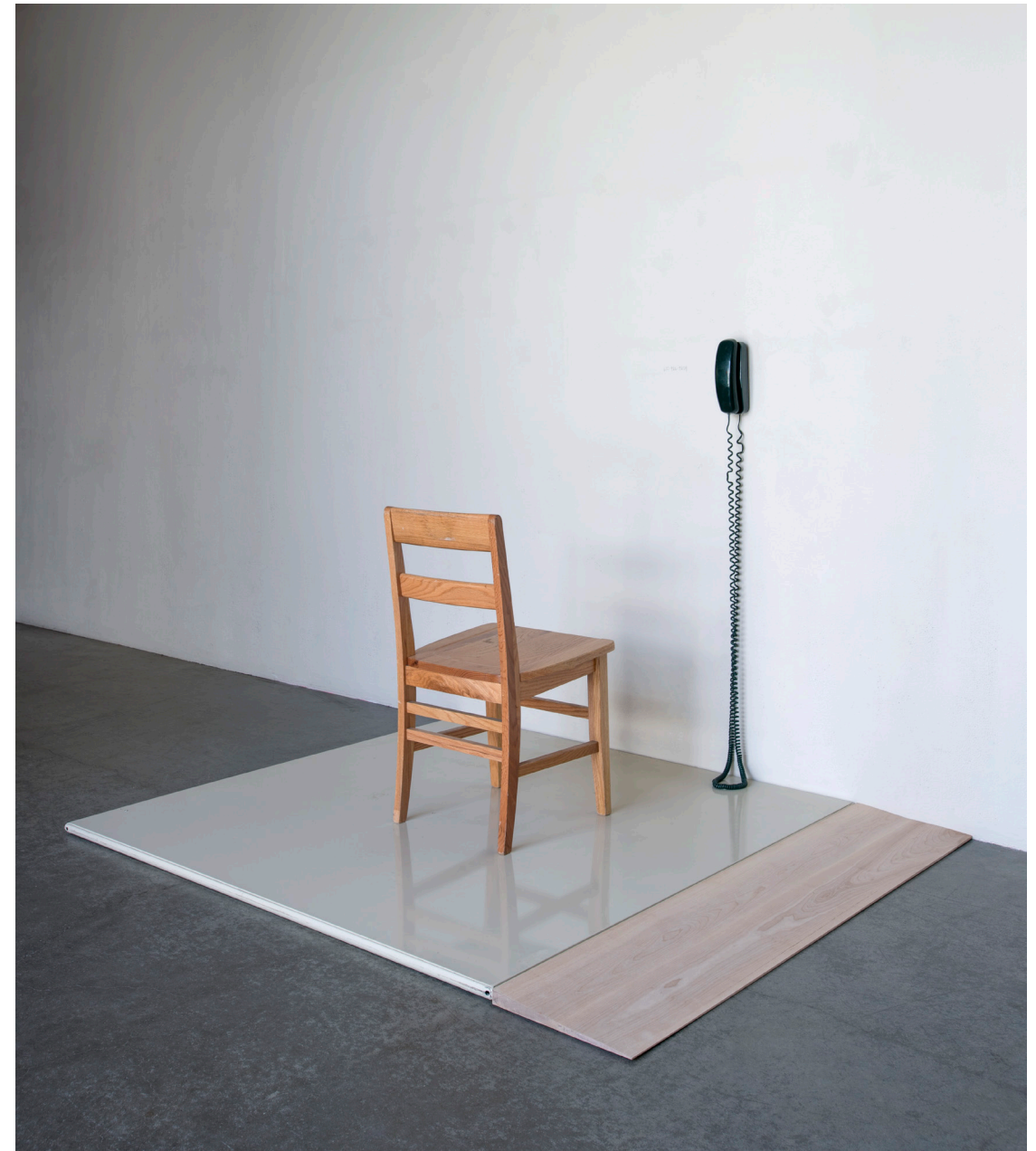
5 x 5 x 4 in.

*Stall*, 2016

Bathroom stall, phone, toilet,
mirror, sign, participant

72 x 42 x 60 in.

Photo: Erin Young

*Untitled (Calling Station)*, 2016

Bathroom stall partition, birch
ramp, telephone, chair, phone,
phone number

5 x 5 x 5 ft.

Photo: Rik Sferra



LINDSAY RHYNER

Lindsay Rhyner creates large-scale wall hangings primarily from discarded or secondhand textile and plastic goods. Born in Rochester, Minnesota, Rhyner graduated from Perpich Arts High School and spent a semester studying art at the University of Wisconsin before withdrawing from school to travel. While traveling extensively around the United States, she began collecting unusual materials and finding inspiration in them. Rhyner now lives and works in Minneapolis and can often be found biking around the city, scouring the alleys and thrift stores for materials. Her work can be found hanging in many friends' houses and in some out-of-state private collections. Rhyner has participated in local group exhibitions at Bockley Gallery and as part of *Made Here*, and has shown her work in solo exhibitions at Soo Local Gallery and the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

mnartists.org/lindsay-rhyner

Stacks of plastic storage bins line the walls of Lindsay Rhyner’s studio, a remodeled garage in a secluded backyard in the Seward neighborhood of Minneapolis. The bins hold the materials for Rhyner’s art: folded pieces of textile and faux fur, ribbons and small rugs. Spread on a large table in the center of the room is a tangle of fake holly leaves, fuzzy black fabric, and shells—“from the bead store,” Rhyner says, with a gleam in her eyes. For the first-time observer, it is next to impossible to discern the artist’s vision for the work in progress. Weeks later, an attachment arrives by email: the chaos of fabric, beads, and fuzz has morphed into an image of a folly by the sea, a stone pavilion with column-lined steps leading up to it, flanked by floral arrangements: *Olive Garden*.

