

MAX AND IRIS STERN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 9

Every Object Has a Story:

Art, Research and the Reinvention of Things

Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28, 2015

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Raymond Boisjoly: *A Secondary Circulation, A Primary Recirculation*

My practice is the product of oblique research, or research by detour and through contingency. With this at the fore, my presentation will focus on two recent bodies of work: *Interlocutions* (2014) and *Author's Preface* (2015), which each respond to very specific cultural moments. The first involves the Native American literary renaissance of the 1960s with particular attention to Indigenous printmaking practices on the Northwest Coast of North America from the 1960s to the 1980s. The second engages Maya Deren's *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*. Each of my works courts the potential for a productive misrecognition of conceptual circumstances, via specific material manifestations.

Raymond Boisjoly is an Indigenous artist of Haida and Québécois descent based in Vancouver. His process can be situated in proximity to photography, and examines the nature and transmission of technology as a means to understand cultural transformation. In the past year, Boisjoly presented a solo exhibition at the Carleton University Art Gallery (Ottawa); his work was also included in several group exhibitions including *Unsettled Landscapes* at SITE Santa Fe; *L'avenir (Looking Forward)* at The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal as part of the Biennale de Montréal; *Sympathetic Magic* at the Mendel Art Gallery (Saskatoon), *The Militant Image* at Camera Austria (Graz, Austria) and *Moucharabieh* at Triangle France (Marseilles). In April 2015, a solo exhibition of Boisjoly's work will be on view at VOX, Centre de l'image contemporaine (Montréal).

Vincent Bonin: *Show Us Your Stuff!*

In my talk, I will focus on the way that some artists have treated materiality discursively by harnessing the exhibition in order to put a social situation into play. I'll briefly evoke projects of the 1980s collective known as Group Material, before examining two projects from 2008, the year of the world financial meltdown: *The Nanjing Particles (After Henry Ward, View of C.T. Sampson's Shoe Manufactory, with the Chinese Shoemakers in Working Costume, North Adams and Vicinity, circa 1875)* by Simon Starling, and *Real is that which always comes back to the same place Broadway between 101st and 102nd Streets, New York, NY 10025, March 21, 2008* by Gareth James. To conclude, I will briefly examine the critical fate of two 2013 exhibitions: *and Materials, and Money, and Crisis*, at MUMOK Vienna, and *Speculations on Anonymous Materials*, at Fridericianum, Kassel. The hand-off between software and hardware, proper to all these artistic practices, here gains a prospective dimension: the works announce the arrival of a world of unusual objects.

Vincent Bonin is an author and independent curator who lives and works in Montreal. He co-curated *Protocoles documentaires (1967-1975)* at the Leonard & Bina Ellen Gallery of Concordia University (Montreal), which included two exhibitions (2007-2008) and a publication (2010). He co-curated *Materializing 'Six Years': Lucy R. Lippard and the Emergence of Conceptual Art*, presented at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art in the Brooklyn Museum (2012-2013) and curated the section on Montreal of *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965-1980*, which toured across Canada. In 2013-2014, he conceived the group exhibition *D'un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant: Actors, Networks, Theories*, presented at the Leonard & Bina Ellen Gallery and at Dazibao (Montreal).

Jason Dodge: *Lecture on Presence*

My way of creating my lectures is akin to the process of drawing; for me, they are a way of working through ideas. My current lecture is about presence, and the ways in which the ordinary things found around us can be calibrated in vastly different ways to reveal what is new. As such, I'll talk about take-away cups and bees, missing fingers, flocks of birds and a curse.

Jason Dodge is an artist living and working in Berlin. His work has been included in many international exhibitions including *Oo* at the Venice Biennale (2013) and *Zoo* at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (2012). As well, it has been presented in group exhibitions at the Walker Art Center, the Henry Art Gallery, and Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago in the USA, as well as at Kunstvereins in Hanover, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Düsseldorf and Nuremberg. Dodge's recent lectures on sculpture have been presented at several museums, art centres and schools. Never one to rest in just one domain, Dodge is also the founder of the poetry press *Fivehundred places*.

Rebecca Duclos: *The Thing in the Middle*

I see the object in the gallery. I walk toward it from a distance. I take in its form, its shape, its scale, its look, its style, its pedigree, its precedents, its presence. I read its label. The label reveals nothing to me of these concerns. Rather, I learn of the object's immaterial origins, of its historical referents or cultural sources, its multi-layered conception into complex realization, its coming-into-being from a world of observations and ideations, assembled by an artist and now manifested in material form in front of me. How now am I to think of this object as an art object? How does this piece of matter become a transactional, translational "thing" that binds my act of interpretation with the artist's act of fabrication? Why, in Bill Brown's words, *does the thing seem to name the object just as it is, even as it names something else?* In this talk, I explore the object/thing dynamic with a particular focus on the interested and invested subject. In what ways might the viewer's "re-search"—their exploratory, indeterminate process of re-reading and re-viewing an object—echo and reconstitute research processes originally engaged by the artist—from the auto-indexical to the ekphrastic to the contingent? Between two subjectivities (artist and viewer), there is always the potent and quivering object: the thing in the middle.

