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BEING & FEELING (ALONE, TOGETHER)

Lamont Gallery Phillips Exeter Academy MARCH 26 - JULY 31, 2020

Front & back cover: Lauren Gillette, *Things I Did*, 2018, Multi-media Installation, glass, vinyl text Inside front & back: Jon Sakata, ex(i/ha)le, 2020, Multimedia installation



Being & Feeling (Alone, Together)

March 26-July 31, 2020 Lamont Gallery Phillips Exeter Academy

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

Sachiko Akiyama Andrew Fish Lauren Gillette Katya Grokhovsky Stephanie Misa Tobias Rud Jon Sakata + Democracy of Sound (exeter)/DOS(e) [Elizabeth Kostina '20, Gigi Gee '21, Daisy Newbury '23, Sophie Turer '21, Chloe Minicucci '21] Cheryle St. Onge

Riikka Talvitie

And many other special guests

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION, AS WE FIRST IMAGINED IT

It was impossible to know that this exhibition would forecast, as well as reflect, a felt and lived experience. However, to subsume the artwork into this period of profound alteration of daily lived experiences—those characterized by movement, by congregation, by intimate exchanges and collective catharsis, by friends and walks and travel and work and prayer and joy and mourning—would be to lose sight of what the artwork can offer us both before and perhaps, *after*.

Artists in *Being & Feeling (Alone, Together)* offer a meditation on the human condition, with its foibles, frailties, awkwardness, and grace. The carved wood portraits of **Sachiko Akiyama**, drawing on the artist's Japanese American heritage, family, and forces beyond human control, such as weather, consider presence and interiority. **Cheryle St. Onge's** photographs mine personal and family history to represent and communicate: for, about, and in collaboration with her mother, who suffers from vascular dementia. The work of **Katya Grokhovsky** examines gender, the immigrant experience, stereotypes, and injustice with urgency and criticality—states of being that are both deeply personal, as well as politically constructed.

The figures in the paintings of **Andrew Fish**, set in ambiguous landscapes, invite us to create new stories, reading the paintings' narratives through the lens of our own desire. Reflection and reinterpretation also operate in **Lauren Gillette's** mirrored tiles in the *What I Did* project. By reflecting us, the texts by anonymous contributors encourage us to reflect upon our own stories, promoting a space of shared intimacy. *ex(i/ha)le*, an installation by **Jon Sakata** and Democracy of Sound (exeter) invites us to move and breathe alongside a twinkling, rippling, and embodied mylar 'room,' echoing with the heard and felt poetry of **Willie Perdomo**. Intended as a physically solitary experience, the piece expands and reverberates with touch, sight, and sound. You are alone, but yet share your mental-emotional-embodied presence with other forces.

There is emotional capacity in language, although it sometimes falls short in its attempts to communicate our deepest feelings of confusion, delight, anxiety, and exuberance. We need additional ways, beyond words alone, to narrate the construction of our identities and experiences. **Stephanie Misa** considers language—read, shared, and heard—and identity, as diverse, intersectional, and always in a state of becoming. **Tobias Rud's** animated short films evoke the sweet memories of home, the discomfort of being lonely while being surrounded by others, and the optimism of shared song. **Riikka Talvite's** video connects her multiple selves as composer, performer, and artist, to the multiple selves of the viewer, through pathos and humor. Who do we feel we 'ought' to be, and what do our own running internal dialogues reveal about our wishes, our fears, and our potentials?

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION, AS WE CONTINUE TO REIMAGINE IT

The exhibition was never open to the public in the traditional sense. It was not closed, either. Rather, the pandemic forced a reconsideration of what we mean by *exhibition*, *program*, and *public*. Initially, we were consumed by the 'pivot'—shifting the exhibition from physical to virtual, from face-to-face to video conference, from mounted sign to electronic text. What *moves* in an exhibition, if *not* the audience to and around the works in a physical space?

What if, in the spirit of Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, we could *let things run*?¹ What new ways of thinking and perceiving emerge when you combine (what you assume is) *physical* inaccessibility to works of art with other kinds of movements that make work and ideas *more* accessible?

