

a thing re | sembling a win • dow

Cover image: Bridget Conn, *Leaving Piece* (detail) and Anna Helgeson, *Betty Marvy (Davis)* from *The Lady Vanishes* series.

a thing re | sembling a win • dow

Bridget Conn
McLean Fahnestock
Ursula Gullow
Dana Hargrove
Anna Helgeson
Leigh-Ann Pahapill

Asheville Area Arts Council
Grove Arcade, Asheville, NC
May 20 - June 25, 2016

a collective exhibition of



window

re/production|re/presentation

a thing re | sembling a win • dow



BRITISH
BIRMINGHAM
Bridget Conn
McLean Fahnstock
Ursula Gullow
Dana Hargrove
Anna Helgeson
Leigh-Ann Pahapill



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Part of The Asheville Area Arts Council's *Point of View* series, a *thing re / sembling a win • dow* places the practice of six local and national artists in conversation through the production of both new and re-imagined works realized in response to the conceptual framework of the ongoing public art project, *Window (re/production | re/presentation)*. I would like to thank, first and foremost, the artists who contributed to this collective installation of works – Bridget Conn (Asheville, NC), McLean Fahnestock (Nashville, TN), Dana Hargrove (Maitland, FL), Ursula Gullow (Asheville, NC), Anna Helgeson (Asheville, NC), and Leigh-Ann Pahapill (Toledo, OH and Toronto, ON, Canada). I am indebted to these artists for their willingness to participate in challenging and thoughtful dialogue throughout the many months of planning for this exhibition, and am also grateful for their support of *Window (re/production | re/presentation)* through previous exhibitions, or continued public engagement. Thanks must also be given to Will Rice and Arthur Fotos, owners of Henco Reprographics, who have given over the use of one of their storefront windows as the site for this experimental public art project since March of 2013, and their willingness to make this project sustainable. As well, I would of course like to thank The Asheville Area Arts Council for providing a space for this off-site exhibition and for their continued support of the arts in Asheville, North Carolina. Lastly, I give enthusiastic thanks to all of those who promote and participate within our arts and cultural communities in Asheville, and beyond.

- Dawn Roe, Exhibition Curator and *Window (re/production | re/presentation)*, Founder

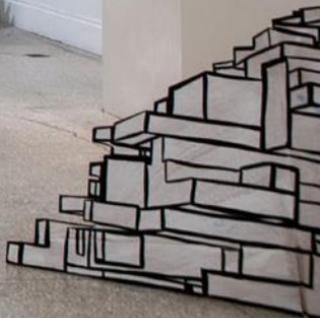
[It is] Opposed to Recognition

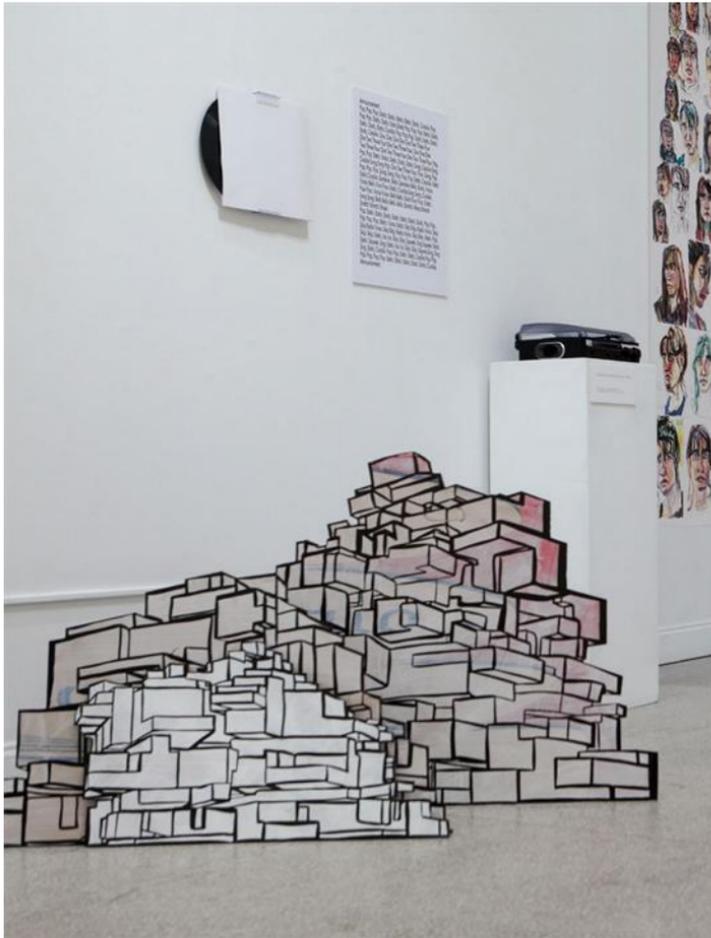
Dawn Roe

"As for the object of the concept, in itself or in relation to other objects, it relies upon resemblance as a requirement of perceptual continuity. [The] "I think" is the most general principle of representation."¹

