

Sept. 06 – Sept. 29, 2012:

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MFA Graduating Exhibition

Audain Gallery

SFU WOODWARD'S

Opening: Sept. 05, 7pm
Sept. 06 - Sept. 15

Opening: Sept. 19, 7pm
Sept. 20 - Sept. 29

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Casey Wei
Nikolai Gauer
Mariane Bourcheix-Laporte

The Audain Gallery serves as a vital aspect of the Visual Arts program at Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts. The gallery's mission is to advance the aesthetic and discursive production and presentation of contemporary visual art through a responsive program of exhibitions and to support engaged pedagogy.

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Steve Hubert
Ryan Mathieson
Anna Marie Repstock

The gallery encourages conceptual and experimental projects that explore the dialogue between the social and the cultural in contemporary artistic practices.

The Audain Visual Artists in Residence Program and student exhibitions are central to the gallery's programming.

The Audain Gallery is curated by Sabine Bitter, working with gallery assistant Brady Cranfield.

The graduating MFA students would like to thank the former and current graduate program chairs, Judy Radul and Arne Eigenfeldt, and the members of the supervisory committees: Allyson Clay, Henry Daniel, DD Kugler, Christopher Pavsek, Elspeth Pratt, and Jin-me Yoon.

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MFA Graduating Exhibition

Three to the left, three to the right. Three once, and three again. These two groupings reflect the unique practices of six visual artists who have worked alongside one another over the past two years to produce diverse bodies of work. The first group requires darkness; the second group requires light. In seminars, studios, bars, parks (and other places too...), we have influenced one another in more ways than we consciously know, and that is the unifying bond that can be felt in the work. A word here, an inch there. Into itself as a whole, more than the parts themselves and their sum could imagine.

3/3 showcases the graduating projects of the MFA Visual Arts students at Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts. A month long exhibition featuring new works in video, sculpture, painting, and photography, 3/3 is separated into two parts, each showcasing the work of 3 MFA candidates. This exhibition is presented by the School for the Contemporary Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts.

The SFU SCA Master of Fine Arts program provides advanced professional training for artists in the fields of music, dance, theatre, film, video, and visual art. The program develops students' individual artistic practices, creativity, interdisciplinary research, technical skills, and critical awareness of art's relationship to contemporary society.

Mariane Bourcheix-Laporte
Nikolai Gauer
Casey Wei

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Mariane Bourcheix-Laporte

In-Between

This body of work was realized in the context of a research project investigating the potential for interaction with the environment as both an actual and a conceptual space, examined through embodied experience and perceptual play.

The works feature documentation of myself rolling across semi-vacant lots around False Creek and on the site of the so-called Olympic Village, a residential complex built for the 2010 Winter Olympics. The presence of the lots as “urban voids” is temporary: they have been zoned for redevelopment by the city of Vancouver. In the coming years, they will be transformed into new commercial, residential, and park areas. The Olympic Village, one of the early phases of the redesign of the area, stands as an image of what they will likely become. Their possible future is imminent but *not-yet*.

Performing in and documenting these sites marks a moment in time. The works visually capture the state of these

spaces in the spring and summer of 2012, rendering tangible the tipping point into the actualization of their planned future.

In the work, the action of rolling is a fully embodied displacement through space. The horizontal travels of my body impose a different value system onto the sites. Recomposing the usual co-extensive body/environment relationship, my continuous rolling serves as a radically empirical mode of measurement, challenging the more typical measures of land value (rental, capital, and market) and the possibilities of vertical urban development. Playing with the captured video footage in postproduction, its malleability expands my performative actions and highlights the rhythmic and dynamic properties of the sites through a process of spatiotemporal restructuring, further deterritorializing my actions and the sites in which they originally took place.

Study for *In-Between*, 2012
Five-channel video installation



Nikolai Gauer

Almost Everywhere

Centered on the theme of uncertainty and the possible limits of reason and inquiry, the research I do has shaped my practice in a manner that allows for digressions, tinkering, and experimentation. My thesis project is the result of that entangled and seemingly chaotic practice. *Almost Everywhere* is a video-installation that, by blurring the borders that distinguish one element from another, attempts to intervene in the more typical programmatic processes that allow for understanding. At the core of my work is an affinity with the absurd, the theoretical limit and antithesis of logic and pure reason. I consider the absurd to be more than something that simply defies logic: it is a tool with which one can actively intervene in what is deemed normative so as to engender unpredictable results from otherwise everyday ways of acting and thinking.

