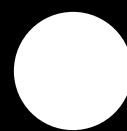
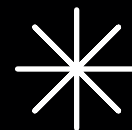


LET
ME
BE
AN
OBJECT
THAT
SCREAMS





LET ME BE AN OBJECT
THAT SCREAMS

CURATED BY MATT MORRIS

GALLERY 400

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

SEPTEMBER 8 — OCTOBER 21, 2017

TERRY ADKINS

NAYLAND BLAKE

ANNA CAMPBELL

NONA FAUSTINE

JEFF GIBSON

JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG

THOMAS HUSTON

E. JANE

ARNOLD J. KEMP

ISABELLE MCGUIRE

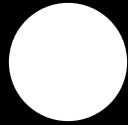
CATALINA OUYANG

PUPPIES PUPPIES

OLI RODRIGUEZ &

JOVENCIO DE LA PAZ

LEONARD SURYAJAYA



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FOREWORD

LORELEI STEWART

DIRECTOR, GALLERY 400

Bringing together a range of artworks in order to test psychoanalytic concepts of 'subject-hood,' as well as how a subject's counterpart, the 'object' is animated by artistic and exhibition practices, *Let Me Be an Object That Screams* reimagines and challenges the accepted conceptual division between humans and objects. Artist, writer, curator, and educator Matt Morris curated an exhibition that employs dazzling counterpoints of images and objects, rich interplays between material and concept, and differing registers of engagement across media to map multiple forms of resistance to dominant systems of power. Haunted by bodies – adorned, constricted, performing, othered, collective, individual, pleasuring, and absent – the exhibition uses a feminist, queer, and racially critical frameworks to propose new forms of identification and relationship. It's through impassioned curating such as Matt's, curating that asserts a clear claim, that is suffused with care and attention, and that layers dialogues between, across, and among art objects, that artworks are revealed to be truly invaluable. The *Let Me Be an Object That Screams* catalogue is published on the occasion of the exhibition presented at Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois at Chicago September 8 to October 21, 2017.

We are very grateful to writers Alisa Swindell and Evan Kleekamp who have contributed revelatory catalogue essays that flesh out key dimensions of the exhibition. Art historian Swindell incisively explores how the deep roots of objectification and misogynoir limit who is allowed subjecthood, while Kleekamp offers a penetrating analysis of self through a poetically allusive address of another. Their essays complement Matt's wonderful essay *Let Me Be an Evil Genie of Objects That Screams*, which so thoroughly unfurls the theoretical background of the exhibition while knitting it tightly to the artists' works and the urgency of our historical moment.

To Merele Williams and the estate of Terry Adkins, our sincere thanks for their generosity in lending the beautiful Terry Adkins work *Tonsure*. Additional thanks to Lévy Gorvy Gallery for coordinating that loan.

Thanks as well to Matthew Marks Gallery for shepherding the loan of Nayland Blake's works. And to Matt Morris and Eric Ruschman for lending their E. Jane pieces.

Many thanks to the School of Art & Art History, College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, for their support of the exhibition. And to the individual donors whose generosity underwrites this and other Gallery 400 exhibitions. The presentation of Terry Adkin's work was made possible only through the very generous support of Theaster Gates and Rebuild Foundation. We are so grateful they stepped in to make *Tonsure's* exhibition possible.

Our deepest gratitude to Jason Pickleman, Scott Hunter, Al and Sue Ravitz, and Dan Berger for enthusiastically supporting this catalogue. Their magnanimous support enables this beautiful document to be in your hands.

Many thanks to Danny Giles, Oli Rodriguez, and Das Janssen who created and presented alongside the exhibition fascinating programs that further illuminated the ideas in Morris's exhibition. Giles, an artist in his first curatorial endeavor, organized *Thinging Bodies*, an evening of film and video work by artists employing the body as sculpture or exploring the relationship between our bodies and the object world. As Giles described, works by Zachary Fabri, Zachary Hutchinson, *ibid* (Robert Heishman and Megan Frank), Andrew Mausert-Mooney and Kera Mackenzie, Mores Mcwreath, Christopher Meerdo, eliza myrie, Sondra Perry, Jefferson Pinder, Amina Ross, Sanaz Sohrabi, and Cauleen Smith with Taisha Paggett and Malyk Singleton "trouble our perceptions and understandings of the self and ... the ways in which our bodies are defined and differentiated in the world of things, objects and commodities." Janssen, a philosophy and gender studies scholar, and Rodriguez, an artist in the exhibition, held a public conversation on objecthood and embodiment in art practice and philosophical thought.

Thank you to Frederick Eschrich and Anton Jeludkov who sensitively and adroitly composed the design of this catalogue. The staff of Gallery 400 produced this exhibition with such dedication, humor, and verve. Many thanks to Assistant Director Erin Nixon; Public Programs and Engagement Manager Demecina Beehn; graduate assistants Karen Greenwalt, Erin Madarieta, Rachel McDermott, and Megan Moran; interns Claire Doonan, Ryn Osbourne, and Liz Vitlin; and Gallery's tireless installation preparators Kyle Schlie, Alexandra Schutz, and Alex Tam.

To the artists, Terry Adkins, Nayland Blake, Anna Campbell, Nona Faustine, Jeff Gibson, Jennifer Chen-su Huang, Thomas Huston, E. Jane, Arnold J. Kemp, Isabelle McGuire, Catalina Ouyang, Puppies Puppies, Oli Rodriguez and Jovencio de la Paz, and Leonard Suryajaya, we are truly grateful for their ingenuity, incisiveness, bravery, vulnerability, and generosity. Their work stakes out critical pathways to how to most vitally live in the 21st century.

Lastly, the greatest appreciation is due to Matt Morris, who beautifully orchestrated an enthralling gallery experience; brilliantly shared the intellectual and social urgency of the exhibition's ideas in multiple curator's tours and in his catalogue essay; and centered care and consideration in all of his communications and negotiations, whether with artists, lenders, supporters, gallery staff, or exhibition visitors. Every dimension of Matt's work on *Let Me Be an Object that Screams* demonstrated the crucial role art, imagination, and exhibition making has in creating a more fulsome, empowering, and just world.

INDEX

EVAN KLEEKAMP

A door rests on its side at one end of a large room. Metal cables – as if pulled from the back of a photograph and then enlarged – attach the door to the wall. Screws on the bare ground nearby outline the perimeter of a rectangle; their points have been directed upward and touch the air. On the opposite end of the room wood shavings and yellow paint chips clump with hair and surround an urn likewise placed on the floor. Glass shards occupy a plinth above the sideways door where they document the elimination of what was previously a vessel. But nothing is eliminated: The hair is my own, the hair of an African American man who now identifies as female. The inherited body does not go away or fade; no subtraction occurs: “I now identify as female” only adds to the concatenation. Instead, four television screens run the same video loop on separate channels, each with a unique delay. – A torso enacts a butterfly stroke out of water; a hand mimics the shape of a crane; the camera manages to replicate a wince; a scalpel traces a line across a chest; a hand guides screw after screw into the latticework of a polyester jersey; a windbreaker drifts over the screws on the floor until a spine forms underneath the fabric wherein the frame cuts to a string being tied into a knot; a mason jar overfills with clear liquid. – I promise you this is the most I can do to forgive myself. Do you remember when I fell to the ground and convulsed for several minutes while you cradled my head above the floor? The first time it was a photograph. The second time I put a slice of cold pizza in my mouth. The third time was at a dinner party when I saw a boot sitting beside an electrical socket and your phrase came to mind: “What do you do when a head loves a hip?” I didn’t tell you about the pearl at the bottom of the urn; I wanted you to sense it without my guidance. The words inscribed on its shell – “I was only five years old. I didn’t understand that kind of evil.” – come from a text message exchange with my mother. Was the pearl an homage to my mother or to you? – Maybe it was the proximity. I thought of you and couldn’t move. The man in the photograph resembled a childhood friend who used to grope me in my sleep – I venture

toward the adverb I hate to utter – regularly. I took the screws from a door my father painted during the recession. The yellow paint featured on my fingernails in the video alludes to the color on the door. I recognized, years later, that it was the same color as the sunflowers in my mother’s garden. It’s strange what you hear when you listen to a woman. Had you listened on the night we met perhaps you would have understood the nature of the cable connecting the door to the wall. The cable resembles a chain. It passes information between the door and the wall – from the door into the wall and vice versa – like a plug pushed through an electrical socket shared by two nonadjacent rooms. I wanted you to see the chain. I wanted you to see the screws on the ground as they resemble circuits or ports. As if, in the manner of a machine, you could drive them through the back of your skull and massage the tissue around your heart in one automated gesture. I wanted to demonstrate the pressure required to produce a kinetic field: “Suffering for a being deepens the heart within the heart,” as Clarice would say. But what if this isn’t so? What if suffering does nothing but mystify each and every consequence? What if suffering only mutes the one true error? How many human accessories must you collect and purge before you recognize your entire life is a quest to receive and validate an error that does not belong to you? You’ve made the scream impossible. You supersede the scream; it passes underneath you and escapes your detection. The scream lists and describes, lists and describes not to demarcate but to shift, rock, and shake the bedrock of your affectations. I filled the urn with sand and put the pearl in the middle; the hair was meant to advance and recede in a circle on the floor. The indentations that rise when the jersey scrapes against the screws were to replicate a certain agony I found difficult to express. I thought they would pass through the fabric uninhibited. It was like the first time I saw a man dressed as a woman and recognized, albeit unconsciously, that I was looking at myself. I wanted to repeat the accident. I wanted to see if I could find a new way to escape what I saw. I wanted to repeat and test the pain

again to see if it was still authentic. Instead, when I looked up, all I saw was you. This, and only this, the expression of our experience. None of it was meant for you. One narrative suggests we met in an auditorium; another recalls a performance you gave in the bedroom while I lay on my side and you nudged my clothes away from my body in a corner of the house where no one could see you. When will that be enough? When will the answer that overcomes your fatigue arrive? Or, should we close in on an image of you with your finger extended toward my nose as I turn to enter the bathroom? I’ve tried to deflect my hatred but it stands to torch you and all men like you. Let me just once be the object of your affection and nothing more. I’ve suffered enough for you. I only wanted to be a version of yourself you could love. If it means anything, I offer you this one relief: I’ve only grown more attached to you since your departure. Why won’t you cut me out of your life? And me: I’m an enabler. I critique the same mistakes I’ve made as if they’ve never happened to me. Do you remember? Once upon a time I slid into and away from your heart. Do you remember? Once upon a time I put my head under your arm and felt your heart sliding toward me. Do you remember? Once upon a time the hour for farewells came; I did everything I could to increase the distance between each second because it meant more time with you. What have you done and why have you done it to me? Only time will tell. At least I now know what I am even though it is not what I want to be. The sands wrap around the pearl and drown out its cry. May your desire outlive the impulse that requires I write this book. I have no sense of self outside the eternity you have left behind. I leave everything to you. As for myself, the more I look, the more I turn away.

WHO'S AN OBJECT,
WHO IS SCREAMING?
ALISA SWINDELL

Objectification is put upon many of us, from a gaze that does not recognize the humanity of a person looked upon with desire to the legal dehumanization of Africans to create wealth in the Western world through chattel slavery. How, under this violence can a person navigate their sense of self? Who gets to stand, silently and have the force of history support their subjecthood? Who has to scream, wants to scream, can only be noticed while screaming? Who might pay or can be paid to feel removed from the obligations of being a subject?

