

FIN

OCC

HIO.

sept 5

26, 2015

*ARTISTS /
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*Finocchio is a group exhibition curated by Scott J Hunter
The exhibition was presented at THE FRANKLIN, Chicago IL
September 5th - 26th, 2015*

*Featuring works by Daniel G. Baird, Jessica Caponigro, Alexandria
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NOTES FROM THE CURATOR

SCOTT J HUNTER

There is a panic running through a significant segment of mainstream white culture in the United States today. The status of those who are of cisgendered, predominantly male, European-immigrant white background, who have seemingly long forgotten where they once came from and why, has diminished significantly. Much to their surprise and indignation. The nation's persons of color, including those who are historically indigenous to the lands defining the US, and those whose ancestors were brought here as slaves and chattel; those whose ancestors came to find greater opportunity, and those who have immigrated to escape persecution; persons of female and transgender, and of non-hetero and fluid sexual identity, the "fags" and the "dykes" -- it is these groups of individuals who have grown to become the majority population. This has opened a deep animosity within those who were once considered the majority; a fear of losing their place and experiencing diminishment, and a terror about what this might entail for their future. It is this dread, coupled with anger at the loss of status they are experiencing, which is contributing to horrible choices, words, and actions. To a growing genocide. To an entrenched apartheid. For the predominantly male, cisgendered, European-immigrant white population has come to believe that they are in confrontation with the people whom they fear; in response, they seek to challenge and diminish these others who they have historically labeled as queers, as deviants, as traitors to their white civilization. They have come to view these others as a danger, as menacing individuals with lances drawn, ready to take down their tradition. Others who must be stopped and removed.

But the other, the queer, the deviant, the different, they are now unstoppably active and vocal, ready to confront and dismantle the inequalities and the ignorance; to remind this terrified white cisgendered mainstream that their hold on what defines the US is truly lessened, is degraded, and is soon to be gone. Because the change that has been deeply feared, aggressively pushed into the closet, has now come full

"E quei, ch'io non credeva esser finocchi, ma very amici, e prossimi, gia sono venuti contra me con lancia, e stocchi." attributed to Dante. Translation: "And those, who I did not believe were traitors (faggots), but true friends and very close, now were come to me with lances and rapiers (thrusts)."

According to Silvia Federici, in *Caliban and the Witch* (p. 197): "the Italian

word *finocchio* (fennel) refers to the practice of scattering these aromatic vegetables on the stakes in order to mask the stench of burning flesh during the execution of witches [and other undesirables, like homosexuals and gypsies,] during the Middle Ages.

Synonyms: homosexual, faggot, queer, worthless, traitorous, penis, testicles

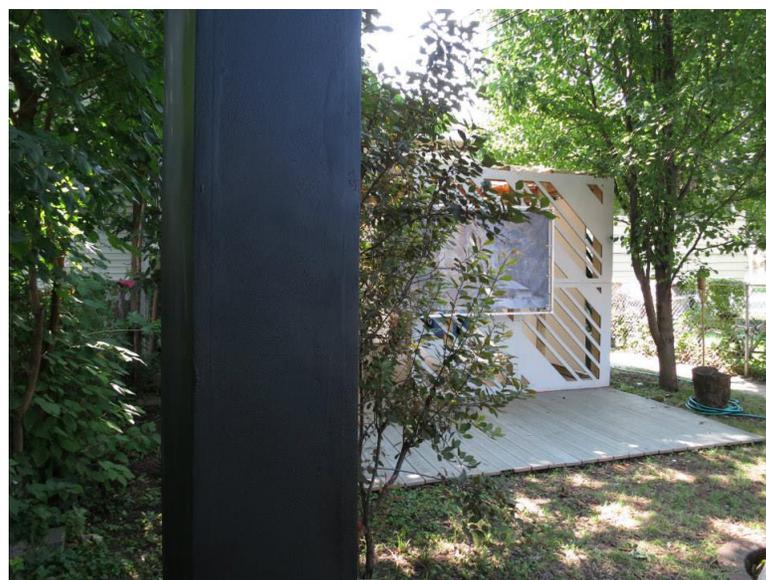
force. It can no longer be ignored. The queer, the different, the transgendered, the female, the other colored, the other loved-- the diversity that makes the US a true cacophony-- has become the norm, the primary definition of culture and place, at this time and as the future unfolds. And with this change, there will be no stakes left burning, none left to smolder. For it is the queer, the different, the other who will secure the future, confronting that dread, that anxiety, that panic, saying, "We're here. Come join us."

FINOCCHIO presents the voices of the other, those who have been historically deemed different and left out of the mainstream, who have been always feared and marginalized by the previously dominant culture. It is their voices and their experiences, that define the diversity of identity, which is considered with this exhibition -- revealing through a range of practices the multiple layers of diverse selves as Queer. Each of the works in *Finocchio*, taken individually and in concert together, shares a personal interpretation of self and situation. And as a grouping of voices, of practices, the exhibition confronts the layers of Queer (nee diverse) identity that define the 21st century.

As curator, I have sought with this exhibition to attend to how these Queer voices combine; how they define self apart from and within a culture that attempts to segregate and ignore their beautiful humanity. A humanity that ultimately details and extends our country's reality. I ask that you engage with the physical and visual dialog that is presented in these works, and consider how diversity has become defined as the Queer, as it is reflected through a materiality and plasticity of self-identity that is contained within a range of conceptual forms. For in *Finocchio*, each of the artists shares their position, as they move into and seek to embrace a place of prominence. I ask that you join in listening to, and hearing, these voices with me.

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BLACK DICK

GEIR HARALDSETH

I returned to Oslo from boarding school during the summer of 1996. It wasn't the fancy British boarding school with bugging and royalty, but it was in a Harry Potter'esque castle preaching international understanding. When I arrived back in my native Norway as an 18 year old, I was conscripted to do military service, but opted out. I didn't want to have a life in military, not even for the six-month minimum military service. Not even to hang out with lots of 18 year old boys. No way. Instead I claimed to be a pacifist in order to serve society in some way. To prove my pacifist stance I was questioned by police about a lot of weird questions. This is standard policy and they will test how much of a Gandhi you are. Would you protect your family with a gun if they were threatened? Don't you have any national pride? Have you no idea of what happened during WWII? And so on, like it actually mattered. They took my pacifism for good fish (as we say in Norway when you accept something at face value) and I was sent off to a camp, much like a military camp, with all the other pacifists. We had to pick our social service and I had already arranged to start working at the National Museum of Contemporary Art. It was fun for a budding art aficionado and I was allowed to constantly challenge myself by looking at the works of art on display and tucked away, thinking about what they meant, how they came about, discussing them with co-workers and visitors, writing about them in educational guides and pamphlets, dealing with people inside and outside of the organization, organizing events and guided tours, taking phone calls about everything from art to cross word puzzles, and really getting into this world of contemporary art and all of its promises and paradoxes. I devoured magazines and catalogs in the bookstore and hovered over the library. Sorting the publications in the library according to the alphabet was a treat. Not only did I get to geek out over the alphabet to see how many consonants could go in a row without a single vowel, I would also get my head around all the names of all the artists. Mostly from Europe and US. I got into Artforum, especially the copies from the late 80s, early 90s. The air of the American art was slightly different than the European one, and I didn't really know why. It was heavier, serious, dour...

Two exhibition catalogs from the bookstore really haunted me and they became some of my first purchases. One is sadly MIA. The other one lives in my personal library still. But more importantly they live in my head. *A Forest of Signs; Art in the Crisis of Representation* is a primer on representation in American art of the decade from the late 70s, something I was not able to wrap my brain around fully at the age of 18. It was organized by Ann Goldstein and Mary Jane Jacob for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. I never saw the show of course because I didn't travel to the US until Easter 2001, but still ... the catalog had me engrossed.

The exhibition featured the so-called Pictures Generation, the group of artists in the 1977 show curated by Douglas Crimp at Artist's Space. Well, except for Paul Smith. Brauntuch, Goldstein, Levine and Longo were all in there, together with the 'revised' edition of the group with Richard Prince and Cindy Sherman. Bender, Birnbaum, Bloom, Charlesworth, Holzer, Kelley, Kruger, Lawler, McCollum, Prina, Simmons, Steinbach and Williams were some of the additional artists in the show. Just to give you an idea of the artistic forces at work in this exhibition. The title, *A Forest of Signs*, led me to semiotics, but the second title, *Art in the Crisis of Representation*, was a slightly harder nut to crack. I could deal with semiotics as an idea, but crisis and representation were too abstract. Or too real. Or too close to home. I read the dedication to William Olander on the first few pages of the catalog and the mention of AIDS, something that really stuck out for this young budding gay. Crisis? Representation? The ramifications of the AIDS crisis didn't hit me until later in life. I was watching it all from afar. First as a kid in front of the TV in Norway, watching the news as the gays in the US were hit with a plague. It did scare me even though I had no concept of being a homosexual at the tender age of six, but even at 18 I had no tools to pick apart the representation of gayness, queerness, or otherness in Norwegian society. This is a world that appreciates homogeneity above all, where identity politics is not broached, as it is not deemed necessary. The crisis seemed very real though. And art had something to do with it. Color me intrigued.

Identity politics have changed.

That's for sure.

The second publication, the one I can't seem to locate to this date, is *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary Art*, from the Whitney museum in 1994. The show was curated by the eminent Thelma Golden and featured artists such as Ligon, Basquiat, Simpson, and Mapplethorpe. It also dealt with the AIDS crisis, but focused on race and gender. And I was floored. The catalog was tantalizing and challenging. The works gave me a raging hard on and fed my growing white guilt. For objectifying and fetishizing the black male, but giving me more than I needed in order to grasp some of the issues at stake. Later on, as I was studying Fine Art, or Curatorial Studies, the idea of representation stuck with me. It is identity politics, it is all the things we don't want to talk about, it is all the things that make us tick. Looking at the current state of the world and the current state of the art world, I am surprised the art world is not responding with heavier ammunition. The art created during the late 80s and early 90s dealt with the crisis of representation in such a strong and poignant way. And the works seemed on point, even though they all looked different and acted differently. Some overtly political, some overtly beautiful. Why are we seeing a different response in the field of visual arts? Is this not being taught in school? Are we over it? Is it passé? Not on trend?

AIDS is still around. There is PrEP, and there is still a sense of dread, but it's letting loose a little bit. The clammy hand of death, something I imagine to Robert Mapplethorpe's cold, white, half-dead knuckle on his cane in his self-portrait from 1988, is not as present as it was. He is still dead, but I don't feel guilty every time I have a boner. Race is still an issue. It's an even bigger issue than it was, a more visible issue and a more pressing issue than it seemed like. *Seemed* being the operative word, as it is not the art making the devastating horror visible, but social media and smart phones. The recent developments lay bare the institutionalized racism and horror of being an African American when faced with bureaucracy and, even more abruptly lethal, the guns of the police and the polis, our self. Gender is still an issue, but has been turned into entertainment, which makes it visible in a different, and in a more tolerable and perhaps enjoyable way than the killing of

black men, women, and children. The notorious queen Quentin Crisp wrote in his autobiographical novel, *The Naked Civil Servant* from 1968, about how he viewed his own display of gender and queerness in London during the earlier half of the 20th century. I am paraphrasing when I'm saying: Boredom. Kill them with boredom. If the bull sees the proverbial red cape over and over again it won't charge. If you see a queen all made up on the street with her fairy ways every fucking day, you will be so bored with it you won't wince. You won't lift a finger, won't lift a fist, won't charge like a bull. The exposure of mass media might lead to this liberating state of boredom Crisp was pining for. How many queens can you take on RuPaul's Drag Race? How many transgender heroes can you see on TV? The industry is fickle and only has limited room for representations of diversity. I am usually pretty naive, but I am not the 18-year-old Norwegian boy I was.

The representation of gender, race and otherness is still a challenge, and it is shifting. The diversity aspect is filtered through the media available. Social media is one thing, mass media another, art yet another. The diversity of the media itself is key, as they veil and unveil different aspects of diversity, which in turn covers aspects of representation like a blanket. Comforting, warming, but hiding and stifling. The aspects of visibility and acceptance will have consequences for diversity, how we speak to it, and receive it. I am on unstable ground in this text, basing it solely on my own reflections on the topic, but it is clear to me that the art world does not hold the same artistic practices and discourses as prominent as they did in 1993. It's not necessarily a depolitization, but rather an internationalization of the visibility of diversity. And probably the lack of it. The Norwegian performance artist Marthe Ramm Fortun's work *Inverted Sky* at the Grand Central Terminal pointed to one major shift in society, which might be rendered invisible if not for art. Act Up, the radical advocacy group for people living with HIV and AIDS, arranged a massive sit-in at Grand Central Terminal on January 23rd 1991. The crowd gathered and protested against the lack of attention and action from the American government and public to the AIDS crisis.

The protest was peaceful, and no one was arrested until parts of the group moved toward the UN. Today, such an act is illegal and Ramm Fortun, who usually works with the mass of people as her material, had to navigate a public space where your movements as a group are dissuaded and illegal. When a different version of the work was performed at the central station in Oslo, the participants were a homogenous body of people passing through the station, a sixteen year old kid lent the artist his skateboard, a group of asylum seekers were heading back to their camp outside of the city, and a Roma lady sold the artist her newspaper. Part of the work was navigating the existing structures, and at Grand Central Terminal she chose to point to the changes that took place over the course of 25 years, and the way that politics influenced who can act, where they can act, and what is considered illegal.

There was a strong air of transgression surrounding the art and the language in those two publications I cherished as an 18 year old. ACT UP was transgressive. Today, the art world seems less interested in transgression and issues of representation, and more invested in presentation. The retreat of the 're' might be interesting, but I am wondering how artists today are choosing, or not choosing, to deal with these issues. Still pressing. Still pressing. Repressing? Depressing?

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NEW WORK

DANIEL G. BAIRD

In the Spring of 2009 I worked as an art handler at the Art Institute of Chicago to assist with the assembly and development of the new Modern wing that was set to open that May. They divided the preparators to be either Contemporary, Modern or 'Floating' (where one was available to assist with all of the other departments in the museum when needed). I got placed with a few others into the Contemporary group and we were set to develop the galleries dedicated to more recent (post 1945) art.

In speaking to my colleagues at breaks and lunch, I came to find out that the curators of the Modern section were utilizing to-scale high resolution prints of all the artwork destined to adorn the third floor galleries as a means to assist in their placement of the work. There were even prints of sculptures, mounted onto sheets of cardboard that stood upright to give a sense of dimensional volume. These images were stand-ins for the real, and functioned in a cleverly practical way. Due to the sensitive nature of the artworks themselves, hanging a poster rather than the real artwork allowed for an understanding of the space and the ability to easily make changes for the final placement.

