

Exhibition Checklist (expanded)

The Alliance of Pentaphilic Curators

(Jason Dunda and Teena McClelland)

5x5 Porcelain Venues, 2011

Toilet paper holders

In 2005 The Alliance of Pentaphilic Curators presented *Experiment 400/5* at Gallery 400, a tongue-in-cheek project aimed at questioning and undermining the structure of gallery systems. They subdivided the Gallery into 25 microcosmic spaces and invited 125 artists to exhibit their work on an absurdly accelerated schedule: the artists installed work on the first day, held a reception on the second day, and deinstalled on the third day. Constantly in flux and experimental on multiple levels, the exhibition was both an insightful parody and a remarkable presentation of work by a diverse community of artists. *5x5 Porcelain Venues* mines the archive of *Experiment 400/5* by inviting all participants back to Gallery 400 for a rotating reunion of new works on paper. Additionally, visitors to the Gallery are encouraged to participate in the project by contributing their own drawings.

John Arndt

Archive, 2008

Microcrystalline wax, metal lath, compost, and cedar

John Arndt participated in four group exhibitions at Gallery 400: *Arresting Images* (1995), *Sculpture in Chicago*, *The Next Generation* (1998), *Concerning Truth* (1998), and *San Miguel Arts Project* (1999), and had a solo exhibition, *Empire* (2006). In recent years he has been documenting the relatively mundane interests and activities of everyday life—producing a video of a walk in the woods or an audio recording of a day at the county fair. Occasionally Arndt's medium is sculptural, as with *Archive*, which contains fruit, vegetable peelings, and organic waste that he collected over the course of a year and allowed to break down and decompose over additional seasons. Sealed in wax, what might normally be folded back

into a garden could be considered a historical record of habit, of nutritional consumption, or of any number of things.

Conrad Bakker

Untitled Project: SUBSCRIPTION [Artforum International: Sept 1969–June 1970], 2009–10

Oil on carved wood

In 2005 Conrad Bakker, who replicates a wide range of objects in carved and hand-painted wood, presented *Untitled Project: Dumpster*—a fullscale replica of a construction dumpster on the plaza of Gallery 400's temporary Harrison Street site. Across his broader work Bakker is interested in forcing a repetition of material histories (magazines, books, records, and more), not as a means of bringing them back, but rather as a way of understanding the distance between us and the historical objects and events he re-presents. *Untitled Project: SUBSCRIPTION [Artforum International: Sept 1969–June 1970]* replicates a ten-issue set of *Artforum International* and the subscription card. Structured on the monthly magazine model, Bakker enlisted ten individuals to subscribe (at the price of a current *Artforum* subscription) to his recreated issues between September 2009 and June 2010. This gesture of orchestrated repetition simultaneously produced an archive of contemporary art history and prompted reflection on its ongoing commodification.

Dexter Sinister

A Note on the Type, excerpt, 2010

Vinyl on wall

Dexter Sinister's fall 2010 exhibition at Gallery 400, *The Plastic Arts*, comprised 17 panels of vinyl lettering designed as walk-in-captions offering metaphorical channels through which to consider exhibition display. This excerpt is the introductory panel, presented in the very location where it was exhibited fourteen months ago. Within a complex practice exploring aspects of contemporary publishing, Dexter Sinister (the compound name of David Reinfurt and Stuart Bailey) has designed, edited, produced, and distributed both printed and digital media, and worked with ambiguous roles and formats

in gallery and museum contexts. Currently Dexter Sinister is slowly dissolving all such activities into one single institution, *The Serving Library*. Founded on a consideration of how the role of the library has changed over time—from fixed archive, through circulating collection, to a point

of distribution—*The Serving Library* folds together into a single process publishing and archiving, which traditionally exist at opposite ends of the trajectory of knowledge production.

Christa Donner

Archive Excerpt (Re:Production), 2011

Mixed media on paper, photographic prints, found objects

Christa Donner exhibited in Gallery 400's group exhibition *Drawn Out* (2005) and co-curated *Biological Agents* (2008). In constructing a body of work, Donner selects material from existing archives such as library image collections and old textbooks. She also self-publishes zines, the content of which is generated from a series of workshops and thematic interviews with an individual or community. *Archive Excerpt (Re:Production)* is a multimedia collage of artifacts from *Re:Production*, a body of work exploring the combined themes of fertility and identity. The larger work proposes new visions of human reproduction in an era when fertility drugs and genetic modification transform previously impossible and unimaginable biological feats into viable reality. In creating her poetic reflections on engineered reproduction, Donner drew upon the anatomy of non-human organisms, as well as interviews with a diverse range of women about their own experiences.

