



Being & Feeling (Alone, Together)
Spring/Summer 2020

Artist Statements

Sachiko Akiyama, Andrew Fish, Lauren Gillette,
Katya Grokhovsky, Stephanie Misa, Tobias Rud, Cheryle St.
Onge, Riikka Talvitie and Jon Sakata

Sachiko Akiyama

Artist Statement

Using a combination of figurative and natural forms, I create sculptures that exert a quiet, physical and psychological presence. My work is an exploration of how tactile, physically assertive forms can describe the psyche - not a specific emotion or thought, but rather a state of concentration and introspection. Since my experience of this interior, mental space is my point of reference, it makes the most sense to me to use myself or my family members as subject matter. I hope that the viewer can identify with my sculptures and the personal becomes universal. Over time I have been developing a lexicon of symbols that draw from a wide variety of art, literature, and cultures including my own Japanese American heritage. The allegorical and dreamlike imagery in my work is also derived from a blend of personal experiences, family history, and dreams. My range of artistic influences include modern and contemporary sculptors such as Brancusi and Anne Chu, Egyptian funerary sculptures, and medieval Christian woodcarvings. While my work references the extensive tradition of figurative, religious sculpture, I am exploring similar existential themes from a secular viewpoint shaped by my experiences in the contemporary world.

I recognize that the nature of our interior lives is mysterious and unknowable and in response, I combine symbols and gestures in a way that allows for multiple meanings while still retaining a sense of inexplicability. I am especially drawn to symbols from nature, like weather patterns and mountain formation, because these are shaped by unseen forces and by a combination of rules and circumstance outside the reach of human control. I also frequently use metaphors for journeys and the potential for change such as boats, trees in different seasons, and bird migration. My juxtaposition of symbols has become increasingly surreal and unexpected: a sleeping, blue resin head balanced precariously on a carved wooden cloud or a smaller than life-sized, female figure with a bright orange, tree-like form in place of a head. Straddling representation and abstraction underscores my interest in creating something that isn't merely illustrative but rather bridges the ordinary to the fantastic. Being freed from realism and executing a specific idea also allows me to be playful with imagery and to develop sculptures in response to the process, the nature of the materials, and formal issues.

Woodcarving is my primary sculpting process. This technique lends itself to creating compact, self-contained forms that direct attention inwardly. I frequently collage wood forms with materials that offer complimentary expressive and formal possibilities like the transparency of resin and the levity of linear steel forms. My sculptures retain evidence of the process and material. The visible chisel marks, welds, and unpainted resin surfaces all assert the physicality, or "thingness," of the sculptures. I am interested in the contrast between using tactile forms to represent an intangible, psychological subject matter. This is an aspect of sculpture that fascinates me: how can an object exert a palpable presence?

Sachiko Akiyama received her MFA from Boston University in 2002. She is best known for her sculptures that combine hand-carved wood forms with other materials such as clay, resin and metal. She has exhibited in the United States and abroad, including solo exhibitions at the Akinofuku Museum (Hamamatsu, Japan), the University of Maine Museum of Art (Bangor, ME), and group exhibitions at the Kohler Arts Center (Sheboygan, WI), Smack Mellon (Brooklyn, NY), and Field Projects (NYC, NY). Her work has been reviewed favorably in *Art New England*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Portland Press Herald*. Among numerous honors, Akiyama was awarded a Joan Mitchell Award, an Artist Resource Trust Grant, and residencies at UCross and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She is the 2018 recipient of the Piscataqua Region Artist Advancement Grant. Her work is in the permanent collections of Decordova Museum and Sculpture Park and Gordon College. Akiyama currently lives in Portsmouth, NH.

www.sachikoakiyama.com

@woodchip47



Sachiko Akiyama
Deeper Than You Imagined,
2012
Wood, paint

36" x 49" x 2"



Sachiko Akiyama
Finding Home, 2013
 Wood, paint, gold leaf

40" x 19" x 9"

Sachiko Akiyama
Origins, 2014
 Wood, paint, resin

46" x 19" x 11"

