



CLIMATE CHANGING

On Artists, Institutions,
and the Social Environment

WHY CAN'T YOU TELL ME SCORE WHAT YOU NEED

Somewhere our body needs
party favors attending
sick and resting temperatures times
hot unevens twice
I ask myself all the time too
ward draw pop left under right
Just try and squeeze me.

Pause.

What would you do?
Fall down off my feet and try waking tired ex muses
Like, you either know I can and work on it with me
Or know I can't and wouldn't want your baby to go
through what I have to go through
Over prepared for three nights.
Over it all scared for three nights.
Tell me the unwell of never been better.
Are we still good?
Are we still good?

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BLANKET (STATEMENT) SCORE

Why can't you just tell me what you need

DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

4

Johanna Burton,
Executive Director



Opening in the first month of 2021 (or at least *set* to open then at the time of this writing), *Climate Changing: On Artists, Institutions, and the Social Environment* comes at a time of great uncertainty for cultural organizations. Even before the monumental, entangled crises that defined 2020 in the United States—the outbreak of COVID-19, widespread protest against the police murder of Black citizens, and a bitterly (and yes, bizarrely) contested presidential election—arts institutions were experiencing a once-in-a-generation moment of self-examination. In recent years museums have been called to task around funding, board, and staff structures; begun to ask themselves painful questions about which audiences and artists they're not serving well or at all; and been publicly challenged when their programs betrayed a lack of genuine engagement with their communities. In the wake of this reckoning, the devastating economic consequences of COVID—which has forced so many venues to close their doors to the public for a time, and in some cases forever—have only raised the intensity of these questions, giving them an existential gravity.

Conceived in 2019 but delayed due to the pandemic, *Climate Changing* offers a timely, clarifying opportunity to survey how some of today's most innovative artists are articulating these difficult but invigorating questions. As you'll read in the pages that follow, the artists featured in the exhibition address a range of matters shaping our cultural climate today—including global warming, economic inequality, colonialism, racism, mass incarceration, education, and ableism—and critically, they ask us to examine how arts institutions are addressing these issues as well. Thoughtfully organized by Wex Associate Curator Lucy Zimmerman with input from an advisory committee of Ohio State faculty, *Climate Changing* presents projects that span multiple themes and frameworks, emphasizing the power of intersectional thinking and encouraging us to consider how institutions and individuals can together reimagine our social environment. As Zimmerman's introductory essay articulates, and as the advisory

committee's roundtable discussion further explores, the exhibition intends not to inventory nor propose solutions for these considerable challenges, but rather to provide artists a forum for bringing the issues into conversation with each other—and in so doing, to generate unexpected perspectives.

Providing this kind of open forum that encourages artists to test their ideas—and invites diverse audiences to experience the process—is a core tenet of our mission. The very idea for the Wexner Center itself was, and continues to be, born of questioning what an arts institution could and should be, and even three decades after opening our doors, we're still designing from the ground up to support the investigations of today's artists, wherever they lead. As Chris Burden's *Wexner Castle* (1990) demonstrates, we've long been supportive of self-evaluation (perhaps especially when presented with a wry sense of humor). That key work from our opening year, restaged for *Climate Changing*, is joined by nine others newly commissioned by the Wex for this exhibition, including Torkwase Dyson's *Bird and Lava*, a project supported by a Wexner Center Artist Residency Award. For as long as the center has existed, this series of awards has offered living artists significant financial, professional, and moral support in the development of original work. It's an essential tradition that, even when the climate turns tough, the Wex wholly intends to continue for years to come.

Since my arrival in March 2019, the Wexner Center has instituted a number of initiatives to improve how we address equity, inclusion, and accessibility internally as well as externally, with our audiences across communities. We have a long, important road ahead but, inspired by the fearless work of artists like those featured in this exhibition and by our staff, board, members, volunteers, and the many generous supporters featured in the back of this publication, we remain as hopeful and focused on the future as ever—and more sure than ever in the transformative capacity of art to change the world.

**COVER AND ABOVE**

Demolition of the Ohio State Armory and Gymnasium in 1959. Photo courtesy of The Ohio State University Archives.

Image description: A black-and-white photograph of a crenellated brick turret being demolished. The bottom of the structure is mid-explosion, and the top is leaning to the right, about to fall over. In the foreground of the image, there is a railing between the camera and a group of seven onlookers. The image here is cropped; the image that wraps across the cover shows 10 onlookers.


A CLIMATE FOR CHANGING

6

Lucy I. Zimmerman



When I began working on *Climate Changing* in the spring of 2019, it was scheduled to open May 29, 2020, serving as the exhibition that would close out the Wexner Center's 30th anniversary year. Anniversaries provide an occasion for reflexivity, to examine the past as well as reaffirm commitments into the future. I decided to tinker with this past/present/future anniversary "recipe" and revisit Chris Burden's architectural intervention *Wexner Castle* (1990), a work commissioned for the last exhibition of our inaugural year. I was interested in how restaging this now-historical work would resonate today, 30 years later. How might this revisitation encourage new lines of inquiry? In thinking about reshaping the center's iconic architecture through *Wexner Castle* a second time, and focusing on its original iteration as a gesture of institutional critique, I devised a list of questions to guide this exhibition:



Is the museum a fortress or castle designed to protect "precious" cultural objects, or rather, is it a platform for producing new ones?


If the purpose of the museum is to provide a space for culture, and by extension act as an arbiter of value, how can it forge pathways toward ethical awareness and foster active, equitable participation in shaping those values?

What are artists' roles within museums, communities, and cultures?

Whom do museums serve?

On May 29, 2020, I sat alone in my apartment in lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic wearing sweatpants and a T-shirt with my hair thrown in a topknot. Hunched over my laptop on my couch—my “office” for three quarters of 2020—I anxiously toggled back and forth between work email, the news, and social media. I opened and closed the Word document for this essay multiple times on that day (and since then). In it, the cursor blinked at me with indifference, like a silent metronome keeping steady time while my mind was frozen, suspended in a struggle to respond to what was happening.

