

FRONT

Micro-celebrity

Everyone is famous to 15 people



SPECIAL SECTION

Feline
Performance
Artists

Marian Bantjes, Rodney Brooks, Sylvana D'Angelo, FASTWÜRMS, Kimberly Gilbertson, Sarah Gotowka, Fiona Hernández, Grey Hernandez, Karina Irvine, Keith Langergraber, Meghan Latta, Maru, Megan Morman, Zeesy Powers, Helen Reed, Chick Rice, Ryan Steele, Anna Szaflarski, Sarah Todd, Usher, Lisa Visser, Sheri-D Wilson and a calendar of arts events.

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Sheri-D Wilson, photographed by David Johns



The source for the cover of this issue, a photograph of spoken word poet Sheri-D Wilson, was originally published on *Front Magazine's* February 1990 issue, on the occasion of a performance at the Western Front (9pm, \$5 at the door). We probably have a tape of that night in our video archives.

I was nine that year and missed the show, but I've seen Sheri-D perform a couple times since — in a creative writing classroom, at a festival — and have known her name for years. *Front's* Art Director, Karianne, comes from the design world and had never heard of her.

Sheri-D is, in other words, a micro-celebrity.

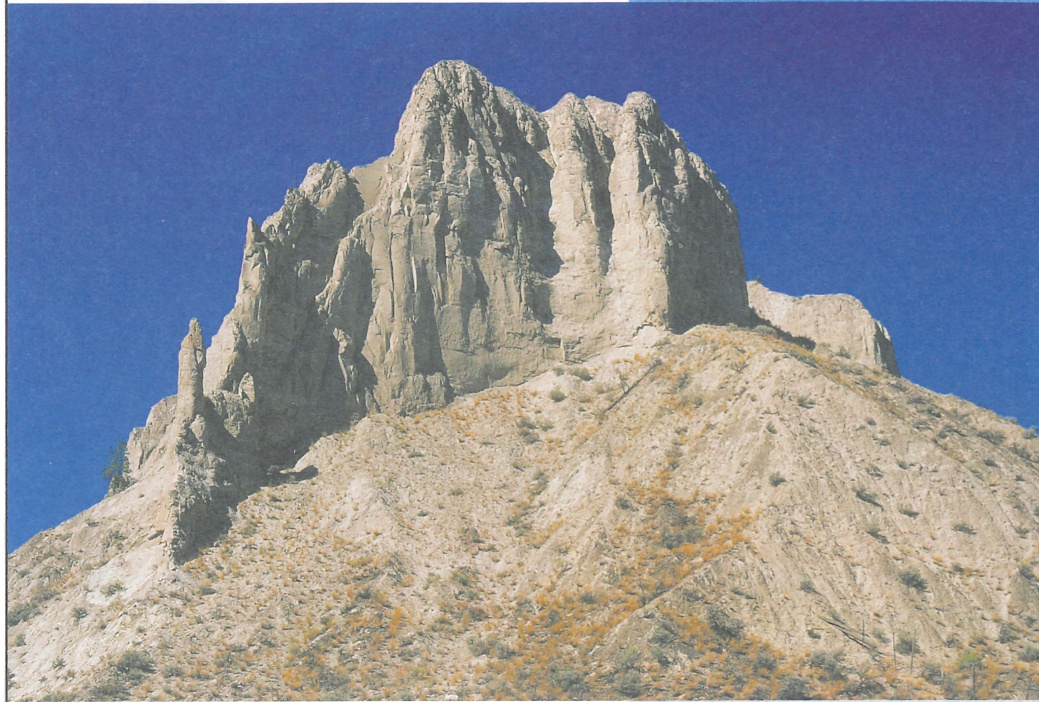
Our tendency, as a culture, is to see semi-fame as a form of half-failure, but that's only one way to look at it. When I asked Sheri-D what it's like to be semi-famous, she said "I'm sort of like a cup half full, and a cup half empty at the same time. It lends itself to a neutrality, which I really like." She liked our theme a lot. "Artists are micro, and they must remain micro. That's where they can move around." So she did what she does: she wrote us a poem. You can find it on page 8.

Our intern, Karina Irvine, remixed the original cover in colour for 2010.

Enjoy the issue.

Reanna Alder
Editor

Keith
Langergraber
text page 10

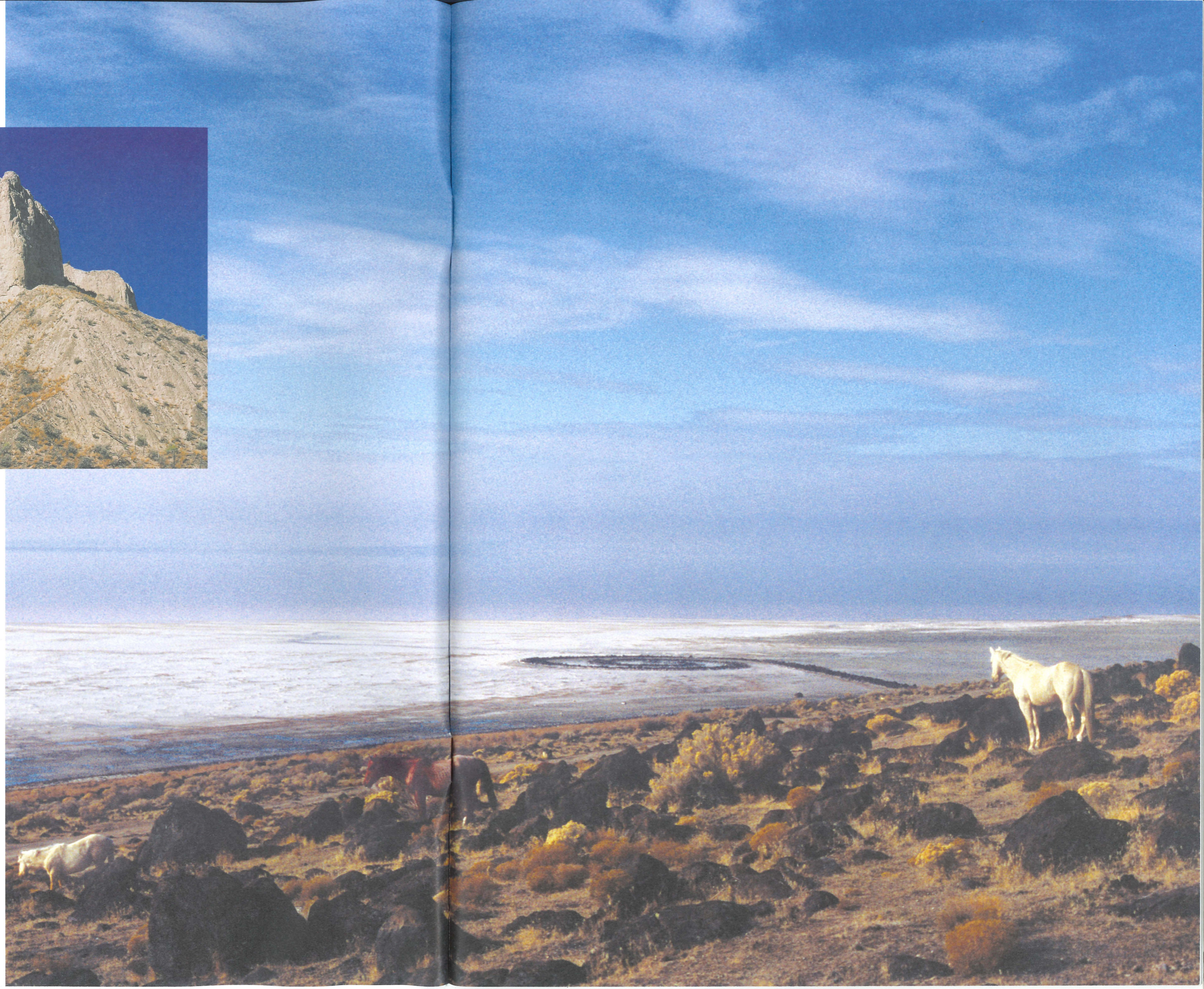


Above

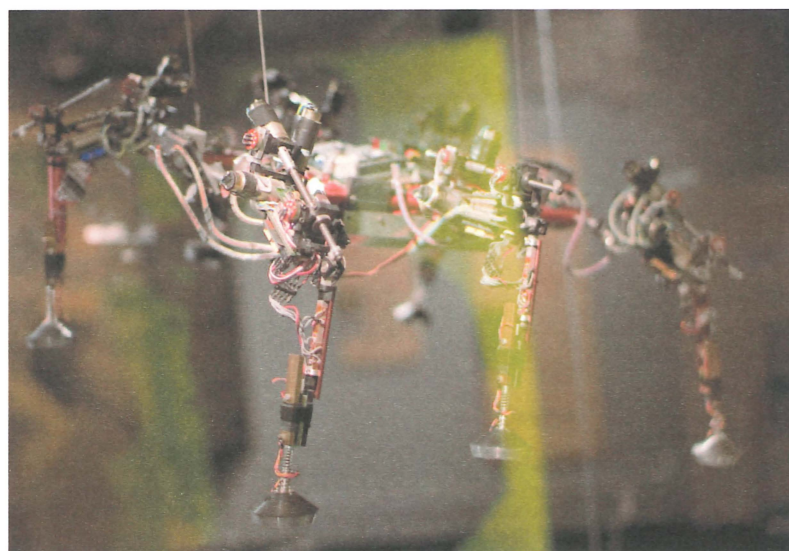
A *Battlestar Galactica* film was shot at this site at Kamloops, B.C. The geological formation is called a "hoodoo." Keith Langergraber took this photo while doing research for his exhibition at Western Front, The Society of Temporal Investigations.

Right

Photo of Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty, with horses. Keith made two trips down to Great Salt Lake to film.

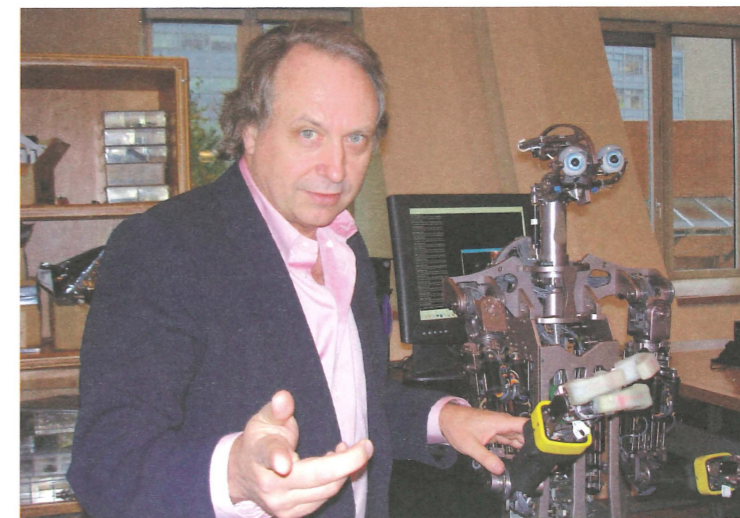


Marian
Bantjes &
Rodney
Brooks
text page 14



Above, Marian Bantjes
Right, The field across from Marian's
house on Bowen Island.
Photos: Karina Irvine

Left, One of Rodney Brooks' insect robots
featured in the Errol Morris documentary
Fast, Cheap & Out of Control. Photo:
Kenneth Lu, Flickr Creative Commons
Right, Top, Rodney Brooks. Courtesy
Marian Bantjes.



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Everyone is famous to 15 people

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Cover Notes
Chick Rice took the original photo on the cover. Rice continues to explore photography's esoteric and not so esoteric territories. She occasionally writes about ecological issues, teaches photography and visual literacy at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and is working on a solo exhibit. chickrice.com
Karina Irvine remixed the original Front Magazine cover from February, 1990. See her bio on page 16.

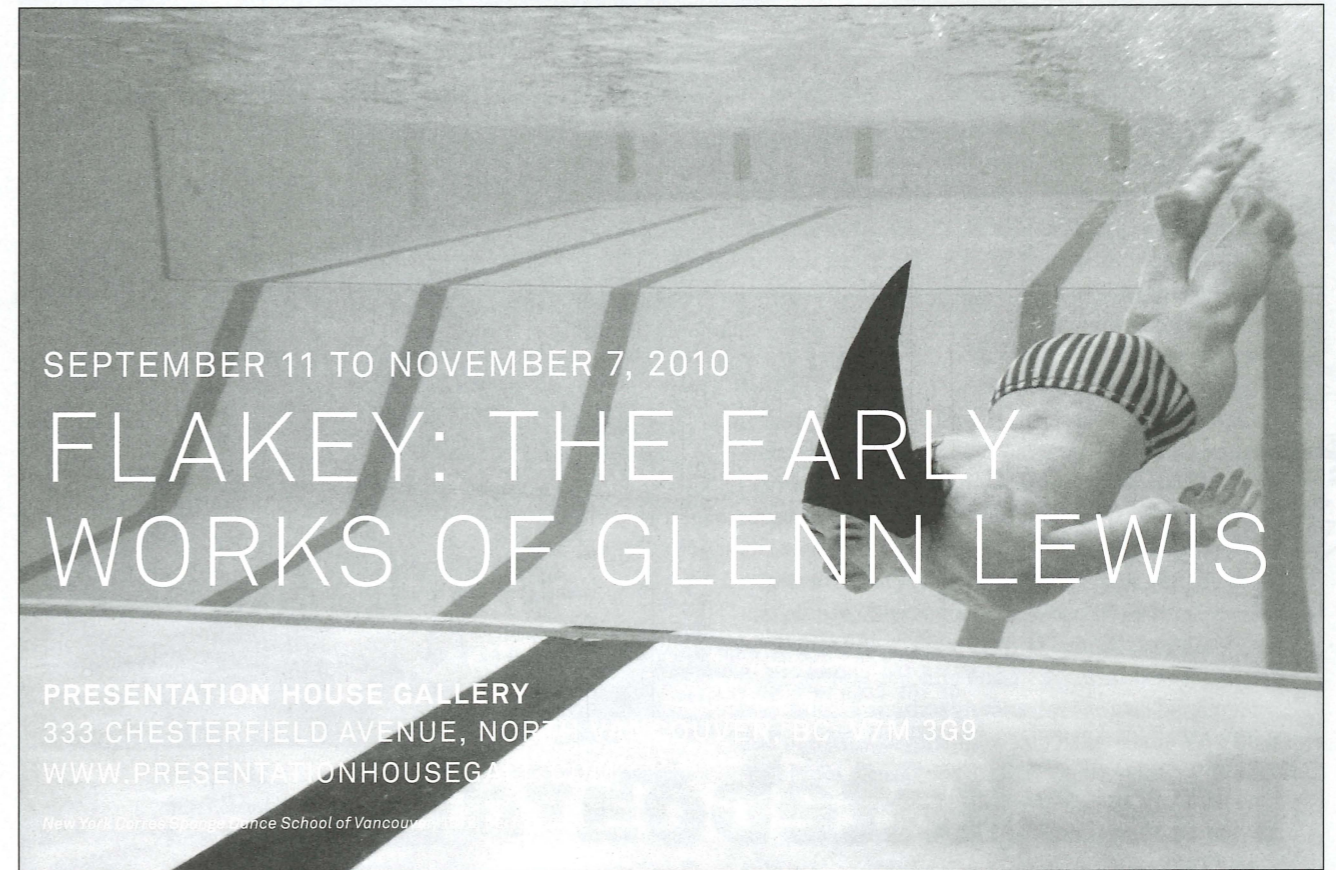
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cover, page 1