Walking through the galleries with these images on the wall and in space was a strange experience. There was a peculiarity to the paintings in particular because, in this context, they didn't announce their physicality. The frames and brushstrokes were perfectly flattened and the only variation that occurred in traversing the space were the glares of light that reflected off the glossy surfaces. In this mode of being flattened into pure printed surfaces they began to feel virtual in a way.

The printed replicas were disposed of soon after the original works took their place. These exacting museum-quality images were barred from entering into the real world for the threat they posed to the authenticity of the originals, and were (supposedly) thrown out. All of the bets and compromises my colleagues and I had about who would get which replica for our apartments went very quickly out the window. These extremely high resolution printed images for me represented an ideal form of the actual works.

The originals could cease to exist and these exacting replicas could forever stand in their place. At the central square of Brussels is Grote Markt or Grand Place, a beautiful square that has the lavishly adorned City Hall, the King's house, and opulent guildhalls with facades covered in gold. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a highly touristed location for its grandiosity and open-air exuberance.

Over time these structures need to undergo architectural-restoration and repair to maintain their appearance as the pristine historical objects that they are. Scaffolding is constructed as an exterior structure that encapsulates the facade of the building to be worked on. This box-like structure, made of metal piping, is often covered in a mesh fabric that hides the jumbled mess of

metal pipes, wooden platforms and workers. Currently, the guild halls to the west of the City Hall building are undergoing restoration. And the fabric hiding over the scaffolding shows an image of the building itself.

Printed at a scale of 1:1, these images stretched over the exterior scaffolding function as a means to appease the travelers who come to this historically important location. These images correspond directly to what is hidden beneath and blend back into their surroundings. It is a form of camouflage. It is a decoy technique to maintain a seamless experience of the place as a whole.

The building is presented as an image of itself. With being a photograph printed to the same scale as the building, the image shows an idealized form of what is being concealed or what the restoration underneath is aspiring to re-presenting. A structure wouldn't be covered with an image depicting a lesser form of its anticipated self if printed at such a scale. It presents us with an idealized representation. This image is a form of cosmetic modification to reality on par with the hyper-perfect images that we are confronted with in fashion and (beauty?) magazines and the HDR images of distant places showing the sublime beauty of the natural world. They are idealized and flattened representations of physical structures and share a connotation to a digital, or virtual, reality in that they can be reproduced anywhere and at anytime.

The enormous image I saw covering the facade of this City Hall building led me to a strange place of speculation. Is the building still there? Couldn't the building be gone and this be its stand-in without anyone knowing any different? With a print of a structure at this size, could it not be reconstructed somewhere else, transporting the entire structure to a different location via its printed image? In the thousands of images being taken of the square, is the massive, idealized, printed image included as part of a composition that will live as a personal memory? It felt like the popular Madame Toussard's wax museum of celebrities writ large.

I found the fear of the replica in my experience at the Art Institute as a compelling counterpart to the experience I very recently had of the architectural replica in Brussels. In one, the original became threatened, it seemed, by its exacting copy entering into the world, whereas in the other, its replica publicly stood as an idealized and perfected version of the lesser one that was being masked.



Daniel G. Baird
Recursion #8, 2015
Aluminum, rapid prototypes, plastic,
printed vinyl (Installation view)





ADVICE FROM A FEMINIST KILLJOY ON THE PRECIPICE OF LOSING HER SHIT.

JESSICA CAPONIGRO

From birth, American society conditions and socializes women to believe that our opinions, beliefs, and emotions, especially those regarding the injustices affecting our gender, are not significant or valuable.

I know this is not true, and hardly a day passes where I don't attempt to use my role as an activist, artist, and educator to encourage women to speak out against oppression. Though I may not have the esteem of Rainer Maria Rilke, Niccolo Machivelli, or Phyllis Chesler, I more than make up for the deficiency with unbridled fury.¹ In my thirty plus years of life, I have been told, over and over again, that there is no war on women; that feminism is no longer necessary. This is bullshit. I've never been shot in the head for trying to go to school. I'm allowed to drive a car. I can leave my home without a male guardian, but even in America, women are still far from free. My years of experience and numerous infuriating personal anecdotes could fill volumes, but I've attempted to narrow down my insight to its core principles. My maddening encounters with patriarchal society are not in any way special or out of the ordinary, and that's the problem.

1. History is full of artists and educators giving advice. Niccolo Machivelli wrote "The Prince" 1513. In 1934, Rainer Maria Rilke wrote to a male admirer, later compiled as "Letters to a Young Poet." Phyllis Chesler wrote "Letters to a Young Feminist" in 1998. In 2006 Art on Paper published a small volume for young artists written by established artists.



2. A crowd sourced list of living feminists, from rock stars and writers to activists and politicians: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ayaan Rirsi Ali, Ana Lily Amirpour, Ghada Amer, Gillian Anderson, Maya Angelou, Jennifer Baumgardner, Samantha Bee, Grace Lee Boggs, Louise Bourgeois, Carrie Brownstein, Judith Butler, Octavia Butler, Cari Car-

penter, Margaret Cho, Mariarosa Della Costa, Laverne Cox, Wendy Davis, Laina Dawes, Kim Dennis, Tina Fey, Jo Freeman, Roxane Gay, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Nikki Giovanni, Laura Jane Grace, Gail Griffin, Terry Gross, Kathleen Hanna, Linda Hierchman, Jenny Holzer, Bell Hooks, Llyse Hogue, Maxine Hong Kingston, Winona Laduke, Young Jean Lee, Emily

May, Mia Mckenzie, Jenny Mock, Janell Monae, Joan Morgan, Toni Morrison, Michelle Obama, Yoko Ono, Suze Orman, Oprah, Adrian Piper, Vanessa Place, Amy Poehler, Katha Pollitt, Griselda Pollock, Jennifer Reeder, Amy Richards, Cecile Richards, Pipilotti Rist, Lise Baggesen Ross, Martha Rosler, Anita Sakeesian, Carolee Schneemann, Amy Schumer,

Diane Seuse, Lorna Simpson, Rebecca Solnit, Amy Smith, Gloria Steinem, Jon Stewart, Patrick Stewart, Mary Timony, Corin Tucker, Ava Vidal, Kara Walker, Elizabeth Warren, Emma Watson, Janet Weiss, Hannah Wilke, Larry Wilmore, Malala Yousafzai

STOP APOLOGIZING, ACCOMMODATING, BEING NICE, AND LOOKING THE OTHER WAY.

I have been fighting the patriarchy since 1987. I was three years old and there was a rare accumulation of snow in Atlanta, Georgia. Out in the yard with my mother and younger brother, I demanded that the creature we were building was a snowwoman, not a snowman, and that she was gainfully employed. I insisted that we abandon the customary black top hat for a plastic firefighter's hat. I had probably never seen a woman firefighter, and I didn't yet know what feminism was, but I did know that I didn't like being told what to do, or what was possible for my gender. I was not an easy child. I was willful, defiant, and hell bent on speaking my mind-- qualities often exalted in male children but considered less desirable in girls. Actually, not much has changed. That snowwoman was the beginning of three decades of raising hell.

I spent a childhood wearing oversized Salt N' Peppa t-shirts and umbro shorts, climbing trees and rejecting pleas to comb my hair. At eight, I refused to play softball. In my mind it was a sport created because society didn't believe girls could hit a regular size ball. I was the only girl on my baseball team, mysteriously walked at almost every at bat by confused prepubescent boys who were being taught that girls were delicate and needed to be treated gently. I was horrible. I remember the undeniable satisfaction of hitting a few balls into the outfield and watching the astonishment on everyone's face. The boys eventually discovered that I wasn't any more fragile than they were. My early nineties bowl haircut probably helped.

I also spent most of my young life trying to make myself as small as possible, which is no easy feat when at 10 you're already too large to close the zipper of your grandmother's wedding dress. In addition to the awkwardness and quasi-shame I felt from being larger than most of the children my age, the fact that as a 10 year old I was being put into wedding dresses is another issue entirely. Perhaps because I saw how ridiculous I looked in my tiny grandmother's wedding dress, I never really bought into the absurdity of society's pressure on women to marry. Many women, even those who do not participate in heteronormative relationships, are often raised with the idea that they are not whole until they find a husband to marry. They are taught that they will have this one magical day where everything is for them and it will be perfect. They are taught that this one single day is the most important moment of their entire lives. Women are taught that that they must marry and have children, preferably in that order, to have meaningful and fulfilling lives. In its inception, marriage was the patriarchy's way of creating a legal system where women were bound to, and completely dependent upon their husbands. Women brought with them a dowry, and became domestic servants and childbearing machines. Many were unable to escape, even in the case of abuse, and punished if they acted in a way deemed inappropriate by their husbands.

Today I know women who are in happy, loving, and fulfilling marriages where they maintain equal responsibilities with their husbands. I also know intelligent women who come home from work to do laundry and dishes, and homework with the kids, while their husbands fuck around on the internet. Over thousands of years, society has created and continues to perpetuate unequal roles for cisgendered heterosexual couples, but you do not have to participate. Do not sacrifice your individuality, or accept a bad marriage to perpetuate this failing legacy. Do not legally bind yourself to an individual who does not view you as an equal. If you chose to marry, do it on your terms.

I have been to several Catholic wedding ceremonies over the last few years where I have feigned interest, attempting to conceal my infinitely rolling eyes as I listened to the multiple readings about how to be a subservient wife. I suspect other traditional ceremonies are similar. Many religions will tell you that a woman's most important role is to care for her husband and children. Men are never asked to alter behavior, to adopt a foreign name and identity. I have hope that the recent Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage will have a lasting affect of the institution of marriage, challenging gender roles and how children are raised.

Today, however, expectations are still very different for all women. Society tells us we must act and speak a certain way. We must always maintain "femininity" and conduct ourselves in a "lady like" manner, while simultaneously not allowing our raging emotions to rule our decision-making. We are "bitches" if we speak frankly. Regardless of how intelligent or thoughtful our comments, we are constantly undermined and talked over. Don't make the mistake of believing that anything feminine is weak and that to be successful you must abandon all of the attributes associated with womanhood. The patriarchy harms men as well, and conversely, men should not fall into the trap that they must be detached and unemotional. Do not let society tell you how you should act or look. It's taken a long time, but now I love wearing five inch heels, which elevate me to approximately six foot three. Instead of shame, I take pleasure in towering over almost everyone. I have long hair and wear dresses and too much eyeliner. I also am covered in traditional tattoos and have hairy armpits. You don't have to wear lipstick, but if you want to, own it. Do whatever the fuck you want. There is not one right way to look, as long as you are happy in yourself.

I once had a conversation around the dinner table with my well meaning but traditional Italian American stepfather about when it was ok to use the word "pussy." (In case you were wondering: when you're talking about a cat or an actual vagina, never in a derogatory fashion to describe weakness). I sometimes get texts that ask, "Am I allowed to say _____." I can tell that sometimes he thinks I'm being overly sensitive, but I don't care. Do not let people talk to you in ways that make you uncomfortable. Demand respect.

CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE. RECOGNIZE AND EMBRACE INTERSECTIONALITY.

Especially if you're white, cisgendered, heterosexual, and living above the poverty line. While achieving some truly momentous accomplishments, the feminist movement of the 1960s and 70s was full of white, cisgendered, heterosexual and privileged women who excluded and degraded the experiences of other women. See the value in what other people have faced. You cannot separate feminist struggles from other social issues like poverty, racism, the cost of college through corporatization, or salary equality. Women as a whole make less per dollar than men, yet white women still drastically out-earn women of color. Everything is connected.

Do not blame other women and do not participate in behavior that tears other women apart. The patriarchy thrives on it. Acknowledge and fight against rape culture and oppressive standards of beauty. Help teach young men not to rape, not women how to protect themselves from it. Create safe spaces to have honest conversations. I found that when I became more vocal about my struggles with the patriarchy and with my position as a part time adjunct college instructor, my students, both men and women, opened up and began having conversations about their personal struggles in school and in life. Don't hate other women because they make choices different from your own. Some women want marriage and children. Some do not. Some love other women. Some were born with a sex they do not identify with. All can be feminist.

Be inclusive. Do not dismiss others because they don't fully understand your struggle or the goals of feminism. Stop apologizing and claim your feminism. As a college instructor, I work with so many young men and women who believe in equality for the sexes but are scared to call themselves feminist. I speak with so many individuals who wholeheartedly believe that the word feminist translates to "man hater."

During a panel discussion about the function of feminism in contemporary art at NYU Florence, a male student asked if there was a role for men in the feminist movement, to which I answered, "Yes. Of course." His question was genuine and I immediately regretted not taking it more seriously. After the discussion, I spent some time talking with him about what he can do to support equality. Men are not the enemy, the patriarchy is.



Jessica Caponigro
Untitled (W.I.T.C.H.), 2015
Screen print on paper, wood,
hydrangea.

EDUCATE YOURSELF. GET ANGRY. AND DO SOMETHING.

Learn the history of feminism, both the good and the bad. Women have had the right to vote in America for less than a century. Educating yourself will infuriate you. Which is good. We need you to be angry. Surround yourself with strong and active women, in real life and in books, movies, and music.² In high school my bedroom walls weren't covered with images of male teen heartthrobs. They were covered with pictures of Kathleen Hanna with "slut" scrawled across her chest. It made me a better person. Talk to other women and men about your difficulties. You'll be surprised how many are experiencing similar things. It's equal parts depressing and comforting to know you're not alone.

Remember the past and how far we've come, but also how easy it now is for old white men to legislate away our rights. As I'm writing this, Planned Parenthood, a non-profit organization that provides millions of women and men with quality health care is under attack and being threatened with defunding. Every year, hundreds of bills (332 in the first quarter of 2015 alone) are proposed by state legislatures that attempt to restrict a woman's right to control her own body.

Our bodies are not safe. I have been in situations abroad where I was amazed at the level of respect afforded to women, yet I can barely walk a block in Chicago without a man yelling something at me from a car window or following me to make some judgment about my body. I've also been in situations abroad where I've felt threatened simply for being a woman. I want to live in a world where I can go an entire day without being catcalled a single time. I want to feel safe walking alone at night. I don't want to have to wear headphones to stop men from hitting on me while waiting for the train. Pretending you are safe is not only denial, it is dangerous. When UN peacekeepers are being accused of sexual misconduct and colleges do not investigate claims of rape without also investigating how many sexual partners a woman has had, you are not safe. When Donald Trump's lawyer claims it's legally impossible to rape your wife, you are not safe. It wasn't until 1993 when laws were passed that acknowledge the possibility of spousal rape. On an average day in America, more than three women are killed by their husband or boyfriend. In Chicago, domestic abuse is five times more likely to affect woman than the most prevalent communicable disease.

