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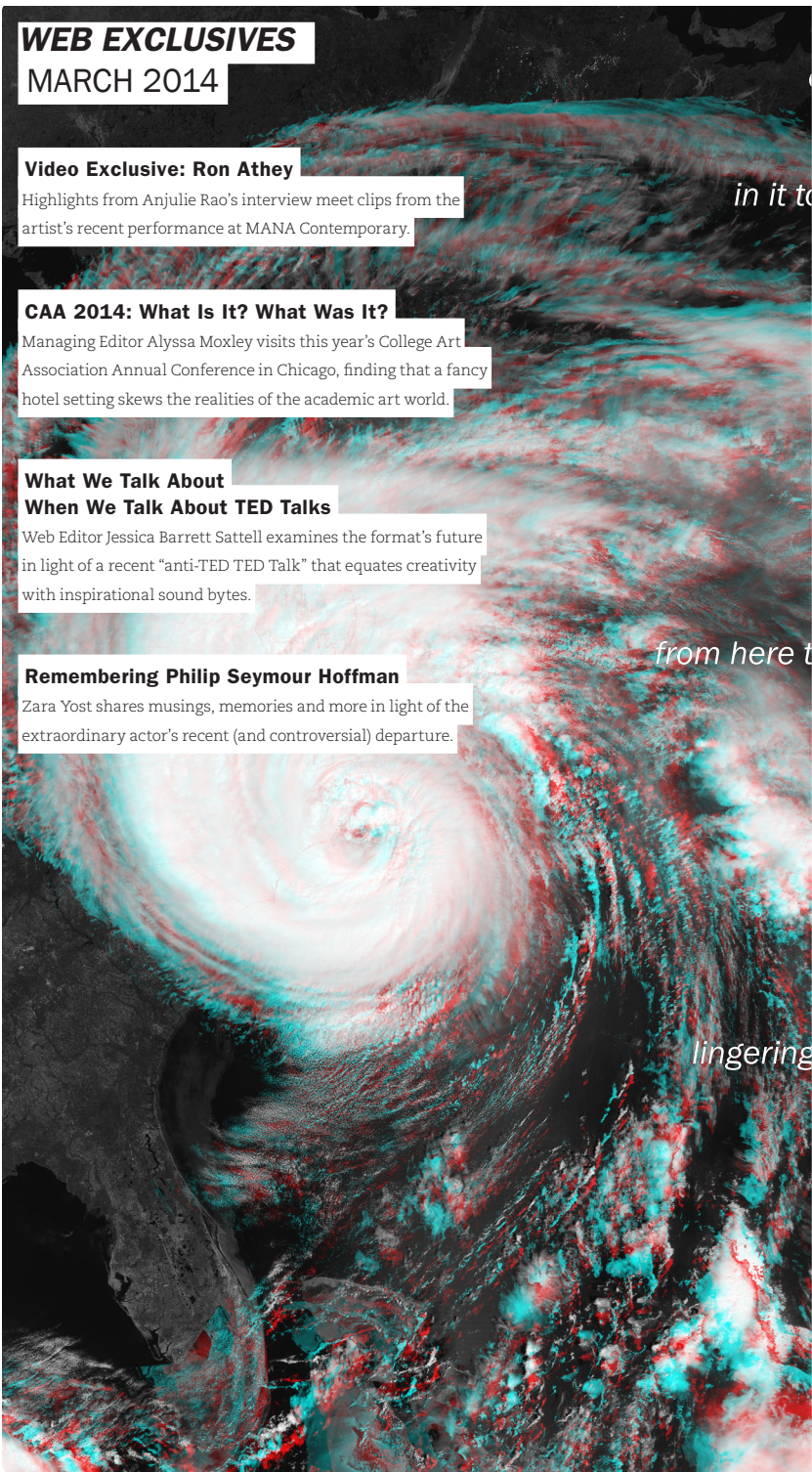
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WEB EXCLUSIVES  
MARCH 2014

**Video Exclusive: Ron Athey**  
Highlights from Anjulie Rao's interview meet clips from the artist's recent performance at MANA Contemporary.

**CAA 2014: What Is It? What Was It?**  
Managing Editor Alyssa Moxley visits this year's College Art Association Annual Conference in Chicago, finding that a fancy hotel setting skews the realities of the academic art world.

**What We Talk About  
When We Talk About TED Talks**  
Web Editor Jessica Barrett Sattell examines the format's future in light of a recent "anti-TED TED Talk" that equates creativity with inspirational sound bytes.

**Remembering Philip Seymour Hoffman**  
Zara Yost shares musings, memories and more in light of the extraordinary actor's recent (and controversial) departure.

emerge

in it together

from here to there

outlets

lingering issues

inlets

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Hot Air

Winter has been hard. Chicago has endured two polar vortexes in a season already devoid of light. Add the cold darkness to the mounting pressures of the spring semester and the quickly approaching summation of the year's work in the forthcoming BFA and MFA shows and thesis presentations, and the season provides fertile ground for stress. In this issue, we address the theme of emergence, with a special emphasis on the opportunities, achievements, and issues that our union of a city encompasses. *Public Housing, Personal Stories* reviews a book with first-person accounts from Chicago's Public Housing Projects. *Typehunting* traipses the streets in search of found typefaces. In *Curating Chicago* we hear from local artists who have debuted in the Whitney Biennale. F Newsmagazine considers revealing the hidden — through the Chicago Cultural Center in *Behind Open Doors*, the biases of US healthcare in *Cheap Shot*, and the dark side of the Olympics in *The Other Sochi*. This winter demands intervention in the form of fun. *Pineapple (On the Way)* is this month's F Newsmagazine site-specific artwork. A performance score in the form of a frame story, the reader is invited to emerge from fiction into reality, through a shared medium — pizza.

—Alyssa Moxley, Managing Editor

cover: **Emergence**  
by Frederick Eschrich

This month's theme, emergence, left our design staff desiring something beyond the two-dimensional constraints of paper. 3D printing is the latest hot topic in technology, and this led to a greater dialogue about emerging technologies and our desire to emulate their effect through the aging technology that is print. So here we are, coming to you with a gift of anaglyph 3D glasses to view this issue — the first "3D printed" issue of F Newsmagazine! The future of the past is now our present.

Anaglyph 3D technology is a brilliant representation of another concept of emergence: order arising from chaos. On the page, the anaglyph images are a jumbled mess of red and blue, but the glasses act as their codex. Put the Cyan/Red glasses on and it filters the elements of the page; order will emerge from chaos. To stand up to this chaos, we chose Franklin Gothic as our typeface. It is strong, bold and legible: necessary traits to stand up to the added chaos of the anaglyph effect. Sit back and enjoy, this issue really pops!

—Christopher Givens, Art Director

in brief



Things Are Blowing Up In Venezuela

Paratroopers sent by the Venezuelan government descended upon the state of Tachira on Saturday to quash student-led protests against President Nicolas Maduro that turned violent. An Al Jazeera article reported that weeks of protests are due in part to rampant crime, runaway inflation, high unemployment and other economic problems. Recent violence resulting in the deaths of several protestors, including government and opposition supporters, came after the arrest of opposition politician Leopoldo Lopez at a protest rally in late February. BBC News reported that “Maduro has accused US conservatives and media organizations of plotting to overthrow his government.” Maduro invited President Barack Obama to Venezuela for talks to “put the truth out on the table.” The Venezuelan government has recently revoked the accreditation of three CNN reporters and expelled three US diplomats it accused of meeting with violent protest groups in the opposition.

Ukrainian President Ousted After Bloody Protests

The Washington Post, along with every news outlet on Planet Earth, reported that on February 21 protestors took control of the Ukrainian capital following violent protests resulting in the deaths of dozens of protestors and police. Protests began in November when Yanukovych refused to sign an agreement with the European Union that would have removed trade barriers. Instead, he chose closer ties to Russia, which the nationalist demonstrators saw as cowering to that country and a betrayal of national interests. People in the south and west of Ukraine, where Yanukovych is from, supported him. But protestors’ numbers ballooned to hundreds of thousands when riot police brutally cracked down on them, and they began to demand the president’s resignation. After weeks of protests, police turned violent again when parliament passed repressive laws to stifle the protests. Protestors winged firebombs and stones at police who used stun grenades, tear gas, rubber bullets and eventually real bullets. After more fighting and negotiations led by EU leaders, Ukrainian police abandoned their posts and the country’s parliament voted to remove President Viktor Yanukovych from power and set new elections for May 25.

SAIC Prez To Aid U Of Chicago In Attracting Obama Library

The School of the Art Institute’s President Walter Massey was asked last month to serve on the University of Chicago’s Community Advisory Board to assist with that board’s effort to entice the Obama Presidential Library to Chicago’s mid-south side, according to a recent Sun Times article. U of C has been working on the bid for more than a year, and the nonprofit founded to establish the \$500 million library will make a decision by early 2015. Other contenders for the library’s site are Columbia University in New York, the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Hawaii, Chicago State University and Daniel McCaffery, a real estate developer who is pitching the site of the former U.S. Steel plant on the far Southeast Side. He has offered to donate 60 lakefront acres if he can forge an alliance with the University of Chicago. U of C president Robert Zimmer said, “A presidential library would mark a watershed moment for the South Side, catalyzing significant and sustained economic opportunity in an area poised to make the most of such promise.”

Comcast Acquires Competition, Further Endangers Net Neutrality

Comcast announced last month that it has reached a deal to purchase Time Warner Cable for \$45.2 Billion, a deal which, if approved by federal regulators, would make its total subscribers 30 million, according to Bloomberg News. That number would make Comcast the dominant company in the Internet service provider market, which already includes only a handful of companies. What worries critics like New York Times columnist Paul Krugman more than reduced competition, however, is the increased power Comcast will have to “dictate terms to the providers of content for its digital pipes.” That means if a company providing digital content of any sort is unable to pay the fee Comcast would be able to charge, that company’s content would not be available to the Internet’s end users or would be available at a much slower speed.

Wild Chihuahuas Terrorize Pheonix

Packs of wild Chihuahuas, a breed of dog that originated in Mexico and one of the world’s smallest, have overrun a neighborhood in Arizona. Maricopa County Animal Care and Control officials are having a difficult time controlling the populations of stray Chihuahuas, according to an ABC News article. Not spayed or neutered, the animals are multiplying, “infesting” Maryvale, an area of Phoenix. Animal Control received as many as 6,000 calls about Chihauhaus in 2013. According to an article in Digital Journal, one theory about the abrupt increase in the number of the small strays is that they are purchased as “fashion accessory dogs,” and when they develop behavioral problems they are dumped at local shelters, lately in record numbers. A United Press International article speculated that the rise in stray Chihuahua numbers may be attributable to an increase in foreclosures in the Phoenix area and in the number of recently deported undocumented workers. “We get the reports of children or even adults being attacked or bitten by dogs that are running loose,” said one Maricopa County official. ABC News also reported that the tiny canines are recruiting larger stray dogs to join their packs.

Biggest Drug Lord In The World Apprehended

The man known as El Chapo, who is accused of running the largest drug cartel in the world, was apprehended by police in Mexico City on February 22. His worth is estimated at \$1 billion. El Chapo’s (whose real name is Joaquin Guzman) Sinaloa Cartel reaches as far as Asia and Europe and has been a main combatant in a spasm of violence that has left tens of thousands dead in Mexico in recent years, according to an article in The New York Times. The US Drug Enforcement Administration has reported that more than 90 percent of the marijuana, cocaine, heroin and other illicit narcotics being peddled in Chicago are supplied by the Sinaloa. Chicago’s Crime Commission had named him Public Enemy #1. The only other criminal with that distinction was Al Capone in 1933.

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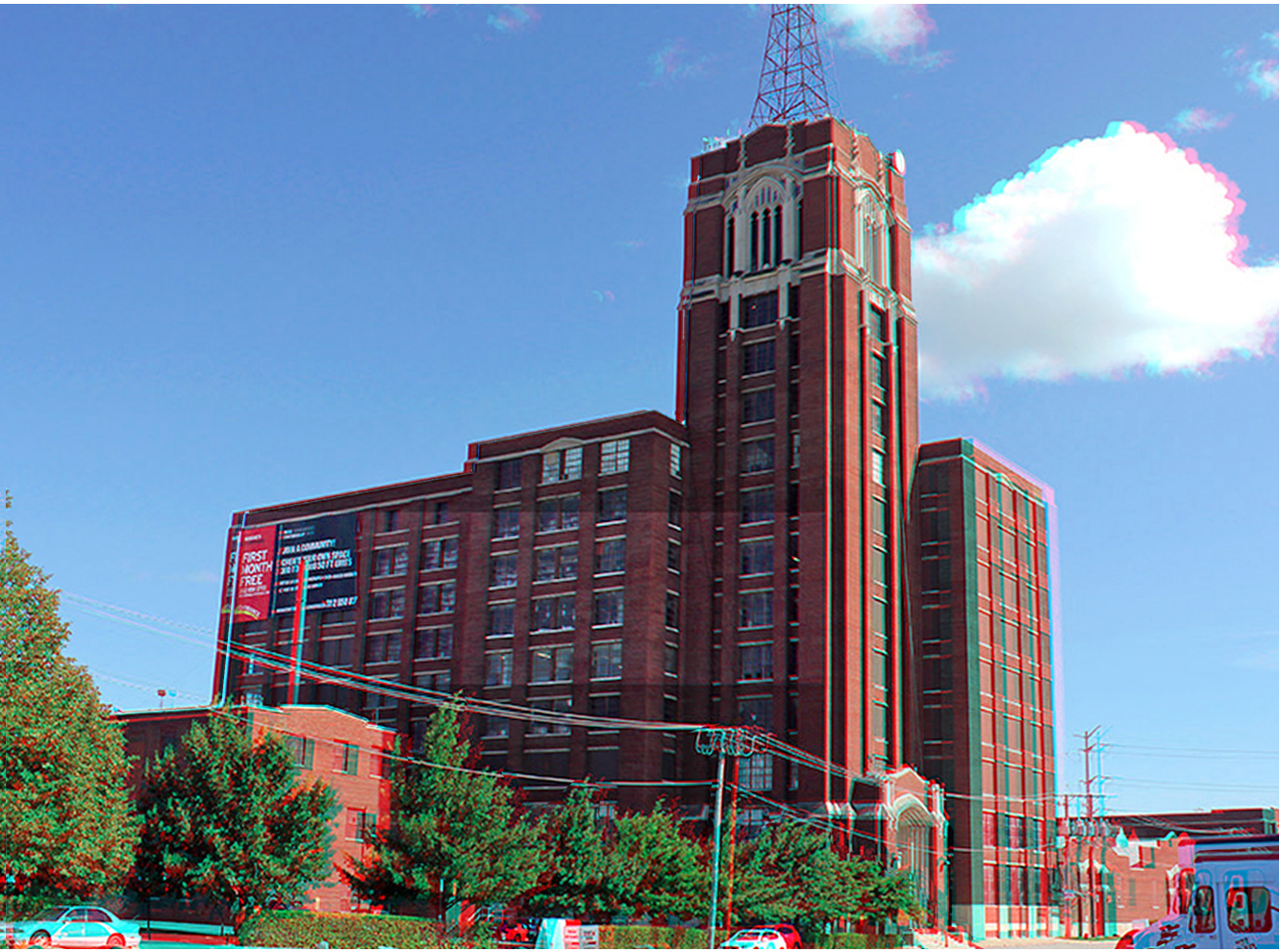
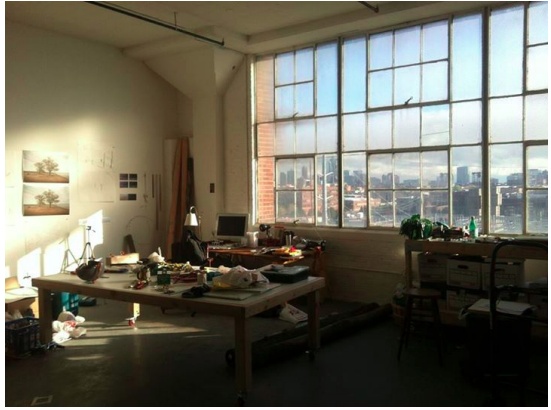
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MANA  
CONTEMPORARY



A New Community and Complex of Arts Activity in Pilsen

» **alyssa moxley**

Mana Contemporary opened up its Chicago branch in September 2013, converting an empty auto-parts factory into a hub of activity for a community of emerging and established artists and the wider arts community. Designed by architect George Nimmons in 1926, the imposingly large 14-story landmark building originally served as a warehouse and garage for Commonwealth Edison's Fisk Generating station, incorporating a 198-foot-high radio tower as the communication system to dispatch emergency equipment. Now the building at 2233 Throop Street is set to become part of a national network of spaces that incorporate artist studios, climate controlled storage, art handling, exhibitions, shared equipment spaces, and areas for performance and programming.