When I look at the group of photographs by Nona Faustine included in *Let Me an Object That Screams*, I am moved by the vulnerability of her nude body. I wonder at what it must have been like to stand naked on Wall Street open to sexualized comments, legal action, even traffic, to photograph *From Her Body Came Their Greatest Wealth, Wall Street* (2013). I feel implicated, knowing that she is standing on a spot where women like us had our undressed bodies poked and prodded to determine their value; the sale of those bodies having generated wealth that still supports Wall Street. In tying herself to concrete symbols of the United States' difficult history, Faustine makes space for viewers to understand and acknowledge a subjecthood that is continually impacted by the objectifying forces of misogynoir. Knowing that she can never have true distance from those histories, Faustine gives us a real body that brings to life the obfuscated histories of the spaces she occupies in her photographs. Histories that are made up of bodies owned and the bodies of owners is deeply woven into the fabric of this country. The photographs Nona Faustine makes, both those that place her body at public locations and those that let the monuments stand alone, demand a rethinking of those spaces and whose stories are told and whose are erased. She highlights that the subjecthood of those honored by buildings and sculptures bearing their names have only been made possible by the objectification of those they could other. In the U.S. it has been made too easy for White people to consider Black people to

be objects that are sources of entertainment, sites of sexual fantasy, and recipients of noblesse oblige, but not fully human. Centuries of history bear down on our bodies, while being removed from narratives of the country's legends. That the threads of these histories continue to hold many of our most esteemed institutions together is made visible through Faustine's very flesh, the humanness of which challenges centuries of objectification.

Ironically, these same concealed histories give Catalina Ouyang's use of living White men in the performance element of her piece *the reprisal of Marco (Pedestals)* (2017) a disquieting vision of bodies that are difficult to distance from their humanity. From the inception of the U.S. it has been White men as a group, if not individually, who have possessed or had the right to claim bodies. The same histories that follow Faustine make it difficult and uncomfortable to accept these three men, standing in for pedestals in the gallery, as objects. White men placed in objectifying positions can only go so far.

These men stand holding Ouyang's sculptures – which she describes as “images of female villains, villainhood being so often a coded way to refer to either strong or abused women” – and physically support these reflections of female objectification. Still, these men used as plinths, asked to stand quietly, and barely dressed while people move around them, never become objects. As much as people try to not look at them or try to not respond to there being half naked men in the room, they do not relate to them as though they are non-sentient objects in the room. Watching how people moved around Ouyang's human pedestals it seemed their presence discomfited people. At the opening most people tried to avoid looking directly at the men even while they looked at the sculptures they were holding, though they kept sneaking sidelong glances and discreet peeks. Unsure of how to respond to these men, people often glanced at each other and then suppressed giggles. In contrast to the image of Faustine standing in the middle of a busy city street, the men in Ouyang's performance seem less

observable, less available as objects. Whereas Faustine stands in as a memory of the objectification her ancestors suffered, there is no historical point from which to understand these men as being available for our visual possession.

Artists like Nona Faustine and Catalina Ouyang carefully tease out the depths and limits of psychological objectification allowed by our knowledge of who has been physically deemed an object and who has held the power to refuse the subjecthood of others. Bodies that present as White and male stand supported by their relationship to history. The fullness of Faustine's body against larger than life locations, her questioning, rather than reverential, gaze upon national monuments, takes as their subject the necessity of visualizing the subjectivity of the object that can scream.





CHILD'S LARGE (LEATHER DRESS)

OLI RODRIGUEZ

2017

ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT

20 X 30 IN.

SCULPTURE (THE HISTORY OF)

ARNOLD J. KEMP

2012

ARTIST'S CAST ALUMINUM FIGURINE, EXHIBITION
ANNOUNCEMENT (GAGOSIAN GALLERY), CARDBOARD
SHIPPING BOX, CERAMIC SCULPTURE (MATTHEW
MARKS GALLERY)
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE



TONSURE

TERRY ADKINS

2010

MEDICINE BALL, FUR, BOOKS
21 X 14 X 13 IN.



FROM HER BODY SPRANG THE GREATEST WEALTH
NONA FAUSTINE
2013
ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT
30 X 40 IN.



OVER MY DEAD BODY, TWEED COURTHOUSE
NONA FAUSTINE
2013
ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT
30 X 40 IN.



LENAPEHOKING, BOROUGH HALL
NONA FAUSTINE
2013
ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT
30 X 40 IN.



LEGACY OF LIES, JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
NONA FAUSTINE
2013
ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT
30 X 40 IN.

*"I HAVE NOTHING TO DECLARE EXCEPT
MY GENIUS," SAID OSCAR WILDE TO
THE CUSTOMS AGENT.*

ANNA CAMPBELL

2017

BRONZE

EACH: 8 X 6 X 3 IN.



*IN BLACK AND WHITE SPACES
WE CAN'T LOSE OUR LOSS*

ARNOLD J. KEMP

2013

HANDMADE SUEDE BOOTS,
SEASHELLS, WELDED STEEL
9 X 20 X 20 IN.







ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE
LEONARD SURYAJAYA
2015
ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT
36 X 45 IN.

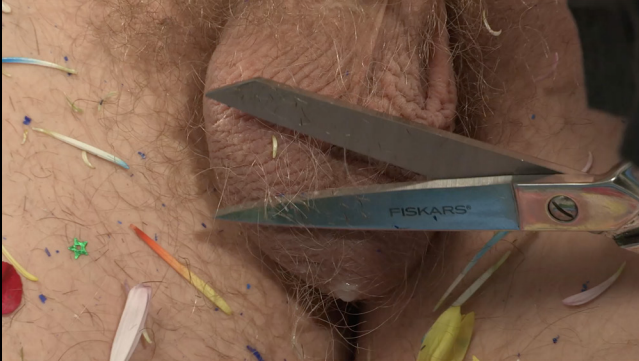
RUPA

LEONARD SURYAJAYA

2015

DIGITAL VIDEO

8:09 MINUTES



LESSER THAN THREE
LEONARD SURYAJAYA
2016
DIGITAL VIDEO
7:38 MINUTES





CHOCOLATE BEARD
LEONARD SURYAJAYA
2014
DIGITAL VIDEO
3:08 MINUTES



CANDYMAN

LEONARD SURYAJAYA

2016

ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT

40 X 50 IN.



FAMILIAL

LEONARD SURYAJAYA

2016

ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT

42 X 54 IN.

GAP

LEONARD SURYAJAYA

2015

ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT

20 X 25 IN.





UNTITLED (HELMETS, KNIFE SETS, UTILITY KNIVES;
ELECTRIC RAZORS, PAINT BRUSHES, SCRUBBINGBRUSHES)

UNTITLED (BREAD, AIR INTAKES, BEARINGS; DONUTS,
BICYCLE SEATS, BLUE PUMPS)

UNTITLED (LAWN MOWERS, LOAFERS, JETSKIS;
MASSAGE CHAIRS, TRICYCLES, STROLLERS)

UNTITLED (NUGGETS, SHOE TREES, RED MEAT;
RED SUNGLASSES, HEADLIGHTS, TAILLIGHTS)

UNTITLED (EXCAVATOR BUCKETS, HEAVY MACHINERY,
MASSAGE TABLES; EXOTIC FRUIT, INFLATABLE BOATS,
HEARING AIDS)

JEFF GIBSON

2015

EACH: INKJET PRINT ON PLASTIC SIGNAGE

EACH: 44 X 25 X 4 IN.



UNTITLED (NUGGETS, SHOE TREES, RED MEAT;
RED SUNGLASSES, HEADLIGHTS, TAILLIGHTS) DETAIL

JEFF GIBSON

2015

INKJET PRINTS ON PLASTIC SIGNAGE

44 X 25 X 4 IN.



UNTITLED (BREAD, AIR INTAKES, BEARINGS;
DONUTS, BICYCLE SEATS, BLUE PUMPS) DETAIL

JEFF GIBSON

2015

INKJET PRINTS ON PLASTIC SIGNAGE

44 X 25 X 4 IN.

WHEN WILL MY LOVE BE RIGHT

ARNOLD J. KEMP

2013

GALVANIZED WELDED AND RIVETED STEEL,
LEATHER, BRASS, COPPER, SEASHELL

26 X 25 X 40 ½ IN.





SAURON (BATAILLE SOLAR ANUS)
PUPPIES PUPPIES
2016
DIGITAL VIDEO
1:14 MIN.

LOVE ME HARDER
ISABELLE MCGUIRE
2015
DIGITAL VIDEO
12:15 MIN.



THREE WOMEN
ISABELLE MCGUIRE
2016-17
DIGITAL VIDEO
3:56 MIN.



hello!

welcome to!

the basement!





SPIRIT OF '69

NAYLAND BLAKE

2016-17

PAINTED WOOD, METAL,
VINYL, FABRIC, PLASTIC
116 X 32 X 15 IN.

UNTITLED

NAYLAND BLAKE

2007

PAINTED WOOD, STEEL, ALUMINUM,
FELT, GLASS, SYNTHETIC FLOWERS,
FABRIC, CORAL

74 ¼ X 37 X 37 IN.







OCTOBER CHAIN

NAYLAND BLAKE

2007

METAL, GLASS, PLASTIC,
WOOD, BEADS

15 ½ X 11 X 12 IN.

E. THE AVATAR (EP. 1-7)
AND COMMERCIALS 2-3

E. JANE

2015

DIGITAL VIDEO

12:08 MIN.



* Where there's WIFI there's a way.



ITEM NO. 23

E. JANE

2015

PRINT ON TISSUE NYLON BAG
26 X 21 IN.



ITEM NO. 12

E. JANE

2015

PRINT ON POLY TWILL DRESS
38 X 26 IN



THE MARKINGS PROJECT (BREATHPLAY)

OLI RODRIGUEZ

2015

ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PRINT

20 X 30 IN.

GOO GOO GUIDE TO PLACEMENT AND BEING
JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>1 Unroll the drawing and place along the taped markers on the floor.</p> | <p>from the pre-assembled sculpture. Hang it on the nail. This is where the blue ball belongs.</p> | <p>that it becomes a stool. Have a seat. Press your hands together, thumbs to the center of your heart.</p> | <p>smallest object in the collection to place at the moment of intersection.</p> |
| <p>2 Take the two extruded clay tubes and slide one on each side of the roll of paper.</p> | <p>8 Reassemble the sculpture, adding the wire with the styrofoam peanut and porcelain AA battery.</p> | <p>13 Turn your gaze to the drawing. The drawing is a map highlighting the tiny roads, ridges, and valleys that compose this gallery space.</p> | <p>18 Pick the second smallest object to place to the right of the smallest object.</p> |
| <p>3 Place the sandbox at the foot of the drawing. Lay its adjoining piece beside the sandbox on top of the drawing.</p> | <p>9 Stack the pillows directly beneath the trajectory of the porcelain battery.</p> | <p>14 Crawl to the drawing. Lay down beside the drawing lengthwise. Extend your left leg, as far your leg will go. Mark the ground beneath your big toe. Place an object where your big toe once was.</p> | <p>19 Determine the area with least information. Pick an object with the most irregular sides to place in the center of that absence.</p> |
| <p>4 Slide a red glazed clown nose under the sandbox.</p> | <p>10 If the distance between the tip of the battery and the top of the pillow is greater than 18 inches, place a porcelain clown nose on the top center point of the stack of pillows, directly below the trajectory of the battery. If the distance is less than 18 inches, place the clown nose beneath a corner of the bottom-most pillow. Have a sliver of the red glaze peer beneath the pillow.</p> | <p>15 If there is straight road in the map that goes unbroken for a feet, place a rigid and long object at its end, so that it continues the trajectory of that straight line.</p> | <p>20 Pick the most square-shaped object to place next to the irregular object.</p> |
| <p>5 Take the textile loupe and place it at the intersection of the carved wood grain on the sandbox. Place a cereal O under its magnifying lens.</p> | <p>11 Take the twig and place along any intersection of the grid printed on the top pillow. Keep the twig as far from the clown nose as possible.</p> | <p>16 If there is a jagged texture that appears on the map, pick an object whose surface mimics the graphite scratches and place on top and to the left of the graphite marks. Be sure that the texture still peers beneath the object.</p> | <p>21 Take five steps away from the drawing in any direction. Turn around to look at the map. Squint your eyes. Determine if another object belongs on the map. Place an object or not.</p> |
| <p>6 Walk up to the far left corner of the exhibition space. Stand with your back towards the corner. Have a lover (or a stranger) balance a pencil on top of your head so that the graphite point leaves a residual mark on the wall. Remove the pencil and walk away.</p> | <p>12 Empty out the rest of the contents of the wooden box. Flip the wooden box over so</p> | <p>17 Determine the most condensed part of the map, where the most lines intersect. Pick the</p> | <p>22 Pour the bag of sand into the sandbox.</p> |
| <p>7 Pick up a hammer and a thin nail. Hammer the nail into the graphite mark left by your head and the pencil. Remove the blue ball</p> | | | <p>23 Take the remaining objects and place them in the sandbox, equidistant from each other.</p> |
| | | | <p>24 Remove the taped markers from the floor. Press them on your leg.</p> |
| | | | <p>25 Walk away.</p> |