Discussions with Jeremy Stoller, Beehive Dramaturgy, Jake Josef, PEA Theater & Dance, choreographers Shannon Humphreys and Kara Fili, and architect John Stephen Ellis, among others, helped move thinking beyond "in person" vs. "online." We could return to the *content* of the exhibition. How it feels. How we feel. How we make our way through the world, as solitary individuals and together with others, through our distanced efforts to reach the work, and reach each other *through* the work.

¹ This line of thought is inspired by my own engagement with the work of Fred Moten, in his text with Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, Wivenhoe/New York/Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013.

We kept trying. We kept *futuring*. 'Futuring,' a concept from choreographer Ame Henderson,² allows for the aesthetic experience to be generative, and generous, facilitating a flow of ideas without succumbing to the binary of leading or following, of either physical access to the "exhibition" or lack thereof. Art is, and always was, so much more than singular works placed in a codified manner within a gallery.

As an object of joint attention, art compels. It has the expressive power to amplify voices, to wrestle with challenging questions in nuanced, complicated, and even contradictory ways, and to facilitate connection, inspiration, and promise. When being and feeling (literally) are threatened—by economic collapse, by systemic injustice, and by closures of already-precarious arts organizations, by suspicion and doubt and inertia, the arts persist. What we have done together, finding ways of *Being & Feeling (Alone Together)*, through collective time and effort and attention, *matter*. We will do these things in spite of others' efforts to control and to contain. We will do these things around the margins or from behind locked doors, enclosed within boundaries of screen space, or by offering many small, accumulating gestures, from the website to interviews to this catalog.

We may hold what Moten and Harney describe as "exuberantly metacritical hope." They note: "This art is practiced on and over the edge of politics, beneath its ground, in animative and improvisatory decomposition of its inert body. It emerges as an ensemblic stand, a kinetic set of positions, but also takes the form of embodied notation, study, score. Its encoded noise is hidden in plain sight from the ones who refuse to see and hear..."³

The experience of assembling an exhibition held in a state of prolonged anticipation does speaks to loss, but it also welcomes a future hope of *being-with*. There is a strong desire to connect. We are enriched by being in relation, to ourselves and to others, no matter the physical or emotional distances that may separate us.

Lauren O'Neal Director and Curator Lamont Gallery

² Hansen, Pils and Darcey Callison, eds., Dance Dramaturgy: Modes of Agency, Awareness and Engagement, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

³ Moten & Harney, pp. 73-4.







Sachiko Akiyama, Deeper Than You Imagined, 2012, Wood and paint; Bird in Hand, 2007, Wood and paint;



...I want to expand my compositional thinking... 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



What are the dynamical tensions, dispersions, dialogics that arise from in-between things? Can gaps, intervals, hiatuses, fissures themselves be seen as a kind of materiality? How might the sensorial give expression and contour to...?

- Jon Sakata





Orality is 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.

- Stephanie Misa







I am all about the storytelling. If I have an idea that could be told and acted out with socks on my hands while videotaping it, then that would be great too.



- Tobias Rud





These components and facets complexify into a personal and on-going engagement with Willie Perdomo's work; but what is more, a shared solidarity with him in exile and breath as we tell it deep 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."

- Jon Sakata



Biography, history, text and memory are my bricks; aesthetics, repetition and empathy, my mortar. 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. One of my great joys is whatever idea I started with was taken by the participants and made into something so much bigger and better. That we are more than a sum of our parts. That a list from a stranger is a connective thread to their own memories.