On that day it was announced that 100,000 people had died from COVID-19 in the United States. A month prior, just an hour up the road from where I live, 80% of the population incarcerated at the Marion Correctional Institution had tested positive for COVID-19. The night before a police precinct was burned in Minneapolis, and on May 29, people were again taking to the streets of that city, fulminating over the murder of George Floyd by police four days earlier. Since life had abruptly halted in mid-March through the end of May, more than 40 million had lost work and filed for unemployment. Words still feel toothless in their capacity to encapsulate the enormity of the year’s events and their effects that will be felt for years to come.



Burden’s work insists we consider the walls of the institution. Feminist writer and interdisciplinary scholar Sara Ahmed writes: “When you don’t quite inhabit the norms, or you aim to transform them, you notice them as you come up against them. The wall is what we come up against: the sedimentation of history into a barrier that is solid and tangible in the present, a barrier to change as well as to the mobility of some, a barrier that remains invisible to those who can flow into the spaces created by institutions.”¹ This is where the seed of *Climate Changing* began: thinking not about theory or the museum in a vacuum, but rather about *feeling, bodies, and space*. I’m asking what institutions like the Wexner Center can offer through considering interdependence, embodied knowledge (a topic this essay will explore later), and the potential for physical and ideological spaces to enable or disable through the reproduction of in/access and in/equity. What do these walls keep in, and what (and who) do they keep out?

While Burden’s symbolic castle sets up a clear delineation of inside from outside and forcefully brings to mind issues of privilege and authority, and perhaps even violence and militarism, the word *climate* conveys a nebulous, all-enveloping atmosphere that does not have clearly distinguished borders. We share responsibility in not just caring for, but in examining this invisible zone where power and privilege are involved. In 2020, our social climate has radically changed. The entwined crises of the global pandemic and

sustained, state-sanctioned brutality against Black and brown people have made the preexisting dysfunction and outright failure of our institutions and systems apparent.

Despite tectonic shifts this year, I kept my initial guiding questions from 2019 regarding museums, artists, equity, and access, and how these issues refract through and reverberate with culture. Mine, of course, are not new questions; countless curators, art historians, critics, artists, and activists have been advancing inquiries in the same vein for years.² But in 2020, the insistence on transforming or altogether upending institutions is more powerful than ever before. Some individuals unwaveringly insist institutions be razed. Others believe paradigms need intensive reforming. Where to begin? How can we bolster a climate for this change?

Burden’s work reminds me of the ongoing role of the artist as agitator and interventionist working both inside and outside of the museum. The artists and collectives included in *Climate Changing* also wage critiques of institutions. They contend with systemic social issues and structures of power—labor, economic inequality, and debt; migration and forced displacement; education and the commons;³ racism, marginalization, and settler colonialism; climate change, resource extraction, and globalization; the biomedical-industrial complex and ableism;⁴ LGBTQIA+ issues; and mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex, among others. By proposing strategies for challenging hierarchies, or even reconfiguring how such systems can operate or be identified, the artists in this exhibition suggest how we might respond to a turbulent sociopolitical climate and moreover create a climate *for* changing that sparks consciousness and inspires action.

If museums are indeed institutions that support the production of cultural knowledge, we must proceed with the understanding of what writer Audre Lorde asserted: “There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”⁵ *Climate Changing* is not an exhaustive survey of any or every social issue—the potential list is practically interminable—nor is it intent on declaring that the topics it covers are our most significant problems. Instead, through the collective presentation of artists’ critiques of multiple, entwined systems, this exhibition encourages a reflexive repositioning of audiences’ orientations as it endeavors to cultivate awareness of how problems as much as solutions are mutually produced, ultimately revealing their interdependence. Works are not installed according to subject matter or content but intermingle so as to activate intersectional inquiry through proximity.

What further brings the work of these artists together is how often within disparate practices the concept of embodiment arises alongside critique.⁶ In her book *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, Sara Ahmed poses questions about the ways in which we become oriented by what is proximate to us (what is established, normative), the paths that we follow or what we tend toward, and how bodies are

shaped by and in turn might shape the spaces they inhabit. These were extraordinarily important ideas as I grappled with my own queries about spaces, both concrete (a room, a building, a gallery, a museum) and intangible (ideological, philosophical, spiritual, conceptual), and how both of those senses of space impact how a body moves, what is available to that body, where a body can be envisioned, and how that body is defined.⁷ Beyond merely pointing to embodied difference, disability studies scholar Tanya Titchkosky writes about access and its relationship to embodiment. “The social ordering of space, time, and money, and all the ways these things limit access, are actually tied to how we can and cannot imagine *who* people are, *who* belongs, and how collectives orient to embodiment.”⁸ Access, Titchkosky argues, is a form of perception—“a way of bringing life to consciousness, a form of oriented social action, and a way of relating to people and places”—as well as “an interpretive relation between bodies” that is always being renegotiated based on the actualities of who, what, where, and when.⁹

Climate Changing may ask more questions than it can answer, but that is in the spirit of what museums must do: offer spaces to wander and wonder about culture within, by way of social and physical environments. Through the work of artists, museums have the opportunity to act as platforms that produce access (and knowledge) through seeking to expose positions—what direction we face; what is next to us, behind us; who is with us, and who isn’t. We must continue to ask how and why this world is experienced as natural for some and not others, where friction and disorientation occur, how we value embodied difference, and how to proceed. As Ahmed states, “we need to rewrite the world from the experience of not being able to pass into the world.”¹⁰

To call this publication a gallery *guide* may be a misnomer, as its contents, composition, and sheer array of voices emulate the unruly and disruptive precepts of *Climate Changing*. Liz Rae Heise-Glass, Bill Horrigan, Stephanie Kang, Daniel Marcus, and Jo-ey Tang contributed their voices and viewpoints to artist entries that point to the structures artists contend with and the tools they use to expose or combat them. Excerpts from a roundtable discussion with the exhibition’s advisory committee, made up of faculty from diverse areas across Ohio State, expand on themes of access, embodiment, and improvisation, among other topics, from different positions, and that conversation and many others were critical to the shaping of this exhibition.