Ode to a Microscopic Life

Sheri-D Wilson

Ode to the micro-micro dot
and the quantum shot — of drink me, drink me, drink me,
to coming in under-the-radar
maybe millionth, between centi & zepto, milli & nano
cause there was no race, in the first place
just open space by-which to muse,
to dance up-close, no socks no shoes
with a beautiful delusion of bones,
like a rhizome poem; or zoom-in tight
on a biome org — the complete unknown
so synonymous with anonymous,
it's almost hieroglyphic, or microfiche-alistic
Ode to the quasi, and the demi-tasse
to the infinite infinitesimal
and the ass with sass in a micro-mini
walkin' the street of hormones, with grace
and disgrace — a fine line
a nine wine — it's all in the taste a journey might find
oh yes: drink me, drink me, drink me
it's alright to be tight
when you don't give a microratsmite
Ode to the cosmic-cosm of micro-'ness
which maps the mystic subterranean
as a hemi-life lived with wildness to recall
"what an odd oddball" — no GPS
and the submicroscopic eye sees it all
cause that's where transformation clicks yes
to install, and birth and death
and breath and the fall, come & go
above so below
RAM ROM RAM ROM DNA — d'oh!
Microb! "attack of the killer micros"
they're as big as micro is soft
so not to be microscuffed
and Jiminy Cricket was a macrophiliac
with a giant fetish, so I guess you'd say
he was micro-giga-boffed
Ode to being and nothingness and the minimalist
to the tiny titanic and the minuscule gigantic
to the micro macrobiotic and the macro microicentic
naked to the unnaked eye — paparazzi aetherized
when the only way to be seen, is through a lens
on a slide — then, get a midway ticket and take a techno-ride
"Now what was the question?"

In 2009, CBC called Sheri-D Wilson one of the Top 10 Poets in Canada. She's performed the world: Poetry Africa, Vancouver International Writers Festival, Montreal's Blue Met, NYC's Bowery Club, maelström Brussels, Taos Circus, Bumbershoot. In 2003 she won the Heavy-weight Title for Poetry USA. She has seven collections, two CDs and four VideoPoems.



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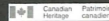


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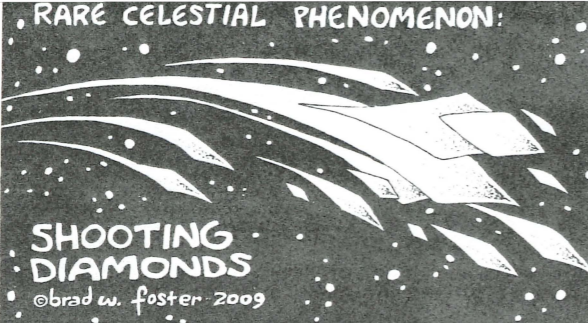
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First blush I would have
y that Mithril armour
d be the way to go.
how it protected poor
Frodo from the troll
k. Plus it looks
etter.

That said, I have always
'ound Captain America to
e a bit annoying. All that
upporting the state blah
blah blah. As if! I
don't think superheros
would really support



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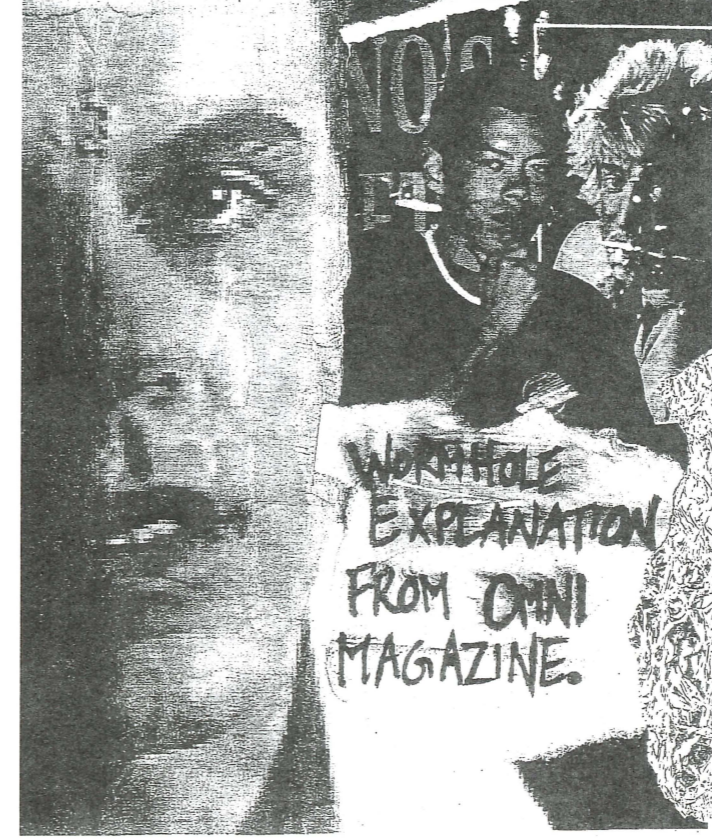
The Skateboarder, the Surfer, the Fan and the Curator

Helen Reed interviews
Keith Langergraber

Keith Langergraber is an artist and a fan of science fiction. In his recent exhibition at the Western Front, The Society of Temporal Investigations, he brought these two often-disparate realms into focus. The exhibition featured Langergraber's drawings based on the science fiction television series *Battlestar Galactica*, fan-made zines and his fan film, *The Theatre of the Exploding Sun*.

Helen Do you identify as a *Battlestar Galactica* fan?
Keith As a kid I enjoyed the original show and I have watched the new series. I see myself as a *Battlestar Galactica* fan but not part of the *Battlestar Galactica* fan community. Having some distance from the larger fan community gives me some anthropological distance. I feel this allows me to create work on the subject in a more critical manner.
Do you think that distance is required for criticality? There are some great examples of fan art that have a kind of criticality embedded in their obsession. Slash art comes to

mind, in which fans create art based on imagined gay/lesbian/queer relationships between the main characters from television shows — Kirk/Spock, for example.
I don't think that critical distance is required, but for myself sometimes it helps to have some distance. For example, with earlier exhibits dealing with the sub-culture of surfing and using it as a vehicle to explore aspects of tourism, it worked out better for me in that I was not local. With my work around skateboarding I am definitely more a part of the community and I had no problem with being too close to the subject.
I see a lot of parallels between my work dealing with skateboarding and sci-fi fan sub-cultures in that they both view the city in interesting ways. Skateboarders create their own mental maps based on various skate spots just as sci-fi fans create their own mental geographies based on sci-fi film shoot locations.



Skateboarders seem to be looking for architectural opportunities, what are sci-fi fans looking for?
Since *The X-Files*, fans have searched the city for sci-fi shoot locations; so much is being filmed here. Sci-fi cult fans will also look for ongoing filming locations. This involves asking local residents about film shoot locations, as the producers have to inform them. The producers, on the other hand, want to keep such locations secret from the hardcore fan. I find it interesting that in this search, local store owners and businesses become "informants."
Do you draw a line between fan art and fine art? Is it important to you that these categories are distinct? What are the benefits and detriments of contextualizing fan art as fine art?
I am interested in blurring the lines between the two. For instance, in my last exhibit some of the framed drawings in the salon-style hanging had a quality resembling the drawings found in the many fan zines displayed in the gallery, while others were more influenced by artists situated within the larger contemporary art world. I am influenced by the work of Raymond Pettibon, in that he has always blurred the lines between popular culture and the avant-garde.
The title of your exhibition — The Society of Temporal Investigations — relates to your interest in blurring the lines, I think. You are invoking the sci-fi fascination with time travel, and also connecting to some of Robert Smithson's ideas.
Smithson provides a good entry point to sci-fi fan culture in the gallery context, in that Smithson was a

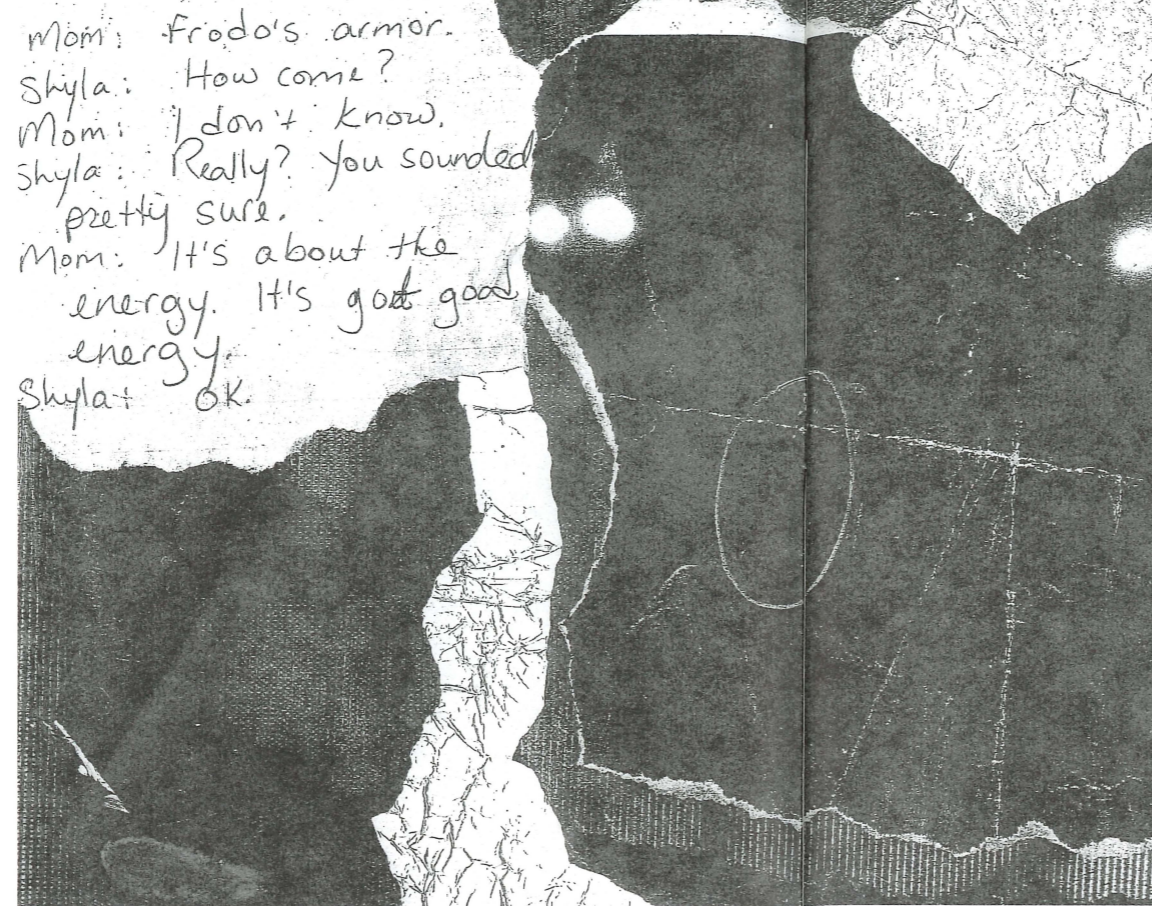
huge fan. He explored this in his essay, "The Shape of The Future and Memory," making connections between his art and time travel. J.G. Ballard, a prominent New Wave science fiction author, anticipated that our descendents in the remote future would perceive Smithson's earthworks as time machines: "artifacts intended to serve as machines that will suddenly switch themselves on and begin to generate a more complex time and space." My film explores ideas around *Spiral Jetty* as a time machine, in that it temporally displaces my character and alter ego Eton Corrasable through time and space.
Given the structures of consumption in the age of Web 2.0 and user-generated content, with an emphasis on direct engagement and participation, do you think that fan practices of engagement are still an "outsider" practice?
I still find fan-based work and culture to be an outsider practice, and I don't necessarily see this as a bad thing. Even though fans use the web in an open and participatory manner, I do believe fans have their own inner social code and hierarchy, which allows the sub-culture to subsist and survive outside of the mainstream. I believe that more interesting veins of cultural production can come from these "less legitimate" or "outsider" positions.
Right, I agree! But it also seems like the terrain that has previously been traversed by the fan — fan vidding, fan fiction, fan art — is in some ways being absorbed into commercial culture as a marketing strategy. I'm thinking of the emerging consumer expectation of direct engagement, like Adidas setting up a framework for consumers to participate in the design process of shoes, or the Star Wars franchise's website where clips of the films can be downloaded for sanctioned remixing, with the stipulation that once the film is uploaded it is the property of Lucasfilm. I suppose my question is, in light of examples like this, what is the relevance of the fan now?
I agree there are some new challenges to fan production, especially in regards to keeping the sub-culture from being absorbed into dominant or popular culture. The sanctioned *Battlestar Galactica* "fan films," now the property of NBC, are quite slick. High production special effects can be imported into the film through a video creation engine provided by the show's producers. I do find the end product of such creations less interesting than the "independent" fan film where the special effects are campier. I find the narrative structures of these independent fan films to be far more cohesive than those sanctioned by the show's producers. But there are always exceptions.

Yes, there is something appealing about the campy, amateurish aesthetic of a lot of fan production. Perhaps this has something to do with notions of authenticity?