Gilles Deleuze posits in the chapter, "The Image of Thought", from *Difference and Repetition*, that we truly think only when we have difficulty recognizing. The six artists whose works comprise the collective exhibition, *a thing re | sembling a win • dow*, deeply engage with ideas that inform the instigation and realization of their works through varying modes of inquiry – all of which rely upon particular culturally held presumptions (be they aesthetic, historical, or personal), leaving behind interpretive prompts to guide the viewer, yet simultaneously embracing a certain illegibility, disallowing any sort of singular, immediately perceivable meaning to rise forth. As individually or collaboratively authored works, each grouping participates in self-reflexive dialogue around methods and modes of representation and reproduction as integral to their being – through such means as repetitive, durational gestures; material transformation and duplication; archival data assemblage and analysis; or directed investigations of image and identity. Yet, as a collective installation, these works form a distinct entity, with combined components reverberating and colliding against one another, where resemblance presupposes recognition, provoking the "I think" of representation.

Opposite: *a thing re | sembling a win • dow* (Installation View), 2016.





Dana Hargrove, *Stand-in Eulogy*, Acrylic and India ink on cardboard, 2016.

Encountering Dana Hargrove's cardboard multiples scattered throughout the gallery serve to orient the viewer to the space through conventions of landscape and horizon with their bases situated at floor level. Yet just as immediately this perception is destabilized as the miniature nature of each cropping is revealed, leaving us to feel enormous as we walk through this field of anonymous structures. Hargrove's facades function simultaneously as futuristic non-spaces and modernist relics, consisting of rigid and compartmentalized Mondrian-like forms that have been subjected to a cartoonish distortion, suggestive of both inner-city tower blocks and cairns within the landscape. Drawing upon the language of abstraction to engage with architectural representation, the fabricated nature of the built environment is called attention to through repetitive visualization.

Associating the urban forms of brutalist architecture with stone piles encountered along walking paths in the countryside has been a recurrent theme in Hargrove's work for several years, as these formal and cultural references link directly to her formative years in the United Kingdom. Hargrove comes at these concerns of space and place from a critical rather than nostalgic perspective. Using tossed aside shipping boxes as a base for each form; the residue of material culture is deliberately allowed to seep out from behind their painted covering, with ghosts of logos and text barely perceptible from behind the white wash. The transformation of these labeled boxes into corporatized factory-like structures produces a double reference to the box-like building as producer of the commodity containers themselves, with the flimsy, uneven material and thick, gestural marks alluding to a certain instability suggestive of contemporary apprehensions around labor and economy.

Echoing Hargrove's dual emphasis upon architectural/man-made and naturally occurring forms, Leigh-Ann Pahapill's contribution incorporates significant physical and archival references to limestone as both building material and geological deposit. Responding to the site of the exhibition in the historic Grove Arcade building, Pahapill engaged in conversation with geologist Paul Valdez regarding the travertine ornamentation the structure is known for. A gridded, floor-based sculpture comprised of acquired travertine tile (a nod to Carl Andre's minimalist works, themselves directly referencing the particle-based nature of raw matter while also gesturing toward Marxist ideologies associating the arrangement of unaltered materials to the assembly line work of the factory) serves as an anchoring piece to Pahapill's grouping of works.

In many ways, Pahapill's practice embodies contingency itself – only taking tangible form after a core set of ideas have been repeatedly subjected to research, leading to subsequent sets of responses that provoke suggestions, which ultimately shape the work. Pahapill's installed suite of works, *Unconformity Redux*, is reliant upon multiple components converging in both visual and ontological proximity, with formal aesthetic qualities directing us toward a critical engagement with the material properties of each piece, the being-ness in each instance, always paramount.

