

A Biennial of  
Contemporary Art

Curated by  
Yaelle S. Amir,  
Elisheba Johnson, and  
Ashley Stull Meyers

DISJECTA

PHOTO  
MIND

**The Portland Biennial** is a major survey of Oregon artists who are defining and advancing the state's contemporary arts landscape. Founded in 1949 by the Portland Art Museum, the Biennial moved to Disjecta Contemporary Arts Center in 2010.

The 2019 Biennial is a survey of work by artists whose practices are rooted in a rigorous approach to socio-political commentary, presenting diverse perspectives on historical and contemporary narratives unique to the Pacific Northwest. The exhibition focuses on the nuanced thematics of site, diaspora, and the multifaceted histories of the region as told in eighteen projects. These gestures address the continuous migration and erasure of communities from the Oregon landscape and, in some cases, served as an act of preservation and remembrance for their stories. The exhibition also reflects a layered view of Oregon's current landscape—observing and commenting on some of the structures and landmarks that populate the state to formative ends. Such objects influence perceptions of the state of Oregon (and the city of Portland) within the country's pop-cultural imagination and lingering fascination with Manifest Destiny. The selected artists were chosen as those whose current studio practices have been influenced by their relationships to community, landscape, and local politics.

A Biennial of  
Contemporary Art

Presented by  
Disjecta Contemporary  
Arts Center

25 Aug–  
03 Nov 2019

Curated by  
Yaelle S. Amir,  
Elisheba Johnson, and  
Ashley Stull Meyers

**featuring**

Natalie Ball *Chiloquin*

Adam Bateman *Ashland*

Jovencio de la Paz *Eugene*

Demian DinéYazhi' with R.I.S.E. *Portland*

Dru Donovan *Portland*

Ka'ila Farrell-Smith *Modoc Point*

Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice *Portland*

Sabina Haque *Portland*

Anthony Hudson *Portland*

Garrick Imatani *Portland*

Colin Ives *Eugene*

rubén garcía marrufo *Portland*

Jess Perlitz *Portland*

Vanessa Renwick *Portland*

Sara Siestrem *Portland*

Sharita Towne *Portland*

Lou Watson *Portland*

Lynn Yarne *Portland*

# Preface

**Blake Shell** *Executive Director, Disjecta Contemporary Art Center*

The Portland Biennial has continuously shifted throughout the years, since first moving to Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in 2010 from the Portland Art Museum. 2019 marks one of the greatest transformations to date in this survey of works by visual and performing artists who are defining and advancing Oregon's contemporary art landscape. It is the first Portland Biennial with multiple curators, one that prioritizes art production support and honorariums over multiple venues, and one that represents not what Biennials have been, but what one could and should be.

The Portland2019 Biennial was built holistically through thoughtful distinctions – the choice of these three talented curators, their collaborative discussion on regional biennials and curatorial advocacy of artists, and great effort and labor by all of the artists, community, and Disjecta staff and board members to support the most inclusive representation of Oregon art making yet.

The arts have a role in community as well as aesthetically, and we are honored to present Portland2019 on both ends.

## About the curators

### Yaelle S. Amir

**Yaelle S. Amir is a curator and researcher based in Portland, Oregon, with a primary focus on artists whose practices supplement the initiatives of existing social movements, rendering themes within those struggles in ways that both interrogate these issues and promote them to a wider audience. Yaelle's programming has appeared in nonprofit art institutions throughout the United States, and her writing has been published in a wide range of national and local publications. She has held curatorial and research positions at major institutions including MoMA NY, the International Center of Photography, and New York University. In Portland, she was curator of exhibitions and public programs at Newspace Center for Photography, and currently teaches in the Art + Social Practice MFA program at Portland State University.**

The average history textbook is deceptively definitive. It presents the past from a single perspective, unwavering in its accounts of noteworthy figures and their legacies. The Portland2019 Biennial aims to be another sort of text: one that introduces a multitude of people, places, and ideas that have shaped Oregon's past, describe its current character, and define its hopes for the future. The pages of this updated narrative are filled with contemporary reflections by Oregon artists, researchers, musicians, and middle-school students. The eighteen detailed projects tell stories of resistance and dissent. They highlight moments of wonder in the ever-changing landscape. Most of all, the depicted artworks amplify experiences that are too frequently only whispered.

One trick when studying is to commit the material to music. When set to melody, the history of the Northwest is equal parts love song and murder ballad. It looks like Dolly Parton and sounds like Esperanza Spalding. It is scored by the hum of running water and the fury of its Indigenous protectors. In this spirit, the following pages are presented in three lyrical chapters that take their names from songs: "Oregon, My Oregon," "Eugene," and "City of Roses."

Portland2019, the catalog, is a proposal for revision in image, word, and song.

#### Elisheba Johnson

Elisheba Johnson is a multimedia artist and poet who has dedicated her career in the arts to creating space for emerging and POC artists to create and showcase their work. Elisheba, who has a BFA from Cornish College of the Arts, was the owner of Faire Gallery Café in Seattle, a multi-use art space that held art exhibitions, music shows, poetry readings, and creative gatherings. Since 2013, Elisheba has been at the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, where she is a public art project manager and works on capacity-building initiatives including Seattle Arts Leadership Team (SALT) and Public Art Boot Camp. She is also a founding member of Collect, a quarterly curated art tour to inspire a new generation of art collectors. In 2018, Elisheba founded Eunice Waymon Arts Services to offer gallery representation to a range of diverse artists in varied disciplines.

#### Ashley Stull Meyers

Ashley Stull Meyers is a writer, editor, and curator. She has curated exhibitions and public programming for a diverse set of arts institutions in such West Coast cities as San Francisco, CA; Oakland, CA; Seattle, WA; and Portland, OR. She has been in academic residency at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Omaha, NE) and the Banff Centre (Banff, Alberta). She is currently Northwest Editor for *Art Practical* and has contributed writing to *Bomb Magazine*, *Rhizome*, *Arts.Black*, and *SFAQ/NYAQ*. In 2017, Stull Meyers was named Eichholz Director and Curator of the Art Gym. She is based in Portland, Oregon.

**YOU REMEMBER  
YOU FORGET**

"GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR,  
YOUR Huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

# 1 OREGON, MY OREGON

In 1927, Oregon’s legislature adopted “Oregon, My Oregon” as the official state song. Written by Astoria judge and former state representative John A. Buchanan and composed by Portland musician Henry B. Murtagh, its lyrics exude settler pride and include celebratory references to the displacement of Native communities and the establishment of Black exclusion laws. The song’s opening quickly sets the tone by declaring that Oregon is:

*Land of the Empire Builders,  
Land of the Golden West;  
Conquered and held by free men,  
Fairest and the best.*

As the finale brings it home with a similar tenor:

*Blest by the blood of martyrs,  
Land of the setting sun;  
Hail to thee, Land of Promise,  
My Oregon.*

## Vanessa Renwick

*You Remember, You Forget* (detail) 2019

Window film, paint, vinyl, wood, light, scrim

Most Oregonians—particularly recent transplants—have little awareness of this official song and its decidedly problematic language. It has been hiding in plain sight for decades, with few efforts to formally replace or update it (an attempt was made in 2017, but was deemed “nonvital”). This is reminiscent of the ways in which collective memory often operates—past indiscretions are overlooked or pushed aside for reasons of inconvenience or discomfort, and ultimately buried beneath layers of time, cultural amnesia, and the persistence of dominant narratives.

The Portland 2019 Biennial was framed with this *modus operandi* in mind. While putting together the exhibition, we repeatedly encountered the lasting effects of Oregon’s exclusionary practices in both overt and subtle ways. But we also discovered strong communities that have risen in defiance of these practices, with the purpose of reclaiming and celebrating land, personal narratives, and history. The eighteen projects in this year’s Biennial can be seen as an attempt to broaden the scope of just what and who is included in this “Land of Promise.”





# Natalie Ball

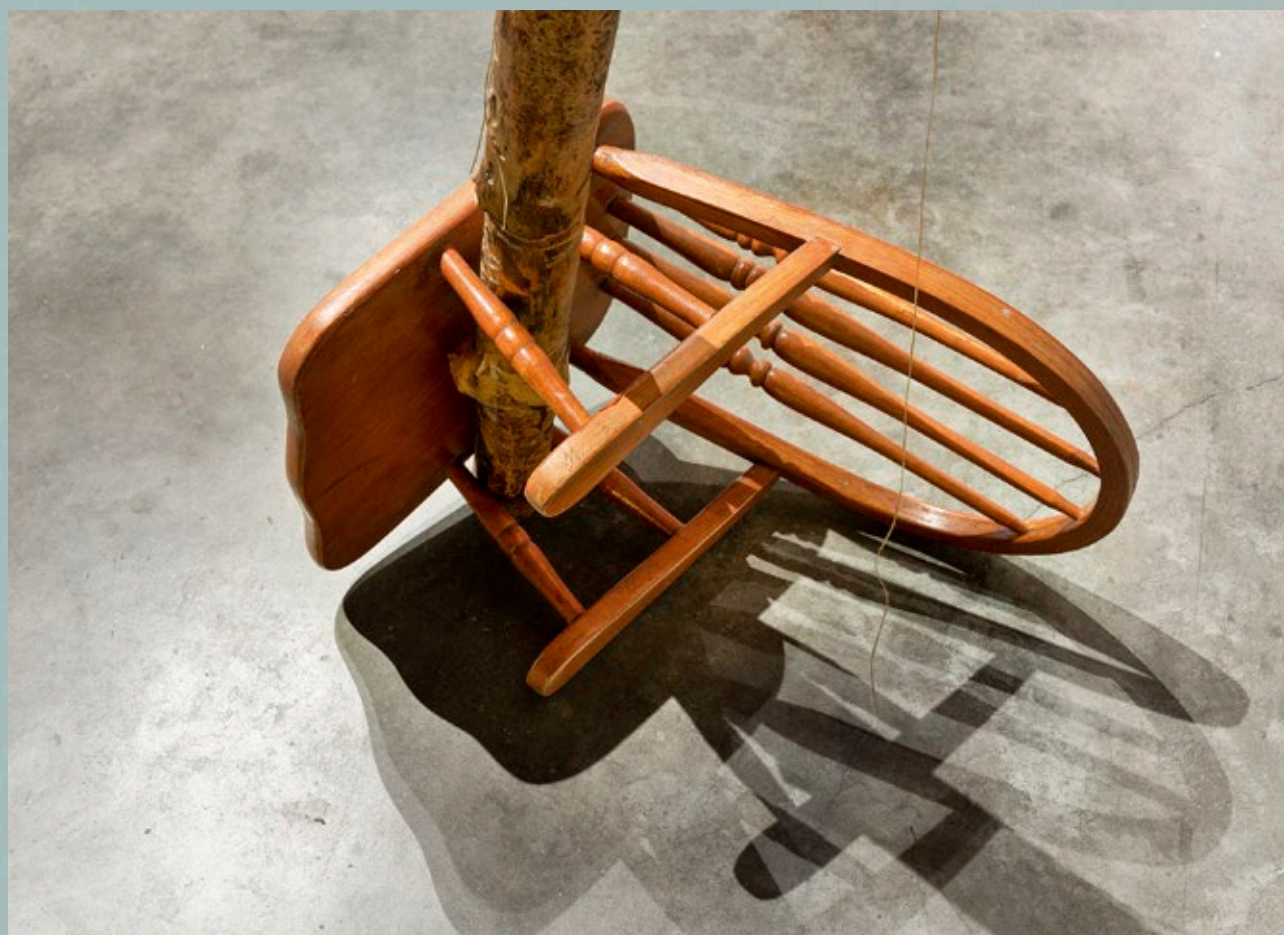
Chiloquin

*Bunny* 2019

Deer rawhide, feathers, pine,  
chair, elk hide

**Natalie Ball was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. She has a bachelor's degree with a double major in ethnic studies and art from the University of Oregon. She furthered her education at New Zealand's Massey University, where she attained her master's degree with a focus on Indigenous contemporary art. Ball then relocated to her ancestral homelands to raise her three children. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally at such venues as the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, BC; Te Manawa Museum, Palmerton North, NZ; Half Gallery, New York, NY; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA), Santa Fe, NM; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; and SculptureCenter, Long Island City, NY. Natalie received her MFA in painting and printmaking from Yale School of Art in 2018.**

Ball explores gesture and materiality to create sculptures she terms Power Objects. She offers her objects as proposals of refusal meant to complicate an easily affirmed and consumed narrative and identity, without absolutes. She believes historical discourses concerning Native Americans have produced a limited and inconsistent visual archive that misrepresents our past experiences and misinforms current expectations. Ball's goal is for her work to be experienced as new texts, with new histories and new manifestations, and for it to add to the discussion of complex racial narratives that is critical to further realizing our selves, our nation, and our shared experiences and histories.








# Adam Bateman

## Ashland

*Field Study #14* 2016–2019

60 × 60 inches

Acrylic and spray paint on canvas



**Adam Bateman is an artist and curator who has exhibited his work internationally, across the United States, and at every major art museum in Utah. He received a Utah Division of Arts & Museums Visual Arts Fellowship in 2008 and a Painters & Sculptors Grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 2013. He has curated projects at venues in Los Angeles and New York City, and has operated CUAC, a nonprofit art space in Salt Lake City, for ten years. Bateman holds a BA in English and Spanish from Brigham Young University and an MFA in sculpture from Pratt Institute.**

In the *Field Study* series, Bateman investigates the additive and subtractive methods used in farming (plowing/planting/watering, etc) and the various marks that are left behind. His painting process references those marks. The artist restricts himself to a parallel set of movements in guiding the paint on the canvas.

*Field Study #12* 2016–2019  
60 × 60 inches  
Acrylic and spray paint on canvas







# Jovencio de la Paz

Eugene

*Options for a Racist* (detail) 2019

Handwoven natural and synthetic fibers, historic textile attributed to the collection of Peter Hardeman Burnett, color laser prints on foam-core

Jovencio de la Paz received an MFA in fibers from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2012 and a BFA with an emphasis on fiber and material studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008. He has exhibited work in solo and group exhibitions both nationally and internationally, most recently at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, CO; Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, South Korea; Ditch Projects, Springfield, OR; Art Gym, Marylhurst, OR; Three-walls, Chicago, IL; Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland, OR; Casey Droege Cultural Productions, Pittsburgh, PA; the Alice, Seattle, WA; Carl & Sloan Contemporary, Portland, OR; 4th Ward Project Space, Chicago, IL; Space Gallery, Portland, ME; the Sculpture Center, Cleveland, OH; Soil Gallery, Seattle, WA; Roots & Culture Contemporary Art Center, Chicago, IL; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL; and Uri Gallery, Seoul, South Korea, among others. He regularly teaches at schools

of art, craft, and design throughout the country, including the Ox-Bow School of Art in Saugatuck, MI; the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, ME; and the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, TN. He is also a co-founder of the collaborative group Craft Mystery Cult, established in 2010.



*Options for a Racist* 2019

Handwoven natural and synthetic fibers, historic textile attributed to the collection of Peter Hardeman Burnett, color laser prints on foam-core



A major component of this work takes the form of a “weave draft,” a traditional diagrammatic language in which European and American weaving patterns were designed, published, and disseminated. By carefully following a weave draft, weavers were able to set up their looms to create a specific woven pattern. A weaver who reads this weave draft and follows the different color options laid out for warp and weft will be able to make the pattern for *A Racist* themselves in a variety of different color schemes.