GOO GOO TOO

JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG

2017

INSTALLATION WITH WOODEN BEAD, WIRE, STYROFOAM PACKING PEANUT, PORCELAIN CAST AA BATTERY, HEAT PRESS PRINTED PILLOWS, TWIG, MOSS, CERAMIC FRAGMENT WITH COTTON PULP, PORCELAIN CAST CLOWN NOSE, WOOD DEVoured BY BARK BEETLE, CERAMIC FRAGMENTS, EXTRUDED CLAY TUBES, BEET JUICE STAINED BIRCH PLYWOOD, BIRCH PLYWOOD STOOL, EAR PLUGS, SCRATCHED CD, TEXTILE LOOP MAGNIFIER, ROCK, TINY BROOM MADE OF HUMAN HAIR AND CLAY, GRAPHITE ON MYLAR, THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE FLOOR
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE



GOO GOO TOO (DETAIL)

JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG

2017



*"I WANT SOMETHING MORE THAN MY HUSBAND
AND MY HOUSE."*

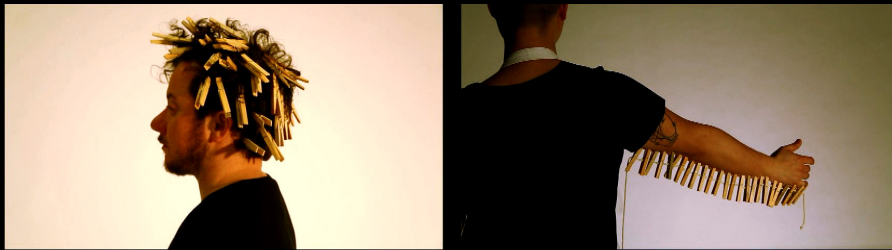
OLI RODRIGUEZ & JOVENCIO DE LA PAZ

2015

DIGITAL VIDEO

3:19 MIN.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>1. We are presenting works that tease out our practices, not towards a definitive product of Collaboration, but towards points of tension, conflict, disparity and unease. We see these states not as deficits, but as moments, both in our practices and our own lived, bodily experiences, as moments of generative volatility.</p> | <p>of collaboration by introducing queer family as a challenge to hetero and homonormative hierarchies based in marriage and binary partnership, through role play, fetish and material negotiations.</p> | <p>Shave my legs using only your mouth.</p> | <p>I ask you Trivial Pursuit questions, every wrong answer I will stick a needle in you, my human pin cushion. Right answers get a treat.</p> |
| <p>2. Taken from Betty Friedan's seminal text, "The Feminine Mystique," which helped ignite Second Wave Feminism, the words I want something more than my husband and my house referred in the 1950s and 1960s, to the pervasive unhappiness of housewives and domestic laborers. This collection of interviews focused on the disillusionment of the American insistence of patriarchy and heteronormativity within the theatre of the home. Taking this language from an earlier period of feminist thought, we are queering notions of the domestic realm and the realm</p> | <p>3. Model and obstructor Nicole Ciesla has delivered particular instructions to de la Paz and Rodriguez to investigate duplicities of pervasive maskage and material seepage between skin and second skin. These instructions become performances for the camera, images, discrete sculptural objects, and residues of activity that examine limits, restraint, and subversive stamina.</p> | <p>Stand still, arms extended, balancing lit candles while I wax your legs and then clean you out with an enema.</p> | <p>I cover you in eggs, that are either soft-boiled, hard-boiled, raw. I'll ask you before I crack each one to guess how they are prepared. I will crack each egg and you'll have to eat the ones you guessed wrong.</p> |
| | <p>4. I want to hogtie you and watch you eat out of a bowl/tv dinner/pork roast. I want to watch you thread bacon between my toes with your mouth.</p> | <p>Zipper of clothespins attached up and down your extended arms. I connect the zipper to your feet and you are tickle tortured and struggling.</p> | <p>Kneel on coarse cornmeal, while I toss popcorn in your mouth.</p> |
| | | <p>You are to draw a game of hopscotch. I enjoy watching you play, while I attach heavy weighted objects to your body parts (household objects weigh you down).</p> | <p>Make a life sized gummy bear, and fuck it.</p> |
| | | <p>Clipped candles all over your body, I ask you Trivial Pursuit questions and the candles will either be lit, or blown out.</p> | |



*"I WANT SOMETHING MORE THAN MY HUSBAND
AND MY HOUSE."*

OLI RODRIGUEZ & JOVENCIO DE LA PAZ
2015

DIGITAL VIDEO
3:19 MIN.



ARSENIC, LOVE

CATALINA OUYANG

2016

GLASS VIALS, REALGAR WINE, DYE,
WATER, BLUE CONTACT LENSES
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE





THE SNAKE

CATALINA OUYANG

2017

EPOXY CLAY

DIMENSIONS VARIABLE



THE REPRISAL OF MARCO (PEDESTALS)

CATALINA OUYANG

2017

PERFORMANCE COMPRISING A GROUP OF MEN OUYANG REFERRED TO AS "WHITE DUDES" CAST INTO THE OBJECTIFIED, SUPPORTIVE ROLE OF PEDESTALS FOR HER SCULPTURES

METHOD OF PALM

CATALINA OUYANG

2016

EXTRUDED POLYSTYRENE, PLASTER, STEEL, OIL
PAINT, WATER
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

*MEDUSA*

CATALINA OUYANG

2016

EXTRUDED POLYSTYRENE, PLASTER,
GROUND PAXIL, OIL PAINT, MARBLE DUST,
BODYCHAIN, BLUE COLORED CONTACT LENS
22 X 11 X 7 IN.





FORT/DA

THOMAS HUSTON

2017

DRYWALL, ONE QUART GALLERY WHITE PAINT,
DROP CLOTH, INKJET PRINT, GRAPHITE
96 X 48 X 24 IN.



BLANKET 4 [GARY LAPOINTE JR., STOLEN BLACK BIKE, STOLEN BLACK BIKE RACK, 9.30.2014-10.11.2014. W. NORTH AVE./ CLAREMONT AVE. CHI. IL. USA, 2014, BIKE FRAME, CHAIN, U-LOCK AND BIKE RACK; JEREMY PELLINGTON, GOOD COMMENTARY, 2016, VIDEO, STEEL STUDS, WOOD, FABRIC; GARY LAPOINTE JR., STOLEN BLACK BIKE, STOLEN BLACK BIKE RACK, 9.30.2014-10.11.2014. W. NORTH AVE./ CLAREMONT AVE. CHI. IL. USA, 2014, BIKE FRAME, CHAIN, U-LOCK AND BIKE RACK; JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG, GOO GOO TOO, 2017, WOODEN BEAD, WIRE, STYROFOAM PACKING PEANUT, PORCELAIN CAST AA BATTERY, HEAT PRESS PRINTED PILLOWS, TWIG, MOSS, CERAMIC FRAGMENT WITH COTTON PULP, PORCELAIN CAST CLOWN NOSE, WOOD DEVoured BY BARK BEETLE, CERAMIC FRAGMENTS, EXTRUDED CLAY TUBES, BEET JUICE STAINED BIRCH PLYWOOD, BIRCH PLYWOOD STOOL, EAR PLUGS, SCRATCHED CD, TEXTILE LOOP MAGNIFIER, ROCK, TINY BROOM MADE OF HUMAN HAIR AND CLAY, GRAPHITE ON MYLAR AND THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE FLOOR], BLANKET 5 [GARY LAPOINTE JR., POLISHED TIRE, POLISHED NAIL, 2015, POPPED CAR TIRE, WAX; JEREMY PELLINGTON, GOOD COMMENTARY, 2016, VIDEO, STEEL STUDS, WOOD, FABRIC; LAUREN YEAGER, UNTITLED, 2016, SHIPPING PALLETS, WOOD, PLASTIC WRAP; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, COMFY CHAIR (3 OF 5); LEONARD SURYAJAYA, GAP, 2015, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT], BLANKET 6 [GARY LAPOINTE JR., MILK CRATE, 2015, CUT FOUND MILK CRATES, 10F 64; NOEL MADISON FETTING-SMITH, SHELVES OF KNOWLEDGE, 2014-16, ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE IN BOOKS, UNUSED WOOD FROM KNOWLEDGE LAB, INDICATORS OF KNOWLEDGE STATUS, COST: \$32,000 (CURRENT STUDENT LOAN DEBT); KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, OFFICE DICTIONARY/THESAURUS SET; ARNOLD J. KEMP, SCULPTURE (THE HISTORY OF), 2012, ARTIST'S CAST ALUMINUM FIGURINE, EXHIBITION ANNOUNCEMENT (GAGOSIAN GALLERY), CARDBOARD SHIPPING BOX AND CERAMIC SCULPTURE (MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY)], BLANKET 9 [ROCÍO AZARLOZA, MLEJNAS, 2016, CEMENT, REBAR, GLASS, WATER, AND LIGHT; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, DESK; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, DECORATIVE OFFICE ART (FLOWER PHOTOGRAPH); OLI RODRIGUEZ, THE MARKINGS PROJECT (BREATHPLAY), 2013, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT], BLANKET 10 [ROCÍO AZARLOZA, MLEJNAS, 2016, CEMENT, REBAR, GLASS, WATER, AND LIGHT; KELLY LLOYD, NEIGHBORHOOD BARS, 2016, VINYL; ARNOLD J. KEMP, WHEN WILL MY LOVE BE RIGHT, 2013, GALVANIZED WELDED AND RIVETED STEEL, BRASS, COPPER AND SEASHELL], BLANKET 17 [JEREMY PELLINGTON, GOOD COMMENTARY, 2016, VIDEO, STEEL STUDS, WOOD, FABRIC, ARNOLD J. KEMP, IN BLACK AND WHITE SPACES WE CAN'T LOSE OUR LOSS, 2013, HANDMADE SUEDE BOOTS, SEASHELLS AND WELDED STEEL], BLANKET 18 [JEREMY PELLINGTON, GOOD COMMENTARY, 2016, VIDEO, STEEL STUDS, WOOD, FABRIC; HOUFF FOUNDATION, TEMPORARY OHIO BRANCH, HOME OFFICE, 2016; JAMES QUARLES, PROTECTING AND SERVING, ACRYLIC ON PLYWOOD, 2016; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, COMFY CHAIR (4 OF 5); LEONARD SURYAJAYA, ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, 2016, ARCHIVAL INKJET