Working with found fabric, Rhyner plays with palette, composition, textures, shapes, and motifs to create textile collages of astounding depth and complexity. Her process is organic and intuitive. Rhyner’s tapestries, which have grown from more modest proportions to floor-to-ceiling wall hangings in her recent work, are all made by hand, stitch by stitch. If an arrangement does not seem right, it is taken apart with equal diligence. Each collage emerges from experimentation and play. Labor intensive and slow, her practice is obstinately analog in an era where the arts, like other domains of cultural production, increasingly rely on the digital. But while digital devices have a tendency to cast most of those who interact with them strictly as users—not designers or programmers—Rhyner’s practice celebrates a DIY approach. From digging through post-Mardi Gras trash cans in New Orleans to sifting through secondhand stores and volunteering at warehouse fabric sales, Rhyner is creative in sourcing her material. Before starting a new piece, she sorts through

her entire archive of cloth, choosing, touching, and arranging, before she starts to cut and sew together textiles. Throughout, the artist is intimately connected to each step of the process.

To a degree, the intimacy of a haptic aesthetic comes with working in textile art. Fabric, unlike other materials, interacts with its surroundings and those who touch it. Whether smoke or sweat, textiles absorb and harbor an olfactory history of their whereabouts and their wearers. But for Rhyner, the work resonates personally, too: each textile holds a memory of when, where, and under what circumstances the artist found it. Unlike memory quilts that repurpose worn clothing, her textile collages combine traces of personal journeys with generational and cultural sensibilities: a seventies polyester print, lace and feathers reminiscent of vintage fascinators, a holiday-themed wall hanging all find their way into her art. Some pieces specifically speak to a place or a period of time: Rhyner started *Pittsburgh Skyscraper Cloud World* with a blanket depicting the city’s skyline and used fabric she obtained there. The composition, too, intends to echo the city’s architecture and atmosphere. Inspired by history, *1944*, in sepia tones, centers an embattled arch with arrows flying.

Still, while the artist references specific moments and events, she does not set out to commemorate. Her textile collages engage time, place, and memory symbolically, not with the activist urgency of other recent fiber art projects.¹ Rather than invoking the traditional connotations of comfort associated with textiles and harnessing them for a cause, fabric serves as a versatile medium in Rhyner’s hands. Her practice steers clear, too, of the communal ethos of quilting bees, “stitch and bitch” get-togethers, and the many organizations devoted to fiber arts.²

Rhyner works alone. (In fact, in 2014, her submission to the state fair’s quilting competition was disqualified for not meeting the proper guidelines).³ Her fabric wall hangings are more closely related to what Le Corbusier called “nomadic murals.”⁴ In contrast to many of his contemporaries invested in distinguishing fine art from craft, the famed modernist considered tapestry an art but outsourced the actual production of his designs.

As a mostly self-taught artist, Rhyner usually skirts philosophical skirmishes in centuries-old debates about the distinctions between fine art and craft, which typically focus on the question of functionality, which on closer inspection is steeped in the politics of race, colonialism, class, and gender.⁵ Yet her diptych in the Jerome exhibition invites a suggestive dialog about function and folly: in the history of architecture, pavilions like the one in *Olive Garden* were called follies since their sole purpose was to delight. Named for its dearth of practical purpose, the folly shares an etymological root with foolishness. *Swimmers*, on the other hand, pictures a disorienting space that does not abide by the laws of perspective. Reminiscent of M. C. Escher’s drawings, the scene mixes points of view. Certainty is suspended. Multiple staircases lead nowhere, stripped of their function and distilled to form. In the foreground, four strange humanoid bodies dive toward water. Elsewhere, glowing orbs grow from wavy-patterned fabric and further amplify the pervasive sense of strangeness.

Together, *Swimmers* and *Olive Garden* present a subtle material commentary on the putative uselessness of art: void of immediate practical purpose, art nonetheless stirs experiences that even though they may not make sense initially (or ever), still hold value in that they suspend certainty and, rather than

comment on what is, alert us to what might be. Art may well be a misfit folly that does not play by the rules, but how marvelous to enter an imaginary space that invites play, wonder, and getting a little lost.

NOTES

1. Two examples for such commemorative and explicitly activist projects are the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt and the crowd-sourced Monument Quilt devoted to creating a public platform for the survivors of rape and assault.

2. To name but a few local examples, the Minnesota Quilters, the Weavers Guild of Minnesota, and the Textile Art Center.

3. Conversation with the artist, April 29, 2016.

4. Wendy Moonan, “Le Corbusier Saw Tapestry as Part of Art”; <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/28/arts/antiques-le-corbusier-saw-tapestry-as-part-of-art.html>.

5. Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 274–78.



Pittsburgh Skyscraper Cloud World, 2015

Fabric, acrylic

11 x 4 ft.

Photo: Sean Smuda



Welcome, 2015

Fabric, acrylic, beads

Approx. 10.3 x 9.3 ft.

Photo: Sean Smuda

*Cotton Field*, 2015

Fabric, acrylic, beads

10 x 12 ft.

Photo: Sean Smuda

*Swimmers*, 2016

Fabric

Approx. 9.3 x 7.6 ft.

Photo: Rik Sferra



HOLLY STREEKSTRA

Holly Streekstra is a sculptor and installation artist who employs multiple modes and forms of expression in order to investigate our inner subjective states and psychic vulnerability in the contemporary world. She is especially interested in raising questions regarding our accepted notions and reactions, our choice to suspend disbelief, and our capacity for doubt. Streekstra has participated in many group exhibitions and residencies in the United States and abroad, and has received several awards. In 2013, she was a Fulbright Scholar in Hungary. She holds a BFA from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and an MFA from Louisiana State University.

hollystreekstra.net

Ladies and gentlemen! Little did you realize that today, you're going to witness the most hair-raising display! You won't believe your eyes! Never-before-seen feats will shock and amaze you. So prepare to be thrilled beyond belief as you encounter the incredible, inimitable, simply unbelievable—

Holly Streekstra is fascinated by moments when we willingly suspend disbelief: from carnival attraction to theater magic and sideshow trickery, the Age of Reason has not ended the desire for forms of enchantment capable of casting certainties in doubt. Though the script of the carnival ringmaster of old may have changed, the eagerness to believe in what seems impossible has not.