Speak up for those who do not yet have the courage to speak up for themselves. I was once on a train sitting across from five college age women. A man sat

down next to them, and began touching the edges of one of their long dresses. I watched, waiting for her to stand up, to yell, to do anything. She was trying to ignore him, but as his hand got higher and higher up her leg, I saw something in her face that made me cringe. I looked that man straight in the eye, and said, "Hey. Stop." Truthfully, there was a moment where I was terrified, but after flashing me a dirty look, he got up and switched cars. The young woman never acknowledged what was happening, either to me or to her friends, though it would have been impossible for them to not realize what was happening. Women are taught to remain quiet and that they are strong enough to suffer in silence. If you see someone who does not have the ability, be their voice. My partner worries about my safety constantly, not because he doesn't think I'm capable of handling myself, but because he knows how little respect some people have for women. I've been given the finger and called a terrorist at a counter protest of Anti Choice abortion activists. I've had men grab me in bars, then get angry when I tell them that's unacceptable. I've had college age men lunge at me in my classroom when I tell them to clean up after themselves. And I've gotten off very easy compared to other women.

Learn when to be angry. If I became furious every time I was objectified while running an errand, watching, as a man looked me up and down, I wouldn't have time to breath. I do, however, really enjoy meeting their gaze with a dirty look. I try my best not to get angry when the security guard at my school calls me sweetheart or a student calls me doll. I do however, make sure they know that the way they are addressing me is sexist and totally unacceptable. Don't be afraid to stand up to microaggressions. You may find that sexist tendencies are so ingrained in both men and women that they don't realize how their negative behavior affects others. Prepare for the eye rolls and being accused of "man hating" or being a feminist "kill joy." I look forward to a day when I don't have to defend my choice to not see a sexist movie, listen to sexist band, or support companies that engage in sexist behavior.

Do not expect things to change immediately. Change takes time, constant work and an unbelievable amount of patience. But we're at a vital point. Rights, especially those associated with abortion are being taken away in a horrifyingly rapid fashion. Give money to Planned Parenthood. March to bring attention to rape culture. Protest against Anti Choice hate groups, with their disgusting photoshopped signs, and so called crisis pregnancy centers that prey on vulnerable women and spread lies. Volunteer to escort women into abortion clinics. The easiest and perhaps most important thing you can do is openly and loudly discuss your opinions, experiences, and beliefs. No one, especially the old white men in power, is going to just give it away. We're going to have to take it.

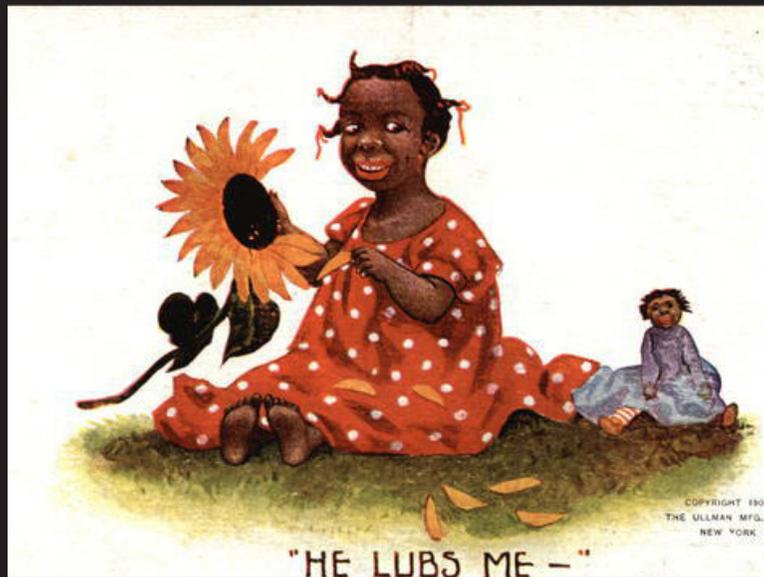
TRIPLE THREAT: TO BE BLACK, FEMALE, AND EDUCATED- ON VISIBILITY, BLACK GIRLS WITH DAISIES, AND THE 276 MISSING NIGERIAN SCHOOLGIRLS

ALEXANDRIA EREGBU

HE LOVES ME, HE LOVES ME NOT

Daisies are a reoccurring symbol that have appeared in my work since 2010-- typically in the form of paying some sort of tribute or memorializing to a specific memory or a moment in time. When I think about the symbolic nature of (white) daisies, it is almost impossible, in my mind, to separate them from conversations surrounding childhood, innocence, purity, love, sexuality, and the patriarchal gaze. As a kid I remember picking daisies in my neighborhood and playing the "He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not" game amongst my friends to discover if our male childhood crushes loved us. The game was superfluous and quite banal, but I recall always getting excited about the encounter of a daisy and the opportunity to uncover "the truth" about he who held my heart.

Predation and the patriarchal gaze has been habitually and familiarly linked to the way that we are often presented with (and asked to decipher) the representation of young females, especially that of young black women and children. In the case of the United States, we may witness this structure of power and oppression in the form of white supremacy. Historically, black children have been represented as perverse, dirty, wild, and undesirable. Pickaninnies¹-- the antebellum term for black children, who tend to be illustrated as unkempt, socially vulgar, and hyper-sexualized characters, were often targets of violence for their "primitive" behavior and repeatedly juxtaposed with animals, nudity, and punishment¹. Sometimes they were even paired with a subject who represented the "good example" for the wild child-- usually some "respectable Negro" character or an innocently portrayed white woman.



1. The pickaninny is an anti-Black caricature of children. They are "child coons," with the same physical characteristics. Pickaninnies have bulging eyes, big red lips, and they speak in a primitive, stereotypical dialect. They are often shown stuffing their wide mouths with watermelon or chicken, which they usually stole. They are unkempt, suggesting that

their parents are neglectful. Very often they are shown nude, a level of sexualization that is particularly troubling due to their age. It is not uncommon to see images of Black girls pregnant. Pickaninnies are often dehumanized to an extreme not seen with any other caricature. They are equated with animals. They are the targets of violence.

For several years now, I have been observing these images of pickaninny girls with daisies-- an image that has reoccurred between 1893 and 1970 in the popularly collected (and culturally offensive) Black Americana postcards. These images often paired young black girls participating in the "He Loves Me/He Loves Me Not" game with their thoughts depicted from the song as subtext-- usually misspelled or in improper grammar. This detail becomes crucially important to understanding how illiteracy (and thus, uneducated) portrayals of black females support systems of oppression for women of color-- both in the West (particularly the United States) and beyond.

The plucking of the petals from these daisies, (which I am choosing to read here as quasi-symbols for innocence, youth, and love) become a significant, yet subversive gesture that unveils a visibility of the patriarchal gaze towards young black women. It suggests that at any given point, there is a potential for looking from a potential voyeur. This "He Loves Me/He Loves Me Not" act, for me, serves as a reflexive moment where the subject or petal plucker is made aware of her desirability (or lack thereof) to her male suitor. What this moment also implicates is a certain dependency for the female subject to be visible or seen under the male eye. In the case of the pickaninny, however, this desperation is usually in vain because her "primitive" (poor and uneducated) and "ugly" (black) ways are never palatable enough for the white male subject-- therefore inherently leading her at the subjugation of mortality or a hopeless death.

FAST FORWARD ABOUT 50 YEARS

On April 14th in 2014, 276 female students were kidnapped during their physics test from the Government Secondary School in the town of Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria. Around 50 of the school girls escaped leaving 219 young women unaccounted for. The girls were targeted by the Islamic extremist group, Boko Haram: whose name means "Western education is sinful"-- an explicit message to those who engage in Western education, that they will reap serious repercussions. The young women have yet to be found, however last April, when we met the one year anniversary of the missing girls, it was said that it is safe to assume that the girls were married off to soldiers and allies of the Boko Haram army or dead.

Here in the United States, the social and political climate for young black women has proven itself equally horrendous. On July 13th of 2015, 28 year-old Sandra Bland was found dead and hanged in her cell at Waller County Texas Jail. Allegedly pulled over for a "wrong turning signal," Bland was arrested and held overnight at the county jail. Two days and several incongruent and suspicious videos later, we were told that Bland had "committed suicide" in her cell due to a heavily self-induced dosage of marijuana-- right.

Both of these accounts beg the question: Why are young, black, and educated women so threatening to society? Why are we so constantly shamed #SerenaWilliams, shunned #AssataShakur, and silenced #SandraBland when we are consistently at the vanguard of culture in society? Why is it that at the moment a woman recognizes her own independence from a man, her own agency, her own autonomy, that her vitality is almost always at risk or at stake?

Sandra Bland could have become a food scientist, a veterinarian, a horticulturist, a professor. The Chibok girls could have gone on to be doctors, lawyers, activists. They could have led full and accomplished lives. They could have exercised their right to choose to raise a family. They could have traveled. They could have loved. They could have experienced their final years in joy. I look at myself, reflect on my life and compare it to Bland's-- similarly having gone through college, similarly raised in Illinois, similarly volunteering and interning several years after school, similarly working in mentorship, similarly enjoying the arts. I think about the Chibok girls and how if my Nigerian Christian father had at some point decided to move us from the States, that perhaps my story could have ended up very differently.

Behold the Invisible, (For the Missing 276) has been the mediator of a very fragile space in my life right now. I chose to recreate the daisy because it seemed to symbolically carry the weight for these conversations that feel intensely pertinent and urgent at this moment. Their black color represent resilience. Their waxy surface command sensitivity. Their beaded centers elicit care. I often wonder about the future of black women in America and beyond. I look at the Black Lives Matter movement and see the masses of black women at the forefront of these conversations--- relentlessly and unapologetically supporting their brothers, sons, friends, and lovers who have passed and protecting the lives of those who haven't so that they, too may see another day.



I scroll through my newsfeeds, my Facebook, my Instagram, and take note of the lack of young black women and children (including the trans and self-identified) represented in these movements and campaigns. They, too are violently and rapidly dying. Who will rally for them? Who will protect them? Do black women's lives actually matter? Do their bodies only remain relevant as long as they continue to be child-bearers and mothers? Do I really have to carry another man's child in order to be fucking seen? Does my bachelorette status compromise my livelihood? Does such a refusal put black women's protection and safety at risk? I love black women. We need each other. I think about sisterhood and how integral this solidarity has been to my personal wellness and mental health. This is the only thing I truly know and believe. I am constantly drowning in anxiety and fear. I have a lot of questions. I have hope, but I'd be lying if I said it wasn't slowly dwindling.
To be continued.

URANIAN LOVE SANDALS

DANNY ORENDORFF

A PREFACE

Some time ago, I stopped using the terms ‘queer’ and ‘queerness’ in favor of the terms ‘non-normative’ or ‘non-normativity’ in my curatorial and scholarly work. I did so in the wake of certain social and cultural developments that *too* closely align or collapse ‘queer’ identity with, simply, gay and lesbian identity – and sometimes, though less frequently, with trans identity.

If you’re reading this, I should hope that by now you’ve become familiar with terms like homonormativity, homonationalism, gay-racism, transmisogyny, cissexim, and pink-washing. If you haven’t, look them up already.

Let’s face it, I know a lot more straight, cisgender anticapitalists that live lives and hold politics way more ‘queer’ than many of the so-called ‘queers’ I know that claim the term simply because of their sex-life and then leverage the term’s academic, artistic, and cultural currency towards their own individual and private benefits.

To me, queerness is meant to be counterpoint, is meant to be sideways, up-side-down, and otherwise to the status quo. It does not want to belong, should not belong, refuses to belong. It dissents, it invents, it imagines, and it is resourceful. This is what lends it its radical, willful, and ever so necessary critical capacities, if we can claim ‘queerness’ to have any.

From the artwork, the activism, the writing, and the actual life experiences of non-normative individuals, especially the angry and poetic ones, we see the systems that surround us anew. We are informed, we are broadened, we are pushed outside of ourselves. We are made angry. We experience poetry.

We are also made to see alternatives. For, if ‘queerness’ is to have any usefulness to me today, I want it to teach me how to live life otherwise. How to be generous, how to be communal, how to be selfless.

And, so, I look for models. I seek ancestors. I seek solutions to my own life in the lives of those who lived boldly, furiously, madly against the norms that prescribe, confine, separate, and sometimes kill.

A POEM

*And I will be the plain ungarnished facts of life, with continual nearness;
The train arriving at the station shall not be nearer or more solid; nor the
 lifting and transporting of boxes and goods; nor the grasp of the handles
to them that open and shut the doors.
I will be the ground underfoot and the common clay;
The ploughman shall turn me up with his plough-share among the roots of the
 twitch in the sweet-smelling furrow;
The potter shall mould me, running his finger along my whirling edge (we will
 be faithful to one another, he and I);
The bricklayer shall lay me: he shall tap me into place with the handle of his
 trowel;
And to him I will utter the word which with my lips I have not spoken.
- Edward Carpenter
Excerpt, Towards Democracy, 1883*

A PIONEER

Written in a style directly influenced by free-verse pioneer Walt Whitman, *Towards Democracy* is a poetic novel-la by the late Victorian-era labor rights activist, first wave Feminist, Uranian poet, and vegetarian sandal-maker Edward Carpenter. Containing dense references to nature, eco-spiritualism, manual labor, homoerotic affection, and Socialist ideals, *Towards Democracy* is Carpenter's often meandering and associative diary of utopian longing. His thoughts were published primarily in poetic or abstract form in such works as the aforementioned *Towards Democracy*, *Chants of Labour* (1888), and *Civilization: Its Causes and Cure* (1889). Carpenter's thoughts would quickly turn, however, towards issues of women's rights and homosexual rights, what at the time was being referred to as 'Uranian,' 'Invert,' or 'Homogenic' issues, in his Free Society series of texts published in 1894 (including *Homogenic Love and It's Place in Free Society*, *Sex Love and It's Place in a Free Society*, and *Marriage in Free Society*).

Later, he would pen, *Love's Coming of Age*, a piece primarily focused on women's issues published in association with Olive Schreiner, Edith Lees, and Kate Salt, all early Feminist friends of Carpenter's, in 1896. Eventually penning over 30 treatises exploring the interrelationships of class-prejudice, women's and gay's sexual oppression, pastoralism, and Socialism, both the radicality and breadth of Carpenter's literary output cannot be understated when considering the repressive Victorian political climate in which he operated - comprised of mass-industrialization, emergent commercialism, colonial projects, rampant disease, persecution of sexual dissidents, impending war, and extreme class-biased poverty.

Situated as he is at the beginnings, the cusps, the *whirling edges*, of political, cultural, and sexual movements that would later manifest internationally in myriad forms, Carpenter arrives to us today or, rather, we receive him - we being those of us reading or writing this essay in 2015 - as an amorphous amalgamation of texts and images, paintings and sculptures, ephemera and architecture, maps and travelogues, that form, or not, into some always incomplete, multiply mediated historical object.