I am more interested in the sense of immediacy and spontaneity in the more "independent" fan films. I tried to reflect this approach in my fan film/video art piece so as to reference the independent spirit of the fan film and to challenge the trend of high production values, especially in video art, and particularly in Vancouver.

The word "fan" is an abbreviated form of the word "fanatic," which is rooted in the Latin fanaticus, meaning "of or pertaining to a temple." Do you think that there is a religious or revelatory association inherent in fan art?

I believe fans have a high degree of obsession. I am guilty of this myself, but I see this as no different to the obsession of the major players in the art world. Dealers, curators and artists are absolutely fanatical in their interest and knowledge pertaining to contemporary art. So in some ways, in my last exhibition I had a bit of a problem using the term "fan," in that I found so many similarities between the hardcore Trekkie and the art fan. Of course, you need some



sort of framework to work with, but I find it interesting that the Trekkie or Trekker is written off as being out in left field while the curator or writer is taken far more seriously. I was interested in levelling the playing field with the last exhibit by revealing how complex and nuanced sci-fi fandom has become. I find there are a lot of similarities to the D.I.Y. phenomenon of the fan film and the early beginnings of video art, so I exploited this with my meta-fan film, *The Theatre of the Exploding Sun*.

Yes! To quote Randall Szott of Leisure Arts, "Art people are Trekkies too"!

Keith Langergraber is a teacher at Emily Carr and Thompson Rivers Universities. His work grows out of an interest in social, cultural and political change found through scrutiny of a selected site. His exhibitions consist of the accumulation and reconstitution of information through the peeling back of layers of the vernacular landscape.

Helen Reed is an artist based in Portland, OR. Over the past five years her art practice has involved working with specific invested communities. Her most recent project is *Twin Twin Peaks*, a third season of *Twin Peaks*, written and acted by the show's fans. reheardregalement.com

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Marian Bantjes is a huge fan of

Robot Man

by Marian Bantjes

One of my favourite films is a documentary by Errol Morris called *Fast, Cheap and Out of Control*. One of the four people in the film — and the person responsible for the catchy title — is a roboticist, Rodney Brooks. I had seen the movie a few times, and I became entranced with Rodney's delight in his robots; his obvious enthusiasm for his work lit up his face in the most charming way. He was animated, joyful, smart. Who was this guy?

Rodney Brooks was the head of the MIT Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, and the founder of more than one robotics company (including iRobot, the maker of the Roomba vacuum). And he wasn't just any old roboticist; he was, it seemed, one of the leading roboticists in the world. I was dying to meet him. But I had no connection to his world, not even a connection to a connection, and my chances of ever meeting him seemed nil.

In 2010 I was invited to speak at the TED conference, and while perusing the TED site to see who else was attending, I stopped short — there he was. Of course! Where else in the world would a graphic artist and a roboticist cross paths?

Somewhere around 2,000 people attend that conference, and I refused to leave our meeting to chance. Brazenly, I contacted him, introduced myself as a fellow TED speaker, and arranged to meet him before the conference. It was a half-baked plan, and once made I realized I didn't have the faintest idea what I was going to say.

When you meet someone who is a leader in a field you know nothing about, should you talk about that, or steer clear of it? The thing is, I have opinions about robots. But still, if I meet a famous actor I'm not going to mention my opinions on acting. And I

personally hate talking about my own work with fans, or worse, people who are not in my industry. So it was a quandary. I'd set myself up to meet this famous person purely for the purpose of meeting him; it was senseless, but I couldn't back out, nor did I want to. I would wing it.

And I got lucky: Rodney turned out to be a friendly, natural conversationalist. (Who would have thought that a roboticist would be a people person?) Of course, it helped that we headed straight to a bar and got drunk.

In the course of our conversation I discovered that I was far from the first to hunt him down on the basis of the Errol Morris film. In fact, I got the impression that many people — dare I say, particularly women? — had been similarly charmed by his appearance, at least one of those fans going into robotics just to get into his lab. He wasn't mobbed by adoring fans at the TED conference, but TEDsters are a relatively cool bunch who manage to keep their heads even when Bill Gates is standing next to them. However, at robotics conferences the young roboticists do flock about him, and later gush about the privilege.

I know many micro-celebrities, mostly in the field of design, and when their emails arrive I can't help but stare at their illustrious names in wonder. Sometimes I have many micro-celebrity names lined up one after another, and there in the mix is Rodney Brooks. I want to show my inbox to people: "Look! Do you see this? Do you know who that is?" The funny thing about micro-celebrities is that other people almost never do know. You don't know mine, and I don't know yours. Somehow the thrill is undiminished.

Front Magazine is a huge fan of

Marian Bantjes

After reading about Marian Bantjes' chance encounter with Rodney Brooks at this year's TED conference, I thought it appropriate to speak to the semi-famous graphic artist regarding the person she herself considers a microcelebrity.

by Karina Irvine

One Saturday afternoon I took the ferry to Bowen Island and peddled across the sloping landscape to Marian Bantjes' home. I pushed my bike against a blackberry bush and opened the gate to find an abundant display of climbing, creeping and flowering plants. I knocked on the door and rung a small bell. Through the windowpanes I could see it was dark inside, with an approaching silhouette. Marian had been relaxing on her shaded porch outside. I joined her with a tall glass of water, still catching my breath and happy to rest my legs.

I asked her about the TED conference, where she gave a talk in February and met Rodney Brooks. At the conference, Marian spoke of "the importance of professional cross-pollination as a source of inspiration and imagination," and her interest in investigating the possibilities of wonder in graphic design.

"The world is full of wonder, but the world of graphic design is not," she says. Consequently, she's developing a "co-dependency" between word and image to create an inextricable "seductive force." It's easy to see why Marian was attracted to Brooks' fervor, as she shares a similar enthusiasm when she talks about her work.

I asked her what her interest in robotics was. "We were promised robots in the 50s and didn't get them. I want my robot!" Marian's ideal robot would be like Rosie, the archetypal *Jetsons'* robot maid, complete with an academic positronic brain and the ability to indulge in intelligent conversation. Assuming that its "brain" would be connected to the Internet, it could collect information on any given topic. For instance, the robot and Marian might have a conversation regarding neurology and reference the new Oliver

Sacks book. Marian might ask what the book is about, which the robot could answer.

To avoid the frustration of conversing with a know-it-all, Marian thought the robot should be "silly looking," a point she also brought up with Brooks. "The robot would have to be smaller than us," and "should be covered in fun fur!"

She cited the "uncanny valley" hypothesis, devised by roboticist Masahiro Mori, which explains our reaction to robots that look and act like human beings. The gradual progression of similarities a robot has to a human is acceptable to the point at which it becomes too familiar. Our empathy only reverts back when the robot surpasses that point and is once again less distinguishable from a human. Bantjes asks us to imagine C3Po on one side of the valley and Data from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* on the other: aside from his computational language, Data's pale complexion and yellow eyes separate him from the other humans on the *Starship Enterprise*.

Rodney Brooks fashioned a robot he calls Kismet that shows emotional response through facial expressions and the prosody in its voice. Whether it understands what you are saying is questionable. Brooks states that, "The most important thing for building a robot that you can interact with socially is its visual attention system, because what it pays attention to is what it's seeing and interacting with."

I asked Marian whether she knew if Brooks' home was equipped with robots helping him out of bed in the morning, making toast, and brushing his teeth in a timely manner, perhaps triggered by the sound of his alarm clock. Considering his profession it was a disappointment to learn that his only robot is his Roomba vacuum.

continued>>

Though Marian gives Brooks credit for his expertise, she finds his sense of design a bit wanting and hopes to one day contribute her thoughts in devising her very own robot. She has sent him drawings to which she has not yet received a response. Time will tell. Maybe one day we will see people talking about neurology to small robots covered in fun fur.

Marian Bantjes has been described as a typographer, designer, artist and writer. She has lectured and had her work published in books and magazines around the world. In 2008, she was accepted as a member of the prestigious international design organization, Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI). Her book, *I Wonder*, is due out in October.

Karina Irvine lives and works in Vancouver. Having obtained her BFA with a major in photography, from Emily Carr University, she is now continuing her studies in Art History at UBC.

HERE TODAY, GONE TODAY UBC MASTER OF FINE ARTS GRADUATE EXHIBITION

September 3 to 19, 2010

Keesic Douglas, Sydney Hermant, Fan-Ling Suen, Zoe Tissandier, and Clare Yow

Presented with support from the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at The University of British Columbia.

MARK BOULOS

October 8 to December 5, 2010

Presented with support from The Canada Council for the Arts.

MORRIS AND HELEN BELKIN ART GALLERY
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Art + Reality TV

The Front Magazine TV Advisory sits down in front of Bravo TV's Work of Art: The Next Great Artist



MARSHALL MCLUHAN
Illustrations by Meghan Latta

YOU, ANDY WARHOL, UNICORN custom drawing by Beth Frey

You ride the unicorn of success with Andy, even though he's already bored of you. You succumb to a lifestyle of hard drugs and bad sex, and when you finally die, all the bloggers will be writing about the tragedy that was your life. When you order the piece, please send a couple photos of yourself for reference, and give any special requests or customizations. Extra fees may apply for custom backgrounds, colours, bells and whistles. Pen and ink on nice acid-free 8.5" x 11" cardstock, signed and dated.



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Faced with the challenge of writing about a show so much in its infancy that we don't know if it will become the next American Idol, the next Art Forum or—most likely—perish into obscurity, what is the best approach?

Should we chart the art world's declining enthusiasm for the show as reflected in New York art blogs? (An early headline on Art Fag City: "Good news. Work of Art will not embarrass the art world." A later headline: "What's Work of Art's biggest failure so far?")

Should we write a critical essay about the contradictions of the prescriptive nature of reality television versus the myth of the expressive artist?

Is the show worth writing an essay about?

Think what you will. We decided to get together, watch an episode and talk over most of the dialogue.

PANELISTS

Meghan Latta coaxed us all into getting together to talk, since she has been entranced by the show's contradictions.

Fiona Hernandez can't fathom how this idea made it into a show.

Ashley Soren has a firm grasp on reality TV tropes, having followed 13 cycles of Tyra Banks' America's Next Top Model.



MILES MENDENHALL

SELECTED TRANSCRIPT

[Opening credits: contestants write their names on the screen, by way of introduction]

A: Which one do you like so far?

F, M: None of them.

M: How could you like anyone who introduces themselves this way?

F: Handwriting does not equal art. Some artists use keyboards!

[A contestant introduces herself]

M: Did she say she was an assistant for Jeff Koons? That explains everything.

A: This is sad; everybody is trying to be so quirky.

M: Because they want to be on TV.

[One of the judges, Simon de Pury, introduces himself in voice-over: "I have always been passionate about contemporary art." A shot of him on the phone: "I want to speak to you about this Jeff Koons."]

M: Do you think he's really calling someone about a Jeff Koons?

F: Jeff Koons is contemporary art? Is this 1985? Did Jeff Koons pay to be in this show?

M: Or is it actually *Work of Art* by Jeff Koons?

F: You're onto something!

[Contestant monologue: "I've been in the art world for about six hours now..."]

M: I guess they need some average-joe characters for people to relate to.

F: But who is this show targeted at?

M: If it is just artists, the target market is too small. And, as an artist, it makes me cringe.

F: Maybe they like the pain. Some artists are masochists.



NAO BUSTAMANTE

A: I think it's trying to appeal to people who feel like they could be artists.

They've been making MySpace portraits for five years and now they have a show that they can have opinions about. Which is why it's amazing that they started with an episode about self-portraits. It's what everyone knows.

F: Is there really still contemporary art that everyone knows? A lot of people who didn't go to art school can't name an artist after the 1960s — that isn't Andy Warhol.

M: I lean toward Ashley's theory, since everything technique-related on the show is weirdly instructional. Clearly it isn't for practicing artists, exactly, but it still has the pretensions of art, where you have to be in the know. What is with these ridiculous challenges?

F: It hurts like art school.

[Contestants show a self-portrait, get paired randomly, and have 13 hours to make a portrait based on what their partners showed.]

A: This is TV drama gold, though. The ones who like each others portraits bond, and the others are totally alienated and catty.

M: The judge says, "if I had this in my gallery I don't think I could sell it," but the instructions so far have been to express inner essences, capture beauty,

truth, yadda yadda. Nobody mentioned making sellable work, or considering viewers.

F: Or making art that communicates over television.

A: But that is what their medium is — television!

M, F: OH YEAH!

M: That solves a big problem that I have been having with the show.

F: The closest the contestants come to being self-referential is when they do the voice-overs on footage of themselves struggling with a painting.

M: It's not even about painting, which is the medium most of the contestants chose. That's the wrong medium! The medium is the message!!!

F: This has been a Canadian Heritage Minute.

M: It all comes back to Marshall McLuhan.

F: As a contestant, I'd think, "Okay, my medium is 13 hours and television. I better piss off my subject so she/he gets more air time in the confession booth."

M: That's why I feel the show itself — this episode, *Self Reflexive* — is the art work.

F: What the contestants make is inconsequential.

M: It is interesting that they all chose

traditional art-making techniques, though. Why aren't they making videos or something?

F: The supplies they are given are paper, canvas and mark-making tools. Their studio shelves don't have film or cameras.

M: Would that be putting too much power in the hands of the artist? If they are actually able to create footage, then they are able to manipulate the show too much.

A: That would be so much more interesting.

M: So much more! They could actually do what artists are supposed to do and f**k with the medium.

A: They have no power right now.

F: That would put the producers at the risk of having contestants that aren't interesting enough to make an exciting show. Easier to fall back on drama, crazy challenges and good reality TV editors.

A: The contestant's power is in their cattiness.

[China Chow dismisses the loser: "I'm sorry. Your work of art didn't work for us."]

A, F, M: NO WAYYYYYY!

Meghan Latta is an artist who lives and works in Vancouver. She is an Emily Carr graduate, which has left her qualified for nothing but making pithy observations on the wastes of popular culture.

Fiona Hernandez is a Mexican-Australian artist who graduated from Emily Carr. She currently works at the Western Front, where she talks about television constantly.



SIMON DE PURY

Exhibition//11 September - 23 October 2010
Curated by Kim Nguyen

Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time

Aleesa Cohene, Alex Da Corte, Jon Pylypchuk, Markus Vater

Exhibition//6 November 2010 - 8 January 2011
Commissioned by the Or Gallery with support from Arts Partners in Creative Development

Several Circles

Mark Soo

The Or Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council, the Province of BC through the BC Arts Council, the City of Vancouver, our members, donors, and volunteers. Or Gallery is a member of the Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres (PAARC).