With an eclectic background in theater, sculpture, music, and dance, in her past work Streekstra has probed perception, make-believe, and the willing suspension of disbelief from a number of angles. *Abracadabra Dare* (2011) cheekily ran red carpet underneath a ladder, as if to invite glamorous violation of superstitious beliefs. *Step on This Side of the Curtain* (2012) transformed an entire room into a scene fit for a Victorian séance. Inaudible, a near infrasonic sound drifted through the parlor, most palpable where sound wave hit brick wall and, in the backwash, amplified to cause an eerie physical sensation. More recently, *Bardo* (2016) similarly created a space in between dangling piano wires studded with black velvet cutouts in the shape of quarter rests. References thus mix and mingle: the bardo, the charnel ground of Tibetan Buddhism, serves as a metaphor for liminality. Signs of silence and periods of rest symbolize a space beyond reason in Streekstra's installation.

Never one to shy away from philosophical questions, Streekstra roots her practice

in conceptual investigations. Since 2012, when the artist packed up her studio and moved to Hungary before returning to Minnesota in 2014, her work has frequently emerged from an informed dialogue with specific cultural and geographic sites, responding to their architecture, history, and present situation. Often, these post-studio projects take shape in collaboration with other visual artists, dancers, and choreographers. But as varied as Streekstra's projects have been, her fascination with the intangible, that which eludes rational explanation—whether based on faith, superstition, sentimental attachments (as in *Souvenir Horizon*, 2012), esoteric beliefs and psychic occurrences, or the uncanny—weaves through her work.

Spectral Response is a case in point. Recorded in the Hill House in Northfield, Minnesota, the video follows a body's exploration of a domestic space. Built in 1894, the Hill House, named after the architect Fred B. Hill, served as a family home first before becoming in 1914 the residence of Carleton College's president. In 1945, the mansion was converted to student housing.¹ Countless renovations have produced an interior filled with strangely shaped nooks and slanted doorways, columned fireplaces, looming stairways, and dormers. More than the architecture, though, Streekstra was attracted to the many personal and generational histories the house potentially holds: if places gather and hold memories, how can art make visible and embody such spectral traces?²

Working with composer Reid Kruger and performer Adrienne Gaylord, a circus-school student who specializes in contortion, Streekstra aimed to heighten the sense of a strange but intimate domestic space. Using a modified camera that registers frequencies beyond the human eye's capacities further amplifies

the alienation of a seemingly familiar space. As in her earlier work, the artist is interested in heightening uncertainty about we see: reality becomes unreliable. Whether through magic tricks or elaborate miniatures, the artist conjures moments when “the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced, such as when something that we have hitherto regarded as imaginary appears before us in reality.”³ This ambiguity is a central element of what Freud describes as uncanny.

“We, with the superiority of rational minds, are able to detect the sober truth; and yet this knowledge does not lessen the impression of uncanniness in the least degree,” he observes. Hence, the uncanny cannot be explained with intellectual uncertainty alone.⁴ Instead, an uncanny experience involves something older, a residue of a more primitive, infantile state of being in the world that still can manifest despite the light shed by sober truths.⁵ The repressed returns, strangely familiar, and proves the reign of reason flimsy in its face. But the uncanny, *unheimlich* in Freud's native German, is also intricately connected to the idea of home: the German adjective *heimlich* means both “belonging to the home” and, in an odd slippage of domestic comfort into what such privacy conceals, “secretive.” *Unheimlich*, its negation, riffs on the idea of home, defamiliarizes it, and revels in dark secrets that haunt the present.⁶ The house in particular embodies a mental structure rich with symbolism.⁷ This structure not only holds our memories but “houses” the things we have forgotten.⁸

In *Spectral Response*, the Hill House acts as the container and stage for the uncanny. The eerily flexible body of a child troubles the distinction between the real and the oneiric. Can we believe our eyes? No, we can't. But rather than resort to a Cartesian embrace of

reason, Streekstra suggests we turn into the opposite direction and embrace uncertainty, imagination, and speculation instead. “Choreography acts in moments of philosophical drift,”⁹ and *Spectral Response* invites us to drift alongside for a while, suspend disbelief, daydream, and savor moments of delicious doubt.

NOTES

1. For information on the history of the Hill House, see Carleton College's wiki: http://www.carlwiki.org/Hill_House.

2. See Edward Casey for a discussion of how places gather and hold memories. Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 2d. ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 327. For other artists and scholars working with spectral traces, see the international network “Mapping Spectral Traces” at <http://www.mappingspectraltraces.org>.

3. Sigmund Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” (1919) <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf>; Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994 [1958]), 13.

4. Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” 7.

5. Freud elaborates: “An uncanny experience occurs either when repressed infantile complexes are once more revived by some impression, or when the primitive beliefs we have surmounted seem once more to be confirmed”; “The ‘Uncanny,’” 18.

6. For a discussion on the etymology of *unheimlich*, see Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” 2–4.

7. C. G. Jung writes, “We have to describe and to explain a building the upper story of which was erected in the nineteenth century; the ground floor dates from the sixteenth century, and a careful examination of the masonry discloses the fact that it was reconstructed from a dwelling tower of the eleventh century. In the cellar we discover Roman foundation walls, and under the cellar a filled-in cave, in the floor of which stone tools are found and remnants of glacial fauna in the layers below. That would be a sort of picture of our mental structure”; as quoted in Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, xxxvii.

8. Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, xxxvii.

9. Jenn Joy, *The Choreographic* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2014), 13.



Abracadabra Dare, 2011

Ladder, carpet, light fixture,
pattern

Approx.
10.6 x 10.6 x 8.3 ft.



Step on This Side of the Curtain, 2012

Mixed media, found objects,
digital audio, near-infrasonic
tone, lighting, scent

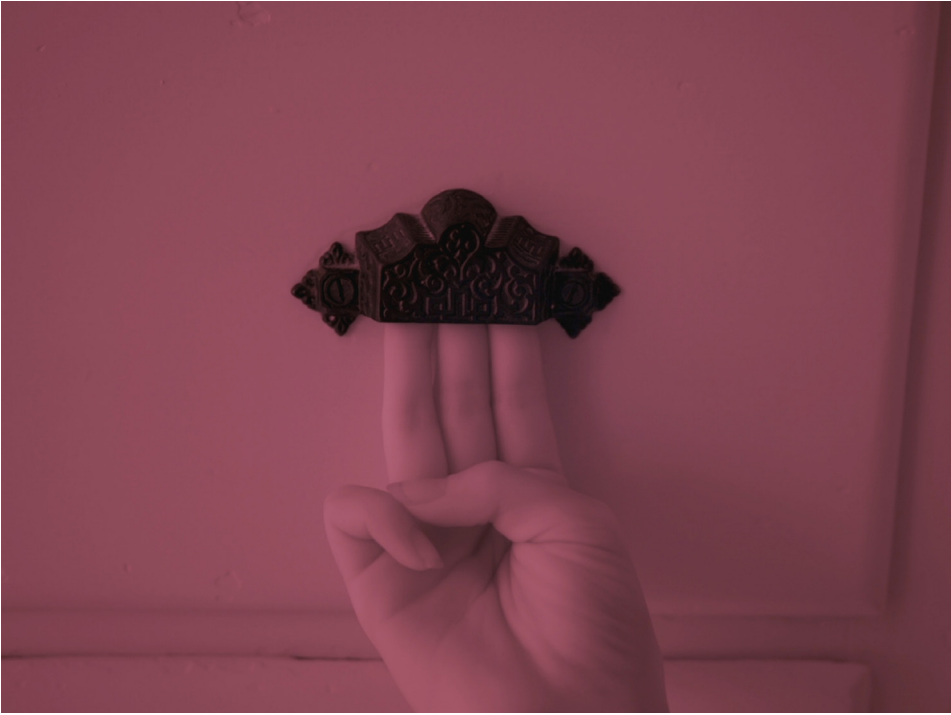
Approx.
11 x 19 x 20 ft.



Spectral Response 1, 2016
Spectral Response 2, 2016

Digital infrared video still
Digital infrared video still

Approx. 30 min.
Approx. 30 min.



Spectral Response 3, 2016
Spectral Response 4, 2016

Digital infrared video still
Digital infrared video still

Approx. 30 min.
Approx. 30 min.



STAR WALLOWING BULL

Star Wallowing Bull's drawings and paintings are kaleidoscopic explorations of popular and commercial cultural references that speak to the future as much as the past. Born in Minneapolis, Wallowing Bull currently lives and works in Moorhead, Minnesota. In 2010, he was awarded a Bush Artist Fellowship, and in 2001, he received the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian Native Artist Fellowship. His art has been exhibited at the C. N. Gorman Museum, University of California, Davis; Plains Art Museum, Fargo, North Dakota; the Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis; and the National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC. His work is in several private and public collections, including the Tweed Museum of Art, Duluth; the Weisman Art Museum; the National Museum of the American Indian; and the British Museum of Art, London. He is represented by Bockley Gallery in Minneapolis.

bockleygallery.com/artist_wallowing_bull

What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you know that the president drinks Coke, Liz Taylor drinks Coke, and just think, you can drink Coke, too. A Coke is a Coke and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it.

Thus wrote Andy Warhol in *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* in 1975. Then, commodities appeared as great equalizers, a bottle of Coke the epitome of a quasi-democratic consumerism. But today, Warhol's faith in the great leveling of class divisions through commercial goods seems quaint.

Pop art, too, cannot help but resonate in dramatically different ways today than it did forty years ago. Star Wallowing Bull, who frequently appropriates commercial icons and logos in his drawings and paintings, clearly situates his work in the wake of Warhol. Mentored by James Rosenquist, a Pop artist of international renown, Wallowing Bull juggles an abundance of references to, among others, automobile makers from Jaguar to Pontiac to Honda, the Great Northern Railway, and the fossil fuel industry in the guise of Red Indian Motor Oil, Mobil, Texaco, and Shell. His work is littered with allusions to popular entertainment, most prominently to the Transformers franchise. But despite the similarity to earlier gestures of appropriation, Wallowing Bull's art maintains a sensibility at odds with celebrating or criticizing the commodity.

Indeed, criticality in the sense of adopting a dutiful stance of resistance

to consumerist excess and manipulation is largely absent in Wallowing Bull's work. Unlike artists such as Martha Rosler or, on occasion, Rosenquist, the goal is not to create unsettling juxtapositions that, by virtue of contrast, critique their subject. For the most part, Wallowing Bull's work does not "flaunt edifying sentiments in the guise of a critical dimension."¹ Instead, his affection for the cleverly marketed, demographically targeted toys of Hasbro and Paramount Pictures is sincere, void of critical distance and fully immersed in a gendered, generational fandom. Similarly, he explains the presence of Honda hubcaps in his drawings with, "I'm a Honda man." Far from condemning Pontiac's notorious hood ornaments in the shape of a stylized chieftain's features, he regrets they are no longer manufactured. Reading cultural critique into his work risks erasing its particular sensibility.