A space that is welcoming to artists, collectors and gallery owners

The arts enterprise has its roots as a moving and storage company owned by Moishe Mana. Artist and former Moishe's Self Storage employee, Eugene Lemay was a co-founder of Mana Fine Arts, and now acts as the company's curatorial advisor. Micha Lang, the visionary and co-founder of Mana Chicago has also been involved with the business from its early days. For a time Moishe's was a go-to job market for Israeli artist immigrants to the US and New York City.

The company's auspicious innovation in the mid-1980s was the development of a barcode method to quickly retrieve medical and legal papers from their document storage units. Locations close to the centers of cities meant that they could act within a couple of hours instead of days. With the advent of digital archiving, access to original documents became less pressing and they were able to store materials at more distant locations. Now these nationally distributed, centrally located urban warehouses are being converted to use for art. The company's flagship art center is a 1.5-million-sq. ft. Jersey City complex, 15 minutes from the center of New York City via PATH train.

In Chicago, the venture is fairly central to the Pilsen neighborhood, only four blocks away from the main drag of 18th Street. Nick Wylie, artistic director and Pilsen resident for seven years pointed out that despite being ten minutes from the center of town, there is a veil of inaccessibility which may have aided in protecting the

area from the rapid gentrification seen in places like Logan Square. That said, he admits that the building can be difficult to find and he provides a paragraph of directions to new visitors that are journeying to the studios, located at the unlikely dead-end of Throop, where it meets the south branch of the Chicago River.

"The Chicago location is just starting out. We're going to have a lot more activity and keep getting better and better. We're opening up the second floor next month," says Chicago manager Micha Lang. A year and a half ago he began scouting Chicago for the next Mana outpost. After meeting Lisa Lee and Matt Siber, he was introduced to even more artists. Nick Wylie, co-director of ACRE (Artist Co-operative Residency & Exhibitions), and Ciara Ruffino, also an administrator of ACRE, are now part of the team at Mana that reaches out to people

they think would contribute to the community and invites them to consider a studio.

Artist duo and SAIC alumni Industry of the Ordinary as well as SAIC teachers Jan Tichy, Claire Pentecost, Jason Lazarus all have studios in the building. Pentecost and Lazarus are planning for some of their classes to exhibit work in their studios. Dance company Lucky Plush, who operate under the administrative umbrella of Creative Partners alongside 8th Blackbird sextet and Blair Thomas Puppetry, are planning on opening facilities on the 6th floor. The fifth floor hosts 19 artists and the soon to be opened fourth floor will host an additional 27. Artists can also contact Mana Contemporary to inquire about spaces, and though reviewed by committee, there are many young artists and recent graduates in the building. "The average age on the fourth floor space is about 24 or 25," says Lang. At \$1.20/sq. ft. and running at 300-2,000 sq. ft., there are spaces for a variety of budgets.

Mana Contemporary currently operates in 300,000 sq. ft. of the building, and has plans to expand throughout an additional nine floors. The rest of the space is occupied by storage, "which is helpful to artists in the building," Wylie points out, and small creative businesses. ACRE currently runs a maker space in the building and helps build inexpensive computers for artists. The offices and programming of High Concept Laboratories (HCL) are based there and also facilitate wider programming within the space; next year HCL plans on opening

a glassed off performance area and spaces to host 12 annually supported artists. A classroom space from the University of Illinois Chicago soon to be dedicated to 3D printing, a classroom and screening space, and a library donated by Donald Young are located on the 5th floor. The Propeller Fund, a funding body in turn supported by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts to facilitate Chicago artists, is also planning to host two of their former grantees per year in dedicated studio spaces on the fourth floor.

The venue is in conversation with independents to establish digital printing and framing services within one 2,000-sq. ft. area. Two weeks ago the company merged with Terry Dowd, an art handling company that will be establishing major facilities in the building, offering knowledge and professionalism for climate controlled storage and transportation of art and collections, contributing to studio residents' access to safe international shipping.

Lang's excitement about the venture was palpable, as he described the creation of a space that is welcoming to artists, collectors, and gallery owners. He said that the Chicago location was even easier to deal with than in Jersey City, perhaps due to Midwestern friendliness. Wylie mentioned that much of Chicago's art scene circulates around educational establishments, while New York City's major influence holders are the galleries, which is reflected in the institutional partnering of the respective complexes.

The venue is not only for artists that have studios within the building. Wylie said that the organization plans to establish a wing dedicated to artist services open to all in the Chicago wide community. He hopes that "it can encourage cross-pollination as a multi-institutional meeting point." The 4,000-sq. ft. area on the ground floor already hosts performances organized by in-house residents, by HCL, and by other interested parties. Wylie said there have been events almost every weekend. SAIC's 2nd year performance grads ran an event on Friday 28th February. In mid-February HCL hosted a Valentine's Day dance. HCL is also a helpful mailing list to join to find out about upcoming programming. The University of Wisconsin-Madison curated a show of graduate work in the space as well. Some events, such as the Fluxfest 2014 and Ron Athey's recent performance, are donated to the space, while fundraisers and universities rent the space. Hospitable, open, and professional, Mana Contemporary is set to be an exciting venue for Chicago's artists and art-interested folk to participate.



# Less and Less Unsustainable

Buildings and Practices at SAIC Get Greener



»troy pieper

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions inventory by 2.5% in the last three years despite the fact that it grew in size by 13% in space and 4% in enrollment, says Tom Buechele, Associate Vice President of Instructional Resources and Facilities Management (IRFM) at the school. That, he says, was only possible because the school has made a number of different simultaneous efforts to improve its environmental sustainability.

Last month, President Walter Massey of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) sent a letter to the SAIC community announcing the fruits of those efforts, many of which were begun in 2009. A large motivator was SAIC's signing that year of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The commitment calls for member schools to:

Initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible.

Initiate two or more tangible actions to reduce greenhouse gases.

Make the action plan, inventory and periodic progress reports publicly available by submitting them to the ACUPCC Reporting System for posting and dissemination.

After a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory his department took later that year on all of the school's buildings, Buechele submitted a Climate Action Plan to the ACUPCC. "It's also a way to connect universities together and for us to compare and contrast," says Megan Isaacs, SAIC's Sustainability Coordinator. "You can see, for example, what our greenhouse gas emissions are per

square foot of building space or per full-time equivalent student," Buechele says. It is difficult to compare how the school truly compares to other ACUPCC member schools, because, says Buechele, "every school's got different circumstances and goals. Pratt's numbers, for instance, look really good. But they don't have air conditioning. We couldn't do that in our high-rise buildings."

Other prominent schools seem to be going a similar route, in some cases even going a step beyond. Parsons The New School for Design boasts a LEED Gold-rated building with a rain catching green roof and strategically placed sensors that track temperature. Loyola University has a Biodiesel Lab and is the only university in the country licensed to sell biodiesel fuel, according to its website.

When Buechele entered his position around seven years ago, the first thing his staff did was to take out all of the incandescent lighting in the school's dormitories and install water-conserving showerheads, he says. And, as part of a group of Chicago colleges and universities, he meets with sustainability representatives from those schools on a regular basis to talk about renewable energy, energy conservation efforts and "retrofit opportunities." Retrofits are simply updates to existing systems such as air conditioning and heating.

"Every year we do a number of retrofits," Buechele says. "We've redone the boilers, given them new burner controls so that no fuel is wasted, installed frequency drives to alter air circulation fan speed depending on demand for temperature control. These things pay for themselves in like a year." His department is also looking for ways to measure the school's electricity and gas use, "so we can see at any moment what the energy profile of all of the buildings at the school is and find ways to be more efficient."

It turns out energy efficiency means money saved as well as a check from utility companies. A part of every utility bill in Illinois, says Buechele, goes into a fund managed by the state. Through utility companies, the state pays consumers, be they private citizens or institutions like SAIC, if they make energy efficiency improvements. "For instance, I put a more efficient water

Every school's got different circumstances and goals. Pratt's numbers, for instance, look really good. But they don't have air conditioning.

heater in at home and got a \$150 rebate from People's Gas for doing it."

Buechele's department also replaced all of the windows on the front of its building on Columbus Drive and installed a new roof, but he also created Isaacs' position last summer, the purpose of which she says is "to find the faculty and students on campus who are interested in sustainability and work to connect them to each other and to IRFM and the support it can provide."

She also works to improve the school's recycling initiatives. "A common misconception is that the school is not actually recycling. Janitorial staff put both clear plastic bags for recycling and black bags for trash into the one cart they use to take everything to the dock," she says, "So we've heard students who think the school isn't recycling say 'that is not cool,' and we're like, 'yeah, that wouldn't be cool, except we are recycling.'"

"In order to save energy and still grow as an institution," says Buechele, "we had to do all of this. If we would have been flat, I would have been happy, but this result was like 'wow.'"

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# CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

## Student and Faculty Groups Take Action on Social Difference at SAIC

» alexander wolff

Following the intense series of conversations stimulated by student and faculty groups like Black at SAIC, SAIC Hillel, the Diversity Action Group (DAG), and the Faculty Senate Diversity Committee, last year saw an increased attention to diversity at SAIC, both in the classroom and in the larger community. Since 2009, SAIC has been having school-wide discussions on social difference, focusing on issues of race, gender, sexuality, and class. After the institution launched a new Strategic Plan that prioritized diversity as one of its seven focal points last year, there has been much attention on what the institution will actually do to better address and prioritize issues of social difference at SAIC.

Since last year, the DAG (which was composed of faculty, students, and staff) has dissolved and taken on new forms. As *F* news Magazine went to press, President Massey announced the formation of the Diversity Advisory Group (or DAG 2.0) to continue the work of the DAG, which will be chaired by Dean of Faculty Lisa Wainwright and will report directly to President Massey. On the group, senior administrators will be joined by “key stakeholders,” including faculty, staff and students.

Working in association DAG 2.0 is the Multicultural Affairs Advisory Committee. Open to students, staff, and faculty, the group will “give members of SAIC the opportunity to network with each other, collaborate, and also air any concerns they have about diversity at the school,” said Rashayla Brown, assistant director of Multicultural Affairs and Black at SAIC co-chair.

In an interview with *F* Newsmagazine, Brown said the group includes all interested students and faculty members in addition to “RAs, Students who are in SUGS, students who are interested in sustainability, students who are leaders of all the affinity groups like the Korean Students Association (KSA), SAIC Hillel, and Spectrum [the gender and sexualities spectrum group on campus]” and holds bi-weekly meetings in the Sharp Building in room 215 that any student can attend. “Those meetings are designed, first of all, to help students get a better knowledge of these diversity initiatives,” said Brown. “Hopefully, then they will do the same thing that the

staff and faculty did on the DAG, which is disperse and get other people committed to this conversation.”

Brown stated that there are going to be more immediate changes happening at SAIC within the next year, or even semester. While systemic changes to the first year programs and school curriculum may be further down the line, faculty and staff training has gotten off to a quick start. It is already underway in some cases, such as with SAIC’s Wellness Center staff receiving training sessions from the non-profit transgender support initiative TransLife Project at the Chicago House, and recent plans from SAIC’s health services department to create a more inclusive environment for trans\* students. According to Brown “in diversity training, changes are moving the fastest.” Brown notes that “the whole department of Student Affairs is going to be undergoing a similar type of training soon.” While it will be some time before we see changes to curriculum, Brown said that “there is a lot of work being done on it right now, and a lot of progress has been made already.”

### The Multicultural Advisory Committee and DAG 2.0 make concrete plans for what our institution can actually do to better address issues of social difference.

In her opinion, “This is not just an SAIC problem.” Rather, it is “more of an art school problem.” “A lot of art schools tend to struggle with promoting this type of integrated approach to diversity,” said Brown. Though structural institutional changes usually only happen as schools try to keep up with one another, she notes that “we’re moving forward without that type of trailblazing happening at other schools.” As Continuing Studies faculty member Josh Rios observes, “The classrooms at SAIC can always be more diverse.”

“SAIC is a small and expensive private art school, so there is, for the most part, an economic threshold in place that necessarily excludes some types of potential students; students that would both benefit from and add support to the school’s already existing openness to socio-cultural and identity differences,” said Rios.

As Faculty Diversity Senate Committee member and Architectural professor Lisa Norton sees it, the

DAG and other groups “have no doubt made SAIC more inclusive and accommodating.” She believes the larger problem is “that our institutional and societal framings of diversity are inadequate to the complexities of today’s world.” She points out, “It is our very diversity that makes it so difficult to address issues related to diversity and inclusivity.”

In the last year, DAG put out a rubric for changes that faculty and staff would like to see at SAIC that is downloadable on the school website. It includes many proposed ideas for institutional changes, like increased diversity training, comprehensive discussions and reformed curriculums. As SAIC Assistant Professor Jefferson Pinder observes, “It’s lofty and the culmination of a lot of hard work. It will take a herculean effort to execute those recommendations.” He is hopeful about their impact, asserting that “if we can do half of the recommendations we’d be in a great place.” Pinder also said that “as a community we need to keep an eye on that plan and ensure that it’s not lip service.”