Kim Nguyen gratefully acknowledges the support of Canada Council for the Arts through Assistance to Culturally Diverse Curators for Residencies in the Visual Arts.

Or Gallery//555 Hamilton Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2R1 Canada//www.orgallery.org//Tel +1 604 683 7395//or@orgallery.org//Tuesday to Saturday 12-5PM//

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EVENT HORIZON Concert Series

FENNESZ
SUNDAY SEPT 26 8PM

INHABITANTS
FRIDAY NOV 5 8PM

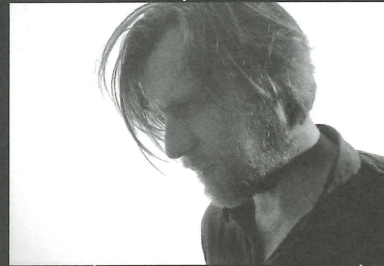


Photo: Maria Ziegelboeck



Photo: Jessica Eaton

Fall Jazz Concerts

presented in partnership with **Coastal Jazz and Blues Society & New Orchestra Workshop Society**

Orkestra Futura - Meeting of the Minds Friday Oct 15 8pm

Kim Myhr Mural Sunday Oct 17 8pm

Benjamin Herman Quartet Saturday Nov 20 8pm

Workshops



NOW Improvisation Series
Mondays, Oct 4- Dec 6 4-6pm + 7:30-9:30pm
FREE

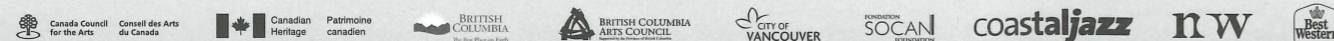
Jim Denley (Australia), Kim Myhr (Norway),
Ellen Burr (LA), Eyvind Kang (Seattle),
Vicky Chow (NYC) Jesse Zubot, Lisa Miller & others

The Empty Vessel Makes the Loudest Sound
Deep Listening Sessions - Sundays 11am-1pm
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Sept 26 Donna Lytle
Oct 17 Hildegard Westerkamp
Nov 14 Viviane Houle
Dec 5 TBA

WESTERN FRONT NEW MUSIC FALL 2010

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Deirdre Logue
Artist in Residence
September 6 to 29

Artist Talk
September 23, 6:30PM
Location TBA
See front.bc.ca for details



Image courtesy of the artist

Erin Shirreff
Artist in Residence
October 3 to 30

Artist Talk, October 16, 3PM
Grand Luxe Hall

Residency and artists talk in partnership with
Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society.

WESTERN FRONT MEDIA ARTS

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Western Front is grateful for support from Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the BC Arts Council, BC Gaming Commission, the Vancouver Foundation, the City of Vancouver, and Best Western Hotels



Sarah Foulquier
Angle Mort
September 10 to
October 23

Opening Reception
September 9
7PM to 9PM

Avec le soutien du
Consulat général
de France à Vancouver



Sarah Foulquier, *Debout*, 2009.
Photograph, 4" x 6". Courtesy of the artist.

Gallery Hours
Tuesday - Saturday, 12pm - 5pm

WESTERN FRONT EXHIBITIONS

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Western Front is grateful for support from Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the BC Arts Council, BC Gaming Commission, the Vancouver Foundation, the City of Vancouver, and Best Western Hotels

Pablo Bronstein
Intermezzo
October 28
8PM
Performance
Grand Luxe Hall

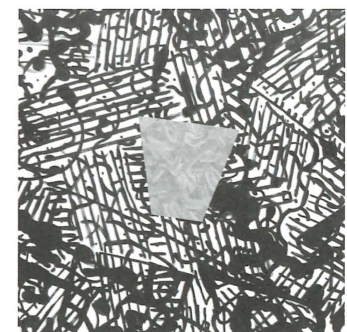


Pablo Bronstein, *Intermezzo*, 2009. Courtesy Herald St, London



Co-Presented with the Contemporary Art Gallery,
as part of the exhibition *Following a Line*

Eli Bornowsky
*Walking, Square
Cylinder, Plane*
November 26 to
January 22
Opening Reception
November 25
6PM to 8PM



Eli Bornowsky, *Icon Art and Writing [3]*, detail,
2010. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist.

september










october











november

AND BEYOND

CONTINUING...


-  TO SEP 25 **Centre A**
The Dig: Centre A's first 10 years
-  SEP 3-19 **Belkin Gallery**
Here Today, Gone Today: **UBC MFA show** • Keesic Douglas, Sydney Hermant, Fan-Ling Suen, Zoe Tis-sandier, and Clare You
-  SEP 9-OCT 9 **VIVO**
BLOODSTORM • Terry Haines
Opening Sep 9, 7pm
-  SEP 9, 10PM-2AM
Front Magazine & VIVO
So Warm: Swarm Afterparty • Cruz Brothers • performance + installation • DJs: Natalie Purschwitz, Jesse Birch, Ian Wyatt • Free
-  SEP 9, 7-10PM
Western Front New Music
Intersections Recordings • Sarah Buchanan, Caleb Johnston, Brady Marks, James Maxwell
-  SEP 10-OCT 23
Western Front Exhibitions
Angle Mort • Sarah Foulquier
Opening Sep 9, 7pm
-  SEP 10-OCT 3 **Gachet**
Enlighten Therapy: Astral Walk • Judy Jheung • Opening Sep 10, 7-10pm
-  SEP 10-NOV 7 **CAG**
Following a line • Pablo Bronstein, Peter Gazendam, Susanne Kriemann, & others • opening Sep 9, 6-9pm
-  SEP 11-OCT 30
SFU Gallery (Burnaby)
The Spirit of Things • Walter Tandy Murch
-  SEP 11-NOV 7
Presentation House Gallery
The Early Works of Glenn Lewis
-  **FADO PERFORMANCE ART CENTRE**
performanceart.ca


-  SEP 11-OCT 23 **Or Gallery**
Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time
Aleesa Cohene, Alex Da Corte, Jon Pylypchuk, Markus Vater • curated by Kim Nguyen
-  SEP 12, 8PM
VIVO Media Arts
The Extreme Animals Sit Down
Jacob Ciocci, David Wightman, Paper Rad, Fortress of Amplitude
-  SEP 14-NOV 21
Burnaby Art Gallery
The Intertidal Zone • Prints by Doug Gildford
-  SEP 16 7PM **VIVO**
The Cutting: short video works • Curators Frederick Cummings & Brian Gotro
-  SEP 17 **Front Magazine**
Submission deadline • Winter Issue: Silence • frontmagazine.ca
-  SEP 17-NOV 14
Richmond Art Gallery
Waterscapes • Gu Xiong • Opening Sep 16, 7pm
-  SEP 17-18 **Centre A**
The Twister • Keynote • David Elliott, Sep 17, 7-9pm • Speakers + Symposium • Sep 18, 10am-5pm
-  SEP 18 **VIVO**
Artist Talk • Terry Haines, with Paul Wong
-  SEP 18 & 19 **Museum of Anthropology**
WAM! World Art Market • Various international artists • 10am-5pm


-  SEP 20, 7:30PM **DIM Cinema**
From Aniconism to Bliss: Media art shows its Islamic roots • Curator **Laura U Marks** • Pacific Cinematheque
-  SEP 20-SEP 27 **OpenSpace CHAOS** • Sinead O'Donnell, Pauline Cummins, Sandra Johnson, Lori Weidenhammer, Anakana Schofield • performance
-  SEP 22, 7PM
Cineworks at VIVO
No Reading After the Internet • Reading group • Women of Algiers in Their Apartment, Assia Djebar
-  SEP 23 6:30PM
Western Front Media Arts
Dierdre Logue • Artist talk
-  SEP 25, 1-5PM **Centre A**
Contemporary Archiving • Panel Discussion
-  SEP 26, 8PM **WF New Music**
Christian Fennesz • Event Horizon Concert Series
-  SEP 28, 7:30PM **OpenSpace**
A.F. Moritz • Open Word: Readings and Ideas
-  SEP 30-OCT 4 **OpenSpace**
Sound Massage Parlour • Stuart Dempster
-  OCT 1-2, 8PM **Dance Centre**
How is Sleep Beautiful? • Helen Walkley • Scotiabank Dance Centre
-  OCT 2-3, 11-6PM **The Drift**
Art On Main Street • Art Walk and Open Studios


SEP 16, 8PM **aluCine & FADO**
Performances • Gabriela Alonso, Nelda Ramos (Argentina) • Toronto Free Gallery


SEP 17, 7-10PM **A Space, imagineNATIVE & FADO**
Performance • Archer Pechawis
Exhibition Opening • Toronto: A Space Gallery


 TO OCT 29 **SFU Teck Gallery**
BESA: Muslims Who Saved Jews in World War II Photographs by Norman H. Gershman

 OCT 7-9, 8PM **Dance Centre**
She's Gone Away • Susanna Hood, Nilan Perera

 OCT 8-DEC 5 **Belkin Gallery**
Mark Boulos • solo show


 OCT 15, 8PM **WF New Music**
Orkestra Futura • Meeting of the Minds • Fall Jazz Concerts

 OCT 17, 8PM **WF New Music**
Kim Myhr Mural • Fall Jazz Concerts

 OCT 18 7:30PM **DIM Cinema**
The Wooden Lightbox: a secret art of seeing • Alex Mackenzie • Pacific Cinematheque

 OCT 19-24
Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival
Granville Island • Six days, 100 writers • .writersfest.bc.ca

 OCT 20-24 **imagineNATIVE**
Film + Media Arts Festival
Toronto • imagineNATIVE.org


 OCT 20-23, 27-30
Co. Erasga & W2 Media Arts
Shadow Machine • Multimedia & Dance


OCT 1, 8PM **FADO**
Singaporean artists Lee Wen, Jason Lim, Amanda Heng, Kai Lam • Toronto Free Gallery

OCT 16-21 **FADO**
Agnes Nedregard • Performance art workshop • Toronto • info@performanceart.ca

OCT 21-31 **7a*11d**
International Festival of Performance Art • Multiple venues, over 30 artists • Toronto • www.7a-11d.ca


 OCT 21-23 8PM
New Music Festival
Theatre for the Ears • Artist talk 7pm
Scotiabank Dance Centre


 OCT 30-NOV 27 **Open Space**
Wunder Worry • Troi Donnelly, Suzanne Franks & Kevin Yates • Opening Oct 29, 7:30pm


 OCT 30 TO 2011
Museum of Anthropology
Man Ray, African Art and the Modernist Lens • Walker Evans, Alfred Stieglitz and others


 NOV 5 **Front Magazine**
Advertising deadline


 NOV 5, 8PM **WF New Music**
Inhabitants • Event Horizon Concert Series


 NOV 6-JAN 8 **Or Gallery**
Several Circles • Mark Soo

 NOV 6-DEC 17
SFU Gallery (Burnaby)
Chris Jordan • Running The Numbers

 NOV 20, 8PM **WF New Music**
Benjamin Herman Quartet • Fall Jazz Concerts

 NOV 22 7:30PM **DIM Cinema**
DDR/DDR • Amie Siegel • Pacific Cinematheque

 NOV 25 TO 2011
Museum of Anthropology
Signed without Signature • Charles and Isabella Edenshaw

 NOV 30-FEB 6
Burnaby Art Gallery
Who Needs Art When You Have a View Like This? • Davida Kidd

 NOV 4 - 7
Vancouver Asian Film Festival
Tinseltown Vancouver • vaff.org

-  OUT OF TOWN
-  FILM / VIDEO / MULTIMEDIA
-  WORDS/LEARNING
-  MUSIC/SOUND
-  VISUAL ART
-  THEATRE
-  PARTY
-  FRONT MAG
-  DANCE
-  FESTIVAL

Feel free to take this calendar out of the magazine and carry it around with you, or put it up on your fridge. In fact, we encourage it.

In recognition of the BC arts funding cuts, listings are provided free to all members of the Pacific Association of Artist-Run Centres.

Have questions about these events? Many of them are featured in the advertisements in this magazine. Others can be googled.*
*But don't spend too long on the internet, there is too much to do out there.

COURSES + WORKSHOPS
Cineworks, pg 43
WF New Music, pg 20
Malaspina Printmakers, pg 12

SWARM FESTIVAL OF ARTIST-RUN CULTURE



Three Minute Girlfriend

Zeesy Powers is famous to 52 people.

Everyone loves to be in love, but dating is tedious when the first bloom fades. Drawing out the inevitable is worse than being lonely. Actually, that's not true. There is nothing worse than being lonely. I will be your girlfriend for three minutes. No risk of rejection, no messy break up. JUST SHOW UP.

-Craigslist ad

On March 14, 2007, I had 52 relationships. Before that day I received over 120 e-mails from potential suitors, but only two men who found me through my Craigslist ad came to see me face to face. I don't know why the rest did not show up.

Of the 52 people, 26 were men and 26 were women. Two may have been transsexual, but I don't know and I didn't ask. And there was one dog, does that count? He makes it 53.

About half were friends and acquaintances, the rest were strangers to me. Looking at their pictures now, I recognize some of them from around town. Maybe they already felt like they knew me? Maybe they just wanted to be friends.

Only 32 people consented to be photographed. All but one consented to be videotaped. This is what I remember of the people who did not want to be photographed:

My first boyfriend of the day wore gloves and a mask. He brought me a box, carefully wrapped and painted white. Inside was a handmade mask with 3D lenses for eyes and a 3D greeting card from a fictional suitor. His mask was identical to the one he gave me, except his was black and mine was white. He did not leave his name. He arrived an hour early and spent our entire relationship claiming to be there in place of someone else. I didn't buy it for a second. (At the end of the school year a classmate came up to me and confessed: it was him.)

Another man had just arrived from Mass. He brought me a used Christmas beanie baby, wore a wedding ring and refused to be videotaped. Another man, in his late-forties or mid-fifties, was entirely forgettable until he began to show up at every event I participated in for the next year.

An older man who had been at a radio interview with me came to see me. He had heard all my thoughts on the project, and even more private reflections made off the air. He started our relationship by stroking my inner thigh.

An older woman from a class I was taking brought her daughter and spent our entire relationship asking me why I was doing this project. There were a few people like that: we spent our time talking about why we were spending time together.

