

International Symposium & Exhibition for Visual Culture 2024

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Visual Culture 2024 The International Exhibition

CICA Museum
September 11 - 29, 2024
2024.09.11 - 29

International Symposium for Visual Culture 2024

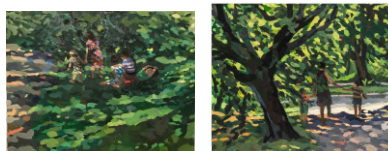
Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza
Silver Spring Maryland
September 14 – 15, 2024

Featured Artists 참여작가: **Sue Collier & Danelle Bernten, Isobel Rose Binnie, Cedric van Eeno, Chung Chak, Jingyi Chen, Luo Chen, DIAMOND.K (강민영), Dodd Holsapple, Barbie Kim, Sang Woo Samuel Kim(김상우), Lavita Yuqing Lai, Maddy Lee(이연우), Xiaoyu Liu, Feixue Mei, Nicholas M. Milkovich, Elena Peteva, Silvia Ruzanka, Lauren Ruiz, Lauren Dana Smith, Zhi Han**

We invite artists, scholars, and researchers worldwide and local communities to participate in the International Symposium for Visual Culture (ISVC). The community of artists, researchers and academics meets in the international symposium and participates in the exhibition. ISVC is an international platform for diverse and critical perspectives on visual culture. Through ISVC, we aim to create a global network of researchers/ artists and consumers/makers of visual culture, and foster critical thoughts and in-depth understanding of visual culture on a global scale.

국제 시각 문화 심포지엄 (ISVC)에 전 세계 아티스트, 학자, 미술 애호가들을 초청합니다. 예술가, 연구원 및 학계의 커뮤니티는 국제 심포지엄을 통해 만나고 전시에 참여합니다. ISVC는 시각 문화에 대한 다양하고 비평적인 시각을 공유하는 국제 플랫폼으로 ISVC를 통해 아티스트와 연구가, 시각 문화 생산자와 소비자들을 잇는 글로벌 네트워크를 구축하며 시각 문화에 대한 거시적이며 심도 있는 이해와 주체적, 비판적 시각 함양과 향유를 위한 장이 되고자 합니다.

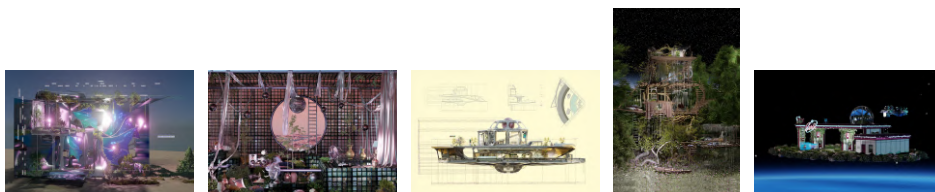
Sue Collier



“The Boys and Me” (2020), “Resting in the Shade” (2019)

Sue Collier is a Boston born artist working and living in NYC. Collier’s practice includes three directions: plein air, studio painting, and drawing. She earned her BFA and MFA and awarded The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Fellowship from Boston University. She is also a 2020 NYFA Fellow in Drawing. At SUNY-Purchase she had half-time tenure and multiple awards. She was granted The Weir Farm Visiting Artist residency and has lectured at Dartmouth College, Queens College, Boston University, Kent State, Marymount Manhattan College at New York City and Tarrytown, and Adelphi University. She has been a board member of The Women’s Caucus for Art NYC and The Painting Center. Collier was included in the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series, and participated in the Art in Embassies Program exhibiting in Africa. Collier’s work has been reviewed by The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Art News, Art in America, Art New England, Women Artist News, among others.