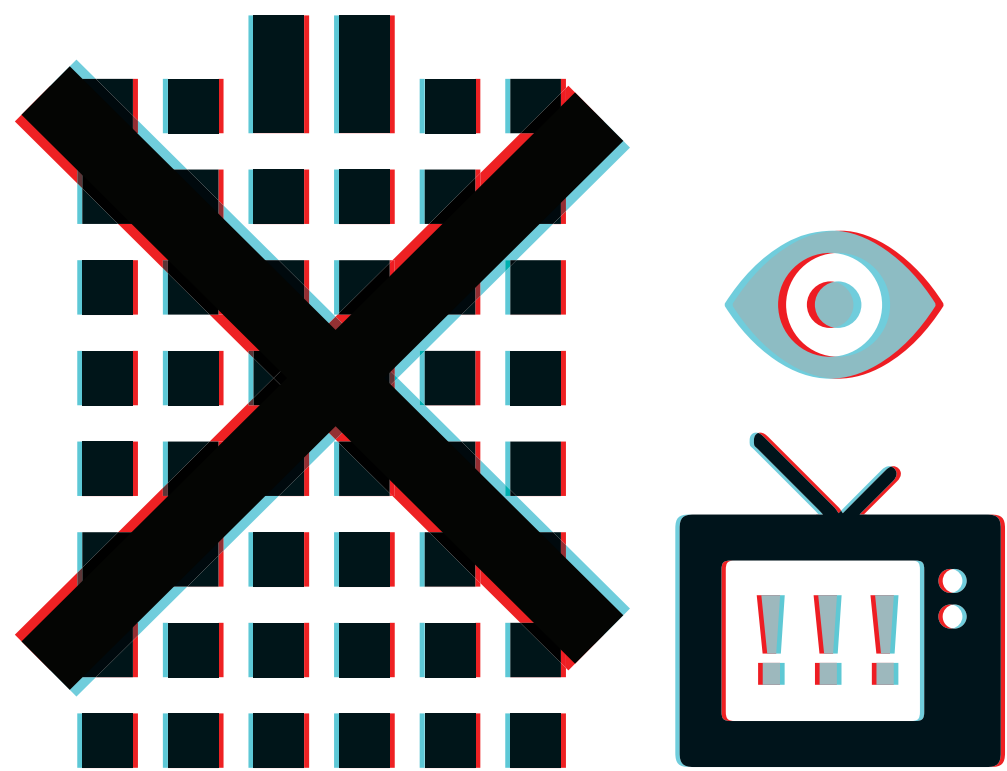
But changes, sadly, take a long time to complete. Improvements, while sometimes not as radical as many hope, operate as small stepping stones towards changing the larger institutional culture. Brown said, “one thing that I always have to remind students is that these things do take time.” But regardless of these constraints, she stated that “we’re all working as fast as we can to make sure there are some visible changes for people to benefit from.” Brown notes the importance of fast action: “You’re spending your time here, spending your money here, and you’re trusting the institution to provide you with a certain type of education by doing that, so we have an obligation to fulfill that expectation.”

*The Multicultural Advisory Committee meets bi-weekly from 4:15-5:45 in the Sharp Building, room 215. The next meeting dates are Wed. 2/26, Wed. 3/12, Mon. 3/31, Wed. 4/9, and Mon. 4/28, and all students, staff, and faculty are welcome.*



# PUBLIC HOUSING PERSONAL STORIES

First Person Accounts from Chicago's  
Demolished High Rises



» *annette lepique*

According to the Red Eye’s *Tracking Homicides in Chicago* website, there were 23 homicides in January 2014. That is roughly half the total in January 2013. While such violent crime statistics represent a complicated mix of socio-economic and political disenfranchisement, Chicago is a city that has long lived under the stigma of high murder rates. Unfortunately, the idea of Chicago as a gangland warzone (our own veritable “Chiraq”) has condemned many of the city’s most vulnerable citizens to lives half-lived under the yokes of violence and fear.





What complicates these twin issues of safety and citizenry within a large urban metropolis, is how larger governmental and infrastructural failures affect specific areas and mark them as incubators of poverty and crime. The most recognizable signifiers of such phenomena are the perceptions and realities that surround a city's public housing. Chicago has been long marked by the stigmas associated with housing projects such as Cabrini-Green or the Robert Taylor Homes. Following thier demolition in the years between 2007–2011, the thousands of people who lived there were dispersed from their communities.

Attempts to unpack the mythos of life at these housing projects present an intrinsic challenge. The residents are no longer resident, and even when they were, first person accounts were not commonly presented in media accounts, despite the local activist contingents. Cabrini-Green's mediated history includes being the setting of the seminal television program *Good Times*, and the media coverage of the brutal 1997 assault of Girl X. While the images of life in the housing projects that are disseminated throughout various channels of communication can range from heartwarming to horrifying, it is crucial to note that they exist within a realm of spectatorship. Someone watching a news report on Chicago public housing, in the comfort of his or her own home, does not feel or experience anything which resembles the reality of the lived experience. At its height, Cabrini housed 15,000 people in over 3,000 units. It may seem simplistic to state but an outside perspective depicted through a television screen does not accurately represent daily residential life within Chicago's public housing projects. As clichéd as it sounds, it is commonly forgotten in discussions of public housing that human beings live behind walls that are regularly vilified and denounced by governments big and small.

While these questions of reality versus perception

and the cyclical nature of governmental failure seem to be insurmountable, the *Voice of Witness* series' *High Rise Stories* *Voices from Chicago Public Housing*, edited by Audrey Petty, serves to humanely and intelligently unpack the common assumptions that haunt the discourses surrounding public housing.

*High Rise Stories* takes both panoramic and microscopic views to understand the legacies and repercussions of communities engrained as hopeless and dangerous in the city's psyche. The book balances the personal narratives of those who lived in Cabrini-Green, Rockwell Gardens, Stateway Gardens, Ogden Courts and the Robert Taylor Homes with helpful appendices of historical context. The inclusion of many civil rights battles, political struggles and social upheavals that directly impacted the residents of Chicago's public housing is informative, but the book's power lies in the personal narratives. As a reader, the stories feel as intimate as a conversation between yourself and the narrator and serve to dispel any preconceptions one might possess regarding the trials or tribulations of life within a housing project. Readers will learn about the people behind the statistics and about institutionalized fear.

For instance, *High Rise*'s first tale belongs to Dolores Wilson, formerly of Cabrini-Green. Eighty-three year old Dolores is a retired community organizer and city worker who happened to be one of the first families to reside in Cabrini-Green. She and her family arrived in Cabrini-Green during a time period when such projects represented a new beginning for many families. Many of these first families (Dolores' included) moved to Cabrini-Green and other housing projects during the nascent years of the Civil Rights Movement. While not all of the early Cabrini-Green families were African-American, many were members of disenfranchised socio-political groups. Thus Cabrini, in a sense, provided all of these families a safe place and community in a broader

world. As Dolores recounts the passing of time and the emergence of gangs, drugs and guns into Cabrini-Green, there remains that original sense of community and strength. For example, during the tail end of her time there she recalls being asked by a reporter if she was scared to live in her community. In response Dolores stated that the "only time I'm afraid is when I'm outside of the community. In Cabrini I'm just not afraid."

While all of the narratives possess the extraordinary qualities of lives well lived, another exceptional story is that of Eddie Leman, a former resident of the Robert Taylor homes. Eddie recounts several childhood memories in the projects during the 1970s. He remembers his uncle and others who lived at Robert Taylor speaking about how the projects were built next to the Dan Ryan expressway because "if there was ever an uprising or something, [there was] easy access for tanks to come down the Dan Ryan and target the buildings." Chicago poet Sam Greenlee's period work, *The Spook Who Sat By The Door* explores the paranoia of riots. During Eddie's childhood the possibility of riots in Chicago's disenfranchised areas was a distinct possibility.

It would be presumptuous to suggest that these two personal stories encompass the breadth and depth of the incongruity of life lived in under the shadows of the myth of public housing. Yet, *High Rise Stories* brings us all closer to knowing and understanding the people who lived behind a notorious perception for too long.

**"The only time I'm afraid is when I'm outside of the community. In Cabrini I'm just not afraid."**



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# The Other Sochi

## Exhibition Shows the Truth of the Region

» troy pieper

As the “Florida of Russia,” the city of Sochi seemed to photographer Rob Hornstra and journalist Arnold van Bruggen an odd place to host the Winter Olympics. It is but a handful of miles from both Abkhazia and the North Caucasus, regions among Russia’s poorest and the sites of many years of violent government crackdowns on separatist activity. After the announcement of the location of the 2014 Winter Olympics, Hornstra and van Bruggen began documenting Abkhazia, Sochi and the North Caucasus because “they knew the story of Sochi that would be told in the mainstream media,” says Greg Harris, DePaul Art Museum (DAM) curator. *The Sochi Project: An Atlas of War and Tourism in the Caucasus*, is the result of the duo’s undertaking.

The show is a pared-down, mixed media installation of simple newsprint images accompanied by text with a small gallery devoted to videos of the karaoke stages popular among Sochi’s tourists. Van Bruggen describes Sochi as “famous for its subtropical vegetation, hotels and sanatoria. People from all over the Soviet Union associate the coastal city with beach holidays and first loves. The smell of sunscreen, sweat, alcohol and roasting meat pervades the air.” Images are indeed of weird, rocky beaches and fat, white Russians, but they are also of bronzed children and families on holiday. Whatever excess in the images is only difficult to tolerate in the context of the poverty and political conflict in the region surrounding Sochi.

Perhaps Hornstra instructed his subjects not to smile. Or, as writer Ed Leigh notes, the subjects are following the Russian tradition that “only two types of people smile on the street: idiots and rich people — and rich people don’t walk on the street.” As this publication goes to press, (likely smiling) people with money have descended on Sochi to take part in the \$50 billion 2014

Winter Olympics. *The Sochi Project* makes the city seem to drip with cash as tourists enjoy themselves in front of the backdrop of enormous Olympic stadiums under construction, even as some of the images very nearly lampoon their “Eastern European-ness” rather than their gluttony. The contrast between this and the tin shack-dotted marshland that characterized pre-Olympics Sochi is the first element of the project that confronts visitors to DAM.

The newsprint on which the photographs are printed hearkens back to a time when newspapers were the primary conveyance for important information, says Harris. Hornstra and van Bruggen think of themselves as storytellers, he says. Their goal with the project, which was entirely crowd-funded, is to tell the true story of this schizophrenic region of Russia. “We wanted to literally take the gloss off the pictures.” Still, the large format photographs are saturated in the beautiful way that newsprint allows, lending them a haunting quality in the context of the pictures’ candidness with their subjects.

Portraits of residents of nearby Abkhazia and the North Caucasus fill galleries on the museum’s second floor. In one, we see a veteran of World War II. In another, a veteran of a separatist conflict holds his daughter in his left arm, his only remaining appendage. Children handle assault rifles in another photograph, and a young mother poses with her child in yet another.

These images stand in stark contrast to the gleam of a Sochi in the throes of preparing for the Olympics just across the mountains. But they also show the character of a people — the furrow of an uncle’s brow, the print of a grandmother’s frock. “The Caucasus is more than just conflict and refugees, fundamentalist Islam or billion dollar games,” writes van Bruggen. “It is first and foremost a beautiful region, home to several million people trying to make the best of life.”



**Their goal with the project, which was entirely crowd-funded, is to tell the true story of this schizophrenic region of Russia.**



# Behind Open Doors:

» alexia casanova

We often fail to see what is right before our eyes. People, opportunities, venues. For many of us, the Chicago Cultural Center (CCC) is one such thing. It is easy to walk by it without looking twice and without entering. Yet it is a richly historical place, a cultural haven, an architectural masterpiece and a free venue open to all.



Chicago Nature

Known for bringing attention to forgotten spaces and overlooked wonders, artist and School of the Art Institute of Chicago teacher and alum Jan Tichy has taken up the task of re-introducing the CCC to Chicagoans. His exhibition, *aroundcenter*, which runs through April 27, is his take on this great building through various installations and thoughtful collaborations. Rather than focusing on a single gallery, Tichy takes visitors all around the building, leading them to rediscover the wonderful architectural details of the CCC.

"A lot of the spaces here are attention-grabbing," says Tichy, "but they are very hard to approach since they are so visually saturated already." *History of Painting* (2014), a 9,261-slide installation on the top floor, is simultaneously impactful and harmonious with the rest of the CCC's architecture. The slides, originally from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, were disposed of when the institution's collection was digitalized. The school offered its students the opportunity to acquire some of the three million slides, but curiously, very few people were interested in the giveaway. Tichy decided to keep the slides of paintings — about 50,000 slides. He sorted them by color and arranged them in strips of red, blue, yellow, brown, black, green, magenta and orange. As daylight shines through the window, the thousands of miniature photographs are reflected on the floor.

"I usually work in an environment where I can direct the light with full control," says Tichy. "Here, I have no control over the lighting inside." This lack of control, whether over artificial lights within the CCC or natural daylight from outside the windows, expanded rather than constrained the creativity of the installations. As the light changes throughout the day, the works evolve and transmute.

Tichy describes his work around the CCC as a "gentle intervention." However, the works are also powerful and thought-provoking. One of his works, located in the north stairwell leading to the Civil War memorial, could easily go unnoticed. A projection casts the names, dates and times of death of the victims of Chicago street violence over the past seven years. The names change according to a random rhythm generated by a computer. The sound of the changing slides is reminiscent of the sound of a handgun being cocked. People walk through the stairs like they might through a war, without stopping, without looking. "People are dying all around, and I think that it is something that, especially here in Chicago, we can choose not to see, not to be aware of," says Tichy. "I hope that some of the works will bring that awareness to a certain audience who might not be paying attention to this issue at this level."



# Jan Tichy Brings the Chicago Cultural Center to Light

An important component of Tichy's artistic practice is his collaborative projects. "I see myself as an artist/teacher or teacher/artist," he says. "There is a place in my practice for me working alone and developing certain concepts, and there is a value in collaborative practice that brings together different perspectives and allows a richer dialogue." The installation *Changing Chicago* 2014, located in the CCC's Chicago Rooms, is a visual response from high school students to Tichy's *Changing Chicago* (2012), which was inspired from a series of photographs of the same name taken between 1986 and 1987. For *aroundcenter*, Tichy also collaborated with SAIC students from the Masters of Arts in Arts Administration and Policy program. The nine graduate students taking part in the project were involved in developing the public programs associated with the exhibit.

The programming surrounding the exhibition is rich: film screenings, kaleidoscope and camera obscura building workshops, flashlight tours led by Chicago cultural historian Tim Samuelson and poetry writing for young people. Most of the workshops developed by the SAIC graduate students were inspired by Tichy's work with light on structure and the show's emphasis on the feeling of getting lost around the CCC. The kaleidoscope and camera obscura workshops for instance, are opportunities for visitors to experiment with lenses and mirrors to get a better understanding of the artist's process as well as discover the CCC through a new light and new angles.

## Tichy describes his work around the CCC as a gentle intervention, gentle but powerful and certainly thought-provoking.

"Jan was really involved, meeting with us every week," said first-year graduate student Alison Reilly. "He was very straightforward and honest, really open to discussion. He encouraged us to be as creative as possible, and challenged us on a regular basis." Arthur Kolat, another first year graduate student involved in the project, mentioned Tichy inviting them to his studio at Mana Contemporary. "It was a great experience, and a true privilege."

Besides explorations of light and generous collaborations, Tichy has a strong interest for archives and how to present them to the public. A number of pieces he dug up from the CCC basement are on display in *aroundcenter*. "Collections are often the history of an institution or a place," he explains, "and it was something that, as an artist working with these institutions and not just in them, was always a huge interest to me." In one gallery,

an entire wall is dedicated to the documentary project *Landmarks Chicago* (2009) with photographs Tichy found in a crate in the CCC's basement.

On the first floor, adjacent to the free library where people are invited to take books home, Tichy has also presented a series of found catalogs of exhibitions that have taken place over the years at the CCC. As he talks about his experience of going through these archives, he explains that he gradually learned more about the place he was working with and found that he could have another role within it. "As an artist working with this institution, one thing I can do is to supplement the roles that, at a certain time, were missing," he says. "I decided to try to collect as much as possible of these parts of history and eventually exhibit them as part of the exhibition."

This knowing and understanding of the history of the CCC and its past exhibitions has inspired Tichy's work for *aroundcenter*. *Chicago Nature*, a light installation situated in the front window on the north entrance, takes its inspiration from Bruce Nauman's *Human Nature/Life Death* (1983). Nauman's piece, donated to the Art Institute of Chicago after Mayer Daley's wife complained about its location across from her Randolph Street Office, was placed at the very same spot where *Chicago Nature* stands today.

*aroundcenter* also comes with its own app and website *aroundcenter.org*, which can be accessed by scanning a QR code printed on the exhibition map. One feature of the site is its audio walks. "I was interested in bringing different people's perspectives, and I asked seven Chicagoans who in some way have influenced the way I perceive Chicago [to contribute]," explains Tichy. Each of these people has a different relationship to and apprehension of the building, allowing visitors to be guided from a different perspective every time.

