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A collaboration between emerging
Fine Art and History of Art,
Design and Visual Culture students
from the University of Alberta

Annotations 2016

Artwork from the University of Alberta

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Preface

Professors and educators find a mix of material and approaches that will challenge and inspire their students towards their future practice. Although the knowledge acquired under the direction of a university is more than invaluable, for many it is not enough. Those who learn the most access the opportunities available to both themselves and their peers to create their own program and goals. This publication is the tangible and stable archive of individuals who have done just that. Whether involved in the project's current or previous years, participants are likely to see how sometimes the greatest opportunities are created rather presented. This is a lesson that will no doubt repeat itself as students find themselves operating exterior to an institution.

Annotations is the third iteration of this collaborative project making this process all the more evident. *Fluence*, 2014, laid the initial ground work for this collaboration, and *It's All Interpretation*, 2015, observed the previous year's outcome while making additions and changes to allow the project to grow. *Annotations*, too, strives to reinterpret the idea of a collaborative publication/exhibition between Art History and Studio Arts students by making our mark in the project's growth: this year we have a larger number of engaged participants, which will be eligible to contribute again next year with hopes that this will lead to greater stability, continuation and growth in the coming iterations of this project.

Alex Linfield
Bachelor of Fine Arts



Introduction

noun *an·no·ta·tion* \a-nə-'tā-shən\

: a note added to a text, book, drawing, etc.,
as a comment or explanation

: the act of adding notes or comments to something

: the act of annotating something

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

In any situation where there is an object on display, be it a book, artwork, commercial product, diagram, monument, or set of instructions, there is usually some form of annotation, or explanation, accompanying it. We rely on context to understand those things outside our realm of familiarity, availability, culture, and so on. Yet while we may rely on a source of explanation for something we encounter, it does not mean that we could not, by inference, learn about an object, or that a description of that object would be of any use at all: this catalogue can be seen as the physical manifestation of an experiment in this very notion. Here you are faced with annotations of other annotations, and from there you are invited to react as you will.

From the first iteration of this collaborative project, *Fluence*, in 2014, to the second, *It's All Interpretation*, in 2015, there has been a theme carried forward of storytelling and the many facets of interpretation in both artworks and art-related literature. *Annotations, 2016*, focuses on the act of annotating on the part of the artists and the art historians. For the artists it is about annotating the world around them, or the internal world of self. For the art historians, it is about further explaining

what it means to look at someone else's annotation and deduce meaning from that while also taking into consideration how they are impacted by external sources. The layers of meaning and how they are understood are endless. How one might read a piece of visual art or text is not limited to the information with which he or she is presented. Furthermore, one of the unique elements of this project is that it encourages individuality and creative expression on behalf of the writers, much like the freedom of the artists in determining their pieces. The writing can vary from essay format, to interview style, to poetic creative writing--whatever the author feels captures best the essence of their experience with the artworks. This results in an unusual and personalized annotative experience for the writers to present to the readers.

Having been a part of all three years this collaboration has taken place, I am so excited to see this show come together once again, and I am ecstatic that our number of participants has almost doubled. My goal when I became involved in the first iteration of the show was that this would be a continued student initiative project that would carry on as a tradition. Based on the enthusiasm for the project on the part of the students, it seems that my hope has become a realization. It has been an honour to be able to work with so many intellectual and driven students over the last three years. Working with these people and continuing to meet new people as we put on the show each year has been one of the biggest highlights of my time (6 years!) at the U of A. So please, take the time to look at and read the work put into this exhibition. We all hope our viewers and readers will be able to take away something meaningful or thought-provoking. What I hope personally, is that you, the viewer, will allow yourself to sit with us, think about what we are presenting to you, and add your own comment to our work. Please, annotate our annotations.h

Brittany Ball-Snellen

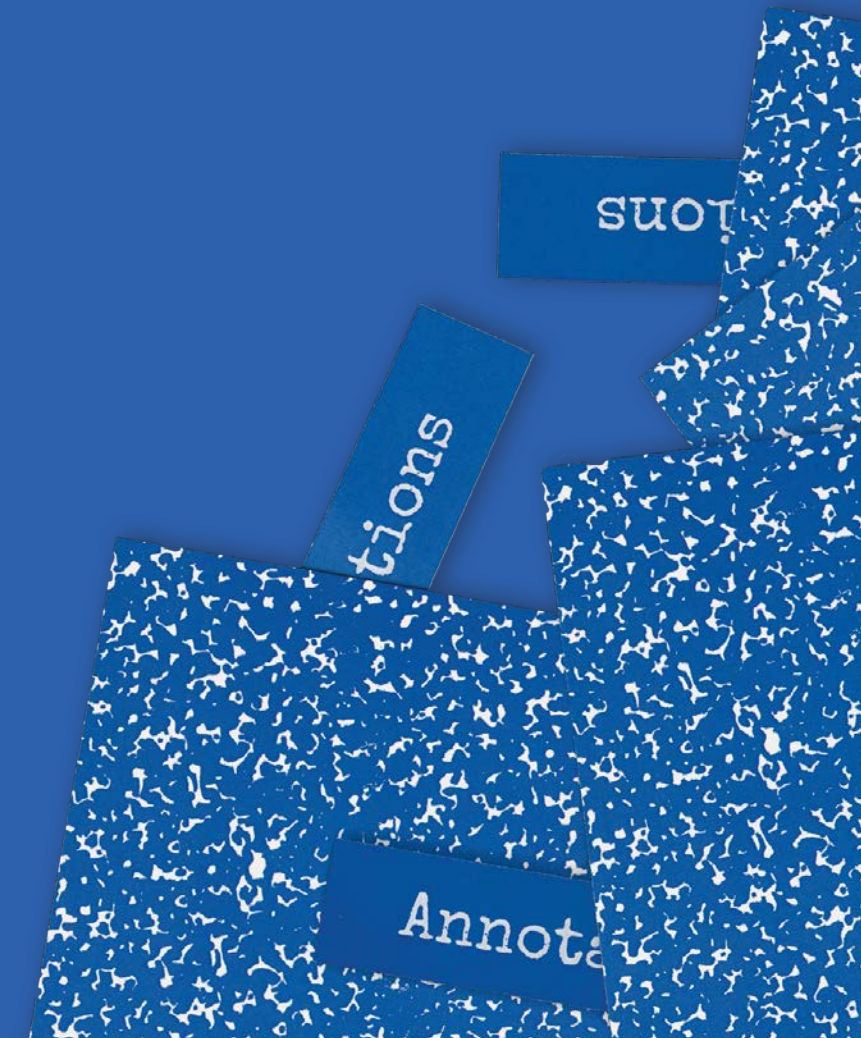
2nd Year Master of Arts - History of Art, Design & Visual Culture

Brittany Ball-Snellen

2nd Year Master of Arts – History of Art, Design & Visual Culture.

One of my favorite ways to look at an artwork is to do so without having any background information on it. To look without knowing what you are supposed to be seeing, while at first a daunting task, can become liberating and allows your mind to draw all kinds of unexpected conclusions. The extent of my background knowledge on Ryan Andrade's work is limited to the fact that he is cinematically inspired. Even more fun for the analysis of his work is the fact that not even he is aware of why or how he is choosing to arrange a composition; he is more concerned with creating an interesting space, working with light and dark, and color, than he is about the narrative or specific figures he is including.