Arguably, the most iconic image of Carpenter was taken in 1905 [Fig. 1] at his rural homestead in Millthorpe, where he lived and worked as a market-gardener, from 1883, along with his lover, George Merrill. They were in Millthorpe until the First World War displaced them to Guildford, Surrey, around 1914. Carpenter appears to us standing surrounded by foliage in the doorway of one of his cottages, hand in pocket, deep in thought. His signature grey beard and full head of hair is covered by a thick felt sunhat he had taken to wearing to protect his skin. Smartly dressed in a warm wool suit-jacket, complete with pocket-square and tie, over a crisp linen blouse tucked into pinstriped trousers that suddenly come to a cinch just below the knee; upon his feet Carpenter is wearing his own handmade leather and wood sandals over a pair of knee-high socks.

I find him incredibly attractive. However, my attraction to Edward Carpenter is by no simple means merely visual or based only upon reception of this particular image I describe. It is, instead, conditioned by how I perceive (or, I might as well say *imagine*) Carpenter historically: how I consider myself as having gotten to know him through reading his poetry and autobiography, how I perceive myself perceiving him erotically through reading second-hand published accounts of his sexual liaisons, and how I locate my own political, social, and sexual situated-ness in relationship to Carpenter's personal legacy of activist work performed over a century ago.

In short, I experience my own attraction to Carpenter as a slow process of sensual apprehension, a feeling I'm attempting to consider (though, perhaps I am wrong) as temporally-proximal and physically-distal. What does it mean for me, writing as a critic and historian, to become aroused by stories of Carpenter's sexual escapades? What does it mean for me, writing as a critic and historian, to become excited by Carpenter's political longings and Socialist dreams? How do my own feelings of sexual arousal and political excitement differ from normative feelings associated with the slow sensual apprehension of a sandal-wearing, sun-worshipping, banana-munching, vegetarian, homosexual Socialist? With what academic resources or scholarly concepts can I validate or incorporate my feelings of sexual arousal and political excitement as part of my interpretation of and appreciation for Carpenter: his body, his clothing, his sandals, his homestead, his poetry, his activism, and his legacy?

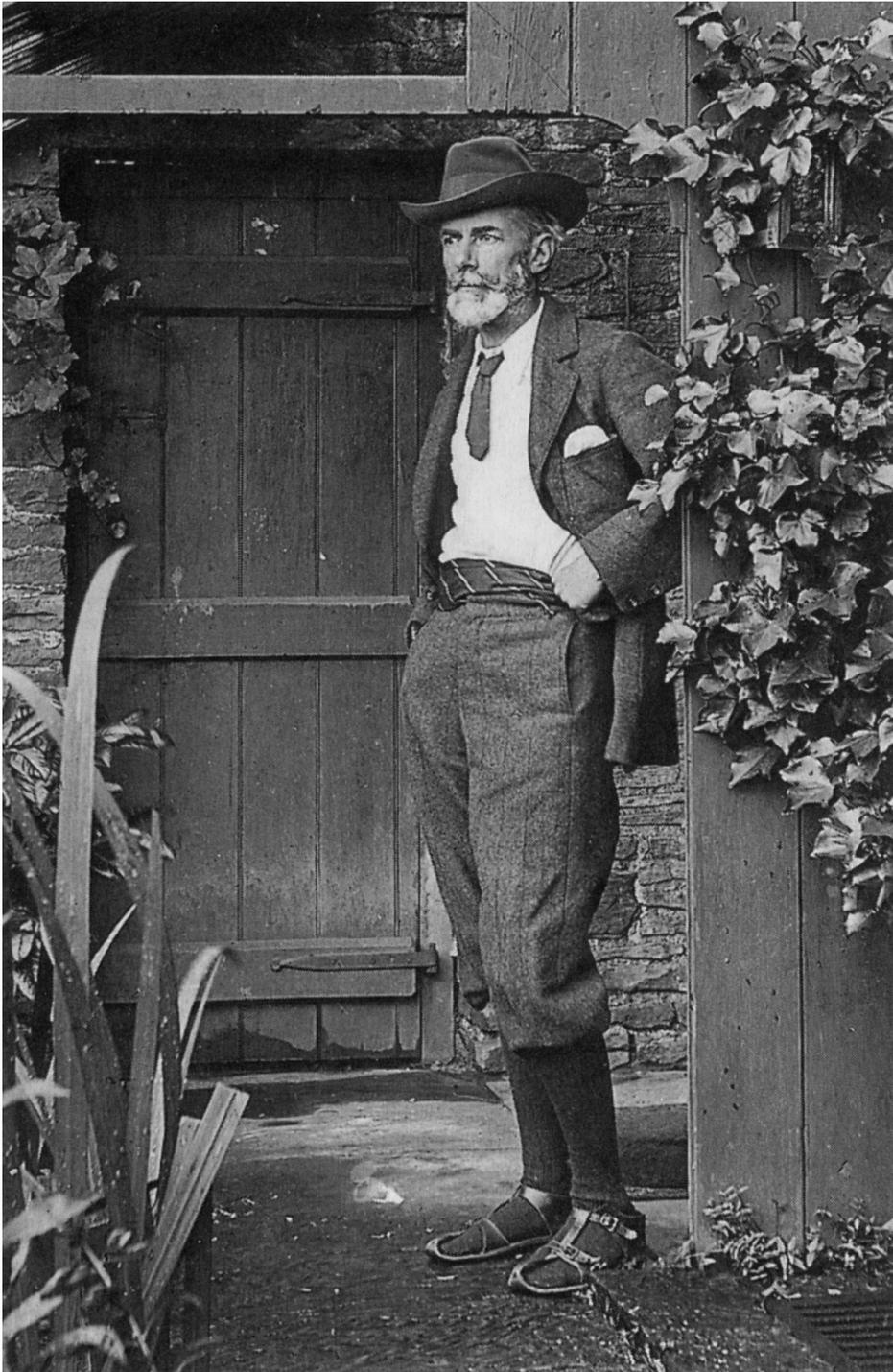


Figure 1 : Image of Edward Carpenter

In short, I could say, that Edward Carpenter gives me a good feeling, or that I receive the historical object of Edward Carpenter with good feelings.

The poet Allen Ginsberg, in an interview with Thomas Clark for the *Paris Review* in 1966, speaks of his own sensual apprehension of paintings by Paul Cézanne, the poetry of William Blake, and the haiku of Kobayashi Issa in explicitly erotic terms;

*O ant
crawl up Mount Fujiyama,
but slowly, slowly.*

"Now you have the small ant and you have Mount Fujiyama and you have the slowly, slowly, and what happens is that you feel almost like...a cock in your mouth! You feel this enormous space-universe, it's almost a tactile thing. Well anyway, it's a phenomenon-sensation, phenomenon hyphen sensation, that's created by this little haiku of Issa, for instance."

For Ginsberg, the apprehension of Issa's haiku is complimented with perceived sensual feelings that actually 'fill in' the space between the word/images Issa has written and the word/images Ginsberg reads/speaks.

Carpenter may very well have experienced a sensation similar to Ginsberg in his apprehension of Walt Whitman as a young homosexual, aspiring poet, and avid reader. As relayed by astrologer, author and early Gay Liberation activist Gavin Arthur in his sexual-memoir *The Circle of Sex*, published in 1966, Carpenter is quoted as saying about his sexual contact with

Whitman;

*"Oh, yes - once in a while - he regarded it as the best way to get together with another man. He thought that people should "know" each other on the physical and emotional plane as well as the mental. And that the best part of comrade love was that there was no limit to the number of comrades one could have..."*²

- Edward Carpenter, as relayed by Gavin Arthur

Set into motion by poetic admiration or activist affiliation, these erotic encounters make literal a lineage of gay male cultural transmission and contact, or constitute what the historian Jonathan Ned Katz has called "a fabulous, historic daisy chain."³ That chain would then extend to Ginsberg, who upon realization that he had shared beat poet Neal Cassady as a lover with Arthur, felt himself as steward of a 'mythological' poetic/erotic lineage.

A CONCLUSION

Carpenter may very well be the originator of an embodiment we might consider as the shoe-less, or sandal-wearing, homosexual Socialist activist. In Late Victorian society, and even amongst the pastoral village of Millthorpe where he lived in relative seclusion with his lover and selected guests, Carpenter's wearing of sandals would have made a statement, both in terms of gender and of politics.

'Sandal-wearing folk,' cultural critic Paul Laity describes, provoked feelings, as they arguably do now, of 'wooly-headed naivety, moral superiority, and worthy bohemianism - certainly a world beyond the values of the mythical 'real' England of ordinariness and decency"⁴ The footwear may also have invoked a relaxed attitude towards how a worker should appear, an "Orientalism" with regards to sun-worship and the outdoors, or, most provocatively, a certain sense of disruptive anachronism, or "temporal drag."

With extensive detail in his (outrageous) book on foot-fetishism and footwear, *The Sex Life of the Foot and Shoe*, published in 1977, historian William A. Rossi writes that the sandal 'dates back at least 6,000 years' and it is, indeed, an obvious feature of Mesopotamian and Greco/Roman art forms. Etymologically, continues Rossi;

*Its word root is from sans, meaning a board of leather to which a simple thong was attached to hold it onto the foot. Sometimes, a tiny, irritable pebble or grains of sand would wedge between the board and the foot. The Latin word for small, sharp pebble is scrupulus. The Romans compared the pricking of one's conscious with having a pebble in one's sandal - which gave birth to our own word 'scruple.'*⁵

Literally defined, a 'scruple' is a "feeling of doubt or hesitation with regard to the morality or propriety of a course of action."⁶ Carpenter was a man of sandals, and of scruples. A scruple is a bad feeling. Constantly in sandals, Carpenter was constantly made aware of bad feelings.

What would it feel like for me, as a young writer and activist, to wear a pair of Carpenter's sandals? Would it provide me with the kind of sensual contact with Carpenter I perceive as otherwise being unavailable to

1. Ginsberg, Allen. Excerpts re: Cézanne from "An Interview from the Paris Review [1966]" in Dorothy Wolfberg, Scott Burton, and John Tarburton, eds., *Exploring the ARts* (New York: Visual Arts Press, 1969), p. 121

2. Carpenter, Edward, excerpts re: Whitman from "Splendor in the Leaves of Grass: Tracing the Links in a Historic Daisy Chain [1990]" in Jonathan Ned Katz, author, *Advocate* (January 2, 1990), p. 40-41

3. Katz, Jonathan Ned. "Splendor in the Leaves of Grass: Tracing the Links in a Historic Daisy Chain." *Advocate* (January 2, 1990).

4. Laity, Paul. p. 28

5. Rossi, William A. *The Sex Life of the Foot and Shoe*. Great Britain: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1977. p. 87

6. "Scruple." Merriam-Webster. Ed. 11. 2003.

me, due to the perceived lack of membership possibilities in the historic daisy chain Ginsberg describes? Rarified as they probably are at this point, any actual surviving sandals of Carpenter's would likely be stored in a museum somewhere and presented to me on a pedestal or in a vitrine; casting my body as a spectator or consumer of the historic objects, leaving me to only imagine myself wearing them - just as a shopper imagines themselves in the clothing hanging upon dress-forms.

No.

Consuming them as a spectator would be entirely antithetical to Carpenter's aesthetic principles and political affiliations. Even a biological or a physiological reception of the objects would not adequately do justice to a complete apprehension of the sandals or of Carpenter, the person who made them, the person whose labor I honor.

I should, therefore, make a pair of my own, for myself, and by hand. I'll do that. Perhaps then, and only then, would obtainment of the Uranian love sandals be fulfilling emotionally, intellectually, and sensually, in the exact way Carpenter always imagined for us workers.

SOME NOTES ON BEING AND THE VOID

DANNY GILES

0

The body is a text, we know this. Also that the utterance or inscription (evidence of seeing) is its making and its erasure. I'm already gone. But, the politics of my life (*Black Life Matters*; *Matter of Black*; *All Blackness Matters*) does not have to be the politics of my death. In being seen we become known. That is, we are boxed up within the salutation; packed up like the thing that can be said to be a "thing" so far as it is marked as such through its own interests, origins, faiths, practices and modes of knowing and being known. I read from myself. Several lines from a bio. Spilling out from the pages is all you need to know to fix me. I try to give you just enough, but I'm already penned. What would it mean to abstain? Or at least to elude the immediacy of these signifying effects? Because we're made up of history and that which is not but nothing, the thing we were wanting to show you, tell you. One half, militant, kind of, super, queer, criminal, black, cis, that, one quarter, german/irish/cherokee, privileged, this, well adjusted, interested in, poly, part, brown, brownish.

What does it mean to be blanked-out and voided? What does it feel like to be blank and void?

1

On July 17, 2014, Eric Garner died in Staten Island, New York City, after a police officer put him in what has been described as a "chokehold" for about 15 to 19 seconds during an arrest¹. In the moments directly preceding his extrajudicial murder he, by being black in public, was already blanked out as, in the eyes of drones, not human, without subjectivity, standing in obstruction to the mechanized machinations of anti-blackness

2

Arthur Jafa describes in his essay *My Black Death* the "inconceivability of the black body to the white imagination" in the context of the white world's misapprehension of African sculpture at the dawn of Modernism. Jafa argues that in understanding the widely circulated "primitive" African objects as mere abstractions of human form, the representation of humanity is again read through the primacy of whiteness. When white Europeans encountered these objects, they did not see themselves reflected within the masterfully crafted sculptural visages. Instead, over-emphasizing *abstraction* as the defining character African sculpture presented a way to contain and police representational boundaries and to deny the range of expressiveness found in African works. The ontological break agitated by African sculpture illuminates a kind of black horror wherein a representation of humanity that does not reflect the image of whiteness and so frustrates identification and inspires fear that must be assuaged by deeming its visual forms totally other, abstracted instead of "real". Jafa offers that in studying Picasso's *Demaiselles d'Avignon* as an image formed out of both West African sculpture and the ethnographic photography of Edward Fortier, the very introduction of the black figure within European Modernism held riotous consequences for the ontology of Modernism, by displacing the white cannon and invigorating it with new life.

Jafa goes on to recount his initial experiences and subsequent musings on the repressed "anxiety ridden preoccupation with blackness" within the Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001 A Space Odyssey*:

"2001's obsession with/suppression of blackness is atypical of the genre only with respect to the elegance of its construction. And who could possibly fully disentangle the clusterfuck of racism (and sexism) that's typical of classic science fiction and its retarded offspring, science fiction films? *2001* is about the fear of genetic annihilation, fear of blackness. (Black rage, Black Power, Black Panthers, black planet, black dick, etc.) White phallic objects (starships move through all-encompassing blackness (space from one white point (stars) to another. This fear of space, this horror vacui, is a fear of contamination, a contamination of white being by black being which, by the very nature of the self-imposed fragile ontological construction of white being, equals the annihilation of white being"² (Jafa 254).



Danny Giles
Visitor, 2015.
MDF, spray paint, dolly

We might productively read the monolith, "2001's" brooding sublimated symbol of blackness, into Angelina Morrison's art historical intervention within the discourse of the monochrome as her situation of the blank pictorial ground within the drama of the western phallogocentric consciousness bears likeness to Jafa's depiction of white fear. Morrison compares the ambiguity of the monochrome with the endemic doubt attached to the identification of a mixed race body within the binary logic of America's racial epistemologies.