Other gifts included a bouquet of flowers, a poem, and the back halves of two decorative birds, fused together. Only one person broke up with me. I kissed him on his forehead and he got up and ran away with

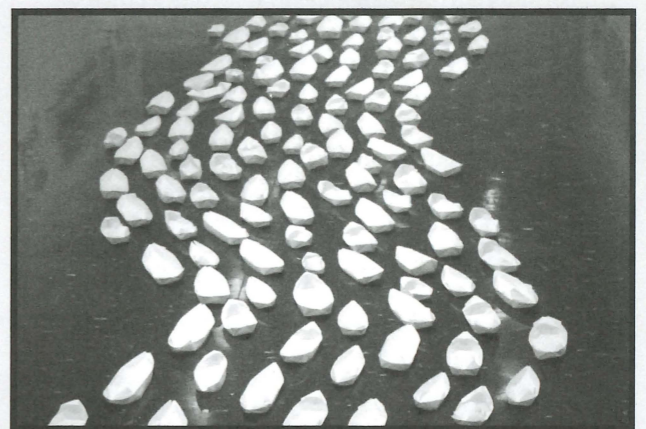
I WOULD PACE AROUND THE ROOM OR LIE DESPONDENT ON THE SOFA BECAUSE I FELT THAT NO ONE LOVED ME.

one minute left to go. We are still friends, but I yelled at him and called him an asshole on his way out.

There were times when there would be 10 to 20 minutes between relationships. When that happened I would pace around the room or lie despondent on the sofa because I felt that no one loved me. I wish I was kidding, but I am not. I wanted people to love me. I wanted to love people.

Front I just finished reading the zine you produced for this project, consisting of all the email responses to your Craigslist posting. You got 123 responses, seemingly all from men. A lot of them seemed to think they were going to get a blowjob in three minutes, or they tried to negotiate for more time on a different day. In real life, though, you got this amazingly even gender mix. Did the tone of the Craigslist responses make you nervous in the days leading up to the big date?

Zeesy I was pretty nervous, so I set up a security crew of about seven intimidatingly cute women and a large,



WATERSCAPES Gu Xiong

September 17 - November 14, 2010
Opening Reception: Thursday September 16, 7-9 pm

Gu Xiong, *Red River* (detail), installation, paper boat, dimensions variable, 2008

Richmond Art Gallery
Canada Line Stop: Richmond-Brighouse
7700 Minoru Gate Richmond BC
phone: 604.247.8300



RAG
richmondartgallery.org

handsome dog that looks like he was trained by cops. I was also maybe just a little ready to take on a whole bunch of creeps, but on my terms, which is absolutely silly — creeps will always be creeps. Mostly I was hoping that someone would show up and I would fall in love, instantly, like magic. And that I would get to put a whole bunch of creeps in their place. Very few creeps showed up, and the ones that did, I didn't have the heart to be hard to.

You mention that one guy touched your leg. Were you physically intimate with people? Did you sit close? Did you hold hands and gaze into their eyes?

There was a lot of close-sitting, and hand-holding, and hair-stroking. I tried to feel emotionally close to everyone, to experience gentleness and tenderness — some kind of love. The only people I spooned with were women, which was surprising at the time, but it kind of makes sense in hindsight. Women were much less overtly sexual about their intentions, so the intimacy was more "pure." Or, women are just that much easier to take advantage of.

Did you like most of the people you were dating? Did you try to like them?

Sometimes I just liked them, sometimes I tried to like them and ended up liking them, sometimes I tried to like them and ended up unimpressed. Just like real relationships.

Is there something you know about yourself, or about being in relationships, that you didn't know before?

I need a lot of attention. Also, three minutes is a long time, but short enough that you can forget everything if you really need to. It's good to learn lessons, but better not to dwell.

Zeesy Powers works with technology, people and consequences. Her online presence, zeesypowers.com, is pretty funny. Her new piece, Total Panic, will premier in November 2011 at Gallery TPW in Toronto. Currently employed in biotech, she has worked in telecommunications and wants you to know you can do anything you put your mind to.

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September

- 10. **SWARM After-Party**
- 10-18. **New Forms Festival:** Traversing Electronic Narratives [including StoryBox]
- 18. Earth Dance
- 26. Olio Festival Closing Party

October

- 1-31 Exhibition: **Al Neil/Carole Itter/Krista Lomax** 'Fish Film, Tarpaulin Pull, Up Inlet Down'
- 20-30. Performance: **Shadow Machine** Co Erasga World Premiere, Peter Courtemanche, Carole Sawyer, Alvin Tolentino, and more.

November

- 5-6. Media Democracy Day
- 4-14. Exhibition: **Rollout**
- 12-14. International Ms. Leather
- 25-27. GVPTA Making a Scene Conference

W2 Community Media Art Society | W2 Storyeum | 151 W Cordova, Vancouver, BC, V6B 1E1 | 604.689.9896 | @W2Woodwards | creativetechnology.org
 W2 Woodwards + W2 Cafe open later this Fall across the street! Join W2 online and stay up to date with our weekly events.

Up Inlet Down, video still

FOLLOWING A LINE

**PABLO BRONSTEIN
 PETER GAZENDAM
 SUSANNE KRIEMANN
 KYLA MALLET
 ALEX MORRISON
 FRANCES STARK
 AND PAUL SIETSEMA**

September 10 - November 7

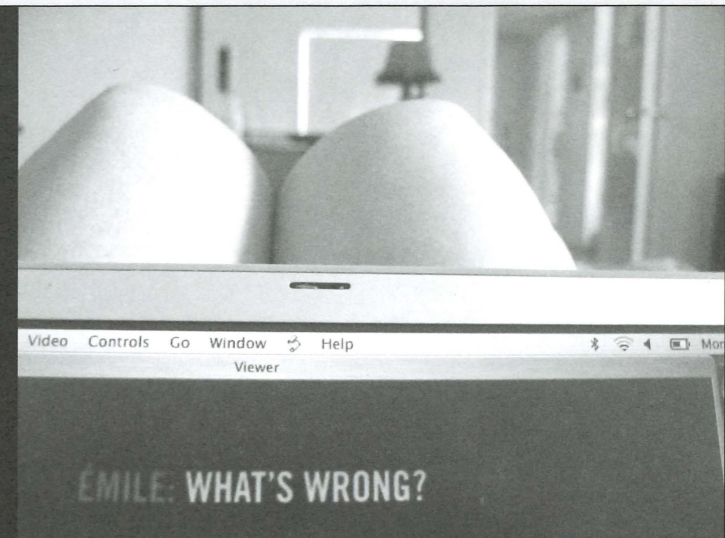
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Walking tour of four of Vancouver's public sculptures by Peter Gazendam
 Sat, Sept 25, 4pm

How to See and Read the Aura: Finding the Invisible: a slide presentation by Kyla Mallett
 Thurs, Oct 21, 7pm

Intermezzo: a performance and lecture by Pablo Bronstein with dancer
 Co-presented with the Western Front Society in the Grand Luxe Hall, 303 East 8th Ave
 Thurs, Oct 28, 8pm

Artist Talk: Susanne Kriemann
 Tue, Nov 2, 7pm

Image: Frances Stark, Structures That Fit My Opening and Other Parts Considered in Relation to Their Whole, 2007



Moral List & Most Wanted List

Grey Hernandez questions Anna Szaflarski about infamous criminals and her shifting moral hierarchy.

Grey: In *Pattern Series 1* the subject matter appears to be a careful categorization of the sinister (crimes) or the infamous (fugitives). What's your relationship to these groups?

Anna: My personal relationship to crime and criminals is limited, but what did interest me was how certain crimes and criminals were described in the media, and in the opinions of the public. We all have a relationship to these themes as we are exposed to society's reproaches to crime.

In these drawings I took publicly familiar symbols or information and subjected them to my personal input. I chose these particular subjects because they invoke an emotional or moral response. In the drawing *Moral Hierarchy* I asked myself to organize crimes from worst to most petty. The exercise was focused on internally questioning my own judgment and morals. I took a subject I would hear about and know through socialization and then I would attempt to know it better through a process of organization.

I have repeated the drawing *Moral Hierarchy* again and again since this one from 2007. The interesting outcome is that the weight one puts on one crime one day may change the next.

These works are part of a larger series entitled Suspicious Non-Events. There seems to be a theme of highlighting the banal or overlooked, and making it "famous."

Suspicious Non-Events was not intended to display the overlooked as much as it was a series of systems that I created in order to comb through public space. Then, through documentation, I would drag the viewer along with me. I feel I can't show or teach the viewer anything. I am on the chase of the lesson as much as they are, and usually don't start each project with a vision or message. Even through drawing, I try to

discover something for myself rather than display something I already know. I'd like to think of *Suspicious Non-Events* as a library of studies that reveal my discoveries.

What the viewer may gain from *SNE* is the feeling that he/she can step outside the limitations of the sidewalk, or perhaps gain a different lens to look at strangers with. I would prefer if they gained tools from my work rather than revelations.

In some respects, *Pattern Series 1* seems like the odd man out, in terms of its subject matter.

I ASKED MYSELF TO ORGANIZE CRIMES FROM WORST TO MOST PETTY. There are other works I have done that relate more closely to *Pattern Series 1*, but you are right to see a division. The drawings are different mainly because they are often done alone in my studio or at home, while the other

works deal with the unpredictability of the outside world. *Moral Hierarchy* was the beginning of a body of work that deals with systematically subjecting myself to moral decisions. Although it may seem different to some of the documentary works I've done, they all deal with my fascination with committing to a definite system to navigate in an indefinite subject.

Anna Szaflarski graduated from Emily Carr University in 2008. Her most recent work has been produced primarily in artist books that have been published with the artist collective AKV Berlin (akuberlin.com). In October, Anna will begin graduate studies in Fine Arts at the Universität der Künste Berlin.

Grey Hernandez is an architect and writer living in Vancouver. He is a member of the architecture collective Herbes Sportifs, and is also currently at work on a lecture series entitled *The Geographer's Delight*.

Lisa Visser wants you to love

maru

"Maru represents the best of what the Internet can be!"

"I know Maru too, he's a really talent clown..."

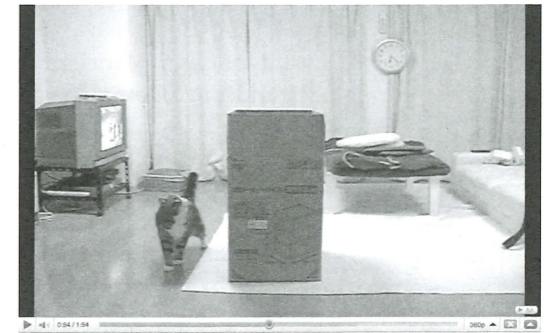
"Everything became right in my world again after I was introduced to Maru. Maru makes my cat look like a catatonic trout."

"What a clean house! I've never seen any dusts in your videos. How many times a day do you clean? I myself used to live in a house that has floor like that. It was naturally shiny like that, but dusts always appear from nowhere despite cleaning every morning."

"I was trying to pinpoint why I can't stop coming here for more Maru, besides Maru, obvious. And I think it is because there's no music.... just Maru. It's so relaxing, calming.... it never fails to make me happy and relaxed."

"Maru: Thank you for reminding me about how to 'be.'"

—Comments from Maru's YouTube channel



MARU IS FAMOUS

Maru introduces himself in the video, *I am Maru* from early 2009, as "bumbling, awkward...a lazybones basically." This charming, self-deprecating attitude, along with Maru's dedication to seemingly impossible tasks, have attracted over 60,000 subscribers to his YouTube channel.

With 149 videos to date and a webpage tirelessly chronicling his performative activity, plus the recently released DVD and book entitled *I am Maru*, Maru is also a hardworking professional.

Since Maru's first appearance on YouTube in 2008, his videos have garnered over 3 million hits. This celebrated feline has been featured on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, graciously accepted several YouTube awards in Japan, and been named Hot Slut of the Week by popular celebrity gossip blog, *Dlisted*!

Yet despite being a famous Internet Kitty², Maru is modest and enjoys a simple, solitary lifestyle. If the mark of a good life is to love and to be loved, Maru lives the Good Life with Mugumogu, his videographer and caretaker. This slightly rotund kitty spends most of his time indoors³, eating, sleeping and playing, unaware of his phenomenal impact on the world.

When asked to comment on his fame, Maru said, "I don't really know how famous I am, but Mugumogu sometimes tells me 'Everybody likes you, Maru.' I just don't get it. I am always so busy sleeping, eating and playing everyday. Mugumogu says it is ok that I don't understand as long as I am happy."⁴

And this happy kitty in turn pleases his YouTube enthusiasts: videos of Maru improve lunch breaks, Facebook sharing and general internet activity for his

fans. Fans can rely on Maru's playful performances to be predictably funny and cute⁵, and because of his nonchalant attitude towards celebrity, Maru is one of the most satisfying e-celebrities to follow.

MARU IS LIKE YOUR CAT, ONLY BETTER

Maru is a handsome boy: a perk-eared Scottish fold⁶, he has white socks and wide yellow eyes, a round face and round body⁷. His calico colouring, in combination with the clean, minimal hardwood floors of owner Mugumogu's apartment create the sense that Maru's crib is the best one in town: clean, neat, fit for an animal celebrity. The simple settings, paired with a minimal use of sound within the performance videos, create an experience that is soothing, pleasurable and at times hilarious.

As a performer, Maru maintains a consistent expression throughout his videos: he never panics when he gets himself into situations that may seem troublesome, like the covered garbage can⁸; he never seems frustrated by his slightly overweight girth, and he never gives up trying to climb the ladder, open the door or get inside the box. This clarity of intent and dedication to his playful practice keep fans coming back for more. Maru is like your cat, only better. And because he exists on the internet, he is hilarious and flawless.

Mugumogu's videography is artful, capturing Maru in simple documentary style with minimal interruption, resulting in a calm, almost lulling effect. Mugumogu, rarely seen and never heard, uses basic editing techniques, including the insertion of simple intertitles and the repetition of action sequences from multiple camera angles, providing a glimpse not only in to the life of Maru, but also the relationship between the two⁹.

Perhaps what makes Maru so special is his sophisticated appreciation for play, going above and beyond our expectations. Watching his performances, you may find yourself comparing Maru to your own cat.