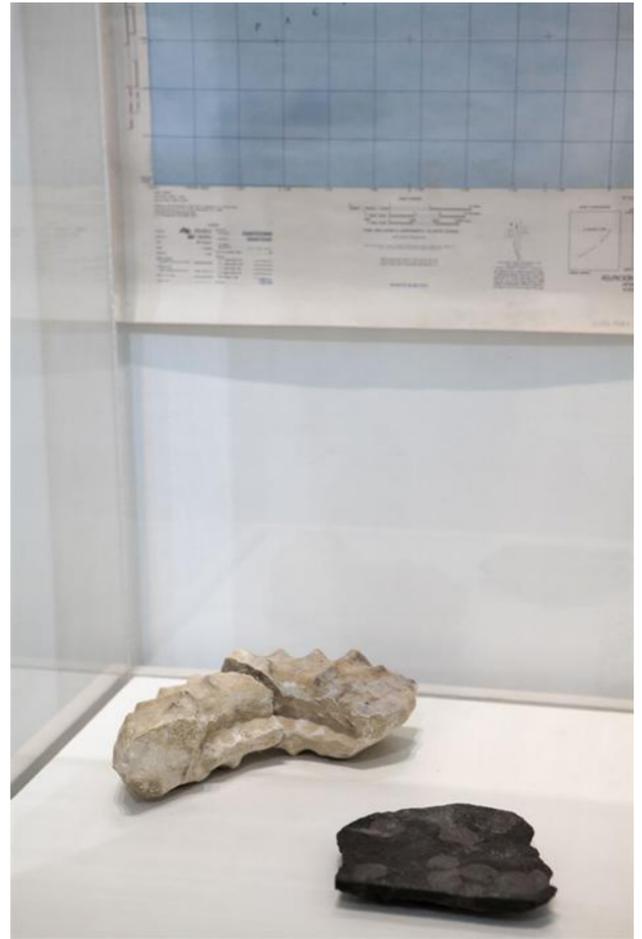
(Opposite) *a thing re / sembling a win • dow* (Installation View), Foreground and right wall: Leigh-Ann Pahapill (with Paul Valdez), *Unconformity Redux*, Various media, 2013/16.



Informational text panel on the right wall, partially visible.



Leigh-Ann Pahapill (with Paul Valdez), *Unconformity Redux* (Limestone ammonite fossil, c. 100 Ma: Cast. Found 2004, Original shell buried, form cast in sediment, Found in Big Bend area of Texas; Slate ammonite fossil, 250 Ma: Relief, Original shell buried (relief sculpture) Death Assemblage, preserved, likely from a gift shop; Original 1943 map of Ascuncion Island, Found map), 2013/15.



In, *'now', 'then, 'soon' and so forth* (Pahapill's original contribution to Window (re/production | re/presentation)'s storefront space in 2013) the artist relied upon a primary interaction with a found map that, upon being scanned for reproduction, encountered a software glitch resulting in a thin band of digital noise demarcating the top quarter of the image file. Taking this glitch a step (or two) further, Pahapill has suggested a physical manifestation of the immateriality and interruption of digital noise as geological movement reconstituted in the form of fossils, rock and stone.

The collaborative research of Pahapill and Valdez led to very specific analysis of the pits and troughs inherent to travertine stone as a geologic unconformity that could be linked back to the vacuous space produced via the digital glitch in the scanned map file. The tiled floor sculpture comprised of 16 travertine tiles reinforces an emphasis on this particular materiality and serves as a foundation for the component objects (including the original, found map) which serve as visual manifestations of an attempt to apprehend the void – a scanned reproduction of an architectural plan of The Grove Arcade, photographic documentation of sandstone rock formations, fossil samples, and transcribed text – generating a slight sense of unease as we are led from one place, and one thought, to another. The re-visioned works created for this exhibition function as a post-encounter, suggesting a measured relation to time and duration through the slow, unfathomable movement associated with the relentlessly ongoing yet always imperceptible geological transformation of the earth.

McLean Fahnestock's repurposed field recordings rely upon a series of notable encounters that without her retrieval would otherwise have remained confined to their historical space within the Library of Congress archives. Fahnestock's ongoing project examines a discrete portion of her family's history involving her Grandfather and Great Uncle's seafaring voyages throughout the South Pacific on behalf of the American Museum of Natural History in the 1930's and 1940's. Reclaiming this history through archival research as a mode of artistic practice allows Fahnestock to activate the process of the expedition as method, while sifting through the mythologies stemming from post-engagement with the artifacts surviving these travels.

As a unique recording pressed to vinyl, *Fahnestock South Seas Collection: Containers*, manages to reconstitute the experience of an expedition in the form of a visual-aural image. The newly imagined encounter is further troubled by the viewer/listener's inability to directly engage with the material data that has been subjected to an archival doubling – now embedded within the grooves of a record album. A turntable is situated in proximity, yet the sounds have been made inaccessible (aside from a nearby placard of text insinuating what might be heard via written language); as the record remains mounted to the wall for the exhibition's duration, save for a single performance directed by the artist. Fahnestock's emphasis upon tangibility concerns itself with the transformation of one material form, to another – and the inevitable loss that occurs in both the initial recording process (in this case, audio data, which is already once removed from its original place and time in its first iteration) and its subsequently copied forms which inevitably result in the insertion of additional elements as the degradation inherent to reproduction introduces its own distinct material.