The weave drafts presented as part of this work are inspired by a historic colonial-era overshot textile (also on view) attributed to the family of Peter Hardeman Burnett, the infamous judge and lawmaker who penned the Oregon black exclusion laws of 1844, which, among other limitations, prevented people of color from owning land in the state of Oregon. Overshot weaving was a favorite of American colonists and settlers, representing colonial American domestic idealism. This work attempts to uncover the subtle history of white supremacy embedded in material culture, suggesting that the purely formal, decorative, or abstract patterning of overshot weaving is potentially fraught with racial tensions.



# Lincoln Ordered the Greatest Mass Hanging In America's History

America's greatest mass hanging — the execution of 38 Sioux Indians — was personally ordered by the "Great Emancipator," President Abraham Lincoln.

By WEBB GARRISON

Trouble started in the summer of 1862 when starving Sioux Indians, upset over broken promises from the federal government, attacked settlers in several Minnesota towns.

Since most able-bodied men were off fighting in the Civil War, the towns were practically unprotected.

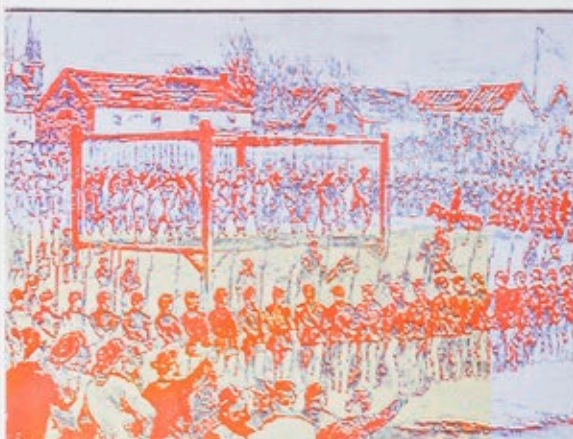
The Minnesota Infantry struck back, but within weeks the Indians controlled a 250-mile-by-50-mile strip of land. The uprising eventually became the bloodiest of all Indian massacres — about 800 settlers and soldiers were killed, although some historians estimated

the death toll much higher. U.S. Army troops commanded by Gen. John Pope finally subdued the Sioux and hundreds of Indians were imprisoned in a military stockade.

Pope set up a military tribunal. After a hasty hearing, 307 warriors were condemned to die.

But no one was sure of the military trial was legal. The matter was dumped into President Lincoln's lap.

Acting as Commander in Chief, he personally reviewed each case. He wrote an order for the execution of 38 Sioux he judged



38 INDIANS were hanged on President Lincoln's orders following a bloody massacre of settlers and soldiers.

guilty of murdering unarmed citizens. He commanded death sentences for the hanging Indians.

A square scaffold erected in Mankato, Minn., for the public hanging.

On the morning of Dec. 26, 1862, the condemned Indians were lined up and their ropes were fastened around their necks. As they

fell from beneath the Indians' feet, 4,000 civilians cheered. The bodies were buried in a common grave and the rope used in the hanging was cut into small pieces and distributed to spectators.

In a huge whitewash, historians usually mention the Sioux massacre only briefly — and fail to point out Lincoln's role in it.



**NEARLY ALL MEN CAN STAND ADVERSITY, BUT IF YOU WANT TO TEST A MAN'S CHARACTER, GIVE HIM POWER.**

R.I.S.E.: Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment

# Demian DinéYazhi' with R.I.S.E.

Portland

*A NATION  
IS A MASSACRE* Ongoing  
Vinyl, paper, Risograph ink,  
red paint, plexiglass

Demian DinéYazhi' is an Indigenous Diné transdisciplinary artist born to the clans Naasht'ézhi Tábaqhá (Zuni Clan Water's Edge) and Tódich'ii'nii (Bitter Water). Growing up in the colonized border town of Gallup, NM, DinéYazhi' has been influenced by their ancestral ties to traditional Diné culture, ceremony, matrilineal upbringing, the sacredness of land, and the importance of intergenerational knowledge. Through research, the mining of community archives, and social collaboration, DinéYazhi' highlights the intersections of Radical Indigenous Queer Feminist identity and political ideology while challenging the white noise of contemporary art. They have recently exhibited at the Honolulu Biennial (2019); the Whitney Museum of American Art (2018); Henry Art Gallery (2018); Pioneer Works (2018); CANADA (2017); and the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery at Reed College (2017). DinéYazhi' is the founder of the

Indigenous artist/activist initiative R.I.S.E.: Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment. They are a recipient of the Henry Art Museum's Brink Award (2017) and have been named a Hallie Ford Fellow in the Visual Arts (2018) and an Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellow (2019).

*Death and grieving for Indigenous peoples is like a war zone—a space unlike any other, far removed from the “stars and stripes.” We are expected to die without news headlines or revolution, and in this way we expect nothing; we accept death. It’s a slow death, but with the same urgency as endangerment or extinction or invasion, or an asteroid the size of England or complete and inevitable economic collapse. Even in our survival and resilience, we come to the table ready to protect the most sacred of human rights.*

—DEMIAN DINÉYAZHI’

In the words of David Everitt Howe (curator at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn, New York, where a version of this project was previously shown): “With their political aphorisms, all-caps fonts resembling newspaper headlines, and graphic images and colors, [the works in *A Nation Is a Massacre*] resemble activist agitprop first popularized by Soviet Russia in the early 20th century and later adopted and refashioned by artists in the wheatpasting tradition, like Jenny Holzer and the Guerrilla Girls. Unlike these artistic forebears, however, who excluded Indigenous womxn and other Indigenous communities, DinéYazhi’ focuses exclusively on these marginalized groups, noting that ‘the details are gruesome and American and as patriotic as gun violence and mass murder. *A Nation Is a Massacre* considers over 500 years of mass shootings and massacre, missing and murdered Indigenous womxn, queers, trans, gender gradient/nonconforming, and two-spirit folx, and numerous instances of environmental racism/injustice ignored by citizens of a colonized country.’”





NATIVE AMERICANS MAKE  
UP 0.8% OF THE POPULATION  
& COMPRISE 1.9% OF  
POLICE KILLINGS



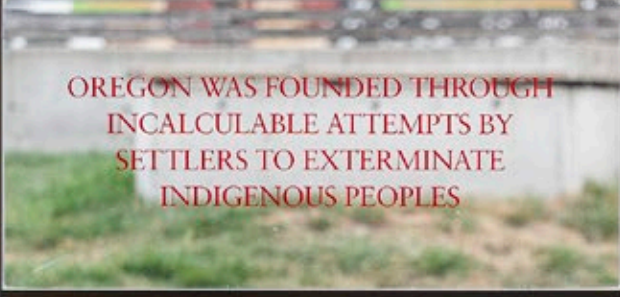
INDIGENOUS WOMXN FACE  
MURDER RATES AT 10 TIMES  
THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



A NATION IS  
A MASSACRE



THE DETAILS ARE GRUESOME &  
AMERICAN & AS PATRIOTIC AS  
GUN VIOLENCE & RAPE  
& MASS MURDER



OREGON WAS FOUNDED THROUGH  
INCALCULABLE ATTEMPTS BY  
SETTLERS TO EXTERMINATE  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



OREGON DONATION LAND CLAIM  
ACT OF 1850 RESULTED IN  
2.5 MILLION ACRES OF LAND  
STOLEN FROM INDIGENOUS TRIBES



GRAND RONDE RIVER VALLEY  
MASSACRE WAS A MASS MURDER  
OF 60 CAYUSE & WALLA WALLA  
ELDERS, WOMXN, & CHILDREN



YOU ARE A PRODUCT  
OF INDIGENOUS GENOCIDE  
& ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM



The roof of a home protects it from the elements, providing shelter and safety to its inhabitants. Previous decades are exposed as roofers scrape at a house with three layers of shingles; worn-down surfaces, dirt from the past hidden between layers is unveiled. When the shingles are ripped off and flung into the sky, gravity pulls them down into the dumpster and—for a moment—they take on an active form. Disregarded material becomes a constellation, choreographed into a new arrangement. Donovan's photographs look at the implied labor: the filling of the dumpster, the removal of shingles, the tearing off of a home's history. The work further reflects on the omnipresent construction and dismantling that is increasingly changing Portland's housing landscape.



# Dru Donovan

Portland

*Untitled* 2019

Archival pigment prints

Dru Donovan received a BFA from California College of the Arts in 2004 and an MFA from Yale School of Art in 2009. Donovan's work has been shown both nationally and internationally. It was included in *reGeneration2: Tomorrow's Photographers Today* at the Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne, Switzerland, and in the 2010 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art. Her work has been exhibited in group shows at Fraenkel Gallery, Yancey Richardson Gallery, Brancolini Grimaldi, Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, and in a solo show at Hap Gallery. Donovan's photographs have been published in *Aperture*, *Blind Spot*, *Picture* magazine, *Matte Magazine*, the *New York Times Magazine*, and *Vice*. Her work is in the collections of Deutsche Bank and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. In 2011, TBW Books published her first book, *Lifting Water*. In 2011-12 she participated in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace studio

residency program. Donovan received a John Gutmann Photography Fellowship in 2015 and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2016. She has taught at such institutions as Parsons School of Design, Pratt Institute, Lewis & Clark College, University of Hartford, Yale University, and Harvard University.







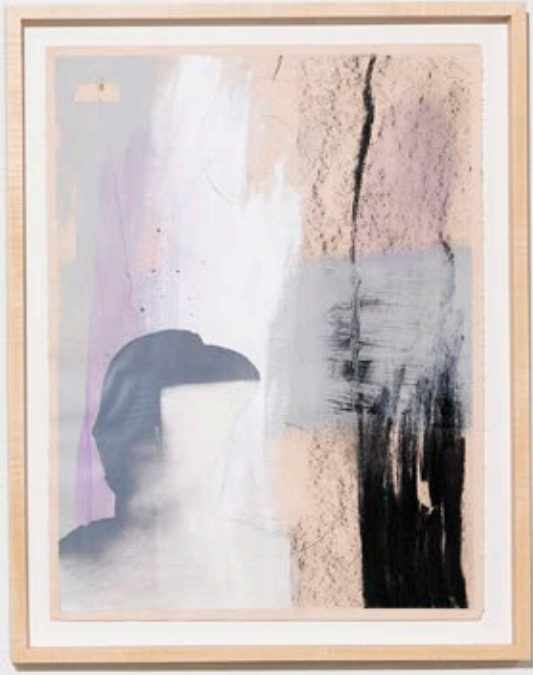
# Ka'ila Farrell-Smith

## Modoc Point

*No Man Camps: Missing Her* 2019

Wildfire charcoal from Pelican Butte, OR,  
red dirt from Painted Hills, OR,  
shot-up can stencil from Modoc Point, OR,  
acrylics, aerosol, oil bars on wood panel

**Ka'ila Farrell-Smith is a co-director of the Signal Fire artist residency program. Her work has been exhibited at Out of Sight, the Museum of Northwest Art, and the Tacoma Art Museum in Washington; the Missoula Art Museum in Montana; and the Medici Fortress in Cortona, Italy. In Oregon her work is held in the permanent collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art and the Portland Art Museum. Her work will be on view in 2019 at the High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon, as part of *Desert Reflections: Water Shapes the West*. She has recently been selected to attend artist residencies at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, Ucross, the Institute of American Indian Arts, and Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts. Farrell-Smith received a BFA in painting from Pacific Northwest College of Art and an MFA in Contemporary Art Practice: Studio from Portland State University.**



A few years ago, at Standing Rock, Ka'ila Farrell-Smith saw how corporate special interests used state-sponsored violence to impose a fossil fuel project on Indigenous people. The Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas (LNG) export terminal and pipeline now jeopardizes the artist's ancestral land. The 229-mile pipeline carrying highly flammable fracked gas would add to fire risks across Oregon. It would impact nearly five hundred waterways, and it would create the largest source of climate pollution in the state, affecting tribal members and all Oregonians.

Additionally, "man camps" pose a dire threat to Farrell-Smith's personal safety and her tribal community's overall health. In the past ten years, frequent reports have documented increases in crime, drug use, assaults, kidnapping, sex trafficking, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) because of these temporary labor camps, which place significant burdens on local infrastructure, public services, public health, and nearby Indigenous communities. Many such camps may be needed to build the proposed Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline, especially in rural areas in and near tribal lands, raising concerns about increased risk to rural communities of communicable diseases, crime, drug use, assaults, and homicides. Local communities do not have the ability to protect their community members, and public health resources are insufficient to respond to the projected adverse health impacts.

The works *Selfie w/UFO* and *Selfie 2.0* were created during an artist residency in the late summer of 2017. It was a hot, dry summer and there were four artists left, mid-residency, with wildfire smoke crossing the rolling hills. The artists collectively watched in terror as Hurricane Irma headed toward Florida, where many of them had family. Farrell-Smith watched the Columbia Gorge burn via the internet and was terrified for the long drive home through smoke-engulfed forests. Existing during catastrophic climate chaos, watching the earth burn and flood, enrages her. She thinks about beings, humans, monsters, aliens, and our shared trajectory. These two self-portraits were captured during a fleeting moment in the studio, tracing sun silhouettes. They are abstract selfies looking out into a smoky haze. The artist is searching for UFOs or anyone who can help to wake us up from our self-annihilation.

*Selfie w/UFO + Selfie 2.0* 2017

Collage paintings on paper.

Made during Ucross Residency, Ucross WY





In 1972, Dolly Parton spent the night on a tour bus in Eugene. Young and unsure, she had embarked on a tour with the flashy-suited Porter Wagoner—and by her own account, she felt farther away from home in Oregon than she ever had before. She nearly didn't go onstage. But through force of will (coupled with generous coaxing from the Northwest crowd), she sang "A Coat of Many Colors" and was met with a standing ovation.

Dolly wrote the song "Eugene" while dizzy with gratitude. She was captivated by the difficult-to-characterize quality of Oregon's people: polite and encouraging, but with what are perhaps more complex motivations simmering underneath. The Oregonians of today are subject to a somewhat similar fascination. They loom large in the pop-cultural imagination as ranchers, adventure-seekers, and the caricatures of hipsters and utopianists popularized by *Portlandia*. They're imagined to be nearly exclusively white, and to hold politics that are radically permissive toward conservative and liberal ideologies alike. Stories like those that inspired "Eugene" are the lifeblood of the state's narrative, but so too are the quiet details of a long and fraught history of exclusion.

The welcome Dolly experienced that night in Eugene was genuine. The many artists who choose to develop and maintain their creative practices in Oregon do so for the magical spirit of support and community she describes. But it is with a much-needed acknowledgment of the state's dual nature that we present the Portland2019 Biennial. The included projects present a multitude of historical perspectives, characterized by humor and strife, criticism and gratitude. Together, they embody the coat of many colors Dolly sang about. They attempt a corrective to a fabric that was once destructively plain.

## Statement from the Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice

Bea, Elliot, Esperanza,  
Harrell, Joyce, Lisa, Nora, Syncier

PORTLAND  
2019

Hello and welcome to the Portland 2019 Biennial (a biennial is an exhibition that takes place every two years). We are the Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice—a group of seventh graders from Harriet Tubman Middle School who work with two Portland State University professors to learn about contemporary art and curation. We were selected for the Biennial and are participating by writing this statement, the wall labels for the exhibition, conducting interviews with artists for the catalog, and presenting a public panel to talk about our experiences. We are really grateful for this opportunity to share our perspectives with you. Yaelle, Ashley, and Elisheba (the Biennial curators) said they wanted fresh perspectives from different types of people and perhaps that is why they picked us (you don't normally have a group of seventh-graders doing something like this).