My cat Sushi once jumped into a box. As I ran for the video camera, she ungracefully tipped the box over to exit — completely unlike Maru's

flawless jump to get out of the box¹⁰. My cat is chatty enough to give me attitude and tell me what's what, while Maru is almost entirely silent. His silence suggests a confidence in his actions: rather than talking it out, he's ready and committed to get in that box. What he lacks in vocabulary, he makes up in hilarity. His unusual use of the box and clever performances with bags, bubble wrap and the bathtub produce performances that are unprecedented. Maru is in a league of his own.

MARU — MEME OR CELEBRITY?

In the world of YouTube animal fame, artists tend to produce only one or two performances, which are then remixed and responded to — think of internet kitties like Nora the Piano Playing cat, Keyboard Cat, Roomba Driver, Talking Cats, Singing Kitty and the Scottish fold kittens.

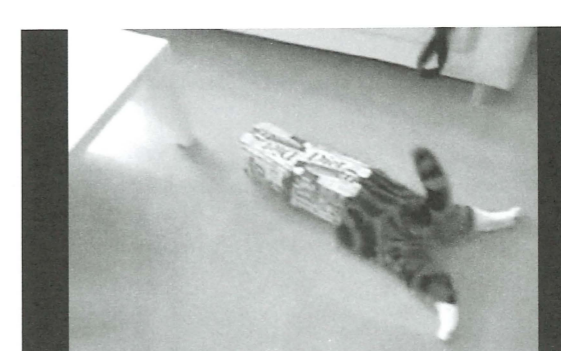
While Maru lacks the history and notoriety that these cats, or the LOLcat images, have attained, Maru's prolific body of work is unsurpassed in terms of sheer volume, with new material uploaded weekly. While other cat memes have come and gone with little follow-up from the animals or their caretakers, Maru enjoys the slow burn of celebrity, increasing his fan base with consistency and predictability.

FOOTNOTES

1. Maru was a heavy contender for Hot Slut of the Year for 2009 but lost out to Stains the Dog.
2. Internet Kitty refers to felines who exist, on a macro scale, on the internet. Internet Kitty may refer to still images of kitties, like LOLcats (kittehs) or a performer like Maru, who allows

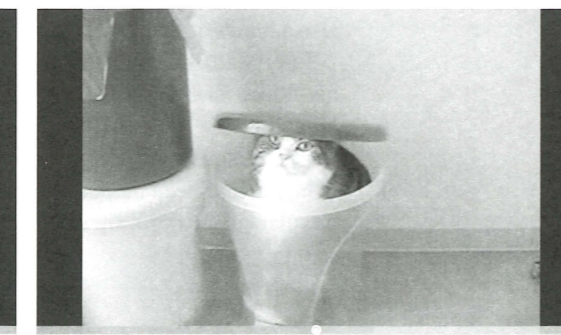
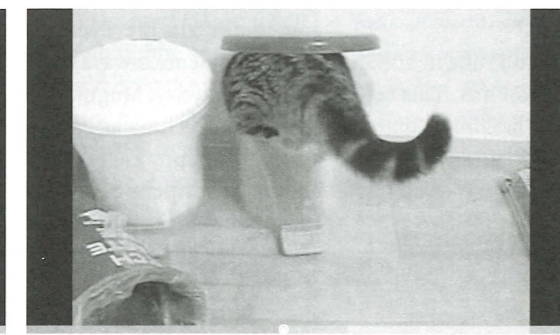
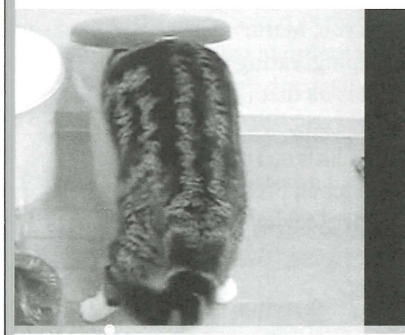
himself and his practice to be known only in the virtual world of the internet.

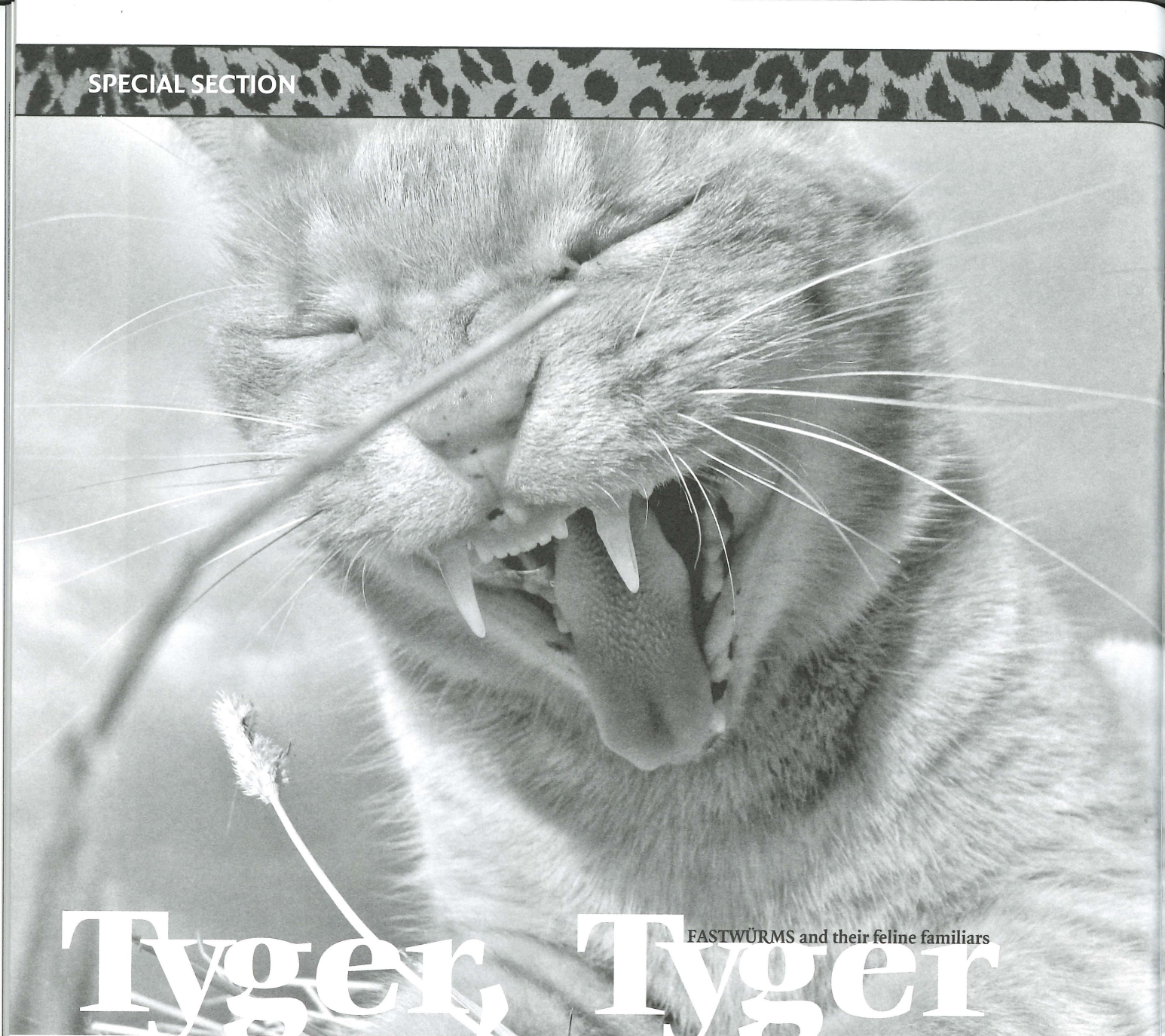
3. Maru, on playing outdoors: "It's getting warmer lately, so I get to play in the backyard more often... I like sun bathing, sniffing the air and looking for bugs when I am outside, but I get scared when I see birds flying over me." (www.lovemeow.com/2010/04/interview-with-maru-the-cat)
4. Source: www.lovemeow.com.
5. My use of "cute" refers to the expectations placed upon Internet Kitties that they be sweet, amusing, and expressionless (all characteristics that Maru embodies). However, cute can be a problematic term when considering the representation of animals. It implies a sweet softness, innocence and, at the core, a lack of individuality. Through our internet relationship with Maru, one can appreciate his cuteness while recognizing the individuality he expresses in his performances. Additionally, the availability of Maru's voice, through interviews, and the use of the first person in his videos, webpage and book, maintain his autonomy as a feline performer.
6. Maru is a perk-eared Scottish fold, differing from Kitten That Occupies Bed, who is a fold-eared Scottish fold. Maru has been confused for many other breeds, including British Shorthair, but Mugumogu has confirmed that Maru is a Scottish Fold.
7. The name "Maru" means "round" in Japanese. According to Mugumogu this is a coincidence; the name was decided before Maru arrived. Source: www.lovemeow.com
8. The banner image on Maru's website is a picture of Maru peeking out from a garbage can. This is a reference to the video *Untitled*, in which Maru climbs into the garbage can and several moments pass before he climbs back out, and to *Maru and Trash Box* in which Maru rolls around in a circular garbage can.
9. It is necessary to call into question the practice of animal caretakers to capitalize upon their pet's performances. Maru's presence on the internet is carefully filtered through the choices that Mugumogu makes and, although Maru may enjoy some benefits from his celebrity, including constant praise from his fans, Mugumogu is the real beneficiary of Maru's success.
10. Maru has a general inclination towards boxes. "I don't know why, but I can't seem to stop going into a box when I see one. It just gets me so



excited!" (www.lovemeow.com) and is also known on YouTube under the name Box Cat for his videos *Maru and the Giant Box*, *Maru and the Little Box*, and *Maru and the Box*. Sliding Box Cat has inspired multiple remixes and spoofs. Of particular note is Chris Loughran video *I Am Not Maru*, starring Richie Moriarty.

Lisa Visser's art practice combines performance and a biographical narrative, evokes tenuous human-animal relationships, and addresses questions of the everyday and the obvious with deliberate miscommunication, humour, and irony.





Tyger, Tyger

FASTWÜRMS and their feline familiars

"The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for whites, or women for men." —Alice Walker

Quote from *The Color Purple*, as seen on a FASTWÜRMS poster at the Art Gallery of York University Donky@Ninja@Witch exhibition, Sept–Dec 2007

In the essay *The Animal that therefore I am* (More to follow), a nude Jacques Derrida expresses concern over his cat's intense gaze, focused plainly at his crotch. The cat's voyeuristic stare leads to a kind of 'critical uneasiness' as the theorist acknowledges a reversal: he is not so much looking as being looked at — the examiner has become the examined. Here Derrida suggests that we attempt to really see the animal that stares upon us.

This sentiment is strongly in line with the multidisciplinary practice of FASTWÜRMS, otherwise known as Kim Kozzi and Dai Skuse. FASTWÜRMS are practicing witches, a worldview that is writ large across their artistic production, providing a useful framework for interrogating ideas of nature and power. They continually challenge the convention of human dominion over animals — a convention

Image courtesy of the artists

stretching back to Genesis — through their relationship with their seven cats.

FASTWÜRMS look at these barn cats through a variety of lenses, both literal and figurative, producing performance, installation, photography and drawing directly about these seven animals. For FASTWÜRMS, these cats are not pets, companions or passive subjects, but feline counterparts and, quite literally, family. The current crew, residing on the duo's Creemore, Ontario farm, consists of Rustler Crowbar, Taalon, Spoticus, Ludakris, Dragon Wagon, Cheese and Petunia.

The cats are generally depicted with a distinctly stoic air, represented as larger than life and often looking quite fierce, as in a recent photographic work, *Spotti Fang* (left). The 2004 video *Pussy Necropolis* features four of the Fastwürm cats as kittens, and is in turn adorable (cats rolling about in a furry pile) and vicious (near the end of the tape a cat drops a dead rat at the cameraperson's feet). The widely circulated 2009 print series, featuring the blue rendered likeness of Pusterniks, Dragon Wagon, Rustler Crowbar, Cheese, Taalon and Spoticus (right), is characteristic of the way in which FASTWÜRMS represent their feline counterparts: head on, the subject staring directly at you, or intensely fixated on something else beyond the frame. The style of the work is closely related to the veneration of portraiture. As the FASTWÜRMS state, "The work is about commemoration and adoration. We live longer than our cats, so there is always this tragic reminder of the future loss in our need to picture them, a poignant reminder that we love them and will suffer when they are gone." The images are arresting for this reason. Void of ironic or analytical motives, they embrace sentimentality in a way that is neither anthropomorphic nor anthropocentric.

Images of cats, moving and still, have proliferated rapidly over the last few years, specifically on the internet. *The New York Times* recently chronicled the rise of the LOLcats empire, a cat photo/caption website that generates over 1 million dollars in profits annually. Artists are also contributing to the ubiquity of cat imagery: FASTWÜRMS' images have circulated widely within the Canadian and international art world, becoming familiar to many. The cats have even been on the cover of magazines, producing what the FASTWÜRMS refer to as "maybe a K-list

WHY ARE CATS SO WELL-SUITED TO INTERNET CELEBRITY, ABOVE AND BEYOND OTHER SPECIES? HOW DID THEY BECOME THE PREFERRED MATERIAL OF WEB 2.0 IMAGE SHARING?

and beyond any other species? How exactly did they become the preferred material of rapid Web 2.0 image sharing? FASTWÜRMS think that much of it has to do with the fact that cats look good on film. "We buy into the theory that at this time of military/ industrial/corporate hegemony, cat images have become useful for mediating the growing post-human anxiety. The charm of feline "cute" has more obvious cultural currency and circulation on the internet. The mainstream media can now quantify the enduring attraction for the cat that was always present in folk art and craft and of course Egypt."