So how does one begin to look at a piece where there is no "annotation" to start from? For myself, the answer lies in seeing and reacting. How does it make me feel? What does the position of the figures say? How does the space connect or divide different parts of the work? How are the figures even placed in the composition? Are they floating? Laying? Does the space make any sense? How do the colors make my body react? Any reaction is indicative of successful looking. Love it or hate it; get it or don't get it-- the pieces want you to think and react. I will repeat once again what I wrote in the introduction: make your own comments on the work. The following visual analysis may be useful as a starting point or not. However you choose to engage with it, I hope it will spark something.





Ryan Andrade

by Brittany Ball-Snellen

Sharp lines direct my eyes from one side of the canvas to another. Each time they are directed toward the edge another line draws my eyes back to the centre, revisiting the figures that inhabit the work. The more I try to make sense of the space, the more my awareness of the other bizarre elements of the painting is heightened. Of the many interesting elements of the painting to discuss, the one I am most drawn to is the artist's play on space and size. We are unsure of what is inside and what is outside, or what is near or far.

Depth in the painting is completely skewed. While Andrade has used certain architectural structures and varying sizes for his figures to allude to a progression into space, they are all on the same plane within the frame of the canvas. This accentuates the gargantuan suited figure keeled over on the right that vomits a strange blue substance--I cannot tell if it reminds me of soft ice cream or a pile of intestines.

While the bent figure and the random Monty Python inspired knights inhabit the seemingly interior space depicted, the woman creates tension with her ambiguous position on the staircase. At first she appears to be entering the room, but upon closer examination she seems rather to be a trapped within the frame like a painting mounted against the wall. Is she inside or outside?

The ceiling also negates any sense of logical space within the room. Multiple wall-like structures of varying sizes draw attention to Andrade's manipulation of scale. They invite the viewer to enter them; however, the result is an Alice in Wonderland-like disorientation where the viewer is at once faced with an opening too small to enter, and at the same time with other areas so large they completely exit the edge of the canvas.

As for any kind of annotation or description from the artist, I suppose that would be the title: *My Mother Raised Me to Be Admired*. Again returning to the introduction, I recall stating that some explanations render themselves to be useless. By this I do not intend it in a negative way, but rather the title is useless to the extent that the artist has selected it to bring any literal or suggestive connotations to his work. The playfulness of his words used for the title is matched by their lack thereof in the weird parchment that resembles a newspaper with no text. The entire painting is a play on space and shape, illusions and disorientations-- dichotomies run amuck.



Aaron Brown

2nd Year Bachelor of Arts – Philosophy Major, English Minor

The unspoken tension found between idealization and reality is central to the work of the artists I have collaborated with for *Annotations*. Art provides its viewers with new ways of seeing and understanding the subtle power effects that hegemonic discourses have naturalized over time. Exploring how the lack found between preprogrammed expectations and real world experiences creates incongruities, each of these artists offer tools to rethink biases and to reshape societal possibility.

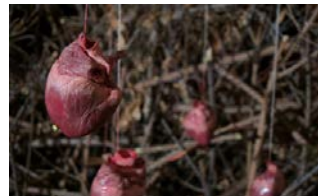
In *Living Water* Connor Cantelon uses opposing forces to simultaneously threaten and protect vulnerable hearts. A slow yet steady trickle of cooling water cleanses the organs and counteracts the rising heat from the fire burning below. Spirituality, like water, helps to insulate an individual from unregulated exposure to the harshness of society, while habitually cleansing the residues of avarice and negativity born out of our interactions with others. Nathan Levassuer's *I am a Mourning Person* posits tension between the heavily curated visual language of advertising and design culture with the realities of personal anxiety. The glossy image is offset by the dour message etched into the glass, which in turn devalues the perfection depicted.

Masculinity is commonly identified with hardness and to show emotion weakens this rigid conception of male identity. Toxic masculinity relies on ignorance to survive unchallenged, but this ignorance leads to inevitable stress of the male psyche to perform a gendered role for the appeasement of others. Mika Haykowski explores the rigid identity projected onto children in *Immediate Family – A Colouring Book*. The sexualized posturing of children immediately incites discomfort due to an insistence that children are “innocent”, but our fears of exploitation may actually serve to repress the natural sexual curiosity of children.

Haykowski invites the viewer to complete the work by colouring the pages, thereby engaging with a controversial image to remove a discomfort that has been nurtured by ideological socialization. Engagement with art serves a didactic function to help us explore the complexities and contradictions of modern existence. Each of these artists' works serves to annotate a complex and seemingly impenetrable body of theory surrounding spirituality, gender socialization and sexuality.

Connor Cantelon

by Aaron Brown



Living Water is a study of tensions found within the reflexive processes of consumption, protection and cleansing. The hearts are suspended precariously over a destructive fire; their only protection being a slow, yet steady stream of cool water to shield the scorching heat.

The allegorical imagery of the hearts can be understood to represent human vulnerability in the face of temptation or danger. As an individual moves through life, they are confronted with choices that shape his or her being. Without protection from the harshness of the world, callousness is inevitable.

Fire often denotes passion, be it love or hate, but while its warmth may be comfortable, as destructive energy increases it begins to overtake indiscriminately and it consumes life to feed its own.

Water hydrates the exposed flesh of the heart as it protects from the ravages of the open flame in the same way that spirituality helps guide an individual through pain and suffering through resisting consumption by nefarious temptations.

Both fire and water are considered to cleanse, but to cleanse with fire is to accept destruction, to give in to fear, to embrace death. The hearts hanging above the fire resemble not only the sacred heart, a catholic object of devotion, but also appear to be a sacrificial offering. The artist offers these hearts to the fire but mitigates its force with the opposing element of water. Those hearts that did not receive enough (or any) water dehydrate under the relentless wave of heat emanating from below.

This installation is a testament to the importance of moral and emotional guidance (be it sacred or secular) from a structure that helps shield us from the severity of reality, thereby preserving our integrity. We are all responsible for providing an opposing force to that which aims to consume.

Without refuge from ravenous consumption we become desiccated and callous to those who struggle, even if their situations mirror our own. If we allow our humanity to deteriorate, we allow the fire to consume us.

Mika Haykowsky

by Aaron Brown

Childhood cannot be defined by innocence alone. Society, and the visual culture it consumes, serves a didactic function in a child's understanding of gender and sexuality before they are even conscious of its influence. "Immediate Family – A Colouring Book" calls into question the performativity of socially constructed asexuality in children through reinterpreting a series of photographs by Sally Mann.

The chosen medium of a coloring book places the child as both the viewer and consumer of a work that contains images of children expressing their own understanding of sexuality. The cover of this work features a young girl with blue skin and pink hair poised confidently with the smoldering gaze of a high fashion model. Haykowsky's choice of color lends absurdity to the image, which historically has been met with strong criticism for its sexualized depiction of Mann's children.

The pink hair and blue skin present the child as androgynous, our only clues to gender remain in the adornment and posture of the child, which is decidedly female. Various images from within the colouring book feature the same element of androgynous possibility leaving the active viewer to project his or her own conception of gender onto the images based on colours chosen. The appearance of props, jewelry, clothing and hair is what signifies gender in all of the images, therefore labeling the child through secondary characteristics likely chosen for them.

