vs. The Brother

vs. The Brother, a split screen, one-channel video is part of a series from vs. Him, the investigation of masculinities in the Middle East in confrontation with a female protagonist. This work examines the rearing of opposite gendered siblings in Middle Eastern society as they move into adulthood. The video explores the idea of freedom and expectations of opposite genders; both are pressured into accelerated maturities and responsibilities, yet both are trapped in their narrowly defined roles. In the video, I juxtapose a racecar going round in circles (known as ‘drifting’ or ‘donuts’) with the image of a veiled female climbing, spinning and almost disappearing along a black silk rope. Ultimately, both are trapped in the repetitive and circular performance of society’s expectations, continuing the cycle of social norms of acceptability.

The work is a social observation on men in the Middle East who find their masculinity in risky and destructive ways amidst stifling economic, social and political conditions. Amateur car stunts are a popular pastime of the Arab male youth, from the streets of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia to Ramallah in Palestine, where this film was shot.

SAMA ALSHAIBI

vs. The Brother

vs. The Brother (from the project vs. Him)

Video screen embedded in custom made box, 4 minutes

Courtesy of Ayyam Gallery

19 3/16” x 19 3/16” x 2 3/8”

2011
My interests center on depictions and interpretations of the landscape. Distinct from the notion of land, untrodden by human feet yet completely ravaged, the landscape exists only as an embodiment of our collective cultural imagination.

The landscape is one of the most politicized entities of contemporary culture. It is the backdrop against which we play out so many of our political, economic, and social dramas. Images from “One Light and a Fog Machine” are part of an ongoing series exploring the implications of this and its effect on our relationship to the land.
WAR ZONE: What if?

“One reason for this (children in war) is the proliferation of light weapons. In the past, children were not particularly effective as front-line fighters since most of the lethal hardware was too heavy and cumbersome for them to manipulate. A child might have been able to wield a sword or a machete but was no match for a similarly armed adult.

However, a child with an assault rifle, a Soviet-made AK-47 or an American M-16, is a fearsome match for anyone. These weapons are very simple to use. The AK-47 can be stripped and reassembled by a child of 10. The rifles have also become much cheaper and more widely available—having few moving parts they are extremely durable and have steadily accumulated in war zones.” — UNICEF

This quote from UNICEF strongly influenced the ongoing project “WAR ZONE: What if?”. This current research pertains to the trauma potentially imposed on American children by war and light weapons—What if it happened here? This series of work is delineated by large scale watercolor portraits, 30” X 42.5”, of children and young adults influenced by the use of weapons of war.

JACKSON BOELTS

War Zone: Z #2
42.5” X 30”
Watercolor on paper
2014

War Zone: MB #1
42.5” X 30”
Watercolor on paper
2014
CARLTON BRADFORD

Basso Profondo

I have recently realized that my work deals in incongruities. I use form and material to try to shape a new reality, based on recognizable objects, for the viewer to experience. My sculpture in this exhibition represents ideas I have had for many years now, only now able to be seen in the “real” world.

Basso Profondo
Alder and plywood
45" h x 76" w x 33" d
2014
In 1987, I was invited to come to the UA by Professor Maurice Grossman as a visiting artist. For two days in February I demonstrated my approach to clay sculpture before a group of students and local ceramic artists, some who assisted me in the making of several sculptures. One of the pieces I constructed was what I have now titled 1987 Cataclysm/Cataplasm 2015, which was bisque-fired and left on a shelf 28 years ago. Unexpectedly, in 1988, Maurice retired and invited me to apply for his position and was hired. The piece was never finished and languished in a box until a few months ago when I rediscovered it during a cleanup. It was like a chance meeting of a beloved old friend, long gone missing. I contemplated it over the summer and knew I had to complete it and display it in this faculty exhibition. The title is a cryptic reference to my life sandwiched in between the dates of the birth and fruition of this piece.

**1987 Cataclysm/Cataplasm 2015**

Earthenware, underglazes, copper oxide stain, glaze

20.5" h × 15" w × 17.5" d

2015

Balfour Walker Photography
DAVID CHRISTIANA

Shannon

This piece is a series of views of my mother-in-law, Shannon, while she underwent treatment for breast cancer. Shannon had agreed to sit for me earlier, but our schedules had not synced, in part, because I had been dealing with cancer of my own. So, I was grateful when, in spite of the private and personal nature of the struggle she was embarking upon, she agreed to sit for me anyway. I had no intention of completing more than one image. I paint to be nearer to my subject. It’s the closeness of sitting with someone, or some thing, that I aspire to revere. Sometimes a sitter will talk, or move, or not. I generally don’t ask them to be still unless they want to, because I have no interest in capturing a likeness or stopping time. I have no interest in capturing anything at all. My interest lies with change – from minute to minute, month to month, year to year.