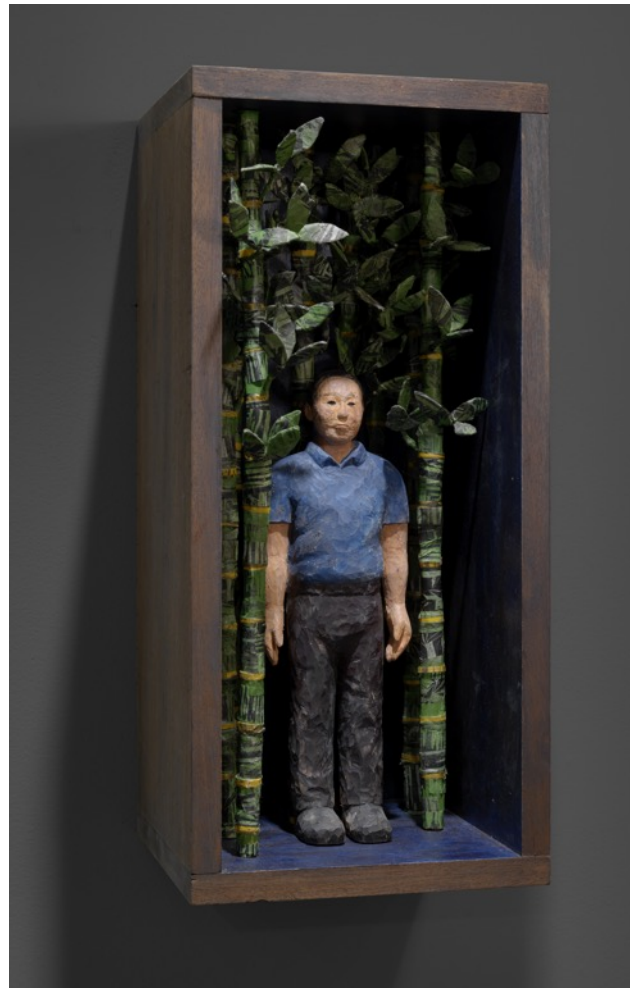


Sachiko Akiyama
Bird in Hand, 2007
 Wood, paint

33" x 11" x 14"



Sachiko Akiyama
Somewhere In Between, 2019
 Wood, paint, steel



Sachiko Akiyama
In the Forest of Ghosts, 2016
 Wood, woodcut prints, paint, mixed media

23" x 10" x 10"

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Sachiko Akiyama
Mountain / Sky, 2019
Wood, paint, resin

55" x 18" x 14" (with pedestal)

Andrew Fish

Artist Statement

My paintings begin with an abstract under-painting. I work on clear-primed linen to incorporate the material's natural color and weave. It's a neutral tone and supports dynamic contrasts in dark and light values. I paint the abstractions with various tools, experimenting with a vocabulary of mark-making. (ie: squiggle, swoosh, scrape, stencil, etc.)

When the abstract under-painting feels right, I apply representational imagery derived from my own photographs to work in conjunction with the abstraction. This process has allowed me to surprise myself and develop a visual language that feels uniquely mine. The paintings can appear harmonious or discordant, depending on the viewer.

[The] photographs that act as source imagery [for my paintings] are usually spontaneous snapshots inspired by light and shadow, and almost always have a figurative element to them. I consider myself a figurative painter even though abstraction, atmosphere, and landscape are equally important.

Alongside the formal elements in my work is an open narrative, and ambiguous story about what the viewer is looking at. My aim is to create images about the human experience and the complexities therein. I find that my work is best viewed through a psychological lens that illuminates memory, personal experience, and one's relationships to others and the world around them.

Andrew Fish is a painter and printmaker who studied at School of Visual Arts in NYC and has attended several artist residencies and workshops. He exhibits internationally and is the recipient of a Somerville Arts Council grant, a NY Studio School Award, a Contemporary Arts Center-Woodside Award, a Distinguished Artist Scholarship from The Art Students League Residency at VYT, a Manship Artists Residency Fellowship, and the Curators Choice Award from the Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition. Fish currently lives in Somerville, MA and teaches at Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Lesley Art + Design in Cambridge, MA. His work can be viewed online at www.andrewfish.art and at Childs Gallery in Boston, MA .