Commissioning texts from artists rather than including traditionally formatted essays was essential for this guide, and these texts treat language in the same spirit that the other artists in the exhibition identify or enact alternative forms of perception and communication through disorientation, exposure, occlusion, adaptation, or reconstruction of existing structures. For instance,

Pope.L’s text does not directly connect to his works on view in the exhibition—a sculpture hanging upside from the ceiling dripping chocolate on the ground alongside an irregular constellation of drawings featuring declarations about people with Black, Brown, Orange, Green, or Purple Skin—nor does it to any other work in the show. Instead, his text draws on another work by Chris Burden that is in Ohio State’s collection, stored in the bowels of the Wex: a relic (what Burden called leftover remnants from his performative works) from *Through the Night Softly* (1973). In this now-infamous performance, Burden—wearing nothing but a red Speedo bathing suit—crawled through broken auto glass on a sidewalk in Los Angeles with his hands tied behind his back. The performance was filmed and appeared that year as a TV commercial aired on channel 9 in Los Angeles.¹¹

Among Pope.L’s best-known works are his crawls in public spaces, sometimes compared to this Burden performance. Perhaps the most notorious of Pope.L’s crawls is *The Great White Way: 22 miles, 9 years, 1 street* (2001–9), where he wore a Superman costume (with a skateboard strapped to his back in lieu of a cape) and crawled from the Statue of Liberty to the Bronx. With his own family members living on the streets, Pope.L rejected the American obsession with upward mobility. “I’m suggesting that just because a person is lying on the sidewalk doesn’t mean they’ve given up their humanity. That verticality isn’t what it’s pumped up to be.”¹² Pope.L’s vertiginous text in this publication exists between the documentation of Burden’s performance and the pithy remnant in our vault, the crenellations crowning the brick façade of the Wex, his sculpture hanging from the ceiling of the gallery, and a convenience store parking lot. It lies somewhere between access and ejection, between what is seen and not seen, and between how an artwork (or a persona) is created, remembered, discussed, and activated by perception and put into relation with one’s own experience in the world.

“WE LEFT THEM NOTHING” by Demian DinéYazhi’ was written alongside their forthcoming book that takes to task tropes of science fiction and dystopian imaginings of the future in popular culture where capitalist greed, oppression, surveillance, and authoritarian power prevail. Instead, DinéYazhi’ asks, what if we imagined otherwise? What if we envisioned a future where these forces don’t succeed? “WE LEFT THEM NOTHING” is a direct indictment of the intersecting forces of theft, social marginalization, and dispossession imposed on Indigenous people by settler colonial machinations that are many centuries old but still persist today. DinéYazhi’’s work in the exhibition, a neon text sculpture that reads “NOT EVERY SPACE DESERVES YOU NOT EVERY SPACE IS SACRED,” calls attention to these enduring, oppressive legacies while urging those who behold the work (and institutions who display it) to reflect on accountability, power, equity, and freedom.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman’s untitled poem illustrates his adept use of pacing, rhythm, and tone, presenting images and sentiments in unexpected harmony and

sharp juxtaposition that unfold in staccato-like bursts. Huffman uses both language and mass media as malleable material, recalling the collaged aesthetic of his visual art, like the multimedia video installation on view in *Climate Changing, We Don't Need Another Mural* (2019/21). By sampling and remixing found and studio-produced footage and interviews with residents of Smoketown (a historically Black neighborhood in Louisville, Kentucky, where Huffman sought to create a public art project) and combining them with a long-form poem that acts as a spine, this work speaks to the politics of visibility and representation and how they weigh on the artist.

Ranging in tone from playful, droll, lyrical, and sensual to prosaic and exasperated, Park McArthur and Constantina Zavitsanos's jointly authored scores are interspersed throughout this guide. Friends and sometimes artistic collaborators, McArthur and Zavitsanos began creating performance scores to think through disability, dependency, and the social nature of care. Care is typically understood as a form of transactional labor—I give, you get, and now you owe me—and in this country where individualism and independence are championed, dependency is registered in the negative sense, resulting in a deficit. Zavitsanos describes that the scores are directives for past, present, and future acts that speak to the necessity of interdependency. “They are acts that have been done but that are never really done. They are never completed precisely because they are an ongoing maintenance, a constant precarity, that is in our case both necessary and dreaming, residing in what others may see as utopian, and what we see as daily.”¹³ Zavitsanos's quote, to me, echoes the modes of institutional responsibility called for by the artists in *Climate Changing*, a call that I hope is imbued in the very spirit of this exhibition, from inception to execution. This institutional transformation must always be in practice, ever becoming, and always invested in interdependency with and care for our social environment.

NOTES

1. Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 175.

2. For examples from 2020 alone, see Yesomi Umolu “On the Limits of Care and Knowledge: 15 Points Museums Must Understand to Dismantle Structural Injustice,” *Artnet*, June 25, <https://news.artnet.com/opinion/limits-of-care-and-knowledge-yesomi-umolu-op-ed-1889739>; Paul Farber and Ken Lum, “Interviews: Monument Lab,” *Artforum*, June 23, <https://www.artforum.com/interviews/paul-farber-and-ken-lum-on-reimagining-symbols-and-systems-of-justice-83303>; Kimberly Drew, “What Should a Museum Look Like in 2020,” *Vanity Fair*, August 24, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2020/08/what-should-a-museum-look-like-in-2020>; Betsy Bradley, “A Museum Director Asks: What if Art Museums Can't Measure Up to the Present Moment?,” *Hyperallergic*, August 26, <https://hyperallergic.com/583763/what-if-art-museums-cant-measure-up-to-the-present-moment/>.

3. The commons is a term used to refer to neither public nor private property, but rather resources that are freely accessible and available to be used by everyone. In *Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All* (Oakland, CA: University

of California Press, 2009), Peter Linebaugh writes, as a note of caution, that “to speak of the commons as if it were a natural resource is misleading at best and dangerous at worst—the commons is an activity and, if anything, it expresses relationships in society that are inseparable from relations to nature,” 279. Thanks to Daniel Marcus for sharing resources that informed this citation.

4. Disability Justice advocate Leah Smith defines ableism as “a set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against people with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities and often rests on the assumption that disabled people need to be ‘fixed’ in one form or the other. Ableism is intertwined in our culture, due to many limiting beliefs about what disability does or does not mean, how able-bodied people learn to treat people with disabilities and how we are often not included at the table for key decisions.” “#Ableism,” Center for Disability Rights, accessed December 9, 2020, <http://cdmrns.org/blog/uncategorized/ableism/>.