The brazen visage of the children depicted shows both an understanding of gender and naiveté regarding their own assertion of intrinsic sexual expression. The provocative postures of the children depicted lack modesty or shame because the children are not objectifying themselves, but instead merely being themselves. An adult audience generally perceives a child's automatic, yet innocent, reenactments of adulthood as performance, even if the child is being genuine. Adults recognize themselves in the sexualized gestures displayed, thereby interjecting an element of taboo onto a primary assumption of "innocence". These postures, at first glance, can be read as children merely acting out adulthood, but the candidness of each face reveals an authenticity that cannot be replicated in pretending without careful study and intention. A child's surroundings inform his or her development and a self-actualized sexual being.

Our perception of innocence does not capture a child's natural curiosity and sexuality when confronted with gender identity. *Immediate Family – A Colouring Book* is a transgressive gesture that asks us to reconsider childhood innocence by confronting taboos surrounding nudity and sexuality through inviting its viewers to activate the work by filling it with colour. In consuming the image this way, viewers are challenged look past the ideological responses of "taboo" against "innocence" and instead focus on the complexity of the actual being.



Immediate Family: A Colouring Book
book & sheets (8.5×11 in)



Nathan Levasseur

by Aaron Brown

The slick editorial exterior of *I am a Mourning Person* posits tension between ideology and reality. Product design promotes glossy perfection as a promise of potential to achieve an end goal of salability, despite being removed from reality. Saturated colours, luxury materials and soft lighting offer the viewer aesthetic pleasure but through provoking text *I am a Mourning Person* alter the connotations of the materials and the scenario depicted.

What at first glance appears as a precisely crafted and luxurious slab of Carrera marble later resembles a gravestone. The use of durable stone in commemorating the deceased gives the memory of a loved one physical permanence after their temporal existence has ended. This symbol of finality is a stark contrast to the daily ritual of a cup of coffee. The morning ritual of coffee marks the start of a day, a means of waking up before we venture into the world and exert ourselves as productive citizens.

The hardness of both the glass and the marble allude to hard lines, which signify masculinity. Masculine “hardness” is considered a virtue by heteronormative society, but this can lead to a toxic masculinity that forbids men from being able to express and emote freely. To mourn is to show weakness that threatens to interrupt the daily rituals of work and play, revered in capitalist society. In a world obsessed with glossy perfection, vulnerability is shameful. This problematic tension between image and text serves to promote openness and emotional development by utilizing the naturalized visual language of advertising to promote emotional exploration and catharsis.

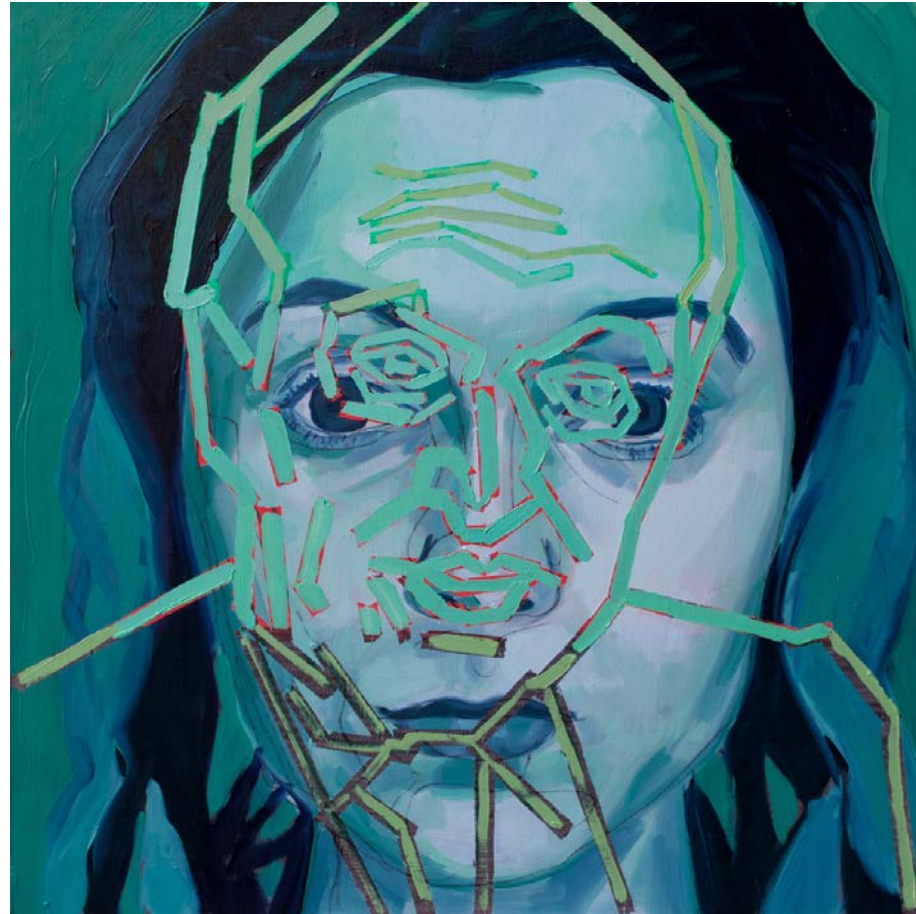
Akosua Adasi

2nd Year Bachelor of Arts – Comparative Literature Major, Art History Minor

I understand identity as the explicit representation of the self. It is formed gradually by the combination of personal interests and social notions. Identity may also be formed based on personal experiences and the individual's interaction with the larger collective. For example, an individual's identity can be influenced by contemporary notions of individuality and how he or she should interact with the larger collective (e.g social media, pop-culture). This idea is reviewed by Samantha Charrette in her portrait compositions. By superimposing the images of well known cultural figures such as Clement Greenberg and Kim Kardashian onto her self-portraits, Charette illustrates the individual's interaction with the extensive influence of society. In other instances, an individual's identity may conflict with that of the larger collective in terms of personal experience. In this instance, there is a conflict within the self, which disrupts the stability of the personal identity. The conflict may be formed due to the desire for detachment and the need to interact with the collective. Courtney Standing's art embodies this notion of personal desires versus social expectations using a variety of mediums to illustrate metaphors for detachment (torn plastic) and inclusion (thread).

Samantha Sierra Charette

by Akosua Adasi



In her work Samantha Charette examines the role of the collective identity through the construction of self-identity. Charette believes that we are all, in some ways, connected by our interests. In her compositions Charette also explores themes of social stratification and their impact on the collective identity. Furthermore, she considers the communication between the two and how this communication illustrates contemporary times as reflected by herself and others.

In isolation, an individual is given the opportunity to venture into the forum of self-identity: a space where an individual examines their role within the larger collective. Charette ventures into her forum of self-identity, which is influenced by her understanding of political and social figures through her compositions.