- Lauren Gillette



Stephanie Misa, Transplant, 2016, Soft-bound book, table, chairs, plant; Tobias Rud, But Jane Was Deaf, 2018, 2D Digital animation



Jon Sakata, ex(i/ha)le, 2020, Multimedia installation; Tobias Rud, But Jane Was Deaf, 2018, 2D Digital animation













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... 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

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



Cheryle St. Onge, Untitled (Disco Ball), 2019, Photograph Scene 11: 07:42 JAETTU II / Shared II

Image:(oboist and composer are sitting side by side back to back)Sound:(composer is talking, microphone quite close, sounds of reed making)

Meidän pitäis päästä jonkinlaiseen sopimukseen...näistä rooleista...tai ei- rooleista...vähintäänkin kummankin pitäsi tuntee olonsa jotenkin kotoisaks... niinku tarpeelliseks...niin...miten näitä neuvotteluja käydään...äänestetään ...yks vastaan yks...no, mikä sitten on pahinta...huono esitys...niinku virhe...särö...häpeä...oboeen liittyy valtava häpeä...en mä oikeastaan halua enää... esiintymään...nyt aletaan lähestyä kiinnostavia asioita...niin, ehkä meidän pitäis työskennellä juuri epäonnistumisen kanssa...niinku sillä hilkulla...mitä siellä lavallakaan oikein halutaan nähdä...esitys taituruudesta...vai...oisko se kuitenkin merkityksellistä, jos yleisö pääsis kurkistamaan jotain mikä on salattua...niin, miten luoda niin luottamuksellinen ilmapiiri että jotain sieltä tiedostamattomasta tihkuu...niin ja totta tässä tapauksessa pitäis tihkua meidän molempien tiedostamatomasta... Titles: We should reach some sort of agreement...about these roles...or nonroles...at least we both have to feel somehow homely...and needed...so...how do we run these negotiations...by voting...one against one...well, what then is worst...a bad performance...like a mistake...a distortion...a shame...there is a huge shame related to an oboe...I really do not want...to perform again...now we are approaching interesting things...so, maybe we should work with failure ... like almost failing all the time...what do we want to hear on a stage... a representation of virtuosity...or... would it be meaningful, however, if the public was able to see something hidden ...how to create such a confidential atmosphere that there is something oozing out of the unconscious...so in this case, something must be oozed from both of our minds...

- Riikka Talvitie

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



Sachiko Akiyama, Deeper Than You Imagine, 2012, Wood, paint





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.

- Sachiko Akiyama





One of the first things that emerged are the emotions and tension we all feel right now and the need to mourn the loss of our world and society in our own way. There is a pressing need for humanity and compassion, for connection and community, to keep each other sane, to reject the hyper capitalist pressure to produce. We must acknowledge the fact, that we are experiencing a collective trauma. There is a lot of anxiety about immigration status, about border closures, about government assistance, all of which the pandemic highlights even further. Nobody truly knows how this will impact our future as artists and cultural workers. We are overworked, underpaid, under-appreciated and devalued, so there are no answers yet, only the necessity for reflection and survival right now.

- Katya Grokhovksy



LIST OF WORKS

Sachiko Akiyama

Bird in Hand, 2007, Wood, paint Deeper Than You Imagine, 2012, Wood, paint In the Forest of Ghosts, 2016, Wood, woodcut prints, paint, mixed media Finding Home, 2013, Wood, paint, gold leaf Origins, 2014, Wood, paint, resin Mountain/Sky, 2019, Wood, paint, resin Somewhere In Between, 2019, Wood, paint, steel

Andrew Fish

Bench (Phone Conversation), 2020, Oil on linen Grand Staircase, 2019, Oil on linen Hedge Maze 2, 2019, Oil on linen Corner Spot, 2018, Oil on linen Interior Dialogue, 2015, Oil on linen

Lauren Gillette

Things I Did, 2018, Multi-media Installation, glass, vinyl text

Katya Grokhovsky

Purple Rage, 2018, Acrylic, marker on canvas Sunset, 2018, Acrylic, marker on canvas Possibly Maybe, 2018, Acrylic, collage on canvas Smile Again, 2017, Acrylic, collage on paper Untitled, 2016, Ink, pen on paper

Stephanie Misa

Transplant, 2016, Soft-bound book A Bedtime Story for Someone Else's Child, 2016, Single Channel Video

Tobias Rud

But Jane Was Deaf, 2018, 2D Digital animation Sweetie O's, 2018, Hand drawn animation