5. Audre Lorde, “Learning from the Sixties,” in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1984), 138.

6. Tanya Titchkosky describes the term embodied as “all the ways we have to sense, feel, and move in the world, as these are mediated by the interests of social environments, including race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.” In *The Question of Access: Disability, Space, Meaning* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 3.

7. “Bodies also take the shape of the spaces they occupy and of the work they do.... When bodies take up spaces that they were not intended to inhabit, something other than the reproduction of the facts of the matter happens. The hope that reproduction fails is the hope for new impressions, for new lines to emerge, new objects, or even new bodies.” Sara Ahmed in *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 62.

8. Titchkosky, 34–35.

9. Titchkosky, 3.

10. Ahmed, *On Being Included*, 176.

11. The commercial aired five times a week for four weeks on channel 9 in Los Angeles. See Nick Stillman's “Do You Believe in Television? Chris Burden and TV,” *East of Borneo*, October 10, 2010, for more information on Burden's engagement with TV and broadcast, <https://eastofborneo.org/articles/do-you-believe-in-television-chris-burden-and-tv/>. Burden's *The TV Commercials 1973–77* are available to be viewed on http://www.ubu.com/film/burden_tv.html.

12. In Mark H. C. Bessire, *William Pope.L: The Friendliest Black Artist in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 71.

13. Constantina Zavitsanos, *Initial Conditions: Artists Make Spaces*, exhibition pamphlet (Stamford, CT: Franklin Street Works, 2015), 27, https://franklinstreetworksdocuments.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/initialconditions_booklet_final.pdf.

14. *Breakthroughs: Avant-Garde Artists in Europe and America, 1950–1990* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), vi.

15. See interview with Måns Wrangé, *Chris Burden: Februari–Maj 1999*, exhibition catalogue (Stockholm: Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, 1999), np.

16. Paul Goldberger, “Architecture View: The Museum That Theory Built,” *New York Times*, November 5, 1989, <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/11/05/arts/architecture-view-the-museum-that-theory-built.html>.

ON CHRIS BURDEN'S WEXNER CASTLE

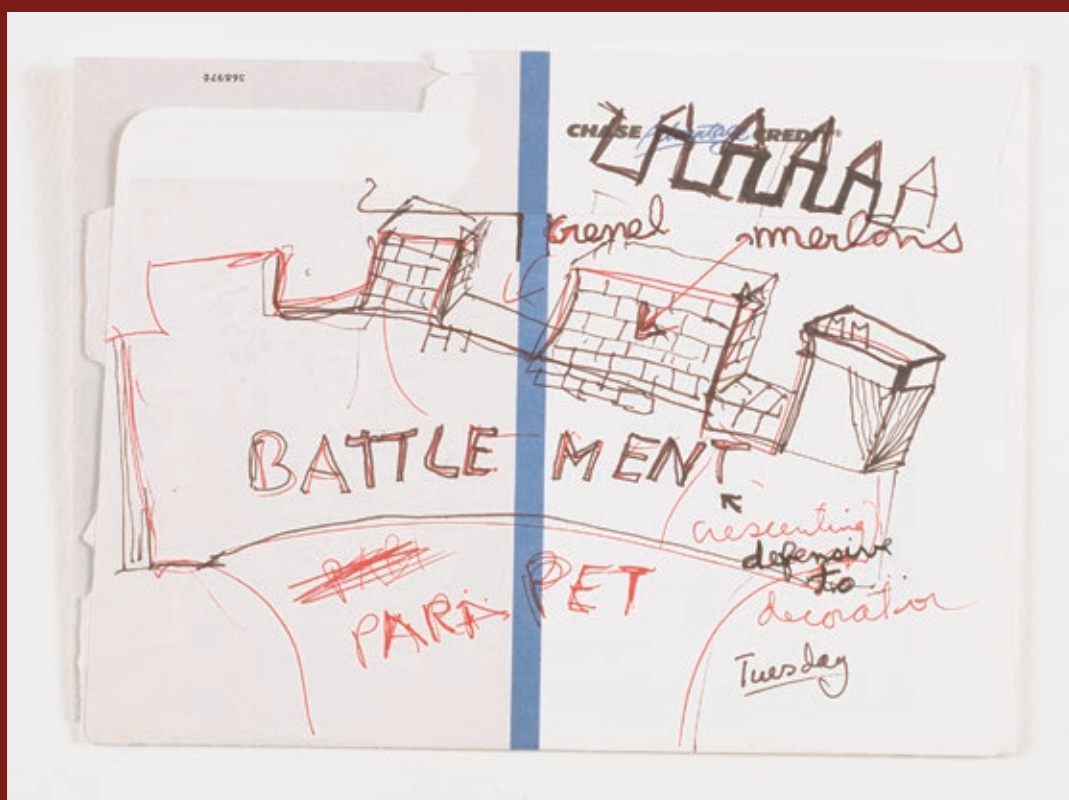
After opening to empty galleries where Peter Eisenman's deconstructivist architecture was on display, the Wexner Center for the Arts' inaugural year of 1989–90 included a trio of exhibitions. The first two, *Art in Europe and America: The 1950s and 1960s* and *Art in Europe and America: The 1970s and 1980s*, acted as orientation devices (albeit through a problematic lens that looked only at western art history through the work of mostly white, cis-gendered male artists). Founding Wex Director Robert Stearns described that across this timeframe "artists have groped for the future by investigating new forms, materials, and purposes for art. As they did so, they tended to perturb more than they pleased and to raise more questions than they answered."¹⁴

The final exhibition closing out that first year, *New Works for New Spaces: Into the Nineties*, invited 13 artists (including Gretchen Bender, Ann Hamilton, Tadashi Kawamata, Barbara Kruger, Christian Marclay, Trisha Brown, and Bill T. Jones) to create works responding to the architecture and mission of the Wex—a vanguard, multidisciplinary laboratory for art of the 21st century. Chris Burden, an artist who had gained recognition for his performative works in the 1970s, staged an intervention on the center's façade, *Wexner Castle*. Where Eisenman's design includes a smoothed-over brick tower that refers to the multi-use Armory that once stood on the same site (it was damaged by fire and subsequently torn down in 1959), Burden added the Armory's battlements back onto the tower—those square merlons and open crenellations so typical of castle turrets.