Isobel Rose Binnie



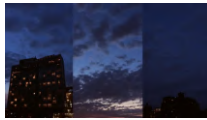
"SPACEPORT" (2023), "TREEHOUSE" (2023), "LOBBY" (2023), "SAUNA" (2023), "GAS STATION" (2023)

In the ethereal realms of the digital, where the boundaries between reality and simulation blur, digital world-building challenges conventional notions of space and architecture. This body of work seeks to weave together the whimsical and the architectural by attempting to merge their languages, in the interest of visually negotiating the impact of digital technologies on the conception and representation of space. It features technology as an agent who morphs our intentions when designing, as the real and imaginary seamlessly blend into an architectural language of hyperreal stages and ever-expanding digital landscapes. Baudrillard's concept of 'Simulacra' provides a theoretical foundation for the exploration, where the distinction between the original and the copy, reality and representation, becomes increasingly elusive. Traditional boundaries crumble, allowing for the construction of spaces that exist beyond the constraints of physical laws. The project embraces Mario Carpo's insights in "Architecture in the Age of Digital Representation," that speak of architecture as a product of the digital, where the very nature of design is transformed by the tools and technologies at our disposal. The digital realm becomes a playground for architectural experimentation. As we delve into this digital wonderland, the traditional understanding of architectural symbolism undergoes a metamorphosis. This implosion of realities stands as the act of collaging becomes a method of transcending physical limitations, creating compositions that no longer defy logic.

The rendered structures serve as simulacra, not mimicking reality but transcending it, becoming symbols that invite contemplation on the nature of existence itself. In the hyperreal, simulated structures hold a truth of their own. The images are representations of physical spaces as well as the limitlessness of the digital realm. The interplay between the precision and tradition of architectural plans and the designs simulated becomes a dance of paradoxes and a collapse of distinctions. The project echoes the fate of the real in a world dominated by simulacra. The structures, devoid of a fixed reality, invite viewers to question the value of unfulfilled designs and the authenticity of the intention of the designer.

Isobel is a set designer working in Toronto, Canada. A graduate of the Bartlett School of Architecture, she is interested in using design to mold our understanding of fiction and storytelling. Her work plays on the irony of engineering for unreal circumstances.

Cedric van Eeno



"Untitled" (2024)

The split screen concurrently displays three views of the same street in New York City in slow motion. As elements successively appear in different parts of the image, and the low light gradually darkens, the viewer becomes involved in recreating the story through personal interpretation.

Cedric van Eeno is a scholar, musician, filmmaker, and artist, affiliated with Manhattan Graphics Center, Brooklyn Arts Council, and New York Art.

Chung Chak



"Abandoned Building" (2023), "Blue Rickshaw" (2023), "Delivery Tricycle and Factory Buildings" (2023), "Green Dormitory" (2023), "Two Boys Walking Their Bikes in Sunset" (2023)

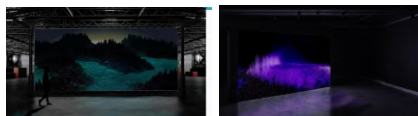
The Great Wall was built to protect and to unify its people who lived behind the wall. However, it came at the cost of over a million civilians. In modern society, walls still serve their primal role as shelters, but they have also become the cradle of aspirations for families.

As society progresses, the process of removing older walls becomes an expected part of urban development. Yet, this transformation often lead to the relocation of those with fewer choices. Reflecting on my family's experience in Hong Kong in the 70s, the government relocated my parents from the city center to a housing project on the outskirts. My father complained but Hong Kong blossomed, and my family stood as proud bearers of its success.

Observing numerous urban redevelopments in Beijing, I photographed random walls being torn down and reconstructed them into harmonic entities, symbolizing the conflicting concepts of individual and collective identities. These images serve as a poetic documentation of present-day Beijing while evoking memories of my childhood in Hong Kong.

As an immigrant who grew up in Hong Kong and resides in the U.S., my work consistently explores how human beings interact with their surroundings. I draw inspiration from cultural clashes, gender expectations, history, and the feeling of alienation. My aspiration is for my work to foster greater tolerance and understanding among individuals who are different from one another. I primarily work as a photomontage artist, aiming to delve into the expression of multiple layers of meaning through complex image compositions. I invent photographic metaphors that convey hidden messages, and I find the process of conceptualizing and problem-solving equally rewarding to witnessing the final result. I am currently a professor at The College of New Jersey, with a portfolio that includes approximately twenty-five solo exhibitions both in the United States and internationally.