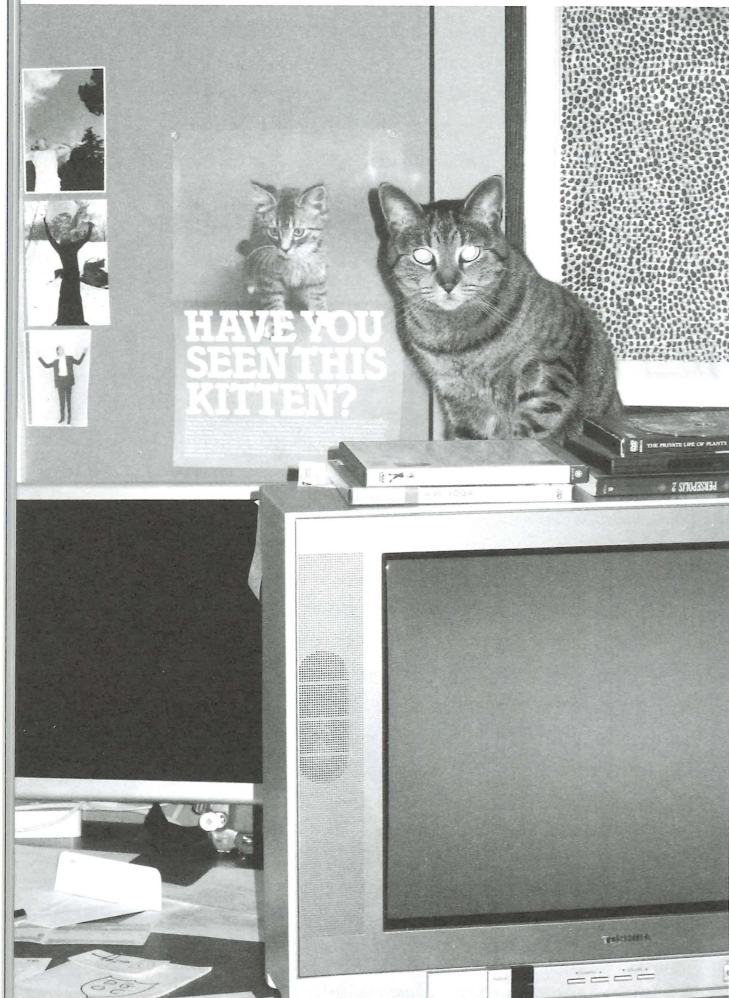
With that in mind, perhaps all of those at-work "focus breaks" spent searching cat videos on YouTube are not entirely escapist. There is something compelling that leads us to watching cats, and some of the appeal is observing what is Other.

"There is great elegance and economy in cat movement," FASTWÜRMS explain. "Their understanding and perception of tactile information is far more sophisticated than ours." It seems that these mediated feline images are perhaps not wholly instrumentalized, and looking at cats, through lived and mediated encounters, has the potential to challenge or at least destabilize dominant notions of human perceptions and identity.

FASTWÜRMS are currently featured in *Adaptation: Between Species* at the Power Plant in Toronto, Ontario. Sarah Todd spoke to FASTWÜRMS about their work and cats during their exhibition *Hood Woad* at the Ministry of Casual Living in Victoria, BC.

Sarah Todd is a Vancouver-based curator and writer. She has curated exhibitions at various art centres across Canada including Vtape, the Toronto Free Gallery, XPACE Culture Centre, InterAccess Electronic Media Arts Centre and the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery. Currently, Sarah is Curator of Media Art at the Western Front in Vancouver, BC.

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS KITTEN?



Cats were born to be famous. Sarah Todd offers a selection of contemporary art involving feline as artist, collaborator, or subject.

HAVE YOU SEEN (2009)

HAVE YOU SEEN (left) is a colour photograph depicting Diane Borsato's cat, Helen of Troy, poised in front of a poster from a Ron Terada mail art piece. Terada's poster acts as a wanted poster, incriminating Helen of Troy as she stares at the camera with glowing eyes.

www.dianeborasto.net

DREI KLAVIERSTÜCKE OP. 11 (2009)

Cory Arcangel's series of three video compilations of cats playing the piano, found on YouTube. The unapologetically cute images are accompanied by the cats' discordant piano soundtrack. Sound produced by the cat/piano interaction is meant to recall atonal compositions by early 20th century composer Arnold Schoenberg, specifically the 1909 work *Drei Klavierstücke op. 11* (a.k.a. *Three Piano Pieces*). The work riffs on notions of the avant-garde—while referencing musical feline internet celebrities like the infamous Keyboard Cat. This work is now on view at the Power Plant's *Adaptation: Between Species* exhibition.

www.coryarcangel.com

LOL CAT MAP (2008)

LOL Cat Map is a Google Maps application for photos of LOLcat look-alikes that live in Matthew Williamson's Toronto neighbourhood. The map pinpoints the day, time and location that Williams encounters the celebrity cat doppelgangers, functioning much like Gawker Stalker, a Gawker.com device that tracks human celebrity sightings.

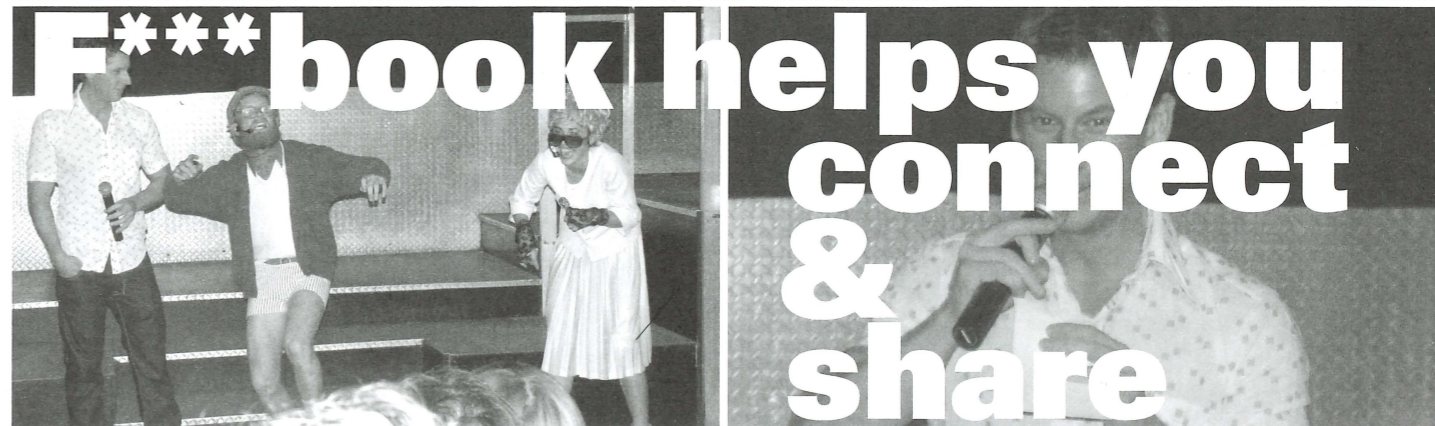
www.matthew-williamson.com/lolcats

IMAGE ABOVE & ON PAGE 34 are available for purchase, as full colour prints, through Gallery TPW and Curcuit Gallery's *More is More Collection* fundraiser — online at gallerytpw.ca.

VARIOUS WORKS (1973–1998)

Carolee Schneeman's cat, Kitch, was a major figure in her work for over 20 years. Most notably, Kitch was featured in the films *Fuses* and *Kitch's Last Meal* (1973–1976). Both films are about sex and death, invoking these thematics through the documentation of daily life. Kitch is often positioned as an objective observer to life's goings on. Another notable cat-related work by Schneeman is *Infinity Kisses* (1981–1988), a wall-size collection of 140 photos featuring Schneeman kissing her cat Vesper, documenting what Schneeman calls "the artist at life." She has since produced *Infinity Kisses II* (1990–1998) similarly documenting the unexpected human/animal configuration.

www.caroleeschneeman.com



All images courtesy Ryan Steele

I met Ryan Steele 11 years ago, before he was gay. His words. Is that possible? Alright then, before he was out. We waited tables together, and made up alternate restaurant birthday songs for embarrassed customers. We had breakfast together before work every Thursday morning. Then I changed jobs, went back to school, got married, and had two children; Ryan moved to Vancouver and starred in his first queer film, *Tranny Force*. He was the pink superhero. We lost touch as our lives diverged, the physical space between us becoming visceral and impassable. I thought about Ryan a lot though, convinced that one simply could not obsess over *Saturday Night Live* that much with another human being without making a permanent knot in the emotional space-time continuum. The truth was that I missed Ryan.

I recently decided, with some trepidation, to use the ubiquitous social networking tool for one of its intended purposes. It felt like a victory: I found someone whose absence from my life made me feel regretful. I typed in his name and became one of his 2,857 friends.

If 2,857 sounds outrageously high, that's because it is. When Ryan posts a status update, there are usually upwards of 15 comments. It's not a fan page — it's his personal profile. That's a heck of a lot of people interested in what time he got up that morning and

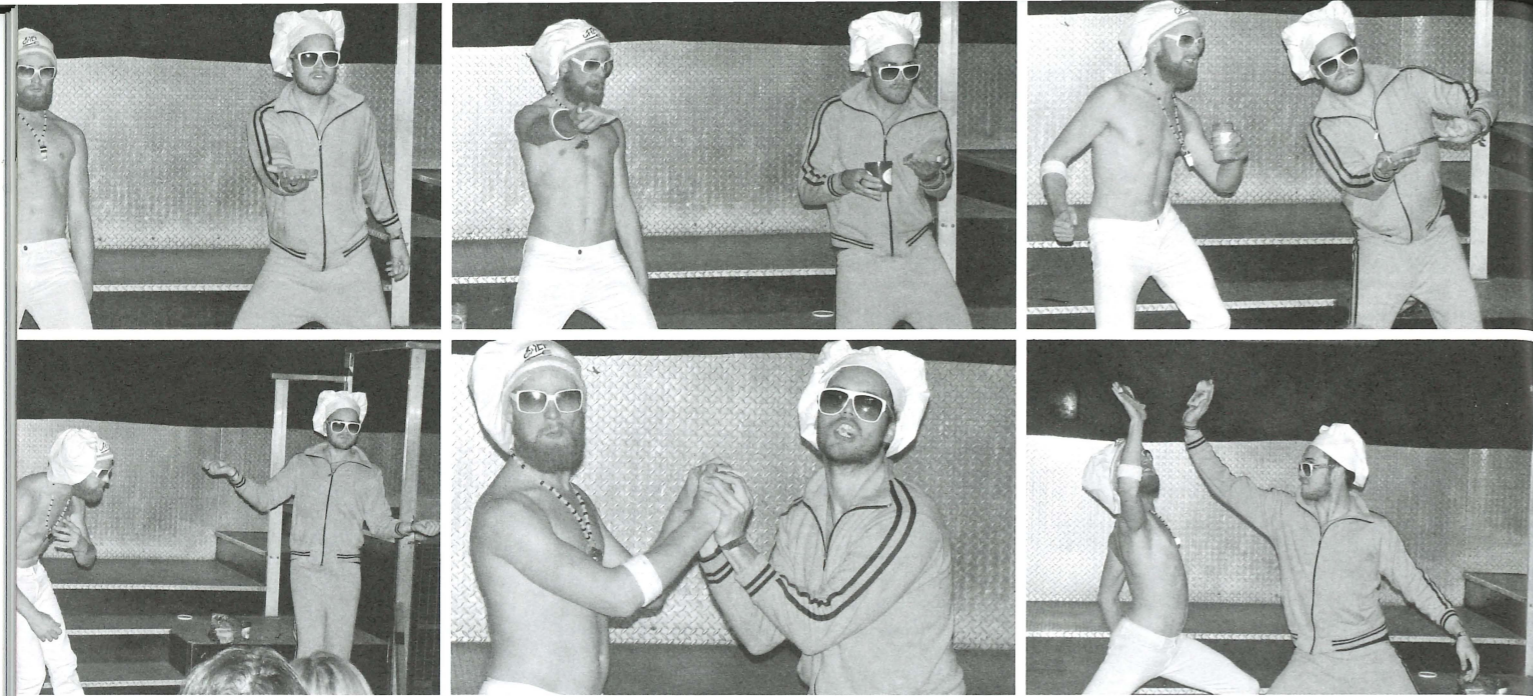
whether or not he liked the final episode of *Lost*. His wall is full of posts from friends telling him that he and his videos are genius, that they can't wait to see him, that they want to be his boyfriend. Ryan isn't just popular. He's kind of a big deal.

We meet up at a bar on Davie Street where Ryan bartends and holds court. Ryan suggested this spot after a few weeks of trying to agree on a mutually comfortable time and place to acquaint. It's a humid summer night, and although it's only Thursday, Davie Street is noisy with a kind of manic enthusiasm. There are a few people hanging around the bar at 1181 when we arrive, and they all know Ryan. I have the sense, through Facebook, that a lot of people want to be a part of whatever Ryan's up to; his passion and his energy are matched by a genuine intimacy with those close to him.

The bartender, a good friend of Ryan's and occasional actor in his skits, engages me in a playful game of who-knows-Ryan-better; Ryan assures me the game is a draw and I am, for some reason, relieved.

We sit in a corner, drink gin and tonics and play catch-up. The G&T's are too tall and, in the loud music and sticky leather seats of the close summer night, I feel as though no time has passed at all. My unarticulated worry has abated. Ryan is happy to see me, and is utterly candid and charmingly hospitable.

Kimberly Gilbertson typed in Ryan's name and became one of his 2,857 friends



He ignores a text from a girl with whom we had spoken moments ago. When she emerges from the washroom to confront him, he tells her he's with me and didn't want to be rude. She's curious because I'm in. I'm with him.

Ryan tells me about his upcoming gig on MuchMusic's *Video On Trial*. He explains that gay men call each other "girl." There is a kind of culture shock in this nostalgic encounter, and I feel something foreign and perhaps dangerous hovering at the edges of our reunion.

Seven life-changing years lie between us. It is as though the contents of those years are behind a door that Ryan has cracked and through which I can only peer. In an anamorphic painting, a straight-on gaze leaves the viewer in confusion; the comprehensible image exists only in a view from aside. I wonder if this is where I stand now. There is some freedom in confusion.

Ryan makes it seem as though the door is open, though, and I feel privileged to be here under his wing. I don't know if it is just because I'm an outsider in the gay community, or because we can't talk for 10 minutes without being interrupted by friends and fans, some waving from the street as they walk past.

Ryan has come from a day of writing scripts for the videos he posts on YouTube; at over a million hits, I can't tell if they are supposed to be his ticket to the big time or if they are the big time. One of his most popular, *Busy Drag Queen*, has inspired an Australian knock-off. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, it is also, half a world away, an indicator of a certain cult fame.