In constructing her compositions, Charette first sketches portraits of herself and the individual that she

plans on incorporating into her work. Through the process of photography and sketching, her final composition features a realistic self-portrait and an abstract portrait of a historical or social icon that influences her. In her painting “I am Clement,” Charette superimposes the abstract image of Clement Greenberg onto her painted self-portrait using strips of different coloured painter’s tape. First, she isolates herself using muted tones of green and blue. She then engages with the image of Greenberg through the shared colour of brown. The domination of Greenberg’s image may be a commentary on stratification, as he is a highly acknowledged art critic whose work has helped shaped that of Charette’s as an artist. Interestingly, Charette’s individuality is not lost as she forms the background that Greenberg’s image veils. Rather, she retains her identity whilst connecting to that of Greenberg’s.

Courtney Standing

by Akosua Adasi



Through the medium of her art Courtney Standing explores psychological themes of abandonment and detachment—especially when an individual is suddenly faced with his or her differences and the fear that those differences may violate the social definitions of individuality. This tension between the personal identity and the social definition of individuality naturally produces frustration and anger, both of which eventually construct tension between the personal and shared identity. Her piece, titled *Transparency*, explores this subject.

On a disjointed plastic surface, frustration and anger are illustrated through the manipulation of paint and thread. First, she applies paint to the plastic and then rips it off. Then, with glue and scarlet thread, she proceeds

to connect the pieces together again. Standing describes this process as a metaphor for detachment.

Furthermore, the process can also be seen as the psychological struggle to depart from society (torn plastic) and the fervent need to form relationships (thread). The flesh-toned plastic is connected by arteries of scarlet thread, which connect her isolated pieces to the social characterization of community and individuality. In the far left bottom corner there is an isolated nucleus of thread that may represent the individual; however, clots of similar thread can be found nestled within the larger piece, perhaps signifying the inclusion of the individual in the characterization of community.

Arden St. Andre

2nd Year Bachelor of Arts – Comparative Literature Major, Art History Minor

When I began this adventure I was terrified that I wouldn't be able to say something worth remembering. How could I contribute something original to these dynamic artists when, as the saying goes, 'a picture is worth a thousand words'? Academia has taught us that we don't own ideas; instead we look for validity in citation or doctorates. What is valid about what I have to say? Instead, I ask whether my words influence your experience of the artworks by Martina Gutfreund, Oksana Maszczak and Melissa Cayford.

One's experience of art is eclipsed in subjectivity; we relate works to our everyday lives and expect that to be the motive of the artist. I expect you will have this partiality to all art just as your opinion of my experience, another form of artistic production, is subjective. Nevertheless, I have experienced something far more valuable from this opportunity than any professor could have taught in a classroom or that I could have read in a book. For as an art historian (in training) I look into the past in search of context and motives and piece-by-piece put together an image of an artist based on their work. I feel elated at the idea of finally being able to break the piñata rather than continuously swinging in hopes of treasure. It is rare that I have the chance to meet an artist before I can read an

artwork and I discovered that these pieces belong to amazing women who developed far before they were able to materialize what they have to say into the work we see today. I think often we become too focused on what the piece is trying to convey rather than what it says about the artist. This realization is hard to comprehend in my line of work when what are left of the past are simply the artworks themselves and not the artists.

These three vibrant artists have given me the opportunity to grow and for that I am grateful and it is an honor to be able to guide you, the viewer, through an interpretation of an art piece that has been directly plucked from the mind of the artist herself. As I began to grasp who these ladies were, I discovered that in many aspects their inspiration came from experiences that many of us have also experienced, but we just don't fashion it into pieces of art, which truly is their craft.

Melissa Cayford

by Arden St. Andre



Historically the west has always been a beacon of opportunity. For people who live here, most often it is not hard to fathom how our parents, grandparents, or not so distant ancestors would have wandered to these flat lands. The wide blue sky uninterrupted by history or momentums, the vast space for growth—we grow into the ground making roots connecting us to oil rather than history. Growing up in Quebec, Melissa Cayford was surrounded by heritage and tradition: the cold stone and weathered buildings that saw the beginnings of our new nation, whereas our city sacrifices history for modernity.

Habitat is a performance piece that critiques Edmonton's destruction of heritage buildings, which, to a native easterner, represent culture and identity. For Cayford, the destruction of these cultural emblems means the surroundings of the Edmontonian citizens, that affect us in terms of heritage, values and tradition, begin to have so little meaning they become disposable to us. The piece begins with

the task of creating a frame hastily made much like all expansions within our city. Next she weaves an intricate patterning of crochet over the structure and all at once it dissipates as she unravels it into an indistinguishable pile of wood and fabric.

By using a framework of wood Melissa already had begun to comment on the fragility of our 'new' culture built on a degradable substance that is used for temporary society, unlike the lasting characteristic stone that is found in the east. Even the geometric shape of the sphere, unstable and constantly shifting, represents the flash fashion mentality that has sprung up in our city, which says that the classics are no longer revered. Once the new pieces of different crocheted squares are placed upon the structure it begins to take on an atmosphere of culture, especially through the choice of a textile so associated with tradition as crochet. But, like Edmonton's heritage buildings, it can be torn down because we have learned to sever history from culture by creating a culture that values modernity.



Gorglon Berry Sadness
oil paint & glitter on canvas (24.5 × 17 in)

Martina Gutfreund

by Arden St. Andre

Entering a world of playful imagination can be hard for anyone whose life ambition is just to act like an adult for most of one's life. I think we are constantly striving from a young age to become like an adult hopping from milestone to milestone; I unfortunately am one of these people. Therefore it was hard to fathom a world created from the mind of one of my own peers that was so exorbitantly colourful and spirited without adult-like implication.

Upon meeting Martina I immediately jumped to the academic approach and asked how this artwork has consequences in our society and what the artist is trying to say. Naturally understanding Martina's passion for the environment and how it stemmed from her proximity to the Edmonton River Valley growing up, I looked for the environmentalist commentary; however, these paintings are so fundamentally rooted in an exploration of the creative side of the artist and imagination of the viewer that

the commentary isn't the point of the painting but rather it is conveying a story of the inconceivably imaginative imagery.

I personally love Martina's fearless exploration of unconventionality and kitsch that emerges in glitter and rainbows and galactic patterning, but I was curious how a child might react so I interviewed one.

M: What do you like about the picture?

C: The ice cream and rainbows.

M: Why do you think this guy seems sad with so much ice cream around, then?