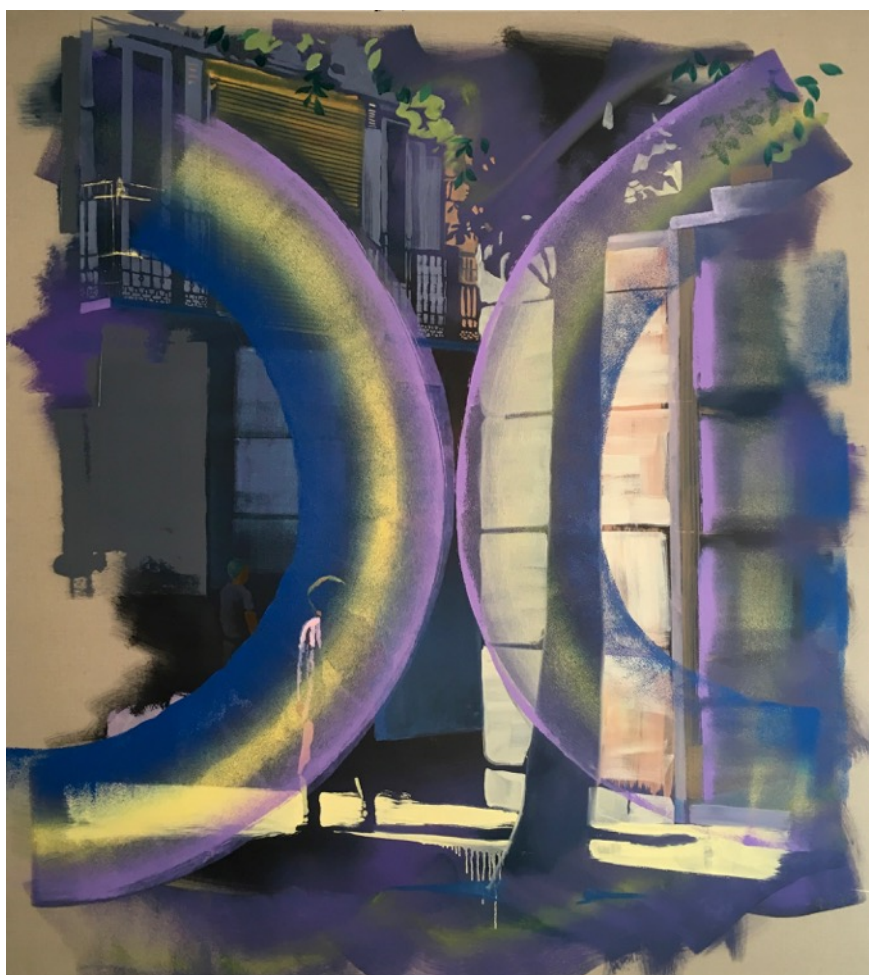
www.andrewfish.art

@andrew_fish_studio



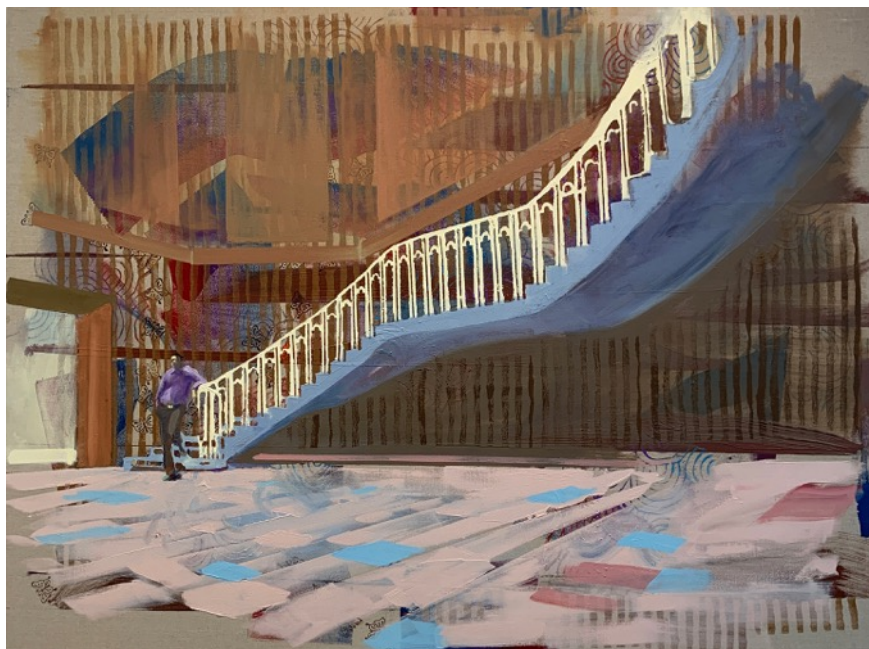
Andrew Fish
Bench (Phone Conversation), 2020
 Oil on linen

36"x48"



Andrew Fish
Corner Spot, 2018
 Oil on linen

60" x 54"



Andrew Fish
Grand Staircase, 2019
 Oil on linen

36" x 48"



Andrew Fish
Hedge Maze 2, 2019
 Oil on linen

36" x 48"



Andrew Fish
Interior Dialogue, 2015
Oil on linen

42" x 42"

Lauren Gillette

Artist Statement

I am a conceptual artist. Biography, history, text and memory are my bricks, aesthetics, repetition and empathy, my mortar. I bear witness.

I have felt the gravitational pull of projects that allow me to collect, chronicle and archive, tell and retell. I work to reveal something emotive about each subject. My intent is to spark that last piece of the puzzle, a visceral thread of recognition in the viewer.

Reading Paul Harding's, *The Tinkers*, I stumbled onto a misunderstood character who had a 7 item list of things he had done:

1. Shot a rabid dog. 2. Delivered a baby. 3. Put out a fire. 4. Pulled a rotten tooth. 5. Cut a man's hair (with a bowl). 6. Sell bootleg whiskey. 7. Fish a drowned child from a creek.