McLean Fahnestock, *Fahnestock South Seas Collection: Containers* (Sound on unique vinyl album; Text document printed and mounted to foamcore), 2016.



Announcement.

Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Crackle. Pop.
Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Static. Static. Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Static.
Static. Static. Static. Crackle. Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Static.
Static. Crackle. One. One. One One One Two Three Four
One Two Three Four One Two Three Four. One One One
Two Three Four One Two Three Four One Two Three Four. Pop.
Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Song. Crackle Song.
Crackle Song Song Pop. One Two Three Four. Four. Song. Pop.
Pop. Pop. Pop. Song. Song. Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Crackle. Static
Static Crackle. Gamelan. Bells. Gamelan Bells. Static. Voice.
Voice. Bells. Four Four. Static. Crackle. Song Song. Crackle.
Four Four. Voice Voice. Bells Bells. Static Four Four. Static.
Song Song. Bells Bells. Bells. Bells. Stretch. Warp Stretch
Stretch Stretch. Break.
Pop. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Pop. Pop.
Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Voice. Static. Skip Skip. Radio Voice. Skip
Skip Radio Voice. Skip Skip. Radio Voice. Skip Skip. Static. Pop.
Skip. Skip. Static. Ice. Ice. Skip. Skip. Squeek. Sing Squeek. Static.
Static. Squeek. Sing. Static. Ice. Ice. Skip. Skip. Squeek. Sing. Sing.
Sing. Static. Crackle. Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Crackle. Pop. Pop.
Pop. Pop. Pop. Pop. Static. Static. Static. Static. Static. Crackle.
Announcement.

The grooves of Fahnestock's fabricated record allude to both an additive and subtractive process, whereby the vinyl is manipulated in a manner that takes away material in order for the embedded aural information to be reproduced, and heard. Bridget Conn's series of chemigram prints become visually manifest in a manner that parallels Fahnestock's singularly produced album. Conn's *Leaving Piece* (titled in response to Yoko Ono's conceptual, instruction pieces of the 1960's) takes the production of an initial, contemplative gesture as its basis, prolonging the moment via its performed reproduction — made possible by its recorded imprint on a silkscreen utilized throughout the process. A resist applied to the photo-sensitive side of plastic, resin coated paper allows Conn to manipulate which portions of the substrate will be acted upon by the photo-chemical materials encountered throughout the various stages of development. The resulting non-representational imagery consists of either empty or full black or white spaces that undulate and interact with nebulous stains of purple and brown.

Although drawn from the same screen (itself containing only a portion of the original gestural mark), each individual image persists both as a recording of a unique situation and a manifestation of a secondary encounter, its form resulting from a chance response to photo-chemical processes. Although Conn has learned to manipulate and control when and for how long to subject the paper to particular baths of solution in an effort to procure specific results, each distinct image is impossible to replicate with precise exactitude. The subsequently produced marks serve as indexical records of Conn's momentary interaction with the material, repeating portions of the initially screen-printed gesture, but never (quite) in the same manner, twice.





Like Ono's instruction pieces - which were essentially comprised of ordinary language made poetic via their suggestive implication of simple actions - Conn's work emanates from the enactment of seemingly mundane repetition, re-staged and rigorously examined until something entirely new emerges. Stitched together, the distinct demarcations between the hundreds of prints that comprise Conn's *Leaving Piece* lead the resulting continuous strips to become suggestive of forms common to photography's time-based neighbors of music and cinema, visually referencing both printed stanzas and reels of film. The choice to transform the joined segments into a series of continuous scrolls furthers the work's durational link to photographic practice, visually spewing each momentary contemplation directly into the gallery space, forming a grouping of mass objects that manage to retain an ephemeral quality as they delicately sway from the ceiling.

(Opposite) *a thing re / sembling a win • dow* (Installation View) including in the foreground, Bridget Conn, *Leaving Piece*, Chemigrams on gelatin silver paper and thread, 2016.

The portrait studies of Ursula Gullow take shape as a similarly vast pile, seeming to emanate from the recess of the gallery's corner in their installed arrangement along the back wall, forming an amorphous mountain of sorts with less stable components along the tops edges threatening to produce a slide, resulting in collapse. The many hundreds of representations are heavy in their directness as well as their multitude, confronting the viewer repeatedly in a manner that becomes disorienting – with each singular image inevitably melding into its neighbor, ultimately becoming a massive conglomeration.