My video-aesthetic consciously toys with genres and the languages of film and video. I permit myself to make

troubled, if not visually displeasing edits and shots, occasionally brushing up against trashy video clichés. While realizing my thesis project, I have fluxed between exercising strict control and letting go, permitting interventions and allowing improvisations to destabilize my decision-making process. If at any point I become absolutely certain about what it is that I am doing, I feel that it is my ethical obligation as an artist to trouble that supposed foundation of certainty until it becomes unstable again.

Video still, *Almost Everywhere*, 2012
HD multi-channel video installation



Casey Wei

Murky Colors

I work primarily in video and text to investigate conventions of storytelling in popular culture. My work examines how moving images, widely incorporated into cultural history and popular consciousness, have come to be a predominant way of understanding life in the contemporary world.

I am especially interested in critically unfolding the various spectatorial processes involved in producing and consuming films, from their origin as words on a page, to the actors and crew working on their production, to the final images presented on a multitude of screens. Because of that focus, I regularly place myself in my own work as a performer, and my work also often has a diaristic quality, such as in the case of my thesis work, *Murky Colors*.

Murky Colors is a 50-minute multi-narrative, single-channel video derived from my father Menjin Wei's suspense-spy novel of the same name.

In collaboration with him, I adapted his story to explore the potential of the medium of video to critically engage with dominant Hollywood themes and character types. Just as his original story is a re-conglomeration of archetypal Hollywood tropes (the sexy assassin, the playboy secret agent, the war veteran, the corrupt cop, etc.), my adaptation is a re-conglomeration of experimental video art styles and techniques, including collage, appropriation, and documentary strategies. By combining familiar filmic conventions with a free-for-all video aesthetic, my work draws the viewer in while simultaneously distancing her or him. That dynamic provides the viewer with the opportunity to ask: what is happening behind and beyond the camera?

Video still, *Murky Colors*, 2012
HD single-channel video

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Steve Hubert
Ryan Mathieson
Anna Marie Repstock



Steve Hubert

***FOUNTAINS OF SAND PART II:
PICTURES NOT AS WINDOWS
BUT AS DISPLAY WINDOWS***

I am writing in response to your friendly letter to explain to you the reason the couch in question is where it is. This woman asleep on the couch is dreaming she has been transported to the forest, listening to the sounds from the instrument of the enchanter.

– Rousseau, the painter of jungle scenes who never left France, to critic Andre Dupont in 1910

To wit:
‘Ole New Mexico
Stucco for inside or out
The clarinet sounds

Architectural features that appear intrinsic but that are “for looks only” are a common journey’s end for malleable stucco. The low-rise wall or ponywall appears frequently in Santa Fe-style restaurants, often next to exposed brick, and sometimes in the lobbies of shopping malls when a grotto effect is required.

Add to this a water feature — and so is born a public space that has been engineered to produce desire for exotic locales.

These barrier-mazes, not unlike the bureaucratic obstructions of Martin Kippenberger’s *The Happy End* of Franz Kafka’s *Amerika*, are perhaps all the more insidious as they offer hope through a dreamlike version of one’s waking life. Festooned with indigenous flora, they are the colourful horse-jumping obstacle courses of sport: full of possibility if one possesses the right equipment, low enough to mount.

Having already been appropriated from a colonial soup, these pavilions are my dilettante starting place for the paintings of *FOS II*. From there, I have assembled new eclectic displays of painted subject matter that are akin to “postmodern looks” (accepting that it is still too soon to do this), but especially in the small-history regional style of the genre painting (even if such forms continue to give so much joy to so many).

NEW MEXICO, 2012
Oil on canvas on panel , 80” x 84”



Ryan Mathieson

Surface Production: The Replication and Display of Objects

Although I am skeptical of the desire to seek new spaces and then to familiarize them through photography, I am intrigued by how that medium often mediates our engagement with the transformative potential of actual experience.