Kota Ezawa

History of Photography Remix, 2004–06

Slide Installation

Gallery 400 exhibited Kota Ezawa's work in two group exhibitions: *Color Value* (2003) and *Drawn Out* (2005). Across works in video, sculpture, and photography, Ezawa meticulously recreates images and sequences from the deep archival well of television, cinema, and art history. Because he redraws the

images digitally in a reductive, highly stylized manner, and selects images across typologies, his reproductions are at once strange and familiar. It is this tension that potentially slows down our recognition of the famous art photography and photojournalism referenced in *The History of Photography Remix*. In the process of identifying the images, we become aware of the spectrum of cultural history and the storehouse of collective memory we draw upon in recognizing the image.

Edie Fake

The Sappho, 2010

Kris Studios, 2011

Pen, ink, and gouache on paper; 14 x 17 in.

Earlier this year Gallery 400 exhibited a suite of Edie Fake's drawings in the group exhibition *Bless This Mess*. Deeply interested in Chicago's queer heritage, Fake researches archival materials in collections such as the Leather Archives and Museum (located in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood). Taking inspiration from the venues, movements, and projects of this complex history, Fake creates hybrid fantasy architecture that evokes an essence of queer space. Though not exact representations of specific locations or a nostalgic past, the patterns and structure of the buildings are almost entirely collaged from extant architectural details in Chicago. Fake views these re-imagined spaces and the power of their archival sourcing as catalysts through which the past can inspire what is needed in the present.

Eric Fleischauer

Rhythmus 21st Century, 2011

HD video, 13:00 min. loop

Eric Fleischauer exhibited at Gallery 400 earlier this year in the group exhibition *File Type*. His work investigates the ramifications of technology's expansive influence on both the individual and the cultural sphere. More specifically, it addresses the relationship of the archive to the multitude of new tools and techniques being used to collect, store, organize, and retrieve information within digital culture.

Rhythmus 21st Century is a remake of Hans Richter's pioneering film *Rhythmus 21* (1921). Each of Fleischauer's four components—Straight, Gradient, Color/Film, Color/Gradient—was made with frame-accurate precision using sophisticated animation software, thus reiterating and reinventing the historical work. *Rhythmus 21st Century* draws attention to the unreliability of the archive in which even an exact trace of the original can accrue meaning and be transformed through newly created associations, ultimately raising important questions about the role of materiality in the digital age.

Stephen Lapthisophon

The Taxonomy of Root Vegetables, 2011

Shelf, potatoes, and wire

Stephen Lapthisophon had a solo exhibition, *With Reasonable Accommodation*, at Gallery 400 in 2002. As with that exhibition, most of Lapthisophon's installations, publications, and other works combine accumulated fragments from art history and everyday life into complex structural dialogues. Evidencing an impulse to index, Lapthisophon's works create layers of meanings, allusions, and associations with respect to everyday life and how we move through it. *The Taxonomy of Root Vegetables* presents a collection of potatoes simply and humbly sitting in place, intended as a representation of the "temporary nature of being in the world." This and other works reflect on the tendency to collect and how it can both preserve and dismantle.

Jason Lazarus

Too Hard to Keep, 2010–

Selected donated photographs

Jason Lazarus (exhibiting at Gallery 400 for the first time) is interested in images that possess intensely personal meaning for their owners. Begun in 2010 as an archive to be maintained throughout Lazarus' entire life (with a succession plan in the event he is unable to maintain it), *Too Hard to Keep* asks the public for photos that are too painful to keep but have not yet been destroyed or discarded. Ongoing and ever growing, the archive exists in three formats: as a blog (toohardtokeep.blogspot.com), a physical

archive, and a series of installations. When exhibited, a selection of photographs is presented in an arrangement unique to the venue, with certain images displayed backwards at the request of the original owners and accompanied by a secure drop-box for new submissions to the project. *Too Hard to Keep* serves as a means of transferring and recording a special set of images, ultimately providing an outlet to relinquish images from a personal archive and incorporate them into a public one.