The app also offers visitors detailed information about each installation, such as the complete list of the victims whose names are displayed in the War Memorial installation.

Last but not least, *aroundcenter* marks the launch of *Chicago Projections*, a beautiful artist book gathering Tichy's architecture-related projects that he has conducted over the years. Published by US Equities and the Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), it includes essays by Karen Irvine.

Future Chicago-centric projects for Tichy include a video wall marking the Hyde Park Arts Center's 35th anniversary this fall and project in partnership with DCASE and students from SAIC to create archives for the Chicago Public Arts collection this summer.



Changing Chicago (above)  
History of Painting



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# MICROSCRIPTS

*The Everyday World of Walser*

» **nicholas szczepanik**

Waiting with my sister at the gate to board a flight from D.C. to Chicago, I pulled out my copy of Robert Walser's *Microscripts* to read through yet again. A recent edition from publisher New Directions, it's the kind of book that challenges our preconceived notions of what "good" writing does, or should do, and thus warrants multiple readings. I turned to "Microscript 408" and handed it to her. It's only a paragraph, but she sat there — turned-down brow, lips silently shaping the sounds — reading over the same short passage.

She paused and glanced at me after that initial reading, then started again. This is how I read the book, too. Finally, she said that she wanted to read the passage aloud, that it would help, and so she began: "Is it perhaps my immaturity, my innocence or, to put it in a more ordinary way, my foolishness that has prompted me to ask myself whether I would like to enter into relations with you." She continued, "On account of my total lack of life knowledge, I am called the Blue Page-Boy. And indeed I have not yet ever experienced anything worth mentioning except that now and then, i.e., relatively seldom, I glance into a little mirror..."

After she finished — not without a misstep or two — she closed the book and stared at its cover. "I need to text my writer friend. He needs to read this."

She couldn't pinpoint exactly what about the high modernist's work triggered that impulse, and I'm not so sure that I can fully articulate why I feel obliged to recommend *Microscripts* to anyone interested in writing. It certainly isn't the plot, for there rarely, if ever, is one. It's not the character development or the dialogue, because each of the pieces here function more as carefully crafted, seemingly tangential observations on the mundane.

However, you'll find yourself drawn into Walser's labyrinthine lexicon. Translated from the German by Susan Bernofsky, the book is comprised of relatively few of Walser's posthumously-discovered microscripts, a term he used for his series of tiny manuscripts written on found scraps of paper. Opposite of each entry is an actual-size color reproduction of the original microscript, detailing a vital component to Walser's work: the tactile process of writing itself. He claimed that he never once erased a sentence, but at some point in his life, he still thought it necessary to write in pencil.

Bernofsky's introduction not only helps to place Walser and his work within a historical context — Swiss-born in 1878, he lived through the Industrial Revolution and two World Wars, only to be institutionalized for a large portion of his adult life — but also reveals the difficulties in translating the work thanks in part to the writer's pencil markings being a mere millimeter in height, the shorthand he employed consisting of ticks and slashes, and the present condition of the original work.

Renowned German critic and philosopher Walter Benjamin wraps up the collection with a succinct essay that calls Walser's quirky world of words a "linguistic wilderness," which is quite accurate. Walser's syntax and diction are often so unusual that it becomes difficult to separate him from the first-person voice narrating each microscript.

Contrary to first impression, Walser's winding, stumbling sentence structure is an intentional technique that he uses to great effect. The deliberation with which he writes makes it easy to notice his deep-rooted fear that modernity has planted in us a severe disconnect with life's simple beauties — this makes sense coming from a man who eventually met his demise during a long walk on Christmas Day in 1956. For example, Walser characterizes "Microscript 190" as "just a tiny little piece," but strangely, in his hurried excitement, it becomes lengthier than many of the others. It begins with him simply watching children play with a dog. Later, it transforms as he turns his focus to the admiration he has for the children's mother, her feet, and then her "nameless servant." At one point, in true Walser fashion, he even interjects on how long he could write about what he's writing about.

Walser is a true modernist in that he is able to transform the world with a singular insight that reveals what has previously gone unnoticed and now demands devoted attention

Yet, he is not without bouts of heartfelt intimacy. "A Drive" concludes with one of his most poignant thoughts: "In this car I also flew past her, the woman I abandoned, which isn't even true, I just imagine it from time to time in order to suppose that she is thinking about me and that she and I together comprise a novel." A little firework of a passage: painful in its clarity and keeping us enchanted until the next.

The editors at New Directions revitalize and further reveal Walser's genius, but the series of paintings by Maira Kalman included in this edition to attempt to illustrate a visual biography of the author fall short; they seem to fantasize and trivialize his difficult life as a troubled, poor man. Although the idea to include another artist's creative response to the text is intriguing, Kalman's contribution is unnecessary and fails to complement the writing. This slight misstep aside, *Microscripts* is an immensely alluring work that rewards multiple readings. Walser is a true modernist in that he is able to transform the world with a singular insight that reveals what has previously gone unnoticed and now demands devoted attention.

There is a mystery to his words, his methodologies, his thoughts, and there is much to glean from it all... or perhaps it's intentionally empty.

I wouldn't put that past Walser.

# Curating

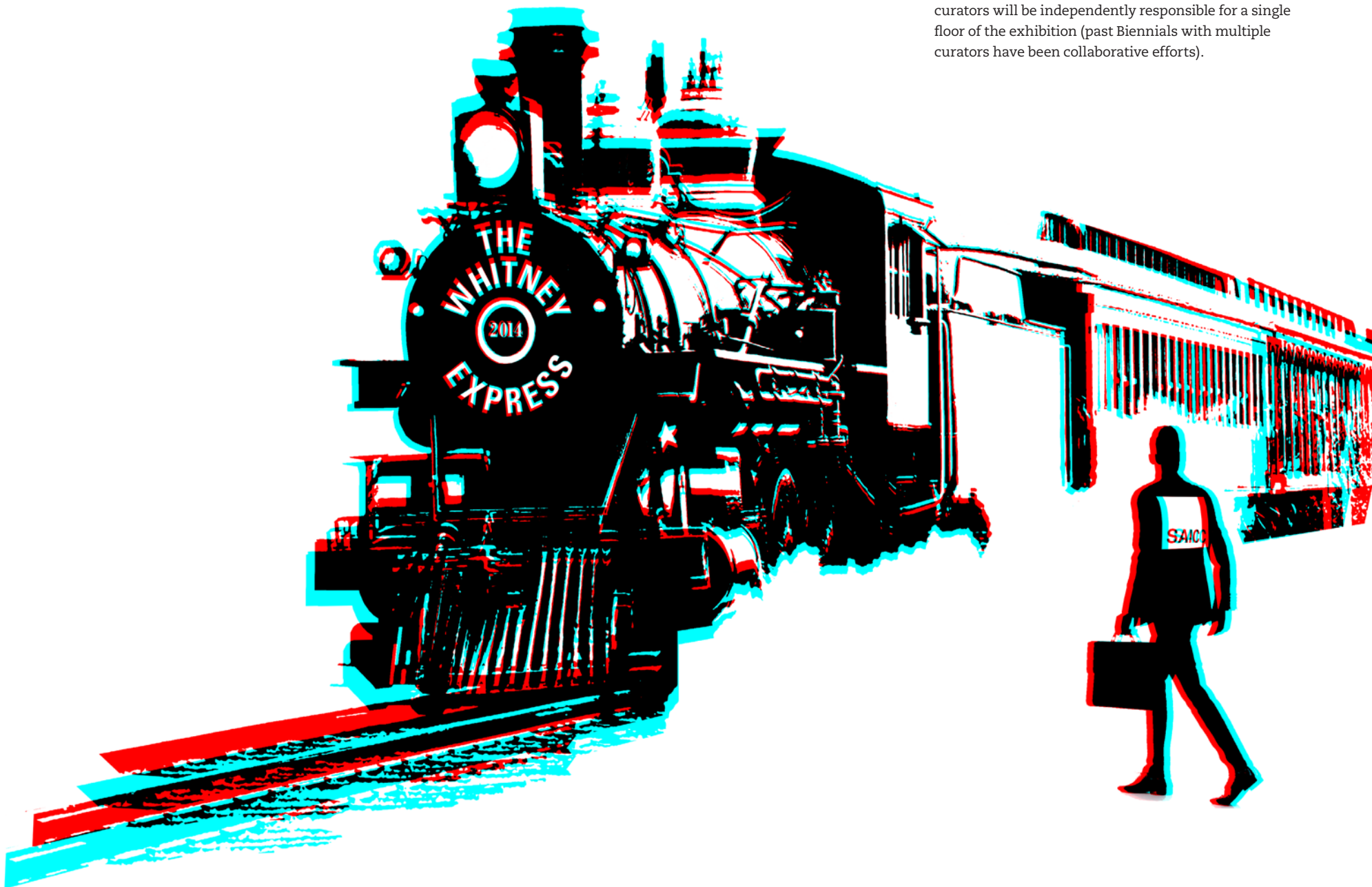
## Representations of the Midwest at the 2014 Whitney Biennial

»patrick reynolds

The Whitney Museum of American Art's Biennial exhibition is undeniably one of the most high-profile recurring contemporary art events in the United States, and it is one that has consistently provided discussion points for both proponents and critics of the contemporary art world. While the museum-wide show has existed in a biennale format since 1973, it has seen a great degree of scrutiny since the late 1980s, when it was harshly criticized by the feminist art collective Guerilla Girls for its lack of inclusiveness with female artists in their art event *Guerilla Girls Review the Whitney*. All subsequent biennials have been subject to similar examinations, with each new iteration of the exhibition being statistically compared to previous years' racial, ethnic and gender demographic breakdowns.

When the Whitney released its finalized roster of chosen artists for its 2014 Biennial this past November, the art world quickly jumped at the opportunity to dissect the list. Hyperallergic swiftly published an article entitled "The Depressing Stats of the 2014 Whitney Biennial," in which author Jillian Steinhauer refuted the Whitney's claim of the upcoming exhibition being "one of the broadest and most diverse takes on art in the United States that the Whitney has offered in many years" by offering the representation of female and black artists at 32% and 7.6%, respectively.

In spite of its expected preemptive criticisms, this year's Biennial is notable for a number of reasons. 2014 will mark the last time that the Whitney presents the exhibition in its iconic Marcel Breuer-designed Brutalist space in upper Manhattan; the museum will move downtown in 2015 to a new location designed by architect Renzo Piano. This year also presents an organizational first for the show, as each of the Biennial's three curators will be independently responsible for a single floor of the exhibition (past Biennials with multiple curators have been collaborative efforts).





# Chicago

Much of the coverage and discussion surrounding this year's Biennial has been centered upon the inclusion of a greater-than-usual number of artists from the Midwest, especially Chicago. Commentators have speculated that the degree of Midwest representation in the exhibition could be the result of curatorial ties to the region — Michelle Grabner is a current SAIC faculty member and Chicago-based painter, and Anthony Elms served as the Assistant Director at UIC's Gallery 400 prior to moving to the University of Pennsylvania's Institute of Contemporary Art.

The Whitney has not yet released a floor plan for the show, so it remains unknown how exactly the exhibition's included Midwest artists will be divided between the curators. A New York Times article from February 13 reveals that Anthony Elms' portion of the show includes contributions from eight Chicagoans — a full third of his twenty-four chosen artists. The article, however, only includes a discussion of two of the curator's selections (SAIC alumnus Elijah Burgher and Marc Fischer, the administrator of collective exhibitors Public Collectors), which leaves two lingering questions: of the 17 total Chicagoans in the show, where will the remaining nine fall, and which ones have not been included on Elms' floor?

Regardless of the possible political motivations behind the representation of the Midwest in the 2014 Biennial, the range of selected artists in this year's show will certainly provide attendees with a variety of new and interesting work to be seen. The roster of Chicagoans includes artists at wildly varying points in their careers working in all different types of media, and many will be showing new work at the exhibition. Most of the artists will be showing their work for the first time at the Whitney, and each has his or her own opinions regarding the surge in Chicago art for this year's Biennial.

The show has numerous ties to the SAIC community through the inclusion of both current faculty members and alumni of the school's MFA and BFA programs. Stephen Lacy (MFA 2000), Molly Zuckerman-Hartung (MFA 2007), Alex Jovanovich (BFA 2003), Diego Leclery (MFA 2007), Rebecca Morris (MFA 1994), Joshua Mosley (BFA 1996, MFA 1998), Sterling Ruby (BFA 2002), Pedro Vélez (MFA 1999), Tony Tasset (MFA 1985), Elijah Burgher (MFA 2004) and Tony Lewis (MFA 2012) are all past students of the school, and most will be displaying their work for the first time at the Whitney.

Burgher, who will be showing three works from 2013 along with two new pieces, thinks that the curatorial direction is an organic extension of the curators' experiences. "Two of the three curators have strong Chicago ties, so I think it's to be expected that more artists from the Midwest would be included than usual. I doubt it reflects a general desire on the part of the art world for art from Chicago, though; more likely a desire for art from outside of either NY or LA, if anything." Tony Tasset, who now teaches at UIC, will also be showing a new piece in the exhibition. He, too, is not surprised by the inclusion of Midwestern artists, given the curators' backgrounds: "I suppose a curatorial decision was made to include an artist and curator from the Midwest. It's only natural that someone who lives in the Midwest would choose a greater number of artists from the Midwest."

SAIC faculty in the Biennial include Joseph Grigely, Gaylen Gerber, Philip Hanson, Doug Ischar and Carol Jackson. For Jackson, the Whitney's decision to hire curators based outside of New York simply reflects the advantages that their experiences bring to the table. "I think the Whitney chose Midwest curators because of their non-New York provincial awareness that the art world is no longer geographically specific (and because they are great)," said Jackson. "As a result, many otherwise overlooked artists from Chicago were given an opportunity to become visible."

Grigely, whose work in the exhibition will be an installation based on the archive of art critic Gregory Battcock, thinks that the show's curatorial direction is simply a natural extension of the individual curators' individual sensibilities. "I think it's a curatorial reality," said Grigely. "So it just happens that so much of this work emanates from Chicago. If we had a pair of LA curators, we'd be seeing a lot of LA art. You want the curators to show their individual predisposition in the Biennial, as that's what makes it interesting in the end."

Alongside the multitude of artists with ties to the SAIC community, the Biennial is also set to feature a number of faculty and alumni from other Chicago schools, including Dawoud Bey (Columbia College faculty), Taisha Paggett (Columbia College faculty), Steve Reinke (Northwestern Faculty), Jessie Mott (Northwestern Alumnus) and Catherine Sullivan (University of Chicago faculty). Reinke, for whom it will be the first time he has exhibited at the Whitney, seems fairly confident that the inclusion of Chicagoans is purely a result of the curators.

"There is no demand in the art world to see more Chicago artists. It is because two of the curators have strong ties to Chicago."

Mott, who worked as a collaborator on Reinke's piece Rib Gets in the Way doesn't want to concern herself with labels.

**With a greater-than-usual number of artists from the Midwest, this year's Whitney Biennial presents a variety of new and interesting work from a roster of Chicagoans at wildly varying points in their career, in all different types of media.**

"I don't feel there should be a stigma attached to identifying as a Chicago artist. There is no center of the art world anymore, and Chicago is a culturally rich place with a vibrant community full of interesting artists with far reaching careers both nationally and internationally."