PRINT], BLANKET 22 [NOEL MADISON FETTING-SMITH, RESIDUAL MATTER, 2016, UNDERUTILIZED DESK AND CHAIRS FROM CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS, UTILIZED EMERALD ASH, COTTON ROPE, CONCRETE, DISLOCATED AXE HEAD, EMBEDDED STAKE, MIG WELDING WIRE, COST: \$6.2 BILLION (CURRENT DEBT OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS); KELLY LLOYD, NEIGHBORHOOD BARS, 2016, VINYL; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, COMFY CHAIR (4 OF 5); OLI RODRIGUEZ, CHILD'S LARGE (LEATHER DRESS), 2013, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT], BLANKET 23 [NOEL MADISON FETTING-SMITH, RESIDUAL MATTER, 2016, UNDERUTILIZED DESK AND CHAIRS FROM CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS, UTILIZED EMERALD ASH, COTTON ROPE, CONCRETE, DISLOCATED AXE HEAD, EMBEDDED STAKE, MIG WELDING WIRE, COST: \$6.2 BILLION (CURRENT DEBT OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS), ARNOLD J. KEMP, WHEN WILL MY LOVE BE RIGHT, 2013, GALVANIZED WELDED AND RIVETED STEEL, BRASS, COPPER AND SEASHELL], BLANKET 27 [ELIZABETH VAN LOAN, UNTITLED, 2016, WATER, CONTAINER, PIGMENT; GARY LAPOINTE JR., STOLEN BLACK BIKE, STOLEN BLACK BIKE RACK, 9.30.2014-10.11.2014. W. NORTH AVE./ CLAREMONT AVE. CHI. IL. USA, 2014, BIKE FRAME, CHAIN, U-LOCK AND BIKE RACK; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, COMFY CHAIR (1 OF 5); JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG, GOO GOO TOO, 2017, WOODEN BEAD, WIRE, STYROFOAM PACKING PEANUT, PORCELAIN CAST AA BATTERY, HEAT PRESS PRINTED PILLOWS, TWIG, MOSS, CERAMIC FRAGMENT WITH COTTON PULP, PORCELAIN CAST CLOWN NOSE, WOOD DEVoured BY BARK BEETLE, CERAMIC FRAGMENTS, EXTRUDED CLAY TUBES, BEET JUICE STAINED BIRCH PLYWOOD, BIRCH PLYWOOD STOOL, EAR PLUGS, SCRATCHED CD, TEXTILE LOOP MAGNIFIER, ROCK, TINY BROOM MADE OF HUMAN HAIR AND CLAY, GRAPHITE ON MYLAR AND THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE FLOOR], BLANKET 30 [ELIZABETH VAN LOAN, UNTITLED, 2016, WATER, CONTAINER, PIGMENT; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, DESK; LEONARD SURYAJAYA, CANDYMAN, 2016, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT], BLANKET 31 [DERRICK WOODS-MORROW, MONOLITH I - WHAT IF NONE OF THEM GIVES YOU THE UNIVERSE?, 2015, SCULPTURE: GLASS AND CEMENT; KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, COMFY CHAIR (2 OF 5); KELLY LLOYD, FOR JUST BUSINESS AGENCY, 2017, DECORATIVE FAKE TREE; JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG, GOO GOO TOO, 2017, WOODEN BEAD, WIRE, STYROFOAM PACKING PEANUT, PORCELAIN CAST AA BATTERY, HEAT PRESS PRINTED PILLOWS, TWIG, MOSS, CERAMIC FRAGMENT WITH COTTON PULP, PORCELAIN CAST CLOWN NOSE, WOOD DEVoured BY BARK BEETLE, CERAMIC FRAGMENTS, EXTRUDED CLAY TUBES, BEET JUICE STAINED BIRCH PLYWOOD, BIRCH PLYWOOD STOOL, EAR PLUGS, SCRATCHED CD, TEXTILE LOOP MAGNIFIER, ROCK, TINY BROOM MADE OF HUMAN HAIR AND CLAY, GRAPHITE ON MYLAR AND THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE FLOOR], BLANKET 37 [DERRICK WOODS-MORROW, ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, THE ROOM WAS RED, 2016, MIXED MEDIA: MULTIPLE PIGMENT PRINTS, LETTERPRESS MOUNTED BETWEEN GLASS WITH WOODEN FRAME, PLANTS, FAUX TERRA COTTA PLANTER; LEONARD SURYAJAYA, FAMILIAL, 2016, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT]

THOMAS HUSTON

2017

THIRTEEN STANDARD MOVING BLANKETS
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE



LET ME BE AN EVIL GENIE
OF OBJECTS THAT SCREAMS
MATT MORRIS

The object is never innocent, it exists and takes revenge.¹

I haven't been human for a long time. They wanted me to be an object. I am an object. An object dirty with blood. An object that creates other objects and the machine creates us all. It makes demands. Mechanisms make endless demands on my life. But I don't totally obey: if I have to be an object, let me be an object that screams.²

Suddenly he began to scream. The sound was piercing, like steam escaping...And as Orvil screamed he knew that he could not stop, that he had been working up to this scream all his life. Through his madness spoke these very clear thoughts, "Now they'll never touch you again. You can be mad for the rest of your life, and they'll leave you alone."³

She was never a subject. He was never a subject if he was dark skinned or had sex with other men or failed fabulously at masculinity or was not physically able or lacked class or economic status. They were not a subject if their gender wasn't legible within an imposed binary. The cruel twist of the transcendence to subjecthood even for the portion of men who were granted it was that its promises were bankrupt, predicated as they were on compliance rather than the liberation that was assured.

She was never a subject, ergo she is an object? At least a hysteric, clattering around in caverns and swamps, "trailing sequins and incense."⁴ A gorgon, Medusa in a garden of stone bodies. An object, in psychoanalytic terms, can be disappointment, denial, rejection materialized. But fine. Monique Wittig called for her readers to vacate the category of 'woman,' to be other than even the othered position contrived in contrast to a subject. Not 'she' but 'it.' After 'it.'

After Frank Garmann – the police officer who accompanied Timothy Loehmann when he shot twelve-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland in

2015 – described: “I didn’t know it was a kid.”⁵ It. What is uncovered in the deadly intent of these officers if we listen closely to their utterances and slips? From Loehmann’s written statement following on the shooting: “I saw the weapon in his hands coming out of his waistband and the threat to my partner and myself was real and active.”⁶ When a child is an it, when a toy is a weapon, when that imagined threat comes “out of his waistband,” when these grown men admit to seeing something other than the boy in front of them, when what is “real” is in a total state of breakdown, one can see the pernicious effects of the ways subjects act upon their objects.

Common parlance uses the word ‘object’ to denote a nonhuman, inanimate thing: a belt, a shopping bag, a moving blanket, for instance. Yet when psychoanalysts say ‘object,’ they mean the foiling, complicated counterpart of the subject (a subject being one who acts upon the world around him, extending himself from interior consciousness into his surroundings). The demarcations of subjects’ relationships to objects is not simple, and yet power has a history of being produced coextensively with the positions of subjects, favoring them at the expense and disenfranchisement of his related objects. This text and the exhibition which it accompanies doesn’t easily distinguish between these uses of ‘object’; instead I am led by a curiosity for how artists as object-makers might intervene into these power relationships and redefine how an object is understood formally, psychoanalytically.

This exhibition holds subversions to how political and psychic power have been traditionally and consistently distributed in accordance with who is perceived to operate with agency and thought, in contrast to the disinvestment of groups and communities read as ‘other.’ Particularly, the persistent privileges of white masculinity are problematized across feminist, queer, and racially critical inquiries. Historical counter-narratives and accounts of artists’ own lived experiences shift emphasis off of the typical subject, while elsewhere projects reject the specious claims tacit to subjecthood in favor of stranger possibilities of an object that misbehaves – or “screams,” as the exhibition title, quoted from Ukrainian-Brazilian author Clarice Lispector, describes.

The position of the object is not under-theorized. To name just a few, there are Lacan’s *objet petit a*, Freud’s lost object, Karl Abraham’s partial object, Klein’s good or bad objects (good or bad breast, good or bad mother), Fairbairn’s exciting object, Bion’s bizarre object, Winnicott’s transitional object, Arjun Appadurai’s work with Georg Simmel’s economic object, Sherry Turkle’s evocative object used to describe personal computers and the Internet’s role as extensions of self and as “intimate machines,”⁷ Timothy Morton’s hyperobjects, Baudrillard’s “the fatal reversibility of the object, pure object, pure event (the fatal), mass-object (silence), fetish-object, femininity-object (seduction),”⁸ and what Baudrillard arrives at calling the “Evil Genie of Objects.”⁹ And these are just a few choice theories that serve as support for the exhibition at hand, some of which will be further elucidated below.

Theories of “object relations” in psychoanalysis have proposed that individuals relate to both “good” and “bad” objects, the former being necessarily incorporated toward the goal of a healthy ego, and the latter, the “bad objects,” epitomizing detachment and frustration brought on from these objects failing to perform in service of the ego. Fairbairn expands on Lacan and Klein by conceiving of a third “exciting object,” the one for which a subject hopes will care for them and meet their needs. Neither “good” nor “bad,” this object is a wish and a phantasm.

Anna Campbell’s “*I have nothing to declare except my genius,*” said Oscar Wilde to the customs agent. (2017) is a set of bronze fig leaves that quote from the convention of sculpted leaves to cover nudity during modest and repressive periods of art history. The leaves alone on a wall, each bulging suggestively, are more than simple phallic signifiers; they gesture to precisely a phantasmic actor or object of desire, and in so doing form a critique of how power is often masked in such institutional settings as white gallery walls (and the white bodies privileged in their proximity). These pieces build upon Campbell’s research into the potential of queer forms of objects, an investigation that brings her to, as the artist describes, “poach key signifiers of gender- and hetero-normativity and open them onto new attachments of possibility and desire from what might seem otherwise to be static legacies.”¹⁰

Leo Bersani paraphrases Lacan to say that objects comprise the emergent subject's world, "not as projections, but rather as that which has been detached, cut off from the subject, as a result of our entrance into language as signification; we are in the world as the psychic dropping...the unacceptable, hidden, lost cause of our desires."¹¹ So then objects – that is, the entire world as one experiences it – is, or is at least understood as, cast off of the one who becomes a subject. To further complicate matters, Judith Butler draws attention to not only the multiple inferences bound up in this language but also the history of political power that serves as a backdrop for these notions of subjects and objects: "'Subjection' signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject."¹²

To be a subject is also to be subjected, at best always a mythic reward in the form of granted agency. At closer inspection, if one is a "subject," one is someone else's "object," good, bad, bizarre, exciting, or otherwise. To analyze our national politics, arguably it is a crisis in the conception of subjecthood, fears, and outrage over the tacit forms of submission inscribed therein that gave shape to the election results of November 2016. The U.S. witnessed heightened self-interest directing many of the votes of those most associated with social privilege: straight, white men threatened by an expanding sensitivity toward oppression of people of color and other minoritarian positionalities.

Thomas Huston's practice responds to those fixated with achieving and maintaining centrality in society by strategically performing a destabilization of the privileges afforded to artists as social actors. Huston instead submits to being utilized in supplemental roles typically defined by art exhibition and display. For the past year, much of the work Huston has produced has resulted from volunteering his services as an art handler for artists, friends, and colleagues. The moving blankets he uses, accompanied with documentation of artworks being packaged and transported, become his work displayed in gallery settings. This iteration of *Standard Moving Blankets* performs wily power relations, with the artist both submissive in his

labor and incorporative in his modes of attachment to objects, makers, and institution.

In *Fort/Da* (2015) Huston physicalizes Sigmund Freud's narrative of observing his grandson's play of tossing a toy away from him ('fort' meaning 'gone') and drawing it back toward him ('da' meaning 'there'). Freud deemed this a game of mastery and a revenge fantasy for the toddler to cope with his mother leaving him from time to time. In Huston's iteration, an installation made from the building elements of the gallery itself – sheetrock, white gallery paint – is combined with photographic evidence of a sculptural addition (now absent) situated in the space. In other versions of Huston's *Fort/Da* the 'lost object' was a bouquet of artificial flowers. In this case, the photograph shows a real bird's nest holding three faux eggs.

In a more compassionate than accusatory view, we might look at what infantile drives motivate apparently deep, profound fears of loss among voting citizens. So visible are the ways those conferred with power have taken violent – physical, psychological, symbolic – measures to withhold freedom and agency from those they objectify and relegate to sites of Otherness. And while this curatorial work develops claims toward radical possibilities in, through, and beyond objecthood, so also does it hold space open for remembering and tracing forms of objectification as persecution in our national and cultural history.