Dani Leventhal

Shot 2002, 2011

Wood and black bear skin

Dani Leventhal had a solo exhibition *Featherstitch* at Gallery 400 in 2003 and served as a collaborator in Steve Reinke's *The Tiny*

Ventriloquist (2010). Leventhal's artworks incorporate a wide range of imagery drawn from her immediate life and environment, as well as from broader socially and historically significant sources. In many ways her work can be seen as an alternative archive of experience. Part of a larger series on death, fragility, and current events, *Shot 2002* is a commemorative work that includes a bear skin, which Leventhal has used extensively in previous work. *Shot 2002* evokes both the unknowable circumstance of the bear's life and Leventhal's personal experiences with the bear's body: from acquiring the bear's corpse from hunters; to cleaning, skinning, and eating the bear; and ultimately filming those activities and incorporating the footage into a larger meditative video work, *Draft 9*.

Aspen Mays

Radio and Television Production Aids, 2010

Silver gelatin prints

Exhibiting at Gallery 400 for the first time, photographer Aspen Mays explores the tension between what a photograph reveals and what it conceals. She has grown increasingly interested in the different ways that photographs function in the context of the archive, as well as the larger endeavor of cataloging as a

way to visualize and organize information. For *Radio and Television Production Aids*, Mays found the typewritten notes for a NASA slideshow in an abandoned dark room she was using in Chile. Mays used these captions to create photographs by making transparencies from the found pages and using the transparencies to create contact prints. The black writing and white paper background of the original is now reversed, adding a strange layer of secrecy to notations originally incorporated into a slideshow conveying triumph for NASA. Having the captions and language without the images activates both our imagination and memory of these iconic photographs.

Mary Patten

Untitled (names and addresses), 1994

Mixed media

In 2007 Mary Patten exhibited at Gallery 400 in the group exhibition, *Captive Audience*, and co-organized the multi-platform project

PathoGeographies (or, other people's baggage). She presented *Untitled (names and addresses)* in the 1995 group exhibition *fag-o-sites*. In contradistinction to the archival impulse, Patten characterizes her solo and collaborative projects within the framework of the “ephemeral impulse,” in which the discarded stuff of everyday life, materials that change and decay over time, barely-visible histories, and the fleeting movements of feelings, are all evident. *Untitled (names and addresses)* is a quiet testimony to a ten-year passage of time and the erasure of an accumulated and dense personal history. For Patten, the tedious and labor-intensive “paintingover” of every name and address seemed an appropriate commemoration of the loss that she was experiencing in the early '90s.

Jenny Perlin

Division, 2010

Video, 0:55 min. loop

Letter, 2010

Video, 0:56 min. loop

Mimeograph, 2010

Video, 20:50 min. loop

In 2004 Jenny Perlin presented the major solo exhibition *A Worry-Free Life or Your Money Back* at Gallery 400. Perlin's practice works both with and against documentary tradition, emphasizing issues of truth, misunderstanding, and personal history. Her work looks closely at ways in which social machinations are reflected in the smallest elements of daily life. The works included here are part of the larger project, *The Perlin Papers*, a cycle of films dealing with issues of domestic espionage during the Cold War. Named after her distant relative, *The Perlin Papers* is an archive of 250,000 pages that contains most of the FBI documents related to the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, U.S. citizens tried and executed in 1953 for spying. For two decades after the execution, the FBI tracked hundreds of people tangentially connected to the case. *The Perlin Papers* films focus on the overlooked, irrelevant, and seemingly unimportant documents in the archive as a way of unpacking history and connecting it to the present.

Public Collectors

Public Collectors is administered by Marc Fischer, who has been involved in a number of Gallery 400 exhibitions: *San Miguel Arts Project* (1999), *Paper Trails (Going Through Your Garbage)* (2002), *Captive Audience* (2007, as curator), and *Art Work: A National Conversation About Art, Labor, and Economics* (2010, as part of Temporary Services). In late 2007, Fischer created the ongoing project Public Collectors, which is founded upon the concern that there are many types of cultural artifacts that public libraries,

museums, and other institutions and archives either do not collect or do not make freely accessible. Public Collectors asks individuals that have had the luxury to amass, organize, and inventory these materials to help reverse this lack by making their collections public. The purpose of this project is for large collections of materials to become accessible so that knowledge, ideas, and expertise can be freely shared and exchanged. Public Collectors also organizes exhibitions and events, participates in

exhibitions organized by others, teaches, lectures, responds to research inquiries, and makes its own publications.