I was intrigued with how much 'memoir' you could jam pack into the brevity of an autobiographical list. I petitioned for volunteers on Craigslist and Facebook to summarize their lives in 5 lines of text. Each list is marked with the author's age and first name. The resulting autobiographies were etched onto mirrors and placed at slightly off angles. Reading them, you can see your reflection, but only in fragments.

Gillette earned a BFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1983. Her diverse biographical and conceptual works have been exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the US including the Portland Museum of Art. Her work has been published in Art New England among, other publications and honored with several grants and awards including Artist Advancement Grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and a Good Idea Grant from the Maine Arts Commission.

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Thingsididproject.blogspot.com

Lauren Gillette
Things I Did, 2018



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Katya Grokhovsky

Artist Statement

Grokhovsky works in installation, performance, sculpture, video, painting and drawing, exploring ideas of gender and identity construction, alienation, labor, history and the self. Through research and autobiographical experience, Grokhovsky crafts alter-ego characters, through which she examines and underscores stereotypes, assumptions, prejudices and injustice. She is interested in the histories of migration and displacement, whilst enacting the bodies of the historically oppressed, in relation to the preconceived social order. Many of her projects deal with protest and freedom through failure, via radical and humorous actions, personas and costume: reclaiming the body through pleasure, chaos and refusal, residing in the space between kitsch and grotesque. From writing, research, drawing, collage and painting, sourcing of found and discarded materials to sculptural performative objects, masks and sets, performances live, for video and photo, Grokhovsky's work occupies an interdisciplinary territory of making. The extensive process culminates in immersive mixed media site responsive installations, video works and performances, exploring politics of defiance to the prescribed ideals of normative existence.

Katya Grokhovsky was born in Ukraine, raised in Australia and is based in NYC. She is an artist, independent curator, educator and a Founding Artistic Director of The Immigrant Artist Biennial (TIAB) and Feminist Urgent (FU). Grokhovsky holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a BFA from Victorian College of the Arts and a BA (Honors) in Fashion from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Grokhovsky has received support through numerous residencies and fellowships including Kickstarter Creator in Residence, Pratt Fine Arts Department Artist in Residence, Wythe Hotel Residency, Art and Law Fellowship, The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) Studios Program, BRICworkspace Residency, Ox-BOW School of Art Residency, Wassaic Artist Residency, Atlantic Center for the Arts Associate Artist in Residence, Studios at MASS MoCA, VOX Populi Curatorial Fellowship, NARS Residency, Santa Fe Art Institute Residency, Watermill Center Residency and more. She has been awarded the Brooklyn Arts Council Grant, NYFA Fiscal Sponsorship, ArtSlant 2017 Prize, Asylum Arts Grant, Chashama space to create grant, Australia Council for the Arts ArtStart Grant, NYFA Mentoring Program for Immigrant Artists, Freedman Traveling Scholarship for Emerging Artists and others. She has curated numerous exhibitions and events, including: Art in Odd Places 2018: "BODY", "Soft Power" at Lesley Heller Gallery, "She's a Maniac" at Kunstraum Gallery, "Call of the Wild" at Vox Populi and more. Her work has been exhibited extensively.

www.katyagrokhovsky.net
[@katyagrokhovsky](#)

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Katya Grokhovsky
Possibly Maybe, 2018
 Acrylic, collage on canvas

12" x 9"



Katya Grokhovsky
Purple Rage, 2018
 Acrylic, marker on canvas

24" x 36"



Katya Grokhovsky
Sunset, 2018
 Acrylic, marker on canvas

23" x 30"



Katya Grokhovsky
Smile Again, 2017
 Acrylic, collage on paper

15" x 11"



Katya Grokhovsky
Untitled, 2016
Ink, pen on paper

8.5" x 11"

Stephanie Misa

Artist Statement

A Bedtime Story for Someone Else's Child, 2016
Single-Channel Video

Using text from writer Mira Lobe's *Komme Sagte die Katze (Come, Said the Cat)*, three voices are heard reading the children's story out loud. As in the work *Transplant*, we decipher three different ways of speaking and are invited to listen to the different sounds produced when the tongue wraps around a language is found to be foreign, familiar, or loved.

Transplant, 2016
Books, plant, table

This book is a series of stories rooted in real-life, of people transplanted into Vienna, Austria, as fictionalized and told with fancy. Not that the embellishments take away from the truth of the matter. It is a book on being alien, and being other, and on how sometimes where you are is the fiction, and what you are is still becoming.

FILIPINOS, CANNIBALISM, AND MOTHERS DANCING ON TONGUES

In this performance, I look at first languages (the "mother tongue"), my own included, and the complication this notion implies in contexts where the mother tongue is a purely spoken language outside of institutional (read-write) frameworks. I question power hierarchies implicit in institutionalized languages by putting forward oralities from the margin and their alternative forms of expression whose agency live in embodied forms of articulation. I am arguing that the embodiment of an orality, its containment in a colonised, disenfranchised, diasporic body, is exactly what gives it power.