Jingyi Chen

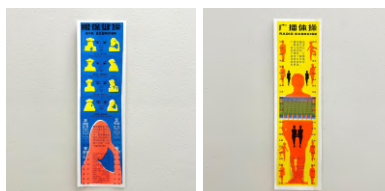


“Nature simulation: Mountain” (2023), “Nature simulation: Lavender wave” (2023)

"Nature Simulation" is an artistic series that merges the elegance of nature with the precision of mathematical algorithms, illustrating the harmony between organic forms and digital art. It captures phenomena from auroras to ocean waves and plant patterns, emphasizing the synergy of nature's beauty and algorithmic design.

Jingyi Chen, born in 1997 in China, is an innovative digital artist and designer whose work critically engages with contemporary digital themes. With a solid education in sculpture from the China Academy of Art and an MFA in Computational Arts from Goldsmiths, University of London, Jingyi's portfolio is a testament to her ability to blend traditional artistry with modern technological insights. Her art, inspired by postmodernism and new media theories, navigates the complexities of cyborg identities, surveillance capitalism, algorithmic bias, and feminism. Jingyi has exhibited her work in the UK, China, and on several online platforms, using XR, AI, and generative art to challenge societal norms and advocate for a future where digital landscapes are inclusive and equitable.

Luo Chen



"Radio Exercise" (2022), "Eye Exercise" (2023)

Radio exercise chart is a case study to analyze how bodies are socially and culturally constructed in a range of relationships and movements. Radio exercise is performed to music and guidance from radio broadcasts and It is very popular in many Asia countries that students practice it during the breaks. The activity originated in the US in 1920s for promoting Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.

Eye exercise chart is a case study to analyze how bodies are socially and culturally constructed in a range of relationships and movements. Eye exercise is performed to music and guidance from radio broadcasts. During my time in Chinese elementary and high schools, we practiced it during the breaks, twice a day by finger pressing the acupuncture points to relieve eye stress.

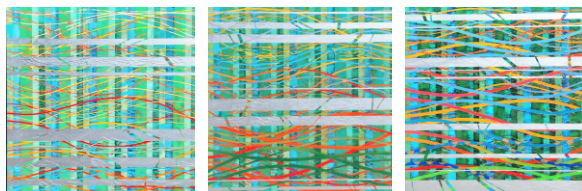
Chen Luo is a Graphic Designer based in Boston. She is the founder of Body&Forma—a collective design house. She has taught graphic design, typography, and publication at Boston University and School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Tufts, and University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Her work has been awarded and recognized by Communication Arts, NewOne Awards, Design 360°, and The Young Ones TDC, and exhibited in Canada, Italy, Japan, China, and the United States.

DIAMOND.K (강민영)

“心眼圖帖 - 火 (Fire-Eye of the Mind series)” (2023)

DIAMOND.K studies Printmaking and ArtHistory from Hongik university(Seoul, Korea) and works on printmaking, photography, mixed sound, video and Art theory and criticism. In 2021 and 2022, at the International Symposium hosted by the CICA Museum, the works "Conversation with A.I." which deals with conversations with artificial intelligence, and "Eye of the Mind series" which interprets inner human psychology through Taoist philosophy, were presented. She mainly projects psychological elements of the human inner self into meditation, prayer, and images of nature, and also treats text work as an important element. She has served as an academic assistant at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art and as a manager at the National Museum of Korea's Digital immersive gallery, and has worked on field of art in the era of art and technology. She currently operates POSTHUMAN Studio, which considers artists and the future of the Post-human era.

