

**ART\_\_\_\_\_.**

Department of Cultural Affairs

COLA 2018

City of Los Angeles

Individual Artist Fellowships

This catalog accompanies an exhibition  
and a performance and literary presentation  
sponsored by the City of Los Angeles  
Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)  
featuring its COLA 2018 Individual  
Artist Fellowship recipients.

Exhibition

May 3–June 24, 2018

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery  
Barnsdall Park

Opening Reception

Sunday, April 29, 2–5PM

Performance and  
Literary Presentation

June 15 and 16, 2018

Grand Performances

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# Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles

As a leading progressive arts and cultural agency, the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) empowers Los Angeles’s vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage L.A.’s residents and visitors, and ensure that L.A.’s varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA’s mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant making, public art, community arts, performing arts, and strategic marketing and development. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

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# COLA 2018 Catalog

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# Foreword

Artists are truth tellers who create with great skill and intent. They are interpreters of emotion, of curiosity, of position, and of truth. Artists question the world as they experience it and, by doing so, illuminate a unique perspective. When we, as viewers and participants, enter the conversation, we become curious and more open to new perspectives, and we expand our understanding.

It is the privilege of the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) to continue to support a spectrum of contemporary, creative communicators from the deep talent pool in our region. Now in their twenty-first year, the City of Los Angeles (COLA) Individual Artist Fellowships highlight and amplify midcareer artists whose work reframes our perspectives.

The 2018 COLA fellows ground their respective practices in the fields of the literary arts, performing arts, design, and visual arts. They explore, nuance, and eviscerate walls; they challenge our understanding of creative praxis and deepen our relationship with the arts, our context, and ourselves.

DCA is committed to supporting artists and the invaluable contributions they make. The fellows are selected by an accomplished multidisciplinary panel of their peers: curators, educators, nonprofit gallery directors, museum directors, and previous COLA fellows. These artists represent some of the best and brightest of our creative capital. Their narratives inspire our collective cultural consciousness at a moment in our society when we can ill afford anything short of forward progress.

Congratulations to the recipients of 2017–18 COLA Individual Artist Fellowships. Please join us in celebrating them and their work (both in print and in person) on view at DCA’s Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) at Barnsdall Park.

**Danielle Brazell**  
General Manager  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
City of Los Angeles

# Introduction

Art\_\_\_\_\_ is about evoking new sensations and is part of a spectrum of treatments for negative social conditions such as omission, disavowal, and grievance.

The recently defined concept of *moral injury*, which refers to the suffering of an individual’s conscience as a result of one or more ethical transgressions that have delivered measurable emotional shame, should not be limited to the military. Psychological-cultural-spiritual trauma is a health condition suffered by many professionals and citizens as well as soldiers and military veterans who have witnessed or perpetrated an act that has breached their deeply held moral beliefs. It would not be a stretch to say that 99 percent of us are feeling some glacial depression, punctuated by sudden delusions, about living in a world with increasingly heavy human polemics.

After watching Wim Wenders’s film *The Salt of the Earth* (2014), about the documentary photographer Sebastião Salgado, I realized that Mr. Salgado, now aged seventy-four, suffers from the same kind of deep moral injury that affects soldiers, journalists, doctors, and emergency workers. In our newly networked yet increasingly fragile world, more and more of us are witnessing episodes or examples of human cruelty or natural devastation. Groups from 2017–18 include concertgoers at the Route 91 Harvest festival in Las Vegas, the residents of six counties in Northern California devastated by wildfires, and schoolteachers and students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. All of us empathize with similar events coming to us in a nonstop stream of videos and news. When we experience (first- or secondhand) some destruction, violence, or tragedy, the sanctity of our moral goodness—our safety, compassion, and peace—is gradually or quickly eroded.

What should we do when the quicksand of witnessing trauma pulls us into entanglement, regret, and disillusionment? In this Trump era of bullish tweets and fake news, it seems to be getting harder to understand the full distinctions between the transgressor and the transgressed against. In times like this I seek the voices of serious artists and journalists to correct my moral compass.

Currently no guidebook exists with directions for treating the spectrum of our moral anguish, as either an occupational, accidental, or general hazard. Military service members and others who are exposed to threats, bullying, sexual abuse, and visual violence can be treated for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with deep therapies. But for the rest of us it might be enough to seek repair in music, dance, theater, poetry, media arts, and visual goods as well as journalism, scientific writing, and scholarly research. Treating moral injury is referred to as “soul repair,” and in this capacity the humanities sector must be sought and supported for providing us with the critical facts and enlightenment needed for healing.

As we wrestle with the impact of what we have done or failed to do (personally and communally), a general feeling has emerged that our guiding principles must be lifted, shifted, or removed. It is time now to build our respect for the full spectrum of individuals and professions that can make this world a better place (safer, healthier, more educated, more empathetic) with personal, technical, intellectual, and financial donations. I believe that the COLA master artists featured in this catalog are playing their roles in remaking moral goodness. I encourage you to consider their timely expressions.

**Joe Smoke**  
Grants Administration Division Director  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
City of Los Angeles

# Director’s Statement

<p>This year marks the beginning of a new phase in Los Angeles’s commitment to honoring and supporting mid-career artists in generating new work. I was honored to be a part of the nomination process, and it is wonderful to see the projects emerge from the chrysalis and take flight in the gallery. Throughout this journey there are people who have been champions of both this program and the artists involved.</p> <p>We are grateful for the support of the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) leadership team: Danielle Brazell, general manager; Daniel Tarica, assistant general manager; the Grants Administration Division, which drives the COLA fellowship program, including Joe Smoke, grants administration division director, and Christopher Riedesel, arts associate; the Marketing and Development Division, including Will Caperton y Montoya, director of marketing, development, and digital strategy, and Rhonda Mitchell, public information director, as well as Nateene Diu, public programming associate, and our community arts division director, Leslie Thomas.</p> <p>I would like to express my gratitude for the guidance of Steven Wong and the support and hard work of the</p>	<p>other Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery staffers, including Gabriel Cifarelli, Ciara Moloney, John Weston, Jamie Costa, and Marta Feinstein. I also thank the support staff, including our gallery attendants—Jasmine Corrales, Monica Juarez, Adriana Luna, and Darlene Perez—and our preparators—Randy Kiefer, Eduardo Malaga, Connie Martin, Sam Medeiros, Benny Reiss, Roland Solandry, and Brian Tarpey.</p> <p>Finally we would like to thank our catalog designer, Susan Silton, and our copy editor, Karen Jacobson, for their superb work and acknowledge the essay writers who contributed their insights on the COLA fellows and their projects, including Tressa Berman, Claudia Bohn-Spector, Raquel Gutiérrez, Lisa Henry, Jamillah James, Dora Epstein Jones, Lars Bang Larsen, Việt Lê, Emily Pethick, Julia Steinmetz, Kristine Thompson, Jan Tumlir, and Mimi Zeiger.</p> <p><b>Isabelle Lutterodt</b> Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) Director Barnsdall Park Director Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles</p>
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# Curators’ Statements

<p>Every year, for the past twenty-one years, the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) has hosted the City of Los Angeles (COLA) Individual Artist Fellowship Exhibition. The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) awards COLA fellowships to a group of midcareer artists, who each receive a \$10,000 grant for the creation of new artworks. This year’s COLA exhibition at LAMAG honors the artistic achievements of these highly accomplished artists and celebrates their contributions to a city that has proven to be a diverse cultural and creative capital of the Pacific Rim.</p> <p>The COLA Individual Artist Fellowship marked its twentieth anniversary in 2017 and has clearly become a mainstay of individual artist funding in Los Angeles. As funding becomes increasingly difficult to obtain, however, the fellowships serve as much-needed support for a healthy and robust arts community in our city. Furthermore, in recent years we have seen an influx of artists from other established national and international art centers, elevating the prominence of the city and its arts communities. As we embark on the next twenty years of COLA, the program will certainly play a crucial role in the continued transformation of Los Angeles into an increasingly powerful international arts capital.</p> <p>This year’s COLA fellows represent a new generation of midcareer artists, distinct from those recognized when the program first began in 1997; together they embody our city’s unparalleled creative diversity. Consider June Edmonds, a native of Los Angeles who draws inspiration from Adinkra symbols from Ghana in her layered and rhythmic paintings. Along with Edmonds’s signature works, the exhibition will showcase paintings sparked by recent political events, which explore ideas of nation, race, and womanhood.</p> <p>Just as Edmonds’s works reflect feminist underpinnings, critiques of systemic patriarchy and misogyny are also prevalent in Michele O’Marah’s and Terry Braunstein’s installations. Furthermore, both artists employ appropriation to challenge and subvert the very devices that they are drawing on. O’Marah’s work threads together popular media’s construction and destruction of two iconic female figures of the 1990s through her appropriation and remaking of period TV interviews. One can infer from her work that the beginnings</p>	<p>of Hillary R. Clinton’s failed presidential campaign of 2016 are rooted in what took place in popular media more than two decades earlier. Braunstein uses appropriated clippings from twentieth-century publications that, when assembled, serve as nods to her surrealist and Dada inspirations. In her installations <i>Broken Vows</i> (2017) and <i>Ladders</i> (2016), she constructs tense psychological and imaginary worlds that contain deeply personal and sometimes whimsical existential narratives.</p> <p>Doris Sung and Tim Durfee explore the relationship between architecture and sculptural object making in their respective practices. Both engage in rigorous research. Sung’s practice centers on materials-based inquiries. Her sculptural installation <i>Fuller</i> (2018) is a product of ten years of research and experimentation to develop a nine-foot-diameter heat-sensitive and self-interlocking metal sphere, an accomplishment that even Buckminster Fuller would have found inspiring. Conversely, Durfee pursues speculative cultural investigations of systems and rules and the pedagogy of knowledge in a changing world in an effort to illuminate often hidden webs of interconnections.</p> <p>The construction and resurrection of space and place are common themes in works by Dave Hullfish Bailey, Cassils, and Julie Shafer. Bailey has been documenting Slab City, a squatters’ camp near the Salton Sea, in the Southern California desert, which is equipped with a library located under a paloverde tree. His photo installation dedicated to the Slab City library probes the organic social structures and nonstructures that attempt to house, organize, and reorganize information, looking at the intersection of pedagogy and geography with social theory. In contrast Cassils examines the layered histories of a specific site, with their implicit erasures, and the queer and radical bodies that once created these histories. Visitors to Cassils’s installation <i>Aline’s Orchard</i> (2018) are forced to rely on sound, smell, and touch in a blackout room that re-creates a time when Barnsdall Park was a gay cruising site.</p> <p>Also recovering the history of a specific place is Julie Shafer’s installation <i>Parting of the Ways</i> (2018), which presents rubbings from and photographs of a location on the Oregon Trail where migrants were confronted with</p>
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Curators’ Statements

the choice of two paths to their destinations and ultimate destinies. Shafer is concerned with the American landscape, its legacy of westward expansion, and the quest for natural resources such as silver, a material essential to her photographic practice. At its simplest yet most profound, *Parting of the Ways* is about the legacy of mark making and how the traces that we leave behind as capitalists, migrants, and artists tell the stories of those who passed through a particular place.

Migration and diaspora are also common themes in the works of Guillermo Bert and Michelle Dizon. Bert continues his filmmaking and art practice dedicated to amplifying marginalized voices through the intersection of art and technology. In *Tumble Dreams* (2018) he immerses viewers in an installation of tumbleweeds, projections, and sound, incorporating interviews detailing the journeys of the Latin American diaspora, in particular those whose movements are not state sanctioned. Bert’s use of a plant long associated with the arid American West complicates ideas of borders and migration, for tumbleweeds are in fact an invasive species from Europe and Central Asia. Wall building and deportations have become ubiquitous themes of today’s political chatter, making *Tumble Dreams* timely and relevant and perhaps providing us an opportunity to take a step back and contemplate the disparity of global capital, the barriers that safeguard this uneven distribution, and why these borders are crossed.

In her installation *The Archive’s Fold* (2018), Michelle Dizon uses colonial archives and family photographs to explore history and imagine the future of her family’s journey within the Philippine diaspora. Using reflections of memory, Dizon challenges the narrative form that imagines legacies of family and of conquest and place, instead proposing that

labor migration exists on a continuum that encompasses future projections of capitalism.

Archives and labor also play a role in Sandra de la Loza’s installation, which uncovers the interconnections between the history of Los Angeles’s early rail infrastructure, including the Pacific Electric Railway strike of 1903, Mexican workers’ demand for pay equity, and a faith healer and radical revolutionary who was exiled from Mexico and settled in Los Angeles. Through her extensive research and analysis, de la Loza has recovered historical erasures and further imagines a space where the ghosts from the past can guide our journey to the future.

The artists represented in this exhibition have created artworks that are relevant to the lives and experiences not only of those who live and work in Los Angeles but also of a growing international audience. More importantly, many of the artists have responded to today’s social and political climate in the creation of their new works. Together these artists demonstrate their influence and convey the vitality of our creative communities.

I would like to thank the artists featured in the exhibition. I am honored and inspired to work with artists who represent and enrich the creative pulse of this city. Their vision and insight are not only at the core of this project but also represent a type of innovation that could take place only in a layered, nuanced, and heterogeneous city like Los Angeles.

**Steven Wong**  
Curator  
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
City of Los Angeles

**Avant-garde artists** don’t generate novelty! That is a terrible stereotype that positions artists as jokers and their artworks as trivial or tricky. This ongoing misunderstanding is forgivable, since cutting-edge artists strive for self-differentiation, and this concept can be construed as inventiveness rather than distinction.

The 2017–18 COLA performing and literary fellows exemplify this aspirational value of self-differentiation. Each is an esteemed professional simultaneously aware of his or her art historical lineage and pushing to be a free voice. Peter J. Harris calls himself an African American poet of witness, inspiration, social justice, and uncensored personal expression. His works are flavored with unexpected associations, within a mix of philosophical and conversational language.

d. Sabela grimes identifies himself as a choreo-poet and creates insightful dance-theater that includes singing, rapping, joking, and multiple genres of movement. His fellowship project has a global Afrofuturist character, in honor of the speculative fiction writer Octavia E. Butler.

Kristina Wong is a performance artist who also uses a culture-jamming mix of comedy, crafty props, and theater to engage audiences (oftentimes as collaborators) in the process of developing thematic presentations. Her brand of meta-theater uses humor to explore difficult subjects and amplify the sociocultural experiences of marginalized peoples.

All three of these artists generate works that exhibit their uniqueness while suggesting their relationships to us. Their well-balanced self-differentiation is laudatory. After all, identifying positive achievements and social connections is what makes us individually strong and collectively civil.

**Christopher Riedesel**  
Grant Program Associate  
and COLA Performance Event Coordinator  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
City of Los Angeles

# COLA 2018 Artist Fellows

Dave Hullfish Bailey 16

Guillermo Bert 22

Terry Braunstein 28

Cassils 34

Sandra de la Loza 40

Michelle Dizon 46

Tim Durfee 52

June Edmonds 58

d. Sabela grimes 64

Peter J. Harris 70

Michele O'Marah 76

Julie Shafer 82

Doris Sung 88

Kristina Wong 94





# Dave Hullfish Bailey.

ART finds kin in seeds, bone chips, and tangled skeins of hair—altered but still unassimilated bits produced when curiosity tries to digest what it doesn't understand.