Public Collectors

Publications from the Public Collectors PDF Collection

"Every publication in this vitrine has been scanned in its entirety and can be downloaded from the Public Collectors website in PDF form. These publications are believed to be out of print and, in some cases, are unique, rare, or exceedingly expensive to purchase on the secondary market. These materials are being made available for noncommercial and educational use only. Public Collectors shares these and other publications because they are interesting, deserve a broader audience, and should not linger in obscurity. If, however, you are the copyright holder of these materials and would like to see them removed, please contact: marc@publiccollectors.org. If you have complete PDFs of publications to submit for inclusion, contact Public Collectors using the same email."

- Public Collectors

Public Collectors: Ricki Hill

Scrap Metal Collection: Relics of an Industrial Pathway

"Hubbard Street has been a steady source of inspiration and reflection. For nearly six years, it has been the main artery that links me to downtown. It is the preferred pathway for many reasons. Most importantly, it is very bicycle friendly. The street is extra wide for the trucks which frequent it and there are many stop signs which discourage use by passenger cars. This, combined with its industrial character and urban charm, has led to an unusual sense of connection for me. Often, while riding, my mind races as the blurred images of the street fly by. Other times, the ride is slower and details of the street engage my full attention. In this alert state, I become aware of small items in the street and my inclination to accumulate objects compels me to circle back and retrieve certain items that strike me as appealing. These relics from Hubbard Street are interwoven into my development and personal history as a scrapbook of my Chicago experience."

- Ricki Hill

Public Collectors: Katrina Petrauskas

28 CTA Passes

"My uncle, Gustas Naujokas, came over from Germany with his parents and siblings in 1949. He was about 13 years old when he left and never received much formal education past that age. My family members lived on a farm in Pennsylvania for a few years to pay off their debt to the woman who sponsored their passage. They moved to Chicago in 1952 and ended up in Marquette Park. When my uncle was 16 years old he started working at Carson's and was employed there for 42 years until his retirement. He never took a day off and always took the bus regardless of terrible weather or ailments. My father found these CTA cards in a dresser drawer while cleaning out my uncle's house after he passed away in 2009. He gave them to me because he thought they would be a good source of inspiration for my work."

-Katrina Petrauskas

Public Collectors: Michael Thomas

Fashion Illustration by D. 'Jame

"These drawings come from the collection of Michael Thomas, an artist based in Chicago. Thomas found the drawings at a thrift store in Chicago, located on Broadway Avenue near Devon. He writes: "They were priced at \$5 per drawing. I could only afford one and was unable to decide. The owner of the store said he was tired of having them around and I could buy them all for \$20. There are thirty-three drawings. He said there had been more, but they had been sold." The store owner purchased the drawings as part of a lot at an estate sale in Northern Indiana. No other information about D. 'Jame is known. The drawings are dated from 1970-77."

-Public Collectors

Jason Salavon

374 Farben, 2007

Digital C-print and light box

In 2001, Jason Salavon exhibited in the Gallery 400 group exhibition *Revolutions Per Minute*. Using software processes of his own design, Salavon generates and reconfigures masses of communal material to present new perspectives on the familiar. Though formally varied, his projects frequently manipulate the roles of individual elements derived from diverse visual populations. *374 Farben* simplifies the 374 pages of the 2007 IKEA catalogue into a rectangle of pure color, arranged in order from left-to-right, top-to-bottom. With an estimated 175 million copies distributed in 2006, the IKEA catalogue is thought to have surpassed the Bible as the most published print-work in the world. With this work, which is part of a larger series, Salavon set out to “transform that ubiquity of design into varied pure color arrangements.”

Paul Lloyd Sargent

Diet for Ambivalent America, 2011

Website

<http://dietforanambivalentamerica.com>

Paul Lloyd Sargent curated the 2004 group exhibition *Echo Local* at Gallery 400. That exhibition featured the first public presentation of his own *Representative Sample* project, an audio map of the Humboldt Park neighborhood in Chicago constructed from 547 five-second samples of found audiocassette tape. Sargent's most recent collection project, *Diet for Ambivalent America*, is a decidedly low tech “anti-food blog.” Utilizing available consumer technology and the Tumblr platform, Sargent archives years of grocery lists, shopping receipts, cell phone pictures, drawings, emails, and other ephemera to document economic transactions with and in his neighborhood grocery stores, supermarkets, CSAs, co-ops, delis, bodegas, convenience stores, restaurants, and other local and regional “foodsheds.”