Dodd Holsapple



"Han River Reflections Series / Upper Course" (2023), "Han River Reflections Series / Middle Course" (2023), "Han River Reflections Series / Lower Course" (2023)

Holsapple created the inventive and widely popular living sculptural works View Planter Series / Living Sculpture. These groundbreaking sculptures were extensively published and exhibited internationally including a televised documentary. Dodd Holsapple studied Visual Art at Ball State University, Muncie Indiana USA receiving BFA's in Drawing and Painting. Holsapple was interviewed for a televised documentary about new contemporary sculpture and progressive Architecture for A&E television. Public art installations include, Earthworks Now at Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree, California / Drain Strain for the City of Manhattan Beach, California / Thicket sculpture installation and Mud DNA Chaffey College, Rancho Cucamonga / Mud Fish Mandala Fontana California along with a City sponsored solo exhibition in the Artist Showcase program. These projects range from endangered species representations to conservation and habitat protection. Holsapple served as Artist in residence for the City of Los Angeles and several educational venues teaching Art, Ceramics and Design. Dodd was featured on the Everyday Leaders podcast and showcased a live visual art painting event at Budman Studio, in the WNDW, Venice, California. Mr. Holsapple released his first NFT series Seeds To Smoke July 2022 available on Opensea. Most recently in 2023, Dodd traveled to Zadar Croatia to create a monumental site specific sculpture installation about glass recycling and Sea Grass protection. The Reflections Series painting works were published in Al-Tiba9 magazine and The Uncoiled Magazine on-line. The 5th Annual US Congress Climate Assessment Fall 2023 included Mr. Holsapple's Reflections artwork in reference to the Ocean and waterways category. Reflections Series artworks were exhibited in Berlin Germany and Mr. Holsapple's Water Series works were featured in the Environmental exhibition, Indiana University at Pennsylvania USA. Dodd was awarded the NAHR Fellowship Residency in Santa Ynez, California. In December 2023 Dodd was awarded the WILD Residency at the Madrona Marsh in Torrance, California. In 2024, Mr. Holsapple was published in Plantea UK and has been awarded a CICA Museum exhibition and a residency at Noxubee Wetlands Preserve in September.

Lavita Yuqing Lai

"Koha" (2024), "Storm" (2022)

This series is inspired by an experience of attending a Māori ceremony for beached whale. They named that whale Te Koha which means gift, offering in Māori. I am amazed at how they associate whale and other animals with ancestors. Also, it is a reflection of my connection with the ocean. I always feel calm, nourished and emotionally protected when I am by the beach. I feel like there are some kind of guardians in the ocean. Looking after my spirit, my feeling. So I created a serie of mythological sea creatures. They are the guardians.

Yuqing Lai (b.1993), a mixed media artist born and raised in Shen Zhen, China. She studied art in the UK, University of Goldsmiths. Her practice has explored themes of subconsciousness, self identity and social roles, and the rhythm of rituals. Some of her works combine poetry and dream, experimental film and objects of everydayness to challenge and blur the boundary between reality and illusion. Through mixed media installation, she creates a sensory space for the audience to enter and experience beyond visions. Drawing inspiration from both Eastern and Western artistic traditions, her installations often incorporate found objects and natural materials, inviting viewers to contemplate the relationship between humanity and the natural world. She works in mixed media installation, video, conceptual arts, print making, performance, ceramic and photography. Her work has been exhibited in UK, Netherland, Sweden and China.

Maddy Lee(이연우)



"Drowning" (2024)

"Drowning" delves into the intricacies of the human experience, particularly for those navigating the delicate balance of life in a foreign land. Set against the stars that shimmer through the depths of water, a lone ethereal presence emerges, a canvas for the complexities of emotion. Adorned with the stark contrast of a spider lily, a poignant symbol of loss, and a crimson red lily, representing love's enduring presence, it embodies the juxtaposition of grief and affection that often intertwine in the human heart. Surrounding the ethereal presence, water bubbles and petals cascade, a visual symphony of emotion in flux. Bathed in a cool blue light, the scene evokes the sensation of being submerged, of grappling with the weight of emotion. Yet amidst the depths, the glow from within the spectral form's eyes speaks to the resilience of the human spirit, illuminating the path through sorrow towards the glimmering promise of hope.