Wallowing Bull's menagerie of characters is both fantastic and futuristic. On his canvases, creatures inspired by sophisticated alien robots mingle with a host of animals and distinctive indigenous imagery. The motif of butterfly wings recurs as a symbol of metamorphosis. Often the figures, whether fancy dancers or mechanical humanoids, appear arrested in midmovement. In *The Butterfly Man* (2016), Wallowing Bull represents a humanlike head in profile. A thin, green, tentacle-like antenna grows from one shoulder. A Transformers icon peeks from an open skull right next to a swallowtail's colorful wing. Fragments, like shards of a broken mirror, float through the space surrounding the figure. The question of identity appears suspended between human and machine, gesturing both to organic transformation and a posthuman entanglement with machines. Yet neither *The Butterfly Man* nor Wallowing Bull's work in general caters to simplistic sci-fi fantasies. The many animals in Wallowing

Bull's images—whether delicate butterflies, sleek felines, or the muscly mountain goat of the Great Northern Railway—point out that even, or especially, in the fray of postindustrial culture a human longing for connection with other creatures persists, a sentiment that only deepens the more rare real-life encounters with such others become. Wallowing Bull's appropriations of commercial logos are far from coincidental then: they trace a lasting infatuation with the prowess, elegance, and alien intelligence of nonhuman animals. Echoing the blurred boundaries Donna Haraway probes in her "Cyborg Manifesto," the artist imagines identities in between human and nonhuman animals, part person and part machine.² In his kaleidoscopic drawings, such distinctions become indistinct in the swirl of visual iconographies the artist gleans from popular, commercial, and tribal cultures.

This visual heteroglossia riffs on Wallowing Bull's cultural roots but steers clear of purist nostalgia for unadulterated traditions. His drawings and paintings chart a trajectory toward a representational space no longer determined by identity alone: that mirror has broken; its shards are everywhere.³ Thus, his practice embodies a radican sensibility that thrives on "setting one's roots in motion, staging them in heterogeneous contexts and formats, denying them the power to completely define one's identity."⁴ His work both refutes any attempt to equate identity with art and, simultaneously, insists on the continued relevance of his heritage.⁵ Indeed, his images serve as a poignant reminder that the posthuman turn of recent scholarship lags behind indigenous ways of knowing that never fell for the idea of human superiority to begin with.⁶

NOTES

1. Nicolas Bourriaud, *The Radicant* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2009), 25.

2. See Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," originally published in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (New York: Routledge, 1991), online at <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Haraway-CyborgManifesto-1.pdf>. Philosopher Giorgio Agamben describes the production of the boundary between human and animal as a result of the "anthropological machine," an ideological apparatus designed to set apart the human from other animals.

3. For the politics of representational space, see Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007).

4. Bourriaud, *The Radicant*, 22.

5. For a detailed discussion of the history of a "both/and philosophy," see Vivian M. May, *Pursuing Intersectionality, Unsettling Dominant Imaginaries* (London: Routledge, 2015), especially 40–41.

6. See, for instance, Richard Grusin, *The Nonhuman Turn* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015); and Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2013). For the relationship between human hubris and indigenous ways of knowing, see Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Gathering Moss* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003); and Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013).



Cevello Spazio Cosmicio #2, 2015

Colored pencil on paper

30 x 22 in.

Photo courtesy of
Bockley Gallery,
Minneapolis



The Butterfly Man, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

48 x 36 in.