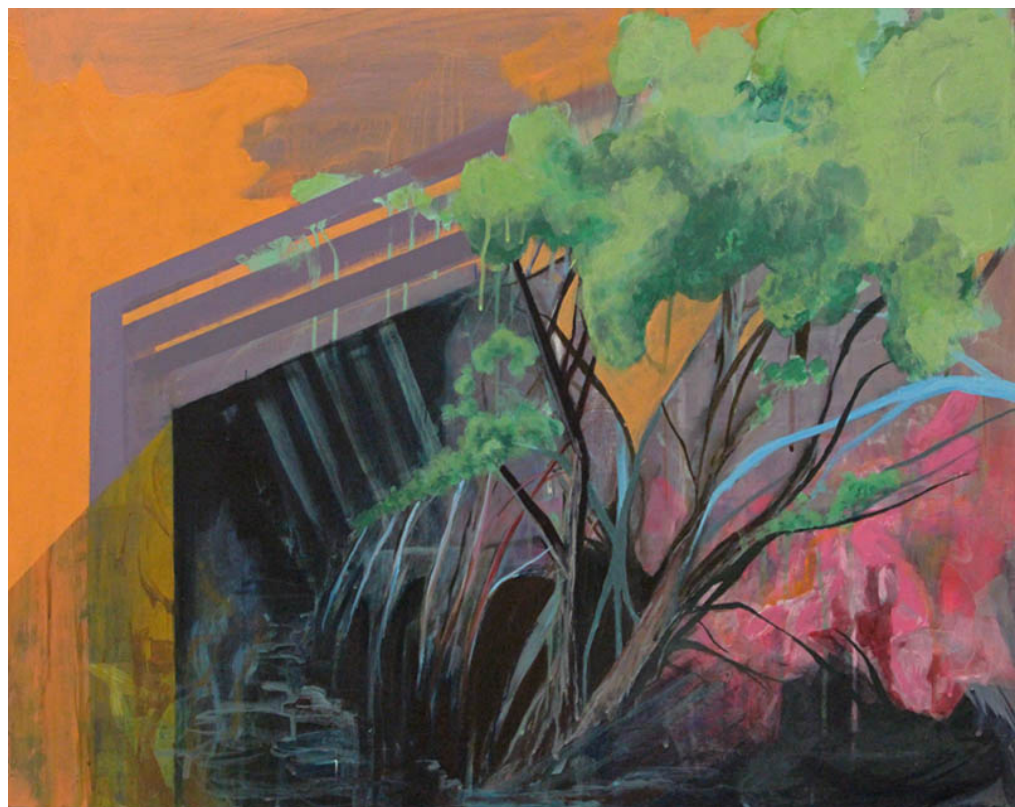
C: He probably has that allergy thing where he can't eat ice cream.

M: Would you rather live in this picture or here on earth?

C: Can fluffy (her bunny) come?

M: Why certainly.

C: Yeah I'll come with you.



Oksana Maszczak

by Arden St. Andre

There is something within the human experience that values sanctuary, not just shelter that's a necessity—I'm referring to the domestic familial space that provides more than protection, but a home, a refuge. We associate these spaces with human interaction, with our earliest memories, with people and noise and life. Often we see this evidence of life and vivacity within enclosed spaces representing these domestic spaces and yet in this work by Oksana Maszczak I see complete silence. The struggle between domesticity and nature finds balance within her painting that can be related to the silence found in ruins as we can appreciate the history and accept that the structure no longer belongs to the human race. This contrast, I found, goes so much further in every aspect of painting and artist that I unintentionally created a theme so strong that all I see now are balancing scales weighing colour, noise, space, artist and lines.

I found that when looking at the progression of her works Oksana was constantly pushing towards artistic innovation and yet she tells me that it's all in effort give up power in her fight for control. The lines and geometric structures found within the painting are a manifestation of this linear control while the natural forms represent free expression. All the while she accomplishes this balance still using resisting pallets of neutrals, darks and then vibrant colours that remind me of chemical reactions. Even this image that I believe to be so rooted in silence, so reminiscent of tranquility, was painted under the influence of metal music. These balancing scales form a painting that depicts a perfect harmony that is neither familiar nor wild, but rather a small space of tranquility amongst the blaring noises of everyday life.



Kalyna Somchynsky

4th Year Bachelor of Arts – History of Art, Design & Visual Culture Major, History Minor

Over the winter break the somewhat daunting task of writing about the work of my peers constantly inhabited my mind. Although I had been writing visual analyses for a few years now, I had no idea where to begin. As it happened, I picked up the Globe and Mail on Christmas Eve to see a Lawren Harris painting on the front page accompanied by a small write up. My mind was triggered and inspiration came on like a wave crashing on the shore. Reading the little paragraph under the painting it dawned on me that this would not be so hard after all.

In the same manner as the Lawren Harris painting that greeted me on Christmas Eve, the following artists play with the concept of isolated spaces devoid of their typical inhabitants, or spaces inhabited by an unusual presence. The spaces become freed from prescribed associations and have the ability to resonate with the feelings of the artist or become inhabited by the feelings of the viewer. Each artist presents a venue that becomes filled during the creative and receptive processes. Furthermore, each artist welcomes and encourages the viewer to interact with the work and reflect on their relationship with it. Whether becoming overwhelmed

by the environment the art work creates, or forced to self-reflect by a textual element, the viewer's mind and emotions become engaged.

The four images that I had the pleasure to write about conjured up notions of the surreal. A common sensation that two of the artworks evoked for me was that of the uncanny. The sensation of the uncanny was employed by the Surrealists throughout history and addressed by Sigmund Freud in his essay "The 'Uncanny'". In his attempt to define what causes this sensation Freud proposes the definition that the uncanny is "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar". All of the artists play with spaces and subject matter that one would most likely have encountered in their childhood, however, these familiar spaces do not conjure up the same emotions they had in the past. Suddenly, one must confront the disconnect they now feel with these familiar images and instead of comfort and intimacy, they trigger unease and discomfort.

In contrast, two of the other images are related to feelings of nostalgia and the syncopation of pattern and figuration. Nostalgia is evoked by the use of images constructed by spaces that are common to the human imagination. The images do not prescribe specific emotions, however, they reflect the comfort provided by the known and familiar. The patterns incorporated into the images are reminiscent of fabric and textiles that further contribute to the sensations of comfort and nostalgia. The various images used in the art works allow the viewer to annotate the works and decide for themselves how they relate to the experiences and emotions of the viewer.

I would like to thank all the artists: Agata Garbowska, Alicia Proudfoot, Alison Prsa and Kimberly Heacock for giving me a glimpse of their art work and for allowing me to pick their brains. I would also like to acknowledge the long hours put in by the organizers of this collaboration, Brittany Ball-Snellen and Alex Linfield as well as the designer of this catalog, Ryan Wayne.



Kimberly Heacock

by Kalyna Somchynsky

Kimberly Heacock's painting *Interpretational Experience, 2015*, embodies the concept of challenging one's perceptions through both its subject matter and the unconventional use of acrylic and oil paint. Heacock based the painting loosely on a photograph of the Galaxyland amusement park located in West Edmonton Mall. Her depiction of Galaxyland channels the uncanny as a typically bustling and raucous setting is painted vacated and silent, making the experience eerie and unsettling. The childlike nostalgia associated with an amusement park is stripped away in favor of the unconventional concept of an indoor amusement park represented in isolation. Galaxyland thus becomes a larger symbol for the challenges present in Heacock's painting; the challenges to convention, association and established rules.

Heacock sought to challenge the technical rules of painting within her work in favor of experimentation. She created an under-painting with oil paint and then used acrylic paint on top while conversely the inverse is considered proper. The result is organic drips, pools and formations of paint that dance across the surface of the painting. Despite the lack of figures in the painting, it does not lack movement due to the playful and experimental use of the mediums. The uncanny environment the painting conveys is enhanced by the use of vibrant and bold colours one finds at an amusement park. They represent what one expects from the venue contrasted with what Heacock presents to us.



Agata Garbowska

by Kalyna Somchynsky

Agata Garbowska presents us with a larger than life-sized painted collage entitled *How to feel safe amongst others*, 2015. It consists of images and spaces alienated from their relationships with the people who typically fill them. The overall feeling of isolation transcending from the painting is emblematic of Garbowska's feelings toward pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. The demanding degree requires that she spend a lot of time alone with only her artworks to keep her company. Through this time in isolation with her works, an intimate relationship with images developed.