Maddy Lee (Newmoon) was born in Seoul, South Korea. She is a 3D artist. She earned her BFA in 2023 in Film & New Media from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has exhibited her works in Chicago at Woman Made Gallery, CSI Project Space, VibrantCast Gallery, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She also exhibited works in Korea at CICA Museum, Gallery Vinci, and Gallery Bincan. Her recent exhibition was held in Washington DC, Miami and Chicago. She has experience in curating and designing exhibition spaces as well. Lee's portfolio can be viewed at <https://newmoon.myportfolio.com/3d>.

Xiaoyu Liu



"Near Water" (2022)

I remade the book I wrote in the past into a pocket size. A book about my personal story of living in cities near water all my life is hung from the top with its edge touching the surface of the water. The water I keep running away from-the ghost that comes after me, the soil that nourishes me-is slowly permeating, evading, and finally gaining control. My story reveals. The fragmented puzzling and mumbling nonsense.

Xiaoyu Liu, a Chinese-born multidisciplinary artist and product designer based in the United States. With a Master of Fine Arts in Design & Technology from Parsons School of Design, her artistic practice delves into themes of time, sensory perception, and the existential concept of death. Through a diverse range of mediums including art installation, writing, bookmaking, documentation, sound, and video, Xiaoyu's keen sensitivity to her surroundings informs her artistic process as she explores the intricate relationship between individuals and their environment. Her work has been exhibited at prestigious venues like the Center for the Visual Arts, The Research House for Asian Art, NYC Media Lab, Maker Faire, and Parsons.

Feixue Mei

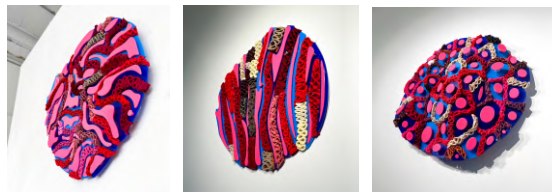
“Caged Dreams — Reflections Within Alternative Space” (2024)

Boys' Love (BL) is a genre of fiction that focuses on relationships between male characters. The genre is primarily created by and for females, which explores diverse aspects of male-male relationships. In these stories, female characters are always removed, and readers like to project themselves onto a male character. It reflects the lives and culture as it addresses complex issues of pleasure, fantasy, and identity that are especially important to women. It also illustrates the oppression of women's living spaces. It is a way to express female fans' deep dissatisfaction with the social norms that women need to be submissive and gentle. BL provides an imaginary space for women to escape the male gaze and the inequalities of different gender roles.

This piece questions the concept of gender, the rules set by society and self, and the possibility of getting rid of established norms. It also explores storytelling as a way of empowerment and transformation, where female voices challenge existing structures and contribute to shaping narratives into alternative fantasies. Themes of identity, social norms, escapism, and the struggle to find one's place in the world gradually unfold throughout the piece. The community has its own power; they have ways of taking space and making room for themselves in structures that weren't necessarily built for them.

Feixue Mei, a designer/artist/illustrator/educator from China based in Missouri, challenges social norms through cultural production, focusing on the impact of social media, online platforms, and shared spaces on cultural identities. Her work, recognized by International Design Awards, Graphis, and Indigo Design Awards, explores community building and amplifying marginalized voices. She has chaired and presented at conferences like CAA and SECAC, with research published in peer-reviewed journals, including *Transformative Works and Cultures*. Her creative works are in the collection of James Branch Cabell Library at VCU and *Printed Matter*. Featured in *Creative Boom*, *Aesthetica*, and *e-flux*, she exhibits globally and holds an MFA in Design from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Nicholas M. Milkovich



“Delta Variant ” (2023), “Gamma Variant” (2024), “Zeta Variant” (2024)

N. M. Milkovich is an American sculptor from the Chicago suburbs and currently based in Brooklyn, NY. Milkovich holds an MFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design as well as a PhD in Biomechanical Engineering from Boston University; he has been exhibited internationally, most notably: New York City, Yale University, Mexico, and Scotland. Milkovich's work is concerned with biological structure and how it translates to biological function. In these works, which represent a sample from a larger project utilizing the same process and materials, he explores the nature of mutation with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic, generating variants through vibrantly colored acrylic sheets and hand-stitched interstitials made of strips of his own clothing.