Gullow's project uses the rhetorical mythology of the portrait as a strategy for isolating representation as both image and idea in the durational project, *SELF EXAM*. This defiantly non-idealized sequence of gestural studies depicts the artist responding to their own image as perceived from a mirror or desktop camera (both, not insignificantly, resulting in a perceptual distortion due to the inverted image) on a daily basis for a period of (at this writing) 2 years and 301 days. Gullow's head and shoulders compositions correlate to conventional expectations attached to portraiture, while other aesthetic choices function in direct opposition to classical traditions. Gullow is almost defiant in her willingness to allow visual distortions to skew proportions, or for particular mark-making strategies or color palette choices to veer into the carnivalesque.

(Opposite) *a thing re / sembling a win • dow* (Installation Views) including in the background, Ursula Gullow, *SELF EXAM*, Color photo-copied reproductions, 2013/16.





The examination implicit in the project's title necessitates a careful and controlled study, made possible in this instance only through a very deliberate process engaged with repeatedly. In a sense each portrait becomes a specimen of representation itself – particularly if we emphasize the prefix “re”, suggesting that representation is simply to present – again. And again, and again, as Gullow has maintained through a relentlessly continuous series where reiteration and repetition are implicated within the images themselves. Installed as a flattened pile of color copies, the resulting conglomeration forms a taxonomy of self-image, functioning as both archive and diary. The directness of the bust study in Gullow's reiterative installation of multiple reproductions allows the figure's gaze to confront the viewer with an uneasy immediacy – a sense that translates back to the artist's encounter with themselves in the initial moments of depiction, then further transformed via the original study's removal from its place within the timeline to a reproduction affixed to the wall.

Significantly, each imprint contains not only the artist's rendering of themselves, but a notation including the date and time, indicating the length of production. Though clearly Gullow's painted and drawn portraits are inherently more expressive than the graphic, typographical paintings from On Kawara's *Today* series (recording only the date on which they were made from 1966–2013) they share in common an ability to collapse the monotony and insistence of daily occurrence with the potential hidden significance of any of the specific dates or times recorded. Like Kawara's project, the regimented tracking of time evidenced in Gullow's *SELF EXAM* reproduces the existential apprehension we face with each waking day, and, as a durational exercise, we understand the project as ongoing and potentially endless – lending a particularly entropic feel to the imagery when seen en masse.

In contrast to Gullow's investigation of self, Anna Helgeson's project, *The Lady Vanishes*, engages with archival representations of women re-enacted as historical interventions that reconstitute contributions of significant yet overlooked female counterparts to presumed "male genius." The women included were selected based upon extensive research that places their role in direct correspondence to specific accomplishments that have remained solely attached to the men in our collective memory – those depicted in this iteration of the work are Mileva Maric (Einstein) and Betty Marvy (Davis).

The sitters for Helgeson's re-imagined portraits further the speculative nature of this study, themselves playing a particular role reliant upon presumptions gleaned from the photographic documentation their performances are based upon. This opens an additional space of inquiry around stylistic conventions of portraiture originating from painted records of nobility that in turn influenced 18th and early 19th century photographic portraits (at this time, still primarily depicting the upper class), which continue to be the dominant form through the present day, contributing to gendered modes of dress and appearance.



Married Albert Einstein in 1903.



Albert Einstein



Betty Mabry, Born 1947, Mission, Wislizen, Model, Pioneer of Cook and just
before period. Married and influenced the groundbreaking album. She has three
children eight albums including, Betty Mabry, They Say I'm Different, and
Nasty Gal. Married Mike Davis in 1986



Betty Mabry, Born 1947, Mission, Wislizen, Model, Pioneer of Cook and just
before period.
Released eight albums including, Betty Mabry, They Say I'm Different, and
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Betty Mabry, Born 1947,
Released eight albums including, Betty Mabry, They Say I'm Different, and
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Betty Mabry
Released eight albums including, Betty Mabry, They Say I'm Different, and
Nasty Gal. Married Mike Davis in 1986



Mike Davis



Not insignificantly, Helgeson chose to use a cumbersome large-format camera to produce the initial negatives for the series – a move again referencing a certain tradition and exalting the portrait to a space of particular reverence. Negating the presumed value of the large, fully detailed negative produced by this type of camera, Helgeson then subjected the initial print to a series of large-scale photocopied reproductions that deliberately degrade, and soften the image. In contrast to one-to-one reproductions from history books, the massiveness of Helgeson's images serve to reveal rather than hide the disintegrative properties of each photocopied reiteration. Reminiscent of wheat-pasted posters in public streets that place value upon political efficacy over aesthetic quality, this scale cues the viewer into the protest-based nature of the project.