Composing the collage required this close relationship as she channeled poetic intuition in order to choose which images would reside comfortably next to others. This poetic and associative decision making allows the painting to take on a surreal quality in a space that one could travel through and encounter many unusual events. It is a space based on the

inner workings of the mind rather than on a concrete reality that one could relate to; however, it is still a space one could flirt with inhabiting.

Garbowska chose to use a number of visual sources to make up the composition of the image. An intriguing source that is represented by the telephone lines within the painting are photographs by David Lynch. Whether conscious or not, the atmosphere of Garbowska's painting is reminiscent of the eerie and strange settings and events found in David Lynch's movies. The two create dream-like atmospheres that could morph into nightmares with the turn of the wrong corner and are filled with playful associations based on the artists own instinct, instead of logical reality.

In contrast, Garbowska does not provide us with the narrative occurring within her constructed space. Instead, one is allowed to decide whether it will be one of comfort, or strange discomfort.

Alicia Helena Proudfoot

by Kalyna Somchynsky



Alicia Proudfoot's photo and stone lithograph *We Are Such Stuff*, 2015 resonates with nostalgia and familiarity for a place close to herself. The image consists of a contrast between the natural, rural space of a family farm with manufactured images of a textile covering furniture in her home and the weaving of a basket.

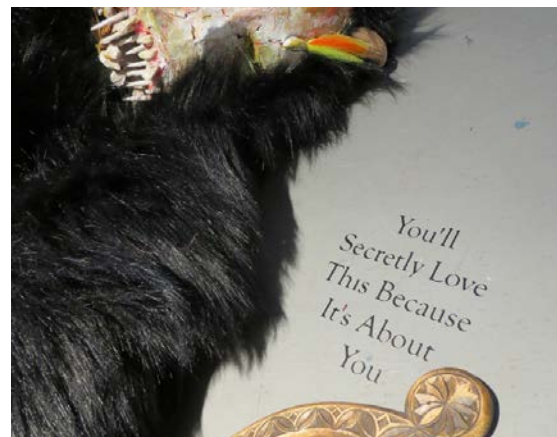
The various sources Proudfoot uses to compose the lithograph appear as if they are being swallowed by the textile. The floral motifs in the drapery appear to be moving—slowly crawling onto the photograph uniting them. Strong, sharp lines found in the weaving of the basket and the outline of the photograph contribute to this affect as they direct the eye towards the draped textile.

The print emanates the intimacy associated with space that is also demonstrated in the hand drawn motifs

contained in the print. The physical trace of the hand is a theme through out the lithograph. Textiles, baskets and work associated with a rural property all require the detail oriented attention of the human hand. The three subjects are relics of tender human love and care. The amount of careful labor required in the production and maintenance of subjects in the lithograph are reflected in the long attentive process of lithography. Both the form and subject are testimony to human capacity, love and care. Despite the deeply personal relationships Proudfoot has with the images in the print, the viewer is able to grasp the sense of nostalgia and love in the image and can recall parallels in his or her own life.

Alison Prsa

by Kalyna Somchynsky



Alison Prsa presents us with an installation piece entitled *Monster (You'll Secretly Love This Because It's About You)*, 2015. The installation consists of a monster laying on the floor holding a mirror containing the phrase included in the title. Inside the monster is a motor so that it looks as if the creature is breathing and one can even hear faint sounds that resemble gurgling. The creation of the piece was a cathartic experience for Prsa. As the process effected her emotionally, the text on mirror is meant to draw the viewer in to reflect on how this monster reflects his or herself.

The creature laying life-size on the floor in front of us is reminiscent of a toy one may have had as a child, or something we would have encountered in a book

or movie. It is not a figure we would expect to see as a part of daily life. Prsa's *Monster* forces the viewer to question whether this creature is indeed alive and therefore, whether or not it exists. "The 'Uncanny'" can once again be referenced as Freud believed that the uncanny could be triggered by the uncertainty "whether an apparently animate being is really alive; or conversely, whether a lifeless object might not be in fact animate".

Monster illustrates this manifestation perfectly. In addition to questioning whether or not the monster is alive, the viewer must question what it is capable of and to what degree it exists as a physical manifestation of what occurs in the psychological domain of every one of us or as a figure in reality.



Liuba González de Armas

3rd Year Bachelor of Arts – Psychology Major, History of Art, Design & Visual Culture Minor

In perceptual psychology, multiperspectivity describes the intrinsic human capacity to derive multiple, even conflicting mental perspectives from the same sensory stimuli. In the study of narrative the same term represents a mode of storytelling in which multiple and often discrepant viewpoints are employed for the presentation and evaluation of a story. The lens of multiperspectivity reveals the perceptually, epistemologically or ideologically restricted nature of individual perspectives and draws attention to various kinds of differences and similarities between the points of view presented in a work. Remediation is the process of translating a text from one medium to another, and of shifting the perspective that frames it. This is not a simple transcription, but rather a fundamental reworking of the way content presents itself and the assumptions underlying it.

Michelle Paterok, Alex Linfield, Holly Hughes, and Jacob Dutton use remediation as a means to reveal the existence of multiple perspectives – both cognitive and narrative – within their works. By painting charged spaces from photographs, Paterok imbues her images with a mnemonic quality which denies photography's stance of objectivity in favour of a

phenomenological projection responsive to viewers' past experience and suggestibility. Hughes uses multiple contrasting modalities to reframe and evaluate the act of coming out as an LGBTQ rite of passage, while Linfield's triptych plays a multi-layered ode to the (in)fidelity of medium. Lastly, Dutton offers intimate and elaborate domestic environments populated by an assemblage of objects whose constructedness is only revealed by perspectival inconsistencies. As a collective, the works interrogate the role of medium in meaning-making. Their various forms of multiperspectivity invite the viewer to actively engage in their perceptive experience.

The process of writing these statements has been a polyperspectival challenge in itself. Reconciling the words and intentions of the artists, my own visceral reactions to their works, and three years of Art History coursework (which seem to quietly assert that everything references the past) is no simple task, nor should it be. Curating these works has given me an understanding of the values and limitations of interpretive writing that no amount of theory can replace. My gratitude goes to the artists for inviting me into their studios and patiently sharing their work; I am most humbled by your eloquence, creativity, and perceptiveness. I also extend my sincerest 'thank you' to the organizers and volunteers without whom this exhibition catalogue would not exist. It has been my absolute pleasure to work with all of you.

To the reader I say this: Think of these notes as a stranger's annotations on the margins of a newfound favourite book – a handful of reasoned perspectives out of an infinite number. Consider them, but do explore the works as you will.

Jacob Dutton

by Liuba González de Armas



In *All Your Things Deserting Me*, Jacob Dutton constructed a domestic scene with life-size stand-ins of objects from his life. The piece aims to explore how conventions of home and belonging are constructed and imposed through narratives mediated by mass-produced objects. Dutton is particularly concerned with design which alienates and devalues certain groups by failing to accommodate for their bodies.