Born 1963, Denver; lives and works in the San Fernando Valley

## EDUCATION

MFA, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA, 1995  
MTS, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, 1988  
BA, Carleton College, Northfield, MN, 1985

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Hardscrabble*, Gallery at REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater), Los Angeles (solo)
- 2014 *School Section*, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm (solo)
- 2013 *Broken Country*, Malmö Konsthall, Sweden (solo)
- 2012 *The Imminence of Poetics*, 30th Bienal de São Paulo (group)
- 2009 *Dave Hullfish Bailey + Nils Norman: Surrounded by Squares*, Raven Row, London (two-person)
- 2007 *What's left to its own devices (On reclamation)*, Casco, Utrecht (solo)  
Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon 2007, France (group)
- 2006 *Elevator*, Secession, Vienna (solo)

## COLLABORATIONS

- 2006– *CityCat Project* (with Sam Watson), Brisbane, Australia

## ARTIST'S BOOKS

- 2008 *What's Left*, published by Casco, Utrecht, and Sternberg, Berlin
- 2006 *Elevator*, published by Secession, Vienna
- 1999 *Union Pacific: Berlin's Neue Mitte and the Fringes of Las Vegas*, published by Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin



*Working approximation of a conventional form: NW, May 2007, 2007/2018*  
Archival pigment print  
16 x 16 inches





*Working approximation of a conventional form: NW x W, December 2017, 2017/2018*  
Archival pigment print  
21 x 14 inches



*Proposed Donation (Slab City Library), 2018*  
*West's Annotated California Codes*, irrigation checkboxes, tailgate, prepared photocopier  
Dimensions variable, approximately 180 x 84 x 60 inches

# Making Something of *What's Left*\*

*Emily Pethick, Lars Bang Larsen, Jan Tumlrir*



*Explanatory object: Meteorite/Dust Cloud/ Drop Art, 2013*  
Road hazard signs in icosahedral arrangement, wire.  
47¼ x 47¼ x 47¼ inches

*EP:* Bailey's work often leads out from research into particular sites, and uses non-linear heuristic methods and experimental webs of information in order to explore these places in the widest sense, forming highly experimental geographies.

*LB:* Bailey investigates the question of what kinds of social entities we can assert exist, and which we can bring into existence. This builds upon a two-tiered ontology, containing a realist perspective with a phenomenological one. That is, his work has, so to speak, one eye trained on the mind-independent existence of reality, and the other on subjective and collective sense-making operations.

*JT:* It is also concerned with the movement of information and processes of connection-making. To expand the field of communications is Bailey's underlying aim.

*EP:* Often this takes the form of processes of disorganizing and reorganizing information, forming non-standard connections between things which opens up the space for other ways of reading a given subject, place or story.

*JT:* Bailey describes this process as 'nodal': at every cognitive juncture, a new concept is introduced, a new association attempted. A different kind of logical glue binds the constituent parts together, at least for a while, until the parts are re-combined elsewhere or simply get lost in the turbulence.

*LB:* Bailey's operations have a built-in awareness of the limits of what can be known, while the destination of the inquiry is the social world. The renewal of society is a continuous obligation through which questions are asked, such as, how can new time-spaces of co-existence be produced? What do they look like? How do we inhabit them?

*JT:* 'The imaginary is that which tends to become real,' writes Debord, . . . And conversely, it becomes clear in a place like Slab City that, for its part, the imagination requires actual territory within which to root even its most far-flung fantasies. It is only in relation to this ruined site that speculative thought acquires a real stake, real estate, in the future.

*EP:* Under-valued space is occupied and the conventional distinctions between public and private are blurred, becoming yet another ambiguous zone.

*LB:* Unlike all structures built by man, the unformed flows of water and light, biomass, lava, and debris are outside of the human measure of time. . . . The relativity of human culture is also a pivotal point.

*JT:* Bailey is interested in the psychic pull of these spaces towards utopian vistas of communal belonging and togetherness, but not without losing sight of the mechanisms of social screening and segregation that must still be countered at every turn.

*LB:* The constructivists held that art, as a kind of meta-epistemology of society, could beam across industry and science and create a new social togetherness. Bailey's work, however, harbors no such illusions about art's capability to over-code and determine other forms of knowledge, but rather proceeds by creating a patchwork of functions.

*JT:* There is a latent Duchampian strain in this work, a tendency to favor materials and objects that have already been formed, assigned specific tasks and integrated into a legible system of signs, but it is no longer enough to simply point out or recontextualize these givens. At the end of the day, something else must be made from the already made, and it is in the process of re-making and re-modeling this existing order of things that the social dimension of Bailey's practice begins to take shape.

*LB:* In Bailey the old avant-garde claim of integrating art into life practice is pegged on the necessity of continuous speculation (rather than, as the modernist avant-gardes would have had it, on the future annulling of art as soon as all of life had become 'artistic').

*JT:* The physical construction of this modest library, structurally linked to its allegorical source in the tree of knowledge, remains immensely suggestive. . . . From the most dismal prognosis of Slab City as a failed state, this library may still be salvaged as a sign of hope, a tentative assertion of faith in the possibility of an authentically integrated, equitable society. ●

*\*What's Left* is an artist's book by Dave Hullfish Bailey in collaboration with Stuart Bailey (Utrecht: Casco; Berlin: Sternberg, 2008). It intercuts essays by Emily Pethick, Lars Bang Larsen, and Jan Tumlrir, which are [here](#) further fragmented and recombined.





*Untitled*, 2012  
Installation at *The Imminence of Poetics*, 30th Bienal de São Paulo  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable (approximately 39 x 49 feet as shown here)





# Guillermo Bert.

ART *is the textural vehicle and sequence of processes through which stories can be generated—and be generative in the process—illuminating lives of migrants in their journeys to bridge cultural worlds.*

Born 1959, Santiago, Chile; lives and works in Los Angeles

## EDUCATION

BA, Catholic University, Santiago, 1981

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2017–18 *Unsettled*, cocurated by JoAnne Northrup and Ed Ruscha, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno; Anchorage Museum, AK; and Palm Springs Art Museum, CA (group)  
*The U.S.-Mexico Border: Place, Imagination, and Possibility*, Craft & Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles (group)  
*Mundos Alternos: Art and Science Fiction in the Americas*, UCR ARTSblock, Riverside, CA (group)
- 2014–15 *New Territories: Laboratories for Design, Craft, and Art in Latin America*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York (group)
- 2013–14 *Encoded Textiles*, Pasadena Museum of California Art (solo)
- 2008 *Bar Code / Branding America*, Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA (solo)

## AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2016 Catalina Island Film Festival, first prize for short documentary for *Luciana and the Weavers: Treasures of the Heart*
- 2015 Center for Cultural Innovation, Investing in Artists Grant
- 2014 California Community Foundation, CCF Fellowship for Visual Arts (midcareer)
- 2010 National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, Master Artist Grant, Austin, TX



*Tumble Dreams*, 2018 (details)  
 Digital projections on tumbleweeds  
 9 x 15 x 20 feet





*Welcome to the USA*, 2017  
Laser transfer on Plexiglas LED light  
32 x 45 x 2 inches each (diptych)

## Tumble Dreams: The Journey

*Tressa Berman*



*You don't have the right to remain silent*, 2018  
Neon  
24 x 48 x 4 inches

Chilean-born and L.A.-bred Guillermo Bert is an artist for our time. His is a visual voice that bridges worlds through his installations, blending raw textural forms with digitized media and film. Bert's current series, *Tumble Dreams* (2018), follows from a decades-long trajectory starting with his series *Encoded Textiles* (2012–), begun as a joining of Mapuche weavings and smartphone technologies to tell the stories of indigenous cultural survival, and flowing from his more recent *Exodus Series* (2015–). *The Exodus Series* expanded his use of embedded technologies that, when activated by a smartphone, open the viewer to stories steeped in places: indigenous, remote, yet present. Expanding into new forms and interviews, Bert and his collaborators trace the migratory routes of members of the Zapotec and Mayan diaspora coming to Los Angeles to realize the American dream. For these dreamers (as for the DACA Dreamers, caught in the bureaucratic whirlwind of policy retractions), the realization of their dreams is often met with the dark side of living in its shadows. It is in those less visible places that Bert casts his light as an artist.

Stories lie at the center of Bert's work. Less tech-centered than previous works, the pared-back *Tumble Dreams* combines the elegance of natural objects (tumbleweeds) with oral histories "embedded" in the casing of the tumbleweed itself. His idea of how to tell those stories is as shocking as it is compassionate. Through projected interviews we learn about endurance and hope, about torn families subjected to the dangers of the journey. This is not an allegorical hero's journey. This is the grist of lives split apart and confronted by the hard choices that find migrant workers in the rough-and-tumble worlds of bandits, border patrols, hunger, and separations. Their very survival defies the threat of the border itself. The journeying migrants may appear to be like tumbleweeds, but they are not without purpose. As Bert described the project to me, "I would like to represent this journey by the image of a tumbleweed, always changing direction, forming a new kind of nomadic population on the move. The tumbleweed is particularly tied to the Southwest

landscape, where the dry conditions and the desert are also the backdrop of the crossing for the Latin American migrant."

The stories of uprootedness and tenacity that these works capture tell of trans migratory routes that we rarely hear about or see. The audio interviews and images placed inside the matted net of the tumbleweed give sculptural shape to the social complexities that connect each migrant's personal journey to another's. Each tumbleweed is both a nomad and a node in a larger distribution system. As with much of Bert's work, a multilayered narrative begins to emerge, creating a through line of interwoven lives. The tumbleweeds, like the lives of many immigrants who lack secure status, hang suspended in midair. The spherical cocoon of thatches and thorns is an apt metaphor for the perils of displaced travelers and the communities they form.

In keeping with Bert's commitment to engaging with the cultural politics of immigration and displacement, his artistic goal is to create contemporary hybrid artifacts that highlight the commodification of labor in trans migrant contexts. The cruel immigration policies that tear families apart and fuel informal economies serve as sticking points, while the tumbleweed itself rises from the landscape, where it is carried straight to the heart of Los Angeles.

The tumbleweeds in the COLA exhibition bring with them an internal rhythm of place. The dreamscapes of the American West create a silent presence in our social geography that propels these forms and keeps them moving. The partially concealed testimonies invite us to witness the hidden stories as told through the actual voices of migrants themselves. Their personal and cultural messaging creates a bond between an otherwise distant viewer drawn in by the intimacy and revelation of the traveler's story. Bert's aesthetic choices illuminate the faith in the dream that lives inside the minds and hearts of "tumbleweed" dreamers. *Tumble Dreams* gives purpose to their seemingly aimless tossings but also fills its hollow core with the storied promise of a new future and the longing for home. ●





*Lukutuwe (Fertility)*, 2012  
Textiles and interactive bar codes  
90 x 48 x 2 inches



*La Bestia*, 2017  
Embroidery and interactive bar codes  
60 x 40 inches





# Terry Braunstein.

**ART** *has the potential to answer questions about life and its passages. Visual archaeology—research, scientific observation, and the collection of materials—is a tool for the artist in addressing issues of daily life, history, and the broader forces in our universe.*

Born 1942, Washington, DC; lives and works in Long Beach, CA

## EDUCATION

MFA, painting and printmaking, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, 1968

BFA, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1964

## ACADEMIC POSITION

Professor emeritus, Corcoran School of Art, Washington, DC

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Scent*, Art & Olfaction Gallery, Los Angeles (solo)
- 2016 *Chapters: Book Art in Southern California*, Craft & Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles (group)
- 2015 *Who Is She? Terry Braunstein*, Long Beach Museum of Art, CA (solo)
- 2009 *Station Identification: Works by Terry Braunstein, 1982–Present*, El Camino College Art Gallery, Torrance, CA (solo)
- 2006 Museo Civico Villa Colloredo Mels, Recanati, Italy (two-person)

## AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2012 Long Beach Artist Fellowship (also 1999)
- 2008 Artists' Resource for Completion (ARC) grant, Durfee Foundation
- 2005 Artist's residency, Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY (also 1997, 1999, 2003)
- 1994 National Book Award, Library Fellows of the National Museum of Women in the Arts
- 1992 Open Channels video grant, Long Beach Museum of Art
- 1985 Visual Arts Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts



*Broken Vows*, 2017  
Mixed-media installation: photomontage, found materials, wire  
54 x 44 x 30 inches





**Ladders**, 2016  
Mixed-media installation: photomontage, found objects, miniatures, wire  
54 x 72 x 30 inches



**Broken Vows**, 2017  
Artist's book: photomontage, mixed media  
12 1/2 x 15 inches

# Looking for Terry Braunstein

*Claudia Bohn-Spector*



**Comparative Psychology**, 1989  
Artist's book: photomontage, mixed media  
11 x 7½ x 2 inches

The French historian Michel Poivert once identified odd and illogical juxtapositions in an image as the result of an “aesthetic delinquency,” a deliberate subversion of current tastes and visual codes.<sup>1</sup> Such artful inversions were the hallmark of surrealism, a revolutionary art movement that flourished in the early 1920s. They are also the trademark of the Long Beach artist Terry Braunstein, whose provocative photomontages, installations, sculptures, and artist's books take aim at a variety of disquieting topics. “To compare two objects as far apart as possible the one from the other,” noted the movement's leading theorist, André Breton, “or, by any other method, to bring them face to face in a sudden and striking manner, remains the highest task to which poetry can lay claim.”<sup>2</sup> Surrealist art—shocking, disturbing, and always surprising—thrives on such glaring non sequiturs, pushing us to recognize the illusory nature of everyday assumptions.

Like surrealism, Braunstein's art jolts us into encountering life with fresh eyes. Her broad-ranging themes—time, perception, journeys, style, and fashion—are at once personal and universal, simple and complex, attesting to her highly playful and irreverent imagination. A household pail over a gymnast's head, for example, becomes a poignant reminder of the significant limitations that enlightened women—indeed all of us—still face in a male-dominated world.

In her nearly forty-year career Braunstein has employed a breathtaking array of artistic mediums—photography, painting, mosaic, printmaking, performance, site-specific sculpture, even video—in an astonishing mix of settings. She examines human experience with a unique and compelling syntax that is dreamlike, paradoxical, and refreshingly authentic, manipulating the seemingly obvious and ordinary to yield resonant layers of hidden meaning.

Braunstein draws on many historic precedents for her art, borrowing from the Dada artists an affinity for politically charged subject matter and from the surrealists a penchant for dreamlike, spatially coherent compositions. She has also appropriated elements of mid-twentieth-century assemblage, a three-dimensional art form related to collage in its combination of disparate preformed materials. As with collage, its origins date back to Pablo Picasso's cubist constructions of the early 1910s, which were among the most radical artworks of their time. While the term *assemblage* was coined by the

French artist Jean Dubuffet, who in the early 1950s made pictures from butterfly wings, the technique became popular in the United States, with proponents such as Joseph Cornell, Louise Nevelson, Robert Rauschenberg, and Wallace Berman—many of whom Braunstein has referenced in her artworks.

Braunstein's works present a powerful amalgam of the modern and the ancient, the real and the imagined, touching on topics as wide-ranging as nuclear war, terrorism, the Ku Klux Klan, adolescence, and the Buddha. Her political engagement, though not the primary motivator for her work, has been a persistent force. Decades after the artist Hannah Höch first laid out her visions of a post-World War I “New Woman,” feminist artists such as Barbara Kruger, Nancy Spero, and Miriam Schapiro have also chosen to work in collage, recognizing the technique's potential for examination of the female self in a wider context. Braunstein's often autobiographical images are exemplars of female self-representation in a male-dominated world. She maintains a dialogue with the complex history of male authority through references to patriarchal myths, classical art, and commercial advertising, offering multiple ways for her contemporary feminist struggle to be universally understood.