I see orality as a way to access an intersectionality, one that ruptures the idea of bound cultures, and instead proposes that culture—by extension, language—is in perpetual flux, one that's marked by creative becomings, but to do this we have to break down and re-digest what constitutes a "mother tongue"—to imbibe, expel, replenish, take shape—and sing, sing in a tongue blessed by *many* mothers.

Born in Cebu City, Philippines, Stephanie Misa is a doctoral researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki. She currently lives in Vienna, Austria where she graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 2012 in Performative Arts & Sculpture with Prof. Monica Bonvicini. She has her

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masters from the Interactive Telecommunications Program, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University.

Her work consistently displays an interest in complex and diverse histories, relating to these topics through her video work, writing, sculpture, installation, prints and curatorial work. Her current artistic research looks at the persistence of languages relegated to its oral form, and the activation of this “orality” outside the usual educational modes of instruction— its evolution, cannibalism, appropriation of terms, and creative becomings.

Recent shows and projects include the 9th Bucharest Biennale, Residencies with Art Space Sydney and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, from the Finnish Cultural Foundation and Lower Austria Arts & Culture, The Salon Series (Cebu & Manila, PH), Project Space Spare Room (Melbourne,AU), Parallel Vienna Arts Fair 2019 (Vienna,AT), WeltMuseum Wien (Vienna,AT), Exhibition Laboratory (Helsinki,FI), Yuka Tsuruno Gallery (Tokyo,JP), & Musashino Art University (Tokyo,JP), to name a few. She was a recipient of the K lt r Gemma Bursary for Immigrant Artists in 2014.

www.stephaniemisa.com

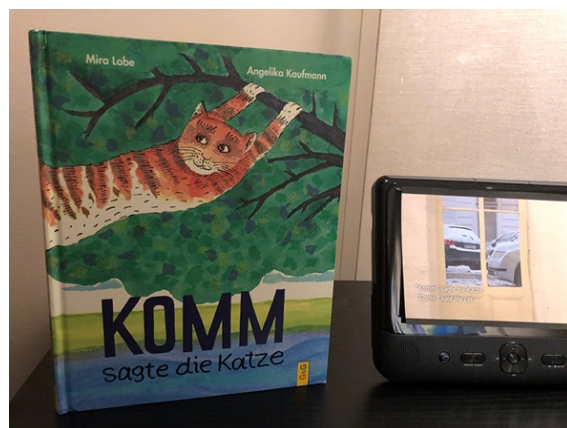
@steph.misa



Stephanie Misa
Transplant, 2016
Books, plant, table



Stephanie Misa
A Bedtime Story for Someone Else's Child, 2016
Single-Channel Video



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Tobias Rud

Artist Statement

But Jane was deaf, 2018, 2D digital animation

Let this little odd group of characters be a soothing break in these fast paced modern times, where no one has the time to stop and appreciate the small things.

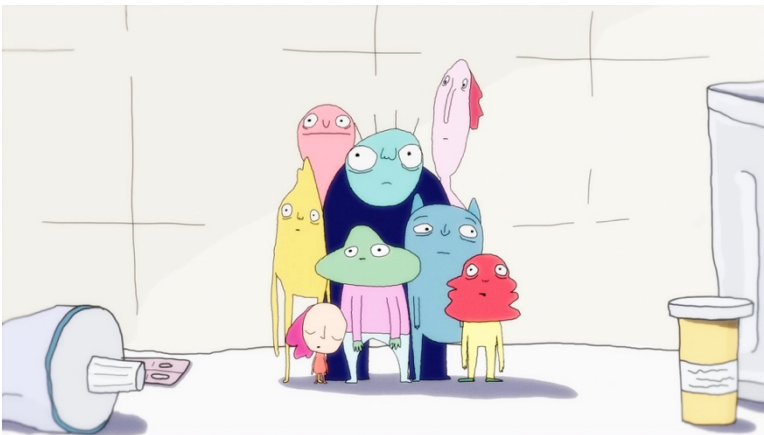
Sweetie O's, 2018, Hand-drawn animation

Sweetie O's is a dreamy and sentimental trip back to a childhood where cereal came in many colors, and your mother's warm embrace was always close.