Nona Faustine's photographs serve as poignant reminders of these times and effects. She places her disrobed body into historical sites where slavery functioned as a major economy within the United States. In so doing, a simultaneity occurs wherein Faustine recalls the dehumanization of black bodies in this country – the consequences of which continue today – while also documenting her incisive interventions into these spaces. Faustine proceeds from a tradition among black women artists that humanities scholar Uri McMillan calls *performing objecthood*. Projects such as Faustine's "violate the 'distinct ontological zones' between human and object. Meanwhile, the sense of the uncanny provoked by some of these more nefarious objects...is precisely because they uncomfortably remind us that 'our history is one in

which humans were reduced to things (however incomplete that reduction)'... Black performance art's usage of the black body as its artistic medium is especially loaded when confronting a historical legacy of objectification and the generations of slaves who did not legally own the bodies they acted with."¹³

Accompanying Faustine's complex self-portraits of protest and reflection is her 2016 photograph *Legacy of Lies, Jefferson Memorial*, from a series in which she casts her own gaze onto institutions and monuments that reify the patriarchal figures who authored racialized injustice in this nation. As xenophobia's hold tightens internationally, with terrifying strides toward institutionalizing and legislating distinction between the 'haves' and 'have nots,' the 'ares' and 'are nots,' Leonard Suryajaya stages elaborately fantastical scenes as a means to process memories of nationalist social control exerted upon his family in Indonesia as well as developments in the artist's own sexual explorations. With participation from his parents, partner, and other volunteers, Suryajaya populates photographs that are densely layered with pattern, color, ritual, prosthetics, constructed scenery, and makeshift costumes that range from direct cultural references into sexualized role-play. Personal attachments are performed within the artist's rich erotic imagination where oral fixations, surreal nudity, and consensual objectification build into alternative, inner realms.

Suryajaya's *Candyman* (2016) centers on two bodies in repose, both covered in imbricated packets of individually wrapped candies, recalling Felix Gonzalez-Torres' candy works made to the weight of his dying lover Ross. Suryajaya crowds the scene with masked figures whose shifting glances – and an isolated instance of fingers touching, echoing Michelangelo's *The Creation of Adam* (c. 1508–1512) – charge the relationships between the figures that also seem to merge into their ornamented surroundings. The differences between a person, an objectified person, an object, and the surrounding environment in which they are situated are shown to be shifting, dreamlike.

In spaces conditioned by the sorts of identificatory ruptures demonstrated in Suryajaya's photographs and videos, new definitions and conceptions of meaning-making become possible. The dialogue of images and sculptures in *Let Me Be an Object That Screams* is organized into research that follows upon artist and writer Gordon Hall's pursuit of an engagement with objects that might teach alternative ontologies, "to make objects that frustrate even my own attempts to know them, once and for all, as one thing and not others. I make things that ask for nuanced, open-ended forms of reading that can accommodate these objects of ambiguous functionality."¹⁴ I take Hall to challenge the ways nonhuman, inanimate things have the potential of being more than what they are typically understood to be. But what if a similar logic is read across psychoanalytic treatments of objecthood and those other object-oriented theories that proceed from these traditions? If inner psychological self-recognition and the social symbolic orders by which psyches become organized under current regimes of power are brought into this line of question, I am enlivened by the added potential in Hall's observation, "I have come to think of the object lessons described therein as ways of approaching our variously felt struggles against hegemonic methods of taxonomizing, cataloging, and controlling bodies, as modestly offered resources toward imagining more expansive forms of embodied life."¹⁵

Wilfred Bion's theory of bizarre objects pertains to a process by which an individual "splits off a part of his personality and projects it into the object where it becomes installed, sometimes as a persecutor, leaving the psyche, from which it has been split off, correspondingly impoverished." While this concept occurs within a diagnostic study of psychotics, what if one refuses these disruptions as solely delusional and reconceives them as a productive mode of derangement with some degree of intent? The bizarre object appears alive in the perception of the personality that was embedded into it. "The object, angered at being engulfed, swells up, so to speak, and suffuses and controls the piece of personality that engulfs it: to that extent the particle of personality has become a thing...these bizarre objects."¹⁷

When set to envision how such hybridity might be portrayed in sculpture, Terry Adkins' assemblage sculptures come to mind, constructed as they were across four decades as a means of drawing forward obscure, forgotten, and misunderstood figures in history by translating the events and particulars of their lives into objects of ambiguous functionality. With Adkins' sculpture as the residue of his own nimble intellectual instincts, Bion's bizarre objects might be worked into comparison with traditions such as the *minikisi*, objects inhabited by spirits, harkening from the Congo Basin in Central Africa. Keeping these psychological and mystical references in mind, one turns with wonder toward Adkins' *Tonsure* (2010) a power object awaiting animation.

Tonsure is the totemic mind of the exhibition, named after the custom among certain religious devotees who shaved their head in humility to indicate their devotion to unseen, supernatural forces. *Tonsure* physicalizes the movement between the self-recognition of subjects and the objects Adkins has imbued with abstractions of personhood. A sequence of signs amalgamates into a model for cognition and epistemological apprehension. The glossy black, fur-lined medicine ball connotes embodiment through the object's prior function in physical exercise, and here serves as the giant head of a monk, shadowed with knowledge, set atop his library. The several tomes that lie horizontal under the ball indicate a passage by way of language into active identificatory exchange with laws, codes, and social consciousness – the reader as subjected subject. The recognition of these forms as abstract, yet still legible in their relationships, is supported by meaning production supplied to art by its institutional context, in this case the gallery pedestal designed especially for this work upon which mind and text rest. Adkins' methods of assembling materials to reflect on the qualities of those to whom he paid homage manifest what a bizarre object – spliced personality and things – may do when it is read as more than a symptom.

Things congeal as fragments of that which was subjugated; to rescue it means to love things. We cannot eliminate from the

dialectics of the extant what is experienced in consciousness as an alien thing...its happiness would lie in the fact that the alien, in the proximity it is granted, remains what is distant and different, beyond the heterogeneous and beyond that which is one's own.¹⁸

The prospect of this mode of objects is reappropriative, on the order of reclaiming pejoratives as empowered self-identification, as with 'fag' or 'dyke.' It is a quaking site of undoing, unthinking. It was queer momentarily, before language coopted, subsumed, and used the term as capital. I find it resists naming. Some approach the quake after they have looked past meanings that occur easily because they are considered beautiful. Others never trusted easy answers or good looks, maybe because we never had either.

We are shadows cast by nothing, casting spells, demonic outliers who see that the Law always broke itself in order to appear to protect its subjects, see the extent to which our minds have been colonized and even subversive forms of labor and production have been capitalized, see ahead of ourselves without obstruction.

Enter upon the gallery installation of *Let Me Be an Object That Screams* where the first room is arrayed with moody works that map out exterior representation and interior appetites. Running diagonally across the room is a blockade of signage that conjures the stubborn borderline along the subconscious. "He waits, thinks, says, 'Perhaps that's what the matter is. I never want anything ever.' Suddenly she laughs. 'We could leave together if you like. I don't want anything any more either.'"¹⁹ A system of desire without labels, underwritten with cathected libidinous energy. Jeff Gibson's haunting work seems familiar, imitative of the form of targeted advertising, yet surreal in the way of Magritte's smartly opaque signifiers. Belying their own intensity, the five sets of panels are printed with images of sleek objects ready for consumption, tiled into grids, floating in an anxious white vacuum in the style of popular product photography – forms with only distant context, ripe for projections and longing.

In this way, Gibson reflects on the power of the desired object. Here is Marx's *commodity fetishism*: the solidification of belief in an intrinsic value transformed from the subjective, abstract aspects of economic value. Gibson's two-sided sandwich board *Untitled (bread, air intakes, bearings; donuts, bicycle seats, blue pumps)* (2015) is filled with the sorts of arousing associations that may be parlayed into meaning and subsequent value. As erect, high-heeled shoes hover alongside cream-filled doughnuts and bike seats that may as well be aerodynamic asses darting among the commodity orgy, the determinants of the relationships that result are observed by Marx thus: "It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things...I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities."²⁰

While Gibson suggests an infinite field of products and their possible combinations laden with projected desires, Arnold J. Kemp characterizes the point of view of those objectified within a social terrain crowded with presumptions, misunderstanding, and oversimplification. Kemp's sculptural tableaux aggregate trappings of interiority, exteriority, anteriority, and consequence through display systems fashioned with personal attire – garments and accessories, belts and shoes. The heartbreaking *WHEN WILL MY LOVE BE RIGHT* (2013) is snaked with leather belts, quietly kinky, and evocative with belt buckles shaped into the word "SHY." These accoutrements that the artist has fastidiously produced issue questions of how identity touchstones like sexuality, race, and socialization are consumed. Several of Kemp's works on view incorporate custom built steel plinths and racks into the inventory of objects that are situated between artisanal handmade and conceptually charged Readymade modes of production. Kemp theorizes selfhood with moderate skepticism, attendant to the deconstructive, socially-contingent turns on identity that accrue in queer theory, Thelma Golden's 'post-blackness,' and third wave feminism. Unworn clothes, as in the shoes displayed in *IN BLACK AND WHITE SPACES WE CAN'T LOSE OUR LOSS* (2013) signal absent and

unseen bodies, contextualized by an apparatus of trays and shelves that serve to model what systemic conditions conspire to support or distort legibility of an individual in the subcultures through which they move. Kemp's work shuffles psychic life between the social production of signs (of bodies) through reductions and the challenge of having one's desires appreciated or legitimated relationally.

Alongside Kemp's artworks that include their own display apparatuses is a trio of objects comprising *SCULPTURE (the history of)* (2012). In contrast to the trays and furniture that support Kemp's other pieces, the elements of this work are set directly on the gallery floor. Pivotal in the overall exhibition, these art objects speak to the objecthood of art directly by gathering together an aluminum cast the artist made of a diminutive African figurine, an exhibition announcement for a Rodin sculpture exhibition at Gagosian Gallery, and a small cardboard box shipped to the artist from Matthew Marks Gallery and containing a ceramic Roy McMakin sculpture that Kemp acquired but has never unpacked. The philosophical questions raised among these parts are vertiginous: original and copy, authorship and ownership, depiction in image and physical presence, repetition, circulation, provenance. Rodin's *The Three Shades*, shown in reproduction, is itself formed from a triad of identical figures meant to represent the shades from Dante, famed for warning: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here."

So what reassurance is to be had amidst the fraught conditions – functionally the gates of hell, it seems – objects are made to endure in art institutional spaces such as this one and those commercial galleries cited in Kemp's materials? For me, I hold to the seashells that Kemp includes in several sculptures. While there are no doubt personal associations for the artist, the privacy around which remains intact, presented here they might be the symbol for the cabal of dissenting objects gathered into this exhibition, at the thresholds between social pressure and inner tenderness. They have begun recurring in my dreams. They've glimmered in my sleep from within dreamt-up bathhouse corridors, flooded homes, and art classrooms.

The productive usefulness of dream and fantasy cannot be overemphasized in this exhibition. As much as scholarly and psychological literature informs the ways that these artists code possible relationships to objects (who are other people, that are other things), so, too, do they draw on virtual spaces and popular culture to orient to power. In the case of Puppies Puppies' video *Sauron (Bataille Solar Anus)* (2016) the artist fills the gallery space with the ambient sound of harsh whispers and alluring commands quoted from the film adaptations of J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* epic. A ring, called 'the Precious' by characters under the sway of its corrupting influence, is transitional objecthood par excellence, as one or another hobbit or spirit appear to bond with it on every possible emotional and mental level. In Puppies' video, footage of the fiery all-seeing eye of Sauron, the titular Lord of the Ring, is collaged with a close-up clip of power bottom autoeroticism. We see a high, plump ass stroked, massaged, and fingered while gentle moans float in the audio between Sauron's more ominous seductions. Puppies Puppies works critically into the recapitulating reflexes that can be traced from collage traditions and Readymades to contemporary milieus of self-appointed auteurs, DJs, and 'prosumers.'