Nearly a decade after *New Works for New Spaces*, Burden affirmed an interviewer's question that indeed *Wexner Castle* could be read as sculptural play with Eisenman's architecture or as critical commentary on the historicization of architecture—the enduring construction of battlements after they ceased to serve a defensive purpose. Burden also acknowledged that *Wexner Castle* invoked conversations around institutional critique—a form of conceptual art that emerged in the 1960s in which artists began to call into question the museums and galleries that showed their work and to unmask how power and financial transactions operate in the art world and beyond.¹⁵

I see *Wexner Castle* in a lineage preceded by two of Burden's works that contend with the structural integrity of the museum as a form of institutional critique. For *Exposing the Foundation of the Museum* (1986–88) at MOCA Los Angeles's Temporary Contemporary, Burden had three trenches dug around the perimeter of the building. Able-bodied museum-goers were invited to descend stairs and examine the concrete foundation that supported the building. Burden's *Samson* (1985) at the Henry Art Gallery was an intervention initiated from inside the building. The artist positioned a 100-ton jack that was attached to two timbers near the entrance to the gallery, pushing on steel plates positioned on opposite walls. The jack was connected to a turnstile, so each time a visitor entered the gallery, the jack would expand, causing it to exert more force on the walls of the institution, and threatening to destroy it. In this vein, by crowning Eisenman's design, deemed by a critic as the "museum that theory built," Burden's seemingly impish intervention dealt just as critical a blow.¹⁶

10



LEFT

Chris Burden, *Wexner Castle*, 1990. Ink on paper, 5 ½ x 8 in. © Chris Burden/Licensed by The Chris Burden Estate and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Image description: A sketch in pen of crenellations with the words "BATTLE-MENT" and "PARAPET" written toward the center along with other notations.

NEXT PAGE

Chris Burden, *Wexner Castle*, 1990. Addition of crenels and merlons to existing Peter Eisenman-designed museum building. © Chris Burden/Licensed by The Chris Burden Estate and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Image description: Exterior view of a postmodern building with deconstructed red brick sections that include crenellations on the top recalling a castle. The building has white scaffolding to the right, and the foreground includes a partial view of a curved, fragmented amphitheater with sloping grass behind it.





SCORE FOR CONSENSUAL HEALING

Tell me the details of what you do remember.

But give me the spread on all you don't.

Tolerate as much emotion as you can.

Bleed the rest in me.

Draft new texture in

Bilateral stimulation as conscription conjured elsewhere.

It's a crime that I feel this fucking way sometimes.

Fall in love.

Never get back up.

This is just the things we do.

BIRD SCORE

AKA better together

FKA nest critique and the critique of nets

SONG SCORE

Down the hall

way in the next room, just saying hi.

NOTES ON CHRIS BURDEN'S *THROUGH THE NIGHT SOFTLY*

Pope.L




Chris Burden was only a rumor before I really started paying attention to him. Once I did, I found him a very resonant figure and his work very focused: *Shoot*, *Locker Piece*, *Trans-fixed*...I absorbed all of them via rumor, photos, and the writing surrounding them.

I heard about *Through the Night Softly* aka TTNS later than the live work and before I ever saw the video. When I finally saw the video, I was struck by it.

Unlike much of Burden's live work, TTNS was presented as a moving image and, at least initially, was broadcast on TV so it came off very differently than the previous pieces. Despite the difference in medium, a few things remained the same: an overall cool laconic feel, a knowing use of time, the utilization of very few elements to construct the work, a sense of compression (that more was being suggested by giving little information) and at the same time, a sense that the poetics of the work moved beyond its obvious boundedness.

People have asked me if TTNS influenced my crawl work—I don't know, maybe. Why not? Of course.



Compared to Burden, performance practitioners like Vito Acconci, Joseph Beuys, or even Marina Abramovic were much more communicative either in how they built their work or how they framed it afterwards. Many of them used language in the works themselves. Burden, by thinning or withholding language in and around his work, made his pieces seem more solid, more object-like, more unto themselves. Why? Overall, he seemed less social, less interested in the group and more interested in the personal vision of the artist. In this way, he was a very modernist artist—very much focused on what he had to “say” even if he said

it by refusing to say it. What is said about a work of art after it is made changes it. Is it possible to say so much or just enough that the chat creates a whole new work? Rumor propelled Burden's career, but explication will transform it.

Whereas Acconci wouldn't shut up, Burden was silent, stifled, petulant, scared, or just coy. In work after work, he sequestered himself, disappeared himself, or muffled his physical appearance and therefore any access to it. Or he framed the performance as an “appearance” or a “cameo” or a fluke, in many cases using extreme brevity, silence, or absence to forestall communication—why?

In TTNS, Burden used editing to convince us of the object-nature of the video: abrupt edits at the beginning and end, no internal edits, and close-up framing. The strategies combined to suggest that the slice you see in the video is the only slice there ever was. For all the liveness that came before, now in TTNS we have the truth: performance is a presentation of facts not a resolution of those facts.

The three-quarter, almost bird's-eye view of the camera points to the position of the camera. During this period for much art cinema, the camera was intentionally made invisible. Burden subjectivizes the camera and cues us that someone is looking (at him?) and you, the viewer, are only able to look as a result of that first looking. He is, as it were, looking over his shoulder at himself, at us. He definitely wasn't operating the camera. This is important in creating the trophy.

Burden noticed that performance lives only sadly ever after in its debris, its trophies, the leftovers of its passing—this, in a way, is its real aura. The relic (or trophy) left over from TTNS is very unremarkable: a small plexiglass box with bits of safety car glass on a bed of deep dark maroon velvet. The object is so unremarkable or corny it is funny or annoying or both. But, you remember it, and its poverty is instructive.

All performance documentation is rich in what cannot be there, is ultimately abstract, and reaches lamely beyond the document. This is a productive lack.