The work began on January 1, 2014. Shannon’s treatment had started the previous month and she tired in less than an hour. She agreed to sit again the next day. She seemed completely different on the second day – as if the bewilderment of the first session had been replaced by dread. The third and fourth portraits were started in March and completed near the end of the year.

Bewilderment
Oil on panel, wood, steel
18” h X 16 5/8” w X 3 1/4” d
2014

Dread
Oil on panel, wood, steel
18” h X 16 5/8” w X 5 5/8” d
2014

Confrontation
Oil on canvas, wood
18” h X 16 5/8” w X 6 3/8” d
2014

Awakening
Oil on canvas, wood
18” h X 16 5/8” w X 3 1/4” d
2014
Jim Cook

Corona: Birth of An Old Man

The short video reflects upon the transformation of creative thinking from the imaginative sphere into language as a means to reconstruct and communicate poetic experiences. Specialized devices that were once mechanical are now electronic and digital, and have become virtual prosthetics in the communication of ideas.

The portable Corona typewriter, used by Ernest Hemingway to write several of his works, is embraced as one such device serving to transform poetic narratives into language onto paper to then be read and re-imagined by others.

The thematic narrative of individual human struggles and larger existential questions in Hemingway’s short story, The Old Man and the Sea, underpin this brief portrayal of typewriter as interlocutor with the imagination.
ELIZABETH GARBER

Touch Clay

Hand-made objects can be understood as portable objects that exist within the intimate sphere of daily living. They are also, as one commentator has observed, “objects of choice,” not made merely to satisfy an immediate need but as a cultural indicator. All objects have the potential to carry connotations, i.e., meanings and associations. Although we don’t always choose an object (such as a coffee or tea cup) based on these associations, that object nevertheless communicates meaning to others: “I was in a rush this morning and stopped at the coffee shop on the way to work,” “I have good taste,” or “I like unusual things.”

Clay is ubiquitous in our lives. It is literally under our feet, on our walls, in our cabinets, hidden in products we use. A common daily interaction with clay is a cup, if it isn’t paper or Styrofoam. In Touch Clay visitors are invited to interact with handmade cups, providing a moment to think about the use and/or arrangement of cups.

Every apple you’ve ever eaten contains genes that originated in the fruit forests that once blanketed the lower and middle slopes of the Tien Shan Mountains of western Kazakhstan. At the end of the nineteenth century, one could travel the thousand miles from northern to southern Kazakhstan, Mongolia to Kyrgyzstan, and never be far from apple trees, along with hawthorn, apricot, pear, and burberry. At this moment, between five and ten percent of the wild stands remain, many of them too small and isolated to continue to function as forest ecosystems. The causes are nothing new: grazing animals, field crops, industrial, recreational, and urban development, and all the other vast and heedless changes modern humans visit on their surroundings.

I would be disingenuous, however, if I claimed that what drove me to go to Kazakhstan was solely a disinterested zeal to save the remaining wild forests. From the moment I learned of their existence, I was determined to see them myself. Curiosity, the desire to be surrounded by apple trees growing in the places they evolved over millions of years and to taste the apples were spurs at least as powerful as the desire to contribute something to secure their survival.

The experience was what I was after, in life and in the photographs. As for the problem of making a modern picture of apple blossoms or autumnal colors, I decided not to torture myself. My admonition to the critical voice in my head: Beauty is unavoidable; live with it.
AUDRA GRAZIANO

April Morning

The development of my recent work was stimulated by looking at the complex system of wires in telecommunication networks and data centers. I began to regard this wiring as the nervous system of our media driven modes of communication. I took particular interest in how these networks continue to operate without our knowledge or attention, much like the functions of our own human bodies. With this as a metaphor, I began to question how a greater system of daily operations played into contemporary life, both physically and psychologically. Often, it is not until we encounter a glitch or malfunction in these processes, that we even become aware of the system that generated them. I decided to take these faults in the wiring as visual metaphors and departure points to begin the intuitive process of painting. Though the work was sparked by a metaphorical investigation into technology, its core reflects the handmade. Once begun, the work is guided by the process of painting itself. It is stimulated and informed by external influences, but generated from forces within the medium. The paintings evolve from an abstract relationship with technological transmission to an embedded metaphor for visual communication.
BROOKE GRUCELLA