Tobias is a filmmaker and animator born 1991 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He has a background in cinematography but has since moved away from cameras and their limitations to draw his own films instead. He is a storyteller at heart, and utilizes naive aesthetics and mindful pacing to explore human relations and the emotions connected to them in all their chaos and complexities.

www.vimeo.com/user20075864

@tobiaslrud

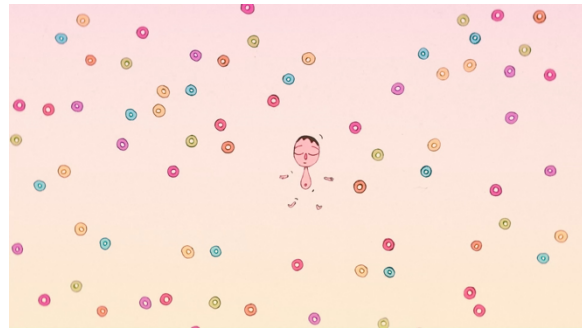


Tobias Rud
But Jane Was Deaf (film
still), 2018
2D digital animation

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Tobias Rud
Sweetie O's (film still), 2018
 Hand drawn animation



Tobias Rud
Sweetie O's (film still), 2018
 Hand drawn animation



Tobias Rud
Sweetie O's (film still), 2018
 Hand drawn animation



Tobias Rud
Sweetie O's (film still), 2018
 Hand drawn animation

Cheryle St. Onge

Artist Statement

Calling The Birds Home

My mother and I have lived side by side on the same farm for decades. Our love was mutual and constant. She developed vascular dementia, and so began the flushing away of her emotions and her memory. At first I stopped making pictures with her, then I stopped making pictures at all.

Perhaps as a counterbalance to her conversations of why she wanted to die, of how she imagined she could die. And because I needed some happiness, some light in the afternoon, these portraits of my mother began. At first made with any camera within reach, phone-camera, or 8" x 10" view camera. Made in the moment, as a distraction from watching her fade away. I would make a picture of her, then share that picture of her with others I love. Sharing the act of being in the moment, sharing the ephemeral nature of my looking and her seeing.

Now, when I leave our home, when I leave my mother behind, people find me. They want to tell me their stories and they want to hear mine. It's a beautiful back and forth, much like a true portrait. Because of the dementia, we have no conversations. But we do still have this profound exchange - the making of a portrait.

She must recall our history and the process of picture making. Because she brightens up and is always up for what my children would refer to as the long effort with the long camera. That best describes sitting before an 8" x 10" view camera, on top of a tripod with its bellows extended out. My mother does her best and I do mine. And then in turn, I give the picture away to anyone who will look. It is an excruciating form of emotional currency.

Cheryle St. Onge was born in Worcester MA, She grew up on college campuses as the only child of a Physics professor and a painter. She received an M.F.A. from Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA.

St. Onge's work focus on the crossover of art and science and photography's ability to distill our sense of time and curiosity. She makes pictures predominantly with an 8 x 10 view camera and considers her work a collaborative process.

Her photographs have been widely exhibited, most notably at Princeton University, University of Rhode Island, Massachusetts College of Art, Rick Wester Fine Arts and an American Institute of Architects traveling exhibitions. She has received numerous awards and residences among them a 2009 John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, a Critical Mass Finalist Exhibition Award, Polaroid Materials Artist Support Grant and MIT graduate Fellowship.

Her photographs are in several private and public collections; the University of New Mexico Art Museum, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, the Cassilhaus Collection and the Guggenheim Foundation.

She been on the faculty at Clark University, Maine College of Art and The University of New Hampshire. St. Onge is currently a photography teacher at Phillips Exeter Academy. She divides her time between Durham, New Hampshire and coastal Maine.

www.cherylestonge.com
[@cherylestonge](#)



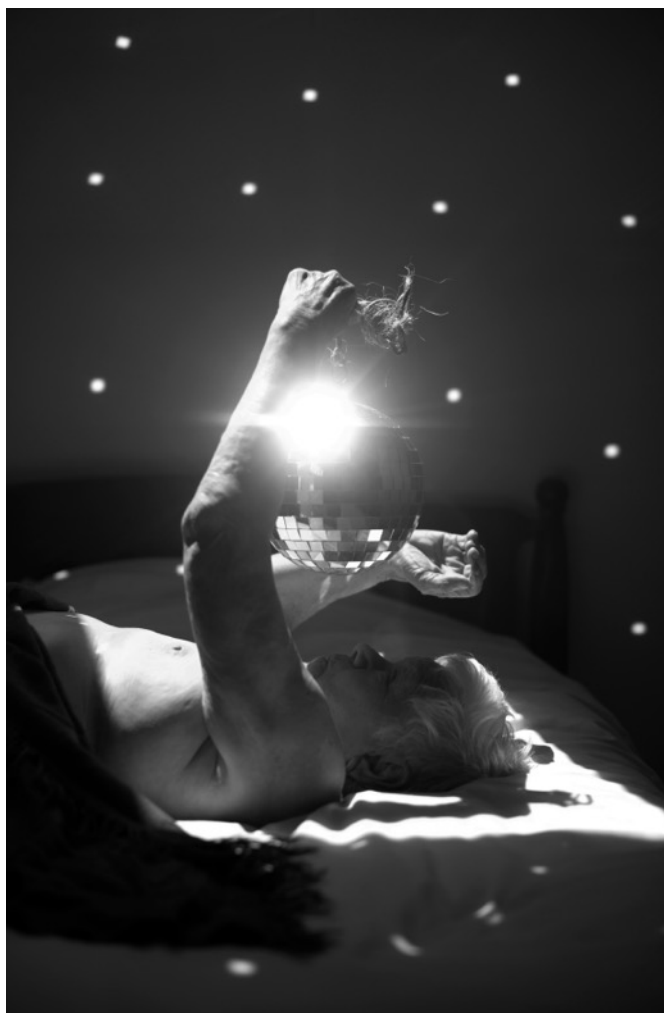
Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Bubbles), 2019
Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Dog), 2019
Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Disco Ball), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Plate), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Horse), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Jewelry), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Pumpkin), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"