Morrison explains, "Phallic readings are characterized by an insistent avoidance of the fact that the optical surface of monochrome presents the spectator with something illegible." Her analogy to Willie Collin's story of the *Woman in White* could accurately be applied as a description of Kubrick's obelisk: "the destabilizing effects of the mad desire-to-know that it creates, its simultaneous qualities of high visibility and total *illegibility*, its eternal trickery of the reader by eluding interpretation-- make it an apt analogy for the blank space of the monochrome surface within the story western Art History." "The subject of Mixed Race," Morrison continues, "understood for the purposes of this argument as both black and white, who lives in a society structured by the foundational binary 'Black/White', can also be said to contain a 'Secret' in much the same way as she can be said to have been 'blanked' -- (a)voided, rendered invisible and inaudible." The epistemological disruption that is signaled by the recurrence of the monochrome throughout Western art history is analogous to the liminal racial space occupied by the subject who is neither black or white, or whose performance of race does not adhere to dominant narratives.³

3

Maybe in the (almost) blank surface of the monochrome we may find an aesthetic reflection of what David Joselit describes as the (unrepresentable) "hole"⁴ of the body and the image. That is, the mercurial space beyond the reach of representation, a "threshold" where those like Eric Garner exist outside of and unrecognized by of the dominant order. Like the monochrome, the "hole" refuses the address of the gaze and interlocutory address of whiteness in its own abnegation of recognition of black subjectivity. It is from this very (under)privileged position that blackness must necessarily perform its refusal of the terms of the political. What Fred Moten and Stefano Harney call *The Undercommons*.⁵ This "insinuating force" must be felt, as the dominant order can never really *know* it. It is a feeling that surrounds, forgoing recognition in favor of an affective *beyond*, where we (the dispossessed, the blanked), find each other beneath the phallogocentric gaze of whiteness. The shape of this position is necessarily ridden with ambivalence and anxiety, as its purpose is to constantly revise and renew itself as a subject, rather than an object of history. The space beyond representation, where individual bodies assume many and varied meanings and expressions, is where we find refuge, determined to evade the reductions of language.

4

Rachel Dolezal, the now infamous former head of the NAACP in Washington State, presents one such epistemological horror, as her racial drag (or "trans-racial" embodiment) frustrates our available language to define and categorize her socially. She is both a traitor to the white race and a hijacker of blackness. Like the various "fallback theories" Morrison cites in her breakdown of "Phallic Consciousness", we witness media pundits strain to identify the logic of Dolezal's refusal of whiteness and appropriation of blackness. As Dolezal exists within a system that does not compute indeterminacy, her performance promises illegibility. We can see Dolezal, but we cannot see through her. Her vampiric whiteness has driven her propulsion into blackness with its consumptive edge. But what if we consider her performance as not only vampiric, but also *sincere*? What if we choose to see intent and not simply the objects of racist demarcations of subjectivity? We would have to admit that we do not see through Dolezal and that, as Badia Sahar Ahdad puts it, "people are not simply racial objects (to be verified from without) but racial subjects with an interiority that is never completely and unquestionably clear."

5

If Whiteness is the mirror, reflecting all other subjects back at themselves and preserving the ubiquitous and invisible subject position of the settler, then Blackness is the hole. Blackness is absorbent in this dialectic opposition to the mirror; it expands to accommodate all the refugees at its shores; shipped on the white gaze; that buoyant conveyer, an alien character crafted in capital, crafted for capital, the construction of capital. you *know* I matter. My literal matter has always constituted and essentially defined relations of capital to power since its original meaning in this country was currency first and citizenship later. The only other thing that defines "Man"⁷ in our social mythos, other than what he does, is what he owns. In the absence of space to reflect, the mirror is mute and blank.

0.

Why are you looking at me? You looked straight into my eyes. Why did you look? You didn't just see me, you *looked* at me. Your look *had* me. Your look stole me. What's your name? Where are you headed? Don't look at me. Don't look. I see you. I saw you. I'm sorry I didn't see you. *I thought he was...* Don't look. Keep going. Get out. Get out now. He is definitely... I will light you up. I will light you up.

1. "Did the NYPD Let Eric Garner Die? Video Shows Police Ignored Pleas to Help Him After Chokehold". Democracy Now. December 5, 2014.

2. Arthur Jafa, "My Black Death", "Everything but the Burden: What Whites are Taking from Black Culture" ed. Greg Tate, 2003

3. Angeline Morrison, "Liminal Blankness: Mixing Race and Space in Monochrome's Psychic Surface", 2002

4. David Joselit, "Material Witness", Art Forum, Feb. 2015

5. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, "The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study," 2013

6. Badia Sahar Ahdad, "Racial Sincerity and the Biracial Body in Danzy Senna's *Caucasia*", "Freud Upside Down: African American Literature and Psychoana-

lytic Culture", 2010. Ahdad references discusses Senna's *Caucasia* using John L. Jackson Jr. and Hotense Spillers' concepts of "racial sincerity" and "interior intersubjectivity". These writers privilege readings of the subject's self-articulation of identity as unfixed and continuously shifting. Ahdad states: "Interior intersubjectivity as a mode of racial subject formation does not function in opposition to social and cultural formations, but is produced from them. However, the racial subject, while a product of his or her environment, does not have to be defined or confined by it." (134)

7. "Man represents the western configuration of the human as synonymous with the heteromale, white, propertied, and liberal subject that renders all those who do not conform to these characteristics as exploitable nonhumans, literal legal nobodies." Alexander G. Weheliye, "Habeas Viscus", 2014, 135.

SOFIA MORENO

Puto!!

For him was formed first, then "her"

it is my duty to defend my body and gender.
it is my duty to create art and allow the world to hear me.
never ending transition, never ending t r a n s i t i o n.
my body is the remains of a creature with human like
features,
able to mutate and destroy if possible.
a combination between beauty and beast, with god like
qualities
able to create, seduce and destroy.

Sofia Moreno
Puto, 2015.
Performance with earth,
water, lingerie, and detritus.



AN EFFECT OF POWER

MATT MORRIS

"You can see beyond what people want, what they need, and you can choose for yourself... You chose to get ahead. You want this life, those choices are necessary... Don't be ridiculous, Andrea. Everybody wants this; everybody wants to be us."

--Meryl Streep as Miranda Priestly
in the film adaptation of *The Devil Wears Prada*, 2006

Please bear with me when I say that art is an impossibility. I say it standing in an utter non-place, remarking on an approach towards knowability, that is, parsing desire. Within capitalist systems whose politics are weighted in favor of the wealthy and machines of culture that manufacture the subjects who reside inside them, one is further situated within several intersecting 'art worlds.' What brings us to these sites: art fairs, alternative galleries, art schools, collectors' homes? What do we want?

In full acknowledgement of the brutal systemic conditions by which we are produced as operations, I more and more consider the tenuous knowability of what is beyond the thickness of one's desires applied across one's experiences. Whether satisfied or disappointed by the outcomes of one's efforts and engagements with the world, questions arise: How is this the manifestation or result of what I want? Why did I want this to happen? How have I only interacted with projections of my own desires rather than anyone or space outside of myself?

These are not easy questions. They can feel unfair, excite defensiveness, and be dismissed. Asking them does not propose that one controls what transpires nor the feelings generated in response to those events, only to wonder at the possibilities of how one can know the personal stakes that shape the way those experiences matter. The discomfort of these questions worsens when compounded with the contradictions built into one's desires-- how often I find myself wanting several things at once that are apparently at odds with one another. What does it look like for these dissenting desires to be acted upon simultaneously? How are they [subconsciously, usually] hierarchicalized? And how do my actions represent-- as far from obvious a representation though it may be-- a pursuit of what I feel that I want and need?

While reading Leo Bersani recently, I was reminded of an earlier stage of Lacan's theorizations that does not situate the subject within the world, but rather the world within the subject. This would indicate the pernicious apparatuses aforementioned are in fact internalized. This would indicate that one is first of all entangled with oneself, with almost no easy access to knowledge of the figures and structures and worlds beyond the phantasms of one's own longing. An array of "bad objects" has been scattered before the subject by which one orients that sense of self.

An array of bad objects. The art world bears no resemblance to what I thought it was when I decided as a teenager to be an artist. At the time, the art world to which I wanted access was depicted in the music video for the band Sixpence None the Richer's 1999 cover of the 1988 song "There She Goes" by The La's. The song is set in a dreamlike art opening: darkly glamorous, recollective of the 1938 *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*, acoustic and diaristic, gossipy and whimsical, on the verge of collapse. Listed thus, this is an alluring delusion that persists, a mirage oft conjured to shield transactions of power; economic assets; art histories constructed in the image of the quickest, steepest returns on investments; the ways in which culturally transcendental experiences intended to reach across class and education are merely a byproduct of other, more hidden pursuits-- to shield ego. The incompatibility of these multiple visions of the function of our field results in the non-place at which I began. My teenage dream is not real, and what is real is tantamount to the madness-inducing room beneath the Pentagon Grant Morrison wrote about in his comic series *Doom Patrol*. The former can't and the latter shouldn't exist.

One could ask how the projections of our desires are ordered in relation to one another. If there is some primary matter from which these art worlds are comprised, who most easily gets the undefined, unknown stuff of our field to organize into the shape of his desires? How is art used to attain what someone wants?

But much of the time many participants in art worlds don't get what they want (although this refusal is the achievement of other sorts of desires, perhaps). So in revision: art manages an impossibility. Where I wanted art to exist doesn't exist, and why did I want somewhere that doesn't exist? In other words, when structures of power defer the attainment of what one wants, art serves as a space of fantasy--not solely an alternative to that disappointment but as a kind of work that might reorient, examine, and form the basis of new desires out of those failures to achieve satisfaction.

Interlude

He whimpered when I pulled away before either of us came. His hands slid from my shoulders to cup my elbows and draw me near again. A musky sweet corn smell floated on his skin, as if he'd eaten Fritos on his break; this smell mixed with the residue of my breath on his lips and neck and. Standing a stride's length apart from him in the pitch dark elevator car, I put both legs back into my jeans and the t-shirt that had been pulled up to my chin but not over was adjusted into place. My clothes smelled of oil paint. He was clearly not on a break when we'd crossed paths. I groped over to the elevator's control panel and pressed for what I thought was the fourth floor.

The lights inside the elevator jumped awake. I looked behind me with my right hand still running down the metal plating around the buttons. Tony looked over at me stunned and visibly aroused. His company-issued jacket lay on the floor beside him, tossed off when we first touched. The rest of his attire blossomed around his trim, creamy pallid body; cheap, crunchy Oxford shirt and khakis peeled back off of him, hanging onto his shoulders and ankles, wreathing his trembling frame in beige flaps of his uniform. Swollen, poofy boxers were pushed low down his hips, pulled across his erection. There his stomach, only lightly smattered with hair, sloped lower, and his hips and the cleft between his small buttocks.

The elevator had started moving up, and he knelt hastily not to dress but only to get his wire rimmed glasses, which he'd secured in a pocket when we found each other in this freight elevator. He would need to get back to work, since he already tasted of having a break. We didn't speak as the doors opened and I stepped out. His mouth hung open, and he shown like a sliver of moon in a security guard's outfit.

The next time I saw Tony was the following day when I tapped my I.D. card at the art school's entrance. I felt his longing expression as soon as the front doors opened. He looked quietly worried, waited until our eyes met, and licked his bottom lip. I still had to abide by the security policies by which I accessed my studio space, but that afternoon, power was, at least, more complicated for having screwed around with he who was contracted to surveil and protect me.

We did more together, and he more regularly stood in the doorway of my studio, flirting with me and making conversation with me and my studio mates. His manner of speaking was still over excited, sentences tripping over those before them in a rush to be saying something fantastic. One night while he was not doing the rounds he was sent to do, I was walking to the bathroom and he asked if he could follow. Particularly because I like men in uniforms (even security for hire uniforms) following me, I shrugged consent. He stepped into the bathroom and I stepped up to a urinal to piss.

"There's something I've been wanting to tell you," he began as a stream of urine started to fill the urinal's basin. "I've never told anyone this before and I feel like I can trust you." He was unbuttoning his collar. "Oh, yeah," I said, smiling and wary, "You can tell me whatever you need to." He didn't speak then, and telling was showing. His shirt fully unbuttoned, he turned away from me then let it slide off his shoulders and gather at the cuffs. Across his milky back, long, angry scars ran in wide curls from just below his neck down beyond the waistband of his boxers. He looked like he'd been mauled by an animal. We'd only so far hooked up in dark rooms on campus, and now that seemed more planned than I'd given him credit. What have I gotten myself into?



Portrait of Edra Soto with *sillage* +
Dan Sullivan with *White Queen*
at Finocchio opening reception
Work by Matt Morris

"I made these with my uncle," he twisted at the waist, still pointing his khaki ass in my direction, and in his turn, the whelps on his back spiraled up his form. His eyes were very shiny. I zipped my pants and stood at the other end of the bathroom. "I was really close to him; we were really close. He loves me" Wanting both to hug him and run, I took a step closer and softened my facial expression. "It's not like I didn't want him to do it. I did. I let him do it. I wanted him to." I nodded slowly as if I understood perfectly. I found some little words to acknowledge his sharing, his spoken and demonstrated personal truth. I made my way toward the exit. "I broke up with my girlfriend yesterday," he spoke quietly.

"You what?"

"Yeah, last night. I really wanted to be able to tell you about these parts of me."

When I left the bathroom, I told a couple of my pals that I was finished for the night and suggested we leave and go over to Waffle House for coffee and a late night snack. I started to avoid Tony. I didn't tell him to leave me alone, just exaggerated my mounting deadlines and how my art was suffering from distractions. I was nineteen and more of a novice in navigating power than I believed I was. My objective was to get inside of the uniform, inside of the boy wearing it, to mess around with the hierarchies of authority, to make an easy mark of him. I'd been learning too well from the system that produced me: it was convenient to keep him nonspecific beyond the dab of lips, brown wavy hair, white skin, and uniform. In the bathroom that night, I'd been shown that I wasn't the first person to territorialize Tony's body, and from the little he said, there were also some pretty charged power dynamics being played out across his person. I'd been raised to be compassionate, and was too struck with the overwhelming consequences to continuing playing with him. Even kindness was an instrument in an entanglement that was not just me and the art institution, but boys and their uncles (and somewhere, their fathers), a kind of violent sex to which I was just being introduced, and the terms of consent and agency that can be explored through those sorts of play.

For a couple of weeks, he seemed so sad. Still stopping by my studio, but I was aloof. He would wait to catch my glance and stare over at me, a fragrant betrayal glowing off of his ashen face.