When you think "art," people usually assume color, crayon, and painting, but the creations the artists put in this Biennial will be more of a thrill! Are you wondering why? Well, because this is not your ordinary art show where all the artists are doing the expected thing. Though all the artists live and work in the state of Oregon, they have different inspirations, styles, and backgrounds. All of them have been specially selected to make sure this Biennial is the very best!

The colonization of Indigenous land, migration stories, environmental issues, and gentrification are all topics that come up in a variety of ways in the exhibition. Those experiences should be thoroughly exposed in more parts of our society.

We hope this exhibition informs you about Portland and Oregon through experiencing the artists and their artwork that the curators brought together. The eighteen artists (including us) show what we think of the region and its history through our creativity.

# Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice

Portland

Opening statement for the Biennial prepared by Harriet Tubman Middle School students Bea, Elliot, Esperanza, Joyce, Nora, and Syncier under the guidance of Portland artists Lisa Jarrett and Harrell Fletcher.

**The Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice is an ongoing participatory artwork co-directed by Portland-based artists Lisa Jarrett and Harrell Fletcher, who work weekly with Harriet Tubman Middle School students (for the Biennial, they collaborated with Bea, Elliot, Esperanza, Joyce, Nora, and Syncier). The students learn about various curatorial approaches, which include working with visual art, performance, public art, historical materials, and social practice, as well as writing and critical assessment of contemporary art and culture. The students apply their skills as a curatorial team to projects at the middle school and various off-site locations. When invited to participate in the Biennial, the group chose to function as curatorial assistants. They worked with the Biennial curators and participating artists, wrote wall labels and a**

**curatorial statement, conducted interviews with artists for the catalog, and are organizing a public panel discussion for the closing reception.**

In the months leading up to the opening of the Portland2019 Biennial, the Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice conducted interviews with four of the Biennial artists: Anthony Hudson/Carla Rossi, Jess Perlit, Lou Watson, and Lynne Yarne. The text of these conversations, edited for clarity and length, follow.

## Anthony Hudson/ Carla Rossi

*Hudson/Rossi's contribution to the Biennial can be found on page 78*

**WORA: How many art resources did you have at your middle school?**

At my middle school I think the only arts resource I really had was this one teacher, Ms. Battin—she was the art teacher. We had one art teacher, that was it. We had one art classroom. I took her class every semester, every art class I could, all the way till I finally got to take honors art. I got into the honors art class and then Ms. Battin got really sick, so we had a substitute for the entire semester who did not understand anything I was doing. I love horror movies, and I would always do zombies or scenes from *The Exorcist* in my art. The substitute teacher would always grade me terribly and say, "This is disgusting, nobody wants to see this."

I remember Ms. Battin got out of the hospital and she came to visit us one day, and I was



Carla Rossi  
as Pennywise the Clown

doing this giant *Exorcist* painting, like you do when you're that age. She looked at me and she said, "This is great, we need to get these feelings out. It's awesome that you are doing this." And for me that really spoke to her difference in teaching style and the difference in how some people approach art and teaching art to youth. So she was it for me—it was just her. My only resource in middle school. In Keizer, Oregon, at Whiteaker Middle School.

**SYNCIER: How did you get into making art as a profession?**

It was a dare. I chase things that scare me, because if something scares me, I think that's a sign that I should probably do it. Because if I feel like I'm not able to, I take that as a challenge. I did theater in high school, and honestly it was high school theater that really changed my life. I probably wouldn't have made it through school, I probably would have dropped out if it wasn't for this drama teacher I had. My whole life has been a story of amazing teachers who carried me through and helped me continue to keep moving and pick myself up. Like Ms. Battin in middle school, Ms. Baker in high school—she was our drama teacher. I wasn't really confident enough in myself to pursue theater outside of high school. She wanted me to go to college for it. I had started the first gay/straight alliance at my high school, and I was an out teenager back then, in the early 2000s, when Bush was president and that was the scariest thing we had to worry about, but I still didn't feel very confident in myself outside of my safe place—the high school theater.

I wanted to go to college—I had set my sights on going to art school, as a dare. I didn't know if my art was good enough—I just drew at the time,

I was just an illustrator. After a while I moved to Portland, and then I got into PNCA. And then, over the time that I was there, Carla kind of exploded out of me, and I realized that drag could be a place where I could make art, I could write, I could direct, I could act, I could do stand-up comedy, I could do everything that had interested me. While I was still in school I started doing shows, and people would ask me to come and do things, and after a while I realized, "Oh, this is my job."

**BEA: What artist or person inspired you to become an artist?**

I love *Beetlejuice*—that was one of my very favorite movies when I was a kid. It still is one of my very favorite movies. But Delia Deetz—she's the mom in that movie, Lydia's stepmom—she's the one that has the wacky hair and puts gloves in her hair and gets attacked by shrimp. I love her, and the words "This is my art and it is dangerous" have stuck with me my entire life. And I think the movie makes fun of her a little, but I was just so tantalized by the comedy of Catherine O'Hara, the actress that plays her. I thought artists seemed so cool. I have done Delia Deetz drag numbers, I love her so much. There have definitely been other artists, and real artists along the way that have really impacted me, but Delia Deetz is my root, for real.

**JOYCE: Do you use your culture in your art practice?**

I wrote an article about this for the Regional Arts and Culture Council last year. Something I'm really interested in is: How do we know art is Native unless it looks like it? There is this expectation that it has to look a certain way to be considered Native art. We all have this idea of totem poles or paintings of whales, drums, traditional arts. I grew up without my traditions—the only person who really taught me traditions from my culture was my grandma, and she's not with us anymore. I would stay with her every summer, and she would tell me stories about spirits and about whistle men, which are like scary medicine men. She would tell me stories about tricksters and Coyote, and that became the focal point for how I wanted to frame Carla. So I've always thought of my art as contemporary Native art that doesn't look like it's traditional, but it still has that traditional root, that idea of Coyote and of tricksters. I've looked at clowns in relation to tricksters—clowns and tricksters both say one thing and do the other. They usually do something completely selfish to benefit themselves, and ultimately their selfish ends are their undoing and benefit the greater good. That's always how I've looked at Carla, and sort of her drive and my MO when I perform as her.

Another thing for me, as a queer artist and as a Native artist—I was fourteen when I came out to my parents, I was so afraid to tell them, and my mom was the first one I told. The next day she was like, "Oh, it's OK, you're just responsible for telling your father." And the morning after that she comes



Anthony Hudson  
in a scene from a 2016 performance of his work  
Looking for Tiger Lily

up to me and goes, "I told your dad." She was freaking out. My dad came up and talked to me, and he was like, "You know we have a tradition called two-spirit?"

That was the first time I had ever heard that term. My grandmother never taught me that. It was the first time my dad really taught me something traditional. Across the multiplicity of tribes around the United States and the northern continent, there's been this idea of gender-variant people: shaman characters, medicine people who could walk between genders, between sexualities. Learning that had a huge impact on me. So Carla honestly is the ultimate end of all my interests and all the ways I see myself—she sort of embodies that priestess role for me, of stepping into this other world and into this other character, becoming my truest self at the same time, or letting it explode out of me.

**BEA: How do you define or label your own work?**

That is the number-one question, 'cause that's the thing: a lot of my work is sort of counter-label or anti-label. A lot of my work is about confusing, about hacking signals. When I do drag, I dress up like Carla, and I don't always shave, and I have weird padding, and I wear retro clothing combined with modern-day stuff, and I have a white clown face because when I see people walking down the street and they see me, I want them to be as confused by what they're seeing as I am about myself. I don't know where I exist, I don't know how I identify in terms of my sexuality, in terms of my gender, in terms of my race—I'm mixed race and I'm queer and I'm whatever—but in terms of how the world sees me, I feel like I never fit in. So a lot of my work is about combatting the idea of labels. What I move toward is calling myself just an artist. In my bio I say I'm a writer, a filmmaker, an artist, a performer, all these things that are all interests of mine, all things that I do, but ultimately it's all art-making, even if it's stand-up comedy, even if it's a video, even if it's whatever it is I find myself doing that day. I just consider it all art, and I try not to box it, because I'm sick of boxes.

**ELLIOT: What inspired your comedy?**

Definitely my cultural roots of coming from a family where most everyone is living on the reservation, or "the rez" as we call it. And hearing the laughter—there is constant laughter, everything is funny. I grew up watching *Beetlejuice* and *Beavis and Butt-head*, and I love laughing, I love, love, love laughing. I don't care about something unless I can laugh with it or over it.

My dad was a social worker for the tribe and he would go and give presentations to mostly white social workers that were working with the state. I would watch him give these presentations and he would always start his PowerPoints with these terrible dad jokes and everyone would crack up, and then he would go to the next slide and get really serious and teach them something, or as he taught them something he'd make it kind of funny. So as I was growing up watching him do that, I understood that comedy could be a way to teach people. Because it makes them more ready to listen—because if you are all laughing at something together, that's a moment of connection. And it's easier to listen to someone if you feel connected to them. Comedy for me has two points: it's cultural, it's a survival mechanism, it's something that we use to break through pain and to cope with trauma; and it's also something that we use to break down resistance so that we can learn from each other and listen to each other.

I spent a lot of time not being taken seriously in the art world because people looked at what I do as funny, and if it's funny that means it's entertainment and not art. Because art should be serious and something you look at seriously. But I don't think that's true. Comedy has been a lifelong love of mine. When I was trying to be taken seriously, it wasn't working. I was trying to make stuff that I thought people would respect, or what they wanted to see. A big breaking point for me was when I started making

work I wanted to see and started to do the stuff that makes me laugh in the shower.

**NORA: What age did you think of becoming a drag clown? When did you actually decide to do it?**

I saw the first drag queen I think I ever saw when I was ten. I was at my uncle's party—my uncle is the only other out gay person in my family, on my mom's side—and he's my favorite person in the world. We were at this birthday party, and I see this super-glamorous, over-the-top giant lady. I was like, She's amazing, and I was just so transfixed by her, 'cause I loved the fantastic, like I loved *Beetlejuice*. I see this glamorous glitter thing, and I was so in love. And my mom leans over to me, and she was kind of uncomfortable with it [*loud whispering*]: "That's a man!" My mind was blown because I didn't even understand how that could be possible. I think in that moment I saw that you can look like one thing but not be it, or you can be something else.

I was really into RuPaul. I was always fascinated by *To Wong Foo, Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Then everyone started watching *Rocky Horror*, so *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* got to me, and then *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. So all these things I love. I got really into David Bowie and glam rock. A lot of David Bowie back then was, "He's a man, he's a woman, he's an alien!" I was really into this idea of becoming more than what society says you are, and everything I loved had drag in it.

I did it in high school for Halloween costumes, and we did a play once where I played a character in drag, but other than that it wasn't until I moved up to Portland and I met one of my coworkers—I worked at the mall at Lloyd Center—and my coworker was like, "Do you want to come over to my house and watch *Battlestar Galactica*?" The finale was airing, and we'd just realized that we both liked the show. So I go over and he warns me, "By the way, I live with this crazy drag-queen roommate," and I was like "What?!" And then I walk in and meet the most incredible person—it was Jinx Monsoon, who ended up going on season 5 of *Drag Race* and winning. This was maybe five years before she got on the show. I started going to her shows and hanging out with her, and we had this whole summer together watching *Grey Gardens* and talking about *X-Men*, about *Mystique*, because *Mystique*, she can change into anybody, she's the ultimate drag queen. I saw that Jinx was writing these shows herself, she was acting, she was doing all these things, and that's the first time I ever really saw someone doing something other than just lip-syncing. She sang live, she spoke, and that's when the seed was planted for me, that this could be a place where I could do all the things I wanted to do too, in the same way she was doing it. I was about twenty-two or twenty-three when I got into it, and it's been almost ten years now.

**JOYCE: What character traits would you consider part of Carla Rossi versus your actual personality traits?**

I used to be like, she's a character I play, she's a persona, she's nothing else. And then recently I read this thing that Taylor Mac said about how they don't like the term "persona" because it implies that it's a character, that it's something separate from Taylor's self. (Taylor Mac is this amazing artist that I'm obsessed with who also does drag and writes plays.) And Taylor said no, this is all of my insides coming out. And that really put into words something I didn't know how to articulate before. Carla is kind of my ultimate form. It's weird, because I'm playing a horrible, racist, privileged, rich or wannabe rich, awful character. She's very Trumpian in that way. But I can only play that so much before I have to make some jokes to the audience to signal that I'm not actually a monster.

So despite her being ignorant and very loud,



Carla Rossi in adventure moment from a video supporting Jeffrey Gibson's 2019 exhibit *Like a Hammer* at the Seattle Art Museum

she is me amplified. Everything that I'm afraid to say, that I don't feel comfortable saying, anytime I want to open my big mouth and call somebody out for something, or anytime I want to make fun of something that just doesn't make sense to me, like our government, she is the armor I put on that empowers me and enables me to get everything out that otherwise I wouldn't feel safe saying. I think because I grew up in a small town, I try to dress to not be seen. I try to hide if I'm not dressed up. But if I'm her, everything is coming out. Because she's armor, she's a mask.

**Jess Perlitz**

*Perlitz's contribution to the Biennial can be found on page 78*

**NORA: How many art resources did you have at your middle school?**

We had an art classroom. I don't remember how often we had art class. I want to say maybe once a week, but maybe less than that. And that was it. What was in there? I don't know—painting and collage stuff, nothing fancy. Now I teach art and I have students who are like, "Well, I've been doing this for years," or "I've been building things in a woodshop or metal shop since grade school." It's amazing to me to think about what could be possible if people consistently had access to resources like that early on.

**SYNCIER: How did you get into making art as a profession?**

I studied art when I went to college. I went to college to be a writer, and then when I had to choose my classes to do the major I was to do, there were semesters when I couldn't take studio art classes, and that seemed really awful to me. So then it seemed like the answer was that I should study art. With hindsight, I wonder what I was thinking. It seemed to just make sense. My mother's an artist, so it wasn't totally unknown to me. But when I did decide to study art, I remember my mother was like, very hesitantly, "So you're really going to do this?" And now I realize she was saying that because there are lots of things that are quite difficult about it. But at the time I was like, "Yeah I'm going to do this, why? What's wrong?"

**BEA: What artist or person inspired you to become an artist?**

I think there is a whole range of people. Because there are so many parts of being an artist, like dedication, and there are things about it that are about following your own vision. Like not listening to other people. And then there are parts of it that are about working really hard, being resourceful. There isn't a set path you're following, so you have to figure out how to make it work. I feel like I got all those things from different people. I also remember really looking at people and being enamored with the way they were living their lives, and I also remem-

ber there being certain people I didn't want to be like. And studying those just as much. I feel like it was just around your age that I started reading people's autobiographies. Have you guys gotten into reading those? I feel like I went through a big phase in middle school where I was just reading autobiographies. Harrowing stories and intense stories and things about famous people. I was totally into it, and I remember being like, "Yes, that's how I'm going to live my life." This fantasy of what I was going to be. I also had some art teachers who were great, that I really liked, and it wasn't necessarily that I wanted to be like them, but I felt like they really encouraged me, so I thought that anything was possible in art-making.

**JOYCE: Do you use your culture in your art practice?**

Not as content, but I think it influences every artist. I think there is no way that you cannot be making work that's affected by the culture you come from. I also think there are ways that you could use my work to talk about certain cultures, right? And places that I come from. And I think that sometimes I'm not totally conscious of that. The way I think about art is as a tool for conversation; there are many conversations you can have with artwork.