In Three Parts

Comic book heroes personify the duality of humanity. Superman had to lose everything to become Superman. His family, his planet, all was obliterated when he was sent rocketing off to earth, but the tragedy binds like tar. I have memories good and bad that can be pinpointed; anchored to a song, a toy, perhaps a cartoon, and those cultural by-products become signifiers for those events. The abstract comic images within the paintings reference both the tragic falsehood of superheroes, as they are perpetually trying to rectify their own trauma, and a pop culture by-product at times used to escape reality. The paintings embody one’s commitment to investing everything into something that unfortunately can no longer function within the familiar.
LISA HOCHTRITT

Art and Social Justice Education: Culture as Commons
Coedited by Therese Quinn, John Ploof, and Lisa Hochtritt

My research is focused on visual art education and social justice and the inherent power the arts possess to forge community action and question dominant ideologies. The characteristics of social justice art education that guide my practice focus on promoting a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity. They also include: prioritizing the voices of young people, artists and community members who might otherwise be silenced; critical engagement for personal and social transformation; teachings that are personally and contextually relevant; and encouragement of individuals to take action in the world. The arts, research and social justice education are crucial in our lives as they can challenge us to imaginatively think and rethink how we make sense of and engage with the world around us.

I coedited the anthology, Art and Social Justice Education: Culture as Commons, along with Therese Quinn, University of Illinois at Chicago, and John Ploof, School of the Art Institute of Chicago. We include the voices of over 80 contemporary artists, scholars, and cultural workers and together we propose “that art can contribute in a wide-range of ways to the work of envisioning and making a more just world.”
JOSEPH LABATE

Playa

Playa: the flat-floored bottom of an undrained desert basin that becomes at times a shallow lake.

Playa #2525
Medium is pigment ink on cotton rag paper
5’ x 9’
11.5” x 15” Framed
2015

Playa #2547
Medium is pigment ink on cotton rag paper
5’ x 9’
11.5” x 15” Framed
2015
KELLY LESLIE

HER

Do You Want to Make Men OBEY YOU?

Do you want to make him love you wildly, fiercely? Do you want to make him say “Darling, I adore you. I worship you. I’ll do ANYTHING for YOU!” Do you want to make him obey your every command? Then use CHEZ-ELLE (What a Perfume) to help you CONTROL Men. One woman told me that CHEZ-ELLE is the STRONGEST perfume she ever used. Another woman told us that she blesses the day she first used CHEZ-ELLE, because now her husband comes home at night to help her...

HER is a digital print from my series “Fallout Pages”. This work appropriates imagery and text from old, mid-century schoolbooks, cookbooks, magazine ads, and other ephemera I have collected. Each print creates an abstracted, non-linear visual narrative in response to an element of text; usually a directive for female thought, which is included in each digital collage. The fallout of these directives still lingers within our discourse as women’s roles, image and relevance continue to be challenged and questioned in contemporary culture.
In the summer of 2014 I drove thousands of miles to visit remote field stations in the Pacific Northwest where I had previously lived and worked as a field biologist in my early twenties. I wondered if returning to experience these places again after forty years would help me to understand the course my life had taken. I smelled the sweet sage of the Alvord Desert and the earthy ferns of the coastal rain forests. I saw my handwriting still there on the tags of dusty stuffed bat and bird carcasses in the teaching collections and my blurry black and white photo on the wall of the library. And though the rugged beauty and awe-inspiring scale of the landscape affected me as much as it had when I first saw it in 1970, the girl I was then still remains as distant and unknowable as she was before my trip.

Distance Passed
Acrylic, ink, paper, wood
5” h X 96” w X 1” d
2015

ELLEN MCMAHON
BARBARA PENN

heART attack

It is easier to sit back and let unpleasant things happen when we don’t have the heart to try to correct them.