A couple of weeks after that, we stopped seeing him. Then the entire student body received a memo, saying that a security guard had recently been let go of his position. The reason was unclear, though the subtext made him sound unstable. The letter closed by emphasizing that students should allow all staff to do their jobs properly, and refrain from distracting them from

their work or carrying on with them in any way. "Ha, that's totally about you," one of my friends told me.

An assortment of bad objects. I work in ways that try to allow my contradictory desires to be articulated. This means my approach has to be varied. I set about to try to know what of myself I have cast before me to serve as a space or context (the space between a bad object and a subject who might not be bad, but perhaps worsens through the confessions of this text). To do this asks for an assortment of tactics in approaching knowledge.

Take, as an anecdote, my relationships to *Finocchio*, an exhibition at The Franklin, to Dan Sullivan and Edra Soto who operate the gallery, and to Scott Hunter, who has curated this particular project. One of the objectives of my practice is to occupy positions of intimacy (even if that doesn't mean becoming intimate, exactly) in interwoven relations of power. I have elsewhere written of myself as a courtesan with ulterior motives. To gain that closeness, I have involved these constituent parties in several interrelated encounters that mark and eroticize their persons as not only contextualizing conditions for the show but also as an assortment of (art) objects, bad or no. They have all been patient, open, and adventuresome.

For Dan, I worked with the fashion designer Randall Hill who designed and fabricated a custom white BDSM collar and harness to be worn for a photograph I made and subsequently at the opening reception. Randall used the white diagonal motif of The Franklin's design as a point of departure in his wearables, so that in donning this gear, Dan is overlaid with his building's aesthetics along with an orgy of other associations to S&M, athletic wear, death metal theatricality, comic book super heroes, and gay circuit parties. After Dan wears the collar and harness at the opening, it remains on view in the gallery, absent a wearer. After the exhibition closes, Dan retains the harness as a gift from me, receiving something that it's distinctly possible that he's never wanted.

For Edra, I developed the newest iteration of an ongoing project called *sillage*, for which I shop for a readymade perfume that I associate subjectively to the tenets, qualities, and mission of the host institution. Edra wears the perfume *Botrytis* by Ginestet for a photograph I've made of her, at the opening reception, and during subsequent gallery hours. The fragrance smells of honey, juicy white wine, candied fruits, white flowers, and an outdoorsy change from summer into fall. Unlike the gifted harness, Edra does not retain the bottle of remaining perfume after *Finocchio* ends. Rather, it returns to my studio to join an archive of scents from the ongoing *sillage* piece.

These works involving Dan and Edra are highly aestheticized, rich with fantasy, and aim to have the organizers of the exhibition directly participating in my art.

The desires I express in them may be complicated and strange, but manageable and undisrupted by internal contradictions. In considering Scott, however, the things that I want do not organize neatly. In fact, the tensions at this particular place in my inquiries have greatly influenced the assortment of forms elsewhere employed.

Early in this exhibition's planning, Scott committed to helping underwrite the costs of production for the artworks being made by all the artists included. While stipends of this kind may be more commonly attached to honorariums in museums and non-profits, or as advances for commercial ventures with assured sales, it's rare to be paid to make and show art at alternative venues like this one. Speaking with other artists included in *Finocchio*, Scott's generosity is wildly appreciated and reflects a growing interest in financial support for the cultural work that artists do. Organizations like W.A.G.E. (Working Artists and the Greater Economy) have, for several years, been rethinking and advocating for sustainable labor relations in the art world. As arts funding has decreased or been privatized, there is a burgeoning conscientiousness around the regular exploitation of artists' efforts. In my case, the very intended tone of decadence in these projects--custom couture bondage gear and an imported eau de toilette perfume--have only been feasible with the infrastructure for funding into which Scott is personally invested.

Emergent in my desires for this work was to gift something to Scott in the ways I am doing with Dan and Edra. But just as strongly, I've wanted to subvert that impulse for reasons that are conceptually in keeping with the moves I am making and others for which I am less proud. Given Scott's funding of my production costs, a gift at this juncture presents itself as an attempt to balance power, to owe him in less immaterial ways for his encouragement of my work. If these maneuvers are meant to mark out the effects of power, I also want to stay critical of my own ego that doesn't want to be seen as indebted, and is afraid of what being cared for will mean for my own behavior later. A gift here would signify even footing and maintain a social masquerade that shows me not having needs. The vigilantly thoughtful stratagem is not to give Scott a gift of any sort.

And if only that was the extent of what I can know about my desires. More than my curator and benefactor, Scott is also an art collector and an out gay man with an impressive collection and inimitable good taste. His sharp intelligence, candor, and openness are rarities, and since he asked me to be in this exhibition, I've wanted to make good on his faith in me, to impress him, and to solidify a relationship that could continue beyond *Finocchio* (just some more desires to thread through this matrix). I've wanted to foster the affinity I feel in our interests in queer life and an art that plumbs psychological depths. A gift might help do that, wouldn't it? And yet, a careerist drive in me recommends that I resist giving Scott a work to belong to the contemporary art pantheon his collection represents, instead waiting for him to select for himself something that he wants to live with, and then for him to buy it.

It's mortifying to write in an attempt to map these desires. These aren't the longings, fantasies, needs, wants we're meant to admit. Doing so breaches that dreamscape art opening that presumes only superficially who we want to be and in what kind of art world we want to live.

In conversation with Scott and the fantastic group of artists with whom I am here showing, we discussed an expanded notion of queer and Otherness, identities that are persistently set apart. These may be funny issues for my questions to take up from that premise, but my thinking is not only of the histories of people who are punished for their desires: How does power work in these art world relationships? When are the effects of those powers punishing? And are even these punitive consequences accounted for within the tensions between the several (many) things I want? I don't know where the [art] world is anymore, and it may reside within me. My fantasy of it, at least.

JEROME CAYA

CAULEEN SMITH

In contemplating *Finocchio*, its past and possible meanings, I found myself thinking about clowns tricksters, the real kind, the cosmic kind. And then I found myself reading the transcribed interviews of Jerome Caja (pronounced Chaya). Jerome was born in Cleveland, Ohio on January 20, 1958 and died in San Francisco on November 3, 1995 of HIV related illnesses. Jerome has been on my mind for a while now as I witness and attempt to support the surge in challenges to the social enforcement of gender norms and the expansion in our understanding of genders' various potentials. Jerome was a fantastic artist. Like most of the gay men who died in the 80's and 90's, from Willie Smith and Roger Brown, to Jerome Caja and Essex Hemphill, the historical potency of their cultural contributions has eroded with time, faded with our fragile and wracked memories.

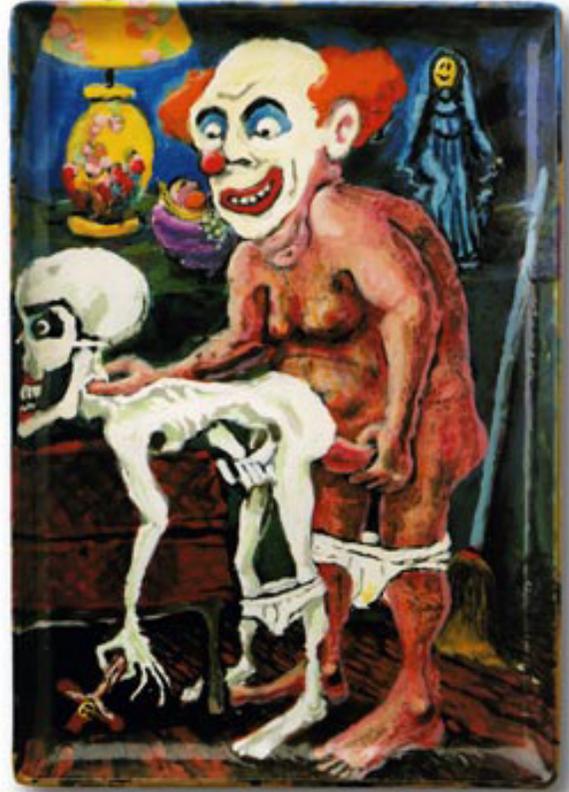
I remember Jerome. We were not friends. We worked together at the Lumiere movie theater in the Polk Gulch of San Francisco. He liked working the late nights and I liked the matinees so our encounters at work were strictly shift changes. It was our encounters on the streets, me going home (I lived at California and Polk, a block from the theater) and him going wherever he was going that have remained with me. This picture feels as if it was lifted from my memory. I remember that crocheted halter top so vividly.

When we would cross paths on the street, Jerome was always friendly but business-like. I was of absolutely no interest to him, and to be completely frank, he totally freaked me out. My sheltered Sacramento upbringing in no way prepared me for the force of Jerome Caja. He assessed my capacity to engage him correctly. But we were in a show together once - the inaugural show for the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. This was actually my first time seeing some of his work beyond his performative street persona. Beautiful, frightening, caustic little paintings on found objects made with fingernail enamel. Amazing.

I wish I'd spoken with Jerome about art and art history. I wish I'd spoken with him about a lot of things. But I learned so much from him nonetheless. His performative persona was legend in SF. But he was also sickly (I didn't know he had HIV when we worked together) and would frequently come to work in "street clothes" (jeans and a t-shirt) accompanied by one of his close friends (family) who would bring him soup or coffee of whatever he needed during his shift. Jerome was well loved. Indeed, I loved the guy too and as I move through life, my gratitude for our collision there at the Lumiere movie theater increases. Jerome taught me what it means to make one's own family, what it means to build one's own world, what it means to eschew societal acceptance in one's pursuit of one's own truth and love and work. Jerome was a bombastic sarcastic smartass and he was intensely ethical. Unlike several of our co-workers a diverse group of queer contenders, Jerome never felt compelled to racially provoke me. For instance, some guy named Dominic wanted to name the theater cat Niggerpussy. (Really). My coworkers could not understand why that would piss me off. But Jerome did. And he schooled our co-workers during his shift - I wasn't even there, all I know is that the kitten was not going to have that name, that Dominic decided to name the cat Hazel. Jerome the trickster, he made them feel like it was their idea.

Perhaps because I so regret not being cool enough, brave enough, or clever enough to become Jerome's friend when we worked together at the Lumiere, I sought out a surrogate for conversation. As Jerome's illnesses overtook him, it became clear that a new home would be needed for his artworks, costumes, and personal effects. The Smithsonian Archives of American Art very wisely acquired Jerome's work as well as recorded several hours of candid and intimate interviews with the artist as he reclined on his couch in his San Francisco apartment.

Here I'm going to share a few excerpts from the interviews. Jerome describing his own identity, Jerome talking about performance art, about the Gay community within the art community, about growing up with 9 brothers in Cleveland. This is a Jerome I did not know. And I'm so happy to listen to him and share his words for *Finocchio*.



Bozo Fucks Death, Jerome Caja
Date Unknown.



Bozo Venus Peeing on a Burning Bush,
Jerome Caja. Date Unknown

An interview of artist Jerome Caja conducted 1995 August 23-1995 September 29, by Paul J. Karlstrom, for the Smithsonian Archives of American Art. Hayes Street. San Francisco, California.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: An interview with Jerome Caja. This tape 1, side B, Session 1, on August 23, 1995.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: ...Well, here we go, Jerome. We have the beginning of your papers in the Archives, so your career to a certain extent is going to be documented in the research collections of the Smithsonian. But that, of course, ends up telling a story that's in a way more public,... and that's all part of the story. But it doesn't tell the complete story. The purpose of an interview like this oral history is to try to get at something more private and more essential, to round that out, and that's why I am here today. And before we move on, it's something that I would like to touch on, or to make clear, as we move into the interview, that you earlier were talking about your own understanding of mortality, an issue that you have faced and dealt with. The fact is you are sick and I guess at that time were and probably, although I should let you say it rather than my saying it, there was an awareness that there were these things that, this story you had--

JEROME CAJA: I've always been a frail, sick man. I've always been thin and delicate and weak, so I've always had a sense that life was fragile and that is especially clear in my work. The sickness now, whether it's AIDS or whatever it is, I happen to have AIDS. All illnesses have the same kind of demoralizing and crippling effect. ...If I was in pain once in a while I can handle that, but when you're in pain all the time, you become very irritable, and that's what I don't like. I think that going blind, I can still paint because I still can create what I want to see. And I'm not sure, but I think it's interesting to look through drawings I've done from when I was in good health to when my eyesight has gone, to see how that change is. Now I've gone and done that with some of my friends, but they haven't noticed any change. [Laughs] So I don't know how to work that theory out, because it doesn't seem to be working. But I figured that I probably don't have a problem because I'm creating, and of course, I'm going to create what I can see, so my work will lend itself to being seen, where as opposed to taking something that was already created and trying to see that, like I'm looking at a photograph or a writing or something. When you're looking at that you don't have that control, so you have to conform, and if you can't see it clearly, well then, it's not so easy to conform. I know I'm adjusting, I'm learning how to live without sight. So there are certain things people take for granted, or that I used to take for granted, that I can no longer do, like I have to look at the steps when I go down the steps. I have to do things like rely on my memory. If I can see the shape of a person, OK, I know

it's a person. I don't need to see the detail.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: You are part of a gay community in San Francisco and there is a sub-set within that, it's the gay art community. I've never thought too much about that interestingly enough, it's not something that I've really considered. Could you describe within the art community, a gay artist community? Is there such a thing that mutually re-enforces, or is this a construct that's ghettoizing.

JEROME CAJA: It's one of those things that so-- It's ghettoizing and it's all those bad things it is. It's just one of those things isn't as easily ghettoized. You know, there're gay artists, I know a lot of them. They're very supportive, but at the same time it's not a community sense that I ever see them or that I have great exchange with them. When I do see them it's always very pleasant, but they're not, I don't think, I have any artists who are personal friends. But it doesn't mean that I don't hold them in high regard with other gay artist people. There are a lot, there are a lot of gay artists.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Are they primarily though--

JEROME CAJA: They're as different as the artist is different. No, as different as the art they make. There's Michael Brown who did that lamp. He designs water fountains and falls, and things like that, very clean, very minimal, very beautiful. Then there's Nayland Blake, who does very esoterical, very thought orientated work, provokes thought and thinking; the story behind it is what's most important. So you have to read and things like that, although they're pretty overwhelming just to look at. And then there's, I know, I love photographers, all of them a lot of good photographers. I must say I have a weakness for photography. I collect photographs. I've been fortunate to meet a lot of good photographers. So each, depending on what the artist is involved in, I mean, of course, I think elements of their homosexuality will be in their work. I don't believe that you can successfully eradicate yourself from your work. I know people who try. I know people whose whole goal in life is to make something that has nothing to do with them. Why they would do that I don't know. I do know people like that.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: They must not like themselves or find themselves interesting.

JEROME CAJA: Yeah. To be honest with you I can't understand that, really; that's not something that I'm capable of comprehending. Like why bother?

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: This is important. I want to really make sure again that we have this right and that is this issue of a specifically gay art community within in the art community.