This work draws on existing visual culture from the historical to the commercial in order to ground a longitudinal analysis of our relationship with objects and the systems that produce them. While the seemingly diverse cast of personal items loosely alludes to 17th century Flemish *vanitas* scenes, there is no outright rejection of material possessions but rather a critical reflection on how they relate to and attempt to denominate people. The crisp composition and vaguely naturalistic position of the objects echo contemporary furniture catalogues, hinting at the influence of capitalism, mass production, and consumer culture on how we interact with and understand products. The constructedness of the scene is made apparent by the flat shadows which trail each object.

Several other elements break with the scene's immediate naturalism: on the far right, a light gives the impressions of the

stand-ins as props on a stage. The image of Dutton in the mirror at the bottom left functions as an artist's signature, pointing to the artificiality of the scene by rendering visible both the author and his creative tool: the photographic camera. On the left, the oversized banner – a device which Dutton often uses to explore the functions of markers of space – covers the only window. Text imbues the inanimate objects with agency; they acquire the capacity to abandon their user. These tender words animate the apparent stagnancy of devalued, mass-produced objects while pointing to a reliance on them which is perhaps emotional in nature. Both banner and text are salient due to not conforming to the scene's vertical gravitational pull.

One is tempted to interpret these items as autobiographical – as somehow revealing essential characteristics of the person to whom they belong. But upon further reflections, are our lives not teeming with meaningless objects? Why would these be any different from the haphazardly tossed blanket, the forgotten left sock, the generic teacup? The notion of growing alongside mass-produced objects implies mutual influence, a complex and gradual reshaping of both the objects and ourselves. *All your things deserting me* questions our understanding of the natural in human-object interactions though a composition which is decidedly unnatural.



Holly Hughes

by Liuba González de Armas

Holly Hughes' *Open Invitation* is a durational performance piece which took place on November 25, 2015 in a constructed bedroom environment on the main floor staircase landing of the Fine Arts Building. The work – framed as a coming out party – saw the artist present and seated on a bed from 8am to 5pm, roughly the time she spends on campus on any given day. In order to interact with Hughes, visitors had to approach her and initiate a conversation.

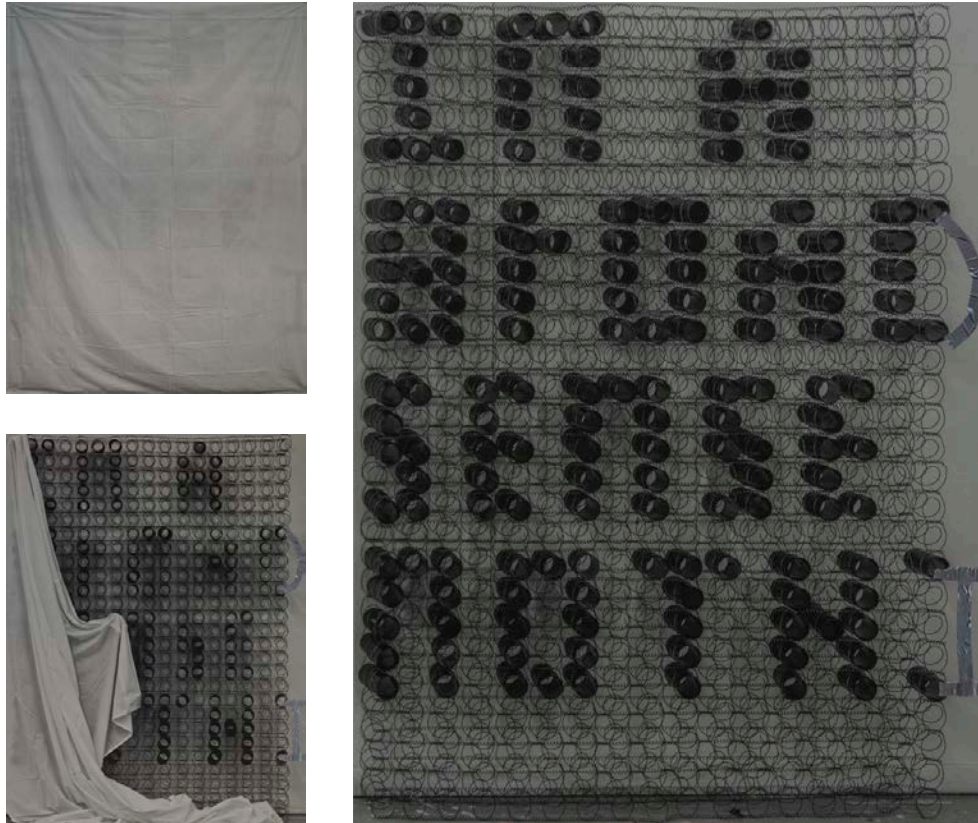
At the core of this piece is the process of negotiating sexuality's existence within public and private realms. By conspicuously occupying a public space and framing the act as coming out, Hughes presents herself as a queer subject. Coming out becomes a performative utterance which asserts a visibility otherwise limited to those to whom the artist has disclosed her sexual orientation. In spite of being publicized as a coming out party, the work lacks the overtness normally associated with public declarations and therein lies its elegance. By juxtaposing the public nature of a coming out party with the intimacy of a personal bedroom space, Hughes negates the notion of coming out as a one-time, absolute event. The ambiguity of the space and unfamiliarity of passing participants turns dialogue – the performance's metaphorical act of coming out – into a reiterative process.

The idea of coming out as an LGBTQ rite of passage is also interrogated. One is led to ask, how do we negotiate self-concept in relation to existing social constructions of queer identity? Is the demand that non-heterosexual people declare themselves as such not heteronormative in itself? The parameters of this performance make participants responsible for initiating dialogue, effectively placing the onus on them to engage with the artist and gain an understanding of her work. This paradigm parallels and reverses the implicit assumption of heterosexuality, in which queer individuals are expected to notify others of their nonconformity.

The title, *Open Invitation*, reflects Hughes' openness to discussing both her work and her sexuality. By being present as a queer subject in a public space, she creates an opportunity for meaningful dialogue surrounding LGBTQ visibility and the necessity of coming out. She does not, however, assume responsibility for educating passersby on the intricacies of her work nor her sexuality. True to the notion of art as life, *Open Invitation* uses existing contradictions and contrasting modalities to denaturalize the act of coming out, opening up the floor for alternative views.

Alex D. Linfield

by Liuba González de Armas



Alex Linfield's *In a Broad Sense Nothing* was once a mattress on which a stranger might have dreamed of a young Marshall McLuhan. The sculptural object is presently without a doubt removed from its original function. As if by way of exchange, it now exudes the mystery of an unfamiliar artifact: imposing and not readily legible. Noting the grid formed by the mattress coil unit, Linfield introduced dark plastic tubes to form a text of which the length and legibility is limited by the characteristics of the object. The edge of the grid crops off the letters, breaking the function of words in a manner that parallels the coil unit's own dismantled state. Silver duct tape completes the words where they are cut off.

From a cognitive perspective, the process of reading is nearly automatic. Once sufficiently familiar with a language and script system, we humans cannot help but read text presented to us. Obstructed legibility within *In a Broad Sense Nothing* makes reading a conscious task, thereby redirecting attention to surface features. The viewer is invited to look at the image plane instead of past it, to question the sense in assigning sound and meaning to arbitrary markings, to interrogate the medium for signs of infidelity.