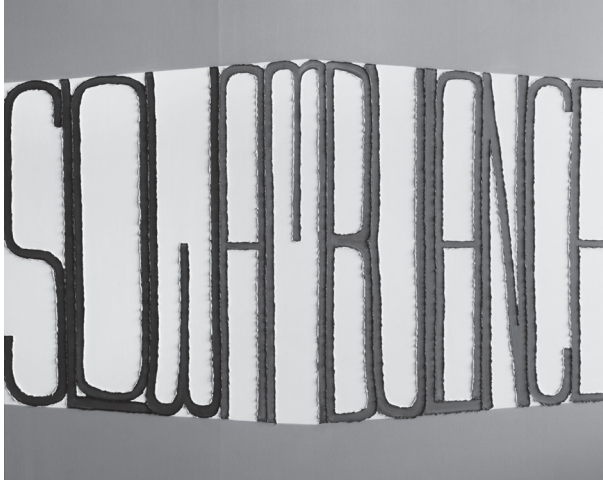
I am interested in how the idea of display can be used to understand how photographic objects become sites for the simultaneous compression and expansion of information. More specifically, the composition of an existing photograph taken in Iceland sparked my research and presented a formula for the interrogation of three other locations in the Southwestern region of the US. The restriction of projecting the composition of that one photograph over three other unique landforms became a structural component in my questioning of the inevitable simplifications inherent to the medium of photography. Together, these images depict a space that is both distinct

and generic: the re-presentation of one of the landscapes is scripted into that of the others. Disparate geographic elements become connected through the medium of photography.

The fabrication of sculpture in my thesis project also shares something with the impetus to photograph a vista in order to prolong it or make it more tangible. Given that they mimic existing forms, casted polyurethane sculptures and photographs both refer to an absence; they also both speak to a process of translation. As I developed a technique for molding forms and casting them, I understood that I was accessing the same underlying interests present in my photographic practice. Although calling upon a different set of skills, my working with form through casting led to a breakthrough in how I chose to address my use of photography. Throughout the realization of this project, exploring how and why people use objects — aesthetic objects such as photographs and sculptures as much as everyday objects — has become an overarching incentive for my research.

Iceland, 2012

Trans-mounted chromogenic print, 40" x 32"



Anna Marie Repstock

SIGNPAINTING

Each canvas contains two words jammed together, eliminating the space between them. These word combinations are portmanteaus that depict an instant in time. For example, the endorphin fueled smirk across the mouth of a boxer in *BOXINGGRIN* and the speed of a moving ambulance in *SLOWAMBULANCE*.

I see my work in relation to a historical discourse that polarized the medium-specificity of painting and language-based conceptual art. But for me, perhaps more fundamentally, paint and language share temporality. There is time in the body of oil paint, especially when considering its application in layers. Words also accrue and fall before and after each other in time. In my paintings, words are taken out of their usual spaced procession and brought together. My main concerns are the notions of the material and the immaterial, the temporal and shifting nature of signifieds, and of words as both images and concepts.

In their discussion of modern painting, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari focus on the “ground” of painting:

“One no longer covers over; one raises, accumulates, piles up, goes through, stirs up, folds. It is a promotion of the ground, and sculpture can become flat since the plane is stratified. One no longer paints ‘on’ but ‘under.’”¹

By foregrounding the “under” with a thick application of paint, my work suggests a temporal structure. Theoretically, building up a surface with paint could go on forever. Consequently, the delimitation of a painting by its frame, scale, or dimensions can be overcome. In my work, painting is an accrued material “thickness” — a thickness both of and about paint that elides illusionism, perspective, and depth.

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, Verso Press (2003), p. 194.

Somnambulant, 2012
Oil on canvas, 64” X 80”

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ENGAGING THE WORLD

Audain Gallery SFU Woodward's
Goldcorp Centre for the Arts
149 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6B 1H4

Tue – Sat: 12pm–6pm
info@audaingallery.ca
www.audaingallery.ca

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