**JOYCE: In *Mud Breathes Better Than the Buried*, what was your intention in putting a hundred pounds of clay on your face?**

So you know the man in the moon? When you look up at the moon, sometimes you can see a person's face. It's interesting—I just learned this—in other places in the world, people don't see a person's face.

I think that desire to see images in things is a way of making sense. It's also a way for us to tell stories and to try and understand things. So when I was on the floor with that clay, basically I was constantly almost making a face, but not quite, and then mashing it back up. I was interested in how, as the viewer, you felt like, "Oh, I see a face! They're making a face! It's becoming—wait—oh, it's not—



*Mud Breathes Better Than The Buried* 2017  
100lbs of clay, bowl, water, rag, body

what is happening?" There was always this desire to be making sense of it. It's like how, if you spill coffee on the table, you can see an image in it. You try and make sense of it, or you look at the clouds and try to see something in the clouds. I'm interested in that, how we really desire to make meaning out of things. By seeing ourselves in it.

**ZAZA: Why did you take your shoes off during your performance? Does that have meaning in the work?**

Yeah. Maybe you guys experience this when you are making art—sometimes you just follow instinct. It just feels like it's right. When I took off my shoes, it seemed like the right gesture. Where I grew up, everybody takes off their shoes when you go into a home. My experience in the US is that people don't generally do that. Depends on the house. Back home, everybody does it. When you take off your shoes, it's a sign, like, "I've left the outside and I'm on the inside and there's something more intimate

happening here and I'm not bringing in the dirt from outside." So when I was performing I felt like I was being a bit more present or humble with my audience. It was like letting my guard down a little bit.

**NORA: We were really interested in the *Chorus* project you did.**

**ELLIOT: What were some of the songs the prisoners sang?**

It was a really wide range. I wanted them to sing whatever song they wanted. About half the people I met with, maybe a little less, sang songs that they wrote. And I think that was because to sing a song for a microphone you have to have a little bit of confidence, and so some of the people who were doing that were already singing, writing—it was something they were already into. Then about a quarter of the songs were spirituals, hymns, the kinds of songs that people would have learned in church or through families. And those were the songs they knew quite well and that had stuck with them. Then there were probably about a quarter of them who just sang their favorite song. I asked people if they could sing it a cappella.

**BEA: In the *A Rainbow Every Other Day* performance, did your legs or limbs fall asleep?**

Surprisingly, no. I did it for twenty-five minutes. Though you couldn't see it, I was standing on a bucket. So basically the outfit was in a five-gallon bucket, and I would march over to where I was going to do it, and very quickly I would take the outfit out and flip the bucket, stand on it, and put the thing on. People would really not notice. Then I'd lean with my forehead against the wall, my arms against my sides. I think there was a lot of adrenaline going, and I couldn't really see. I could sort of see footsteps, I could hear things, and it just kept me engaged enough that twenty-five minutes seemed to be the limit. If I had done it any longer, I might have been like, "Uh oh, my back is hurting, I've got to get out of this." I think that was the absolute limit.

**NORA: A few of us are athletes, and we are used to doing endurance-related activities. How tiring is it to do endurance performance artwork?**

I think it's very tiring. You ever have this experience where you lose your sense of time, like you're really bored or it's tedious? And you feel like it's been hours and hours, and then if you look at the clock it's only been ten minutes? You're like, "Uhhhhh," right? And then there are other things you do and then suddenly you're like, "Wait a minute, how is that three hours already?" With endurance performance you really lose your sense of time based on what you are doing. But also because there is that experience of adrenaline—you have no control over how your audience is going to respond to you. And you're sort of hyper-aware of that. So I think it changes your sense of time.

When I teach performance one of the first things I do is an endurance exercise with students, because a lot of times people are like, "I want to do this for twenty-four hours straight!" And you're like, "Oh yeah? We are all going to do an exercise together



*A Rainbow Every Other Day* 2008  
Poster, fabric, bucket, body

where we do something for two hours." And the amount of work it takes to actually coordinate... You need to drink water, but not too much. You need to go to the bathroom because technically two hours is not that long, everybody can go two hours without going to the bathroom, but the minute you are aware that you cannot go to the bathroom, you're like, "I have to go to the bathroom! I'm itchy, I have to go to the bathroom." So we do this exercise and at the end of it they're like, "That was the longest two hours of my life!" I'm like, "Yeah, exactly. So when you want to do a twenty-four-hour performance, let's think about it."

**SYNCIER: We also looked at *Peace Dove* on your website. Is this a performance piece?**

I don't know what that is. It exists as a series of photographs—it's a video, essentially. It's photographs that become a video. It was this series of stills as the sun rises. There are certain things I'm working with that are both happy and sad. I like thinking about things that can be complicated in that really simple way. So I was thinking about that being the bird in the attic. I was like a dove. It's waiting for the sunrise, being a peace dove, hopeful. And there is something really calm and really sweet



*Peace Dove* 2017  
Images

about it. But also the last thing you want are birds in your attic. They are a nuisance. They poop everywhere. It's often a sign of a forgotten building.

**ZAZA: It looks like you are in an abandoned building or something. You kind of already did this, but can you tell us about the significance of the site for this work?**

I was in residency at the time at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, which is in a big old factory in Omaha, Nebraska. And they had this big empty room at the top, and the light coming in was so beautiful. I was trying to figure out how to pay attention to the light. I also was thinking a lot about my body at that point. There is an artist the work references, Ana Mendieta. I'm interested in conversations we can have with her work. She did a piece where she became a bird, so it was a little bit of a nod to her. I liked how empty that room was and the light coming in—it was really as simple as that.

**JOYCE: What does the lighting in the photographs mean to you?**

I think about it as a marker of time. I also think about it as something hopeful, optimistic. The sun rises and sets, so there's this earnest desire in there. I also think about it as waiting. I have lots of memories of being a kid and just waiting. Being bored and watching shadows and sun move across things and just waiting.

**SYNCIER: We noticed that *Everything Fought For* is a public work. What is the difference between a public setting outside and an indoor gallery setting for your work?**

Most of my stuff is actually out in the public. The gallery is interesting—when you make stuff in a gallery, it's often these white walls without windows.

It's sort of separate from the world in which we live, and for a long time I didn't like that. I was like, that doesn't make any sense to me. I want to be making art that is in the world for people to use. I really like how kids in particular will play with things right away, and I liked how that made art approachable. So I was like, if I can make things that people can climb up or look through or speak through, we can use these tactics of play that we all know to actually experience the artwork. In play, we also replicate the world in which we live.

Then I started making more works for a gallery. And at first I really had no interest in that, and I didn't know how to make work there. Then I quickly was like, actually there is something interesting about trying to take out some of the world and create a room that's isolated. Maybe it can also give us a way to think about the world in which we live.

**NORA:** How do you think about this piece as a work of art? Is the purpose to get a view of the New York skyline, or getting the water from the river, or both?

Both. And, on top of it, when you were busy doing those things, you were also on display. Like you were a part of the artwork. So if you were up there doing all that, super into it, like, "I'm going to get more water from the river and spill it down in front of the structure. I'm going to peer into the window of these fancy apartments in Manhattan," then when I walk into the sculpture park, I can see you up there doing all that. And so you also become part of the work.

**BEA:** We noticed you have a lot of different styles of working. Is there one that you prefer? Why?

No, I like changing it up. Rather than style, the way I think about it is: What does this specific context dictate? Who is the audience, what's the location, what's the history of the place, how do I want



*Everything Fought For* 2010  
15 x 5 x 11 feet. Wood, stucco, paint, optical viewer, manual pump, East River water

to engage with that. With something like *Disjecta*, where it's a gallery space, it's a little bit different. There's not as much of a history. I'm making an object that's much more discrete. But sometimes I want to embody the objects myself—I want to be the object—and that's when it turns into something a bit more performative. Sometimes I think, "I want this to be a service for people." And then I think, "Do I offer this service or can people interact with it directly?" And sometimes I think, "Do I want to make something where people can imagine how they interact with it, but they don't even need to actually interact with it?"

**ZAZA:** How do you classify your type of artwork?

I think of myself as a sculptor, and I think of objects as being about how we understand space. So I'm as interested in the furniture in this room as I am in all of you, and also our relationship to each other and the empty space of this room. The walls that make up the room and the structures—the school itself that is in charge of this room, who has access to this room. I think about all of those as being issues of sculpture, so even when I'm doing performance, I'm thinking about objects.

## Lou Watson

*Watson's contribution to the Biennial can be found on page 78*

**NORA:** How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

First of all, you probably tell I didn't go to school in the US, I went in England. And they don't have middle schools—you go to high school when you are eleven in the UK. So I had my elementary school from four to eleven and high school from eleven to eighteen. In my elementary school there were only forty people, because I lived in a tiny village in the middle of the country. The art resources were kind of country craft-based, so we would do things like take eggshells and dye them and make mosaics with them. Or collect rose petals and do a thing called well dressing. We would take corn and weave with the corn and things like that. We didn't have much in the way of traditional craft and art resources, it was just stuff that was handed down from generation to generation.

**SYNCIER:** How did you get into making art as a profession?

I have three kids, and I had those guys quite early on in my life. When my oldest daughter turned eighteen and applied to go to college, I said, "I'm going to go to college as well." So we both went to college at the same time. She graduated before me, though, because I took a semester off. I turned forty and I was like, I've wanted to make art all my life, but I've been working jobs and raising kids and now it's the right time to do it. So I took the plunge.

**HARRELL:** Did you both go to the same school?

No, she went to Beloit in Wisconsin and I went to PNCA.

**BEA:** What artist or person inspired you to become an artist?

Helen Crummy is this lady in Scotland—she started this festival in Glasgow, and she believed everyone had great creativity in them. She grew up in a super-poor mining neighborhood, but she started this festival of creativity for all the local people to bring their arts and crafts to. And it just became this really amazing thing, and I always loved her. I loved the idea that what she was doing was art in itself, making this platform for other people. Art didn't have to be actually making something yourself, it could be doing an inspiring thing for other people. She was one of my all-time heroes.

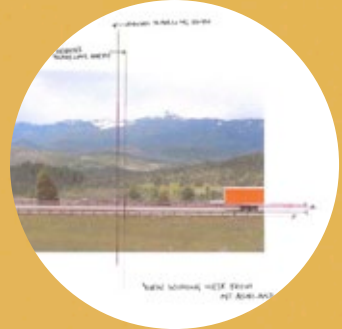
**JOYCE:** Do you use your culture in your art practice?

Yes, I do. Growing up with lots of country crafts and things like that, I still make yarn art and weave things out of corn and paint on eggshells and crush them up and things like that. And I think my fascination with roads is because I've traveled a lot trying to find a home base, traveled all over and finally got here. But the road I grew up next to in England was a Roman road, so it's like two thousand years old, and it was the only straight road. Everything else is tiny one-lane roads, but there was this long straight road and that really fascinated me. I think that's one of the reasons I got really into roads. It was romantic, the idea of this straight line going off somewhere, amongst all the other ones.

**NORA:** Why do you make traffic scores? Was there a personal experience that got you thinking about this?

Yes, there was a concrete moment actually.

I have three kids, and my youngest kid, Finn—when he was fourteen, he was on his bike and he had a really bad bike accident and broke his femur, which is this really big bone in your thigh, in two places. So they put a metal rod down it, and he was in a wheelchair for ages. And he was at home very, very bored—



*Score Notes 1-5/Mr. Ashland, 11am on a Thursday 2017*  
Ink on digital color print

that's when I took my semester off from school, actually. So one day I wheeled him out to the front porch with his wheelchair—I live on Sandy Boulevard—and I put a keyboard across his lap, and he just wanted to play video games, and I was like, "No, we are not doing that for your whole recovery." I said, "OK, when a car goes past in that lane press this note, then this note," and that's how it all started. Then Finn got into it, he's like, "It's just like playing Rock Band," and I was like, "Oh, I guess it is really." So that was it, that was the moment when traffic scores got born into our world.

**BEA:** How old were you when you started making scores and when you became interested in audio art?

Before I went to art school I was in a band, so I was writing music and that kind of thing. Well, I guess I've been in bands all my life, since I was about sixteen. So since sixteen I've been making music and writing music, but it's the last ten years where it's really gone into an art practice rather than just hanging out with my friends making goofy songs.

**ZAZA:** What other types of art do you make and why?

At the moment I'm making a lot of sculptures because I've been thinking about earthquake prep. I've been thinking about all the movement on the land, and then I started thinking about the movement under the land and how where we live there are the two tectonic plates and they're shifting closer and closer. Well, one's shifting toward the other. So I started thinking about the movement we don't see everyday. And whilst I've been thinking about that, I started worrying that I don't have any earthquake preparation stuff. So I've been making these sculptures where I've got earthquake preparation kits, like water purification tablets and protein tablets and Neosporin and emergency ponchos. I put them into plaster and I make these wonky sculptures, with them all sunk in the plaster. They are kind of fragile, with wonky bottoms, so you put them on a shelf. And then when an earthquake happens the shelf will rock and they'll fall off, and then you've got all your earthquake supplies right there on the floor in front of you.

**BEA:** Have you ever struggled with making your artwork? If so, when and why?

Yes, definitely. Last year was a big struggle for me. Post-election, all that kind of stuff, I felt a little bit indulgent to be making art and had to do some hard thinking about what I was doing. Was I actually helping or being a positive force in the community with what I was doing? So I spent some time just stopping making art and thinking. Then I came out on the other end of it, and I was like, "Yes! It is positive making art, I'll continue."

**ELLIOT: What software do you use to edit your traffic scores?**

I use a mixture of GarageBand and Adobe Audition, and then, because I'm using the film footage as well, I'll use Premiere and Final Cut. I kind of mix them all up. And sometimes a little bit of Ableton Live.

**SYNCIER: Have you been on the highway at night? If so, how would you describe it compared to daytime?**

I have been on the highway at night. I think it's more hypnotic at night, you find yourself kind of following the lights in front of you. Do you guys do that thing where you're traveling down the road and then you get somewhere and you're like, "Ah, I can't even remember the journey?" Because you kind of zone out. Even when you're driving you can do that, because you go on automatic pilot. I think when you drive at night, your body is going through the motions, and then you get there and you're like, "Ah, I have no memory of this journey, but here I am."

**SYNCIER: Can the difference between day and night be heard in your work?**

On the album [*Interstate 5*] it definitely can. The tracks which are during the day are way more hectic because there's so much more traffic, and then at night it's a lot more sporadic. I also use different keys depending on what time of day it is. There's a tradition in Western music that relates keys to different emotions and things, so I tried to choose a key for each time. Like, the morning one is—I can't remember what key—but that key signifies persistence. I thought that for morning rush hour, that was a good key to be in.

**ZAZA: What influences your work?**

I think going out and seeing other people's artwork and seeing other people be creative always fires me up. Going and seeing shows or going and visiting with people who are talking about creative



Lou Watson

things or trips they've had or things they've heard. Or you might know the kind of people who are like, "Do you hear that weird thing that's banging against the side of that building over there?" And you wouldn't notice it yourself, but then somebody else just sees something—people who hear or see things and zoom in on something you might overlook. I think that's really inspirational.

**BEA: What medium do you consider your traffic score pieces to be?**

I would say they are... installation, audio/ video installations? Maybe?

**NORA: What audiences are you most interested in communicating with in your work?**

I think that the audiences I'm most interested in communicating with are people who are not traditionally gallerygoers. You know, I want to make work which can bring a moment of joy or thoughtfulness to someone who doesn't have to be trained in the art of art-looking.