The Lady Vanishes provides a series of seemingly straightforward visual depictions with didactic accompaniment, with portions of both image and text disappearing in each photocopied reiteration. Presented sequentially in rows of five, the final image renders the subject of the portrait barely perceptible with almost all descriptive text redacted save for the undeniably present names of Albert Einstein and Miles Davis. In this manner, the female image is extended into contemporary historical space while simultaneously struggling against what seems an inevitable erasure.

Together, the works produced by the six artist in this exhibition make manifest an incessant cross-referencing that denies the viewer a singular read of any individual component(s), provoking interpretations that necessarily integrate one generative thought into another – an operation that is perhaps both frustrating, and liberating.

Pahapill's found map potentiates a functional use for the explorative wanderings of Fahnestock's re-imagined expeditions. Conn's photo-chemically revealed gestural patterns are clearly reminiscent of the imprinted stone of Pahapill's re-claimed fossils as well as the imperceptible sounds embedded within the grooves of Fahnestock's fabricated vinyl record, while the obsessive repetition inherent to Conn's process of production and reproduction corresponds to both Gullow's daily portrait studies and Hargrove's facades that almost seem as if they might regenerate on their own, as continually sprouting earth forms. Similarly, Hargrove's eschewing of traditionally associated materials of painting and sculpture in embrace of re-purposed cardboard as a utilitarian surface relates back to Pahapill's minimalist appropriation of travertine tile and related ephemera and to Helgeson's deliberate use of commercial photo-copiers as a means to degrade the expected quality associated with fine-art reproduction. More directly, Helgeson and Gullow's projects overlap in their depictions of women, engaging with feminist theories of the gaze and the politics of representation, while these aspects are less directly evident in Fahnestock's personal intervention into her family's male-dominated history of exploration, and Conn's referencing of gender associations around the textile-based practice of sewing in her stitched together image scrolls.

These correspondences are potentially endless. No doubt this spontaneously generated list has not mined every potential addition to this conversation, as unforeseen cultural, aesthetic, and art historical reference points are bound to emerge and strike against one another as agents of resemblance. The dialogue is ongoing, endlessly moving from one encounter to another – these works simply serve to provoke and perpetuate the cycle of perceptual continuity.

“Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter... What is encountered [may be] grasped in a range of affective tones [yet] in whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed. In this sense, it is opposed to recognition. In recognition, the sensible is not at all that which can only be sensed, but that which bears directly upon the senses in an object which can be recalled, imagined or conceived.”²

Notes

¹Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 138.

²Ibid., 139.



Bridget Conn
STATEMENT

I am working with the chemigram process -- using silver gelatin photographic paper to make what is typically a one-of-a-kind piece based on line, shape, color, and textures rather than on photographic imagery from negatives. By applying an oil-based resist, and then placing the paper in a tray of photo chemistry, the resist protects portions of paper from going black or remaining white (depending on which chemical is used first.)

A subset of my work focuses on gesture, on symbolic, spontaneous mark-making that I relate to the concept of secret or foreign language. Being that chemigrams are one of a kind, I wanted to play with the idea of how the chemigram can transform by using screen-printing to make the gestural form itself a resist. From here I created more chemigrams to address how the process of reproduction still created unique imagery given the endless variables involved in the chemical process. Given my interest in treating photographs as physical objects, I wanted to sew them together and emphasize their sculptural properties.

The replicated gesture itself for this piece was made in a state of concentration on the fact that I am about to start a new chapter of my life in Savannah, Georgia. In clearing my mind and focusing on the concept of departure, the instinctual mark, as originally created in the framed chemigram, abstractly represents this thought.

THE FAHNESTOCK COLLECTION: CONTAINERS

Pops and crackles that betray the method of manufacture. Skips and squeals that originate from playback, capture, and transfer. Real to reel.

Remixed from the physical sounds created by the records in the Fahnestock Collection this record, a 12" single, is composed of clicks, warps, and tape stretches. This is an audio document of the containment of sounds that utilizes the artifacts of the transition from performance capture to container as compositional material. Its rhythmic form echoes material in the Fahnestock Collection, field recordings of chants, percussion, and gamelans from the South Pacific.

A promised gift to the Fahnestock Collection in the
American Folklife Center at Library of Congress.

McLean Fahnestock, *Fahnestock South Seas Collection: Containers* (Acquired record player; Text document printed and mounted to foamcore; Sound on unique vinyl album), 2016.





Ursula Gullow

STATEMENT

My ongoing series, *SELF EXAM* sequentially examines the way self perception and creative technique expand and contract over time. Every day I interpret my image, as I see it, via a mirror or video camera. I intentionally do not use a photograph because I want to reference what is in front of me in that moment. Working from a live image enables me to be both creator and subject.