Photo: Rik Sferra,
courtesy of Bockley
Gallery, Minneapolis

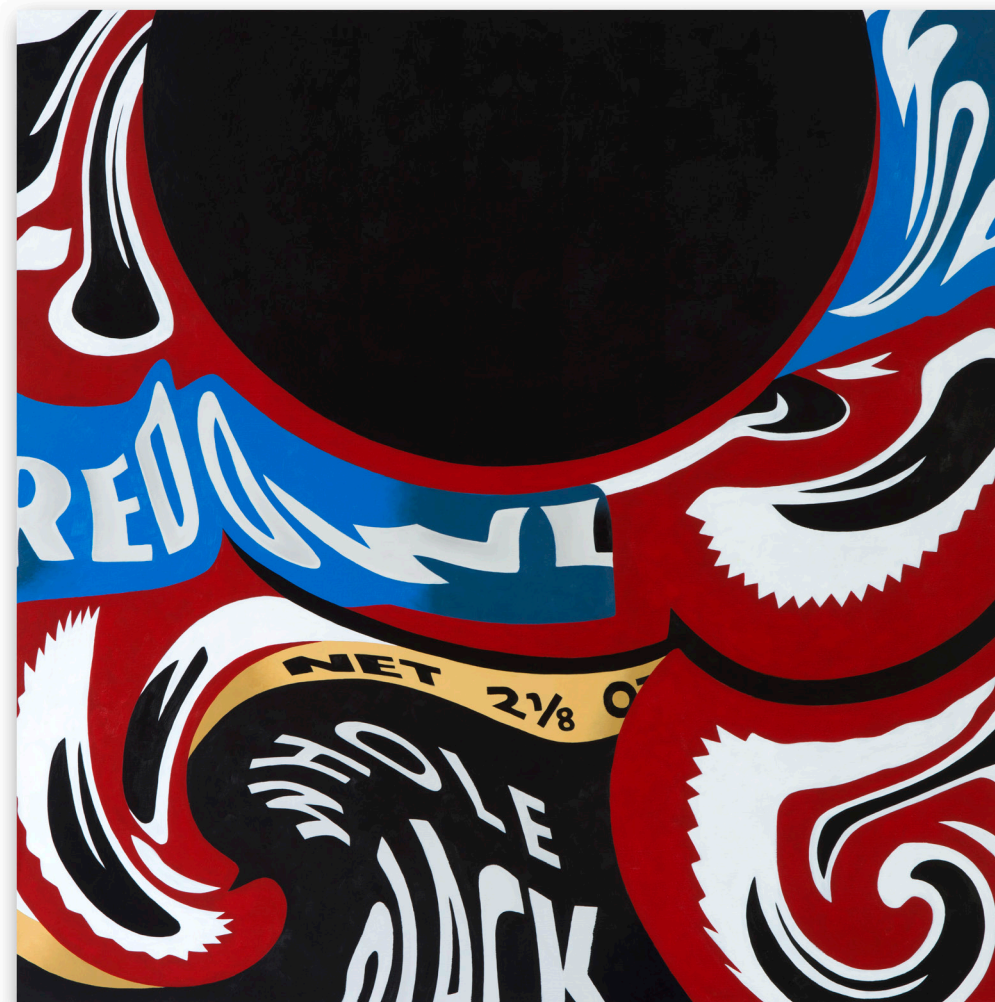


High Plains Jingle Dancer #2, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

48 x 36 in.

Photo: Rik Sferra,
courtesy of Bockley
Gallery, Minneapolis



Black Hole, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

48 x 48 in.

Photo: Rik Sferra,
courtesy of Bockley
Gallery, Minneapolis



SAMUAL WEINBERG

Samual Weinberg's paintings depict strange, uncertain narratives where relationships are tentative and seemingly connected events refuse to acknowledge if they indeed are. Accompanying some of his 2D works are 3D paintings, or artifacts, that seem to have emerged from the painting's world into our own and are ostensibly physical evidence of the painting's events. These parallels, repetitions, echoes, and materializations challenge other elements in the narrative as well as the interplay between fiction and reality. Weinberg recently participated in local group exhibitions at Rosalux Gallery and Gallery 13 in Minneapolis, and has shown his work in solo shows at Soo Visual Arts Center in Minneapolis and Thierry Goldberg Gallery's Project Room in New York City. He received his BFA from the University of Wisconsin–Stout. Weinberg currently lives and works in St. Paul.

samualweinberg.com

The story reveals itself to me.
—Trenton Doyle Hancock

As artifacts go, “made by hand” assures a connection between the object and its maker, as if human touch guaranteed more authenticity than other forms of facture. “The artist’s hand” amplifies the myth: imbued with a mind of its own, it stands for an inexplicable agency beyond intentionality, the harbinger of revelations born from haptic intimacy.¹ A similar surrender of agency occurs when artists like Trenton Doyle Hancock wait for the story of his epic, esoteric Moundverse to reveal itself. Samuel Weinberg is no stranger to such discoveries: When the first Pink Man, the hapless hero of his recent paintings, appeared, his exuberance and admittedly odd appearance startled everyone, including the artist. Since then, the Pink Men’s travels and travails have become one thread that weaves through Weinberg’s labyrinthine practice. The Hand, too, is a recurring motif: it appears severed, as a glowing phantom limb, afflicted by an enigmatic discoloration that, alarmingly, seems to be spreading; or as “The Hand,” a swollen, pink affair that serves as the title of a sci-fi soap opera, popular in Weinberg’s fictional universe. Thus the revered mind in the hand meets “The Hand,” in an encounter as slippery as the lines between sincerity, humor, and irreverence in Weinberg’s work.

Rooted in painting, his practice has grown to include not only soap opera episodes but also objects that have left representational for actual space. T-shirts advertising “The Hand” in a mock Star Trek aesthetic were available for a limited run on Weinberg’s website. Faux Americana bring a tongue-in-cheek regional and generational sensibility to Weinberg’s zany production: the “Troutouroboros” paraphernalia of Jacoby

Sanders’s fishing empire comes complete with his tagline, “there is no doubt, you’ll catch trout.” Other objects, displayed on shelves next to the paintings, seem determined to blur the line between fact and fiction but—as in the case of a painted ham—fail to do so rather conspicuously. Verisimilitude, though, is beside the point; the slippage between the familiar and the fictional isn’t.

Each of Weinberg’s paintings captures a moment filled in a decidedly nonlinear visual narrative. Hints and clues allude to the strange events that befall the mysterious characters without revealing their meaning. This narrative conceit is conceptually related to a particular strand of contemporary fiction, most prominently associated with Thomas Pynchon, David Foster Wallace, and Don DeLillo. Weinberg alludes to Pynchon directly by quoting Larry “Doc” Sportello of *Inherent Vice*: “Idiots Unlimited. First to Go, Last to Know.” The motto appears as a tattoo on the left arm of Weinberg’s character The Man Without Problems. On the right, he sports a cactus tattoo. Weinberg had the very same cactus motif inked into his arm. Aside from a passion for arcane references and a zany sense of humor, the artist shares an enthusiasm for packing his paintings with the visual equivalent of Wallace’s extensive footnotes. Together, the paintings become a multilayered, looping, self-referential funhouse, neurotically devoted to the obscure quasi-logic of events that, amid much uncertainty, continue to unfold.

Consider *The Clearing or Sad Trippy Smilies* (2015) a case in point: on a pastoral meadow complete with birches and dotted with yellow blooms, The Man Without Problems, his hair shorn close to the scalp, arms lined with signature tattoos, kneels on the ground, steadying a black-haired figure. He is missing his

right hand, though, which, were it not for the eerily glowing blue phantom limb in its place, might be a problem. With his left hand, he grabs the leg of a figure running off with hands raised in alarm. Meanwhile, the black-haired figure reclines like some saintly martyr, while an onlooker gives or takes a knife—the weapon that severed the hand? Littered with cards of a toothy, teary-eyed, long-tongued smiley face, the painting also features a Pink Man, pointing and laughing at the strangely sacrificial scene while pulling off a mask that looks remarkably like The Man Without Problems.