**ELLIOT: Do you listen to your albums or traffic scores?**

Yeah, I do actually. I drive down the I-5 quite a lot, and so sometimes I'll put it on whilst I'm driving down the I-5, and I kind of like that. Then I'm like, "Is this a little much?" But I indulge myself.

## Lynn Yarne

*Lynn Yarne's contribution to the Biennial can be found on page 78*

**NORA: How many art resources did you have at your middle school?**

I took one trimester of art in middle school. It was kind of a bad experience because the teacher was really scary. She would yell at us all the time, and everyone was really afraid because if you had a watch that went off, she would yell at you and send you to the principal's office. She said my friend's zebra was not as good as a fourth grader's. So everyone was crying all the time. It was really sad. It was only a couple of months, then there was no more art.

**SYNCIER: How did you get into making art as a profession?**

Lately I've been thinking about whether I have been making art as a profession, because I think as a profession it's something you're recognized for, something you make money at. I don't really make money with my artwork, so I'm doing teaching most of the time, and that could be my profession. The thing I like to do most is making art, and I think with teaching there is a crossover between projects I do within the school and then my own art too. But I've always liked drawing—drawing was my entry point.

**BEA: What artist or person inspired you to become an artist?**

When I was little, I liked drawing with my mom. I don't know if that's what particularly inspired me to be an artist, because I don't think she identified as an artist. Both of my parents are people who like to do things and take on small projects and teach themselves things.

**JOYCE: Do you use your culture in your art practice?**

Yes. Only in the last couple of years have I been focusing on things related to ethnic identity and local culture. When I'm making work I'm always doing something around who I am and where I am and what kinds of things are influencing me.

**NORA: In your artist statement you mention an interest in duality. Do the colors in your art have anything to do with the emotions in the pieces or your interest in duality?**

I've actually been thinking about colors a lot. In the work that I'm making I've been taking a lot of pictures of color inspirations, and the one I've been thinking about a lot recently is purple—like an eggplant or darker—and then forest green with



Woodburning (detail) 2007

red/orange. Which are things that I don't think would go well together, but I'm finding them a lot in old Buddhist temples and altar imagery. I like that there are things that you don't think go together, but when they do they blend in interesting ways and create something else. For example, the animations try to work with histories and actual people's photos or actual people's stories. I feel like those are partially true, and then my artistic version is partially true or kind of exaggerated. It's OK if there is some weird mythmaking going on.

**ZAZA: What drew you into the deeper ideas of the abstract and the concrete?**

Mythology, I think. It's something I've always been interested in, though. Teaching, for example—times when you have a lot of structure and times when you have absolute freedom. Sometimes I think the absolute freedom part is really hard to work with. And sometimes when I give someone really strict rules, like: Draw a house with two bunnies and a fire-place and a rabbit—now there are three bunnies, I guess—then people make more interesting things within those walls.

**JOYCE: In your woodburning pieces we noticed the colors that the tigers are breathing out are all geometric shapes. Can you tell us why?**

I'm not totally sure why. A professor that I really liked—maybe fifteen years ago, probably my favorite teacher I've ever taken a class from—he told me that in all of my work, there's a lot of things coming out of things, and so at that time in my life I was trying to explore that more. Shapes, magical



Woodburning (detail) 2007

things coming out of black-and-white bodies or animals, symbols, recognizable things.

**SYNCIER: When you first started working with woodburning, did you think it would be easy or hard?**

When I would go to the hardware store there were these workshops where these older, experienced-seeming people would go, and it looked really hard and there were lots of different tools. Then I found out it was kind of a hot pen, but I used to like to do them on my lap because you can get really close. I have a scar here, maybe from stabbing myself in the leg with the tool multiple times, because when you slip it's so hot [*makes sizzling sound*]. So it's kind of hard in that way, but fun to learn.

**BEA: What inspired your woodburning drawings?**

At the time I was really interested in mark-making. I use a lot of pencil when I draw. With woodburning I liked the gradient that you get just from leaving the pen on longer, and the smell is nice, like a woody smell. I like the feeling of it. It's really tactile, and you put your hand over it because it's embossed, or the opposite of embossed—engraved. And I like that it's something on a surface. With pencil, your pencil lead is kind of etched into the paper texture, and with wood it's not exactly carved, but almost.



**ELLIOT: What does the tiger symbolize for you in your woodburning pieces?**

I think I see myself as a tiger kind of person. Tigers are still most of the time, but they're ferocious and they have a solid presence. Maybe it's an aspirational animal identification for myself. Like I want to be a tiger. They don't have to do much to seem worthy of respect. They seem very strong and powerful, but they're not showing off, they're just lying around and taking naps. I like that.

**BEA: In your *Candy* body of work, how did you create and mold the candy sculptures?**

I did a lot of prototypes. One was about twenty-five pounds, and there is a series of smaller ones in the shapes of sentimental things. I made them mostly with silicone molds. So I make them out of cardboard and things first, like modeling clay.



*Candy (detail) 2006*

Then I make a silicone mold around it. I did a lot of candy baking in my studio at that time.

**ZAZA: What does candy symbolize in your artwork?**

I guess it does relate to what I'm working on now. I was really interested in nostalgia. I was away from home, away from Portland. At that time of my life I really wanted to go away and be somewhere else, and then I found myself missing Portland a lot and missing family or missing the landscape here, and I think the candy symbolized all the things I was making up about Portland that I didn't really appreciate when I was here and that are more sentimental and in my mind than 100 percent real. Something that's overly sweet, or something that's sweet and temporal. I was inspired by some traditional Chinese funeral practices—after the funeral you get a piece of candy and five cents, a small amount of money, so that you get the sweetness of life after all the sadness. Then you get some money to buy yourself a candy in the future when you are feeling sad again.

**ELLIOT: What inspired your *Empty Houses* set of work?**

After the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, I went on a trip with a group of people to promote tourism. It's a place that relies heavily on tourism, and because they had the big earthquake, that was really devastated. A lot of people were afraid to go to Japan because of the nuclear disaster there, so we did a big expedition to show that it's OK to go to Japan. And to spend money there to support local economies, but also to help clean up people's houses. So those were from photos of the houses that we worked in and the houses that we saw.

**JOYCE: What medium did you use in *Empty Houses*?**  
Sumi ink.

**ZAZA: A lot of your work seems dark, and you show a lot of dead animals. What does death mean to you?**

I've been thinking about that a lot. I'm kind of a morbid person, but not in a way that I feel bad

about. I was trying to ask my mom the other day what she thinks happens when you die, and she always just says nothing. Nothing happens. With death I'm excited about the mystery of it, and going back to duality, abstract versus concrete, I think that's a place where there's a meeting of all of those things. When someone dies, they're physically there and they are not there at all, as a person. That's a weird duality.

**BEA: What is it like being a teacher at Grant High School and also making all of these art projects?**

Originally I thought they were going to be the same thing, that I could do all my art projects as a teacher at Grant, and all my creative needs would be fulfilled working with other people. And then in the last couple of years I have been making stuff entirely on my own in my room, just going wild without any need to make stuff for my students or with a group, and that's been really healthy for me. I like being an art teacher at Grant. I don't know how long I can do it, but I'm finding that it's been wild without any separate practices, although there is overlap, of course, as far as what I'm thinking about.

**ZAZA: Why did you become a teacher?**

Initially, like with drawings, I was making stuff all by myself all the time and asking my own questions. And a lot of my work was about being sad or about self-therapeutic practices. I wanted to learn better structures for making art with other people and having research questions that I can share with other people. Teaching is a structured way to help me learn that.

**NORA: We noticed you also make video art. Do you prefer working this way or in more traditional media, like drawing?**

I go through phases—I don't know if phases is the right word. I'm liking working with video because I think animating things can give a weird life to them. And I'm interested in historical documents or ways to activate historical pieces. I do think I'll probably go back to drawing, but I always cycle through different types of work, based on what I'm working on.

**ELLIOT: What excites you about working with ballpoint pen?**

**We saw a ballpoint pen piece where you did it entirely in ballpoint pen.**

I like that it's something you find at the bank or find on the floor. It's a really common tool, and so for those ballpoint pen drawings I was only using the Bic ones, the very cheapest, weirdest ones. When they start running out of ink they get really nice—you can draw really thin lines and kind of sketchier lines, almost like a pencil. I was interested in using such a blunt tool, trying to be more delicate with it or get a wider range from it.

**SYNCIER: Do you prefer working with ballpoint pen, woodburning, or creating dioramas?**

Right now, dioramas. Actually, I think of these video pieces as dioramas.



*Empty Houses: The House I Grew Up In 2011*  
Sumi ink on paper

**SYNCIER: Where did the idea for the diorama pieces come from?**

The ones with the glass? It was right before I started teaching, when I was thinking about making art by myself or with other people. For a couple of months I was trying to only make art for one specific person at a time, and so the collaborations were trades with other people. Someone gave me something like a song that they worked on, or whatever their art practice was, and then I would make something specifically for them. I don't know why that ended up as dioramas.

**NORA: Do you consider some of your videos stop-motion?**

Yes. Right now I'm interested in making them choppy. I've been making them in a style where there aren't as many floating things, and so I've been doing more frame by frame, which is kind of stop-motion.

**ZAZA: Are the people in your video work family or friends?**

In the pieces I've been working on most recently, they were all family members, and then some community members that I interviewed. Right now I'm trying to work with images of people that I don't know, and have more archetypal or mythological people. But before that, most of the things from the altarpieces are specifically women in my family and then my dad.

**JOYCE: What do the videos portray?**

I'm still trying to think about that for myself. I created them as almost a pump-up reel for myself. Might be a common theme in my work. I think the way a lot of altars function for me is as something to go to and memorialize and honor. An altar reminds you of your values and the things that you are trying to do with your life, the way you interact with the world. And those are like a video version of that.



# Sabina Haque

Portland

*Signs of the Times* 2019

2019

3-channel video installation, archival footage from  
Portland City Archives, zines

Sabina Haque's work combines oral histories, performance, and hand-drawn animation to explore transformations of place and identity. Raised in Karachi by American and Pakistani parents, Haque has spent half her life in America. This cross-cultural experience informs her conceptual approach, which uses art as a tool for excavating site-specific stories.

In 2016–17 Haque was artist-in-residence at the Portland Archives and Records Center, a public art residency funded by Portland's Percent for Art program. Collaborating with non-typical art participants, including disadvantaged youth and immigrant communities of color, is a vital part of Haque's creative process. She has partnered with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Africa House, and schools in East Portland to give voice to untold stories through art. Haque acts as a bridge between underserved communities

and establishment institutions. Her exhibit featuring the oral and written histories of Somali women was installed at the Portland Art Museum in March 2018 and included an artist talk with immigrant activist Lul Abdulle, drawing a non-traditional audience to the museum for the first time. Haque's series of etchings entitled *The Right to Return* was exhibited at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in September 2018 as part of the show *Witness*, which explored issues of race and social justice in contemporary printmaking. The museum commissioned Haque to facilitate a zine-printing workshop with LGBT and Native/Indigenous students, resulting in twenty-four pages of images confronting racism, sexism, and environmental pollution.

This three-channel video installation considers perspectives on land, power, belonging, and identity in Portland's communities of color, particularly those that are located east of 82nd Avenue. The complicated story of East Portland is one of forced annexation and migration, which resulted in two segregated communities, one on either side of 82nd. One in two residents living east of 82nd is a person of color, while 90 percent of residents living west of 82nd are white. This installation brings together Haque's prior work as the artist in residence at the Portland Archives and Records Center and two place-making zine projects she completed while working with at-risk youth in the East Portland neighborhoods known as "The Numbers."

In this new piece, film, text, animated maps, and archival photos are overlaid with the lived experiences of young people growing up in the Numbers as they talk about their hopes and concerns for their community. The installation offers an immersive experience involving overlapping projections, putting the viewer in the middle of an intersection at 82nd Avenue, the present-day geographical center of Portland. Haque seeks to erase the distance between the viewer and the viewed through the use of scale, sound, and theater-in-the-round, creating multiple vantage points from which to contemplate complicated questions about place, power, and the future evolution of our city.





sw Where's Our st

sw Dead Faggot st

sw Darcelle XV st

sw Vaseline Alley st



# Anthony Hudson/ Carla Rossi

Portland

*Alternative Options  
for Harvey Milk Street* 2019

Aluminum street signs, metal, MDO plates

Anthony Hudson (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde) is a multidisciplinary artist, writer, performer, and filmmaker perhaps best known as Portland's premier drag clown, Carla Rossi, an immortal trickster whose attempts at realness almost always result in fantastic failure. Anthony and Carla host and program *Queer Horror*—the only exclusively LGBTQ horror screening series in the country—bimonthly at the historic Hollywood Theatre, where Anthony also serves as Community Programmer. In 2018, Anthony was named a National Artist Fellow by the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation and a Native Launchpad artist by the Western Arts Alliance; in 2019, Anthony was named an Individual Artist Fellow by the Oregon Arts Commission. Anthony's first evening-length show as Carla Rossi since 2014, *Clown Down: Failed to Mount*, will premiere at PNCA this November,

and Anthony's first professionally produced theatrical play—a multi-actor version of *Looking for Tiger Lily* commissioned by Artists Repertory Theatre—will make its world premiere in May 2020 with support from a 2018 Oregon Community Foundation Creative Heights grant.

# Notes on Harvey Milk Street, or: A Short History of Vaseline Alley

Anthony Hudson



**Carla Rossi**

Photograph by Sam Gehrke

On June 14, 2018, Portland City Council successfully voted to rename thirteen blocks of SW Stark Street in recognition of the gay San Francisco politician and activist Harvey Milk, who was assassinated in 1978. Propagated by a grassroots coalition of downtown Portland business owners—and endorsed by such personalities as former Oregon governor Barbara Roberts, musician Thomas Lauderdale, filmmaker Gus Van Sant and screenwriter Dustin Lance Black, Matthew’s parents Judy and Dennis Shepard, and Democratic fundraiser Terry Bean, who has faced (and currently faces) a litany of on/off indictments for sex abuse—Portland’s Harvey Milk Street Project sought, according to its website, to “honor the LGBTQ community’s struggle for equality & contributions” with the new street sign.

SW Stark Street was chosen for rebranding due to its history as a queer neighborhood, in particular the “Burnside Triangle” stretching from SW Stark and SW 10th Avenue over to West Burnside and up to SW 13th Avenue (further back in history to the “vice” days of the early 1900s, this territory stretched past SW Stark to SW Washington Street). Best remembered as “Vaseline Alley” due to the high population of gay bars, hookup sites, rainbow flags, and queer-owned businesses in general, Burnside’s Pink Triangle once housed the original locations of the Portland Eagle and Silverado strip club as well as the long-defunct Club Portland bathhouse, the Three Sisters bar, Flossie’s, the Fez, Red Cap Garage and its sister club Boxxes, and Panorama.

Razed and replaced in a tide of gentrification triggered by the installation of the Ace Hotel in 2007, the fey earth and concrete of Vaseline Alley was finally straight-salted not long into the early 2010s, leaving just two remaining queer businesses in its wake: Scandals and the Roxy, the latter home to years of 4 AM meals for underage queer teenagers ready to eat after a night of dancing at the nearby City Nightclub, later known as Club Z, and even later as the Escape, before its closure as the only all-ages LGBTQ venue in Portland.