NOW I want to think of Chris Burden in the context of a character I've been writing through for some years now. The character is called Mr. Brown-Guy and he is a solitary type who moves about the world doing ordinary things in a suspectable but deliberate way. He never really explains his actions, he pontificates instead. He complains a lot. He thinks everyone worships him. He is in his own world. He is unto himself.

On this one particular day the sky glows white. It is going to snow. Mr. Brown-Guy drives into a strip mall in his gleaming Cadillac Eldorado and parks in front of a 7-Eleven convenience store. He disengages from the vehicle carefully holding aloft a clear plastic cup brimming with yellow liquid which he proceeds to lift shoulder-high and pour into various rainbows floating in various parking-lot puddles. The liquid splashes. You can hear the parking lot sigh. As if it's known all along of this fateful day...

He enters the blinding white interior of the store dragging his foot adjacent. Inside the structure fluorescent lights are upped to the nth. The muzak is barely audible, drowning beneath the scream of a forcefield of products, geegaws exquisite, and service machines as if creating, foe-menting itself from the sound of the emporium: air conditioning units, again and again and again the fluorescents, the dance of the food warmers, the phalanx of coolers lining almost every wall every surface, the sharp shiny ca-ca-cacophony of boxes, cans, tubes, bottles, and packages—the contrapuntal ding ding ding of the cash register—Oh oh oh Capitalism! And so on and so on and so on...

Mr. Brown-Guy's cowboy boots clip-clop drag as he makes his way down the aisle knocking over the many colorful displays, must-haves, and design winners: milk, bread, cosmetics, juice, glue, more glue, hair-pins, oils, chips, mops, puds, cuds, astringents, DVDs, pills, paperbacks, candy, toiletries, camaraderies, pills, condoms, parakeets, glycerin, soy lecithin, pills, hemoglobin, sleet, dust bunnies, sandwiches dressed only in gravity—

He makes his way through the maze of aisles pausing now and again as if he is if lost, and he is, he is at least until he encounters the Slurpee machine. Without hesitation, he snatches a white, orange, and green cup, mostly white—the largest size available beyond family size (the catch phrase), its diameter a basketball rim. Out of one eye, the left, the left, he sights the hard-black plastic nozzle of the machine, chooses Mango Chutney Nilla-Sampler flicking his wrist up up forcing the nozzle inexplicably but violently up up up upward. The transparent front-panel unbreakable explodes, a catastrophe of frozen custard erupts, kiddie-lava splattering walls, performing performing performing against the air, down the aisles, out the door, dispersing startled arriving customers, and deluging the parking lot with its many rainbows, puddles, and abrasions.

The cashier is on the phone. He's raving.

The police arrive.

Mr. Brown-Guy sips.

He does not move.

— what do you do when one of the most important artists from yr supposed minority group's most important piece of work consists of them lying dead in an institution as some sort of american relic of white violence + genocide + cultural erasure + you know the worst of them will still drive to the rez to buy fireworks to regurgitate the fourth of july + bootleg liquor + refuse access to needle exchange programs + walk out the door before you when yr trying to

enter a building + not even say thank you + snicker at
plastic straws but not give a quarter / eighth of a fuck about
whose land they are on / where their water comes from /
whose burial site is more sacred / who's got the first + last
say about immigration rights + racial injustice + sexual /
gender inequality — honestly that's just a footprint's worth
of frustration atop the tip of an iceberg slowly melting in a
rising sea impacted by global warming caused by colonization

+ somehow you think a land acknowledgement will absolve
you but hunny that don't mean shit without land + water
reparations / without giving it all back / even the memory
you've memorized of this simulated cannibalistic garden of
eden: infected through centuries of european perversion +
dementia + deception + paranoia — there is no distinction
between a morgue: a sanctuary: a prison cell: an institution
— there is no distinction if freedom is absorbed through

bloodstained land + battle-scarred rubble: there is no distinction if genocide is the apparatus that constitutes what is sacred / worthy of preservation — there can be no decolonization within the constructed memory of settler colonial / heteronormative / gender binary dominant / white supremacist / capitalist failure — if it's all the same to say: there can be no future without decolonization —

UNTITLED

Jibade-Khalil Huffman

Ned Beatty
playing a

different but
nonetheless

inexpertly
dressed

version of
his character

in *Network*, pretends
he is

not really there
to promote

anything other
than his sense

of enduring
within

some familiar

backgammon

reiterates

itself

as not only
a game but

thee
game

Los Angeles
defends itself

in a murder trial
and then defends itself

in a kidnapping trial
Los Angeles

swallows whole
bodies up

goes in for
similar tributes

to water
as they have

tributes to
dry land

instead of
a bust of

the commander
there are

a number of
resources online

22

then a divider
running from

the middle of the room
until the middle

of the room
until their other siblings

have to communicate
each of their frustrations, passively

“tell your
Brother

he can go
out on a limb

and start to
fuck himself”

“tell your sister
she has

five seconds
to navigate

a canopy
under the stars

the entire next
day to

manipulate
the forestry”

“could a
less involved person

do this”
and sing along

to the newscast
set to

another slowed down
soul sample another

lonesome
dubstep, some

tenderhearted
cheesesteak

several more
trial size

incantations where
you are

turned out
to dry.

SCORE FOR SUPPORT SYSTEM

Make 24 with 12

and call it a night.

Sure roses visit hours in the flowerwater

While you teach magic tricks

Like how to keep all eyes on your left hand

While lighting your right on fire

til desire can't be extinguished from desire.

SUPPORT SYSTEM SCORE

We triple time. Going so

Slow takes all day, meaning waiting for someone else

sextuples night. Meaning we show ourselves how

time's not hours but it's more than we could ever need.

SCORE FOR TOURMALINE (UPWARDS SPIRAL)

Tell yourself you wanna move up and launch that desire

Take it incrementally

Love where you are

Watch the magic unfold as you decrease resistance

Allow yourself to feel good

Feel good

Feeling good has been here

Relax into it

Be lazy with it

This too is a palindrome

QUESTIONING ACCESS

Advisory Committee Roundtable Discussion

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dan DiPiero is a musician and a lecturer in Ohio State's Departments of Comparative Studies and French and Italian, where he teaches courses on American popular culture and music history. He is interested in the aesthetics and politics of improvisation broadly, and his current book project investigates the relationship between improvisation in music and in everyday life through a series of nested comparisons. He plays the drums.