Marc Fischer, who serves as the administrator of Public Collectors, a Chicago-based archival group that will be included in the Biennial, seems most squarely focused on the group's project, rather than the political implications of the curators' decisions: "Anything I could say would just be speculation. I have no idea how the curators made their selections or how other requests that are made for my work relate to art world trends." Fischer has established deep ties to Chicago's music scene through his co-founding of noise rock label SKiN GRAFT, and Public Collectors' piece on display at the Whitney serves to illuminate the work of the late activist Malachi Ritscher, who immolated himself in 2006 to protest the Iraq War. Malachi was a strong supporter of experimental music in Chicago, and Public Collectors' piece at the Whitney presents his recordings of various Chicago concerts alongside a free print publication and loaned objects from a multitude of local artists and musicians.

Taisha Paggett is one of several exhibiting artists who works in both dance and performance. While Paggett is pleased with the high number of artists and wide range of media in the Biennial, she still feels that a general lack of diversity is apparent, "I think the curators were definitely interested in mining a broader spectrum of artists (as made evident by the high number of included artists) which is fantastic, not to mention the wider inclusion of performance, but unfortunately it still falls a bit short of what both the 'art world' and the 'world' beyond its confines is really needing right now, and that is much more work from the perspective of artists of color."

While much can be said about the Whitney Biennial's roster of artists and how it may or may not reflect current trends or realities of the contemporary art world, the most important question will remain unanswered until the exhibition opens on March 7: is the show any good? Exhibitions of the Biennial's size are guaranteed to provide commentators with something to critique, but with the range of artists displaying their work, there will hopefully be something to celebrate as well.



# Typehunting As Storytelling.

"Heartsourced" Writing from Vernacular Typography



» jessica barrett sattell

Heartsourced, a web-based collective experimental writing project that documents happenstance instances of encountering vernacular typography in Chicago, doesn't aim to be loud or remarkable. Instead, it quietly acknowledges the conscious decisions that keep the city a playground of visual artifacts: innovative small business displays, handpainted announcements and antique signs. Rather than mourn the loss of unique instances of text amidst urbanization and gentrification, its goal is to explore the occurrences of words peppered within urban landscapes that are often overlooked in the rush of the day-to-day.

Many feel a disconnect between the head and the heart; thinking with one is hardly ever the same as trusting the other. Both are genuine, but evolve in different forms. The writing that is sourced from these encounters with found type in Chicago evokes a love of a neighborhood, a city, and a community; a method of thinking about text that engenders other text. The title hints at the practice of seeking sources, spaces and places that evoke a heart-centered documentation of memory. Hosted on a simple Tumblr, a plug-and-play publishing platform, every entry is happenstance but inscribed in some kind of heartfelt jolt or affinity for the character of the type.

Each of these floating texts, anchored by buildings, are somehow personally

meaningful to me immediately upon first glance. I snap several photos on my iPhone and then return to them minutes, hours or days later to try to make sense of why I feel that connection. On *Heartsourced*, freeform writing accompanying the visual documentation ranges from formal analysis of the typography and its context to minute tangents on a sign's relations to other aspects of design or culture. The common thread, as I am finding, is that they all hit on some infinitesimal memory, such as going out for Chinese food with my grandmother or remembering another instance of that same typeface in another country.

*Heartsourced* was originally developed as part of the SAIC Spring 2014 course *Wired Writing: Community and Culture* on the WWW. In thinking about the communications that we encounter through the "analog" forms of signage, I wanted to make a web-based collection centered on a physical community, then translated for a digital one. Right now the main focus is on the extremes of the paths of my own everyday: my relatively quiet neighborhood around Lincoln Square and the bustling area around SAIC. Through submissions from others, I want to expand *Heartsourced* to become crowdsourced, documenting instances of vernacular typography, and writers' reactions, impressions and challenges from all over the city.

Visit [heartsourced.tumblr.com](http://heartsourced.tumblr.com) to see the project and learn more about submissions.

## Font Palace.



**Argyle at Damen//1.18.2014**  
*This is the sign that launched this project, a typographic smorgasbord.*

My movements within Chicago are usually trans-fixed along paths dictated by timelines and train lines. Like many commuters and urban residents, the city is often nothing more than a tunnel of space. I often simply float through, unaware of my surroundings, too consumed by the chatter of my own mind. Glancing out of the window of my office on Michigan Avenue at the north courtyard of the Art Institute or counting the bicycles on the back porches of the two-flats along Ravenswood Avenue is usually the extent of my practice of looking at my city, as opposed to actually seeing it.

I finally realized on a bitterly cold winter day that Chicago is filled with a visual language that, if you look up and around, is playful, mysterious, and hints at time warps and time freezes alike. After downing plates of runny eggs, biscuits and gravy at a greasy spoon, I tried my best to dodge the puddles of slushy water coagulating around the crosswalks at the corner of Damen and Argyle, at the southeast corner of Winnemac Park. While waiting at the light of the intersection least plagued by the icy mess, I noticed the boarded-up sign shop with five different typefaces in less than a foot of space on the door.

Background research on this space has yielded little outside of business listings for Vo's Graphics, which is proudly announced elsewhere on the building. But the fact that this is (was?) a sign and printing shop certainly makes sense for everything going on here. The clear winner in the hodgepodge of eighties-inspired lettering on the door is the treatment of the business name. It reminds me of the font that was on the sign of the video store near my childhood home where I would rent only the finest of Disney VHS tapes and buy POGs. The inversion and the shading of both the "V" and the "A" balance the rest of the conversation.

## Chop Suey.



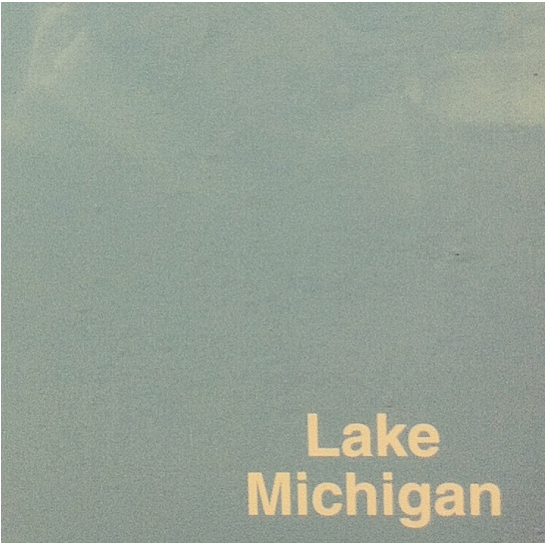
**Irving Park at Ravenswood//2.9.2014**  
*A little from column A, a little from column B.*

There are few dishes in America that have as much mythology as chop suey. Once the reigning staple of American Chinese restaurants, it's a mix of assorted meats, vegetables and noodles in a starchy sauce usually served over rice. The name derives from the Mandarin *tsa sui* — literally, "miscellaneous leftovers." Culinary historians and anthropologists debate the exact nature of its emergence in North America, but the general consensus is that it underwent a transformation from a Cantonese peasant staple to Americanized comfort food over the first half of the twentieth century. From art school dropouts to middle class families, many Americans found their first forays into "ethnic" dining through the Chinese restaurant.

The thing about chop suey is that it's a rather antiquated dish, kind of like those elaborate Jell-O molds or glazed hams with pineapple-and-cherry garnishes from the 1950s. It was pushed aside as an "inauthentic" concoction born in the U.S. in favor of "authentic" Chinese food. Nowadays, dishes like Cashew Chicken, Broccoli Beef or Orange Duck (again, mixing a meat with a vegetable/fruit/nut in any number of combinations) are far more popular for today's palate. To order chop suey feels quaint or even awkward, like it's from the time of smoking in supper clubs. Whenever I go out for Chinese food with my grandma, she will always order it even if it's not on the menu. Instead, our server will point her towards the closest incarnation available, usually a kind of pan-fried noodle medley.

I noticed the signs announcing Orange Garden Restaurant on Irving Park at Damen immediately because of this throwback to chop suey, the thrill of going out to eat (or even ordering take out) so front and center. The typography here is a mix of everything together, just like the dish: the curved 1940s-feel to the text of the hanging sign (the "w" and "m" mirror each other, and that "e" mimics their curvature) meeting the 1950s diner feeling of the façade and the rigid font of the restaurant's name on the building. The robin's egg blue of the neon signs meshes perfectly with the tangerine façade, a mashup pleasing to the palate of the eyes.

## Hello-vetica.



**Western at Lincoln//1.30.2014**  
*It seems improper to not bring up Chicago's relationship with Helvetica.*

After growing up in Milwaukee and then living in Japan and Seattle for nearly a decade, coming to an urban area where one typeface permeates the landscape has been a first. The most obvious place you'll find Helvetica is proudly announcing the CTA stops and on city maps.

I like to revisit *Helvetica*, the 2007 Gary Hustwit documentary, from time to time. As the film so brilliantly shows, Helvetica has it all, and for that reason people are bound to either love it or hate it. It can be beautiful, simple, bland, intellectual, utilitarian, egalitarian, dull or even oppressive, depending on where you look. It could be a deliberate, conscious choice or a total cop out. No matter what, it is undeniably here to stay and will pop up in interesting ways in any urban landscape. That typeface has a charming balance of ubiquity and playfulness, and as a modernism fangirl it still thrills me to no end that I see it daily.

Since Helvetica's 50th anniversary in 2007, if not earlier, it seems to have found its way back into the collective eye. Especially with the explosion of sites like Etsy, where independent crafters and makers take production into their own hands and to the masses, everyone can enjoy a little slice of typography appreciation and let the world know it. There are t-shirts that read "Helvetica" in Helvetica which garner reactions ranging from eye rolls to pick up lines. At a knitting store a few months ago, I spied a young woman carrying a tote bag that immediately pinned her as a language nerd and a Helvetica fan. It reads: "some days feel like Helvetica"

In some ways, that has become my mantra akin to something like "This Too Shall Pass." Some days I revel in the comfort of the familiar, the "everything is going to be OK." Some days I want to be told what to do. Some days I want to play. Some days are boring. Some are beautiful.



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School of the Art Institute  
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*Elspeth Vance (BFA 2011), Lie, as in recline. Lay, as in place,  
2011, printed cotton and woven wool*



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## A Profile of Jeremiah Jones

» **patrick reynolds**

Jeremiah Jones, a School of the Art Institute of Chicago alum, is an artist who uses moving image works as a means of exploring both narrative and technical concepts including interests in Americana, art history, mythic landscapes and the construction of the visualized landscape. He currently has three shows in Chicago at SAIC's Sullivan Galleries show, The Mission gallery in West Town and the newly-opened SAIC space, SAIC at 900 on North Michigan Avenue.

On view through February 22 at The Mission, *To Win and to Hold* is a two person show, also featuring SAIC alum Liz Enszer. The exhibition is part of The Mission's ongoing series, *The Sub-Mission*, which presents alterna-

work in the North Dakota oil fields. "They say it's the one place you can start out dishwashing and wind up earning six figures by the end of the year. Homelessness is the norm," says Jones. The piece features footage of a Walmart parking lot that serves as a depository and meeting place for men searching for work, enticed by the illusory promise of wealth that the oil fields are said to provide.

SAIC at 900 is a new project and exhibition space meant to bring the work of current students and recent graduates to the Chicago community through an easily accessible and highly traveled location. *Looking Down Yosemite Valley After Bierstadt*, 2013, presents an idealized animated landscape constructed of multiple animated scenes from different locations. Inspired by the romantic landscape work of 19th Century German painter

Albert Bierstadt, whose depictions of the American west would often consist of fabricated and geographically impossible views, *Looking Down Yosemite Valley* analyzes contemporary idealizations of the American landscape by presenting a

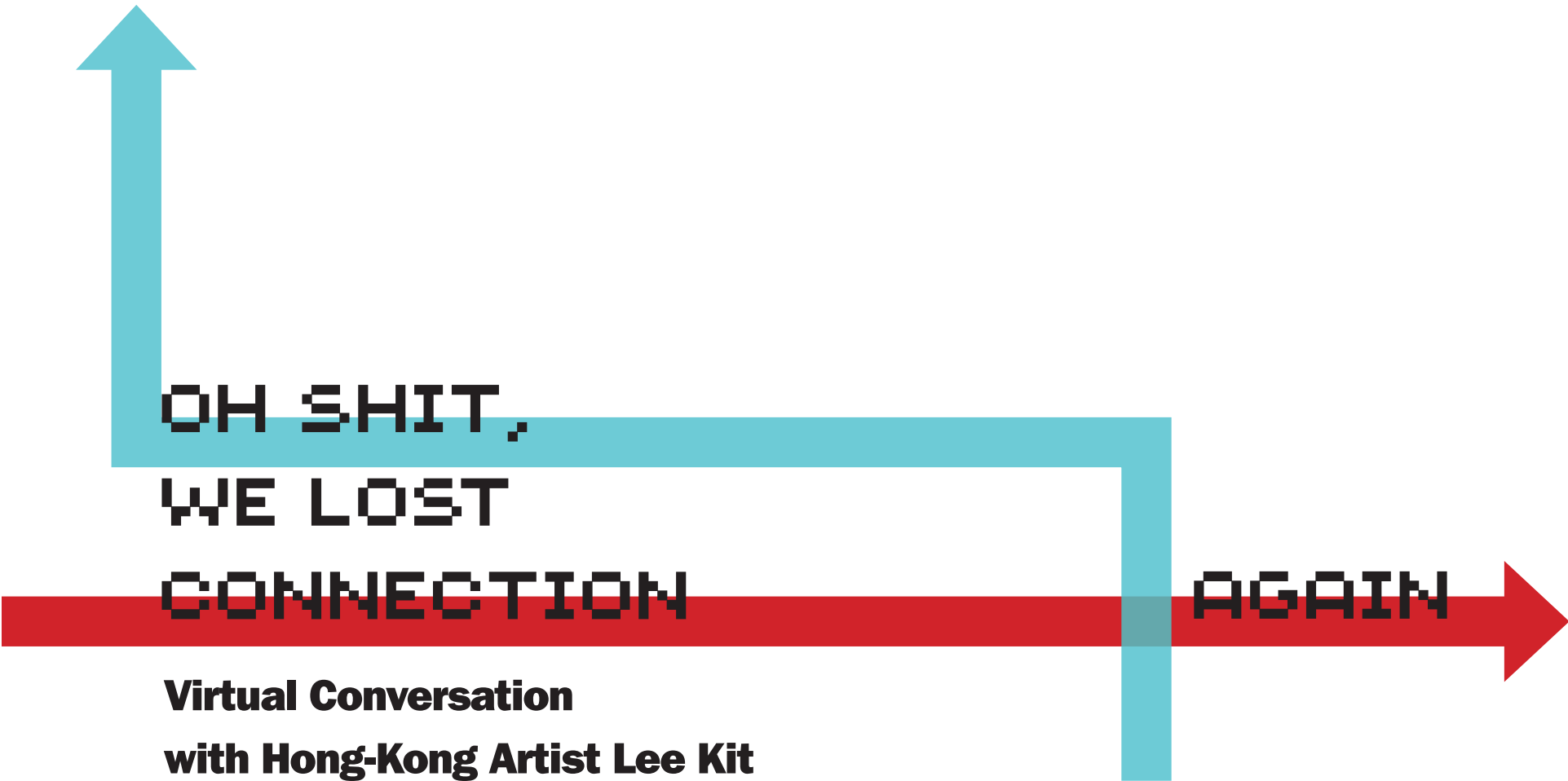
pieced-together view of the region using multiple animated layers of topographically disparate views. Unlike Bierstadt's realistic stylized scenes, the landscape of *Yosemite Valley* is visibly manufactured. Cascading trees give way to jagged cuts, and mountains flatly overlap one another as they recede into the distance. Jones' installation in 900 is the inaugural piece for the space and explores themes that cross over with those of his other current installations. By using the varying physicalities of found images to undo established fictions in traditional American narratives, he creates an entry point to meditation on the way visuality plays into our perceptions of time, place and culture.