What was once the multi-story Eagle is now the ass-end of McMenamin’s Crystal Ballroom and a franchise apothecary specializing in high-end skincare; Silverado and Club Portland, once home to male strippers



and a labyrinth of glory holes and bareback sex, gave way to McMenamín's Crystal Hotel and Zeus Café; Three Sisters, which became a gay strip club after the death of its original owners, was ultimately reborn as the still-surviving Scandals; Panorama traded dance parties for dinner and a movie at Living Room Theaters; and the Fez, which once hosted queer variety show Homomentum and the year-long Miss Thing drag competition hosted by Heklina and Artemis Chase, sits empty above the grave site of Red Cap Garage and Boxxes—bars where, full disclosure, I met my first drag family in 2010 and cut my teeth hosting cabaret shows. You can now purchase artisan backpacks there, or if you're hungry there's always \$13 ramen offered at Boxer Ramen, owned by the proprietors of Blue Star Donuts and Little Big Burger (that is, before they sold the latter to Hooters).

Am I bitter about the death of Vaseline Alley? Absolutely. Do I believe that renaming the street after a politician from San Francisco, regardless of his import or impact, is an effective way to honor the lost gayborhood of Vaseline Alley? Absolutely not. Look no further than the words of Mayor Ted Wheeler, who on the day of the City Council's vote—during Pride month, no less, because that's the only time politics publicly sanctions talk of queerness—was quoted as saying that renaming the street “sends a signal that [Portland is] an open and a welcoming and an inclusive community.” Wheeler's “signal” is in actuality nothing but a gaslight—an empty gesture meant to propel Portland's white capitalist branding as a diverse liberal mecca.

If Portland were open, welcoming, and inclusive, would we let an entire queer city district fall into disrepair and disband at the hands of rent inflation, causeless eviction, and gentrification? Would we support our businesses that—capitalist or not—contribute to the city's cultural landscape? Would we let an entire unending acronym's worth of identities lose their collective hub and home, where it's safe to walk among peers without being bashed? Sadly, of course we wouldn't—look at what we've let gentrification do to the Black and Asian communities who are pushed farther and farther out of North and East Portland. Look at the cops who

trade information with Proud Boys and shoot unarmed youth of color and the mentally ill. Look at the comically angled, yet completely unfunny, bus stop benches we place to prevent the homeless (a large proportion of whom are queer, youth, and of color) from sitting and resting, or at the boulders ODOT has placed on roadsides to prevent them from sleeping. But Wheeler's liberal “signal” isn't for them: like that elusive green light the Great Gatsby is constantly reaching for, Wheeler's signal is designed only for the tech retirees and land barons settling New Portland with their “Dream of the Nineties.”

Regardless of how you feel about what the Street Formerly Known as SW Stark should be called (in the talk leading up to the campaign, Darcelle XV's name was thrown around often and rightfully so, but one must be deceased for five years to become a street's namesake, if one cares about laws pertaining to signs), or the fact that Harvey Milk “doesn't even go here” to quote *Mean Girls*, this new street sign functions not as a tribute but as a tombstone too ashamed to honor its own history:

*Here lies Vaseline Alley. Here lies what was and is no more. Here lies the undesirable, the unwanted, the city's wcloset, Portland's junk drawer. Here lies the economically unviable—businesses discarded, memories forgotten, lives paved and repainted. Here lies dried blood and smeat and cum and skin cells, the dust of the faggots and the dykes and the trannies and the whole of their lot.*

*May they rest replaced.*



# Garrick Imatani

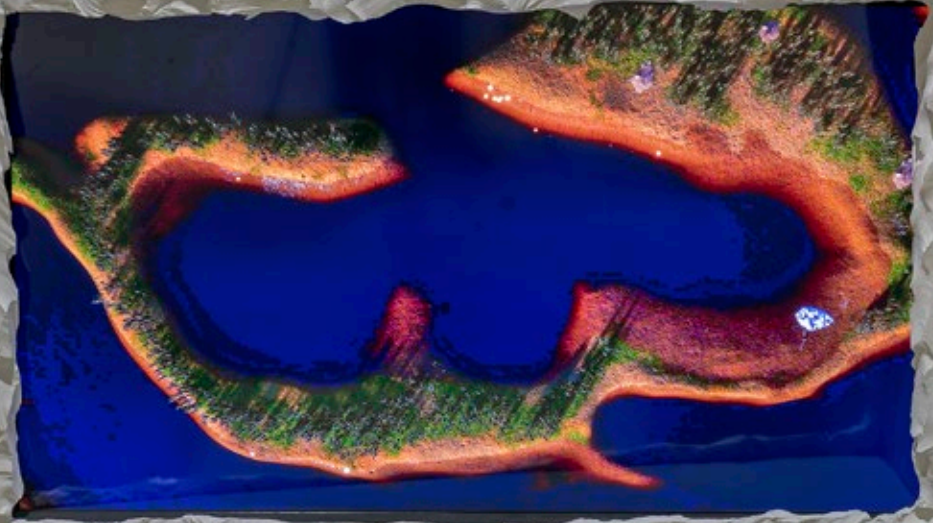
Portland

*The Drift* 2019

Video

Garrick Imatani uses embodied perception, fabrication, and performance to think through the role of landscape, collective history, and racialized bodies within the United States. Imatani's process frequently stems from research, site visits, and collaboration, resulting in sculptures, installations, drawings, photographs, videos, and public projects exhibited nationally and internationally. Imatani's recent collaborative public work, *The Watcher Files Project* (with Kaia Sand), has been exhibited at Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston; the Art, Design, and Architecture Museum at UC Santa Barbara; YNKB in Copenhagen, Denmark; and the Portland Archives and Records Center (Portland, OR), among others. Other recent exhibitions and venues include the Southern Oregon SITE Project at Schneider Museum of Art (Ashland, OR), Triumph Gallery (Moscow, Russia), Ditch Projects (Springfield, OR), Incident Report (Hudson, NY), Hap

Gallery (Portland, OR), and the Portland Museum of Art Biennial (Portland, ME). Imatani is the recipient of several grants and awards from such organizations as The Ford Family Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, Maine Arts & Culture Council; as well as the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, and the Calligram Foundation (as part of the Spreading Rumours collaborative with Ariana Jacob and Anna Gray + Ryan Wilson Paulsen). He has been an artist-in-residence at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program (Woodside, CA), Ragdale (Lake Forest, IL), Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (Nebraska City, NE), and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (Skowhegan, ME). In 2016, he received a Percent for Art commission for a permanent installation at the University of Oregon, the G. Douglas Byers Memorial Fellowship for a Signal Fire Outpost Residency (Mount Hood, OR), and The Ford Family Foundation Resident Artist Fellowship at Ucross Foundation (Clearmont, WY). In 2019, his work will be featured in a monograph supported by The Ford Family Foundation, an exhibit at the Chachalu Museum at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and in *Unwalking the West* at the Center for Contemporary Art and Culture at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. Imatani holds an MFA in visual arts from Columbia University and a BA in Art Studio from the University of California at Santa Barbara. He has served as studio head of Foundations at Lewis & Clark College and as an assistant professor of sculpture and 3D fabrication at Southern Oregon University. He is currently the chair of Foundation at Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon.



*The Drift* is a multipart installation that includes a film made within a virtual reality software program, objects on loan from multiple institutions, Cona VR experience, and souvenirs from regional and national institutions that currently possess cultural artifacts from the Grand Ronde.

The film depicts Tamanowas (the Willamette meteorite) lifting off from its base inside the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and traveling westward toward its ancestral home. As the meteorite travels, it passes institutions such as the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Harvard University) and the Field Museum (Chicago), which continue to house objects that have not been repatriated back to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. There are hundreds of snapshots held in photo albums by the tribes' Cultural Resources Department that document objects scattered across the United States. These snapshots were individually scanned and appear within the film as the meteorite passes by their relative geographic location, producing a visual archive of displaced belongings that the meteorite is symbolically pulling back together.

The installation's title, *The Drift*, invokes the story of Tamanowas drifting down the Willamette Valley during glacial floods several thousand years ago. The film, produced in collaboration with 3-D environmental artist Matt Krause, contains original 3-D-modeled environments as well as assets that can be purchased online, often for video game development. In suggesting that an uncontrollable geologic event or unexplained force of nature brings these artifacts home, *The Drift* visualizes the erasure of bureaucracies that often stand between collection and repatriation.



# Colin Ives

Eugene

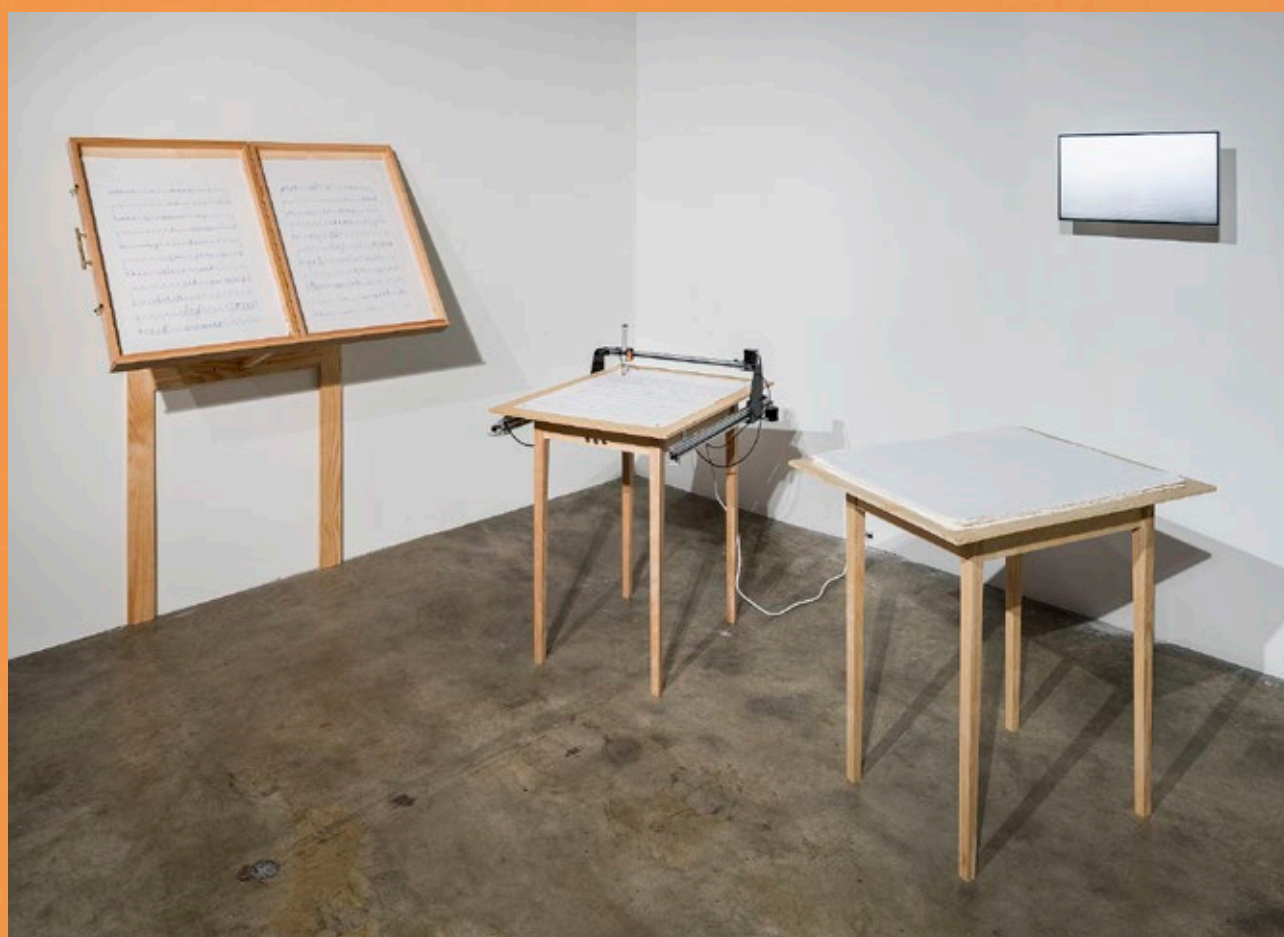
*Wave Scribe* 2019

Wooden tables, handmade paper, custom electronics

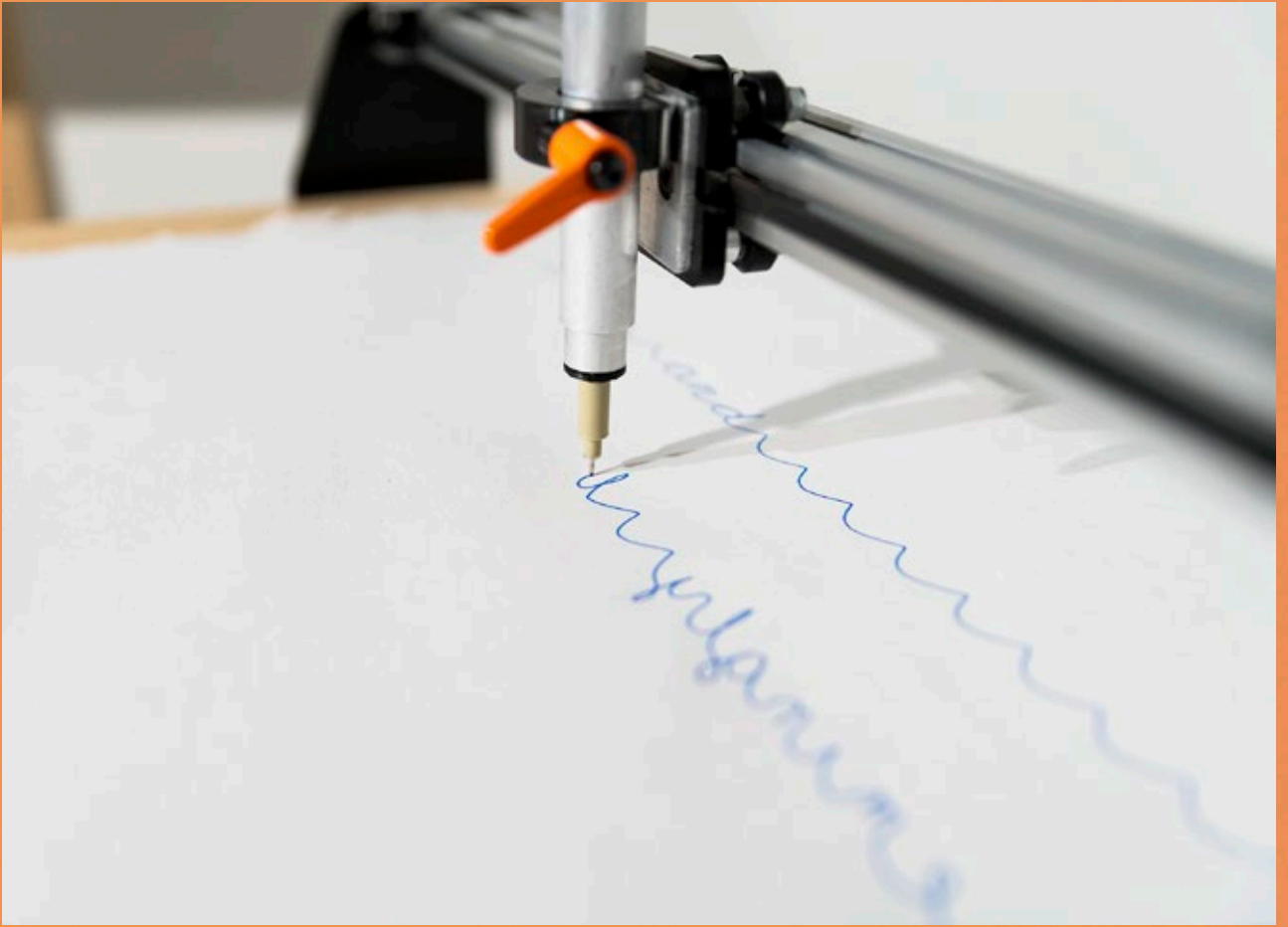
**Colin Ives's creative practice operates within a nexus of overlapping cultural categories, including art, technology, and ecology. The tools central to his work, digital media and the computer, are themselves representative of a hybrid discourse. Clearly the nearly insatiable demand for progress that has shaped our technology-driven culture has had a devastating impact on the environment. Ives's projects increasingly address ecological issues, not only in regard to technologically driven questions, but also in regard to broader questions about our sense of place in the natural world. His work has been shown in the context of international exhibitions such as the International Symposium on Electronic Art and the Microwave International New Media Arts Festival in Hong Kong.**

*Wave Scribe* is a machine that is designed to write out the entire text of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. Once a page is loaded, the machine starts writing using a digitized form of Ives's own cursive script; however, the transcription is altered in height and slant by data from the current rise, fall, and direction of ocean waves off the Oregon coast. In this way the text of this great American novel, which famously reflects a cultural upheaval in our relationship to nature and the effects of technology brought on by the industrial revolution, is altered in form.