Beyond direct literary quotation, artists like Puppies Puppies, E. Jane, and Isabelle McGuire immerse themselves in problems of modes of consumption in our digital ages. Throughout this exhibition, assisting devices are brought under examination for being both I and also not-I. These partial objects include gallery display furniture, the involvement of staff and interstitial operations around the exhibition (as in Huston's *Standard Moving Blankets work*), and the pervasive relationship to the camera. This object, complicit in the production of a majority of works included, is the fulcrum of its own considerable theorization as self-extension, object, other, prosthetic. The camera itself is frequently implied but never shown objectified within these artworks, with the exception of Leonard Suryajaya's remarkable photograph *Gap* (2015) which presents the artist naked down to his waist and face turned away, lying against a bearded man, piled and all but bound to one another with a band of grey jersey knit and a mound of raw ground

meat. Formally, the image is neatly composed of repeating groupings of red and blue. At center a mirrored tray lays before the couple. On Suryajaya's arm, a red and blue camera is tattooed. The significance of this illustrated object is formidable in how it appears marking the artist's body, mirroring the apparatus by which the photograph is made. What more demonstrably incorporative gesture might there be than this boyish pile as the surface for an image of a camera? Layers of reflections and simulations saturate their captured repose, haunting the artwork with the subject-object relations of its production.

More specters drift in this ambiguous field of objects, particularly beyond the blurred edge between what is appointed real or virtual. What new ways have objects come to perform when they exist as hypertext and avatars, occupying the Internet, hovering to face us from within one of the most powerful hyperobjects on which our culture depends? 'Hyper' in the sense of Timothy Morton's view of massively distributed imaginaries-cum-material effects that are detectable by way of the interrelationships they contain. The computer, like the camera, is prevalent in the shape of the exhibition before us. Questions loom about the effect of such object-relations not only on consciousness itself but also what we come to understand consciousness to be. Sherry Turkle surmises, "The instrumental computer, the computer that does things *for* us, has another side. It is also a subjective computer that does things *to* us – to our view of our relationships, to our ways of looking at our minds and ourselves."²¹

While the possibility of a subjective computer is in no small way produced by histories of capital and demand, performative speech acts that issue from such sites of being nonetheless propose new distributions of power. What might have been a controllable subject is now a network of positions, recurrent of one another, simultaneous, strategically divergent, flickering in and out of being. "I am the master of this room. I am so powerful in this room, I can dematerialize on demand."²² So begins the web series *E. The Avatar* (2015) by the Philadelphia-based interdisciplinary artist E. Jane. The personae that populate Jane's practice pressure the stability of

identities that are culturally generated and projected onto individuals without negotiation. Jane's practice performs objecthood in the sense that McMillan describes: "an adroit method of circumventing prescribed limitations on black [bodies] in the public sphere while staging art and alterity in unforeseen places."²³

For Jane, those spaces traverse embodiment and disembodiment across gallery, Web, and commerce. Jane remains critical of the platform; the commercials that interrupt their cycle of web episodes and their tie-in products available for sale exemplify a necessary ambivalence toward the Internet as a space that is regulated, surveilled, and organized for profit from our participation in it.

"A virtual object is effectively the same, yet formally different. A virtual body *does* even though it *isn't*."²⁴ Accompanying Jane's video series are two *Design Objects*, print-on-demand garments and bags that are imaged with fragments of the artist's Avatar dressed in studded black leather, each fabricated at the time it is purchased. Function, application, and materialization are disorganized: the online gallery of more than thirty objects derived from Jane's Avatar is a hypothetical space like that of Gibson's composite images. Desire is materialized through exchange value. Like a haunting surrealist painting, the tissue nylon eco-tote is printed with the Avatar's visage. Their face is removed to accommodate the handles of the bag, and yellow text is printed across their hands: 'Why can't I see your face?' Screaming object.

Just as distinguishing between real and virtual has come to be troubled (and the need to do so ripe for analysis, too), so have the means of apprehending the material world through the psycho-symbolic system of Subject and Object. The "Thing Theory" turn pressures what things might mean before they are swept up as Objects in the disorienting maze of alternating theories that have only been etched out in these pages. Bill Brown asks:

Could you clarify this matter of things by starting again and imagining them, first, as the amorphousness out of which objects are materialized by the (ap)perceiving subject, the anterior

physicality of the physical world emerging, perhaps, as an after-effect of the mutual constitution of subject and object, a retroprojection? You could imagine things, second, as what is excessive in objects, as what exceeds their mere materialization as objects or their mere utilization as objects – their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence, the magic by which objects become values, fetishes, idols, and totems. Temporalized as the before and after of the object, thingness amounts to a latency (the not yet formed or the not yet formable) and to an excess (what remains physically or metaphysically irreducible to objects). But this temporality obscures the all-at-onceness, the simultaneity, of the object/thing dialectic and the fact that, all at once, the thing seems to name the object just as it is even as it names some thing else.²⁵

The object, it seems, does not account for enough of the alterity and excess that moves beyond tidier psychoanalytic formulations of self and other. Brown asks after an engagement with physicality anterior to the restrictions of language and knowability, and drawing closer to tactile presence. Jennifer Chen-su Huang shifts shapes, dissolves structures, and compounds meanings in her installations. *Goo goo too* (2017) is an inventory of fragments arranged across overlapping wooden platforms and sheets marked out with tracings from the space in which it is sited. Here is a sand garden; there is a disjointed toolbox. Huang's material language takes as its premise that modes of being (inclusive of objecthood) are always partial, rarely definitive, and perpetually attached to more excesses than have been accounted for. Temporary relationships between soft, slight things enact content in flux. Curious, viscerally sensual, and responsive to the incidental conditions of its display, Huang's work is a blend of excitable experimentation and perverse curation of a world in pieces.

For this iteration of *goo goo too*, Huang designed a set of instructions that could be used to make her installation in her absence for the first time. These instructions articulate Huang's processes that, in spite

of the gentle aesthetic sensibilities of her arrangements, give way to negotiations of control. In the text, a box is flipped to become a stool; bodies are directed where to stand and from where to place a litany of intriguing sculptural fragments. Commanding yet open-ended, this iteration of Huang's installation is one in which her fantasy and even the methods by which to produce a fantasy are shared first with me, her proxy, and then audiences.

“Holy crap! Is that you Emma?! Gosh, you’re a ball!” you said in surprise upon viewing the contents of the box, only to discover that it was Emma herself inside of it, tightly squished into the shape of a basketball, all her characteristics plastered to her sides with her distressful face on top... You picked her up and started fondling her globular, squished body around in your hands, feeling all of her rubbery crevices, as she was indeed tightly packed and compressed into the shape of a ball like some kind of cartoon. “It sure was a... a hard trip though. Got any hand pump around?” Emma tried to speak again through squished lips, almost pleading you to restore her back as you took her under your armpit and started walking to the basement.²⁶

Such is the engrossing and unsettling morphological fantasy narrated in Isabelle McGuire's *3 Women* (2016) one of two video works of theirs included in the exhibition that reject body ideals and gendered roles enforced by the sexed divisions upheld in the earliest psychoanalytic theories and continuing to shape mainstream society at large. McGuire substitutes the always necessarily incomplete pursuit of those types with inquiries into the powers and effects of performing as a sexual object. In this video, McGuire constructs a story around commissioned fetish art renderings of herself made by an artist they met online, who uses the moniker HellResident. Likewise in the video *Love Me Harder* (2015) the artist metamorphoses into a lip-syncing white balloon as a radical proposal for new ontologies and self-transformation. If elsewhere in the exhibition

artworks rethink oppressive histories of dehumanization, ways objects may be charged psychologically, and interdependencies between things and consciousness, McGuire negotiates role-play as an extra-human object. Sexualization serves as a point of departure in imagining alternative bodies and interpersonal encounters, such as when the balled-up Emma is carried down to the basement, into unknown depths.

Whereas the risk of being or behaving as defiantly something else and other directs McGuire's video narratives, Nayland Blake's work hazards these strategies, taking them as the pleasure and responsibility of art. Inextricably entangled with their concurrent involvement in kink and BDSM communities, Blake's artistic practice gathers memories and found materials into the delights of what Sigmund Freud called “polymorphous perversity,” a means of libidinous gratification outside of social norms. Works like Blake's *Untitled* and *October Chain*, both 2007, are assemblages of talismanic objects variously strung along furniture and jewelry that might figure in childhood episodes of make-believe. The straps, chains, and other signals for bondage in Blake's work are combined with bits of recovered refuse rendered magical within these configurations. A previous exhibition of Blake's *Spirit of '69* (2013) garnered the observation, “Turned a caustic and cold black, miniature 'LOVE's [by Robert Indiana] were stacked like an oversized, goth charm bracelet on a suspended wood table dangling from the back wall. Draped in chains, it was like a Readymade strangled and piled high with crap: a little lantern, a lot of love – hanging off a side bar like dead little Indiana earrings. This was some dark shit, an America so wrong that everything seems so right....”²⁷

Blake's sculptures fetishize and deconstruct aspects of bodies, language, and personal association. Across decades, their work has been iconic for a queer politics that advances creativity, role-play, and fragmentation as generative forms. Theirs is a long recognized penchant for identificatory slipperiness, humor, and mystique. Blake's work alludes to multiple realms of consciousness, noticed through the little leftovers that accumulate along the artist's journeys. In their caring, deliberate additions of

parts, Blake demonstrates that “...accepting the otherness of things is the condition for accepting otherness as such.”²⁸

Many of the artworks gathered into the investigations of this exhibition show kink in the context of the everyday, rather than relegated only to the remotely subcultural. In Oli Rodriguez’s ongoing series *The Markings Project*, depictions of what the artist calls “sexualized mundane arrangements” disorient audiences from preconceptions of an object’s use and ability to stimulate. A politics of desire is here enacted, as with cellophane and striped straws found in a kitchen and repurposed for a necessarily trusting scene of breathplay, or with a child’s black faux-leather dress found while thrift shopping that is full of reminders of pre-adolescent childhood sexuality and the difficulties encountered in speaking to those experiences.

A related video collaboration between Oli Rodriguez and Jovencio de la Paz entitled “*I want something more than my husband and my house.*” (2015) has the two artists acting in response to a set of fantasies given as textual instructions by Nicole Ciesla. In their statement for the work, they describe, “We are queering notions of the domestic realm and the realm of Collaboration by introducing queer family as a challenge to hetero and homonormative hierarchies based in marriage and binary partnership, through role play, fetish and material negotiations.”²⁹ The video documents each artist in their own frame, occasionally traversing into the other’s, as they gradually construct combinations of household materials onto their counterpart’s body. Instances of the instructions to which they submit and respond include: “Stand still, arms extended, balancing lit candles while I wax your legs and then clean you out with an enema. Zipper of clothespins attached up and down your extended arms. I connect the zipper to your feet and you are tickle tortured and struggling.”³⁰ Pain, pleasure, service, objectification, drifts from outside to inside the bodies involved – all these sensations and possibilities bleed together along a continuum of shifting orientations in which the “I” and “you” of the text challenge the fixity of those designations.

Within these collaborations and scenes, consent buzzes as a problem that should be examined from prismatic, plural positions. Within

S/M play, the sub holds more power than they may be seen to have, given the ways they allow themselves to be dominated. Sometimes what an object screams is a safe word.