Elena Peteva



“Of Smoke and Ash II” (2021)

My work explores individual, social and global states through allegorical representation. The subject functions as a subtle but charged signifier in the creation of meaning – whether it is a box with black smoke coming out of it or hands about to reach into a dark tangle. I seek to create works that go beyond the surface and draw in the viewer to slow down, look closer and reflect.

My drawings are created from a combination of direct observation, photo reference, memory and imagination. The drawing process involves a slow, layered construction of the image, simultaneously laborious and meditative – building, excavating and redefining the detailed topography of my subject through what I think of as “organic micro-abstractions”, which when viewed from a distance are meant to come together in a cohesive representation. I continue to draw until the image reaches the visual, psychological and emotive depth I am after.

Elena Peteva is a Bulgarian-American artist who lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island. She is the recipient of three Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grants among other awards. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Elena attended Syracuse University (M.F.A.) and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (4-year C.F.A.). She teaches painting and drawing at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Silvia Ruzanka

“Botanical Computing: Growth Study” (2023)

Botanical Computing: Growth Study is a computer animation, created using a combination of new technologies including game engines and an AI trained by the artist; and old technologies, including the sound of slowly dying hard drives. The piece imagines a future of “botanical computing,” merging plants and computation.

The regime of computation in which we live is structured through bits, electrons, silicon, and an underlying logic, a system of thought. Computer code is a language that describes and categorizes, and also brings things into existence. It is a language that shapes our world, that creates, but is also reductive. Could we re-orient these structures of computation around structures of care? How might we imagine alternatives to our current regime of computation, forms of computation emerging from other kinds of language and other kinds of thought? These questions led me to thinking about plants. I thought about the enforced stillness of pandemic lockdowns and all the other ways we have become physically or mentally fixed in place, in modes of being that become plant-like. I thought also about tending to plants, about soil and compost and nurturing.

Michael Marder describes “plant-thinking” as “the non-cognitive, non-ideational, and non-imagistic mode of thinking proper to plants” [1]. Can we imagine a form of computation grounded in this “non-cognitive, non-ideational, and non-imagistic mode”? And how will our thinking be changed by this encounter? If code is writing that acts, then there is already a certain parallel, because plant-thinking is also a biological, material act.

What would computation based instead in plants be like? What form would it take, in rhizomatic networks, chemical memory, a computation not based on rational thinking but instead grown from plant-thinking? Such a form of computation, like air and ground, cannot be either discrete or flow. It is a mixture that is determined and balanced by care. An aesthetics of care would focus on strategies of return to mixture through poetic acts. These acts may involve finding openings out of closed systems, of introducing unpredictability and error, or in the balance of power in opacity and transparency in digital systems. When we acquiesce care to the machine in return for stability, what is lost is beauty, imagination, and wonder. But as Freeman Lowell argues in the film *Silent Running* (1972), “it is not too late to change it.” [2]

[1] Marder, Michael, Gianni Vattimo, and Santiago Zabala. *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*. Columbia University Press, 2013.

[2] Trumbull, Douglas, director. *Silent Running*. Universal Pictures, 1972.

Silvia Ruzanka is an artist-philosopher whose projects include virtual reality, interactive installation, video, and performance. Her work is concerned with the archaeology and memory of technology and media, and their intersections with everyday life. Her work has been presented at galleries, museums, and festivals internationally including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; SIGGRAPH; ISEA; the New Forms Festival (Vancouver); and the Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (Shenzhen, China), among others. She holds an MFA in Art and Technology Studies from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a B.A. in Physics from Smith College. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and is a Ph.D. candidate in Visual Arts: Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Art Theory at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts in Portland, Maine. Her current research is in the philosophy of computation and care.