Waves are not material things; they are a transfer of energy through a medium. Spoken words cause an oscillation in the elastic medium of air reaching the ear of a listener by way of longitudinal waves of compressions and rarefactions. Scripts are thought to have begun as notches, knots, and notations to keep track of material goods for commerce, but this new materialized language also allowed for new forms of transmission, resulting in literature and other poetic/philosophical plays of language, which have forever changed our individual and collective brains.









# rubén garcía marrufo

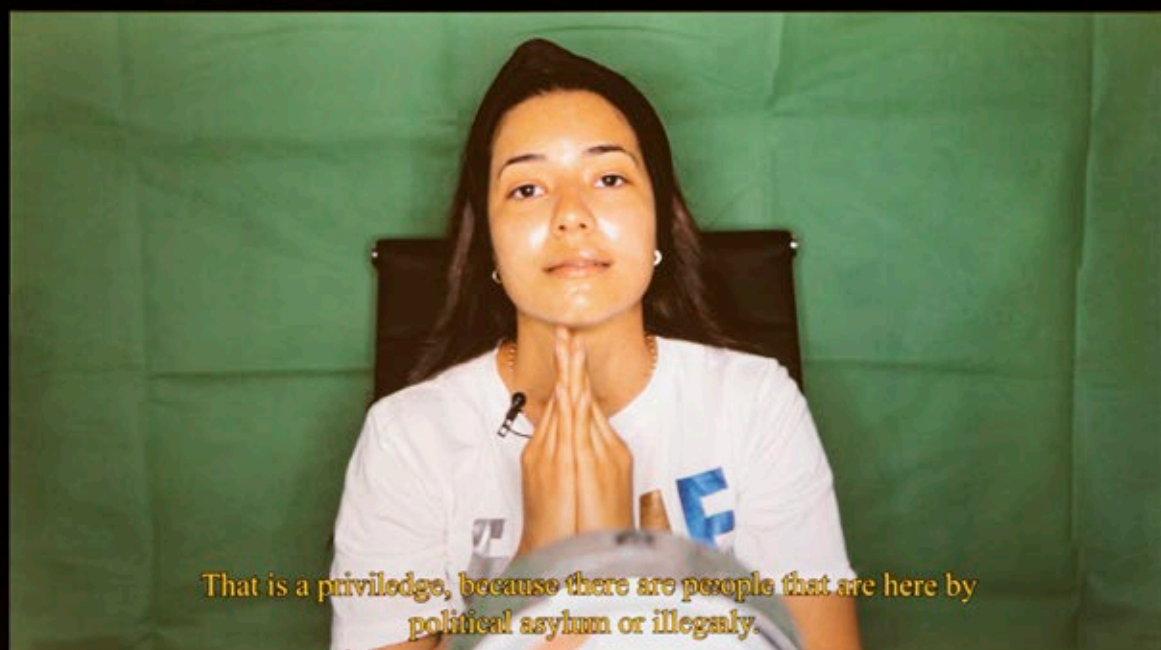
Portland

*el cielo mas hermoso* (detail) 2019

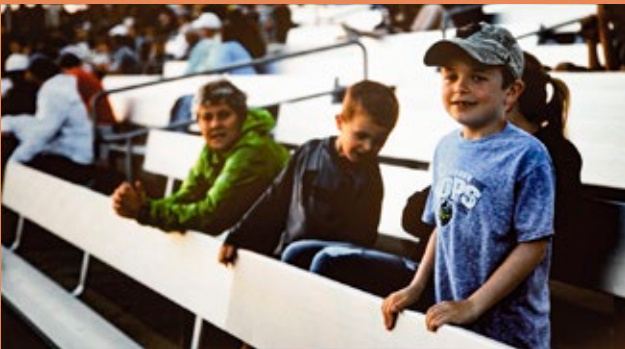
Documentary video, steel bench from the old U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center

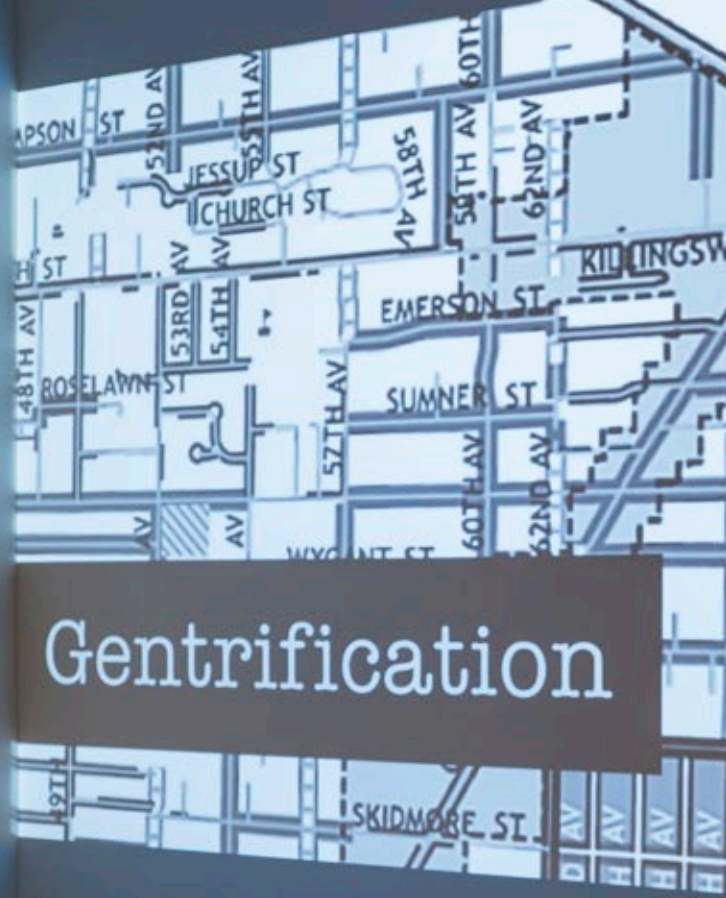
rubén garcía marrufo is a Mexican filmmaker whose work focuses on borders and the separation from place and its aftermath. It finds its place between fiction and documentary video forms with narratives that are rooted in hearsay of multiple languages. They attend to witness and document the extension of the border event and its burdens beyond the geographical line of demarcation. They choreograph actions and speech in order to attain the ecstatic material their films are known for. Co-curator of Chingada, an experimental space focused on non-specific art objects and non-objective art conceived from the distance featuring Latin American artists. Was part of the 2018 MexiCali Biennial, *Calafia: Manifesting the Terrestrial Paradise*. Recipient of 2018 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts grant via the Precipice Fund. Recipient of 2019 Regional Arts & Culture Council Project Grant for *rise and fall*. They have produced feature-length,

short, and experimental films that have been exhibited in Mexico, the US, Germany, and the UK, including work presented at Artists Space, ABContemporary, Kunstverein, South London Gallery, Escritorio de Procesos, Echo Park Film Center, and Mexicali Rose.



The piece *el cielo más hermoso* (“the most beautiful sky”) is a series of collaborative interviews that acts as a prologue to a larger narrative about border crossings and latinx nationals living in the United States. The subjects decided how and where they would recount their stories of escape, migration, and refuge. The border artist works at the edges of diaspora; the piece acts as a rumination on the artist’s own narrative of witnessing and enacting crossings, the everyday life of an immigrant, and what kinds of documentation allow for one to truly live.





# Gentrification



*In the City of Roses**Streets lined with red brick, and green branches**Weren't rainy days that might seem bleak**Our rain is the paint that makes the land lush and the folks unique*

ESPERANZA SPALDING, "City of Roses"

Esperanza Spalding attributes the uniqueness of Portland—the City of Roses—not simply to the natural setting for which it is famous, but to its people. The landscape of the Northwest is imprinted deeply in the consciousness of people born here, and Oregon is famous for its mountain ranges, rivers, and quirky entrepreneurs capitalizing on counterculture. The state's isolation from the rest of the country has allowed for creative experimentation and self-exploration, and many creatives come here to discover the parts of themselves they have to keep hidden in other places. This may be why the artists of the Portland2019 Biennial experiment with sound, video, performance, and new technologies. The rain Spalding mentions in her ode to her hometown nourishes not only the land, but also the people, allowing them to grow and dream in special ways.

In planning a biennial for this region, it was vital to ask the artists about their relationship to the land. What can grow here, and to what ends? Currently, Americans across the country are struggling to afford housing, health care, education, and other basic needs, and undemocratic attempts to grasp power are increasing at an alarming rate. While our country is wrestling with what it wants to be and looking toward the future, Oregon is reckoning with its roots in Manifest Destiny. The City of Roses, and the state it's a part of, are just like Spalding's song—unquestionably beautiful, and fueled by what sets them apart.

**Sabina Haque***Signs of the Times* (detail) 2019

3-channel video installation, archival footage from Portland City Archives, zines





# Jess Perlitz

Eugene

*Onwards* 2019

Burnt wood, paper pulp

Jess Perlitz makes work focused on considering landscape and the ways in which we define and seek to recognize ourselves within it. Grappling with how space is articulated, her projects take many forms, traversing performance, sculpture, and drawing. Her work has appeared in a variety of venues, such as playgrounds, fields, galleries, and museums, including the Institute for Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, PA; Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, NY; Cambridge Galleries in Ontario, Canada; De Fabriek in the Netherlands; and as part of the Arctic Circle residency program. Born in Toronto, Canada, Jess is a graduate of Bard College. She received her MFA from Tyler School of Art and her clown training from the Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation and Performance. Jess is a 2019 Hallie Ford Fellow currently based in Portland, Oregon, where she is associate professor of art and head of

sculpture at Lewis & Clark College. Jess was recently an artist-in-residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, Nebraska, and she was included in the 2019 American Academy of Arts and Letters Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts in New York City. Her project *Chorus* is currently installed at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia as part of the historical site's ongoing artist installation series.

Sometimes sculptures can be traces of a past, and sometimes they are proposals for a future. There are times when objects can hover in both positions. *Onward* is a drunk tower that buckles as it reaches up. It is burnt. It holds up the ghost and shell of a weather vane. It is at once a fire tower that has survived, a surveillance tower that is skeletal, and a monument that is flaccid. Surveillance of land is a way to navigate and survive. It also holds narratives of power and dominance. The idea of marching onward feels inextricably linked to both a past and future mourning.

*Onwards* (detail) 2019  
Burnt wood, paper pulp



# THE CHILDREN ARE IN CAGES RIGHT NOW

INTERMENT CAMPS, CONCENTRATION CAMPS, DETENTION.  
CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT  
FAMILIES ARE BEING TORN APART AND TRAUMATIZED.  
THESE SIX CHILDREN HAVE DIED IN THE PAST YEAR

Darlyn Cristóbal Casanova  
10  
El Salvador

Daniel Casil Moquin  
7  
Guatemala

Felipe González  
8  
Guatemala

Juan de Dios Guzmán  
16  
Guatemala

Carlos Hernández Quiroz  
16  
Guatemala

Wilson José Ramírez Quiroz  
2 1/2  
Guatemala



# Vanessa Renwick

Portland

*You Remember, You Forget* 2019

Window film, paint, vinyl, wood, light,  
scrim, candles, handmade ceramic vases, flowers,  
lucite donation box, zines

Vanessa Renwick is an artist by nature, not by stress of research. She puts scholars to rout by embracing nature's teaching problems that have fretted trained minds. Working in experimental and poetic documentary forms, her iconoclastic work embodies her interest in landscape and transformation, and relationships between bodies and landscapes, and all sorts of borders.

She has been a singular voice in experimental cinema for over twenty years. Eschewing an allegiance to any one medium or form, Renwick builds authentic moving-image works that reveal an insatiable curiosity and unflinching engagement with the world around her. Often focusing her lens on themes of westward expansion and the locales of her adopted home, the Pacific Northwest, Renwick uses avant-garde formal elements to explore radical politics and environmental issues. An artist who often self-distributes, her screening history reads as a map

of independent cinema worldwide. She has screened work in hundreds of venues internationally, institutional and not, including the Museum of Modern Art, Light Industry, the Wexner Center for the Arts, Art Basel, Oberhausen, the Museum of Jurassic Technology, Centre Pompidou, Bread and Puppet Theater, and True/False Film Festival, among many others.

Vanessa Olivia Renwick is an artist of Scottish and German descent born on the traditional and unceded territory of the Illiniwek in what is now known as Chicago, Illinois. She lives and works as an uninvited guest on the traditional territory of the Chinookan peoples, now known as Portland, Oregon.

The children are in cages right now.

Separated from their parents.

I move about my day, brushing my teeth,  
my hair, researching, working, eating,  
laughing with my son, going to a movie.

I speak with others  
how we are being like so many of the Germans  
when the Nazis  
were rounding up the Jews.

(I'm part German, now living on  
Chinookan peoples' stolen lands.)

They agree.

And we then talk about something else:  
dogs, parents declining, babies being born,  
addictions, auto bodywork, human bodywork.  
The children are in cages right now.

These six we know have died in the cages since September  
2018:

Darlyn Cristabel Cordova-Valle, 10, El Salvador  
Jakelin Caal Maquín, 7, Guatemala  
Felipe Gomez Alonzo, 8, Guatemala  
Juan de León Gutiérrez, 16, Guatemala  
Wilmer Josué Ramírez Vásquez, 2½, Guatemala  
Carlos Hernandez Vásquez, 16, Guatemala

Angels submerged

The knowledge floats  
to the surface of my spirit  
and dissipates

again

As we go about our days

Many thanks to all who helped me create this work:

Joshua Berger, PLAZM *Graphic design*

Anthony Brisson *Vinyl and installation thereof*

Dina No *Vase maker*

Ariadne Garden *Flower donations*

Flower replenishers *Vanessa Renwick, Anne Greenwood, Moe Bomstern and Dwayne Hedstrom*

Sarah Mirk *BAIL THEM OUT zine maker*

Brian Jennings *Electrician*

Rob Bardel & Dwayne Hedstrom *Paint and wood donations*

Katherine Lance *Intern*

Erika Wanenmacher and Allegra Love *steered me to The Innovation Law Lab*

Dustin Williams *Preparator extraordinaire*

*You Remember, You Forget* included a box for visitors to donate to Portland's Innovation Law Lab ([innovationlawlab.org/donate](http://innovationlawlab.org/donate)), a legal advocacy group currently focused on immigration and refugee rights; as well as handouts related to that project, stickers, copies of her poem, and instructional zines created especially for this project by Sarah Mirk.