What is at the heart of this matter?
What is the heART of this matter?
SHEILA PITT

A New Venus

A to Ξ

The adventure I am in since my catastrophic accident in 2008 has taken me places I could never have imagined. Starting with an inability to move my arms and hands, learning to draw with a computer tablet and small movements, wonderful things have happened. As my drawing skills have gotten better I realized that I now have enough control to draw letters. This was more complicated than drawing since letters have to be completely recognizable. This font took two years to complete. The most monumental task has been to learn the program, Fontastic, which would enable me to download and directly type the font into a document. Many thanks to Katey Monaghan, Amanda Beekhuizen and Lynn Schroeder for their patience and help.

A to Z

20" x 12"
Intaglio
2015

A New Venus

30" x 24"
Archival Inkjet print on mylar
2015
ANDREW POLK

Anna’s Way #1

As a younger person, in her prime, we all admired her for her sharp wit and fierce independent spirit, but by the time of her eighties, dementia had robbed her of the ability to care for herself. This artwork is an homage to a woman I admire now as much as then.
ALFRED QUIROZ

BODIES OF WATER POOL PROJECT
2011-2014

Installation view of the three nautical symbols “anchored” in the fourth pool of the project. The owners of the pool named this pool the “Black Sea.”

Black Sea Chart #4 of 9 in the series.

Gouache and ink on paper
44” x 30”
2014
IRENE ROMANO
Professor of Art History and Anthropology

My current research is focused on Greek and Roman sculpture, including an exciting recent discovery (or re-discovery) in Rome of a 5th century B.C. Greek marble statue of Athena Nike, now in the Fondazione Sorgente Group in Rome. It is an unusual type of a winged Athena, and the only statue that compares to it is a 2nd century A.D. Roman statue of Minerva Victoria in the Glencarn Museum in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania that I published in the 1990s. This is a rare, possible instance of a surviving Greek original with its Roman copy or variant. It is postulated that the Greek statue was brought to Rome as plunder from Greece during the 2nd century B.C. to 1st century A.D. A book of essays on this subject, co-edited by Gianfranco Ardorato and myself, will be published early in 2016 by LED Edizioni Universitarie in Milan.

I was also fortunate to have been awarded a post-doctoral fellowship by the Archaeological Institute of America and Deutsches Archäologisches Institut to conduct research in Berlin for five weeks during the summer of 2015 on sculpture from two Roman monuments from Pompeii (modern Pozzuoli) on the Bay of Naples. One of the marble fragments is in the Neues Museum on the Museum Island in Berlin. I delivered a lecture in Berlin and one in Split, Croatia on this topic; I spent a week in Rome, to meet with colleagues about the final publication of the excavations of a Roman villa along the shores of Lake Nemi (in the Alban Hills south of Rome), for which a colleague and I are responsible for the villa’s gardens; and I was in Pompeii, Baia, and Cumae along the Bay of Naples studying sculpture and public monuments of the Roman period.
Battery (WORDS/SWORD) is a video sequence that I project during live performances of my series, The Black Tongue Lexicon. While it is not intended to be a standalone artwork in its own right, I include it in this exhibition as an artifact that points back to the live event.

In this abstract interpretation of a hatchery, I am dressed in a black tracksuit running around a circle of large eggs in a desert landscape waiting for them to gestate. The singular white stripes adorning the sleeves and legs of the tracksuit parrot the outfit worn by the subjects depicted in the early motion studies of French chronophotographer, Étienne-Jules Marey. Marey’s images simplified human movement, making it graphically discernible for scientific study. This work (and others from this series) play at extending the activities of Marey’s striped man in a contemporary setting so that we might continue this analysis of motion today through a metaphorical lens.

I parallel our immersion in the landscape with our immersion in language; the two “spaces” are often home to both lofty construction, and great discomfort. Here, my process-engrossed body executes repetitive tasks while situated in the landscape. It is a non-theatrical activator or instigator: a ritual-betrothed body whose preoccupation with the ground’s surface serves as an analogue for the drama surrounding our inexorable confederacy with language.
MARTINA SHENAL

Volcanoes I have known

火の山のわが丈を越す草いきれ

Fire mountain
Taller than I am
Hot grass

万緑や射抜かれるるべく的置かれ

Vast green and
Soon to be pierced
Targets placed

- Takaha Shugyo (1930–)

I’m drawn to the multiple interpretations implicit in each haiku. As a juxtaposition of images or ideas, this form of Japanese poetry echoes the inherent dualities at play when deciphering photographic images—what is literally inside the frame vs. a fleeting feeling that its meaning resides elsewhere.