Jon Sakata

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

Cheryle St. Onge

Untitled (Jewelry), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Dog), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Bubbles), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Pumpkin), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Summer Sweater), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Plate), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Horse), 2019, Photograph Untitled (Disco Ball), 2019, Photograph

Riikka Talvitie

Omakuva (Self-Portrait), 2018, Video



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

SACHIKO AKIYAMA

Sculptor Sachiko Akiyama received her MFA from Boston University. She exhibits internationally, at the Akinofuku Museum, the University of Maine Museum of Art, and the Kohler Arts Center. Her work has been reviewed in *Art New England*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Portland Press Herald*. Akiyama was awarded a Joan Mitchell Award, an Artist Resource Trust Grant, a Piscataqua Region Artist Advancement Grant, and residencies at UCross and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her work is in the collections of the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum and Gordon College. Akiyama lives in Portsmouth, NH, and teaches at the University of New Hampshire.

www.sachikoakiyama.com | @woodchip47

ANDREW FISH

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 grants and awards from the Somerville Arts Council, NY Studio School, the 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 lives in Somerville, MA and teaches at Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Lesley Art + Design.

www.andrewfish.art | @andrew_fish_studio

LAUREN GILLETTE

Lauren 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.

www.laurengillette.com | @laurengillette01

KATYA GROKHOVSKY

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 grants, residencies, and fellowships such as the Pratt Fine Arts Department Artist in Residence, Ox-BOW School of Art Residency, and the Brooklyn Arts Council Grant. She has curated numerous exhibitions and events, including: Art in Odd Places 2018: *BODY, Soft Power* at Lesley Heller Gallery, and *She's a Maniac* at Kunstraum Gallery. Her work has been exhibited extensively.

www.katyagrokhovsky.net | @katyagrokhovsky

STEPHANIE MISA

Born in Cebu City, Philippines, Stephanie Misa is a doctoral researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki. She lives in Vienna, Austria where she graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in Performative Arts & Sculpture. She has her masters from Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. Through video, writing, sculpture, installation, and curating, Misa examines the persistence of languages relegated to oral forms, and the activation of this "orality" outside the usual educational modes of instruction. Recent projects, grants, and residencies include the 9th Bucharest Biennale, Art Space Sydney, the Kültür Gemma Bursary for Immigrant Artists, the Finnish Cultural Foundation, the Lower Austria Arts & Culture, and Yuka Tsuruno Gallery.

www.stephaniemisa.com | @steph.misa

TOBIAS RUD

Tobias Rud is a filmmaker and animator from 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.

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www.vimeo.com/user20075864 | @tobiaslrud
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JON SAKATA

Concert pianist and transdisciplinary artist Jon Sakata has performed and exhibited internationally at venues including Radialsystem V, Myyrmäki Kirkko, at Harvard University and the Carnegie Mellon Center for Arts in Society. Recent collaborative installations include *CLEW: A Rich and Rewarding Disorientation* (2017) at the Lamont Gallery. Recent music compositions have included original scores for Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* and Garcia Lorca's *Blood Wedding*. Sakata teaches piano, composition and harpsichord at Phillips Exeter Academy. Previously, he was a faculty member at New England Conservatory, where he also received his Double MM in Piano and Harpsichord Performance with distinction and DMA in Piano Performance.

CHERYLE ST. ONGE

Cheryle St. Onge 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. St. Onge's work focuses on photography's ability to distill our sense of time and curiosity. Her photographs have been exhibited at Princeton University, University of Rhode Island, and in an American Institute of Architects traveling exhibitions. Awards include a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, a Critical Mass Finalist Exhibition Award, and a Polaroid Materials Artist Support Grant. Her photographs are in the collections of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation. She has taught at Clark University, Maine College of Art and the University of New Hampshire, and currently teaches at Phillips Exeter Academy.

www.cherylestonge.com | @cherylestonge

RIIKKA TALVITIE

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.

www.riikkatalvitie.com | @talvitieriikka



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Curator: Lauren O'Neal

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www.exeter.edu/lamontgallery

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