The portraits are mostly rendered in acrylic paint, ink and/or graphite on paper. They are quick impressions and generally made within thirty minutes. *SELF EXAM* began on July 28, 2013 and continues indefinitely. The complete archive of portraits can be viewed at ursulagullow.tumblr.com which is updated regularly.

In addition to my self-portrait series, I maintain a regular studio practice to explore the range between representation and abstraction using oil, acrylics and mixed media. My paintings reflect the shifting continuums between natural/manufactured, imaginary/real, and cyber/physical. My most recent mixed media abstract paintings are deconstructed landscapes reflecting my agitation and awe of most biological processes and mass-produced things.

Dana Hargrove

STATEMENT

Landscape, and how we manipulate it to fit preconceived ideals or corporatized molds, has become familiar territory for my art practice. Whether I am exploring the urban environment with its homogenized grid of rectangular blocks, or examining how culture frames and re-frames landscape, I remain responsive to how our perceptions of the world and sense of place are shaped by human design.

My spatially illusionistic representations offer synthesized versions of geological outcrops, cairns, or memorial mounds of gathered rock. Organic forms are civilized through linear perspective, and superimposed on disposable consumer packaging to highlight our ongoing subordination of nature.

Classic western movie sets, with their façade communities propped amid panoramic backdrops of desert and mountain, have informed the installation of *Stand-in Eulogy*. Placeless and staged, they act as stand-in monuments to the loss of natural landscape brought on by capitalism and its co-opting of the wild.

(Opposite) Scanned reproduction of a two-page spread (with notations by the artist) of Catherine M. Howett's essay, "Where the One-Eyed Man is King: The Tyranny of Visual and Formalist Values in Evaluating Landscapes", from the anthology, *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes* (ed. Paul Erling Groth and Todd W. Bressi).

as is the corollary precept that an individual's consciousness is profoundly shaped by the cultural community to which one belongs. Yet, despite this awareness that every judgment made about some part of the world "out there" is inescapably subjective and value-laden, aesthetic predispositions, preferences, and prejudices often remain unexamined. While it is certainly not possible for individuals or social groups within a given culture to inventory and analyze with scientific objectivity the whole range of values that inform their evaluations of a variety of experiences, the task of exploring the origins, history, and evolution of shared values is indispensable to understanding ourselves. With respect to the physical environment specifically, an understanding of why we are inclined to make a specific set of values the basis of environmental assessment and decision making may liberate us from the false conviction that our judgments and actions are based on rigorously objective and inviolate standards.

This essay explores the origins of the high priority that Western Europeans and Americans place upon the way places look, based on our expectation that to be considered "beautiful" or "well designed," a readable and traditional formal ordering of visual elements should be present. While it would be absurd to suggest that we can or should ignore the dominant role that seeing plays in most human encounters with the environment, the translation of visual sensory dominance into specific aesthetic values is a consequence of culture, not of nature. Moreover, if an almost exclusive investment of value in visual and compositional values blinds us to other potential attributes of the landscapes we experience, we are left poorer for our failure to discover and exploit additional—and in some cases alternative—sources of aesthetic satisfaction. Obviously, too, design and policy decisions based on a culturally conditioned aesthetic canon whose premises remain largely unexamined simply perpetuate environmental biases that may actually subvert ecological and/or social goods.

McLuhan traced the historic roots of our preoccupation with visual values and highly structured spatial compositions to a revolution in the representation of images and of space that occurred in the Renaissance. He believed that the fifteenth-century invention of movable type was conceptually linked to the invention or rediscovery of the optical science of perspective by Renaissance artists and architects. Both of these devices involved a linear, uniform, and continuously replicable process that defined the world in visual terms and emphasized a fixed point of view and a detached observer/reader. Renaissance perspective figured forth a visual paradigm of spatial order derived from formal units of measurement, dominated by vertical and horizontal axes, and characterized by symmetry and harmonious balance of parts within a unified whole.

McLuhan's playful comment on the hierarchical structuring of this simulacrum ("A piazza for everything and everything in its piazza"²) is, however, well

order = beautiful

World + Africa

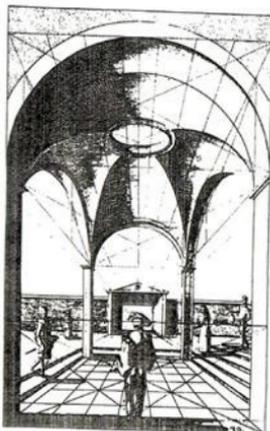


FIG. 37. Illustration from Hans Vredeman de Vries, *Perspective Das ist Die Welt beruehnte Kunst*. . . (The illustrious art of perspective) (Leiden, 1604). IDC by Microform Publishers.