In this age of ubiquitous digital manipulation, Braunstein's assemblages, collages, sculptures, and video works provide a rare opportunity to relish the precision and poetry of the handmade. The quest for self-knowledge, existential and profound, significantly informed surrealist practice and can be reencountered in her elegant adaptations, addressing life stages like adolescence, sickness, old age, or, in her new installation *Broken Vows* (2017), divorce. In another work, created for the COLA exhibition, she explores ladders, in both their physical and metaphorical dimensions, revealing them as pedestrian if strangely poetic gateways to the unknown. That search for what is new and just outside our reach, attainable only though great effort and exploration, lies at the very heart of Terry Braunstein's genuine art, attesting to one woman's journey through the modern-day world. ●

1. Michel Poivert, quoted in Quentin Bajac and Clément Chéroux, *La subversion des images: Surréalisme, photographie, film, exposition* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2009), 26.  
2. André Breton, *Les vases communicants*, quoted in John Matthews, *André Breton: Sketch for an Early Portrait* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986), 93.





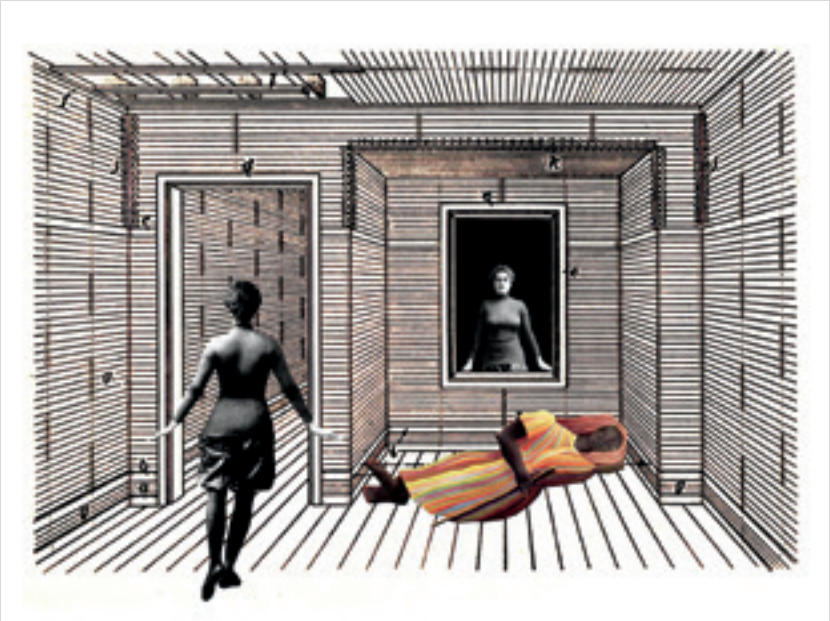
*Who Is She? #VII (Carrying Magritte Rock)*, 2015  
Digital print  
40 x 30 inches



*Empty Nest*, 1986  
Photomontage  
20 x 16 inches



*Time Bound*, 2009  
Mixed media (paper, wire, miniatures, found objects)  
72 x 96 x 32 inches



*Who Is She? #II (With Rousseau's Dreamer)*, 2015  
Digital print  
30 x 40 inches





# Cassils.

ART *reflects lessons from the past, offering new horizons, imbued with potential.*

Born in Montreal; lives and works in Los Angeles

#### EDUCATION

MFA, art and integrated media, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, 2002

BFA, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, 1997

#### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Monumental*, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York  
*Cassils: The Phantom Reverent*, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha, NE
- 2016 *Melt/Carve/Forge: Embodied Sculptures by Cassils*, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia  
*Breaking News: Cassils*, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Tufts University, Boston
- 2015 *Incendiary*, MU, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- 2014 *Cassils: Compositions*, Trinity Square Video, Toronto

#### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Expanded Visions: Fifty Years of Collecting*, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, New York
- 2016 *Fragile Body—Material Body*, 3rd Venice International Performance Art Week, European Cultural Centre, Venice, Italy
- 2015 *Homosexualität\_en*, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin

#### AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2018 United States Artists Fellowship
- 2017 John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship  
Canada Council for the Arts



*Pissed*, 2017  
200 gallons of urine, 18,000 grams of boric acid, acrylic  
86 x 40¼ x 40 inches  
Total weight 1,500 lb.





# Aline’s Orchard (Between Scandal and Oblivion)

Julia Steinmetz

*Inextinguishable Fire:*  
*Burn for Portrait*, 2015  
Photo: Cassils and  
Robin Black



*Queerness is not yet here.*  
—José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*

In a progression of major works developed, performed, and exhibited over the course of the past decade, Cassils has used a mastery of techniques of the body in order to achieve desired performative and sculptural effects. In processes laden with exhaustion, pain, nausea, jouissance, and trembling, Cassils draws us into the intense emotional valence of enacting the desires and fantasies of the psyche on, in, and through the materiality of the flesh. These intensive enactments begin with the body, interrogating the fissures and points of contact between queer and trans embodiment and representational practices. The artist’s body, however, does not exist in isolation: it shapes and is shaped by context and environment, sending and receiving sonic, tactile, and affective communications, leaving indexical traces of encounters and actions.

The capacity for sound to imply both a space and a set of relations is a thread that runs through Cassils’s performance-based works, ranging from *Inextinguishable Fire* (2014), in which sound design by longtime collaborator Kadet Kuhne serves to enhance the viewer’s identification with Cassils as the artist undergoes a full-body burn, to the four-channel audio installation *Ghost* (2013), which redeploys sound recordings from the performance *Becoming an Image* (2012) to produce a ghostly sonic apparition of the artist bashing a two-thousand-pound block of modeling clay. We depend on our brains to make sense of sound, to interpret it instantaneously. In *103 Shots* (2016), Cassils uses the affective force of sound to create a powerful memorial to the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. This short film exposes the ways in which listening is susceptible to the vagaries of expectation: survivors of the shooting heartbreakingly recount their initial assumption that the sounds they heard were balloons popping, fireworks bursting, or champagne bottles opening—anything but gunfire. The footage presents stark black-and-white imagery of a series of pairs of couples and friends bursting a balloon between their bodies with the pressure of an embrace accompanied by a sound track of Foley recordings of balloons popping in a

cement room, which in turn sound like gunshots. The faces of the film’s participants register affection, surprise, pain, discomfort, and laughter; each embrace is a minor enactment of the disorienting effect of violence in the space of intimacy.

Sound speaks the language of the body: it moves us. In *Aline’s Orchard* (2018), on view in the COLA exhibition, Cassils calls on a repertoire of sonic aesthetic strategies and sensory techniques to mine a social and erotic space from the past and superimpose it on the present, interpellating bodies in the here and now into the glimmer of a potential queer future. This work references the specific history of Barnsdall Park, which was created and donated to the city by the oil heiress, experimental theater director, notable eccentric, and single mother by choice Aline Barnsdall, who purchased Olive Hill in 1919 and turned it into a radical artistic enclave. Drawing on archival research, oral history, and active imagination, Cassils uses sound and sensory suggestion to re-create the Barnsdall olive groves in total darkness as a once and future site of political radicalism and queer cruising. Live grasses and dried leaves contribute to this immersive environment, which is also permeated with a custom scent composed by a perfumer in collaboration with the artist. The space is filled with the suggestive scents of aroused bodies, raw earth, and pheromones designed to activate a combined sense of fear and pleasure.

We are transported to a moment in which Silver Lake is a bastion of communism commonly referred to as “red hill,” the Mattachine Society is being formed on the stone steps leading up an epic local hill, and sexual and artistic unions crossing lines of race and class are staged amid the olive trees. *Aline’s Orchard* conjures up the city’s erstwhile queer haunts and, in doing so, enacts a kind of anticipatory illumination, a queer utopian moment. As José Esteban Muñoz writes in the opening pages of *Cruising Utopia* (2009), “We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine the future.” Amid the rustling leaves of the olive trees and the quickened breathing of erotic anticipation, we might just brush up against queerness and feel the breath of futurity on our cheeks, an invitation to another world. ●

Left: *Becoming an Image Performance Still No. 3*, 2013  
Edgy Women Festival, Montreal  
Photo: Cassils with Alejandro Santiago





*200 days, 200 gallons, 2017*  
Photo: Cassils and Robyn Beck



*Alchemic no. 3, 2017*  
Photo: Cassils and Robin Black



*Advertisement: Homage to Benglis, 2011*  
Photo: Cassils and Robin Black





# Sandra de la Loza.

ART *is...the meta realm, shaper of stories, myths, cosmologies. The forbidden realms we weren't supposed to enter—the realms of man—History. Enter his den, disassemble his tools...strip his stories down to the bare bones. Chop, grind those bones down to dust... offer it to the river.*

Born 1968, Los Angeles; lives and works in Los Angeles

**EDUCATION**

MFA, California State University, Long Beach, 2004  
BA, Chicana/o studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1992

**EXHIBITIONS**

- 2017 *Talking to Action: Art, Pedagogy, and Activism in the Americas*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles (group)  
*Resurgent Histories, Insurgent Futures*, Slought Gallery, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (group)
- 2011 *Mural Remix: Sandra de la Loza*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (solo)
- 2010 *L.A. Invisible City*, Instituto Cervantes, ARCOmadrid Contemporary Art Fair (group)
- 2008 *Phantom Sightings: Art after the Chicano Movement*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (group)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- 2017 Martens, Anne, "Ghosts of the Archive: Sandra de la Loza's Bookish, Sported Activism." *Artillery* 12, no. 1: 38–39.
- 2009 de la Loza, Sandra. *The Pocho Society Field Guide to L.A.* Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press.
- 2008 Lampert, Nicholas. "Taking Back the Plaque: The Art and Tactics of the Pocho Research Society." *Proximity* 2: 36–43.

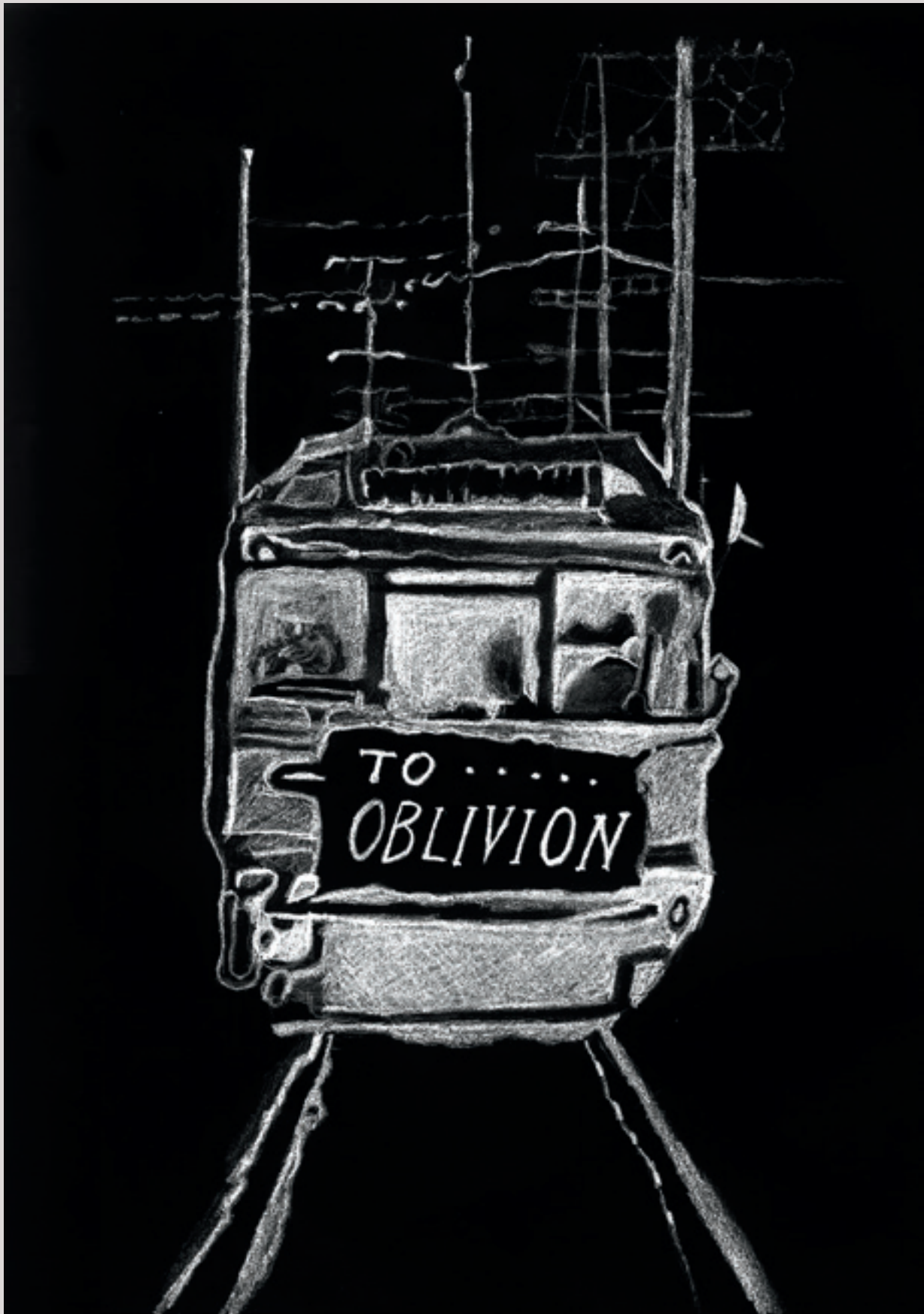
**COMMUNITY**

Co-organizer, *at land's edge*, a nomadic pedagogical project  
Co-organizer, *Decolonize LA*, various locations around Los Angeles



*Hazard Park*, from the series *The Serra Vista Line: A Photo Essay*, 2018  
C-print  
16 x 20 inches





# Erasure as Resistance: Sandra de la Loza and the Making of a Radical Angeleno



Raquel Gutiérrez

Spacechola, 2012  
Silk screen print  
30 x 30 inches

For Los Angeles the art of Sandra de la Loza is a place of junction, a critical confluence. A site that enables multiple points of entry into the city’s complicated history, like a series of sedimentary layers waiting to be experienced in and away from their elemental obscuring. Her unearthing has provided a space to take in and learn from these histories as a way to be with one another.

But how to be with one another is a question that unfolds to reveal the energy in de la Loza’s body of work. We are not positioned as mere spectators but given the tools to penetrate the institutional concretes that make inhabiting autonomous possibilities in present, material spaces real and necessary. Over the course of de la Loza’s trajectory she has asked participants to adjust their optics and unlock their emotional curiosities and follow her map points.

Her guerrilla art collective, the Pocho Research Society, gave us a series of spatial interventions that brought attention to the ways in which histories both collided and colluded in eliding important narratives of self-making in the Los Angeles peopled by Chicanxs and Latinxs, both US-born and recently arrived. *Operation Invisible Monument* (2002–11) invited us to learn how to be a “Guerrilla Historian,” in six easy steps: “1. research 2. choose a location 3. produce your marker 4. put it up! 5. document the action and 6. get the word out.” The prescient guerrilla historian in de la Loza conjures our own wherewithal to step forward and hold these monuments accountable (and well before the already too late removal of Confederate monuments sanctioned by state governments in the past year).

For de la Loza breaking boundaries included the historic ones that produced a segregated hometown in which, in every direction from east to south, black kids were kept from conspiring toward a liberated future with brown ones. Her recent collaborative work with the Argentine artist Eduardo Molinari, *donde se juntan los ríos: hidromancia archivista y otros fantasmas* [where rivers meet: archivistic hydromancy and other phantasms] (2017), emerged from a series of dialogues about the colonial and neocolonial processes that undergird their respective cities (Molinari lives in Buenos Aires). Having

grown up near the confluence of the Los Angeles and Arroyo Seco Rivers, de la Loza drew on her collaborative northeast Los Angeles psychogeography to invite questions about the ecological histories of the river and its domestication that led her to the headwaters of the Arroyo Seco, where, according to her artist’s statement, “the ruins of the White City, a utopic vision of the white colonial imaginaire, lie.”