These inscriptions in stone appear at the summit of a 580-meter dormant volcano located in the Izu Peninsula on the southeastern coast of Japan. As a shrine and popular pilgrimage site, Omuro harbors a lush, green archery field inside the volcano. On the second Sunday each February, the interior and exterior grass is set ablaze, an occurrence that has taken place every year for the past eight hundred years.

Mt. Omuro (haze), Shizuoka Prefecture
Archival pigment print
24” x 30”
2014

Mt. Omuro (yamayaki), Shizuoka Prefecture
Archival pigment print
24” x 30”
2014
DAVID TAYLOR

Indefenso - from the series Lecciones de Español

Lecciones connotes more than classes or instruction pointing to a larger sphere of learning and insight–life lessons. Photographs in the series represent an open-ended exploration. Effectively a succession of sketches with an emergent structure that is guided by personal wandering and interaction; the photographs are meant to reveal a space that is simultaneously foreign and familiar.

Indefenso
29” X 40”
Archival inkjet print on dibond
2014
As individuals, and as a species, we accept and acknowledge our vulnerabilities with varying degrees of success. Naivete, hubris, denial; each keep us from that acceptance.
ANGIE ZIELINSKI

Watch Close

I am captivated by the power of shiny things and loud noises. Mesmerized, I find myself wondering how explosions can be celebratory in one instance and devastating in another. My work explores the fuzzy role of perception in Americana festivities and events, while considering the fascinating connections between acts of celebration and destruction.

The sights and smells of a fireworks display, the gently flapping fringe around car lots—their command my excited attention and I visually translate that intensity in the work. With careful thought and attention to detail I connect unrelated incidents and memories. Themes of whimsy, fragility, and cause-and-effect surface within each work.

The tactile qualities and color of the materials I work with draw me to them, but I am also interested in their history, their everyday use, and their connection to my thematic interests. Often I find myself manipulating materials to transcend original functions, like thread and fishing line as drawing tools, or fringe covered sno-cone cups as explosive projectiles.

As an artist I employ lightheartedness when dealing with ideas that are fantastically disastrous, and transform my experiences into the materials used, the imagery created, and the ideas projected onto the viewer.

Front Row

Thread on cotton
6" x 6"
25" x 20" framed
2014
KAREN ZIMMERMANN

52

Fifty-two (52) is created to define my identity through places, people, personal and historical events within a book structure. On the year of my fifty-second birthday I found myself with a group of friends exploring Robert Smithson’s Spiral Jetty in Utah. We each made a pact to make a book. I decided that the book would be about where I was and where I had been. I also reflected on the significance of the number (52) and its implications. It is a narrative as the book is sequenced through the years. The pages of the book are collages from personal and public ephemera.
In June of 2014, the Islamic State, known in the Middle East as ‘Daesh’, seized Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. In February of 2015, the Islamic State jihadists detonated explosives in the Mosul Library, destroying the large building, but not before burning all of the books, including many rare and irreplaceable volumes dating from the last 500 years. They released a series of videos proudly showing the destruction. I found this very upsetting, and I started doing research on the history of book burning. I found that burning books has a long and infamous history dating back a couple of thousand years. Most people know about the Nazis’ burning books as well as the famous Ray Bradbury book Fahrenheit 451, but it turns out that almost every authoritarian regime (and some that are nominally not authoritarian like the United States) has burnt books that do not agree with their cultural and political viewpoints.

Celsius 233 came out of this research. The book contains 40 pages displaying acts of libricide in chronological order. The title page spread includes a famous quote by Heinrich Heine, whose own literary work was included in some of the book burnings orchestrated by the Nazis. Inserted small orange laser-cut tongues of flame describe the date and action of each image through time.

For me books are sacred. I know that burning books can hardly be compared to executions by beheading, or burning a person alive, two things that the Islamic State has done a lot of. But burning books is a symbol for me of intolerance and narrow fundamentalist views. All that I love, art and music and science, are made manifest and disseminated in books. Books are historically the medium used for the free flow of ideas and culture. Because of that they must be immolated by the narrow-minded and ignorant followers of a mute and humorless god.

With the hardcopy book, I created a short five-minute projection video to be used as a looping “viewing environment”. It is meant to be projected very large in a space where the viewer concurrently reads the book. The video plays off the Heine statement that where books are burnt, so will people be. The video uses similar content and aesthetic strategies as the book.
The University of Arizona School of Art

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