supported by John White's painstaking analysis of the intentions and effects of Renaissance illusionistic perspective in *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space*. White makes the point that the achievement of verisimilitude made possible by the new techniques for counterfeiting the appearance of real three-dimensional space on a planar surface was not more revolutionary than the achievement of a new kind of pictorial organization. The subordination of all objects to a single set of rules is far more than a mere device for closer imitation of the natural world. The measured relationship between each element of the pictorial world is a potent factor in increasing the unity of the composition, as well as its realism.³

What began in Renaissance painting as an extraordinary artistic transfiguration of the everyday world of experience inevitably came to condition the ordinary expectations of what the observing *Ueye*—that fixed point determining the lines along which forms were dispersed in perspective space—should perceive in the real environment outside the frame of the picture. The idealized formal order in a painted landscape or urban scene suggested a model for the design of actual spaces, for buildings and streets and gardens, even for large rural estates and entire cities. First came the conceptual framework of the plan, imposing an ab-



Albert Einstein in 1903



Albert Einstein in 1903

Albert Einstein in 1903, together with his father

Albert Einstein in 1903



Albert Einstein in 1903



Albert Einstein

Anna Helgeson

STATEMENT

The Lady Vanishes reveals the lives of women whose historical contributions were significant, but due to their proximity to male genius, have been erased. Each portrait explores the possibility of remembering through reenactment. By re-performing the portrait sitting, I was able to invite another person into the conversation about these forgotten women. Together, the sitter and I re-membered a women's history that has been dis-membered.

The women shown here, Mileva Maric (Albert Einstein), and Betty Marby (Miles Davis) worked beside their husbands, but have been left out of history books and consequently out of the popular imagination. These exclusions, and thousands like them, contribute to the myth of singular (male) genius.

Each portrait has been reproduced with a large-scale photocopier. This wapproach intentionally references both activist art and didactic material.

By re-membering these women I hope to start a larger conversation about cultural amnesia.

Leigh-Ann Pahapill (with Paul Valdez)

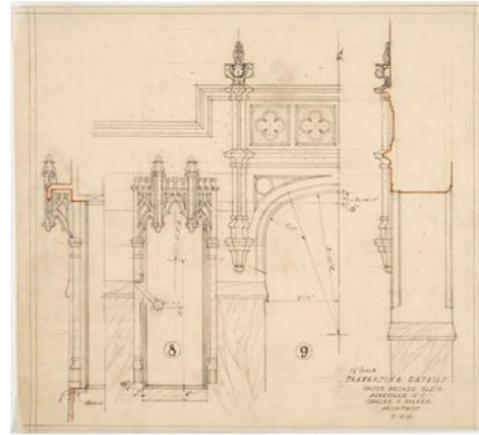
STATEMENT

The installations of Canadian artist Leigh-Ann Pahapill question how we apprehend our world and investigate the frameworks that shape how we come to know things. Pahapill designs site-responsive projects where space and architecture are systematically examined as a means to dis-locate subject, object, and place. Her work is an attempt to invert and sustain the processes of representation as a means to provoke reflection on the logics, grammars, and other complexes of interpretation that comprise culture.

For this exhibition, Pahapill collaborated with Paul Valdez (B.S. geology). The collaboration was initiated based upon a conversation about the Grove Arcade building, and in particular, the travertine details. The travertine – a form of ivory colored limestone characterized by pitting and troughs – connected to the voids Pahapill was investigating in *'now', 'then', 'soon' and so forth* at Window in 2013 with respect to the glitch artifact that emerged in the scanning of the US Army Service Map of Asuncion Island (1943). The fossils held a similar resonance as artifacts of voids: “Rather than creating the illusion of a transparent, well-working interface to information, the glitch captures the machine revealing itself...”



"The "Classic" view of Siccar Point with the angular unconformity between the Late Devonian Old Red Sandstone (dipping gently to the left) and the underlying Silurian turbidites (vertical beds at right). Craig Jones, Professor, Geological Sciences, the University of Colorado, "Subtly Siccar" <https://grumpygeophysicist.wordpress.com/2015/07/27/subtly-siccar/>



Travertine Details, (Grove Arcade, Asheville, N.C.) MC 00383 Flat Folder 6, Special Collection Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries

Papayill and Valdez have produced a PDF document including excerpts of their research for *Unconformity Redux*. The document is available for download at <http://windowcontemporary.org/aaac.html>

DIGITAL APPENDIX

An appendix to this catalog containing additional, supplemental material as well as links to artist websites is available for download. Please visit the link below to access this content.

<http://windowcontemporary.org/aaac.html>



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