*To Oblivion* (2018), de la Loza’s project for the COLA exhibition, continues to delve into the artist’s interrogation of infrastructure as a continuous shaper of the city’s materiality as well as its immateriality. Or how do ontological categories of race, class, and gender become spatialized? How do landscapes produce social hierarchies that impact mobility and other conditions for relational possibility? De la Loza’s inquiry is specific to the ways in which Los Angeles has created, abolished, and reproduced a fraught transportation system throughout the twentieth century by way of the long-defunct Pacific Electric Railway—the interurban streetcar system that helped the staunchly antiunion railroad magnate Henry Huntington build an empire marked by places throughout Southern California that still bear his name, from the hills of El Sereno, to the 710 freeway, on down to the beaches of Orange County.

In de la Loza’s work we refocus our attention not only on the 1903 labor strike in which more than seven hundred Mexican workers walked out but also on the leadership of a *curandera* (healer) known as Santa Teresa Urrea (1873–1906), who was exiled from Mexico for organizing indigenous communities in the country’s tumultuous land battles under the nearly four-decade-long rule of Porfirio Díaz. In late April 1903 Urrea led a march of women to encourage workers to “lay down their shovels” and join the strike. De la Loza explores the space between the myth and the actual historical figure of Urrea through a series of erasure poems exemplifying the labor of a fragmented cobbling of history and place in order to push back against reactionary media representations of Mexican workers as well as to reflect a radical Angeleno subjectivity. ●

Left: *To Oblivion*, 2016  
Drawing (sketch for banner)  
8½ x 11 inches



*Sixth Street Bridge*, from *Cartas Caminantes (Walking Letters)*, 2017  
Postcard  
4 x 6 inches



*Devil's Gate*, from *Cartas Caminantes (Walking Letters)*, 2017  
Postcard  
4 x 6 inches



*Where the Rivers Join*, 2017  
Multimedia installation  
Dimensions variable



*Where the Rivers Join (interior)*, 2017  
Multimedia installation  
Dimensions variable





# Michelle Dizon.

*ART is a network of systems that tokenizes and depoliticizes social movements, simplifies and appropriates difference, and normalizes white supremacy as the status quo. Women of color who continue to make art, despite its culture of violence, refuse to be erased. Our lives and the lives of our loved ones are complex, difficult, and deserve to be heard.*

Born 1977; lives and works in El Sereno (Los Angeles)

## EDUCATION

PhD, rhetoric, University of California, Berkeley, 2012  
MFA, University of California, Los Angeles, 2008  
MA, rhetoric, University of California, Berkeley, 2005  
BA, history of art and English, University of California, Berkeley, 1999

## ACADEMIC POSITION

Associate professor, media and cultural studies, University of California, Riverside, 2018–

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Tiempos migratorios*, VIII Bienal ASAB, Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia (group)
- 2015 *D'ici et d'ailleurs*, Centre d'Art Contemporain de Quimper, France (group)  
*Michelle Dizon: Drifting Islands*, Oakland Museum of California (solo)
- 2013 *Migrating Identities*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (group)
- 2010 *Curtains*, Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines Diliman (two-person, with Camilo Ontiveros)

## LECTURES

- 2017 "Diaspora Praxis," Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia, November
- 2013 "Feminism in Translation," Iaspis, Stockholm, November
- 2011 "Art and Transnational Struggle," Center for Women's Studies, Zagreb, Croatia, November  
"Transmigration of Memory," Jeu de Paume, Paris, March



*The Archive's Fold*, 2018 (details)  
Multi-image slide, digital video, and sound installation





# Family Trees (Toward an Archival Futurism)

Footnotes for my great-great-granddaughter in 2123

Viết Lê as Michelle Dizon (& future ancestors)



My Child, Anak, 2001  
Mini DV, color, sound  
28 minutes

*The Archive’s Fold* enfolds you, the pages of historicity. What lives—our lives—within the folds?

This is a prayer voyaging, echoing. . . . NASA’s *Voyager 1* and 2 spacecraft contain images and sounds for future galaxies, electronically placed on phonograph records, called the Golden Record. This, my golden child, is my record. These letters, this multi-image slide installation projects into time and space, where my voice and these visions reach you, great-great-granddaughter—refugee of space and time. Projection becomes a metaphor for vision—as in visionary; as in the cliché “you are a vision”: rapture—a rupture in time and space. You know so well that time, space, place collapse—past, present, futures meld—generations shutter.

I too am a refugee of time and space. A fellow exile wrote, “All families invent their parents and children, give each of them a story, character, fate, and even a language.”<sup>1</sup> And thus this project gives language, where language fails between folds of parchment—a family album if you will—a trace of our selves. As you see family, the Family of Man, is faction and fiction. In 1955 Edward Steichen envisaged a global photo-essay at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in which he aimed to capture “the gamut of life from birth to death.” The end of World War II marked the birth of US imperial ascendancy—the American Century. Didn’t Mr. Steichen realize then that empire is bathed in blood? From the family tree, strange fruit hanging.

This ambitious exhibition toured the world, reached nine million visitors. Visitation rites of passage: “Although the practice of Empire is continually bathed in blood, the concept of Empire is always dedicated to peace—a perpetual and universal peace outside of history.”<sup>2</sup> “Universal” Pictures indeed. *National Geographic*—saccharine icing; the geography and pornography of violence between the folds—labial, bestial, labor, labotomy. Loose lips sink ships. Have these bloodless images reached you, dearest, in time?

Mother | Nature | Nurture.

Here I am pictured, a visage and ghost, a young Philippine girl or boy in the colonies, through the eyes of the paterfamilias, US empire. A coolie and a conundrum. Here I am again and again, huddled limbs, Abu Ghraib, *Terrorist Assemblages*. Exquisite corpse.

Do you recognize me in my incarnations and incantations (say a little prayer<sup>3</sup>)—do you recognize this earth, bounteous and bereft, oh great-great-granddaughter? Nature denuded.

Do you recognize yourself? Space and time itself are colonies of the mind. Do you grieve when you see me (and yourself) again and again, this body, this body politic, in pain?

This is our archive and our inheritance. Let me tell you about our family tree, another family of mankind, and of kindness. But first, again the scene (mise-en-scène) of the crime.

Father, Figure. Jacques Derrida observes that the archive embodies *logos* (language), the law, the father. What is at once writ, ripped out of these pages? To inscribe is also to destroy. He notes that the repetition of this trauma, “is thus inscribed at the heart of the future to come.”<sup>4</sup> Anne Cheng: racial melancholia is a wound that will never heal—for us racialized subjects the site of trauma is the site of our subjectivity. Repetition compulsion. Rinse, repeat. Here I am washing my hair under their watchful gazes. Your gaze hits the side of my face.

What is truly at the heart of the future to come? The future as failure: the rupture of poisonous paradigms. How to simultaneously unearth, undo patriarchal, (post-)colonial violence? This is the queer art of failure. Utopia is also premised on failure, an impossible horizon. Within the archive’s fold—in between history, memory, the future—you can find me again and again. At time’s edge, looking past the *longue durée*, long creases present themselves—marginalia, the marginalized.

Past, future, present—we are transformed by our longing. ●

1. Edward W. Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (London: Granta, 2000), 3.  
2. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), xv.  
3. “I Say a Little Prayer” was a 1966 song written by Hal David to express a woman’s concern for her man serving in the Vietnam War.  
4. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 52.

Left: *White Gaze*, 2017 (detail)  
Series of 58 chromogenic prints  
24 x 20 inches each





*Gaza before the Law*, 2017  
Digital video, color, sound  
26 minutes



*Perpetual Peace*, 2012  
Two-channel digital video installation, color, sound  
43 minutes



*Ex Utero*, 2013  
Single-channel video, color, sound  
17 minutes  
Inkjet photographs  
Three photographs, 42 x 54 inches each





# Tim Durfee.

*ART follows you from your house, taking in the landscape, cities, objects, people, sounds, ideas, beliefs, hopes, desires, and fears along the way, until they morph—weirdly—into places of their own. You step aside, look around. What's it like?*

Born 1964, New London, CT; lives and works in Los Angeles

## EDUCATION

MArch, Yale University, New Haven, 1992  
BA, University of Rochester, Rochester, 1987  
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, 1980–83

## AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2015 Bronze Dragon, Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture, Shenzhen, China, for *Now, There: Scenes from the Post-Geographic City* (with cocurator Mimi Zeiger)  
*Fifty under Fifty: Innovators of the 21st Century*, by Beverly Russell, Eva L. Maddox, and Farooq Ameen (Mulgrave: Images Publishing, 2015)  
Build International Architecture Award for Innovation in Cultural Architecture
- 2013 Merit Award, NextLA, American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles, for *L.A.-Frame House*
- 2012 Honor Award, Architecture, American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles, for *The Rather Large Array*
- 2008 Tim Durfee and Iris Anna Regn selected as “Ten to Watch” by *California Home + Design* magazine

## PUBLICATIONS

- 2017 Durfee, Tim. “Aspirants to Reality: Possible Essays on the Made Up.” In *Made Up: Design's Fictions*, edited by Tim Durfee and Mimi Zeiger. Barcelona: Actar; Pasadena, CA: Art Center Graduate Press.
- 2011 Durfee, Tim. “The Art School: Three Proposals.” In *Art, Architecture, Pedagogy: Experiments in Learning*, edited by Ken Ehrlich. Valencia, CA: Viralnet.net, Center for Integrated Media, California Institute of the Arts.



*Temple*, 2018  
Ink on paper  
20 x 24 inches



*Bank*, 2018  
Ink on paper  
20 x 24 inches





**Growth Table** (Tim Durfee & Iris Anna Regn), 2011  
Routed marine plywood, hardware, glue, plastic  
36 x 48 x 132 inches  
Photograph: Jeremy Eichenbaum  
Finalist, Architizer A+ Award



**Sticks**, 2015  
Douglas fir, paint, hardware  
50 10-foot wood sticks, placed three miles along the Los Angeles River

# Contrails

Mimi Zeiger



**Twin Ecologies**, 2017  
Ink on paper  
20 x 30 inches

*I sat leafing through a Constable book for almost an hour. I kept flicking back to the picture of the greenish clouds, every time it called for the same emotions in me. It was as if two different forms of reflection rose and fell in my consciousness, one with its thoughts and reasoning, the other with its feeling and impressions, which even though they were juxtaposed, expelled each other's insights. It was a fantastic picture, it filled me with all the feeling that fantastic pictures do, but when I had to explain why, what constituted the "fantastic," I was at a loss to do so.*

—Karl Ove Knausgaard, *My Struggle: Book 1*

It was in Shenzhen, China, in the former offices of a soon-to-be-demolished flour factory, that Tim Durfee convinced me that I should read *My Struggle*, the epic work by the Norwegian writer Karl Ove Knausgaard. We had just wrapped up a panel discussion about the future of cities, technology, and architecture and were painfully aware of the anachronisms between the outmoded infrastructure of the factory in which we stood and the reality of Shenzhen as a hyper-present boomtown and special economic zone.

In our struggle with the then, now, and next of our conversation and the particular circumstances of its location (the site of the Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture), Knausgaard's memoir emerged as a means to hold fast to time and place—a literary click track.

A spare but precise recorder of the everyday, Knausgaard has no use for the shrouds of nostalgia that surround memory. Driving his hard-earned simplicity are the beats of the now that was then, and the now that is now, and the next now.

That Durfee shares the writer's interest in time is no surprise. An architect who practices speculation and an erstwhile musician with a taste for loops and duration, he often sets his work in a near future—one that follows to some degree the adage attributed to the sci-fi novelist William Gibson: "the future is already here, it's just not evenly distributed." Which is to say that the technology of today—drones, logistics software, selfie sticks—is extrapolated and

aestheticized into anticipatory perversions that are wary of utopian and dystopian labels, as both terms are weighted with longing. Near-future scenarios might include suburban neighborhoods planned around the needs of unmanned autonomous vehicles or transit systems controlled by the baroque algorithms once used in fulfillment centers, to mention two from his collaborative suite of films *Everything, On Time* (2015), produced with Ben Hooker and Jenny Rodenhouse. Perhaps in true L.A. fashion, the future is one freeway exit ahead—just past the palm tree-shaped cell phone tower and a bougainvillea-covered sound wall.

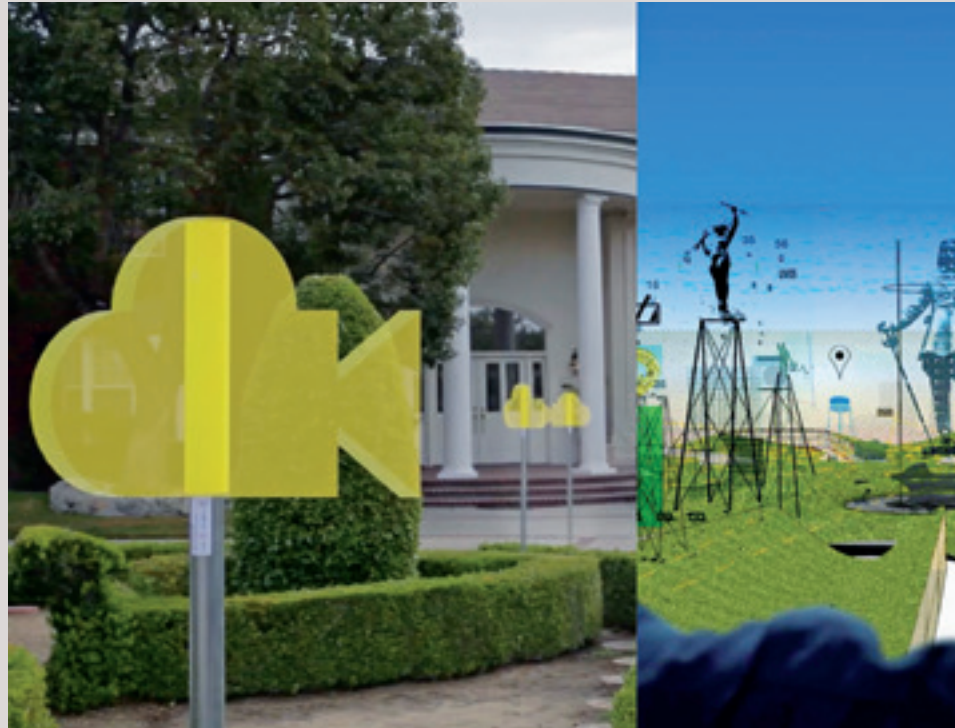
Recently, after speaking with Durfee about a new work, *Twin Ecologies* (2017), it struck me with a sense of karmic wonder and pleased recognition that clouds crop up both in Knausgaard's text and in Durfee's designs. Reason (Knausgaard) and technology (Durfee) capitulate to the sublimity of nature. A lacework of drone contrails floats at the top of the page. The lines are more systematic and graphic by design than the romantic paintings of "greenish clouds" by John Constable that capture the writer's attention. This scripted sky over the Verdugo Mountains is fantastic, a stylized fantasy that implicates beauty in even the somewhat dystopic scenario depicted in the piece, that of a Los Angeles given over to the impulses of an algorithmic economy.

If architecture as built form is sluggish, always just behind the beat in relationship to culture, its speculative side can be critical and even wield political agency in a field beholden to codes and capital. For Durfee this also applies to architecture as a discipline, which lately has taken an inward turn even as the world outside the academy keels. With his new work for the COLA exhibition, he demonstrates that this move toward fiction might even help give us a steadier foothold.