Cauleen Smith

FINDINGS #1: Evidence of Synesthesia and the Exploration of Visual Materiality in the Creative Practice of Sun Ra, 2011

Eighty 35mm slides, 256Hz tuning fork, 432Hz tuning fork, 430Hz tuning fork, rubber mallet, and screenprinted notebook

Cauleen Smith (exhibiting at Gallery 400 for the first time) is in the midst of investigating the visual materiality of Sun Ra, one of the pioneers of black galactic thought and creative practice. During his time in Chicago, Ra deepened and refined the visual and sonic strategies that fueled and informed his fifty-year career. Smith's research is an attempt to better understand Sun Ra's visual and performance strategies, as these were, during his time on planet earth, the least understood. Smith identifies the procedural, philosophical tactics of Sun Ra and his Arkestra as structuring elements in her own practice. *FINDINGS #1* is a report of Smith's research thus far that attempts to link the laws of physics, the knowledge of the pharaohs, occult inquiries, Sun Ra's (and his associates') ephemeral traces, and Smith's practice into a single galaxy of thought and visual materiality.

Smith would like to thank the Black Metropolis Research Consortium at the University of Chicago for the fellowship that made this research possible.

Edra Soto

Ornamentos, 2005

Embossing aluminum in gold, silver, and copper

Edra Soto's 2004 solo exhibition, *Documentation Project: A Year in Review*, consisted of two projects, *Ornamentos* and *Landfill*, which took place in and around Gallery 400. *Ornamentos* was a detailed documentation of popular culture inspired by Mexican folkloric art. Over the course of a year, Soto traced images from publications such as *El Nuevo Día* in Puerto Rico and the *Chicago Sun-Times*—as many as five a day—directly onto sheets of metal. These tracings exist as records of the daily news and/or of Soto's selective decisions about the news of the day. Soto had intended to trace one image per day, but as evidence of the fact that 2004 was an incredibly tumultuous year in U.S. history, the complete

Ornamentos work holds over 400 pieces. Presented here is a small selection, which can be referenced in Soto's bound index of the entire work.

Stephanie Syjuco

Particulate Matter (Things, Thingys, Thingies), excerpt, 2010

Mixed media

Stephanie Syjuco's solo exhibition *Particulate Matter (Things, Thingys, Thingies)* was presented at Gallery 400 in 2010. Syjuco's recent projects have mined the Internet and digital databases as a way to inspect how images and information are archived and valued. With the advent of new and accessible technologies, people are able to easily document almost every aspect of their lives through digital photographs, video, text files, and music that can be uploaded and shared online. Syjuco is fascinated by today's sublimated archival impulse in which the "dregs" of these collections—the images and objects that seem ridiculously unimportant—are filed, stored, and made publicly accessible. Presented here, in part, *Particulate Matter (Things, Thingys, Thingies)* highlights seemingly useless three-dimensional designs that the artist found online in a shared database. By meticulously hand-building each one, Syjuco paid attention to these marginal items and focused on what appeared to be quirky "hiccups" of data and design.

Sergio Vega

Miami Modern Art Museum: Department of Parrots, 2007

Inkjet prints

Philip von Zweck

Best Music Ever, 2004

45 sheets of ink on paper

At Gallery 400 Philip von Zweck co-curated the group exhibition and participatory project *Sounding Off* (2004) and initiated the ongoing, participatory project *Temporary Allegiance* (2005-). An inveterate

collector and student of library science, von Zweck has produced numerous projects that collect and present other makers' work, such as the gallery VONZWECK, the radio show "Something Else," and the flagpole project *Temporary Allegiance*. *Best Music Ever* is a collection of responses from students in the Music Appreciation class von Zweck taught at Brooklyn College in 2004. The students were instructed to submit a list of what they believed were the ten best pieces of music ever—not ones they liked, not their favorites, but the best ones. The activity and lists produced served as starting points for discussions about objectivity, criteria, selection, canonization, and power.

Every Hotel Room, 1991–

Books

Philip von Zweck has collected bibles for over 20 years, taking the bible from every hotel room he visits. He did not start collecting bibles as an artwork, but as a high schooler, celebrating Mardi Gras with friends who had returned from the Navy and rented a hotel room, von Zweck took the bible from the room to commemorate the event. He did it again in the next hotel room he visited, and has continued to do so, turning them into a collection, record, and artwork. Each bible is inscribed on the inside cover with notes on where von Zweck was, when, with whom, and often why he was there. The hotel rooms are not exclusively ones in which he stayed, but include, as well, ones he merely visited. The artist considers his growing archive odd and accidentally commemorative.