JEROME CAJA: Yes. Then you're thinking of a specific gay community. Of course, they have that, but it is the most uncohesive. I mean, that's community that's really pushing it up, really pushing it. Because you have people from each extreme, you have extreme liberal, extreme conservatives, you have people who can't sit in the same room together. But they are part of this gay community. It becomes really evident in the drag world, because a lot of homosexuals hate drag queens and it's because the drag queens are the ones who get all the attention. So when people think of homosexuals they think of these extreme nut cases and they get stereotyped into that and they resent that. 'Course I don't understand that. If you want attention, you get it. That's the nature of attention. You can't expect to get attention and be nothing to be looking at. Not everyone wants attention and I can understand that, but that kind of sour grapes thing, I don't go for that. So you're just trying to organize things and it's OK as long as you realize that no one is going to stay in that boundary. Sure you might be a gay artist in a gay artist community, but that doesn't mean that's the only community and only thing you're a part of, and it doesn't mean you're a part of it. You just happen to fill all those requirements, but you may not necessarily do the things that are usually associated with community. Now I have benefitted a lot from the gay artists' community.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: How's that?

JEROME CAJA: My whole career. I am not a self-promoter. I have never asked to show anywhere. I have never given my slides to anybody, but gay people and people in the gay community, especially the gay art community, have promoted and pushed my work to the point where it's at now. Every show I've gotten because of word-of-mouth and it's usually from other gay artists who adore my work and want to see me become successful. So everything, all my success is because of someone else. In the social sense, in the drag sense, every performance I ever did was because someone else organized it. I would never assume that people would come to see me. I would never assume that I had those talents and abilities. Now, of course, I have learned in the time that I did have those talents and abilities, but it's not something that I ever assumed I had and never thought I had. I grew up with an extremely low self-image. I grew up being different. It was just no way around it. No one in my family was like me.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, you put it to work for yourself finally.

JEROME CAJA: Yes, yes. Well, once I became an adult and moved on my own and grew up, life has been a great big pleasure ball. It's not stopped forming. The

problem comes when I don't have control. [Laughs] I have a great desire for control.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, some of the rest of us do, too.

JEROME CAJA: Well, I think it's a good thing.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Rather than trying to force you to make a generalization, which is always a nasty thing to do to anybody, but in your own case, do you feel, as an artist, more identification with the broader art community, with being an artist, with art itself, than with the fact that you happen to be a gay man?.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, you put it to work for yourself finally.

JEROME CAJA: Yes, yes. Well, once I became an adult and moved on my own and grew up, life has been a great big pleasure ball. It's not stopped forming. The problem comes when I don't have control. [Laughs] I have a great desire for control.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, some of the rest of us do, too.

JEROME CAJA: Well, I think it's a good thing.

JEROME CAJA: That's a difficult one.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Or is it possible--

JEROME CAJA: Could you say that again?

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Do you feel more identified with your career as an artist. Is being an artist the more essential you or your homosexuality, being a gay man or your sexuality?

JEROME CAJA: To be honest with you both, the same.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: There're both the same.

JEROME CAJA: I just can't separate my personality from my body.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: So you would identify with both groups equally?

JEROME CAJA: I identify with both groups; I would have to I guess. I never thought of it like that, because I tend to be a loner not wanting to identify with any group.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Uh huh. See I'm asking this question, and this is groping a little bit, excuse me, because there are many artists, primarily straight,



Jerome Chaya, circa 1991. Photo by Ric Warren

heterosexual artists for whom their identity as an artist, their making art primary, it determines them, it's their concept of themselves, beyond their sexuality.

JEROME CAJA: Oh see, I don't think that's true. I don't think that's true at all.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Oh, I do.

JEROME CAJA: Do you?

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: On the basis of interviewing dozens of them, yeah.

JEROME CAJA: Is that because their sexuality is taken for granted?

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: I think that's very possible, yeah.

JEROME CAJA: As a heterosexual you weren't even assumed to ask the same types of things as if you're researching something that you're not familiar with.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Yeah, but it's not a community in the same way. See when you're talking about--

JEROME CAJA: What the straight artists' community is no--

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, it isn't the straight part, isn't the part that defines the community.

JEROME CAJA: Oh, OK. Yes, that's because you're giving me two definers and then you're just getting the art community.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: But even their sexuality, and they may not be--

JEROME CAJA: They may not be sexual things. I have brothers who are not sexual creatures; one of them, he's asexual. It's not that he's straight, I assume, I really think he's asexual.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Let's put this another way. With a number of these artists, and I can't generalize across the board, that's a mistake.

JEROME CAJA: Yes.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: I get this sense that more important than their relationships when they are really being honest, these are men and women, more important than their relationships even in their families, there are things--

JEROME CAJA: Is their art.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Right, and--

JEROME CAJA: I would say that's true for me, too.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: OK, this is a different way then of asking the same question.

JEROME CAJA: I would definitely say my art is the most important.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: So there is some kind of an allegiance, an individual, a personal allegiance, to this occupation and this activity and that in effect is mainly what you're about.

JEROME CAJA: Yes. Well, it's a major point. It's not mainly what I'm about, because I'm about everything I'm in. If you graded, it is the A+, it's the first top-of-the-list thing that is the most important to me.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: What about politics in art?

JEROME CAJA: Oh, I don't like politics.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: I'm talking about specifically identity politics or gender politics, not the--

JEROME CAJA: I kinda have a hard time with that, just in the sense I have never had any really bad thing happen to me. I seem to have avoided a lot of the, for some reason, the pitfalls that I see other people have a problem with. I think it comes because I'm so self-confident. But the only things I remember, like in graduate school, one teacher I had told me after the first day of the class that he really didn't like homosexuals. Well, I said, "That's fine because I didn't take your class because I liked you; I took it because I have no option." He was trying to be complimentary, because he saw something in my work. Another teacher said that he was degrading the art scene of San Francisco because it was run by faggots. Then he said, "Oh, no offense meant, Jerome." And I say to that kind of thing OK, but that doesn't traumatize me. I think I've used my homosexuality to my advantage, because I'm confident, I don't care what people think about me.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: This, of course, what you're describing is really ---

JEROME CAJA: Well, it's...

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Homophobia or racism, they're all the same.

JEROME CAJA: That's part of it. I'm assuming that's what enters into politics. I've never felt that people did not listen to me because I was a homosexual. I've never felt that people did not take me seriously. They may not take me seriously because I'm a prankster, but that's the nature of being a joker. I'm not going to be denied what the results of that behavior can do.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: When I said politics, more specifically what I meant was imagery that could be viewed as ideologically or politically making a case, telling a story overtly homosexual.

JEROME CAJA: I certainly do that.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Well, then the question is, what does that mean to you, because does it have to have a political--

JEROME CAJA: I think what it means to me is that it's a part of me. Since I tell you this is me and I'm sharing myself, exposing myself, I'm exposing a part of me. And my sexuality, as you can see, is a big, big part of me and that's probably because it was oppressed for so long, that it became more important, when I was finally able to confront it and deal with it in a reasonable manner.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: Do you feel in your own words--

JEROME CAJA: I'm not a hedonist, too, so that anything that's pleasurable, I'm going to tend to agree with. [Laughs]

PAUL J. KARLSTROM: So the imagery, whatever it may be, but the homoerotic imagery is more than anything else in your work, a sharing of self, self-revelation into a real rapid life.

JEROME CAJA: Most of it is just direct desire.

Excerpt from Jerome Caja Oral history can be accessed here:
<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-jerome-caja-12295>

A BRIDGE, A [BLACK], A BARREL, A BACK

AMINA ROSS

MOVEMENT I - A Bridge

In the world, on the outside, my body/ my image is constantly falling apart. Each eye,
like a camera,
peels films from my body me.
Each eye peels me apart [~~segments of a split orange~~].



Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.

Here is **Fruit for the crows to pluck,**
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
Here is a strange and bitter crop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4ZyuULy9zs>

[...I now begin to teach you about images, so-called, a subject of most relevant importance. These images are like a skin, or a film, peeled from the body's surface, and they fly this way and that across the air...Let me repeat: these images of things, these almost airy semblances, are drawn from surfaces; you might call them film, or bark, something like skin, that keeps the look, the shape of what it held before its wandering. This should be obvious to the dullest mind since many things, as our own eyes can see, throw off a substance, rather course at times—as burning wood produces smoke or steam and sometimes thinner, more condensed, the way Cicadas cast their brittle summer jackets or calves at birth throw off the caul, or snakes slide out of and leave their vesture under the brambles where we have often seen them, crumpled or caught. This being so, some film of likeness, frail and thin, must be sent forth from every surface. (The Way Things Are, Humphries, 120) or an alternate translation here --->

http://classics.mit.edu/Carus/nature_things.4.iv.html]

I watch and have been learning.

There are pale ghosts of girls in the air (in here). How many of me linger (t)here in grey space?
In hair

QUICK Soft Loose Waves Hairstyle - No Bantu | Natural Hair

by Naptural85 52,132 views 5 days ago.

I watch beauty tutorials, 5 a day, to skip the hours.
My favorite kind of
story
telling.

MOVEMENT II - A Barrel

I would love to forget my body, if only for a small time.

~~I would love to lose an eye or grow 1/3.~~

I would love to pull my throat from my mouth

, to rinse it in clean water

, to lather it with soap, to wring that body dry and wet it again, to repeat until it's clean.

I would love to bend and break.

My back bends **like** the bottom of a canoe, a barreled

[barrel]

noun

1. a cylindrical container bulging out in the middle, traditionally made of wooden staves with metal hoops around them.

. a barrel together with its contents: *a barrel of beer*.

. a measure of capacity used for oil and beer. It is usually equal to 36 imperial gallons for beer and 35 imperial gallons or 42 US gallons (roughly 192 liters) for oil.

2. a tube forming part of an object such as a gun or a pen.

3. the belly and loins of a four-legged animal such as a horse.

verb (**barrels, barreling, barreled; Brit. barrels, barrelling, barrelled**)

1. [no obj.] informal drive or move fast, often heedless of surroundings or conditions: *we barreled across the Everglades | barreling along the Ventura freeway*.

2. [with obj.] put into a barrel or barrels.

PHRASES

a barrel of laughs [often with negative] informal a source of fun or amusement: life is not exactly a barrel of laughs at the moment.
on the barrel (of payment) without delay: I gotta be paid cash on the barrel.
over a barrel informal in a helpless position; at someone's mercy.
with both barrels informal with unrestrained force or emotion.
ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French baril, from medieval Latin *barriculus* 'small cask.'] bottom.

MOVEMENT III - A Back

I have been trying to educate
fluid from my ears, does that work? to bring it forth?

To educate my throat. Today is the right side, tomorrow may be the left.
To educate my back.
To elucidate the dark spaces between each vertebrae of my spine.

I have the **ability** to learn. When I have failed teachers have mourned my POTENTIAL.
Potential does not function in the same way here.

Maybe
I can build a bridge
between *What Is and What Can Be* and name this bridge Medicine.





Amina Ross
A Bridge, [A Black,] A Barrel, A Back, 2015
Video, sculptural object, and costume



ALFREDO SALAZAR-CARO

Genital Anxiety

Transmutation of The self.

The net has allowed us to assume an almost infinite amount of personalities, ranging from a screen name to a fully formed humanoid-avatar and beyond.

Becoming disembodied allows for the ultimate freedom.

We can now exist outside of the singular self, beyond gender, beyond physical limitation. Virtual Reality has opened the possibility for the hyper-queer.

Like a packed New York City subway with everyone on LSD.

What does it feel like to be a woman? What would it be like to be seen as a man? What would it be like to be a planet, or a mountain, or the Kool-Aid man? What does it feel like to have sex with/as a unicorn? When we transcend our bodies we become all.

Can the queer exist without a body?

I always felt envious of snails...

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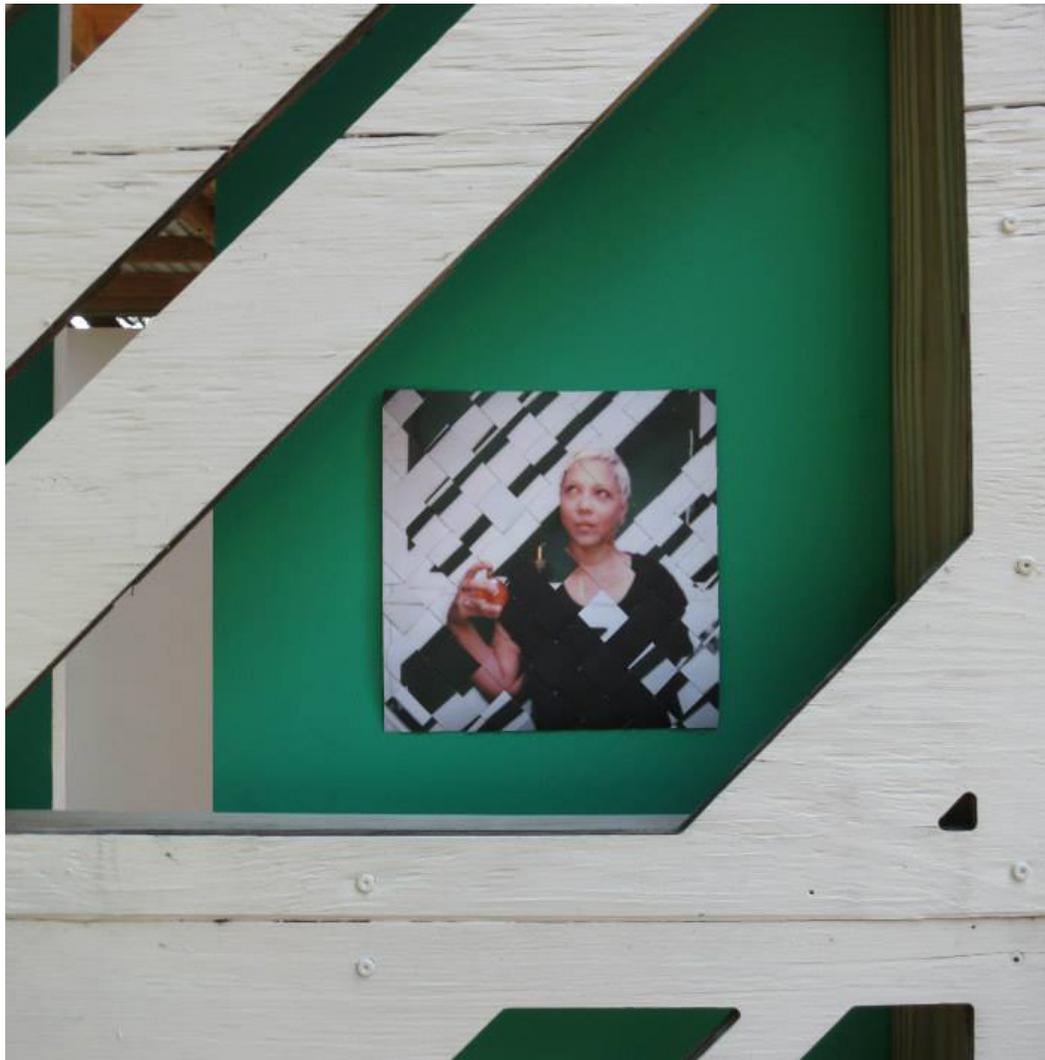
**WORKS IN
EXHIBITION**

Daniel Baird
Recursion #8, 2015
Aluminum, rapid prototypes,
plastic, printed vinyl



Matt Morris

sillage, 2015. Botrytis Eua de
Toilette by Ginestet
Fragrance worn by Edra Soto,
co-director of The Franklin





Sofia Moreno

Puto, 2015

Performance with earth, water, lingerie,
and detritus

Alexandria Eregbu
Behold the Invisible
(For the Missing 279), 2015
Fabric, beads, wax





Finocchio, installation view

Alfredo Salazar-Caro
Mutant_Gen_01.obj + Mu-
tant_Gen_02.obj or I live in a
highly excited state of over-
stimulation, 2015
3-D Prints

Matt Morris
The White Queen, 2015
Custom harness and collar
and created by Randall Hill
for Dan Sullivan, co-director
of *The Franklin*

Matt Morris
An Effect of Power
(The White Queen), 2015
Archival inkjet print on out-
door vinyl

Jessica Caponigro
Untitled (W.I.T.C.H.), 2015
Screen print on paper,
wood, hydrangea





Danny Giles
Visitor, 2015
MDF, spray paint, dolly



Finocchio, The Franklin Outdoor
Installation view
2015

FINOCCHIO

Curated by Scott J Hunter

List of works

Alfredo Salazar-Caro

Mutant_Gen_01.obj + Mutant_Gen_02.obj or I live in a highly excited state of overstimulation. 2015. 3-D Prints.