Indeed it is only when an everyday crisis is viewed against larger narrative themes like time or nature that its importance might be harnessed for design. Or as Durfee explains, "The urgency of what lives with us now yields to speculation." ●



*Everything, On Time*, 2016  
Tim Durfee & Ben Hooker,  
with Jenny Rodenhouse  
Video, 7 minutes  
Part of exhibition awarded  
Bronze Dragon at Bi-City  
Biennale of Architecture/  
Urbanism, Shenzhen



*12/8 Tower*, 2015  
Tim Durfee & Andrew Kragness  
Cardboard, plastic, vinyl  
96 x 96 x 180 inches  
Photograph: Oscar Qi Yuan Li

Right: *The Rather Large Array*, 2012  
Tim Durfee Studio  
Steel, PVC, wood, aluminum, 24  
cameras, sensors, lights  
40 x 50 x 15 feet  
Photograph: Joshua White  
Winner, AIA|LA Honor Award  
Finalist, Architizer A+ Award







# June Edmonds.

ART *is an entire universe. It has the power to illuminate its viewer and its creator.*

Born Los Angeles; lives and works in San Pedro (Los Angeles)

## EDUCATION

MFA, painting, Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, 1990  
BA, fine art, San Diego State University

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Method, Movement, Memory*, Manhattan Beach Creative Arts Center, CA (three-person)  
*Diasporagasm*, South Bay Contemporary SoLA Gallery and Michael Stearns Studio 347, Los Angeles (group)
- 2016 *Practice, Practice, Practice: Abstract Spirituality in Los Angeles Painting, Sculpture, and Performance*, Nan Rae Gallery, Woodbury University, Burbank, CA (group)  
*The New New*, Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Larchmont, NY (group)
- 2015 *Hard Edged: Geometrical Abstraction and Beyond*, California African American Museum, Los Angeles (group)
- 2014 *Word-Up: Interactions between Image and Text*, Huntington Beach Art Center, CA (group)
- 2012 *June Edmonds: Paintings*, Avenue 50 Studio Annex, Los Angeles (solo)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2016 Harvey, Doug. "June Edmonds: Circle/Curve Series." *Practice, Practice, Practice: Abstract Spirituality in Los Angeles Painting, Sculpture, and Performance* (blog), April. <http://abstractspiritual.blogspot.com/2016/04/june-edmonds-circlecurve-series.html>.
- 2015 Knight, Christopher. "'Hard Edged' Art at California African American Museum Widens Perception of Black Artists' Work." *Los Angeles Times*, December 9.



*Untitled (Unina)*, 2018  
Acrylic on unstretched canvas  
65 x 72 inches





# A Space That Joins Worlds

Lisa Henry



Sweet 16.II, 2016  
Oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches

For the last several years June Edmonds’s works have displayed abundant combinations of brushstrokes, with intersecting concentric dabs of vibrant paint forming circles that appear both specific and endless. A viewer encountering her work is at once in the present and—through the myriad strokes, the numerous circles intersecting and spinning round—engaged with the infinite. Her work fits squarely within the tradition of abstract art—concerned with form, color, and nonobjective compositions—yet her style is distinctive. Edmonds’s works in the COLA exhibition include both her signature paintings featuring circular forms and newer explorations of shape and color that make visible the artist’s spiritual and cultural journey.

Black painters working in abstraction have been historically underrepresented in the narrative of modern American art history, but Edmonds, who studied at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia and has been an art educator for many years, has studied the works of artists such as Alma Thomas and Norman Lewis. These abstractionists have deeply informed her approach as she developed her individual technique. The connection to Thomas in particular is one that Edmonds graciously and gratefully acknowledges:

I consider and speak of Alma Thomas as being my “Art Mother.” I remember being very young and seeing [Thomas’s painting] *Flowers at Jefferson Memorial* at LACMA, in the show *Two Centuries of Black American Art*. It was one of three paintings that were revelations for me at such a young age. . . . When I first decided to add color to some abstract paintings I had been working on 15 years ago that were in black, white, and copper, I noticed a circle in one of them and thought of Thomas because of the way I painted it. Around that time, I had gotten more serious about my meditation practice, and once after a session, I painted my first solely circular abstract painting.

In works such as *Dancing on the 110* (2017), *Sweet 16.II* (2016), and the dazzling triptych *Story of the Ohio* (2017), Edmonds’s careful brushstrokes radiate in circles of bright, often complementary colors. Her circles are tight, and the individual dabs of paint are thick and visceral. These activated circles often change color where the shapes overlap, creating an intricate dynamism.

Recent works such as *Primary Piscis* (2017) and *Untitled (Flag)* (2018) feature other shapes but continue to explore the area of overlap. *Primary Piscis* is a major work that evokes both a vagina and a shield, while the shape and composition of *Untitled (Flag)* make it resemble an American flag woven from strands of dark earth tones. Edmonds explains, “I am also working with primary colors and their relationship to skin tones; browns and neutrals. It is a continuing exploration of an idea I touched on previously dealing with African skin tones in particular having primary color classifications as well and how these primary colors create all hues of skin tones in all of humanity as well.”

*Primary Piscis* is a diptych of arc-like forms created by a series of radiating brushstrokes; neutral colors transition into bright yellow and white and then switch back to deep reds and dark blue. It is a work that emanates power and female strength. “The overlap of circles,” the artist explains, “the main focus of this painting and many others in this series, is called the *Vesica Piscis* in *Sacred Geometry*. This shape is said to represent the space which is an opening that joins two worlds.” The junction of the circles becomes a space that weaves the spiritual to the physical, allowing the artist to combine theory and reality. June Edmonds’s exuberant and meditative paintings join multiple worlds and extend abstraction simultaneously into the cultural, spiritual, and visual realms. ●

All quotations from the artist are from email correspondence with the author, February 2018.

Left: *Untitled (Flag)*, 2018  
Acrylic on unstretched canvas  
72 x 48 inches





*Indigo Memory*, 2017  
Oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches



*Story of the Ohio*, 2017  
Acrylic on unstretched canvas  
65 x 120 inches



*That Part*, 2017  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 inches





# d. Sabela grimes.

**ART.** *Bare intuitive intellect. Dynamic knowingness. Sensible. Feel visioning, blatant believing, audible observation, kinetic contemplation, messy manifestation.*

Lives and creates in Los Angeles

## EDUCATION

MFA, dance, University of California, Los Angeles  
BA, English, University of California, Los Angeles

## PERFORMANCES

- 2018 *Bubbling Utterance*, choreography and music, Winterdances: Transit, Jan Serr Studio, Kenilworth Square East, Milwaukee
- 2017 *Electrogynous*, choreographed dance-theater performance, presented by Los Angeles Performance Practice, LAX Festival, Bootleg Theater, Los Angeles  
*Wet without Warning*, choreography, live music, and dance performance solo, D.I.R.T. Festival, Dance Mission, San Francisco  
*Ancient Children*, codirector, dance-theater performance by Embodiment Project, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco
- 2016 *SheWho*, composer / sound designer, John Anson Ford Amphitheater, Los Angeles  
*Agua Furiosa*, composer / sound designer, CAP UCLA, Gloria Kaufman Dance Theater  
*Stardust*, composer / sound designer, commissioned by David Rousseve / REALITY, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, College Park  
*Ruptured Silence*, composer / sound designer, commissioned by Wideman/Davis Dance, Drayton Hall Theater, University of South Carolina, Columbia
- 2015 *Sun Again*, choreographed dance-theater solo, 18th Annual Illadelph Legends Hip Hop Festival, Z Space, San Francisco



d. Sabela grimes, 2018  
Photo: Meena Murugesan

Costume design for *40 Acres & A Microchip*, 2004  
Photo: Jamie Merwin







# Man Discovered Dancing outside the Ship Found to Be from Another Dimension



40 Acres & A Microchip, Wilma Theater, Philadelphia, 2004  
Photo: Hannan Saleh

Anna B. Scott

Whenever the lights come up, we know we are Witness to a story that has never stopped being told and ain’t been told right yet. Neither textual nor visual nor material nor aural (though full of orality). It is quite oracular, filled with a vernacular understanding of quantum mechanics. A multi-registered hue man Being is required to bring this story from the notyetnow into our Presence, one who cultivates and maintains its own muthafuckin planet. The story calls forth d. Sabela grimes. Pushing at our sympathetic nervous systems with his rhymes, songs, remixes, and vulnerability, he arrives in rich Blackness.

Grimes has been elevating the artistry and science of Kinesthetic Street Art for more than two decades. As an original member of Rennie Harris Puremovement, he propelled the company into international crossover stardom with *Rome & Jewels* (2000), his adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*. He is renowned for a transdisciplinary body of work that extracts human-centered stories from headlines and historical facts. To understand how this English major found himself traveling interdimensionally within spacetime while traversing global stages, we need to grasp networks and geolocated memory.

Lompoc. Soweto. Philly.  
Grimes’s insistence that we consider the function of the Divine within our movement vocabulary is rooted in his deep appreciation for physics. It would take a pop locker to weave a coherent experience of a confabulation like the Philadelphia Experiment. The practice of moving the body in ever more minute structures, cadences, and gestures creates the effect of time travel, light disruption, and therefore invisibility as it relates to matter displacement. Yeah. Looks like that guy just teleported across the stage from one time period to another . . . and maybe now he’s a she . . . or an it . . . or we vanished and came back ten minutes before the show started yesterday.

Philly.  
Neither the beginning of his career and definitely not the ending, *Philly XP* (2014) could be read as an autobiography of a changeling using his own transmogrification to jump from realtime to notyetquitetime on a spiraling nautical loop. Whether postulated as field or string theory, the physics of Blackness is a visceral one, an actual process that Grimes

utilizes to leap from the ethnographic to the analytical to the performative to the anachronistic to the individualistic to unison and back again.

*Electrogynous* (2017) expresses the explorations of a gendered cross-dimensional entity traveling in a collective Black Earthship aka body. Depending on your inclination or (en)training, your response to edges and finalities varies. Your materiality unmakes and remakes the fact of the matter. Your electromagnetic field activates certain types of mines beyond your vision. This does not disturb the fact that their explosions reroute and transform your life.

Have we dematerialized, jumped to Los Angeles for a bit?

Philly, the story that knows not it is a lie. Grimes, the body that knows nothing else than being a field of sound-songspace—elemental. The epidermis that sloughs off over and over, revealing stories that lie within faulty scientific understanding. The knowing that the city dwells in a nowhere, an illusion that exerts differing parameters over specific types of bodies: forces that can entangle, that can be calibrated, that can be reverse engineered, that can be hacked so that we can get back to the stars, to a place of the wild free Black Imaginative.

Try to call this Afrofuturistic and you soon run into trouble. When we speak of a Black body having a right to a future, that’s a fact, not a phantasmagorical position. When we make work with our Black bodies that pays homage to, reinvigorates the fractal reality of our ancestral forces, as Sun Ra said, we are “Ancient to the Future,” but we are not from Saturn. Grimes knows we are definitely from deep space. This quality of being a Stranger on Earth, an Original Stargazer, desires to be known as an improvisational force, pure in its ability to be in position of both Call and Response, to verify that one plus one does equal three. There are only pools of interpolated Nows. Ciphering Nowness. Which do you pick?

That is the question d. Sabela grimes asks of us as he courageously projects himself from one to the other. Witness. The story ain’t over, though the stage lights are. It’s alright to clap now. He’ll be right back. ●

Left: *World War Whatever*, Glorya Kaufman Dance Theater, UCLA, 2007  
Photo: Jorge Vismara





*Electrogynous*, Bootleg Theater, Los Angeles, 2017  
Photo: Gema Galianda

*Sankofa*, Glorya Kaufman Dance Theater, UCLA, 2006  
Photo: Jorge Vismara





# Peter J. Harris.

ART is an imaginatively rigorous way to invoke trance, explore and play with time and its pulsations, and revel in the shifts and slippages between emotional states.

Born 1955, Washington, DC; lives and works in Los Angeles

EDUCATION

BA, Howard University, Washington, DC, 1977

PUBLICATIONS

- 2016 *The Johnson Chronicles: Truth, My Penis, Tall Tales* (Los Angeles: Inspiration House)
- 2014 *Bless the Ashes: Poems* (San Fernando, CA: Tía Chucha)
- The Black Man of Happiness: In Pursuit of My “Unalienable Right”* (Los Angeles: Inspiration House)
- 2011 *Relive Everything & Live the Same, VoiceMusic from Avenue 50’s Black-Brown Dialogues Project*, anthology coedited with Gloria Alvarez (Los Angeles: Avenue 50 Studio)
- 2004 *Safe Arms: 20 Love & Erotic Poems (and One Ooh Baby Baby Moan)* (Los Angeles: Inspiration House)
- 1993 *Hand Me My Griot Clothes: The Autobiography of Junior Baby* (Baltimore: DuForcelf)
- 1984–88 *Genetic Dancers: The Magazine for and about the Artistry within African/American Fathers* (founding editor and publisher)
- 1982 *Wherever Dreams Live* (El Cerrito, CA: Life Signs)

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2015 Oakland PEN Josephine Miles Award for Literary Excellence (for *Bless the Ashes*)  
American Book Award (for *The Black Man of Happiness*)
- 1994 Oakland PEN Josephine Miles Award for Literary Excellence (for *Hand Me My Griot Clothes*)



Peter J. Harris with Inspiration House PoetryChoir at Grand Performances, August 20, 2009

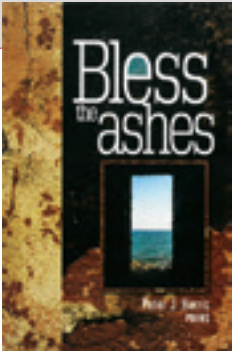




See You Sequence, World Stage,  
Los Angeles, April 26, 2017  
Photo: Tiffany Judkins

# Peter J. Harris, Writer and Cultural Worker

Shonda Buchanan



Bless the Ashes, 2014

*The self-cast trance is possible when you are importantly excited about an idea, or surmise, or emotion.*  
—Gwendolyn Brooks, *Report from Part One*

Peter J. Harris—part griot, part preacher, part saint, part magician—approaches poetry like he approaches life: in Gwendolyn Brooks’s “self-cast trance” of possibilities yet also with delicate, thoughtful precision couched in sincere questions or, if need be, with a poem bomb.

Harris is the consummate inquisitor of culture, manhood, and the role of language in our lives. He is the founder and artistic director of Inspiration House, which produces cultural, artistic, educational, and media programs that combine jazz and verse to both inspire people and encourage social engagement. Comprising four collections of poetry, including the pulsing unpublished manuscript *Trance*, as well as fiction and personal essays, Harris’s body of work shows how the author has come full circle in his life, within his art, and toward a complete acceptance of himself as a man who approaches his community and his humanity with eyes open wide, nothing off-limits.

Harris’s work in *Trance* is sometimes a surrealist manifesto and at other times a symphony of sensual images and musical language transforming our notions of place, time, love, inclusion, and belonging, of innocence, beauty, laughter, longing, and pain. In “Tangled Amber” the poet presses the hot pulse at our throats with “amber hair blesses your stomach / muslin in nightlight / hidden navel my umbilical / destination where I can mumble wicked nonsense.” Harris’s depiction of manhood made of “spring cherries” and constructed by “family kiln” and “neighborhood eloquence” is a challenge to see black men and not be afraid. This poem explores the unspoken dichotomy, celebrating the uncelebrated while subtly highlighting the erasure of the black man’s humanity. In *Bless the Ashes* (2014), Harris writes: “I make eye contact with babies on the street / to catch my stares they twist in their parents’ arms / ignore shouts against talking to strangers. . . . / I might as well be wearing red socks & highwaters. . . . / I know I ain’t hip no more.”