Formally identifying a place as culturally significant to tribal people is a way to legally protect it from industrial development and ecological threat. The Tribal Cultural Property nomination put forth by The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians this year was generated to protect the Coos Bay estuary, not only for us but also for everyone who lives around it and relies on its health and preservation. This estuary is under threat from the Jordan Cove LNG project. Jordan Cove is the cultural and natural epicenter of the estuary.

I am a fourth-generation descendant of the Jordan family, we are Hanis Coos. It should be noted that Jordan Cove was named after my family. We lived in the cove since the beginning of human occupation of this place until contact pushed us out and still, we return to in any way possible. It holds tremendous significance to our people and for our future. While the Jordan Cove LNG project has co-opted my family name, it should be noted that this is not a Jordan family project and it is working in direct opposition to our interests.

From the winter of 2018 through the summer of 2019 the overtly racist and propagandist STOP THE TCP (Traditional Cultural Property) Historic District signs were posted roughly every ten feet along the roads of Coos Bay and North Bend as well as at most significant sights in the surrounding estuary. They were made by the Coos Concerned Property Owners Alliance. It should be stated that while they used our name (COOS) they are working in direct opposition of the Coos people and tribe.

Coos children see these signs hundreds of times every single day on their way to school, as they move around town with their families, and as they interact with the land preserving and enjoying their cultural lifeways and inheritance.





# Sharita Towne

Portland

*Alluvium: collective thinking and writing for Black Life, Black Spatial Imaginaries: Glimpses Across Time and Space, A Visual Bibliography* 2018–2019

Research and concept with Lisa K. Bates with original written contributions from Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Derrais Carter, Katherine McKittrick, LaShandra Sullivan, Shana Friffin, and Treva Ellison

Book designed by Sharita Towne with Garima Thakur

Printed at Eberhardt Press; bound at Container Corps

**Sharita Towne is a transdisciplinary artist based in Portland, Oregon. She was born and raised on the West Coast of the United States along I-5—from Salem, Oregon, to Tacoma, Washington, and down to Sacramento, California. She is a research-based video artist and printmaker most interested in creating interdisciplinary community art projects that engage local and global Black geographies, histories, and possibilities.**

**She is the co-founder of URe:AD Press (United Re:Public of the African Diaspora) and the Black Life Experiential Research Group. She is also known as “Mariah Carrie Mae Weems,” one-fourth of the postcolonial conceptual karaoke band Weird Allan Kaprow. URe:AD Press is an ongoing collaborative print and media project for Afro-diasporic audiences that produces video installations, screen-printed ephemera, and self-published books of Afro-diasporic inquiry. The Black Life**

**Experiential Research Group is an interdisciplinary collaborative for inquiry and activism at the intersection of art, urban planning, and radical geography. Weird Allan Kaprow creates participatory projects built around appropriating pop melodies and creating new lyrics and music videos that critique institutional and art-historical complicity in promoting recolonial worldviews.**

**Towne holds a BA from the University of California, Berkeley in Interdisciplinary Studies and Art Practice, and an MFA from Portland State University in Contemporary Art Practice. She has received support from such organizations as Art Matters, the Fulbright Program, the Precipice Fund, Calligram Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Oregon Arts Commission, The Ford Family Foundation, and the Regional Arts & Culture Council. She currently teaches at the Pacific Northwest College of Art.**

A bird's-eye view that extends over Black life and geography. Black citations—written and lived between the body, place, and page—are spatialized through craft, in homage and reverie. The alluvial nature of our collective thinking and our physical relationship to land, air, sky, and paper are brought into form here as atlas, blueprint, and evocation. Black imaginaries are seen through a telescope that collapses past and present in experimental scholarship—magnifying undersung activist histories and Black people in their everyday, as they move along roadways and waterways by force and by choice, under bright skies, in joyful hardship.

1.  
*Black Life, Black Spatial Imaginaries*  
*Glimpses Across Time and Space*  
*A Visual Bibliography* 2018–2019

Research and concept with Lisa K. Bates  
Mixed process print, printed with Watershed Publishing Center

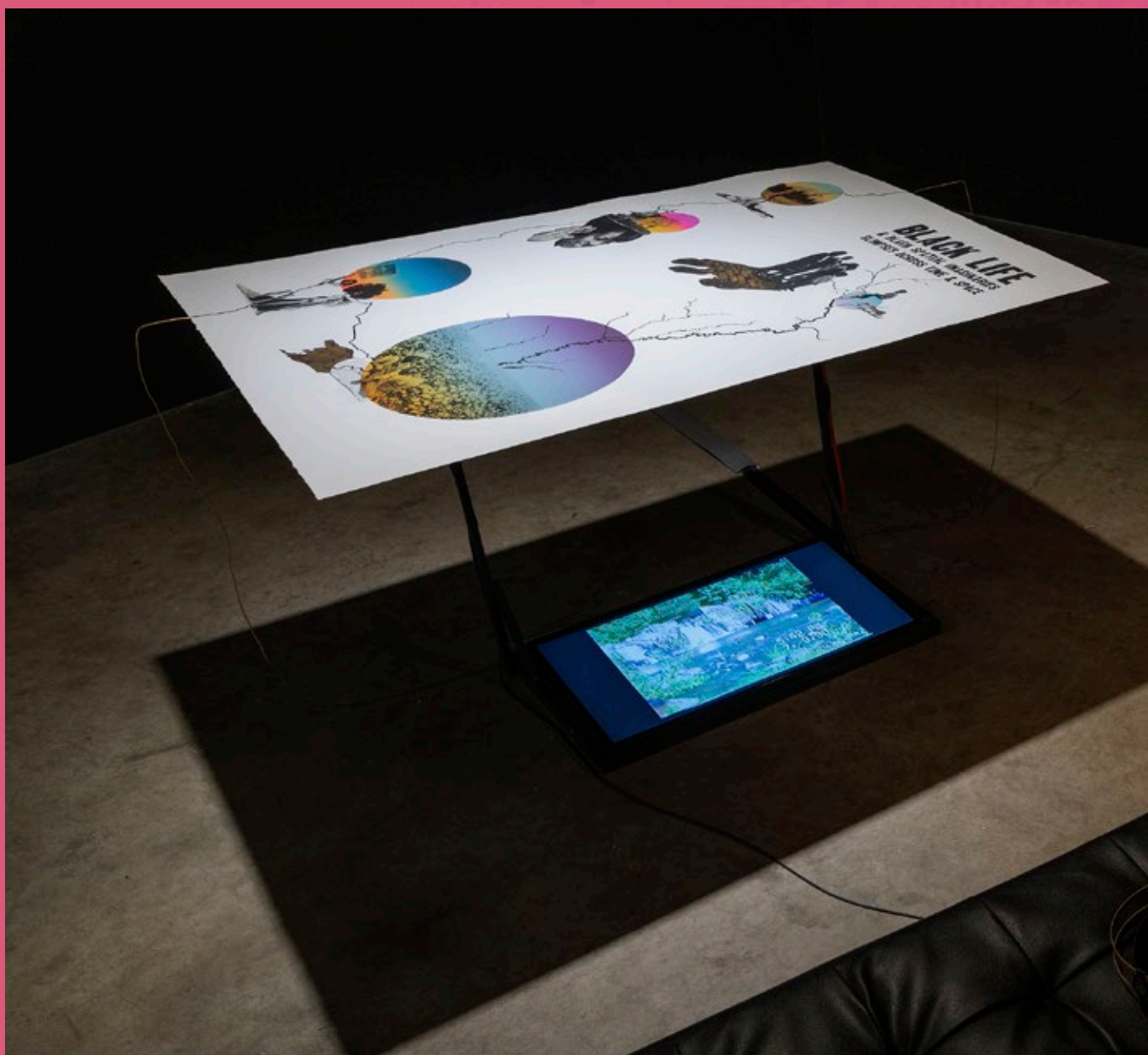
2.  
*Black Dirt:*  
*A Family, a Geography* 1990–2020

With Clara Harris  
Digitized video

3.  
*Alluvium: collective thinking and writing for Black Life,*  
*Black Spatial Imaginaries: Glimpses Across*  
*Time and Space, A Visual Bibliography* 2018–2019

Research and concept with Lisa K. Bates, with original written contributions from Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Derrais Carter, Katherine McKittrick, LaShandra Sullivan, Shana Friffin, & Treva Ellison

Designed by Sharita Towne with Garima Thakur.  
Printed at Eberhardt Press; bound at Container Corps









# Lou Watson

Portland

*Look Both Ways on North Interstate Ave  
(because stuff's worth it) (detail) 2019*

Video

Lou Watson has exhibited films nationally and internationally in Australia, Canada, Germany, Korea, and the United States. She has performed experimental music scores at venues including the Henry Gallery (Seattle, WA), Hollywood Theatre (Portland, OR), and Jubitz Travel Center & Truck Stop (Portland, OR). She has exhibited at the Whatcom Museum (Bellingham, WA), Schneider Museum of Art (Ashland, OR), and in the NW Art Now Biennial, and has had work purchased by Tacoma Art Museum (Tacoma, WA). She received the Kayla Skinner Special Recognition Award from the 2015 Betty Bowen Committee (Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA) and was awarded the John Cage Prize for Synesthesia by Christopher Rauschenberg at the 41st Northwest Filmmakers' Festival. Watson has received grants and fellowships in support of her work from the New Foundation Seattle, Oregon Heritage Society, Oregon Arts Commission, the

Regional Arts & Culture Council, and the Puffin Foundation. She received her BFA in Intermedia Studies from Pacific Northwest College of Art (Portland, OR).

oop.

EMERSON ST  
(named after  
Ralph Waldo Emerson)  
(run a girls school - well  
Hated Jane Austen books)

5325 N. J  
- previous  
500



PEDS C  
 BIKES B  
 SOUTHBOUND VEHICLES A  
 SOUTHBOUND MAX G  
 NORTHBOUND MAX F  
 NORTHBOUND VEHICLES E  
 BIKES D  
 PEDS C

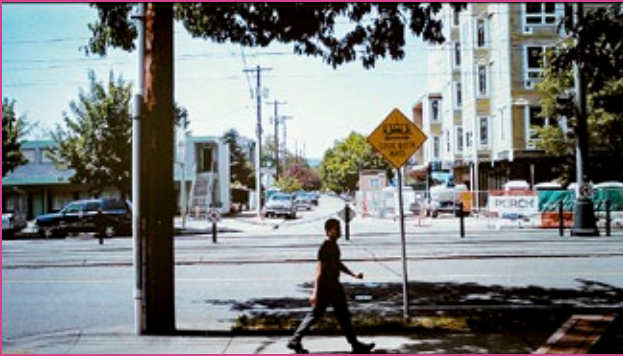
← INTERSTATE AVE →  
 → BUILT TO MOVE TRAFFIC TOWARD CO  
 then bridge built over CO

← (OVERLOOK) →

*Study for Look Both Ways on North Interstate Ave  
(because stuff's worth it) (detail) 2019*  
Ink, correction tape on color copy

*Look Both Ways on Interstate Avenue (Because Stuff's Worth It)* is a fifteen-minute video (with accompanying score notes) that observes the traffic flow of North Interstate Avenue at an intersection a mile from where you stand now. At this intersection a group of construction workers are building a new development. Across North Emerson Street, the Super Value Inn—previously Mel's Motor Inn—provides temporary homes in forty rooms.

Acting as a musical staff, the eight lanes of Interstate Avenue are each assigned a musical note on an ascending scale. Traffic flow allows the notes to play, cued by a designated signal point. Now we hear the music composed by the journeyers, accompanied by the sounds of lives at the intersection of N Interstate Avenue and N Emerson Street.





...son Grocery  
...ore  
...MLK  
...976)

...ttha Natsushima



The grandchild, Yumiko Nishimura (second from  
left) and her husband, Kenji Nishimura, are  
seen in photo with their mother, Yumiko  
Nishimura, and her father, Kenji Nishimura,  
at the Natsu store. The photo was taken  
in 1976. The photo was taken by Linda Saito.  
The photo was taken by Linda Saito.  
The photo was taken by Linda Saito.

Linda Saito



Community Picnic  
at Laurelhurst  
Park

Oregon Buddhist  
Temple

# Lynn Yarne

## Portland

*Okagesamade* 2019

Animated collage, wood, plastic, found objects, photos and audio collected from friends, family, mentors, Densho, Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, Oregon Historical Society, and Oregon Buddhist Temple

**Lynn Yarne is an artist and educator from Portland, Oregon. She works within animation and collage to address generational narratives and histories. She is curious about community, participatory works, magic, and rejuvenation. She currently makes art projects for and about the public education system. Lynn holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MAT from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.**

Portland is said to have once had the second-largest Chinatown in the United States. The city's first major wave of Chinese immigrants arrived in the 1850s; this was followed by exclusion laws. Then the first wave of Japanese immigrants came in the 1890s, also followed by exclusion laws. These immigrants built communities, endured racism and segregation, farmed, made hotel beds, danced, were forcibly removed in 1942, smoked cigars, hunted mushrooms, faced housing discrimination, raised children, prayed, organized basketball leagues, tried to be American, resisted being too American, dug clams, played lottery, *gamaned*.

Yarne is interested in community memory. Portland's *Nihonmachi* (Japantown) was successfully decimated by the government, and more recently, many Portland communities have become more geographically disparate. Yarne examines how the telling and retelling of local history shapes feelings of community, resilience, love, and loss.

Historical accounts often exist between memory, loose facts, memorial, horror, and desire. Much of the dharma was said to have been passed down by memory from a disciple of the Buddha. "Thus have I heard" are the traditional first words of most Buddhist sutras. In Yarne's current practice, she seeks to embrace mythology, messiness, and autoethnography within her understanding of com-

munity memory. Her current practice involves remixing and animating historical photographs of Japanese and Chinese Americans in Portland and making them into digital shrines. With reverence and gratitude to her predecessors, Yarne is interested in creating a personal catalog of mythologies, stories to guide how she lives and to remember where she is from.

*Okagesamade* could be translated to "because of you," or "thanks to your shadow," and is often said in response to someone asking how you are doing.





RELOCATION CENTER

WHEN YOU LEAVE

ZEN

Min Ya  
Manzanar  
WW2  
rdell Hull

HUNG FAR LOW  
SALMON BLOSSOM  
RESTAURANT

Honoree 2014

EST. 1988

# Curators’ Acknowledgments

Disjecta is a community of artists, curators, and collaborators who have worked together to create a space for contemporary art in Oregon. We are grateful to all who have supported us in this journey, and we hope that this book will be a testament to the power of community and collaboration.

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We first and foremost wish to express gratitude to the eighteen participating artists and their collaborators for joining us on this ride—your vision, spirit and conviction guided us through the making of this exhibition and showed us what is possible.

Thank you to the steadfast support from Disjecta’s staff and leadership—Blake Shell, Dustin Williams, Madalyn Barelle, and the board of directors led by Chris D’Arcy. Special thanks to Adam McIsaac for the thoughtful design that brought many important elements of the exhibition, including this catalog, to life. And thank you to Allison Dubinsky, who refined the show’s language through her expert copyediting.

Finally, we extend thanks to our community (in Oregon and afar) for repeatedly showing up for us in word and in action. We would be nowhere without your tireless support.

YAELE S. AMIR  
ELISHEBA JOHNSON  
ASHLEY STULL MEYERS

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