Rebecca Duclos is the Graduate Dean and Professor of Visual and Critical Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She holds a PhD in Art History and Visual Culture from the University of Manchester UK, as well as an MA in Museum Studies. Over the past twenty years, Duclos has taught at universities and schools of art and design in the USA, Canada, UK, and Australia. Independent curatorial projects include *The Manchester Letherium* at Cornerhouse (Manchester UK), *As Much as Possible in the Time and Space Allotted* at the Leonard & Bina Ellen Gallery (Montreal), *Voir/Noir* at the Musée d'art de Joliette (Québec), *Magnify* at the ICA at Maine College of Art (Portland ME). Duclos's ongoing project, *The Compulsive Browse*, focusses on the para-academic research methods employed by artists, designers and curators in the preparation of their diverse works.

Luanne Martineau: *Repetition and Recycling, as Practice*

In my talk, I will address the shifting process and material transitions that have become central to my art practice, and elaborate my artistic history of “cannibalizing” images and forms from previous work as a shared methodology of craft and archive. As well, I will examine how the use of repetition and recycling intensifies and represses the meaning or presence of an image or form within my work.

Luanne Martineau is an Associate Professor of Painting and Drawing at Concordia University, Montreal, whose research practice explores the social stratification of artistic production and the “naturalized” fissures between art genres, engaging a long tradition of satire and critique within contemporary art. Interconnecting the processes of craft and the suppressed narratives of the artisan within minimalist and post-minimalist “deskilled” materiality, Martineau’s research pursues the ways that method, style and ideology are conflated within artistic manufacture. Her work has been exhibited across Canada and internationally, with recent group exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), the Vancouver Art Gallery (Vancouver), The Power Plant (Toronto), The Walter Phillips Gallery (Banff), and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (North Adams, MA). Recent solo exhibitions include Foreman Art Gallery (Sherbrooke), the Art Gallery of Windsor (Windsor), Rodman Hall Arts Centre/Brock University (St. Catharines), and the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal. In 2007, Martineau was the recipient of the Shadbolt Foundation’s VIVA Award for the Visual Arts and, in 2009, she was the British Columbia and Yukon candidate for the Sobey Art Award of Canada.

Dieter Roelstraete: *Uneasy Cohabitations*

As a long-time student of thing theory and research-based art practices, I will consider the art world’s recent infatuation with the notions of research and knowledge production, alongside contemporaneous developments such as the emergence of object studies and new materialisms in the cultural realm at large. My presentation will hinge on an apparent paradox: the turn towards the immaterial labour of art-as-research has been accompanied by a concurrent return of craft, manufacture and related artisanal modes of object production. The oft-times uneasy cohabitation of information and materiality will be the focus of my keynote address, leaning on my experience working with artists such as Simon Starling, Gabriel Kuri, and Jason Dodge.

Dieter Roelstraete is a member of the curatorial team convened by artistic director Adam Szymczyk to organize Documenta 14 (Athens & Kassel 2017). From 2012 until 2015 he was Manilow Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, where he organized exhibitions such as *Goshka Macuga: Exhibit, A* (2012), *The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology* (2013), and *Simon Starling: Metamorphology* (2014). From 2003 until 2011, he was a curator at the Antwerp Museum of Contemporary Art (MuHKA), where he organized large-scale group exhibitions as well as monographic shows, including *Emotion Pictures* (2005); *Intertidal* (2005); *The Order of Things* (2008); *Liam Gillick and Lawrence Weiner—A Syntax of Dependency* (2011); *A Rua: The Spirit of Rio de Janeiro* (2011); *Chantal Akerman: Too Close, Too Far* (2012). A former editor of *Afterall* and cofounder of the journal *FR David*, Roelstraete has published extensively on contemporary art and related philosophical issues in numerous catalogues and journals including *Artforum*, *e-flux journal*, *frieze*, *Metropolis M*, *Mousse Magazine*, and *Texte zur Kunst*.

Simon Starling: *Co-opting the Dead and Redeploying the Past*

Between 1913 and 1916, W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound spent three isolated winters at Stone Cottage in Ashdown Forest, England. There they spent intensely productive periods of “research and development,” which saw both poets attempt to reinvent their work through, among other things, investigations into the traditions of Japanese Noh theatre and conversations with the dead—facilitated

by Yeats's medium. This paradigmatic "research moment" involving cross-cultural appropriations, translations, séances, and the ventriloquizing of "ancestral voices" will serve as a model for my own practice of co-opting the dead and redeploying the past.

After highlighting my Noh-inspired projects, the presentation will culminate in the screening of a short film, *El Eco (2015)*, which takes the form of a type of institutional séance. The film was made in and around the iconic architecture of German émigré artist Matthias Goeritz's interdisciplinary art space El Eco in Mexico City, and was inspired by a number of images from 1953 of the actor Pilar Pellicer dancing in the space. The film, shot during the Day of the Dead celebrations in November 2014, portrays the now 76-year-old Mexican actor finding her way back to 1953, as she attempts to re-inhabit her 15-year-old body while trying to summon the ghost of Matthias Goeritz.

Simon Starling is an artist who lives in Copenhagen, Denmark. He studied in Scotland at the Glasgow School of Art in the early 1990s, and was awarded the Turner Prize in 2005 for *Shedboatshed (Mobile Architecture)*. His works have been subsequently presented in several museums throughout the world, most notably in solo exhibitions at the Tate Britain (2013), the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art in Japan (2011), Kunsthall Charlottenborg in Copenhagen (2011), and at Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland (2005). He participated in the Venice Biennale in 2009, the Moscow Biennale in 2007 and the São Paulo Biennale in 2005. Recently, his retrospective exhibition *Metamorphology* was on view conjointly at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and the Arts Club of Chicago (2014), and at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (2015).