In his sensual poems as well as mirthful ones, and those about his mother, Stevie Wonder, Donny Hathaway, and Marvin Gaye, there is a fearlessness, an unabashed love of black men, a call for truth saying. The poems show a candor and opulence reminiscent of an ancient generation of wordsmiths whose purpose was to provide foundational self-knowledge and awareness while charging the next generation with a mission—speak truth.

In his title poem for his book *Bless the Ashes*, we see the poet’s earnest struggle with his mother’s death, “I call on my June / January mother with summer name / I call on her New York voice freed from tracheotomy tube / to mash lumps of bad memories until I’m gravy again / I call on my June // to help me bless the ashes of my ripening / as I flower finally in the compost of her death & my heartbreaks.”

*Trance* is equally a tour de force collection of poems that simmers in your lap. It vibrates with the pulse of the seeker, with Harris’s questions upon questions to get to the “meat” of the thing, and ultimately leaves the reader wanting to be a part of something whole and righteous. Something at once old and new. Something pure and simple, like a baby’s laughter or smile, which Harris references often. He says, “My insistent quest, in *Trance* for sure, is to tap a rigorous and subsonic sensibility, a creative ecology, that radiates as Dark Matter, infused at an elemental essence with R&B, the Blues (Bluesiness?), improvisation, and the embellished story—talking of the grown ass, working-class, men and women who imprinted me so long ago.”

Reality crossed with Sufism, Harris’s poems make a poet want to write. The poems make you want to spit fire. Make you want to cry and laugh at the same time. And if mere words can evoke such a feeling, proving that language is wet kiss love, penetrating weapon, and a trance, then the poet has done his job. Readers will engage and read Peter Harris’s work for the musicality, the bravery, the innocence, and the bald challenge to wake up in our bodies, in our spirits, and become an even more decent person than we ever thought we could be. ●

November 7th

*The forecast calls for pain—Robert Cray*

shoulders aching  
inches from goodbye  
squatting Arroyo Seco boulders  
tortured foreheads tilted in fractured intimacy

a kiss could resurrect me  
heal my palsied mouth  
hold off epic flood already misting my view of receding horizon in her beloved face  
keepsake face of so many nights my name a guitar solo of pleasure & satisfaction

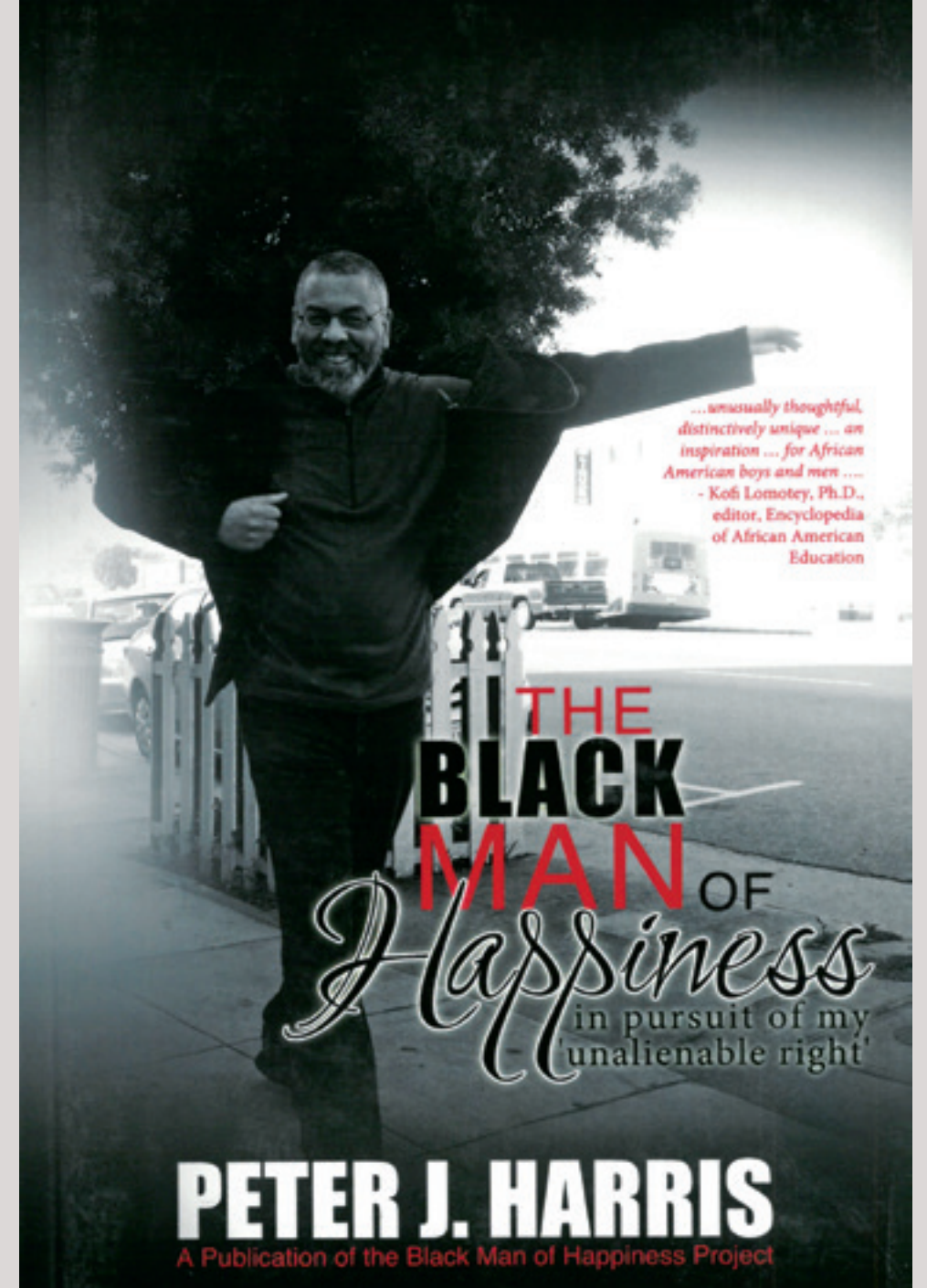
keepsake flood plain we've skipped across these same boulders  
sculpted by galloping waters  
in rainy seasons of confessions & sensuality

namesake flood plain sitting in for all places we've hiked  
while savoring touch on narrow pathways unraveling esoteric conversations  
sensing family in the wind daring to glimpse our future on a sunset's horizon

forecast calls for pain a momentum in opposite directions  
a locomotion of unstoppable emptiness water nowhere  
not to sip nor to soften earth we could muddy  
& smear on our forgiveness in a ritual reunion

her mouth a pool of salvation  
if we weren't drowning in this final telling  
inflamed in our dreaded knowing

hunger too exhausted to wait for rain



*The Black Man of Happiness, 2014*





# Michele O'Marah.

ART *is (mostly) “Whatever it takes to get the job done.”*

—Dave Muller

and

*“I don’t paint things as I see them, I paint things as I think them.”—Picasso*

*With a little of this (especially when you are younger): “What is Art/Rat? Self-crucifixion.”*

—Patti Smith

Born 1967, Vallejo, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles

## EDUCATION

BFA, photography, Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, 1991

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *What’s her problem? Michele O’Marah*, Artspeak, Vancouver, BC (solo)  
*Los Angeles—A Fiction*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, and Musée d’Art Contemporain, Lyon, France (group)
- 2012 *Made in L.A. 2012*, organized by the Hammer Museum and LA><Art, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and Los Angeles Municipal Gallery (group)
- 2011 *Michele O’Marah: Video Portraits*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, CA (solo)
- 2010 *A Girl’s Got to Do What a Girl’s Got to Do*, Cottage Home, Los Angeles, and Brennan & Griffin, New York (solo)
- 2008 *Amateurs*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco (group)
- 2003 *Baja to Vancouver: The West Coast in Contemporary Art*, Seattle Art Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, Vancouver Art Gallery, and CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco (group)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2010 Holte, Michael Ned. “Best of 2010,” *Artforum* 49 (December).  
———. “Body Doubles: Michael Ned Holte on Michele O’Marah.” *Artforum* 48 (February): 75.
- 2002 Hainley, Bruce. “Best of 2002,” *Artforum* 41 (December).



*The Clinton Family Wins*, 2018  
Color photograph





# Take Two: Michelle O’Marah and the Remake

Jamillah James



Nomadic Nights: Michele O’Marah, 2010  
A LAND exhibition

For more than two decades Michele O’Marah’s videos and photographs have reimagined American political and pop cultural touchstones with a distinctive, DIY approach to production.

O’Marah stages her videos in her studio, just east of Hollywood and south of Burbank, where numerous films and television programs are produced. She makes props and sets out of cardboard, construction paper, and found materials and casts both friends and professional actors in her projects. Though she does not appear in her own work, O’Marah is part of a continuum of artists—including Eleanor Antin, Sherrie Levine, and Cindy Sherman—who have embraced appropriation, camp, and the remake as strategies to critique and lampoon power relations and social structures.

O’Marah’s work generally centers on female characters, deconstructing various cinematic and televisual tropes that often affirm one-dimensional representations of women. Reperformance is a critical part of her work, a conceptual practice that inscribes an original source with new meaning or serves as a form of critique. Her earlier works *Valley Girl* (2002) and *A Girl’s Got to Do What a Girl’s Got to Do* (2010) revisit Martha Coolidge’s eponymous 1983 film and *Barb Wire* (1996), respectively, both of which traffic in stereotypes of femininity. In O’Marah’s hands, however, they receive a feminist rescripting that relies on atemporality, artifice, and mutable subjectivity. She has likewise restaged iconic moments in television, such as conservative commentator William F. Buckley’s interview with Huey P. Newton of the Black Panther Party (*How Goes It with the Black Movement?*, 2007) and Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton’s chaotic 1970 *60 Minutes* interview (*White Diamonds / Agent Orange*, 2001) to highlight the ways in which popular media informs the understanding of historical and social events, the perception of public figures, and the information it chooses to privilege.

The often fraught relationship between the public and public figures as mediated by TV is a central point in O’Marah’s work for the COLA exhibition, *We Were the 90’s* (2018), which focuses on isolated moments in the 1990s for pop culture icon Madonna and recent presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, unlikely compatriots whose rise to power and prominence was met with intense scrutiny. Fueled by [sensational press coverage predating the endless churn of](#)

social media, the blowback against their subversion of patriarchal expectation still frames their public images.

The strategies of appropriation and remake allow O’Marah to assert some control over the trajectory of the source material, offering a parallel or alternative version somewhat divorced from the source’s original context and the potential problems made visible by historical distance. Given the passage of time, citing content such as *Valley Girl*, Madonna’s *Nightline* interview following the world premiere of her controversial music video for “Justify My Love” (1990), or Clinton’s watershed “Women’s Rights Are Human Rights” speech in Beijing allows O’Marah ample space in which to play. Her conscious decision to stay true to her sources—allowing only the things she can control, aesthetic differences and means of production, to separate her versions from the originals—recuperates material and personas that have endured life in the fickle public domain. The highly constructed anachronism of O’Marah’s restagings, each produced nearly twenty years after the original, also invites an element of chance and failure—as do all remakes—and with it, freedom that offers another layer of détournement and feminist inscription.

Los Angeles has served as stage and scene of an endless procession of fantasy and simulacra, both in the art world and in film, which influences O’Marah’s methods of production and approach to the visual. Her primary strategies of camp, simulation, and postmodern reconstruction elevate and recuperate the original works she cites. As a whole her work in video and installation presents an array of female representations with the desire to redress the problematic nature of genre and stereotype and the ease with which representation can be manipulated or weaponized by the media against subjects. By selecting sources that are themselves reimaginings of classic texts (*Barb Wire* is a take on the 1942 *Casablanca*; *Valley Girl* a new wave update of *Romeo and Juliet*) and working with time-honored television formats—the soap opera, sitcom, intimate news digest interview, or press conference—she is able to recast convention with radical and transformative potential. ●

This essay too is a revisiting—of a text written on the occasion of the 2016 exhibition *What’s her problem? Michele O’Marah*, curated for Artspeak, Vancouver.

Left: *Madonna (in the wrong wig), Rock the Vote look*, 2018  
Color photograph



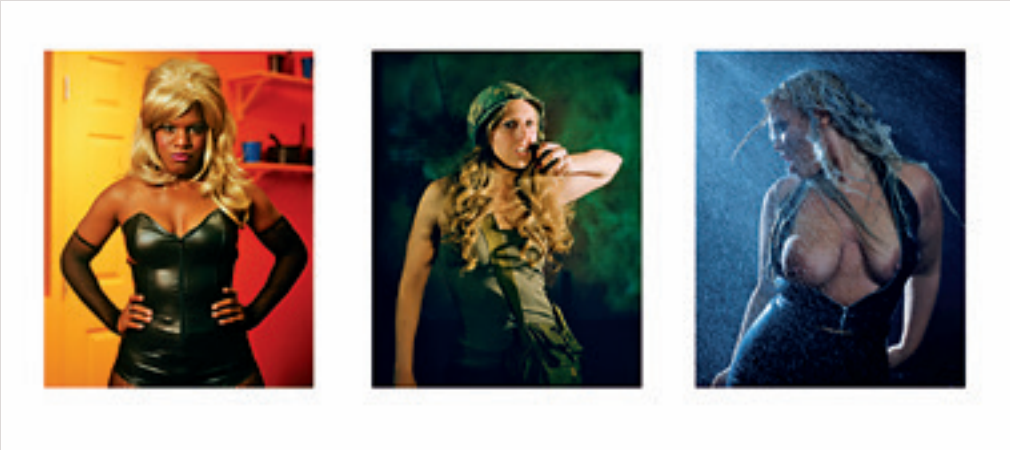


*Pink Piece*, 2011  
Video installation  
Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, CA



*Orange Set and Don't Call Me Babe*, 2010  
Installation view, *Los Angeles—A Fiction*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo

*What's her problem? Michele O'Marah*, 2016  
Installation view  
Artspeak, Vancouver, Canada



*Three Barbs (Amber, Emily and Trish)*, 2010  
Color photographs  
20 x 16 inches each



# Julie Shafer.

ART *is a gesture: of humility, of grace, of rage, of beauty, of absurdity, of distortion, of proof that we are of this world, affected by this world, and, in turn, affect.*

Born 1978, Covina, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles

## EDUCATION

MFA, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 2005  
BA, studio art, University of California, Irvine, 2000