Documentation has a tendency to crystallize sculptural works into fixed points of view. The artist attempts to counter this effect by offering three competing documents, each of which presents a particular state of the sculpture. The tripartite nature of the work is crucial to its commentary on multiperspectivity. The content is serially revealed in three scenes, only the last of which permits a full reading of the text therein. This has to do with the constraints of the medium: given that the plastic tubes are indistinguishable from the coils when the object is viewed straight on, text is only legible when the image plane is seen from an angle.

In echoic synchronicity with the image series, the title is also gradually revealed. Its halting repetition recalls the act of reading a particularly tricky passage aloud. The title clarifies what the medium obscures. Yet, like images, written text is subject to interpretation. *In a Broad Sense Nothing* may describe the hypermediated nature of the work – the imposition of medium before message –, or perhaps its denial of a single objective truth. By offering multiple perspectives in the form of contrasting documentation, Linfield breaks the image's truth value. Instead, he offers a frank discussion on the implications of medium on the perception and interpretation of images.

Michelle A. Paterok

by Liuba González de Armas



Michelle Paterok developed *Hebron Street* while conducting a summer research project in Palestine/Israel, the mere mention of which evokes clashing narratives of identity and belonging. The work is part of a landscape series that explores marginalized Palestinian spaces. A quick Google search of Hebron reveals it to be the largest city in the West Bank, and the second largest in the Palestinian territories after Gaza. The city is divided into two sectors: H1, controlled by the Palestinian Authority, and H2, roughly 20% of the city, administered by Israel. Conflicting terms like marginalization, illegal occupation and re-settling permeate discourse surrounding the city's segregated populations.

The market street depicted in *Hebron Street* is situated in a Palestinian district of the city populated by a number of Israeli settlers. Large nets hang above the path, presumably to protect traversing Palestinians from objects hurled at them by settlers living in the buildings above. This barrier has done little to discourage hostility; attackers now pour liquids and acid on those below. A solitary figure walks into the unknown, a metaphor for the uncertain future many living in Hebron face. This grim image was inspired by a local man's words to the artist on the state of the city: 'there's no future here, no future for anyone here.'

Paterok draws from photographs when creating her oil paintings. Her process involves reducing an image to its bare minimum, maintaining only those formal traits crucial to invoking a memory or creating a narrative. She aims to recreate the phenomenological, sense-based experience of space. By imbuing scenes with personal subjectivity, she produces images which have strong affective tones and yet are ambiguous enough to allow viewers to insert themselves in the space, thereby creating new narratives.

Paterok's oil paintings reference the fragmented nature of memory, where two or more images try to reconcile one another in a cohesive mental reconstruction of space. The effect is a hazy, dreamlike atmosphere which evokes a sensory experience that a photograph's clinical precision cannot. This, the artist claims, is her way of searching for the place of easel Painting in the age of Photography. Paterok's phenomenological approach to representation acknowledges the politics of space as stemming from conflicting narratives that individuals ascribe to it. She offers a view of Hebron that is deeply conscious of the Palestine/Israel conflict but not didactic in its representation.

Acknowledgements

With the success of our third annual student initiative and collaborative project, Annotations, comes the realization and appreciation of all of the supporting roles that have worked hard to make our show happen. We acknowledge those who have invested their time and efforts. This project would not come to fruition, let alone have continued as a tradition over the last three years, without those who have worked so hard on this project.

We would like to firstly thank the student participants. Both the artists and art historians worked very hard to produce visual and written works to share with the public. Their level of enthusiasm and effort given to this project is insurmountable; they have been intrinsically motivated to share their knowledge and skills with fellow students, work as a team in curating, and reach out to the broader community to contribute to the growth of our wonderful arts community.

Our deepest gratitude and appreciation go to design student Ryan Wayne for his time and hard work in this, his second rendition of our amazing catalogue. As our exhibition is temporary and short-lived, having a catalogue of such caliber to document it is unquestionably one of the most treasured outcomes of our hard work. His professionalism and promptness has made a very large component of our show coalesce with ease. Furthermore, his patience and flexibility with our changing schedules and deadlines has been greatly appreciated. You will be very missed next year when you have moved on to bigger things upon your graduation!

The publication of these catalogues would not be possible without the generous support of the Undergraduate Research Initiative fund, the Student Life and Learning Enrichment Fund, as well as the Visual Arts Students Association (VASA). We thank you sincerely for your financial support in multiple iterations of this project. Without it, we would not be guaranteed that our project would be able to continue as a published record.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the Rutherford Library, and specifically Sarah Polkinghorne, for the space to exhibit our show and lending us equipment.. Also to Aidan Rowe, for helping us acquire an ISBN number for our catalogue.

Another special thank you goes to Liuba Gonzalez De Armas for her tremendous effort, hard work, and perseverance in applying for funding for our show. This was not an easy task and certainly had its challenges this year. Thanks, Liuba, you have been great!

Lastly, we acknowledge our two project coordinators, Brittany Ball-Snellen and Alex Linfield, for the huge amount of time they both invested to make this exhibit possible. Thanks to Alex's initiative this project was carried forward into our third and largest year yet. Not only is he exhibiting his own work, but he has taken on a very time consuming role in this project, and applied for funding. We are all very grateful for his efforts, energy and enthusiasm and hope for more students like Alex in the future, as it is through the hard work of people like him that we are able to keep this project going. Brittany, having made this her third consecutive year organizing the project, cannot be thanked enough for her role in this project. Without her knowledge and experience, each year's efforts would not have seen such growth. Her continued and unfaltering dedication to collaborative research and visual culture are evident both in this project and the truly engaged spirit that she embodies. She will surely inspire future iterations of this project.

Exhibition List

Ryan Andrade

My Mother Raised Me to be Admired
oil and acrylic on canvas (44×67 in)

Connor Cantelon

Living Water
video & audio installation

Mika Haykowsky

Immediate Family: A Colouring Book
book & sheets (8.5×11 in)

Nathan Levasseur

Settle
digital drawing (36×36 in)

Samantha Charette

I am Clement
oil and acrylic on canvas (24×24 in)

Courtney Standing

Transparency
acrylic paint, acrylic gel medium, thread, and canvas (16 × 20 in)

Melissa Cayford

Habitat
photography, site specific performance and installation

Martina Gutfreund

Gorglon Berry Sadness
oil paint & glitter on canvas (24.5 × 17 in)

Oksana Maszczak

Transitory
acrylic paint on masonite (24×30 in)

Kimberly Heacock

Interpretational Experience
oil and acrylic on canvas (48×60 in)

Agata Garbowska

How to feel safe amongst others
Mixed Media (96×96 in)

Alicia Helena Proudfoot

We Are Such Stuff
Photo & Stone Lithography (21×25 in)

Alison Alexandra Prsa

Monster (You'll secretly Love This Because it's About You)
Installation (24×60×24 in)

Jacob Dutton

All Your Things Deserting Me
Photograph

Holly Hughes

Open Invitation
Durational Performance

Alex Linfield

In a Broad Sense Nothing
digital on photobackdrop paper (31×47)

Michelle Paterok

Hebron Street
Oil and acrylic on panel (24×36 in)

Annotations