The actors who appear in Ryan's skits are dedicated to his vision, and many of them join him onstage for

the eponymous *Ryan Steele Show*, a monthly sketch show at *The Odyssey*, described by one of the cast as "off side and dirty." Ryan's sense of humour often flirts with grotesquerie (he has a penchant for blood and other bodily fluids). He enjoys the freedom that public sites like YouTube provide, but he tells me his dream is a gig on SNL.

His overt and often boundary-pushing sexual focus translates well into queer film: he appears in, among others, *Trans-Neptune* (2007), a film about the adventures of a drag queen cosmonaut; and *Pimp and Ho: Dragon Fairy* (2009), as an evil villain tracked down by the Gaysian division of the Queer Secret Service. These films carry marks of parody, overt or not, but I'm cautious to speculate on what exactly they parody. For now they are closed to me, manifest traces of another narrative.

Ryan tells me he writes his skits with a particular audience in mind, mainly divided along gay-straight lines. He says that the straight audience doesn't usually "get" his more queer-centric skits, and he is pleased that a particularly blood-soaked one—involving a bathtub and a break-up—has made me laugh. I try to come up with ideas for him, but everything sounds a bit tame.

As our evening comes to an end, Ryan has to leave for *Numbers*, to be a celebrity judge in a talent competition. We promise not to lose touch again, but I am reluctant to end the night. Ryan tells me if I want to keep him company while he waits for the show to start, he can get me in; when we arrive the man at the door looks me up and down, about to ask for my cover. "She's my girl," Ryan tells him. He nods.

I'm in.

Kimberly Gilbertson is an English major at Simon Fraser University and is working on a book of poetry. She is currently interested in the capitalist appropriation of social nostalgia. She believes in negative capability. She makes space into place with her husband and two kids.

ERRATA

PREVIOUS ISSUE

On page 7 and 17, Leannej was mistakenly identified as a former co-editor of *Front Magazine*. Her actual title was Managing and Associate Editor.

Images on pages 33, 34 and 35 of the summer 2010 issue were less dark than we wanted them to be. The perils of CMYK are not to be approached lightly.

On page 21 we referred to Michael Cadamia as "Mike" because we know him well, but we realize we should have used his professional name.

The caption for the bottom left photo on page 45 is incorrect. It should read: *Sorry, installation, Yukon Arts Centre Gallery, Whitehorse, Yukon, 2009. Photo: Paul Gowdie.* Also, the photo is too saturated. We were imagining how red our faces would be if we were apologizing. But these are politicians.

GENERAL

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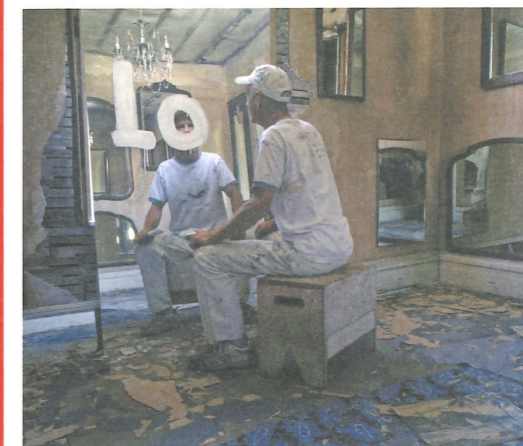
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Dauida Kidd, *LOU (detail)*, 2010, light jet on archival photographic paper 101.6 cm x 116.84 cm, courtesy of the artist

6344 Deer Lake Avenue
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R&B Life

"Usher eyes me, asks me what I'm sippin' on and pours me up a shot of a top-shelf liquor."

Sarah Gotowka

Some of my earliest childhood memories involve sobbing hysterically to songs of heartbreak — songs like Boyz II Men's "Down on Bended Knee" — long before I had ever experienced anything like a romantic relationship. As a teenager, I spent countless hours in my bedroom listening to Aaliyah's "One In a Million" on repeat, fantasizing about high school crushes and male celebrities whisking me away to the eternal bliss of love. Even as a 23-year-old woman, wounded after many failed love affairs, I found solace with Mariah, Beyoncé, and Rihanna, who reassured me that male infidelity is just a fact of life that I needed to "shake off."

As my love for these hypnotic songs continues, I have begun to realize the numerous ways this genre of music has shaped my values and my behavior.

USHER + SARAH = U.S.4EV

Last winter I was feeling especially lonely as I browsed my friends' Facebook albums full of photos of them and their hot, trendy and undoubtedly attentive boyfriends. 25 years old and single for the first time since puberty, I couldn't bear the stormy winter nights alone, so I made a plush, life-sized Usher² doll.

My Usher doll has many qualities that I've never been able to find in a living man. He's a successful businessman (which Dad loves) and a professional artist (all of my ex-boyfriends were wannabe DJs and art school drop outs). He has a refined fashion sensibility (note the gold "U" chain and matching watch), is clean (there's nothing I can't stand more than unattended fingernails) and most importantly, he's an amazing listener — he never interrupts, disagrees, or questions. He's, like, totally there for me.

The video *Love in This Club* documents our courtship.

SCENE 1

As his dance floor classic "Love in This Club" blares through the speakers of a chic bar³, Usher eyes me, asks me what I'm sippin' on⁴ and pours me up a shot of a top shelf liquor. Before you know it we're grindin' low and whispering into each other's ears.

SCENE 2

The phone rings⁵ and a young man with a French accent answers. He's at the library. He asks me what I want to drink. I interrupt to confess that I'm in love with somebody else. He pretends to be happy for me, I giggle at this absurdity and the conversation ends as he tells me he's going to delete my telephone number.

SCENE 3

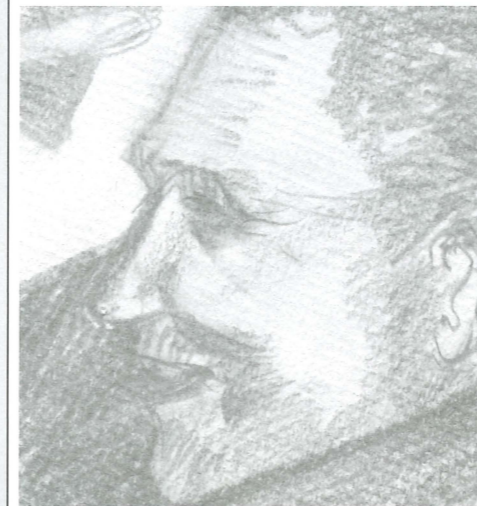
In the bedroom, "U Got it Bad" plays on my boom box, serenading Usher and I as we play footsy, cuddle, and pour our hearts and souls out to each other.



FOOTNOTES

1. "Shake it off" is a Mariah Carey song from 2005.
2. Usher Raymond is an award winning R&B recording artist.
3. I duct taped a piece of shiny fabric to my bedroom wall to give the illusion of contemporary design.
4. Lyric from "Love in This Club": "You know all you gotta do is tell me what you sippin' on / and I promise that I'm gonna keep it comin' all night long."
5. An actual phone conversation recorded on my tape deck. In the brilliant words of Omarion, "I got a ice box where my heart used to be."

Sarah Gotowka is currently seeking her MFA in Fibres at Concordia University and received her BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art. She is Korean-adopted / Polish-Italian. She is interested in contemporary mating practices such as the use of alcohol in courtship and the new phenomenon of sexting.



**Jack Butler, Canadian Artist
Self Portrait**

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ARTIST PROJECT

Sylvana D'Angelo glimpses the almost- and never-famous of the past.

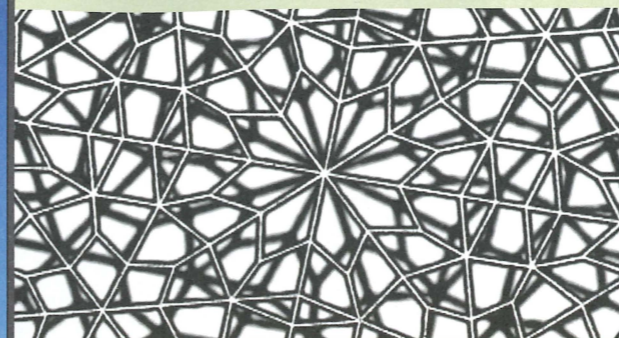
Far From Fame, 2010. Digital collage. Courtesy of the artist.

Backstage at the Girly Show, 2010. Digital collage. Courtesy of the artist.

Sylvana D'Angelo lives and works in Vancouver. She went to school in Toronto, Ontario, where she broke her teeth and became an artist. Her work is an exploration of everything in the search of something beautiful and meaningful and of the exploitation of that moment. Her curatorial projects include darling magazine and /diagonal zine fair. sylvanaisthebest.com



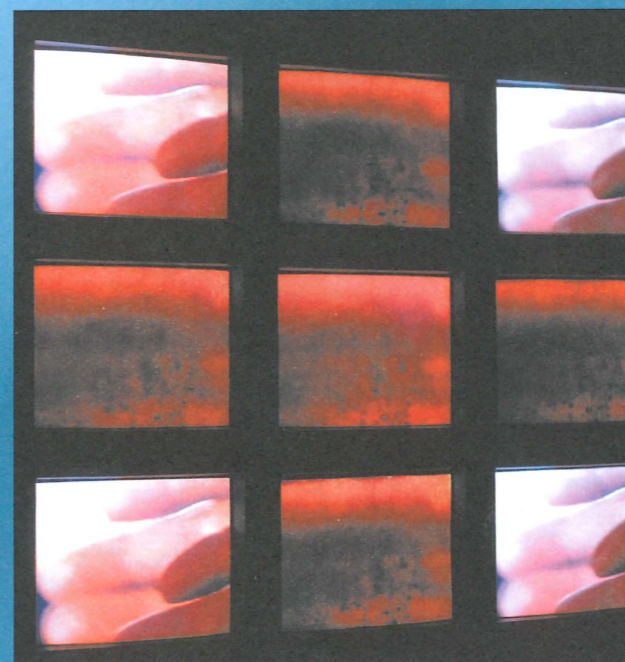
From Aniconism to Bliss: Media Art shows its Islamic roots
Monday September 20 2010 7:30pm



Alex Mackenzie The Wooden Lightbox: a secret art of seeing
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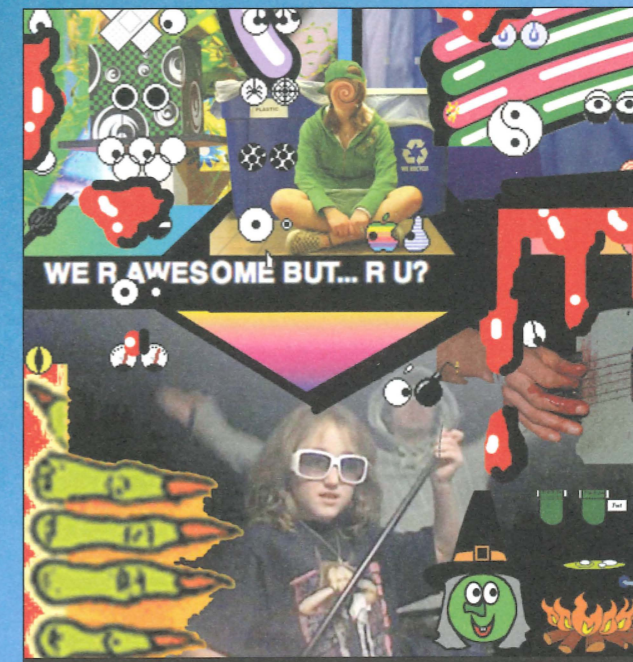
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THE EXTREME ANIMALS SIT DOWN

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Megan Morman's practice wrestles with questions of belonging and "recognition by one's peers;" she's particularly interested in the ways that membership in cultural communities is established through storytelling and gossip. She has shown at festivals and galleries including Visualey, Artcity (Calgary), AKA Gallery, Neutral Ground and SAVAC; her needlepoint work is in the permanent collection of the Saskatchewan Arts Board.

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	69					70				71			

ACROSS

- 1 Oops, excuse me!
- 4 Hucks
- 8 Don't blow it
- 11 Not a comer
- 12 Cajun vegetable
- 12 Damien Hirst's encrustant
- 15 Basque sport: jai ____
- 16 On winter afternoons
- 17 A fan, in Japan
- 18 2010 VIVA Award winner
- 21 Yemeni country code
- 22 How Yuxweluptun met the Indian Act
- 23 Tiny colonist
- 25 Tarot suit, aka wand
- 27 A contemptable fool
- 29 A justification?
- 33 Grunt, Access, Open Space
- 36 Kingdom
- 38 Bigfoot probably isn't...
- 39 2009 Sobey finalist
- 43 Signal & Noise organizer
- 44 Lewitt's machines
- 45 Modern tape backup format

DOWN

- 46 Again
- 47 "____ to the Lost Lagoon"
- 48 Performance art cliché
- 50 Smaller than AA
- 52 Zips
- 56 Says the black sheep
- 59 He cuts up sneakers & lawn chairs
- 64 _____ Like It
- 66 Party, in Honolulu
- 67 Space
- 68 N.E. ____ Co.
- 69 Loan
- 70 Vietnamese new years
- 71 Western Front is this direction from UBC
- 72 Kill, maybe with a sword
- 73 S

DOWN

- 1 Canadian fiberglass camper
- 2 To equip with better weapons
- 3 Use it before paint
- 4 Madame Beespeaker
- 5 "agan" prefix
- 6 Eat it at an opening
- 7 What Bas Jan Ader's boat did
- 8 Jumping in the VAG's fountain will get you ...
- 9 Not here
- 10 Feint
- 11 You're not gonna reach her telephone
- 13 Boehme
- 14 East Van artist
- 19 Embellish
- 20 Cereal
- 24 Caspian or Black
- 26 D
- 27 Bambi's here
- 28 Philosopher Lakatos
- 30 Food, water, or shelter
- 31 Lentils
- 32 Sleeps around
- 33 Edison's middle name
- 34 Wreck
- 35 Give in
- 37 In the middle
- 40 Polish Socialist suburb: ____ Huta
- 41 Filmmaker Ho
- 42 Maker of trucks & thermohygrographs
- 47 Spirit of Haida Gwaii has seven
- 49 Do it to galleries
- 51 Eek!
- 53 WOW, they're big and ugly
- 54 Gatherings
- 55 Santa Ana's airport's
- 56 Flying mouse?
- 57 Tennis player Arthur
- 58 16th Hebrew letter
- 60 Harms
- 61 Clan of the Cave Bear author
- 62 Grandmother
- 63 Performance artist Radul
- 65 Uno

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