Lauren Ruiz

“Worms on the Green” (2022), “Terral Aperture (collaboration with Ocean)” (2023)

WormsontheGreen 2022

Animal invaders are often unaware of their effect on new ecologies, traveling alongside their human counterparts as resources for free labor. The most commonly known earthworms in North America, *Eisenia fetida* and *Lumbricus terrestris*, also known as red wigglers and nightcrawlers respectively, arrived with the first wave of European settlers burrowed inside potted plants, the cracks of wagon wheels, and sacks of spoiled crops. As a method of understanding the complex relationships between human and annelids and the resulting ideologies regarding nature and “greening,” this research-based video project interrogates the connections between animal labor, eco-colonialism and the rapid invasion of nanoplastics into our water, soil, and bodies.

Terral Aperture 2024

Lauren Ruiz and her collaborator, Ocean, a disabled poet and novelist living in the Pacific Northwest, explore the relationality between time and flesh through the lenses of erosion, burial, and the mythos of the subterranean. Featuring macro footage of

Red Wiggler earthworms and a multilayered poem voice-over, Terral Aperture interrogates invisibility, decay, and subterranean time while considering notions of subjectivity by considering the sensorial experiences of nonhuman life forms. Through this process, the artists question the inherent interdependency humans have on these particular annelids, a domesticated invasive species, as a natural resource in colonization while addressing postcolonial theory through the lifeworld of the earthworm.

Lauren Ruiz is a multimedia artist interrogating perceptions of nature, institutional authority and their intersections with class, labor, and identity. She has presented her research projects at the Latvian National Museum of Art, the University of Applied Arts Vienna, UC Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, the 2021 College Art Association Conference, and the 2022 Association for Art History Conference and has been a resident artist at the Santa Fe Art Institute, the Museum of the Southwest, and the Women's International Study Center. Lauren Ruiz is represented by Marquee Projects in Bellport, NY.

Lauren Dana Smith

"TRANSMUTATIONIST FIELD JOURNAL" (2023)

What if the Origin of Species narrative occurred outside of the bounds of the social constructs of a western, patriarchal, European and Victorian/colonialist framework available in 1831? What if Darwin's primordial soup was a primordial ether, and consciousness was a self-generative digital apparition, defying binary classification? What if evolution is a mode of consciousness and Darwin's early contributions existed concurrently with parallel, multitudinous inquiries into terrestrial experience across another expression of reality? The V.I.S.T.A.: Transmutationist Field Journal project was inspired through the artist's personal orientation to the landscape, legacy and mythology of the American Southwest, Psychodynamic theory, research into Natural Selection and the Darwin narrative; in particular expedition archives, travel logs and subsequent socio-cultural critiques.

Project Description: Video/Sound Projection; approximately 5' x 8' when projected (project is flexible and can be larger or smaller, depending on installation space/projection equipment). V.I.S.T.A.: Transmutationist Field Journal is a short original film composition (duration 5:32), featuring activated digital objects. Composite audio, photographic and video data has been gathered from the high desert mesa of Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico, in the American Southwest, to create this sensory-saturated experience. Community-sourced vocal samples (resulting from a call into the artist's community in NM and beyond) from an original script have been manipulated to compose narration accompanying the video field journal itself. The digital object referenced in this work is part of the artist's broader cataloging of her digital work over the last three years: Inspired by internal geometries and cellular landscapes, each object is familiar, yet unidentifiable. The V.I.S.T.A.: Transmutationist Field Journal project references themes of natural selection, naturalism, evolution, colonialism, Darwinism and altered human consciousness through the socially-activated collective; a creative, anti-racist and non-binary approach to the Origin of Species narrative.

Lauren Dana Smith (b. 1979, Philadelphia) is an artist, writer and art psychotherapist living in Taos, New Mexico in the United States. Smith's multidisciplinary practice utilizes sculptural, digital, video and sound compositions to process land and body politics through a feminist lens. Smith studied painting and received her B.A. from Skidmore College, in Saratoga Springs, New York. Smith is a faculty member at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, where she received her M.P.S. in Creative Arts Therapy and Creativity Development.