## EXHIBITIONS

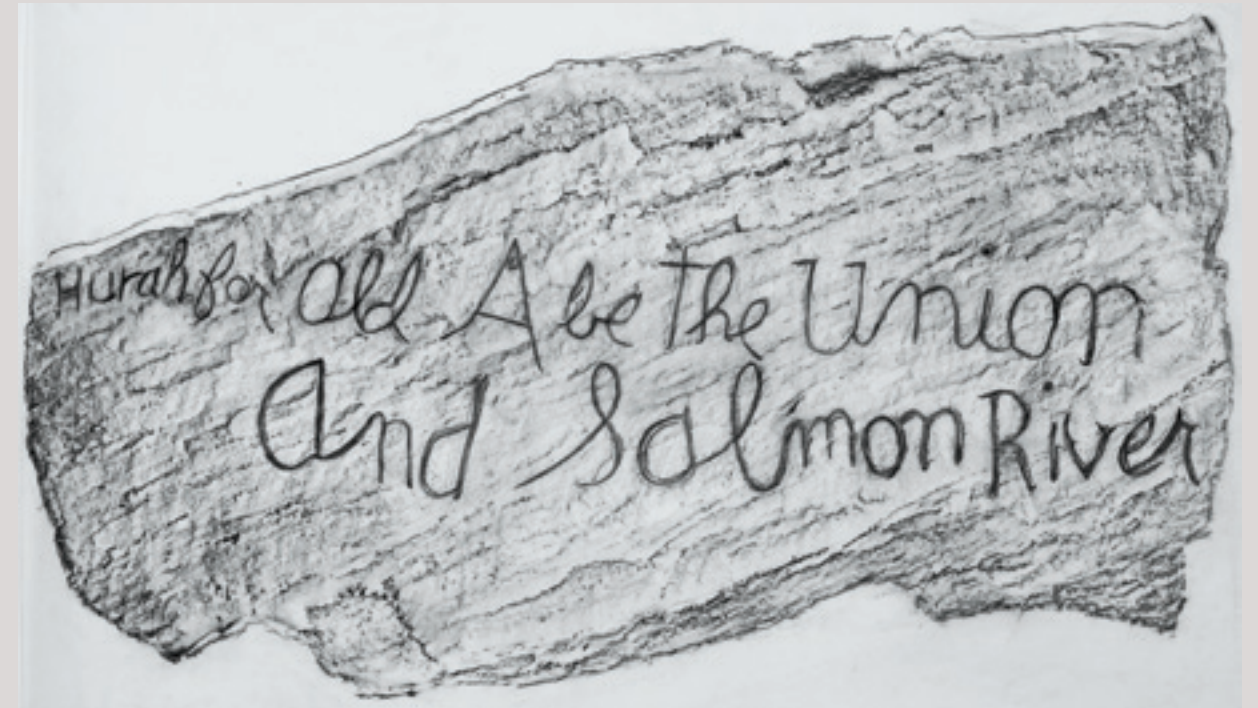
- 2017 *Wait 'til You See the Devil's Punchbowl*, Edouard de Merlier Photography Gallery, Cypress College, CA (solo)  
*Conduction*, Fellows of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (group)
- 2016 *¡Diga me!*, Casa Colonial, Oaxaca, Mexico (group)  
*Altered Land*, Ruth Foster Art Gallery, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire (group)  
*The Gildless Age*, Torrance Art Museum, CA (group)
- 2014 *Fireside Lounge to 41.296111, -105.515000*, 2A Gallery, Los Angeles (solo)
- 2011 *Twisted Selves*, California Museum of Photography, Riverside (group)

## PUBLICATIONS

- 2017 Ennis, Ciara. "Julie Shafer: Conquest of the Vertical," *Exposure Photographic Journal* 50 (Spring 2017): 34–37.
- 2015 Shafer, Julie. "A Pinhole Story with Ants." *Albertini 2014 the Kite* (blog), published by Rosanna Albertini, April 13, 2015, <https://albertini2014.wordpress.com/2015/04/13/a-pinhole-story-with-ants/>.

## LECTURES

- 2013 "Finding Your Voice," TEDx conference, lecture on *Conquest of the Vertical*, a series of six-foot-tall pinhole photographs of remote California mining sites.



*Parting of the Ways: Abe*, 2018  
Graphite, wax, paper  
27 x 36 inches



*Parting of the Ways: Guernsey*, 2018  
Inkjet print  
24 x 36 inches





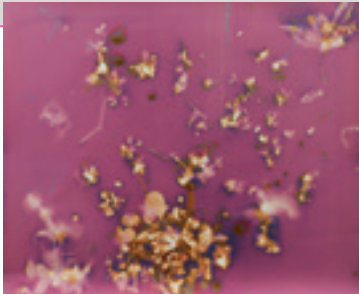
*Phenomenon of Territory*, 2016  
Inkjet print  
20 x 24 inches



*The Means to Experience Change*, 2016  
Inkjet print  
20 x 24 inches

# Records of Consequence

*Kristine Thompson*



*Texaco Oil Channel*, 2016  
Silver gelatin lumen photograph  
20 x 24 inches

*With antecedents;  
With my fathers and mothers, and the accumulations of  
past ages;  
With all which, had it not been, I would not now be here,  
as I am:  
.....  
In the name of These States, and in your and my name,  
the Past,  
And in the name of These States, and in your and my name,  
the Present time.  
  
I know that the past was great, and the future will be great,  
And I know that both curiously conjoint in the present time  
—Walt Whitman*

As I look at Julie Shafer’s work, I have been thinking about Walt Whitman’s notion of antecedents and how the past continues to be felt in the present. For several years Shafer’s work has centered on American landscapes and how our desire to conquer new territories and accumulate resources has scarred those spaces. This began with her project *Conquest of the Vertical* (2013), which utilized a six-foot-tall pinhole camera to document California sites ravaged by gold and silver mining; it continued in *Wait ’til You See the Devil’s Punchbowl* (2015), which explored the effects of deep oil drilling off the coast of Louisiana; and it is evident in her newest body of work, *The Parting of the Ways* (2018), which acknowledges individuals who forged westward on the Oregon Trail in the mid- to late 1800s.

*The Parting of the Ways* focuses on a location in Wyoming where the Oregon Trail forked and travelers faced a choice: proceed on a shorter route west without a reliable source of water or follow the water on a longer, more perilous path. It was at this particular split that people carved their names or other messages into the hillside. Shafer’s visits to these “Registers of the Desert” over the past year have resulted in a series of graphite rubbings of some of the names. The drawings reveal that some carvings are deeper than others, perhaps pointing to the strength and determination of the traveler (or the engraver hired by those who were wealthier) or evidence of how the environment and weather may have worn down the inscriptions over time.

In looking at Shafer’s impressions, I can’t help but compare them to gravestones and epitaphs. In the drawings that are part of the COLA exhibition, J. Bauder, B W Kelley, J W Watkins, B Snow, J. S. Warran, and John Beck—travelers whose stories we begin to imagine—are memorialized. We learn that some hail from Ohio, others from Iowa and New York. Another message proclaims, “Hurah for Old Abe the Union and Salmon River,” revealing the time period, political leaning, and perhaps a reference to home. The practice of frottage has historical precedents in many countries, as rubbings were a transportable way of sharing historical data, art, and scholarly texts from locations where such inscriptions might not hold up over time.

The project also includes several black-and-white photographs that allow us to contemplate the vastness of the Wyoming landscape in order to better contextualize those migrants. Wagon ruts are still visible in the ground, the blazing sun appears both majestic and overpowering, and the names etched in the hillside could be missed if we aren’t looking carefully.

It’s helpful to remember that westward expansion paralleled the development of photography. The federal government and its various photographic surveys set out to visualize the mining, railroad, and agricultural opportunities of the West. The awe-inspiring photographs likely persuaded many to leave home in search of the new possibilities and abundance depicted. And as those pioneers mined the land for gold and silver, photography—a medium that relies on silver for its very existence—became even more accessible.

Photography allowed for a new kind of record making and, with it, a culture that desired to be remembered. To carve one’s name in stone on a monumental journey and declare, “I was here!” is an impulse similar to having a photographic portrait made that could serve as a kind of evidence. I am grateful that Shafer has taken up the task of remembrance. Her photographs and rubbings pay homage to some of these individuals while simultaneously pointing to the larger consequences of the journey, the risk involved in difficult decisions, and the particular confluence of hope and loss embodied in this landscape. ●





*Conquest of the Vertical: 300 miles from Eureka! (n.1)*, 2012  
Silver gelatin pinhole negative  
71 x 42 inches



Right: *Conquest of the Vertical: 600 miles from Eureka! (n.3)*, 2012  
Silver gelatin pinhole negative  
68 x 42 inches





# Doris Sung.

ART *and technology*  
are likely bedfellows.  
*Technology gives art*  
purpose, while art gives  
technology meaning.

Born 1964, Hollywood; lives and works in Rolling Hills, CA

**EDUCATION**

MArch, Columbia University, New York, 1990  
BA, architecture, Princeton University, NJ, 1986

**EXHIBITIONS**

2016 *Drift* featured in Future Forward event series, presented by Toyota Prius and the Creators Project, Industria Superstudio, New York; Revel Space, Fulton Market, Chicago; NeueHouse Hollywood, Los Angeles

**AWARDS AND HONORS**

- 2017 Faculty Recognition Award, Phi Kappa Phi All-University Honor Society, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- 2016 SXSW Eco Awards, Speculative and Prototyping Honorable Mention for *Bloom* and *InVert*  
Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship, Bellagio Center, Italy
- 2015 American Institute of Architects Small Projects Award for *Bloom*
- 2014 United States Artists Fellowship  
Architect Magazine R+D Award for *eXo*, July 2014 issue
- 2012 Prix Ars Electronica, Art and Technology Honorable Mention for complete body of work, Linz, Austria

**PUBLICATIONS**

2016 Sung, Doris. "Smart Geometries for Smart Materials: Taming Thermobimetals to Behave." *Journal of Architectural Education* 70 (March): 96–106. Named best article of the year by the *Journal of Architectural Education*, 2016–17.



Study model of *Fuller*, 2018  
Thermobimetal, aluminum  
36 inches diameter  
A pretensioned structural sphere





**Bloom**, 2011  
Thermobimetal, aluminum, steel  
21 x 20 x 40 feet  
A lightweight monocoque structure sheathed with a sun-shading, self-ventilating surface that responds to the moving sun  
Photo: Brandon Shigeta

**Drift**, 2016  
Thermobimetal, steel, plastic  
60 x 60 x 60 inches  
A thick loaf of pivoting pieces that respond to theater lights



# A Fuller Sense of Metal: Notes on the Work of Doris Sung

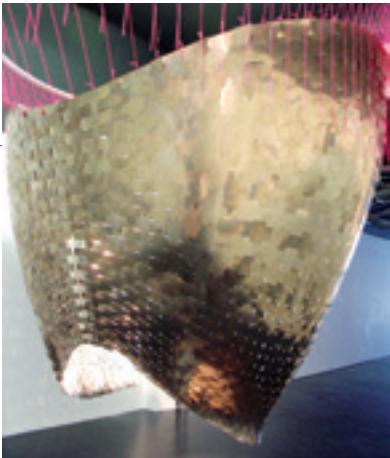
Dora Epstein Jones

The work of DOSU Studio Architecture will change your mind about metal. Metal is supposed to be strong and stable. It isn't meant to bend, and if it did bend, or move, or flutter, that would be a sign of its failure. Not so in the hands of DOSU's architect and innovator, Doris Sung.

For more than ten years Sung has performed experiments on metal. Her goal has been to animate the material—to make it bend, move, flutter—and then to learn from that animated metal new ways of making metal respond to climate, new ways of fastening it to itself and to other materials, and yes, new ways to achieve structural and synthetic strength. Her experiments have led her into the specific use of thermobimetal, a sheet metal composed of two different alloys with different coefficients of expansion, sandwiched together. When the metal is heated, one side expands more rapidly than the other, causing the entire strip or sheet to curl. Thinner bimetals curl tightly when heated; thicker ones curl more loosely.

In a number of Sung's projects the metal is asked to perform immediately. The massive *Bloom* at the Materials & Application gallery in Los Angeles in 2011–12 literally bloomed when the sun hit it and closed up when the shadows stole over it. The strips of metal that make up the sides of the assemblage *Drift* (2016), for Toyota's Future Forward initiative, moved to admit beams of light to pass through the volume. In other projects, such as the towering *eXo* (2014) or *Fuller* (2018), in the COLA exhibition, the animated metal contracts and then expands to "lock itself into place." The movement of the metal is crucial to finding new forms of fitting and then placing pieces into tension. *Fuller* is in tension—a perfect, balanced tension.

*Fuller* needs to be a sphere. In an obvious nod to Buckminster Fuller, the sphere is made up of a repeated connecting module. But more than what Bucky could have imagined, this module is nonequivalent: there are larger triangles and smaller triangles and then, of course, the bowed curves of bi-metal that hold the ball together. Even the bowed curves are nonequivalent, popping out slightly from the semblance of a single monotone structure in a more traditional Buckyball. Geometry is at play in *Fuller*, pushing the ball to be composed not of joints and connectors but of an exquisite equipoise.



**Armoured Corset**, 2009  
Thermobimetal, nylon, aluminum  
108 x 108 (diameter) inches  
A basket-weave surface that self-ventilates

While many engineers and architects might practice a kind of material callousness or a more muscular show of strength, Sung indeed has a more gentle poetic. Strips of shiny metal dominate, but the ways in which the strips are woven together, usually without fasteners, speak to a more cultural effect, a craft rather than an assembly. Her ongoing project *Invert Window* is like a string of butterflies fluttering when the sunlight heats them up. Her *Armoured Corset* (2009) is like a large hanging lantern. *Fuller*, while more of a proof of stability, is also not straightforward. Every geometry has a reason and a performance-based proof of heritage, but Sung happily bends the strips into petals and the petals into flowers.

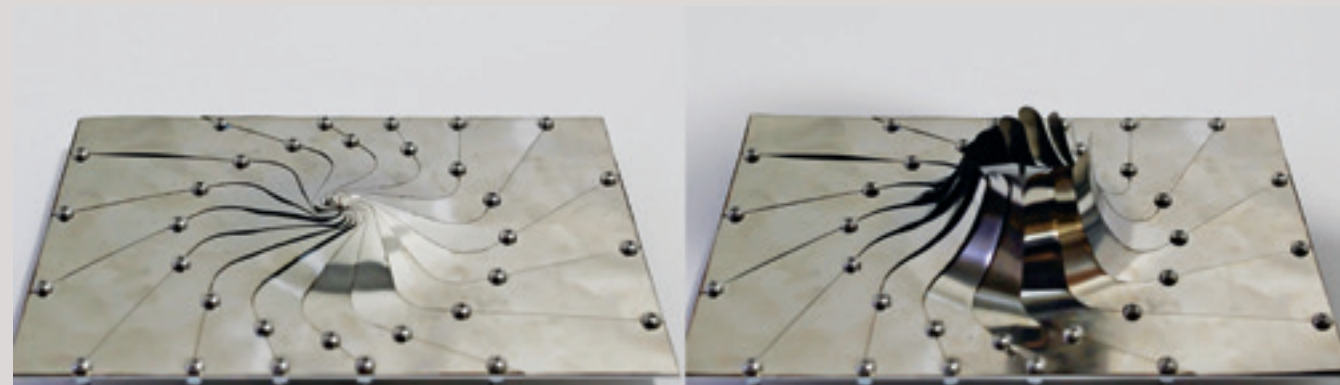
And this is the crux on which *Fuller* spins or rolls: most objects of innovation try very hard to look sleek, aloof, and new. Sung's *Fuller* is more like a found object, an architecture of a longer cultural heritage. *Fuller* is one part a test of material, another part a fifteenth-century Italian diagram of the universe, a demonstration of Leibniz's monad, or a mathematical model found in an ancient madrassah. One discovers in encountering a work by DOSU that the world is full of secrets that we do not yet know. *Fuller* asks us more. ●

*Fuller* was realized with additional support from the Long Family Foundation and the Neal Feay Company.