Matt Morris

The White Queen, 2015. Custom harness and collar commissioned by Matt Morris, designed and created by Randall Hill for Dan Sullivan, co-director of The Franklin. Dan wears the harness during the opening reception of Finocchio, after which point it is displayed in the gallery. Following the close of the exhibition, Dan receives the harness and collar as gifts from the artist.

sillage, 2015. Botrytis Eua de Toilette by Ginestet. Fragrance worn by Edra Soto, co-director of The Franklin during all receptions and gallery hours associated with the exhibition Finocchio. Remainder of perfume and bottle are returned to the artist after the exhibition.

An Effect of Power (The White Queen), 2015. Archival inkjet print on outdoor vinyl.

An Effect of Power (sillage), 2015. Archival inkjet print on outdoor vinyl, weaving.

Alexandria Eregbu

Behold the Invisible (For the Missing 279), 2015. Fabric, beads, wax

Daniel Baird

Recursion #8, 2015. Aluminum, rapid prototypes, plastic, printed vinyl.

Danny Giles

Visitor, 2015. MDF, spray paint, dolly.

Jessica Caponigro

Untitled (W.I.T.C.H.), 2015. Screen print on paper, wood, hydrangea.

Sofia Moreno

Puto, 2015. Performance with earth, water, lingerie, and detritus.

Amina Ross

A Bridge, [A Black,] A Barrel, A Back, 2015. Sculptural object, and costume.

Video by Amina Ross was added to the exhibition for EXPO Chicago weekend and the closing.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Geir Haraldseth

Geir Haraldseth is the director of Rogaland Kunstsenter and based in Stavanger, Norway. Haraldseth holds a BA in Fine Arts from Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design and an MA in Curatorial Studies from Bard College. Previous positions include curator at the National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture, Oslo, and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Oslo. Haraldseth has contributed to several journals and magazines including the *Exhibitionist*, *Kunstkritikk*, *Acne Paper*, and *Landings Journal*. His work as an independent curator focuses on the links between art and the luxury goods market. He has curated shows at GucciVuitton, Miami, Vox Populi, Philadelphia, Fotogalleriet, Oslo, Landings Project Space, Vestfossen, the National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture, Oslo, Stavanger Kunstmuseum, Stavanger, Teatro de Arena, Sao Paulo and Akershus Kunstsenter, Lillestrom. Curatorial residencies awarded include ISCP, New York and Capacete, Rio de Janeiro, OCA, Berlin, Janka, Mexico City and Parse, New Orleans. He published *Great! I've written something stupid* in 2012, featuring a selection of his curated projects and writings, published by Torpedo Press. Upcoming publications include *Collective Good*, *Collaborative Efforts* and *Luxury Face*.

Cauleen Smith

Cauleen Smith is an interdisciplinary artist and filmmaker, and a professor of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego. She is best known for her experimental works that address African American identity, specifically issues facing black women today. She has an acclaimed feature film *Drylongso*, that earned her national recognition as a filmmaker. Smith currently resides in Chicago and has worked on multiple projects that explore the life of renowned jazz musician Sun Ra. She obtained her BA in Cinema from San Francisco State University and an MFA from UCLA. She has completed residencies at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, ThreeWalls, the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, the Experimental Sound Studio, and has been an artist in residence at the University of Chicago Arts Incubator. Smith has been shown widely internationally, with recent shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, ThreeWalls, and UIC's Gallery 400. She received the first prize at the Tirana Albania Open Competition and Outstanding Artist by the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture. Smith has been a Visiting Artist at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago while exploring the intersection of art, protest, commerce, and community on Chicago's South Side. She actively addresses Afrofuturism in her current work, as well as considers the potentiality of technology and physics as metaphors for exploring the African diasporic past and future.

Danny Orendorff

Danny Orendorff is a curator, writer, researcher, and activist. He is currently working as the Programming Associate at Threewalls in Chicago. He was the 2013-2014 Curator-in-Residence and Interim Director of Artistic Programs at the Charlotte Street Foundation in Kansas City, MO, where he curated four exhibitions at their la Esquina art gallery. He has been an instructor for liberal arts and professional development courses at the Kansas City Art Institute and University of Missouri - Kansas City. Recent solo exhibitions include *Loving After Lifetimes of All This*, supported by a Craft Research Fund Grant awarded by The Center for Craft, Creativity, and Design in Asheville, NC, and collaboration with performing artist Steven Reker as a dramaturge/performer within a multidisciplinary adaptation of Richard Brautigan's short story *In Watermelon Sugar*, that premiered at The Kitchen. Danny's research has revolved around issues of non-normativity, queerness, feminism, and DIY/craft-oriented cultural production. Danny has curated large-scale exhibitions and composed exhibition texts for international contemporary art spaces, including; *All Good Things Become Wild & Free* at Carthage College (Kenosha, WI), *Learning to Love You More* at MU Gallery (Eindhoven, The Netherlands), and *There is Always a Machine Between Us* at SF Camerawork Gallery (San Francisco, CA), who also hosted the Andy Warhol Foundation supported exhibition *Suggestions of a Life Being Lived*, which he co-curated with Adrienne Skye Roberts in 2010. He is a contributing writer to *Art in America Online* and *Bad at Sports*, and has previously written for *NewCity Chicago*, *Camerawork Journal of Photographic Arts*, and *Shotgun Review*.

Daniel Baird

Chicago-based artist Daniel Baird's work addresses ideas endemic to the Western cultural milieu, often questioning notions of technological progress by including more primitive or child-like interventions into the very construction of his sculptures and mixed-media installations. Baird earned his MFA from the University of Illinois, Chicago, in 2011, and his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008. He has had solo exhibitions at such venues as Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago; Roots and Culture, Chicago; Appendix Project Space, Portland, OR; Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, the Netherlands; and Hungryman Gallery, Chicago. Baird's work has also been in group exhibitions, including shows at the Rockford Art Museum, Rockford, IL; the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, New York; Koh-iNoor, Copenhagen; Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago; and Gallery 400, Chicago. In October 2015, he will present work at the Leeds College of Art and Design. He is represented by Patron Gallery, Chicago.

Jessica Caponigro

Before receiving her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Jessica Caponigro attended Bryn Mawr College, where she earned her BA in the History of Art. In her work, Caponigro explores ideas of restriction through repetition, reproduction, and translation. She has taught classes at SAIC and Olive Harvey College, and currently teaches studio and academic classes at Harold Washington College. She has exhibited work at the DePaul Art Museum, Chicago Cultural Center, and the Highland Park Art Center. Her work is in the permanent collections at California State University Long Beach and the Joan Flasch Artists' Books Collection. She is a member of the feminist art collective Tracers, and frequently participates in workshops, most recently at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and NYU Florence.

Alexandria Eregbu

Alexandria Eregbu is a visual artist whose work often takes shape in the form of performance, programming, and curatorial practices. Her concerns frequently address community, materiality, performativity, and the visibility of racialized and gendered bodies in space. In 2012, Eregbu was commissioned by Out of Site Chicago to perform 11/10/10, a project that confronted the physical and geographical boundaries of the city of Chicago. The following year, in 2013, Eregbu curated *Marvelous Freedom/Vigilance of Desire, Revisited* at Columbia College Chicago. This curatorial project reexamined the first *Marvelous Freedom/Vigilance of Desire*, a Surrealist exhibition that took place in Chicago in 1976. Eregbu's work has been featured in two solo exhibitions and several group exhibitions including *Seminar*, New York; *Exodus* at the University of Chicago's Arts Incubator in Washington Park; *Mythologies* at Sullivan Galleries and *Warm Kitty* at the Hyde Park Art Center. Eregbu was a recipient of the Propeller Fund Grant (2013), the DCASE IAP Grant (2015), a 2014-2015 Resident Curator with HATCH Projects at Chicago Artists Coalition, and a Public Studio Artist in Residence at the Chicago Cultural Center. Eregbu received her BFA from the School of the Arts Institute of Chicago. She was recently highlighted in *Newcity's Breakout Artists 2015: Chicago's Next Generation of Image Makers*; and is a current Curatorial Fellow with ACRE.

Danny Giles

Danny Giles received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and MFA from Northwestern University. Residencies include Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and ACRE. He has exhibited and performed in spaces including The Socrates Sculpture Park, NY, The Great Poor Farm Experiment, Little Wolf, WI, Threewalls, Chicago, IL, and The Franklin, Chicago, IL. Giles is a lecturer at SAIC and is represented by Andrew Rafacz Gallery. Giles' work necessarily takes many forms as it meditates on the multiple and at times indeterminate platforms upon which identities are reproduced, commodified, and re-invented. His research examines and perverts the instruments of capitalism and engages subversive cultural practices that have developed historically as resistance to economic and social dispossession. Giles is invested in the continual re-imagining of the black radical tradition and in developing strategies and practices to reclaim personal subjectivity from the reaches of the dominant order.

Sofia Moreno

Sofia Moreno was born and raised in Coahuila, Mexico. In 1994, she immigrated to the US and lived in Dallas, TX. She then moved to Chicago, where she currently lives and works. She was educated at El Centro College and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Moreno is a multimedia artist and her subjects include expressions of the sacred and profane, the body, sexuality, religion, and sociopolitical issues within contemporary culture. Moreno is currently working on the follow-up to her five-year project, *P o r n A g a i n*, which has been exhibited at s+s Project in San Francisco, CA, LaGrotta Art Gallery in Queens, NY, and at Defibrillator and Bridgeport Art Center, in Chicago. She has participated in multiple group exhibitions across the world, including in Berlin, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and across the US.

Matt Morris

Matt Morris is an artist, writer, and sometimes curator based in Chicago. He has presented artwork at Queer Thoughts, peregrineprogram, The Bike Room, Gallery 400, Sector 2337, and The Franklin in Chicago, IL; Fjord and Vox Populi in Philadelphia, PA; The Contemporary Arts Center, U.turn Art Space, Aisle, and semantics in Cincinnati, OH; Clough-Hanson Gallery and Beige in Memphis, TN; with additional projects in Reims, France; Greencastle, IN; Lincoln, NE; and Baton Rouge, LA. He is a contributor to Artforum.com, Art Papers, Flash Art, Newcity, and Sculpture; and his writing appears in numerous exhibition catalogues and artist monographs. He is a lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, who teaches in the Sculpture as well as the Painting and Drawing departments. Morris is a transplant from southern Louisiana. He holds a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, and earned an MFA in Art Theory + Practice from Northwestern University, as well as a Certificate in Gender + Sexuality Studies.

Amina Ross

Amina Ross is an undisciplined artist. Through visual abstraction she creates palatable tensions of repulsion and seduction. The conceptions of black visuality and the sensuous world are explored through a blending of image-making, writing, performance, curatorial and installation work. Ross holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is currently a teaching artist at Hyde Park Art Center. Amina is a part of Chicago Artist Coalition's BOLT residency 2015-2016 cohort.

Alfredo Salazar-Caro

Alfredo Salazar-Caro received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work exists at the intersection of portraiture/self-portraiture, installation, Virtual Reality, video, and sculpture. Recently his work has focused on exploring the way that virtual simulation can affect someone's perceived reality, for example by creating simulation in which one is forced to endlessly roam in a desert until death. Other examples include simulations of dreams/dream-scapes and memories, as well as videos of extreme fantasies fulfilled digitally. Salazar-Caro hopes to one day live forever as a computer simulation. His work has been exhibited in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, London, Berlin, Amsterdam, Caracas (Venezuela), Shiraz (Iran), and Mexico City, and has been featured in publications such as Leonardo, New City, Art F City and Creators Project. He lives and works between Mexico City, New York, Chicago, and the Internet.

Scott J Hunter

A collector and philanthropist of contemporary art and music, and an independent curator, Hunter is particularly interested in the intersection between self-identity and cultural representation, and how this is mediated in the transactions that occur between the artist, the object, and the viewer. He has organized four previous exhibitions, Psychosexual (2013) at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago, Sticky & Sweet (2014) at Terrain, Oak Park, IL, a rose is a rose is a rose (2014) at Aspect/Ratio Gallery, Chicago, and Aay-Preston Myint's 2015 work, A flag for Black death (always flies at full mast), exhibited as part of the Second Terrain Biennial in Oak Park, IL. When not involved in the arts, Hunter is a pediatric neuropsychologist and researcher on the impact of socioeconomic and environmental factors on cognitive and behavioral development, as an Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience and Pediatrics at the University of Chicago. Hunter holds a MA and PhD in Clinical and Developmental Psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago, following receiving his BA in Biology and Psychology (with a minor in Philosophy) from the Catholic University of America.

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There are always many contributions, large and small, made to the development and completion of a project like Finocchio. The best thing about this exhibition is its presentation as a project fostering multiple points of view, with incredible synergy coming from the collaboration. With that at the forefront, I want to first deeply thank each of the artists and writers who contributed to the success of this exhibition and catalog; their contributions to the whole were a solid foundation for the exploration of ideas and concerns, with respect, awareness, and kindness always.

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