Cheryle St. Onge
Untitled (Summer Sweater), 2019
 Photograph

16" x 20"

Riikka Talvitie

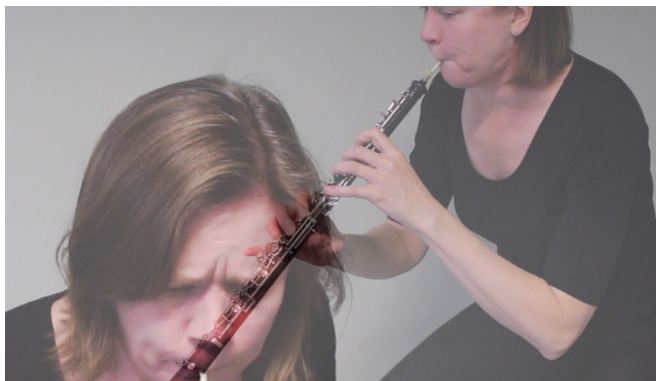
Artist Statement

In this video work I want to expand my compositional thinking – arranging elements in time – to visual and conceptual expression. The video consists of four different elements: fictional discussions between the composer and the oboist, the bodily improvisations by the oboist, the composer's reflections and the final composition, which is performed on the small concert hall. The end result is some kind of documentary presentation about composing. The core issue in the work is the relationship between the composer and the performer, which is presented in a strange way: I perform both persons at the same time. Paradoxically, I do the video alone, but I seek for shared authorship.

Riikka Talvitie has worked extensively in the field of music as a composer, an oboist and a pedagogue. As a composer she has worked especially with vocal and electro-acoustic music. Her radio opera *The Queen of the Cold Land* won the Prix Italia price in 2018. Talvitie is currently completing her artistic doctorate at the University of the Arts in Helsinki. In her research she is studying how the composer's practice could be opened from the point of view of shared authorship and communality.

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Riikka Talvitie
Omakuva (Self-Portrait), 2018
Video

Jon Sakata

Artist statement

ex(i/ha)le (2020) is a multifaceted extension of an ongoing creative response to the poetry of my friend and colleague, Willie Perdomo. Five poems from Willie's collection *The Crazy Bunch* ("Head Crack Head Crack," "Breaking Night," "You Lose Something Every Day," "Forget What You Saw," "Each One Teach One") – and his recorded renditions of them – serve as core and horizon of this immersive installation as well as the focal component of *ex(i/ha)le*: my composition for voice (his) and mixed instrumental ensemble, *elegies-axon-asterismal* (2019-2020). Willie's voice with instruments is now situated in a series of collaborative assemblages that invite touch, toy, search, critical questioning, lounge, emotional embeddedness: a pneumatic Mylar (BoPET) room envisioned and fabricated by members of the Academy's design and sound collaborative, Democracy of Sound (exeter)/DOS(e) as well as a series of subtly installed material haptics and combinatorial video 'erratics' + 'slices' to engage the room(s) and neuro-diverse conditionality. These components and facets complexify into a personal and on-going engagement with Willie's work; but what is more, a shared solidarity with him in *exile and breath* as we *tell it deep and strangely* through our respective mediums of language, sonics and designed forms. Remembrance: reverberations of pain, loss, separation, shatterings; but also, a desire to create, as his poem "Breaking Night" so memorably concludes: "...a smile at the bottom of the world."