*InVert Windows*, in progress  
Thermobimetal, stainless steel, insulated glass  
Dimensions variable  
Self-shading double-glazed window system



*Oculus*, 2017  
Thermobimetal, aluminum, steel  
48 x 72 inches



*eXo*, 2013  
Thermobimetal, aluminum  
108 x 72 x 72 inches  
Photo: Alex Blair





# Kristina Wong.

*ART is best when it blurs real life. It's my way of having honest conversations with my parents. It's allowed me to achieve the results therapy hasn't. It's connected me to a community around the world. It's a protest that doesn't leave my stomach with ulcers.*

Born 1978, San Francisco; lives and works in Koreatown (Los Angeles)

## EDUCATION

BA, English literature and world arts and cultures, University of California, Los Angeles, 2000

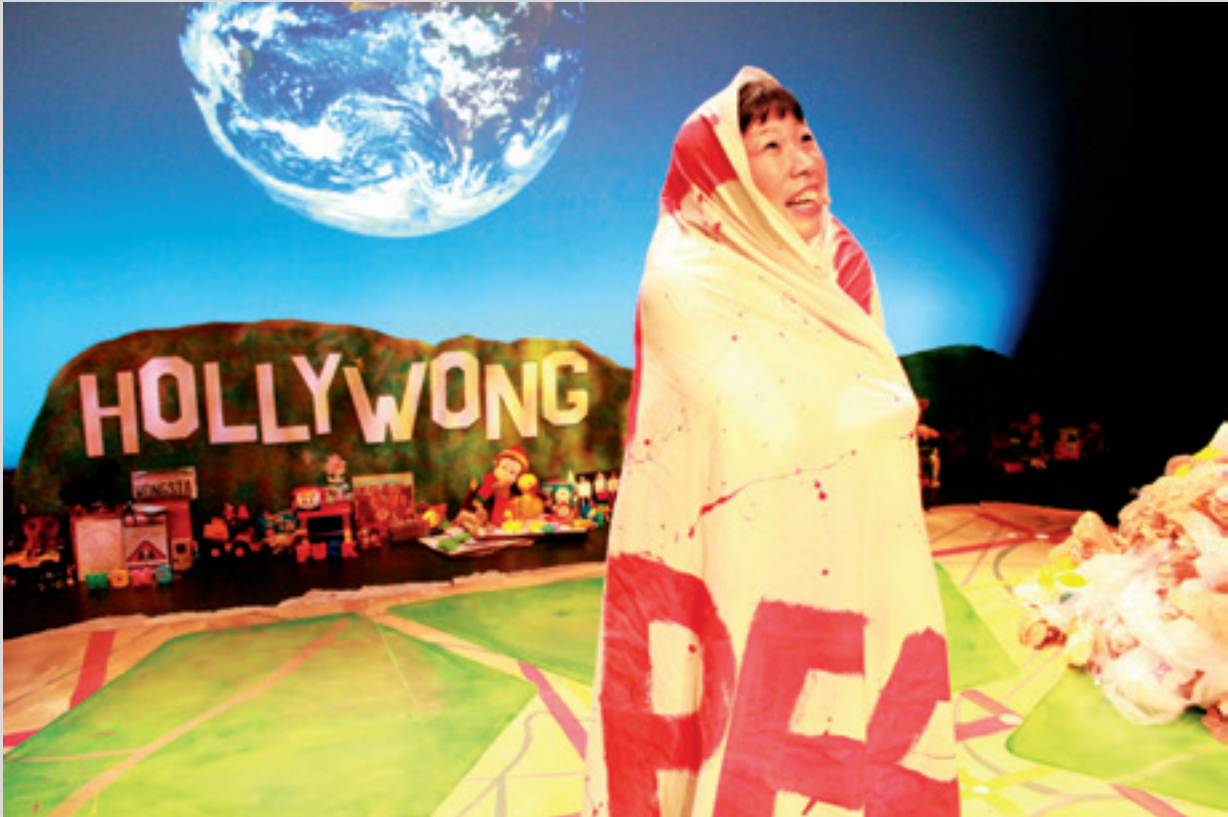
## PERFORMANCES

- 2017 *Kristina Wong's Discharges from American History*, Washington Square Hotel, New York (creator/ playwright, ensemble)
- 2016 *Takeover: Kristina Wong*, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco (site-specific performance, curator and creator)
- 2015–18 *The Wong Street Journal*, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, Burlington, VT; Z Below, San Francisco (produced by Circuit Network); REDCAT, Los Angeles; Miami Light Project; ASU Gammage, Tempe, AZ; Lagos Theater Festival, Nigeria (solo)
- 2011–13 *CAT LADY*, Diverseworks, Houston; ODC Theater, San Francisco; Miami Light Project (produced by Mad Cat Theater Company) (playwright/ ensemble)
- 2006–15 *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, La Pena Cultural Center, Berkeley; Painted Bride, Philadelphia; National Asian American Theater Festival, New York (solo)
- 2003–8 *Free?*, Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, CA; Bay Area Hip Hop Theater Festival, La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley; Hip-Hop Theater Festival at the Public Theater, New York (solo)
- 2001–2 *Miss Chinatown 2nd Runner Up*, Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, CA; Teada New Works Festival, San Pedro, CA (solo)



*Kristina Wong Runs for Public Office, Campaign Event #1, Mock Debate*, February 2018  
Solo performance, Human Resources, Los Angeles





*Going Green the Wong Way*, November 2010  
Solo performance



*Funeral for the White Man's Penis*, June 2015  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
Solo performance

# Kristina Wong Plays Herself (Playing Herself)

Carina Chocano



*Fannie Wong Former Miss Chinatown*  
*2nd Runner Up*, January 2012  
Guerrilla performance

Kristina Wong is running for office. It's a logical next step in a career built on the performance of everyday life. What will she run for? Governor has crossed her mind, but it's expensive. Sheriff appealed to her, but then she found out you had to be a police officer for a year. She's mulling over community college board member. And why not? Politicians are performance artists. It takes one to know one.

The intersection between our private selves and our public selves, the distinction between what's real and what's not, runs like a thread through Wong's body of work, with its Situationist streak. In solo, ensemble, and site-specific performances as well as culture-jamming guerrilla stunts, comedic videos, reality television, and published plays and essays, she is continually exploring the "metaperformances" that constitute our public lives and breaking down the barriers between life and art.

Throughout her career Wong has made it her practice to disrupt conventions and challenge stereotypes in performance spaces, public spaces, and mainstream media spaces alike, reflecting on the narratives imposed on her as an Asian American woman. She has appeared onstage dressed as a giant hand-sewn vagina; crashed Miss Chinatown pageants as Fannie Wong, a cigar-chomping, Jack Daniels-guzzling, megaphone-wielding former second runner-up; married herself in a ceremony at her favorite Ethiopian restaurant, during which she spanked guests with a riding crop; and held a funeral for the white man's penis. After reselling on eBay to make ends meet, she found herself auctioning off personal items onstage. After experiencing the soft racism of "yellow fever" (the fetishization of Asian women by white men) as an online dater, she created a reality show in which she demanded reparations and made her dates clean her apartment. After engaging angry men online, she befriended guys in the pickup artist subculture and made art out of it.

Wong's work explores questions of the self in a world in which "reality" is increasingly constructed. Her first project out of college was a fake mail-order bride website pairing lonely white American men with Asian would-be brides. Titled *Big Bad Chinese Mama* (2000), it led to a clickbait article on *XO Jane* that went viral and in turn led to a spot on *Totally*

*Biased with Kamau Bell* and an appearance on Fusion TV. This was followed by a one-woman show called *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (2006) and a cable reality show episode called "I'm Asian American and Want Reparations for Yellow Fever" (2014), both of which were seen by a Lionsgate executive, which led to an offer to do a reality TV pilot for Tru TV.

Wong played a version of herself—an overachieving, completely in denial about being depressed version of herself—for eight years while touring with *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, an unflinching look at the little-discussed topic of depression and suicide among Asian American women. She found that her audience was obsessed with knowing what was real and what wasn't. It spurred an interest in reality stars, adult film stars, and others whose livelihoods depend on the commodification of their bodies or other narrow aspects of themselves. How do you move on after your identity has been solidified as this one person? How do you reclaim your narrative and put your life back together?

Her more recent solo show, *The Wong Street Journal* (2015), was born out of a desire to break free of the constraints of doing shows about her life and personal history. Online social justice culture sucked her in, and she soon found herself flinging hashtags and arguing with strangers all day. As a corrective she traveled to Uganda to work for an NGO, only to get a crash course in certain global economic realities; find herself referred to as a *mzungu*, or "white person," by locals; and team up with a music producer in northern Uganda to record a hit rap album.

In profound, uncomfortable, hilarious ways, Wong's work shows us again and again how we perform mediated versions of our lives, never quite being seen by others the way our mothers see us. People are uncomfortable with complexity, but this inability to face it has disastrous consequences. The public self has been smashed open, reconstituted into a meme, which, once its moment passes, haunts the mediascape like a hungry ghost looking for redemption or like its counterpart in reality TV, the serial Celebrity Rehabber. ●





*Cat Lady*, 2011  
Ensemble performance



*The Wong Street Journal*, 2015  
Solo performance

Left: *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, 2006  
Solo performance



Works in the Exhibition

<b>Dave Hullfish Bailey</b>  <i>Working Approximation of a Conventional Form</i> , 2018 Pigment prints on paper 56 prints, 17 × 13 inches each	<i>Broken Vows #3</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #4</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #5</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #6</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #7</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #8</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #9</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows</i> (installation), 2017 Photomontage, found objects, mixed media 54 × 44 × 30 inches  <i>Ladder (to below)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Ladder (to heaven)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Ladder (with angels)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches
<b>Guillermo Bert</b>  <i>Tumble Dreams</i> , 2018 Collaboration with Marille Spencer, projection mapping; Anthony Rauld, video editor; Pablo Bert, sound design; and Ronald Dunlap, photography Mixed media with tumbleweeds and projections 9 × 15 × 20 feet  <i>Tumble Dreams #5</i> , 2018 24 × 36 inches  <i>Tumble Dreams #6</i> , 2018 24 × 36 inches	
<b>Terry Braunstein</b>  <i>Broken Vows (artist’s book)</i> , 2016 Photomontage, found objects, mixed media, one-of-a-kind altered book 12½ × 15 inches  <i>Broken Vows—Ex Voto</i> , 2016 Artist’s book, digital prints from photomontages (altered book) Edition 1/5 14 × 10 inches  <i>Ladders</i> (installation), 2016 Collaboration with Marco Schindelmann, sound artist Photomontage, found objects, mixed media, sound piece 54 × 72 × 30 inches  <i>Broken Vows #1</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Broken Vows #2</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches	

<i>Ladder (with boy and unicorn)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Ladder (with columns)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Ladder (with saint)</i> , 2017 Digital inkjet print from photomontage 19 × 13 inches  <i>Interior of artists’ books</i> , 2018 Collaboration with Kate Lain, video artist Video 4:08 minutes  <i>Ladder Man with Heart</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print cut out from photomontage, found objects 72 × 18 inches  <i>Man with Stick</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print cut out from photomontage 72 × 18 inches  <i>Mid-life II</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print, photomontage 9½ × 13 inches  <i>Mid-life III</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print, photomontage 9½ × 13 inches  <i>Mid-life V</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print, photomontage 9½ × 13 inches  <i>Mid-life VI</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print, photomontage 9½ × 13 inches  <i>Woman in Red Dress</i> , 2018 Digital inkjet print cut out from photomontage 72 × 18 inches	<b>Cassils</b>  <i>Aline’s Orchard</i> , 2018 Collaboration with Kadet Kuhne, sound designer; Cristy Michel, Foley artist; and Brent Leonesio, perfumer Six-channel audio installation, custom scent, grass, dried olive leaves Dimensions variable  <b>Sandra de la Loza</b>  <i>Pacific Electric Railway Strike of 1903</i> , 2018 Remade turn-of-the-century float, redacted poem silk screen prints, reproduced photos and newspaper articles on foam core Dimensions variable  <i>The Sierra Vista Line: A Horizontal Poem</i> , 2018 C-prints hand-painted on sun umbrella Dimensions variable  <b>Michelle Dizon</b>  <i>The Archive’s Fold</i> , 2018 35mm slides, digital video Dimensions variable  <b>Tim Durfee</b>  <i>Capitol</i> , 2018 Wood, paint, plastic 72 × 60 × 60 inches  <i>Contrail</i> , 2018 Glass neon light, wiring, aluminum 72 × 48 × 4 inches  <i>Untitled</i> , 2018 Silk screen print, framed 40 × 30 inches  <i>Untitled</i> , 2018 Silk screen print, framed 40 × 30 inches



Works in the Exhibition

<p><b>June Edmonds</b></p> <p><i>Primary Theories</i>, 2016 Oil on canvas 40 × 30 inches</p> <p><i>Unina</i>, 2017 Acrylic on unstretched canvas 65 × 72 inches</p> <p><i>Untitled</i>, 2017 Acrylic on unstretched canvas 65 × 37½ inches</p> <p><i>Ufufuo</i>, 2018 Acrylic on unstretched canvas 84 × 140 inches</p> <p><i>Untitled</i>, 2018 Acrylic on canvas 72 × 48 inches</p> <p><b>Michele O’Marah</b></p> <p><i>Ebony and Ivory</i>, 2018 Mixed-media video installation Dimensions variable</p> <p><i>The Nightlines</i>, 2018 Mixed-media video installation Dimensions variable</p> <p><i>Women’s Rights Are Human Rights (Pink Hillary)</i>, 2018 Mixed-media video installation Dimensions variable</p>	<p><b>Julie Shafer</b></p> <p><i>Parting of the Ways</i>, 2018 Graphite on paper 15 sheets, dimensions variable</p> <p><i>Parting of the Ways</i>, 2018 Inkjet photographs 7 photographs, dimensions variable</p> <p><b>Doris Sung</b></p> <p><i>Fuller</i>, 2018 Thermobimetal, aluminum, steel 108 inches diameter</p>
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COLA 2018 Acknowledgments

<p>The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) combined the efforts of its Grants Administration Division with its Marketing and Development Division and its Community Arts Division via the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery to produce the 2018 COLA Individual Artist Fellowships catalog and exhibition.</p> <p>We would especially like to thank the following DCA employees for their dedicated work toward making this year’s initiative engaging, educational, and entertaining: <b>Joe Smoke</b>, <b>Chris Riedesel</b>, and <b>Alma Guzman</b> from the Grants Administration Division; <b>Isabelle Lutterodt</b>, <b>Steven Wong</b>, <b>Ciara Moloney</b>, <b>John Weston</b>, <b>Marta Feinstein</b>, <b>Jamie Costa</b>, <b>Gabriel Cifarelli</b>, and <b>Mary Oliver</b> from the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery; and <b>Will Caperton y Montoya</b> and <b>Rhonda Mitchell</b> from DCA’s Marketing and Development Division.</p> <p>We also sincerely thank <b>Susan Silton</b> for designing the catalog.</p> <p><b>Department of Cultural Affairs</b> City of Los Angeles 201 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1400 Los Angeles, CA 90012 TEL 213.202.5500 FAX 213.202.5517 WEB culturela.org</p> <p><b>COLA 2017–2018 Individual Artist Fellowships</b></p> <p><b>Exhibition</b> May 3–June 24, 2018 Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery Barnsdall Art Park 4800 Hollywood Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90027</p> <p><b>Performances</b> June 15 and 16, 2018 Grand Performances 350 S Grand Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90071</p>	<p><b>Visual/Design Artists</b> David Hullfish Bailey Guillermo Bert Terry Braunstein Cassils Sandra de la Loza Michelle Dizon Tim Durfee June Edmonds Michele O’Marah Julie Shafer Doris Sung</p> <p><b>Performing Artists</b> d. Sabela grimes Kristina Wong</p> <p><b>Literary Artist</b> Peter J. Harris</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <p><b>Visual/Design Arts</b> Edward Hayes Marcella Guerrero Isabelle Lutterodt Emily Zaiden</p> <p><b>Performing Arts</b> Ben Johnson Paul Outlaw</p> <p><b>Literary Arts</b> Gloria Enedina Alvarez Sally Shore</p>
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