***They say it's the one place you can start out dishwashing and wind up earning six figures by the end of the year.***

tive projects in the gallery's lower level. Jones' work in the show includes two simultaneous looping projections, *Defense* and *Always*, facing one another on opposite ends of the gallery space. The first is a static video projection, the second a 16mm film loop of constructed found YouTube footage, meticulously printed and hand-applied to blank film stock. Due to its handmade nature, Jones' 16mm loop becomes increasingly degraded as it is projected throughout the run of the show, and the physicality of the object changes the appearance of the piece over time.

*Tracing Affinities* at SAIC's Sullivan Galleries includes another found footage project of Jones', *The Information*. The piece, consisting of YouTube footage from multiple users edited together to create a singular semi-narrative video, concerns itself with men attempting to find





## Virtual Conversation with Hong-Kong Artist Lee Kit

» *samuel swope*

Artist Lee Kit grew up in Hong Kong, though now he lives in Taiwan and exhibits internationally. Last year he represented Hong Kong at the Venice Biennale with the installation *You(You)* - a piece that displaced found domestic objects. For instance some of the elements included a live person vacuuming and light patterns falling through a window in the pavilion. His work often takes the form of assemblages of ephemera: a used towel balled up, a t-shirt, a bucket, a crumpled note, a used tea cup, and cardboard that has been painted and imprinted with brand names and memories. The sparseness of his work invites the viewer to juxtapose intimacy with unfamiliarity, and enter calmly into a space of incompleteness. SAIC Art and Tech MFA (2014) and former resident of Hong Kong, Samuel Swope, spoke with Lee Kit about being in places and being an artist.

**K** Lee Kit: I always have this feeling of being lost in space and time. I find it funny that I could have this feeling. When I come back to my apartment here in Taiwan I feel so calm. I don't feel lost. And I can deal with my so-called emotion and of course I generate [art-works] from my emotion. I don't always think this kind of so-called personal thing is really a personal thing. If I feel something, I mean for example sadness, I really think other people feel sad as well. You know it could transcend to a certain kind of different level. It's not about the sadness or happiness of a particular individual, but it's about all individuals.

**S** Now that you travel quite frequently and often feel lost in space and time, I am curious, how would you describe your feelings and thoughts when you fly?

**K** I enjoy the whole process of flying, I mean checking in. Because I fly a lot I already have a gold card. And then, just checking in — special card, blah blah blah, go to the gate, then have a meeting on Skype somewhere, and then boarding. This is not a human life somehow.

**S** When you sit down in the chair on the plane, do you ever have one thought that reoccurs when you are in the air?

**K** I'm always wondering to put it straightforwardly, every time when I sit down in the seat I ask, "What the fuck am I doing here?" [laughter] I'm flying again. In the last six months I flew every three or four days. It was just too much. And I was still doing shows and producing works. Shit.

**S** So, you were literally producing works on the fly?

**K: No, in a hotel.**

**S** You recently participated in the 2013 Venice Biennale, the 55th International Art Exhibition, as the representative artist for Hong Kong. Many people consider you a quintessential figure for Hong Kong Contemporary Art. For you, what makes an artist and their body of work quintessentially 'Hong Kong'?

**K** Hong Kong is a mixture of everything, having been colonized by British. We are still looking for our so-called 'identity', on the political level and social level. Personally I think a person looking for identity is actually quite silly. It's like a guy who wants to define what is a guy or a woman and tries to define what is a woman. I don't think defining what is "Hong Kong" is necessary.

**S** Doretta Lau wrote in 2012 for the online Wall Street Journal that you are known for incorporating "mundane details" of everyday life into your installations. She said it was perhaps fitting that you won the Hong Kong Art Fair's Art Futures Prize for a show that included a sculpture made from a "lacquered and compressed used towel." How do your works reflect on the self?

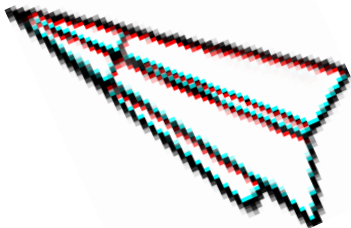
**K** I think all artists, or everyone, who tries to make artwork, are actually refilling and reflecting on themselves. This is something you cannot escape. Even if I am a very, very, dry conceptual artist you cannot escape that I'm still [refreshing myself by doing] what I want to do. This is a fundamental part of so-called making art, or making anything doing anything. In an art fair, everybody is presenting themselves. But some are presenting themselves as money on the wall. Luckily, I have some very good galleries that allow me to do whatever I want. So, I make use of all these opportunities while I am refilling myself. But somehow, actually, this is very difficult — to be in an art fair and try not to present [my work] as money on the wall.

**S** That's a very interesting way of putting it.

**K: An art fair is not about art, it is a fair. Actually firstly, it's about money.**

**S** And how about the lacquered compressed towel, did it have a value put on it or was it just there in the Art Fair? I mean obviously the gallery would want to sell it, right?"

**K** Yeah





**K** I think it is more about life in Hong Kong rather than simply the life in the school. Because of my family background, I needed to support my family since I was 15 years old, to clear up debts. I think in the context of my family and life in Hong Kong, the idea of “cultivating” yourself is because you feel like you don't have a choice in your life. When I have this feeling, somehow I think I was lucky to grow up in the Colonial era, under the British government. At least I know I should have a choice, I don't have a choice, but I should have a choice.

**S** Would you rather consider art as quotidian or daily life as artistic?

**K: Life could be very artistic.**

**S: Yes, it can.**

**K** Ya, if you enjoy that.

**S** Zoe Li made a statement on your political views on Blouinartinfo.com, saying “I see it like this: if you compare the man who is shouting and throwing stones at a rally to the man who is crouched in a corner, silent and unwilling to budge, the silent man is just as political as the loud one. They are using different modes of expression.” Are you, Kit, the silent man?

**K: I am.**

**S** You are the silent man. So when you moved to Taipei did you think that it was a political act, kind of like crouching in the corner?

**K** It could be both. The silent man could still want to kill someone.

**S** Robin Peckham wrote, “Lee Kit seems determined to avoid the fact that his work is increasingly in demand across the world as far as possible: at the opening of his latest solo exhibition at ShugoArts, he spent the duration of the reception sitting more or less alone in a small room to one side, downing multiple bottles of dry vermouth. Make no mistake, however--this is not the behavior of a poetically distraught artist unsure of his direction.” What prompts you to be antisocial?

**K** You know that I am not antisocial. Actually I talk a lot. Basically I don't feel comfortable at my own openings. I enjoy my friend's openings. So, I always think of some way to avoid people at my own openings, particularly my solo openings. But still people come in and ask – “Can I talk to you?”

**S** So, sitting in the corner with vermouth was like a performance?

**K** Yeah, but it was not meant to be a performance. I just wanted to avoid the people.

**S** Has this interview been another performance for you?

**K: No, I am talking to a friend.**

**S** Do you have a question you always wanted an interviewer to ask you?

**K: [long pause] Yes. I have a question. If somebody asked me, are you happy, I would really regret to answer this question.**

**S** No one has ever asked ‘are you happy’?

**K** No.

**S** So, should we try now?

**K** Yeah.

**S: Are you happy Kit?**

**K: I'm okay.**



**S: So it's not really your choice to put a value on it? It's your choice just to present the lacquered towel?**

**K: Yeah** That [piece is a] ball, I call it a ball. [laughter] I didn't make it for the Art Fair. The fair was last year in 2012. I made this ball out a used towel, which I used to clean my paint brushes in 2006 or '07 and I was... angry. Then, I was younger and I was mad. I was not happy, so I really wanted to throw something. I was looking for a ball or something in my studio and I didn't find anything, so I decided to make a ball. But of course to make this ball it took a few weeks. So my emotion actually was gone. And I realized, holding this object in my hand, actually I wanted to throw it. The feeling was like, I wanted to kill somebody by using this ball. It was. But when I finished this ball, I held it in my hand and I felt really quiet. It meant, this is the work. I didn't want it to be a work. The Art Fair was a coincidence. I wanted to present it. A year later, we still haven't decided the price for this “art work.”

**S** Would you consider the ball a therapeutic process?

**K** It was. Definitely. Definitely.

**S** Yung MA wrote in The Art of Kwan Sheung Chi and Wong Wai Yin, or How Critical Art is Possible, that the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where you studied, trains humanist qualities, rooted in the Chinese “literati” tradition. Artists coming out of the program, he says, are drawn towards self-reflective and identity based works that incorporate both the conceptual and the tangible object, often with meticulous styles. Is there an idealization of art there as an act of self-cultivation and reflection?



Ron Athey  
makes art with  
his own flesh

# The Patron Saint of Self-Mutilation



## »anjulie rao

Eight breasts, two severed heads: the tally of saints' relics is long and a testament to miracles, the witness of magic, and the fallible human body. Saints endured immense pain — impaled by spiked wheels, breasts cut off with kitchen shears. The work of performance artist Ron Athey encompasses the same beauty apparent in the tales of saints and sainthood — and the suffering they endured. Recently performing his works *Sebastiane* and *Incorruptible Flesh: Messianic Remains* in Chicago, Athey has continued to explore the mystical, romantic and the violent.

Athey's upbringing as a Pentecostal Christian provided early experiences in mysticism. According to him, it was, "a religion that was rich with channeling, ecstatic states, and gigantic prophecies. I was supposedly from birth raised to be a minister. In childhood I was taught how to open up to receive the gift of glossolalia — speaking in tongues — and automatic writing. I was treated like a living saint."

Sainthood and miracles continued to pervade his life as he was diagnosed with HIV in 1985, which, at the time, was a death sentence. It was in 1996 that he worked with artist Lawrence Steger who had also tested positive for HIV. Coinciding with the discovery, production, and rapid distribution of the "triple cocktail" — the combination of drugs that has drastically reduced the progression of HIV into AIDS — their collaboration was marked by their own inevitable fates. "This miracle," says Athey, "of the incorruptible body that's dead but alive seemed like a strong metaphor to what we're actually existing: being grandiose but rotten."

Saint Bernadette was canonized by the Catholic Church for her miraculous visions, which instructed her to perform tasks that cleared muddy drinking waters and included characters that today are noted as the Virgin Mary and the immaculada concepción — the immaculate conception — who appeared in the form of a young woman. Most remarkable about her sainthood is that, after she succumbed to tuberculosis in 1879, her body refused to decompose. In Christian mysticism, this is the incorruptible flesh. Though dead, the body smells of flowers.

Most bodies of incorruptible saints that were exhumed in the 20th century, however, were found to have been covertly embalmed. "The most incorruptible bodies are like Madame Tussaud's wax dummies that are kept in interiors and shot up with formaldehyde; they're just sparkling with artificial means to keep the miracle alive," says Athey.

Athey, like those saints who were "dead but alive," never expired. His form of HIV was non-progressive, adding to the complexity of how he worked with his body. Using processes that are often referred to as self-mutilation (more so than an act of artistic production) — driving metal arrows through his arms and chest, impaling himself with a baseball bat while splayed on a metal rack — Athey draws from his fascination with sainthood and his experiences of the holy; as he calls it, the "mystic atheism."

At Mana Contemporary, he performed *Sebastiane*. His nude body, laid out on the metal rack also used in the *Incorruptible Flesh* series, was bathed in lights while his face was stretched with metal hooks inserted into his cheeks and around his eyes. Like a pose for prayer, Athey calls this "the splayed corpse." He sported this mask while the audience was given rubber gloves to "anoint" him with thick white grease. With the audience gathered around in a circle, he spent 20 minutes stretched and impaled while young, fresh-faced audience members rubbed his every inch — their eyes wide in awe.

When the performance had finished, the hooks were removed from his face, and the grease wiped from his feet and chest. The second component to the evening, performed by collaborators Jon John and Sage Charles, included Athey's reading of Jean Genet's *Our Lady of the Flowers*. He stood upright and blood trickled from the wounds where the hooks had perforated his flesh. Under the stage lamps, he seemed to resemble the statues of the Virgin Mary that weep tears of blood every so often.

As witnesses to these events, audiences literally and figuratively become a part of the performance. The act of viewing becomes sacred to Athey's ritualistic performances, anointing his living corpse with grease and with the viewing of his pain. Like those onlookers who watched Saint Sebastian impaled to death by arrows and came to praise him as the Plague Saint, audiences watch Athey in horror and awe, as if his acts of self-mutilation were to save them all. Athey, the living saint, will bring them a miracle. According to Athey, we need more moments of validated miracles. "[They are] evidence against the cheapness of mortality; you come and you go. I feel like that's why we need magic and something beyond the logic of just being alive — being animated pieces of meat, then dying and rotting."

Athey has defied certain death, and within that there is a twisted martyrdom and a stoic mysticism that comes from self-mutilation. In this act of false sainthood, audiences are surprisingly not shocked, but comforted. As Genet wrote of the Death of Divine in *Our Lady of the Flowers*, "Madame, it is a blessing to die young."

Ron Athey was the first visiting artist in the Visiting Artist Program's spring 2014 lineup. His lecture is available as an online podcast at [saic.edu/vap](http://saic.edu/vap). Visit [fnewsmagazine.com](http://fnewsmagazine.com) for a video of the exclusive Athey interview and clips from his performance at MANA Contemporary.



# What We're *Looking* Like

*Homonormativity and Televised Representations of Gayness*



»henry harris

When identifying with a social group, you also attend to a practiced framework of culture tied to it. This often happens as you choose to participate in some of a group's practices and share their values, while opting out of others. Queer culture ("queer" as an umbrella term here) is an interesting example, since it is one that first involves an identification process, followed by locating the queer self within a larger framework of people with similar traits. However, it is more complicated than this. Aside from seeing oneself within a group of people, queer culture has a heritage that is self-taught and must be individually reasserted. To be marked or mark oneself as queer is to indicate your relationship to a set of characteristics that people then hold you to. To say that you identify as gay automatically places you beneath a cultural rubric.

Equally complex is assessing media representations of gay identities, which often essentialize the fluidity and diversity of gay subjectivities. HBO's new sitcom series, *Looking*, has further confirmed the arrival of an ostensibly new gay male mass-media stereotype in the twenty-first century. A wary and critical eye toward the mainstream media has grown alongside the development of gay culture, and yet media images still serve an important role in the learning of gay culture — for better or worse. What, then, is being learned from shows like *Looking*?

*Looking* presents three men plus some recurring friends and relationship partners, all of whom could be considered well-adjusted, stable, though not without the usual ups and downs of people in their early to late thirties. The first episode immediately shows a pleasant assortment of gay life, past and present. It begins with a romantically antiquated failed cruise session in the park and later depicts an equally disappointing OkCupid date. Sprinkled in between is a spontaneous threesome as well as a proposal from one of the characters to his boyfriend that the two move in together.

It's more than fair to say that these are refreshing renderings of gay identities as opposed to previously shady or single-dimensional characters that once appeared on television. The problematic nature of those older representations was in part due to their incomplete development as characters as well as their placement into the media world as connotatively queer rather than directly queer. They were closeted, and their queerness was only tacitly addressed, at best. Even so, *Looking* addresses gayness in limited terms, failing to account for the wide array of gay identities that exist. It is a dichotomy between thinking about gayness as a matter of an identity instead of as a subjectivity.

Postulated most recently in his groundbreaking book *How to Be Gay*, David Halperin states that gayness, aside from natural sexual preferences, is a learned practice as well as an affinity for certain cultural forms. His analysis is through the lens of a gay subjectivity, rather than identity.