Erica Levin is an assistant professor in Ohio State's Department of History of Art. Her research focuses on the intersection between avant-garde cinema and postwar art, performance, and visual culture. She is in the final stages of completing *The Channeled Image: Art, Politics, and the Moving Image after Television*, a book that explores the ways televisual politics impacted expanded cinema and performance in the 1960s.

Margaret Price is an associate professor in Ohio State's Department of English and the director of its interdisciplinary Disability Studies Program. She is at work on a mixed-methods investigation, the Disabled Faculty Study, that combines survey and interview data to learn more about the experiences of disabled faculty in higher education. Her forthcoming book, *Crip Space-time*, reports findings from that study and proposes a new way of thinking about access in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Given the breadth of topics and ideas surrounding *Climate Changing*, I felt it was critical to assemble an interdisciplinary advisory committee that could function both as a sounding board and an invaluable resource for providing different perspectives on the exhibition's premise.

In advance of our roundtable discussion, I presented the advisory committee with a set of open-ended framing questions about intersectional definitions of access, embodied knowledge, inhabited space, and institutional critique. Two members of the group posed their own questions about improvisational strategies that recur across a number of artistic practices and about the title of the exhibition itself.

Transpiring over a Saturday afternoon in February 2020, our conversation touched on how such questions pertain to specific works and artists in the exhibition. More often than not, and in keeping with the spirit of *Climate Changing*, the discussion moved toward how the issues raised by artists appear in our daily lives. For the five members of the advisory committee—all educators and academics—this went well beyond the space of the classroom or college campus. The conversation resounded just as strongly with their work as activists (with immigrant women in Columbus and at the US/Mexico border; with local social justice groups; on Disability Justice and LGBTQ+ rights), as dancers and musicians, or just as humans.

The following excerpts from the original roundtable discussion have been condensed and edited for clarity.

Lucy I. Zimmerman

Maurice Stevens is a professor in Ohio State's Department of Comparative Studies and uses the pronouns they/them/theirs. Stevens's work focuses on individual and collective identity formation and memory, cultural performance and participatory leadership, critical trauma theory, and intersectionality. Stevens is committed to supporting transformative change at individual, community, institutional, and systemic scales.

Lucille Toth is an assistant professor in Ohio State's Department of French and Italian (Newark campus) and affiliated with Ohio State's Department of Dance. Toth was trained in contemporary dance in France, and her research interests lie at the intersection of dance, literature, medical humanities, and gender and migration studies. Her new project *Moving Bodies, Moving Borders: Being in Motion in Times of Crisis* confronts migration and movement with current discourses on purity and identity. She is artistic director of On Board(hers), an all-women dance project based on the testimonies of female immigrants both in Ohio and at the US/Mexico border.

Lucille Toth: The question of access in Chris Burden's [1990 artwork] *Wexner Castle* ties really well with my academic, artistic, and activist work. The idea of a fortress is complex: a dividing wall, a protective physical border, or a symbolic imposition. In *On Board(hers)*, we work on the body not just as a protective, impenetrable fortress, but also as a physical limit that allows us to negotiate interactions between us and others. When the body becomes a structure, we need to consider its kinesthetic memory and the traumas that are kept within the fortress. Regarding bordering policies, when I think about access, I think about an economy of fluidity, in the sense that goods, materials, food, and clothes are encouraged to have fast and global access. There's no restriction when it comes to this economy, versus a clear restriction of certain bodies and certain human beings who have a restricted access to mobility that is entirely dependent on immigration policies. So I think this economy [of fluidity] is really present in Burden's *Wexner Castle*.

Erica Levin: I really appreciate the language that Tanya Titchkosky uses around access: "what if, like access, we treat disability as a way of perceiving and orienting to the world rather than conceiving of it as an individual functional limitation?"¹ Just the simple idea of access as a way of perceiving changed the way I thought about political struggles that seek access and struggles that define themselves around refusing access when it comes with conditions. In other words, you can be granted access, but only according to an institution's predetermined understanding of who you are. So it's access that has a political function, which is to keep each person, or each group, in their place.

Margaret Price: Around 10 years ago, people in the Disability Justice movement started talking about access not as something that would be achieved or would have to do with some kind of space or barrier, but that access would have to do with changing what a space is to begin with.

A concept that has been so important to me is what Mia Mingus called "access intimacy."² Access intimacy, as Mingus defines it, is the experience of having your needs gotten on an intuitive level. For example, if I walk into a space and one of the first questions someone asks is, "do you need to sit anywhere in particular?" That's a great way to signal that you understand the different ways of sitting around a table are not neutral. Somebody might need to not have their back to a door, or somebody might need to have good sight lines, etc. Access intimacy is part of a larger idea in Disability Justice around changing what we think of as a space. That space might be a room, but the space might also be the construct of white supremacy. Or it might be the container of capitalism.

I think about the way that access is made in a space by forces like white supremacy or capitalism. When I talk about access arising, or access emerging, that's the process of asking "what is this space becoming?" Spaces only exist because we agree they do, just like time. How might we change those containers that

exist only because we all act as if they do? We act as if things have to happen in a hurry, or we act as if it's not important which seat you might have around a table. Most recently I've gotten really concerned with the notion of accountability in access. I've come to this conclusion that access will never happen without collectivity, and then I think, well, I don't know how that happens, especially in the US.

Maurice Stevens: Some of my work has been about how people have represented past traumatic moments and how representing them in the present offers some possibility of full humanity. So now when I'm thinking about access, I tend to think of it as "what are the possibilities for the subject in the space, in terms of all the things you get to be?" So-called universal accessibility is more like [asking] "how do you optimize fullness of being for a subject in a space in various ways?" It becomes a question of intersectionality, and it becomes a question of pedagogy, but in the sense of learning and teaching together. What strategies of self-protection end up having to emerge because of how I'm being imagined by that space's or institution's understanding of me? That's a question of emergence, the same old crap—reproducing patterns of inclusion, exclusion, strategies of self-protection, or whatever. Limiting things. But also, can other things emerge, like visions of new futures or being together in different ways? For me, the access question gets to be about what emerges across all these different scales, too. How do I feel physically? Emotionally? Mentally? Politically?