The paintings hold an abundance of detail: symbols, mirror images, shadows, reflections, and a sense of sequence communicated through the changing seasons. Even the style of painting holds meaning. Like the saints of Eastern Orthodox iconography, whose exalted state was traditionally represented by two-dimensionality, the Pink Men inhabit Weinberg’s fictional universe in a state of profound otherness. Part alien visitors, part cartoon characters, they seem baffled by what they encounter. *Found Out, with Consequent Stabbing* (2016) seals a Pink Man’s fate, as the black-haired man, his eyes awash in tears, stabs him. *Donning of the Ceremonial Death Shirt* (2016) depicts his subsequent death. The character’s flatness fades, as if only now he is finally entering the dimensionality of the painting’s world.²

The Pink Men’s fate is but one of the countless threads in Weinberg’s prolific practice. Painting, sculpture, merchandise, soap opera script, and video all conspire to create an intricate frenzy symptomatic of a particular aesthetic: “zaniness asks us to regard form not as structure but as activity.”³ Always on the edge of spiraling out of control, the zany responds to the late-capitalist imperative

to “perform or else.” Though always hyperbolic—the bombardment with detail, the incessant shape-shifting of Weinberg’s practice—the zany differs from camp in that it does not allow for ironic detachment.⁴ The artist, tattoo and all, is part of the work. Lines between professional and playful performance blur just as narrative conceits bleed into each other. Weinberg’s work embodies this slippage and its paradox: The zany, as an aesthetic category, is becoming less recognizable as the imperative to perform incessantly is normalized.⁵

NOTES

The epigraph is from a talk by Trenton Doyle Hancock at the Regis Center for the Arts, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, April 7, 2016.

1. Art historian Henri Focillon speaks of “the mind in the hand.” Quoted in Robert Storr, “Dear Colleague,” in *Art School: Propositions for the 21st Century*, ed. Steven Henry Madoff (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009), 64.

2. The Pink Man’s stabbing in the woods is eerily reminiscent of the murder committed in the wake of Slender Man, an Internet invention turned urban myth. The year after Weinberg graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Stout, two teenage girls in Waukesha, Wisconsin, stabbed their friend in the woods to make Slender Man, mistaken for real, appear. Weinberg was not familiar with the tragic incident or the myth of Slender Man.

3. Sianne Ngai, *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 30.

4. For a more in-depth discussion of the zany (along with the interesting and the cute), see Ngai, *Our Aesthetic Categories*, 1–30.

5. Ngai writes, “the aesthetic of nonstop action and movement paradoxically registers a waning of the subject’s capacity to perceive action and movement as form”; *Our Aesthetic Categories*, 230.



The Hand or The Arm at The Pink Man's Place, 2016

Oil and acrylic on canvas

60 x 45 in.

Photo: Rik Sferra



The Clearing or Sad Trippy Smilies, 2015

Oil and acrylic on canvas

72 x 60 in.



Found Out, with Consequent Stabbing,
2016

Oil and acrylic on panel

24 x 22 in.



Donning of the Ceremonial Death Shirt,
2016

Oil and acrylic on canvas

48 x 36 in.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Independent minded, resourceful, and ambitious. These are just a few of the words that most immediately come to mind when considering the 2015/16 recipients of the Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Emerging Artists. For thirty-five years, this fellowship administered by the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) has been offering emerging artists in Minnesota the chance to take unprecedented risks and reconsider what is possible. And, without a doubt, Emmett Ramstad, Lindsay Rhyner, Holly Streekstra, Star Wallowing Bull, and Samuel Weinberg have “made good” on this opportunity.

Blunt, subversive, funny, distinctive, and honest. These are just a few of the

words that the three Jerome jurors used to describe the five fellows selected out of a pool of 220 applicants. These art professionals included Ken Lum, artist and professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design; Monica Ramirez-Montagut, director of the Newcomb Art Museum at Tulane University; and Anne Dugan, executive and artistic director of the Duluth Art Institute.

Over the past year the fellows have met with writer and scholar Christina Schmid, who teaches critical thinking and writing for the department of art at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. The fellows selected Schmid to write individual essays about their work, and she will also moderate a panel discussion

with the fellows in early November while their culminating exhibition is on view. As usual, Schmid’s perceptive and deft writing skills have illuminated key aspects of each fellow’s work and practice, making connections that enrich the audience’s understanding of the art. The fellows greatly appreciated the thoughtfulness she brought to their discussions and subsequent essays. Also while the culminating exhibition is on view in MCAD Gallery, the fellows will each do studio visits with Risa Puleo, a New York City-based independent curator and critic. In addition to receiving Puleo’s feedback, each artist will select one other local critic with whom to do a studio visit. This aspect of the fellowship program expands the fellows’ networks and hopefully encourages them personally and professionally as the fellowship year comes to an end.

MCAD is honored to be the administrative home of this fellowship program, which has been ongoing since 1981. Each year, many people at the college continue to make this fellowship program possible. I greatly appreciate the ongoing support of Jay Coogan, president of MCAD, and Karen Wirth, vice president for academic affairs. Without Kate Mohn, grants and projects administrator, our grants would be too verbose and less enjoyable to write. Nouhtrang Thao ’16, who works for DesignWorks, MCAD’s in-house design firm, has done an excellent job designing the exhibition catalog, promotional materials, and signage with the benefit of the keen oversight by that department’s leadership team of Dylan Cole, Aaron DeYoe, and Rita Kovtun. Many thanks to Rik Sferra for the expertly composed portraits, catalog images, and exhibition documentation. His services serve the artists far beyond the course of just one year. Tabitha Aleskerov, Steven Candy, and Josie Keifenheim are the webmasters

who ensure the smooth running of the application process and the updating of many a web page. Ann Benrud, director of communications and external relations, helps ensure that the five fellows become better known to our own arts community and beyond. My MFA graduate assistants Michaela Chorn and Aaron Olson-Reiners offered excellent help and companionship with the jurying process and also assisted with the installation of the culminating exhibition at MCAD. Managing much of the logistics of the fellowship falls on the shoulders of the fellowship and gallery programs coordinator, a position held by Nathan Lewis at the beginning of the fellowship year that has now been filled by Melanie Pankau. A dedicated MCAD Gallery installation crew that includes Nate Christenson, Isabela Cruz, Julian Howley, Allegra Lockstadt, Sara Suppan, Sheila Wagner, and Forrest Wasko makes the exhibition come together. For all this help, I am grateful.