Subjectivity versus identity is a crucial sticking point for *How to Be Gay*. Early on in the book, Halperin attempts to cancel the "we are the all the same" slogan in favor of a more complex notion of subjective experience, calling out normative rhetoric as narrow and dated. In other words, "identity" fails to elucidate experience. In Halperin's view, it only assigns a marker. It is not uncommon to hear: "Yes, I identify as \_\_\_\_\_, but it certainly doesn't define me." In thinking about gayness, Halperin says there's more to it than that.

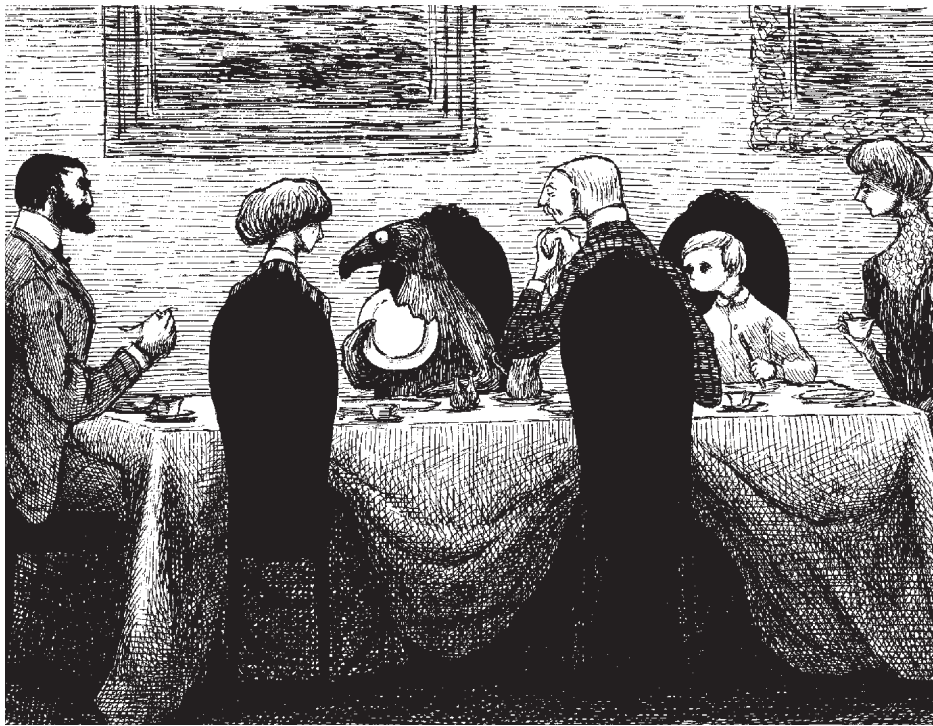
What we find in *Looking* is similar to other representations of gay men in recent films and television shows (excluding children's television, for the most part). We often see men who are stable, healthy, and aptly masculine. In many of these cases, standard ideas of masculinity are especially prominent. These are men that typically pursue exclusive relationships, are well-versed in culture, and hold a stable (if not generous) 9-to-5 job. Perhaps they have a job in set design, something that is both creative and requires intensive amounts of manual labor. Or maybe there's the quintessential "geek" who programs but knows how to have fun on the side, too. And, chances are they know their way around a bar: there's the expected glass of white wine but also the requisite glass of whiskey (served sour if he's the "fun" one in the group).

***Looking* addresses gayness in limited terms, failing to account for the wide array of gay identities that exist. It is a dichotomy between thinking about gayness as a matter of an identity instead of as a subjectivity.**

These men also go to the gym and have a perfect image of upper body strength: not too big, not too small. They also take time to be "420 friendly," as they may say on their Scruff account profile. While career success is prized, a key element to many of these representations is the structure of their living situation. *Looking* eventually involves a couple moving in together. In the case of the single-season NBC show *The New Normal*, the plot centers around a committed couple of two men who are on a mission to have a child and eventually do so via surrogate. Despite the commonality here in actual same-sex unions and largely conventional birthing practices, the shows follow a heteronormative template. They illustrate cohabitation between committed partners and/or the bearing of children. These heteronormative situations seem hegemonic, as they are the narrative standards allowing gay men admission into the mediascape.

Those aspects, however "positive" in their own right, follow the "we are all the same" state of mind. What has happened, and it's no surprise, is yet a new type of homogenization of gay identity, further charged with normalizing features of masculinity and heteronormativity. It's almost as if the gay male character was hurled out of the closet and into the country club, an exaggeration of course. Yet, it's plain to see that extreme change has occurred in conceptualizing gay identities, and thinking of it as a matter of multiple subjectivities is a step in the right direction. What we can hope for is a maturation of these media representations into more multidimensional gay characters that neither overemphasize nor underemphasize gayness. Achieving a balancing act, however, may be an eternal struggle and criticism of media representation.





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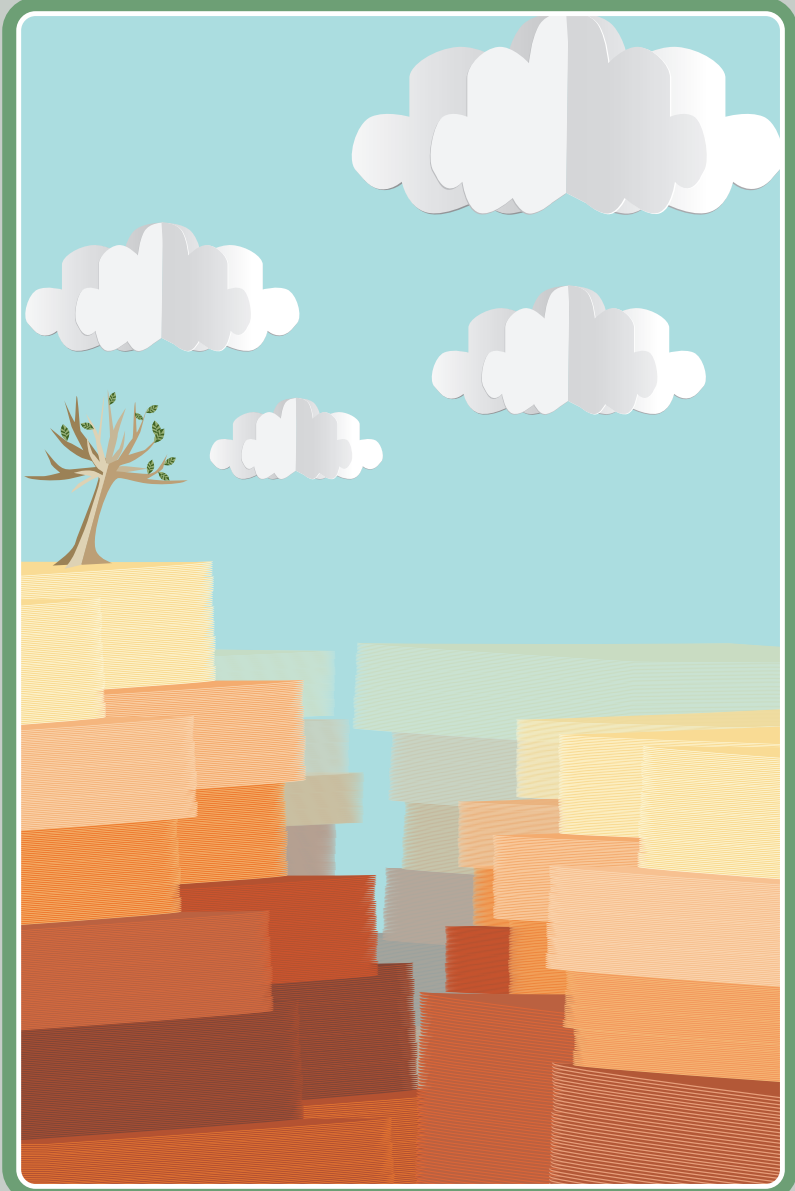
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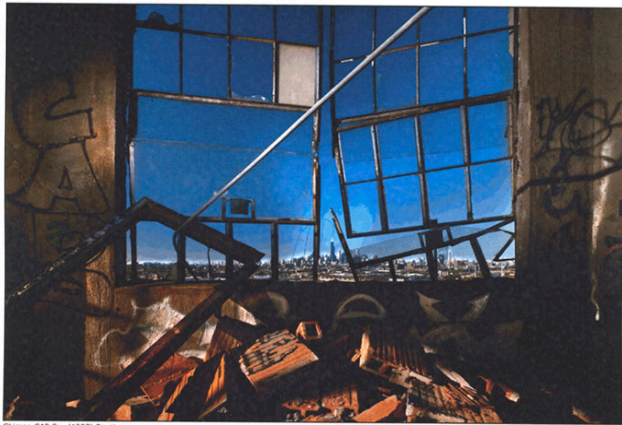
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# cheap shot

## The Biases of the Affordable Care Act

» alexander wolff

On a recent episode of *The Colbert Report*, comedian Stephen Colbert tried to goad Nobel Laureate and economist Paul Krugman into admitting that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a redistribution of wealth in the US. Even at the height of his shtick Colbert could not get him to explicitly say so. Krugman did concede, “If we want to have a system where Americans have a basic guarantee that they can have the healthcare they need, that they can afford it when they need it, then you have to have something like Obamacare.” He stressed that “every other advanced country in the world has universal healthcare.”

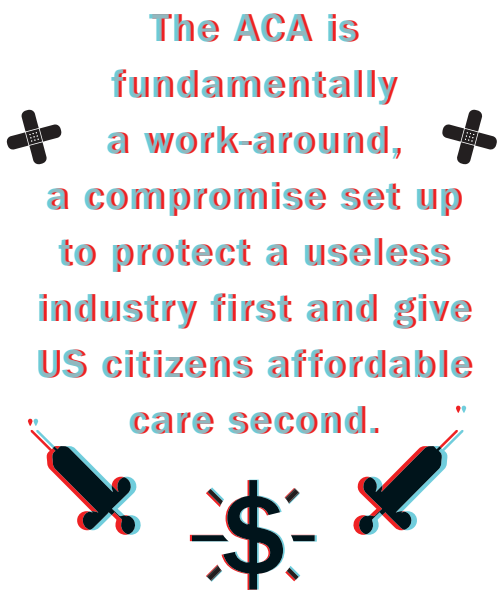
Krugman is correct that many countries have single-payer systems where the government pays for every citizen’s health care costs, and that the ACA is a redistribution of wealth in many ways. However, the dichotomy between a single-payer system and what now exists in the US as Obamacare is where the ACA’s flaws become apparent.

As pointed out in documentary filmmaker Michael Moore’s critical op-ed following the January ACA rollout, “The Affordable Care Act is a pro-insurance-industry plan implemented by a president who knew in his heart that a single-payer, Medicare-for-all model was the true way to go.” Under the discourse of affordable healthcare for all US citizens, the ACA prioritizes the financial interests of the private healthcare industry over providing actually affordable low-cost medical care for all citizens. The ACA is fundamentally a work-around, a compromise set up to protect a useless industry first and give US citizens affordable care second.

In the US, healthcare is still not a fundamental human right. The ACA was established with two intentions, getting millions of uninsured citizens enrolled, and regulating exorbitant costs. As a Kaiser Family Foundation report notes, by 2016, “the ACA is expected to reduce the number of uninsured by 25 million.” A recent government report even stated that 1.1 million people enrolled this January alone. This is an immense improvement over the previously existing availability of healthcare in the US, but the ACA still leaves much to be desired. Numerous aspects of it reek of the market logic of neoliberal capitalism, prioritization of profit over actual care.

There are definitely many positives to the ACA. Now medical insurers cannot discriminate against “high-risk” customers with pre-existing conditions, per-

haps one of the most disgusting aspects of the market. The ACA is much better for those getting insurance on the individual market rather than through employers, cutting premiums for some and requiring that people enroll in more comprehensive coverage. Children can stay on their parents’ coverage until they are 26. ACA requires insurers to devote 80% of premium dollars to providing actual health care, instead of spending it on overhead administrative costs (i.e., advertising, high CEO salaries and bonuses, etc.). According to a Kaiser Family Foundation report, many states have already applied for waivers that would allow them to lower this percentage significantly. The Department of Health and



Human Services has approved waivers for Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada and New Hampshire, while denying eight other states. This evasion is not limited to the state level either. University of Chicago Physician and Physicians for a National Health Plan (PNHP) member Philip Verhoef notes that “insurers are already asking for individual waivers” and “most of them are finding ways to count administrative costs as direct healthcare costs.”

While the ACA may increase the number of US citizens signed up for insurance, it is still forcing them to buy private insurance from an industry that acts as a middleman while making a large profit. The US spends around 20% of the GDP on healthcare, around twice

the amount of countries that run a single payer system. This does not mean that our healthcare system is better. Author Steven Brill notes that studies carried out by the McKinsey & Co. consulting firm found that the US spends “more on healthcare than the next 10 biggest spenders combined: Japan, Germany, France, China, the U.K., Italy, Canada, Brazil, Spain and Australia.”

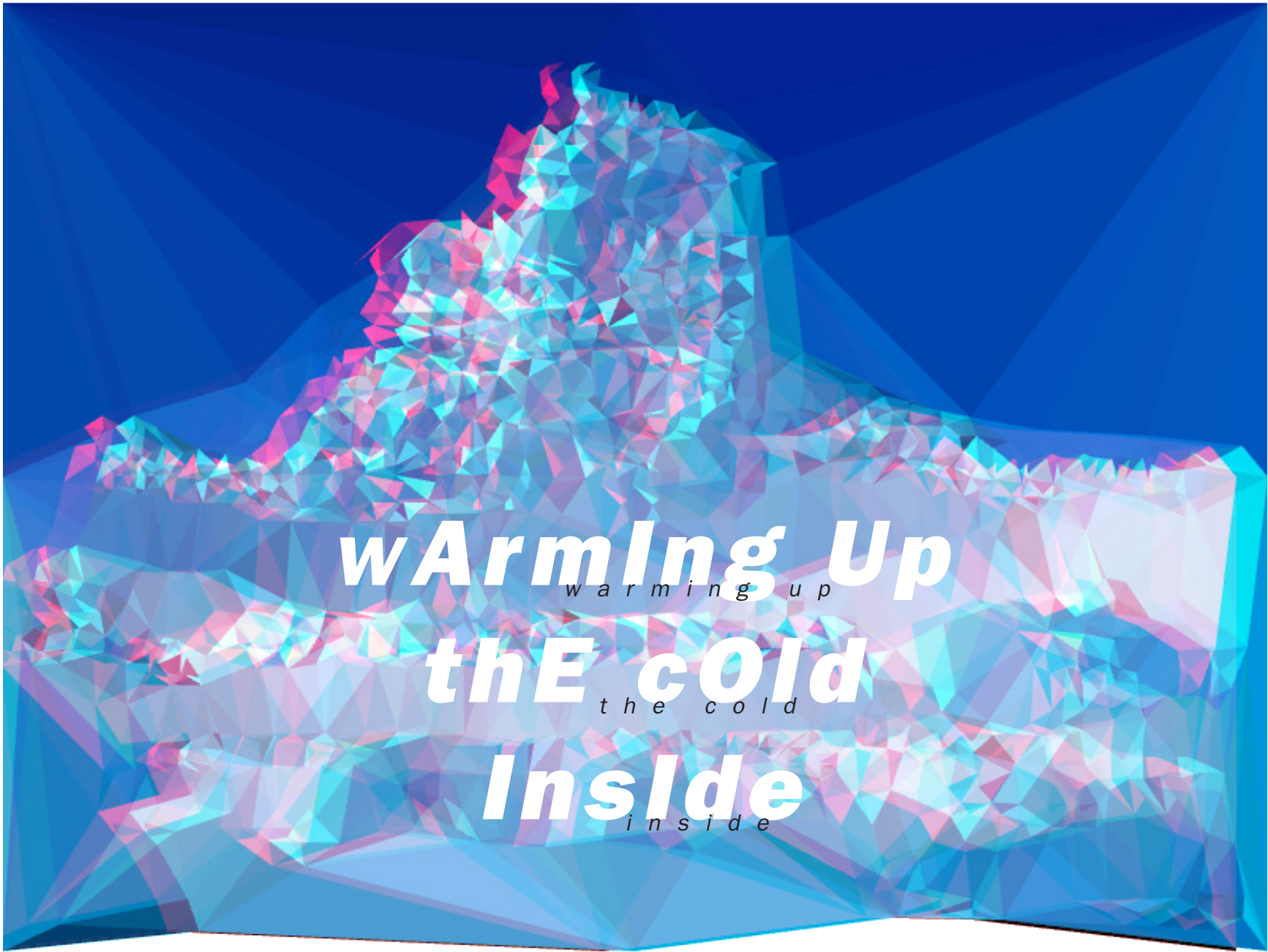
Don McCanne, a physician and PNHP Policy Fellow, states on the organization’s website that “if we replaced the financing system with a single-payer national health program, such as an improved Medicare that automatically covered everyone,” we could eliminate many administrative costs. McCanne elaborates that standardized and shared budgets for hospitals, rates for health care professionals, and bulk pharmaceuticals and supplies would be fundamental to reducing costs, but are thwarted by the ACA’s fractured finances.