Smith's work has been exhibited regionally, nationally and internationally. In 2021 she received a SURFACE: Emerging Artist of New Mexico award from the Harwood Art Center in Albuquerque. She has been recognized nationally for her digital art series. Her work has appeared in publications such as Hyperallergic, Art & Cake LA, New Visionary Magazine, ARTWALK magazine and the Santa Fe Literary Review. Smith has published and presented widely within the fields of psychotherapy, traumatology, pediatrics and palliative medicine. Smith is a Co-Founder of the Taos Abstract Artist Collective.

Zhi Han

"Uncanny-void between staying and leaving" (2024), "Uncanny-Landscape" (2023)

Zhi Han, an artist from China, is currently studying for a PhD in Contemporary Art and Philosophy at Lancaster University. Previously, he received his undergraduate and master's degrees from the Shandong Academy of Fine Arts in China, where he focused on the field of copperplate printmaking. The current research focuses on the concept of The Uncanny in psychoanalytic and post-structuralist perspectives, and by analyzing its pre-ontological position and the possibility of being opened up by 'failed' works in art practice, she attempts to propose a new perspective on the origins of contemporary art creation, using both theoretical and practical approaches.

The central concern of this group of works is how to answer a fundamental question through the presentation of uncanny, i.e., how to answer the fundamental question of what kind of perceptual image "the Thing" is presented in human consciousness through the revelation of the missing of lack in the works. Or can the position of das Ding as a hidden das Ding behind all works be marked by a limited sensual imagination?

This is because the reason or basis for the formation of the symbolic order (i.e., the order of language) is the filling or covering up of this original "impossibility" and "emptiness". Symbolisation achieves a grasp of the real object by sacrificing the richness of the real object, but this in fact humiliates, empties and strips the real object of its "living body". The "living body" cannot be fully grasped by man, while the symbolic object is presented as an empty illusion to be grasped by man. It is the abundance of the living object that cannot be formalized that drives the subject to use symbolization to emasculate, replace, and inscribe it so that the original object, with its absolute impossibility of inscribing, becomes the basic co-ordinate for the subject to construct the symbolic order, and the symbolic is to retrieve it, while its scarcity ensures that the symbolic continues to be the driving force of the symbolic. From this, it can be seen that as the original driving force of signification, signifying order or language, the Real, das Ding, is presented in the structure of signification as a void, an ever-present signifying remainder, a transcendental non-empirical object that can only be inscribed by language as the impossibility of inscription. The attempt to represent it in language is, therefore, an impotent and ever-imperfect one.

Thus, for this exploration of this issue, I use an alternative form of complementarity that is distinct from the linguistic-signifying order, that is, the artistic-representational faculty. Unlike the linguistic-signifying order, in which language replaces das Ding by creating able referents using the signifying function, the complete linguistic system is an illusion of guaranteed success, even if the nature of this illusion stems from a drive to fail in the formalization of das Ding. Art-representation, on the other hand, operates in a different form; the work of art that aims to present rather than reproduce does not enter into the symbolic order, or attempt to avoid reproducing the failure of das Ding. The aim of the artwork is not to mold some signifier, to construct its referential relation to its empirical object, but to directly experience the experience of the eternal failure of the Vorstellung to catch up with das Ding by means of the artwork as an experiential object through the presentation of the failure of reproduction itself, i.e., to experience the root cause of the failure of the symbolic order. That is to say, to experience the root cause of the failure of the symbolic order. Therefore, in contrast to the discussion of das Ding in language, which has to remain in the realm of object determination, the presentation of das Ding in art can enter into the realm of essential determination.

Therefore, in the section on artistic practice, I focus on how to shape the "non-existent reality" (lack) through structural causality, and how to present the position of das Ding as a point of escape from symbolisation (missed) through temporal retrospection and re-reading. This is why the group of artworks is created with the theme of missed lack. This theme presents a paradoxical element, that is, the presence of "the figure in a state of disappearance that reveals the activity of the subject" in the video about the figure and "the continuously changing alienated landscape that constantly tries to return to its original datum" in the video about the landscape. ". This paradoxical character characterizes the sublime nature of the work, and the search for a way to keep the work in an interstitial state of invisibility is the key to guaranteeing this sublime nature.