Which is to acknowledge that there are complications in the propositions this exhibition gathers together – complications brought forward from history, exacerbated by fear, traumatic memories, and socially-minded concerns that circulate around the receptions of these artists’ practices. Amidst experimentation with inverting power relations, reenacting fraught materials, and risking “giving up” what subjecthood promises to permit, one would do well to remember the fragile territories that are traversed in the process. By approaching radicality with humility and honesty, a deeper account of the effects of power on those human and non-human components might be articulated. Kink maven Mollena Williams advises sensitivity to the moments when the scene veers sideways or perhaps when the argument does not hold:

In spite of your best efforts, things will not always go according to plan. This is a gift. Why? Because flawless perfection will absolutely not provide you with the dirt and grit and pain and suffering and transcendence you need to play rough and tumble on the edges...Things can and will fall apart. Be honest when they do. Don’t ever ‘fake it’ when it comes to your emotions around edgy taboo play.³¹

In recalling the histories and traditions in which objectification has been associated with suffering outright, “the dense ligatures between agency, self-objectification, and black female subjectivity...performing objecthood does not always, or necessarily, point toward an emancipated subjectivity.”³² Adjoining McMillan’s research into black female positionalities, one ought to appreciate the difficult task of discerning complexity within power relations. Works such as Rodriguez’s *The Markings Project* evidence how near pleasure draws to what may have otherwise only been understandable as exploitation. Further consideration of McMillan’s performing objecthood

reveals affinities to José Esteban Muñoz's theorized politics of *disidentification* as another strategy of resistance to the norms and hierarchies by which socialized bodies have been forcibly organized. To disidentify is to refuse strict binaries (such as assimilation and anti-assimilation) and to look for ways that a self might be crafted not by identifying with or against dominant cultural forms, but by strategically misrecognizing and re-performing materials sampled from those identities forcibly upheld by the dictates of that culture. And so, in thinking beyond what kind of object one might become through a resistant relationship to subjectivity, I recall Muñoz's word of caution:

It is also important to note...that disidentification is not *always* an adequate strategy of resistance or survival for all minority subjects. At times, resistance needs to be pronounced and direct; on other occasions, queers of color and other minority subjects need to follow a conformist path if they hope to survive a hostile public sphere. But for some, disidentification is a survival strategy that works within and outside the dominant public sphere simultaneously.³³

Catalina Ouyang delves into the interstices of subjugation, gender, monstrosity, and race relations through a practice that traverses sculpture, performance, installation, and video. During the opening reception of *Let Me Be an Object that Screams*, a series of sculptures were displayed in the hands of a group of 'white dudes,' a set of actors who serve as embodiments of a privileged archetype. While the statuses of white men within a society imagined through subject/object relations are pressured elsewhere in the exhibition by Campbell, Faustine, Huston, and certainly Suryajaya, Ouyang's staging of white men as pedestals is a sharp-witted, playful attempt at a counter-narrative enacted within the institutional space of the gallery. A subject position that has long enjoyed social supremacy is here scripted into the supportive role of display furniture for Ouyang's objects that the artist describes as "images of female villains, villainhood being so often

a coded way to refer to either strong or abused women."³⁴ Here and there are verdigris clawed hands, femme counterparts to Campbell's fig leaves; both artists permit the bodily fragments to engender apparitions that enliven how these objects are understood. First held in the hands of a would-be aggressor (but also, possibly, an object of desire), then displayed on a sunny ledge beneath one of the gallery's windows is Ouyang's *medusa* (2016) which transforms a quotation of Constantin Brancusi's oft-repeated sculptures of untroubled heads in repose into a decapitation with snaking pigtails. From her pale green mouth falls a slender chain, a stunning physicalization of the contradictions of subjecthood with the permission to speak.

And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth, I didn't repaint my half of the world...Where is the ebullient, infinite woman who, immersed as she was in her naiveté, kept in the dark about herself, led into self-disdain by the great arm of parental-conjugal phallocentrism, hasn't been ashamed of her strength? Who, surprised and horrified by the fantastic tumult of her drives (for she was made to believe that a well-adjusted normal woman has a ... divine composure), hasn't accused herself of being a monster?³⁵

Draped dungeon-like from the rafters of the gallery space are a pair of Ouyang's works intertwined. *The Snake* to which this heavier chain refers is the white snake spirit of Chinese legend, sometimes called Madame White Snake, whose adventures traverse acquiring magical powers when pills of immortality are vomited into the lake where she resided and transforming her body to rescue an ambiguously homoerotic love interest. Hanging from *The Snake* are a series of small, heart-shaped vials comprising *arsenic, love* (both works 2017). Concoctions of realgar wine, dye, and water hold blue contact lenses like those that have been worn by other 'white dudes' in previous performances the artist has orchestrated. With these fragments both bodily and narrative, Ouyang searches through myth, fairytale, art history, and systems of signs for positions of dissent.

So, too, does this exhibition search for dissenting positions within and through what have been marked out as objects in psychoanalysis and our cultural pasts. As has been shown here, an object can dislocate itself within symbolic orders to critique less sensible forms of power and to herald desires yet to be accounted for within prevailing characterizations of society, as with Anna Campbell's project of queering with sculpture. Thomas Huston operates submissively, longing after lost objects within systems of art circulation, rendering meaningful interstitial non-places and the labor by which they are activated. Nona Faustine reenacts the objectification of black and female bodies like her own; and in her performance an interventionist protest is incited. Leonard Suryajaya's photographs and videos show fantastical scenes that experiment with issues of control as they relate to whiteness and other racialized signs, homoerotics, familial bonds, and nationalist identity.

Terry Adkins' legacy is one of powerfully animated bizarre objects that he made to hold particular and abstract accounts of lived histories. His sculpture *Tonsure* models consciousness as approached from the outside and from within. Jeff Gibson's sandwich board signs track how objects of desire are taken up into systems of economics, marketing, and consumption, while holding on to the visceral anxiety that drives feelings of lack and yearning. Arnold J. Kemp likewise scrutinizes the ways that display and adornment operate within constructions of identity, and how depictions of such are represented in art.

Puppies Puppies draws from pop culture to give enchanting voice to objecthood – simultaneously corrupting and erotic. E. Jane shifts problems of selfhood into an Internet-based information economy, testing the effects of a self that is variously fluid in forms especially supported by virtuality and produced “on demand.” Jennifer Chen-su Huang breaches “object” as language and taxonomy, spreading her sensual engagements into excesses of both material itself and matters of control. In Isabelle McGuire's videos, sex objects morph beyond the human, inflating, compressing, and fantasizing into ontological uncertainty.

Nayland Blake's assemblage sculptures hold in their disparate fragments capacities for fetishization, remembering, and non-normative

pleasures in the way parts come together. Oli Rodriguez and Jovencio de la Paz act upon one another in mutual objectification, using each other's bodies in compositions of domestic kink. And in playing with sculptural interpretations of mythic women's bodies as well as the roles white men occupy in society, Catalina Ouyang rescripts subject/object relations along lines of gender, sexuality, and race.

This exhibition is demonstrative of Baudrillard's conception of the evil genie of objects aforementioned. Keeping in mind that the whole of Baudrillard's writing occurs beyond the bounds of conventional morality, substantive theology, and stable dualities (like good and evil), understanding his frequent use of the word 'evil' can be a conundrum to parse. Baudrillard's evil is “the non-unification of things,”³⁶ “all the forms of radical, heterogeneous, irreconcilable otherness.”³⁷ Continuing in this exhibition's reappropriative work then, evil describes those of us who coalesce across differences, who exhume hidden life from the margins to which we have been relegated by supremacists committed only to those who reproduce what they believe to know about themselves. The evil genie of objects counters the projected nightmares of armed agents of the law (and for that matter, the Law, in all its patriarchy, masculinity, whiteness, and heterosexism). The evil genie of objects “has no desire at all to be analyzed and observed, and taking this process for a challenge (which it is) it's answering with a challenge...today the analyzed object triumphs everywhere, by its very position as object, over the subject of analysis. It escapes the analyst everywhere, pushing him back to his indeterminable position of subject. By its complexity it not only overflows, but also annuls the questions that the other can ask of it.”³⁸

The scream of an evil genie of objects sounds in the voice of Eartha Kitt.³⁹ These are objects in revolt, confounding those from whom they are designated as 'other' by pursuing otherness yet further. Hopes to be treated as a person preoccupy too much energy when an enormous quantity of caring is required in times like these. A care that is not determined by subjecthood, personhood, or the criteria of either. Rather, an object might be abyssal by contrast – the stubborn opacity of its shell serving merely as a threshold opening into itself more deeply, onto temples of pleasure. The

screams of these objects are heard in the households of queer families and in those of Chinese descent in Indonesia where legal, economic, and cultural discrimination persists. Echoes float before national monuments, amongst the delicate detritus of the streets. Evil genies of objects wrap themselves in moving blankets, tighten their belts, and tighten the leather lashes around their consenting playmates. They explore intimacies in alternative forms of relationships “to counteract the shattering effects of discriminatory objectification not by striving to convince the public that ‘yes, we actually are subjects,’ but to be objects for one another, and to get so much better at objectifying one another. We can excel at being ever more complex and nuanced objects – so much so that we learn together how to see, and do it with a vengeance.”⁴⁰

Start with the excess, utter undoing, and a curiosity with what you are that you haven't yet been allowed to be. Rest in the radicality of unsanctioned action. The most abhorrent trait of these imbricated systems of control are the policed apertures through which love is seemingly withheld. See ahead of yourselves without obstruction: see not only that you are loved but that you are able to participate in love that can hold your horror and exhaustion and malaise and melancholy. Making objects that scream is making love. Ronald Fairbairn would say that this is exciting. I say that it's necessary.

Now scream.

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

TERRY ADKINS

A sculptor and musician, born in Washington, D.C. in 1953, Adkins founded the Lone Wolf Recital Corps in 1986 as a collective to collaborate on musical performances and art installations with a regularly rotating ensemble of artists, musicians, and friends. Always drawn to multiplicity and hybridity, the Corps was aligned with Adkins's affinities as a composer, wherein a musical structure could take on a life of its own through its improvisational shifts and fluctuations. Adkins' attachment to the emancipatory potential of music, grounded in memory and expanded through community engagement, served as a reinforcement for his artistic practice. Dubbing his performances "recitals," Adkins considered these arrangements as opportunities to reconsider the legacies of overlooked individuals or dissect biographical details of more famous figures. In the 1990s, Adkins shifted his focus to reinvigorating the lesser-known histories of figures including abolitionist John Brown, botanist and inventor George Washington Carver, and W.E.B Du Bois, among others. These works established a contemporary relevance through their capacity to reinterpret the conventions of the past and engage in site-specific research and installation. The artist passed away at his home in Brooklyn in 2014.

NAYLAND BLAKE

Nayland Blake is an artist working primarily in sculpture, performance, video, and drawing. Their work has often addressed racial and sexual identity, as well as taboo forms of love, desire, and fantasy, ranging from interracial and same-sex love to kink, BDSM, and the "furry" subculture. Their art has been featured in over twenty solo exhibitions, including shows at the Yerba Center for the Arts in San Francisco, Location One in New York, and the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York. They have participated in the *Whitney Biennial* (1991), the *Venice Biennale* (1993), and numerous group exhibitions in the United States, Italy, the UK, Austria, France, Poland, Germany, Australia, and Switzerland. Blake was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2012.

ANNA CAMPBELL

Using sculpture, site-specific installation and the design of ephemera, Anna Campbell's work deconstructs otherwise legible signifiers of gender and heteronormativity. Appropriated and abstracted references to domestic spaces, gay bars and other more provisional architectures are employed to access new attachments of possibility and desire from what might seem otherwise like static legacies. Campbell's exhibition record includes solo exhibitions at BOSI Contemporary in New York, Tractionarts in Los Angeles, and the Window Into Houston at the Blaffer Art Museum in Houston as well as group exhibitions at Seoul National University of Science and Technology in South Korea, AIR Gallery, the Center For Book Arts, and the Green Gallery at Yale. Her work has been featured in the *Advocate.com*, *Hyperallergic*, *GQ.com*, *the Chicago Reader*, and in the recently released "Hip openers: on the visuals of gendering athleticism" by Erica Rand, published in *Queer Difficulties in Verse and Visual Culture*, (edited by Jongwoo Jeremy Kim & Christopher Reed, Routledge, 2017). She has been in residence at ACRE, Ox-Bow, the Vermont Studio Center, and Haystack Mountain School of Crafts. Campbell's work is in the collections of numerous universities, the MoMA Library, and the Leslie Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art; and her site-specific, bronze sculpture is permanently installed at the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn. She earned a BA in Studio Art from the College of Wooster and an MFA in Sculpture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Campbell maintains a studio in New York and Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she teaches sculpture, installation, and curation as Associate Professor in the Art & Design Department at Grand Valley State University.