Even under the ACA people still can go deeply into debt spending money on health coverage premiums and co-pays with some plans, like a Bronze plan that only covers 60% of costs. Medical costs are currently the cause of two thirds of bankruptcy filings. While there are now limits on deductibles for 2014, and a cap on the amount out of pocket money you must pay before an insurer begins paying for all of your expenses (\$6,350 for an individual plan and \$12,700 for a family plan), there is absolutely no limit to how much insurers can raise prices of monthly premiums. The out of pocket maximum does not include premium costs. As a Kaiser Family foundation fact sheet notes, “The rating restrictions in the ACA set a minimum floor, not a ceiling.” In other words, it sets the minimum amount of things they can discriminate against and allows them to raise the rates as much as they please.

Medicaid has been expanded to those at or below 133% of the Federal Poverty Level in 25 states. In states that did not expand Medicaid, many low-income people are still at significant risk for debt. While the ACA might be flawed, physician and former PNHP speaker Rick Guthmann states on a more optimistic note that the ACA has a “shelf life.” He notes that perhaps in the future it can act as a stepping stone to a single payer system.

One of the best ways that the US will be able to extend accountable, low-cost care to its citizens is by expanding the services of Medicare to all of its citizens. ACA is a first step to better reform of healthcare in the US, but it is only preliminary. US healthcare remains a system that is only affordable for some.





» alyssa moxley

According to the National Weather Service Forecast office, this has been one of the snowiest, coldest winters. Compare this winter’s 47.3 inches (so far!) to 2011/2012’s 19.8 inches. Last year there was barely any accumulation at all. Why is this happening? And how do we deal with it?

Rick Dimaio, formerly the senior meteorologist for Fox News Chicago for 12 years and currently a professor of aviation meteorology at Lewis University, also teaches a class on Extreme Weather to students at SAIC. The class covers issues of how humans use technology to maintain infrastructure when natural events challenge our physical endurance. Before working at Fox News, Dimaio spent 15 years as an aviation meteorologist, watching weather to ensure safe airplane travel. Much of his long career in weather analysis has been based in Chicago. He acquiesces that this year has been a particularly severe winter, with record numbers of below-zero days in January.

This year’s storms, says Dimaio, are “totally and directly related to the fact that the Pacific Ocean was at 30-year-high temperatures. Whenever there is extreme cold in one continent, it’s likely that it will be extremely warm in another. Last year when it was warm here, Europe was cold.” Taking note of these patterns is a meteorologist’s job, but, one could argue, it is a wider responsibility to respond to these accumulative effects. Dimaio notes that many people have short memories in regards to weather. Global warming’s influence can be

observed in the five category five typhoons that pushed warm water into Alaska, leading to early snow in the Rockies, and setting up the Midwest for the extreme cold. A climate changing increase in humidity due to increased evaporation from heat later leads to greater levels of precipitation.

Dimaio, however, loves a brisk snowy winter and cross country skiing. He encourages people to bundle up and get outside. After all, Chicago weather this year, although comparatively extreme, is now only almost as cold and snowy as Minneapolis is regularly. From December 8 to January 26, Chicago experienced accumulating snow for over half the days. That’s seven weeks of snow every other day. So far.

Although embracing crisp air and sliding over the slippery surface of the cold earth is appealing in the countryside, the city is a gray mush. Chicago’s snow hides trash and dog waste, reveals slush corners in the gutter of the sidewalks, and makes the walk to the CTA treacherous. Another way to deal with the urban winter is to stay inside and contemplate the soothing warmth inside the house versus the biting winds. These moments of juxtaposing temperatures often evoke the essence of the obstacle, the unattainable, the pure, and the severe.

A technology readily available to many in our own community is a radio, a CD player, or the old YouTube. Combating the psychological decline inflicted by cabin fever, the playlist here hopes to both encourage active consideration of the season and assist in easing its pains.



# a winter's playlist

the beauty of cold

**Kate Bush**  
*50 Words for Snow*  
The eponymous track on a self-produced album (2011) has Stephen Fry exercising his vocabulary skills in a flurry of invigorating wistfulness.

**Björk**  
*Aurora*  
Bjork sampled the sound of walking on snow for an homage to the sparkly glacier. From *Vespertine* (2001).

**Sigur Ros**  
*Cold*  
Icy, drippy dulcimers hang throughout this track from a year 2000 Peel Session.

**Brian Eno**  
*Slow Ice, Old Moon*  
Tentative, slow drone for a blank landscape. From *Small Craft on a Milk Sea* (2010).

**Nils Frahm**  
*Tristana*  
Piano, celeste, and reed organ sweetly jangle oh so pensively. From *Wintermusik* (2008).

love on ice

**The Doors**  
*Wintertime Love*  
Within the canon of songs about missing loved ones in the winter, when shared body heat is more appealing. From *Waiting for the Sun* (1968).

**PJ Harvey**  
*The Wind*  
A reminder that walking through windy streets is heroic, spiritual, and cool. From *Is This Desire* (1998).

**Rolling Stones**  
*Winter*  
This song combines lovelorn yearning with California nostalgia. From *Goats Head Soup* (1973).

**Devo**  
*Snowball*  
The unrelenting impact of love and snowballs. From *Freedom of Choice* (1980).

sunbeam nostalgia

**Zephyr**  
*Winter Always Finds Me*  
A tune made for evoking that looking out a window on a mountaintop feeling. From *Sunset Ride* (1972).

**Henri Salvador**  
*Jardin d'Hiver*  
The voice of this Caribbean French singer carries the nostalgia for warmth like viscous sun. Originally written by Keren Ann (2000) it can be found on Salvador's *Performance!* album (2008).

**The Mamas & the Papas**  
*California Dreamin*  
John Phillips dreamt this song during a cold winter in New York City and awoke his wife Michelle to flesh out this now-iconic song of longing (1965).

snow kitsch

**Frank Zappa**  
*Don't Eat the Yellow Snow*  
Zappa dreams of life as an Eskimo and the kind of advice he would receive. From *Apostrophe* (1974).

**Foreigner**  
*Cold as Ice*  
Classic, 70s rock that evokes lusty revenge against the frozen heart of winter. From *Foreigner* (1977).

**Bangles**  
*Hazy Shade of Winter*  
A screaming guitar version of Simon and Garfunkel's 1966 ballad, recorded by the group for the 1987 film *Less Than Zero*.

**Vivaldi**  
*Winter Movement 1 on synthesizer by Gazdatronik*  
Silly winter bleep for removing the serious, by a synthesizer maker and analog enthusiast. (2011)

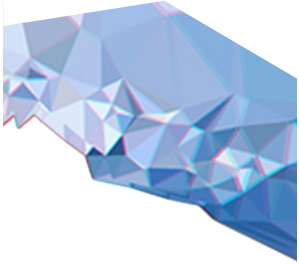
**Kanye West**  
*Coldest Winter*  
Kanye's pop-lament for his mother and ex-girlfriend heavily riffing on Tears for Fears' 1983 *Memories Fade* (which is far better, fyi, if you feel like bobbing your head to your tears). From *808s & Heartbreak* (2008).

permafrost people

**Etnobit Percussion Group**  
*Lake Baikal Ice*  
The wife of a member of a percussion group from Irkutsk slipped while on a walk on Lake Baikal and discovered that the meter-thick frozen ice on top of this five meter deep portion of lake had tone. The 1,642 meter deep area did not. So they went out and played some tunes!

**Terje Isungset**  
*Frozen*  
This Norwegian group makes all of their instruments out of ice, and they sound pretty funky. Turn that frown upside down when you have two hours of sun per day. From *Iceman* is (2007).

**Song About a Thumb**  
*Inuit Music Games*  
Katadjait are throat vocalizations made for entertainment by pairs of women in the Canadian Arctic as a musical game. Check out *Inuit Throat and Harp Songs*, *Eskimo Women's Music of Povungnituk* (1980).





THE EXECUTION OF THE FOLLOWING WORK REQUIRES APPROXIMATELY **35** MINUTES OF TIME, ONE PACKAGE OF UNOPENED PAPER NAPKINS, AND **15 TO 30** DOLLARS, PREFERABLY IN CASH. AN AUDIENCE IS PREFERRED BUT NOT NECESSARY.



## PINEAPPLE (ON THE WAY)

1. Open package of napkins in an articulate manner bordering on obsessive attention to detail. If not inspiring, this action should be at least captivating.
2. Distribute napkins to members of audience if present.
3. Over speakerphone, loudly and clearly order a pizza to be delivered to current location.

The following phone numbers belong to pizza establishments in downtown Chicago:			
Pizano's	(312) 236-1777	Gino's	(312) 939-1818
Bongiorno's Italian Deli	(312) 755-1255	Bella Bacino's	(312) 263-2350
Pat's Pizzeria	(312) 427-2320	Toppers	(312) 291-0400
Lou Malnati's	(312) 786-1000	Pauly's	(312) 957-1111

4. Following completion of order, suggest that members of the audience look into their napkins.
5. Read the following text out loud with clarity and even pacing.

"In approximately 35 minutes, a body foreign to this immediate interaction will arrive with pizza, completing a transaction and laying to rest any anxieties or doubts concerning the reliability of such things. Housed inside this body are many memories, some less vague than others, many recalled without purpose or necessity. One such unnecessary memory pairs the sensation of sitting with an image of a young woman, carrying a large box onto a public bus. Inside the box is a fifteen inch LCD TV and DVD player combo. The screen of the LCD TV and DVD player combo displays an episode of *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. In the episode of *Real Housewives of Atlanta*, NeNe is talking to her girlfriend in her kitchen. In NeNe's kitchen is a stainless steel GE Refrigerator with ClimateKeeper temperature management system. Inside the GE Refrigerator is a twelve pack of Diet Pepsi, a half eaten snickers bar, and a Rubbermaid Tupperware bowl. Inside the Tupperware bowl is an Iphone 4s with 37% battery. On the screen of the Iphone 4s is an image of young woman consuming half of a snickers bar in one bite. The a young woman purchased the snickers bar at a CVS after working a 5-hour shift as a dental hygienist. Earlier in the day a man approached her at the office holding a lit vanilla-scented candle and small, rectangular mirror, oriented landscape. In the reflection of the mirror, the woman saw her own, well-manicured eyebrows. Her eyebrows were gathered slightly, reducing their natural, resting distance of 2 centimeters to 1.5 centimeters. The half centimeter loss of eyebrow distance, verifiable by any standard ruler, is the woman's biological response to an internal state she will hesitate to but even-

tually call confusion. The woman has felt this sensation three times before. Once on March 23rd, 2001, when she accidentally applied liquid hand sanitizer to her eyelids, another at the highest point of vertical jump she performed at a crowded street fair in Chicago, and a third time while screaming at her computer screen during a layover at Newark Airport. On her computer screen was a word document displaying the phrase 'visualization exercise,' centered both horizontally and vertically, in font type Arial, font size 35, and highlighted in hot pink. Minimized to the bottom right hand corner of the screen is a video of a man giving a tour of his master bedroom. Framed on the wall of the bedroom is picture of a baby wearing sunglasses. Reflected on the baby's sunglasses is a roadside billboard displaying a large image of a mountainous landscape. 30 feet below the roadside billboard, resting in a patch of grass, is a contact lens case. Inside the right compartment of the contact lens case is an old contact lens belonging to James Franco. Through this contact lens, James Franco watched the Broadway classic *Cats*. On the stage, in act 2 of *Cats*, a full-size violin case rests diagonally across an old chest of drawers located center-stage. Inside the violin case is a 6-pack of Spicy Tuna Roll. Underneath the smallest of the 6 pieces of Spicy Tuna Roll is a five dollar bill folded into the shape of a star. This five dollar bill, printed in 1995, was first used by a mother in an attempt to pacify her argumentative child. 12 years after this occurrence, the child has grown into a well-adjusted adult, a positive contributor to society, and will, in approximately 25 minutes, participate in the consumption of pizza."

6. Receive, distribute, consume pizza.



>>berke yazicioglu



# Drawn Out Thoughts Drowned Out Drawings

**comics at f**

>>brady drose

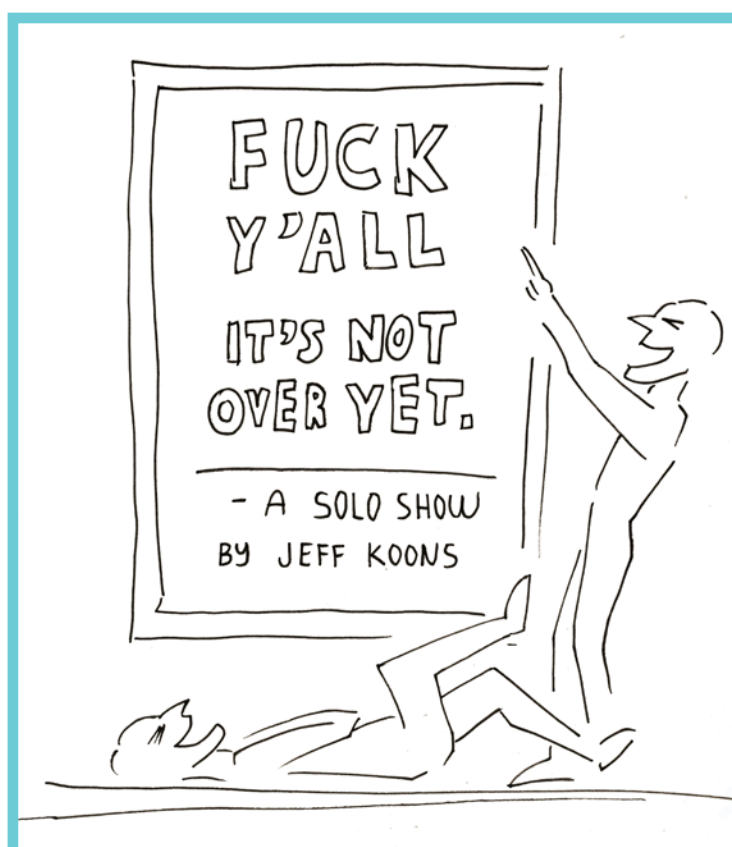


>>eric garcia



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