Outside of MCAD, I am always pleased to have the excellent copyediting skills of Mary Keirstead. Her attentive editing of the exhibition catalog is most appreciated. And finally, none of this would be possible without the generosity of the Jerome Foundation. There are few foundations in the country that have so consistently and fervently supported emerging artists, providing critical financial and professional support as these artists gain momentum in their careers. On behalf of the 2015/16 fellows, I want to thank the Jerome board of directors; Ben Cameron, the new president of the foundation; as well as Eleanor Savage, program director, who has generously given her time to meet the fellows and discuss the fellowship program’s future.

Kerry Morgan
Program Director, Jerome Foundation
Fellowships for Emerging Artists

PAST RECIPIENTS

2014
Miranda Brandon
Regan Golden-McNerney
Jess Hirsch
Sieng Lee
Jason Ramey

2013
Kjellgren Alkire
Pao Houa Her
GraceMarie Keaton
Robin Schwartzman
Nate Young

2012
Susannah Bielak
Amanda Hankerson
Michael Hoyt
Melissa Loop
Lauren Roche

2011
Richard Barlow
Gregory Euclide
Lauren Herzak-Bauman
Alison Hiltner
Jehra Patrick

2010
Greg Carideo
Teri Fullerton
Julia Kouneski
Brett Smith
Jonathan Bruce Williams

2009
Steven Accola
Caroline Kent
Tynan Kerr/Andrew Mazorol
Tony Sunder

2008
Evan Baden
Barbara Claussen
Kirsten Peterson
Benjamin Reed
Lindsay Smith

2007
Matthew Bakkom
Monica Haller
Colin Kopp
Liz Miller
Rosemary Williams

2006
Ernest A. Bryant III
Brian Lesteberg
Cherith Lundin
Monica Sheets
Marcus Young

2005
Janet Lobberecht
Megan Rye
Angela Strassheim
Dan Tesene
Megan Vossler

2004
Michael Gaughan
Kirk McCall
Abinadi Meza
Lisa Nankivil

2003
Tamara Brantmeier
Lucas DiGiulio
Jesse Petersen
Matthew Wacker
Troy Williams

2002
Joseph del Pesco
Helena Keeffe
Charles Matson Lume
Justin Newhall
Grace Park

2001
Jay Heikes
Markus Lunkenheimer
Alec Soth
Peter Haakon Thompson
John Vogt

2000
Santiago Cucullu
Alexa Horochowski
John Largaespada
Gene Pittman
Cristi Rinklin

1999
Amelia Biewald-Low
Jason S. Brown
James Holmberg
Anne Sugnet
Inna Valin

1998
Amelie Collins
Brad Geiken
Rollin Marquette
Don Myhre
Thor Eric Paul

1997
Jean Humke
Carolyn Swiszc
Amy Toscani
Cate Vermeland
Sara Woster

1996
Therese Buchmiller
Todd Deutsch
Celeste Nelms
Mara Pelecis
Mike Rathbun

1995
Robert Fischer
Anne George
Stephanie Molstre-Kotz
Todd Norsten
Carl Scholz

1994
Terence Accola
Mary Jo Donahue
Jonathan Mason
Karen Platt
Elliot Warren

1993
Mary Esch
Damian Garner
Shannon Kennedy
Linda Louise Rother
James Whitney Tuthill

1992
Angela Dufresne
Tim Jones
Chris Larson
Andrea McCormack
Shawn Smith

1991
Hans Accola
Sara Belleau
Franciska Rosenthal Louw
Colette Gaiter
Annette Walby

1990
Andy Baird
Mark Barlow
Keri Pickett
Ann Wood
Christopher Wunderlich

1989
Lynn Hambrick
Vince Leo
Stuart Mead
David Pelto
Alyn Silberstein

1988
Phil Barber
JonMarc Edwards
Jil Evans
Dave Rathman
George Reboloso

1987
Michelle Charles
Leslie Hawk
Paul Shambroom
Viet Ngo
Diana Watters

1986
Gary DeCosse
Christopher Dashke
Jennifer Hecker
Michael Mercil
Randy Reeves

1985
Betina
Judy Kepes
Peter Latner
James May
Lynn Wadsworth

1984
Doug Argue
Remo Campopiano
Timothy Darr
Audrey Glassman
Robert Murphy

1983
Jana Freiband
Janet Loftquist
David Madzo
Jeff Millikan
Steven Woodward

1982
Jane Bassuk
Frank Big Bear Jr.
Laura Blaw
Matt Brown
Kevin Mangan

1981
Ricardo Bloch
Bruce Charlesworth
Alison Ruttan
T.L. Solien
Scott Stack

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The Jerome Foundation, created by artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905–1972), seeks to contribute to a dynamic and evolving culture by supporting the creation, development, and production of new works by emerging artists. The foundation makes grants to not-for-profit arts organizations and artists in Minnesota and New York City. The Jerome Foundation celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014 by honoring the creation, development, and production of new work by emerging artists, and the organizations that support them. Visit the Jerome Foundation's website for more information about its history of grant making.

jeromefdn.org

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