NONA FAUSTINE

Photographer and visual artist Nona Faustine was born and raised in Brooklyn. She is a graduate of The School of Visual Arts and The International Center of Photography at Bard College MFA program. Her work

focuses on history, identity, representation, evoking a critical and emotional understanding of the past, and proposes a deeper examination of contemporary racial and gender stereotypes. Faustine's images have received world wide attention and have been published in a variety of national and international media outlets such as *The New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, *Hyperallergic*, *Village Voice*, *The Guardian*, *Artforum*, *Fader Magazine*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, among many others. Faustine's work has been exhibited at the Schomburg Center for Black Research in Harlem, the College of Staten Island with Kara Walker titled "*I can't breathe*" (2016), as well as Smack Mellon and Baxter St. Camera Club in New York City where she had two solo shows in 2016. Faustine is a sought after speaker for panel discussions, and artist talks at institutions of higher learning around the country: Albany State University, Ohio State University, Schomburg Research Center in Harlem, Marist College, Bucknell University, and Aperture are a few.

JEFF GIBSON

An Australian-born artist and occasional critic who has worked in a variety of media and contexts – photography, video, prints, posters, banners, and books for galleries and public spaces and a former senior editor of *Art&Text* magazine, Gibson moved to New York in 1998 to work for *Artforum*, where he is currently managing editor. Since arriving in New York, he has produced two artist's books, *Dupe: A Partial Compendium of Everyday Delusions*, 2000, and *Sarsaparilla to Sorcery*, 2007, exhibited on the Panasonic Astrovision screen in Times Square as part of Creative Time's "59th Minute" program, and mounted solo shows at the New York Academy of Sciences, Stephan Stoyanov Gallery (New York), and The Suburban (Chicago and Milwaukee). Throughout January 2011, two of the artist's videos, *Smoke* and *Asylum*, both 2010, were projected onto the facade of the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, New York, as part of a curated series presented by Light Work and the Urban Video Project. His video *Metapoetaestheticism*, 2013, was exhibited in the 2014 *Whitney Biennial*.

In 2016, Gibson produced a billboard, titled *Armagarden*, for the I-70 Sign Show, a curated program of artworks occupying advertising sites on the Missouri interstate. In conjunction with this project, he also produced a foldout poster for the Sunday opinion pages of the *Columbia Daily Tribune* newspaper.

JENNIFER CHEN-SU HUANG

An artist, writer, and recent transplant in Taipei, where she is currently a Fulbright Research Fellow at National Chengchi University, Jennifer Chen-Su Huang graduated with her MFA in Fiber and Material Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2017. She received her BA from the University of California, Berkeley, majoring in Art Practice and minoring in Art History. She has also received scholarships to attend Ox-bow School of Art and Haystack Mountain School of Craft and has exhibited in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago.

THOMAS HUSTON

An interdisciplinary artist living and working in Chicago. Thomas Huston received his MFA in Printmedia from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2016 and his BA in Studio Art and Art History from Oberlin College in 2013. Recent exhibitions include: *The Stolbun Collection* at the Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, 2017, *On The Shelf* at Filter Photo, Chicago (2016), *Y* at EXPO Chicago, curated by Edra Soto, 2016, *TEAM SPORTS* with Risa Recio at Samuel, Chicago, 2016, and *Steady State* at CARUS, Cleveland (2016). He currently works as an art handler in the Department of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago.

E. JANE (@MHYSA301)

E. Jane is a Black woman, conceptual artist, and sound designer. Their work is a critical inquiry surrounding softness, safety, futurity, cyberspace, and how subjugated bodies navigate media/the media. Their

interdisciplinary practice incorporates digital images, video, performance, sound-based, sculpture, and installation works. A central facet of Jane's practice lies in their music output as MHYSA, an underground popstar for the cyber resistance. She released the *Hivemind* EP on NON in early 2016 and was recently listed in *Artforum's* "Best of 2016: Music". MHYSA recently finished writing her debut album, *fantasii*, available on July 21st on avant electronic music label Halcyon Veil. Born in Bethesda, Maryland in 1990 and currently based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, E. Jane received their MFA from the University of Pennsylvania in 2016 and a BA in Art History with minors in English and Philosophy from Marymount Manhattan College in New York in 2012. In 2015, E. wrote the NOPE manifesto which was published by the Brooklyn-based digital publishers, Codette. E. Jane is a recipient of the Wynn Newhouse Award and recently had their second solo show, *Lavendra*, at American Medium in Brooklyn, NY.

ARNOLD J. KEMP

A poet and artist, Arnold J. Kemp was a founding curator of San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and was working with Kathy Acker, as Yerba Buena's first visiting artist, before she became ill. Alternately, Kemp engaged Dennis Cooper as a visiting artist and co-curated *Guide to Trust No. 2*, an exhibition inspired by Cooper's novels. Kemp's artworks are in the collections of the Studio Museum in Harlem, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Berkeley Art Museum, and the Portland Art Museum. He lives and works in Chicago where he is the Dean of Graduate Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

ISABELLE MCGUIRE

An interdisciplinary artist working primarily in video and performance, Isabelle McGuire has had solo exhibitions at Jacket Contemporary and Prairie in Chicago, Group exhibitions include New York

City Porn Film Festival, Brooklyn; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Fundación del Centro Cultural del México Contemporáneo, Mexico City; National Queer Arts Festival, San Francisco; Flat Earth Film Festival, Seyðisfjörður, Iceland; and Kleiner Salon, Berlin. McGuire is the recipient of multiple grants, including The Chicago Collaborative Artist Project Grant, and has been featured in *Bullett Magazine*. They received their BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2016.

CATALINA OUYANG

Catalina Ouyang has had solo and two-person exhibitions at Trestle Projects, Brooklyn; PLUG Projects, Kansas City; the Millitzer Gallery St. Louis; and fort gondo compound for the arts, St. Louis. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at COOP Gallery, Nashville; the DEMO Project, Springfield; Field Projects, New York; Parapet Four Seasons, Los Angeles; Kilroy Metal Ceiling, Brooklyn; the Luminary, St. Louis; Hardesty Arts Center, Tulsa; Granite City Art and Design District, Granite City; and Westminster Press, St. Louis. She has attended residencies at the NARS Foundation, Brooklyn; OBRAS, Evoramonte, Portugal; Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach; Mary Sky, Hancock; and North Mountain, Shanghai. She is an MFA candidate in Sculpture at Yale University.

PUPPIES PUPPIES

Woof woof Puppies Puppies woof woof woof, woof woof woof woof woof. Woof woof woof woof woof woof. Woof, woof woof woof woof woof woof - woof woof, woof woof woof woof woof, woof woof woof woof. Woof woof, Woof Woof woof Woof, woof Woof Woof woof woof woof woof. Woof woof woof woof woof.

OLI RODRIGUEZ

An interdisciplinary artist working in filmmaking, photography, performance, installation, and writing, Oli Rodriguez is currently a faculty

member in the Photography Department at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). His projects conceptually intersect and dialogue within consent, queerness, family, childhood, and sexuality. He curated the exhibition *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Aesthetics* at the Sullivan Galleries at SAIC. He is a part of the monograph *Confronting the Abject*, titled after his research themed class that he co-taught with Catherine Opie at SAIC. He just finished his book, *The Papi Project*, which archives the AIDS pandemic through his queer, people of color family in Chicago during the 1980s. In its final stages, *LYNDALE*, his feature length documentary, delves into the complicated relationships between family members as they navigate childhood neglect, queer identities, cyclical familial trauma, and mental illness. Rodriguez has screened, performed, lectured, and exhibited his works internationally and nationally at institutions and museums such as The Banff Centre, Schwarzer Kanal, Berlin, Germany, Smart Museum, University of Chicago, Bridge, Hyde Park Art Center, Cornell University, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and The Gene Siskel Film Center.

LEONARD SURYAJAYA

Leonard Suryajaya's work explores intricate and complicated layers of selfhood in the context of cultural background, intimacy, sexual preference, and personal displacement. Influenced by the cultural milieu of inter-ethnic relations in Indonesia, he utilizes photography and video, along with elements of performance and installation. Through the use of personal narrative and storytelling, his work challenges and deconstructs the perspective we use to scrutinize and observe our roles in a transnational global world.

BFA, 2013, California State University, Fullerton; MFA, 2015, School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Selected Exhibitions: Hyde Park Art Center, IL; Irvine Fine Arts Center, CA; Expo Chicago, IL; Chicago Artist Coalition, IL; The Center for Fine Arts Photography, CO; Roy G Biv Gallery, OH. Collections: The Art

Institute of Chicago; Joan Flasch Artist Book Collection. Publication:
Lenscratch; Chicago Tribune; Chicago Magazine; South Side Weekly.
Lectures: Society for Photographic Education 2014 National Conference, MD;
Society for Photographic Education 2016 National Conference, NV. Awards:
New Artist Society Award; James Weinstein Memorial Fellowship; Claire
Rosen and Samuel Edes Prize for Emerging Artist; Robert Giard Foundation
Fellowship; Lensculture Emerging Talent 2016; The Santo Foundation
Fellowship.

CURATOR AND CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

EVAN KLEEKAMP

Evan Kleekamp is a writer and researcher living in Los Angeles. His chapbook *13 THESES ON STATE-SPONSORED BLACK DEATH IN AMERICA* was published by Kastle Editions in 2016. Excerpts from his in-progress manuscript "Three Movements" are forthcoming in *Fence* and *Nightboat Books's Responses*, *New writings*, *Flesh anthology* edited by Ronaldo V. Wilson, Bhanu Kapil, and Mg Roberts. He is a managing editor at Les Figues Press.

MATT MORRIS

An artist, writer, and sometimes curator based in Chicago, Matt Morris analyzes forms of attachment and intimacy through painting, perfume, photography, and institutional critique. He has presented artwork at Adds Donna, The Bike Room, Gallery 400, The Franklin, peregrineprogram, Queer Thoughts, Sector 2337, and Shane Campbell Gallery in Chicago, IL; The Mary + Leigh Block Museum of Art in Evanston, IL; The Elmhurst Art Museum in Elmhurst, IL; Fjord and Vox Populi in Philadelphia; The Contemporary Arts Center, U-turn Art Space, Aisle, and semantics in Cincinnati; Clough-Hanson Gallery and Beige in Memphis; Permanent.Collection in Austin; Cherry + Lucic in Portland; The Poor Farm in Manawa; with additional projects in Reims, France; Greencastle, IN; Lincoln; and Baton Rouge. Morris is a transplant from southern Louisiana who holds a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and earned an MFA in Art Theory + Practice from Northwestern University, as well as a Certificate in Gender + Sexuality Studies. In Summer 2017 he earned a Certification in Fairyology from Doreen Virtue, PhD. He is a lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of

Chicago and a contributor to *Artforum.com*, *ARTnews*, *Art Papers*, *Flash Art*, *Pelican Bomb*, and *Sculpture*; and his writing appears in numerous exhibition catalogues and artist monographs.

ALISA SWINDELL

Alisa Swindell is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her primary research interests are the history of photography and other modes of contemporary art with a focus on race and sexuality. She is an independent curator and has written for exhibition catalogues and art and culture journals. Swindell regularly presents at conferences and panels as an academic and an activist. She previously had a career as an arts administrator and taught art history at several universities in Chicago and the St. Louis area.

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Jackson Brandstetter, Erik Sateren, and Adrian Stein for performing that night. Thanks also to the gallery photographers Kiam Marcelo Junio and Tom van Eynde for documenting the exhibition. I am so pleased and grateful to be able to share the thoughtful written contributions by Evan Kleekamp and Alisa Swindell that were commissioned for this book. This book would not have been possible without the support and commitments of Dan Berger, Scott Hunter, Jason Pickleman, and Sue and Al Ravitz. Words can't properly express my appreciation for their making this book a reality. Frederick Eschrich and Anton Jeludkov are the brilliantly sensitive designers who made this project into such a compelling book, and they have my eternal thanks for it. Thank you to Michael J. Morris, who alongside many others included in these acknowledgements, was a sensitive reader and resource as I wrote the essay included in this book.

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