- Designer/composer/video: Jon Sakata
- DOS(e) creatives: Elizabeth Kostina '20, Gigi Gee '21, Daisy Newbury '23, Sophie Turer '21, Chloe Minicucci '21
- Installation collaborators: Dustin Schuetz and Dale Atkins
- Poetry: Willie Perdomo
- Playlist on loop:

elegies-axon-asterismal (2019-2020) for voice and mixed instrumental ensemble (featuring Willie Perdomo and the international sound collective, the *in-visible en-semble*)

1. Prelude: Head Crack Head Crack
2. Breaking Night
3. You Lose Something Every Day
4. (i/e)nter-mesh 1
5. Forget What You Saw

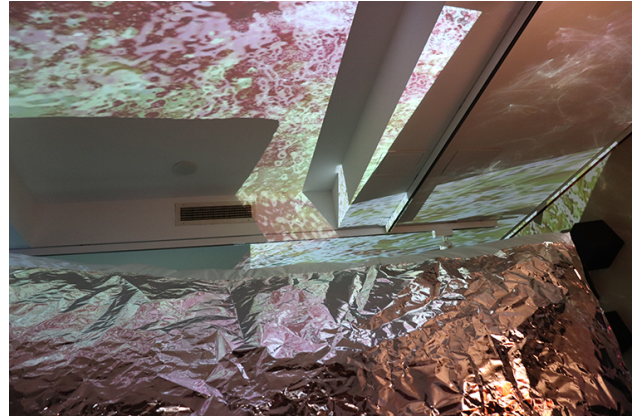
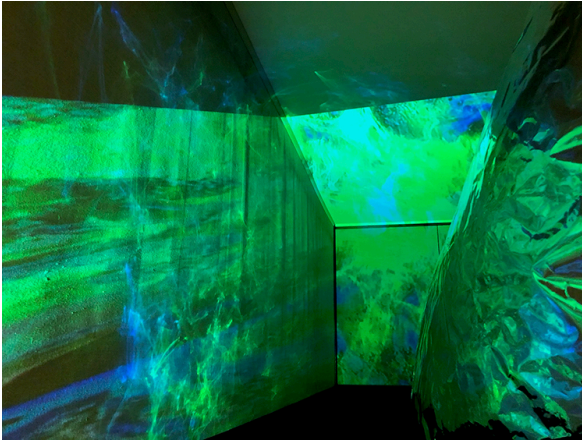
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6. (i/e)nter-mesh 2
7. Each One Teach One
8. Coda

Concert pianist and transdisciplinary artist *Jon Sakata* is active in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia and has been featured in cultural capitols of Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Norway, People's Republic of China, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland. A small sampling of venues and institutions that he has performed and creatively worked at offers a glimpse into the diverse are(n)as that he is engaged with: *Radialsystem V* in Berlin, *Färgfabriken* in Stockholm, the *Exhibition Pavilion of the National Museum of Architecture* in Oslo, *Bagsværd Kirke* in Copenhagen, *Myyrmäki Kirkko* in Vantaa, *Sandels Cultural Center – Gyllensbergsalen* in Helsinki, *St. Henry's Ecumenical Arts Chapel* in Turku, *ILLUMINUS 2015* in Boston; Beijing Central, Shanghai, China National, Wuhan and Xi'an Conservatories; Tsinghua, Tallinn, Porto Alegre, Montreal, Harvard, New Mexico, Boston, Tufts Universities; The New School (NYC), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon Center for Arts in Society, Williams College Multicultural Center, Goethe-Institut-Boston, Japanese-American Cultural Center-Los Angeles. Recent collaborative exhibitions and neuro-diverse installation designs have included *CLEW: A Rich and Rewarding Disorientation* (2017) with musician/transdisciplinary artist Jung Mi Lee, painter Deborah Barlow and poet Todd Hearon; *FUDO* (2015) and *Arch-i-pelago* (2016) with Lee and architect John Stephen Ellis AIA, *temps s(a/e)ns Netz* (2014) with Lee – the latter a cross-modal sense perception work exploring most of the 21 senses. Recent music compositions have included original scores for Academy productions of Bertolt Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* (directed by Rob Richards) and Garcia Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (directed by Todd Hearon); the 43 micro-movement work, - *INTHOS ANNEX* (2015-2018), based on the poem "SELECTION" by Oni Buchanan; and featured in this installation, *elegies-axon-asterismal* (2020), based upon a selection of five poems from Willie Perdomo's *The Crazy Bunch* (2019) – including the author's recorded renditions that serve as core to the sonic fabric of this eight-movement cycle.

Jon has taught piano, composition and harpsichord at Phillips Exeter Academy since 1994, where he also advises the student design and performance collaborative *Democracy of*

Sound (exeter). From 1997-2004 he was a faculty member of both the Piano and Graduate Theoretical Studies departments at New England Conservatory, where he also received his Double MM in Piano and Harpsichord Performance *with distinction* and DMA in Piano Performance with a dissertation on spectral analysis of Korean/German language sounds and instrumental tone-color in Korean *p'ansori* and Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*.



Jon Sakata
ex(i/ha)le, 2020
Multimedia installation

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