Price: Dan, since you said you work on improvisation, how is all this talk about becoming and belonging and emerging and arising resonating with you?

Dan DiPiero: What everybody's been saying about access involves relationality, right? And that's not what we're invited to think about when we look at the castle, about this gate coming up and then, you've achieved access! But relationality involves different ways of addressing what happens once you're inside. When I think about that, I think specifically about access as a performance. That resonates with me in terms of improvisation, and not only the question of this utopian notion of "we can be together differently" where there's a democratic trade-off and everybody has their say. It's more the ambivalent question that I hear in everybody else's comments as well, which is: you might have to protect yourself in this space, you might have to really scramble; there's an unexpected situation that you have to deal with and you're left to your own devices in that moment. It's no less improvisatory just because it's really not emancipatory for that moment. And yet, if there's also this presence of intimacy, then improvisation looks quite different, it can be this quite different relation. So I'm really interested in the ambivalence of improvisation and how that's dictated by actually quite concrete, stable parameters like what can you do in this room versus that room, what can you do with these people versus those people. So the not-open but very closed, concrete limitations that allow different things to happen in a space, as opposed to [or in contrast to] the idea of a parameter that simply persists [or blocks possibilities].

Stevens: It persists, the persistence of the liberatory structure, in addition to the humanity, the creation of possibilities...

DiPiero: When I think about the persistence, I think about Sara Ahmed's idea of diverging from a path [to establish a new one].³ In order to do that, you actually have to keep walking over this different route all the time, or else the line is not going to stay in the grass. We imagine improvisation as this freewheeling creative capacity, but it can be about just walking that

about structure. But if there's that history there, then access becomes a completely different thing where you're negotiating and changing the space together.

Toth: In contact improvisation, in dance, we talk about safety, but we also talk about consent. I've never thought about consent and contact improvisation through that idea of accessibility, but I think it's very interesting. You need to train yourself to be able to understand how your body and your body's partner are reacting to certain situations to avoid confusion: if I put my head on your hips, I need to feel that you agree with that movement. And if you don't, then I need to negotiate this access. The negotiation that you need to have is probably the same in music with hearing, right?

DiPiero: My first thought when you made this connection between safety and consent was that no corollary concept exists in music, because the idea is if you're a sensitive listener, you'll know what to do. I'm thinking about this conversation I had with a colleague where she was describing this improvised performance where she was the only woman and feeling musically crowded out, but none of the men were noticing how she was retreating from the space, and they just kept on doing what they were doing because we have some ethos in the jazz world that, "well of course everybody has their own say in a space like this, you've just got to speak up." There's no attention to the rules, those dynamics, in quite the same way. One of the things I love to think about is how improvisation

compares across spaces, and in dance this idea of consent being concrete and talked about a lot is really interesting.

Levin: Now that I'm in the frame of thinking about access as something that everyone is accountable for realizing, what is really exciting is this idea that improvisation is a way of enacting perception, making that into something that's like a shared experience rather than just an abstract set of principles. And that feels like where art might rub up against politics in a very generative way.

Stevens: Where art means a collaborative making of an expression of something? Or...

Levin: I don't know if art needs to be collaborative to engage a collective awareness, but artists who engage in practices that involve collaboration might have a special ability to offer up something for people who are thinking about political change or be able to show us what you need to do in order to work with other people to make things different. Which is all I really mean by politics.

Stevens: What's building up for me is how some of these things can operationalize in collective action and having spaces where the minoritarian position

SCORE FOR ACCESS INTIMACY BEYOND

Don't tell your partner shit on shit.
Just enjoy the feel through and in it.
Feels good init.
This could be anyone everywhere,
Everyone anywhere but right now.
This is us.

way very deliberately every single day because you want to have a different relation to the space around you. It can be quite boring, but intentional and important for different reasons.

Toth: And improvisation is very structured. You improvise with what you have, so it depends on many things. You are different every time you take that walk, to use Dan's example. So that walk seems the same, but you are the factor that's actually changing every single time: what you give will be different, what you receive is different. So it looks like it's the same walk, but it's not.

Price: Dan, I don't think you used the word safety, but to be able to improvise in a precarious situation, safety is always something that one has to think about. So, let's say there are two people trying to navigate a situation that could be very difficult or could be humiliating, or something as simple as...sorry, I'm reverting to the most obvious example of disability...but suppose there are some stairs. Now, no wheelchair user wants to be carried up stairs by, say, a restaurant employee. Nor does any disabled person I know care to climb stairs in their own way with strangers looking on. But if you're in community, or if you're improvising within a structure of memory and knowing each other and intimacy, that's not the same way you were talking

in a group doesn't have to be excluded from movement going forward. Where it can still be included, or where people can be involved in activism that doesn't already assume that they have to burn themselves out in it. You must have pleasure, pleasure activism, and you should also be able to care for yourself and others at some time.⁴ And so I was thinking, is there something artful about that kind of process?

Levin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Stevens: Right now, I'm noticing I'm feeling very uncomfortable, and I think that is a good thing, the discomfort I'm feeling. It's more like a tension. With [Torkwase] Dyson's work, there's this thing in there about Blackness, anti-Blackness, and also possibility. Which always takes me into Frantz Fanon and this idea that the Black body is made in a specific way, and how I'm supposed to identify with this position⁵...I don't, so then I try to make something new, and then I look at that new thing I made, but there are problematics built into that, too, because I've just incorporated some of the same old power relations. And in that [struggle], there's an ambivalence or tension: my only possible freedom comes with a cost. Maybe that's what I mean. I guess I'm just wanting to point to that, that tension or discomfort I feel is in a lot of the work [in the exhibition]. And in me right now, in this conversation. We must stay with the intensity to invite liberation.

Price: Going back, to some degree, to the issue of care and what you said about "at what cost," I think about cost a lot in terms of meeting needs of access. Again, I think of access not necessarily as access to things, but as access to thriving. Thriving, or just surviving. Some of the most profound experiences of care for me are when something has gone so terribly wrong...and there comes a moment when someone gives something regardless of the cost. When that act is given without any kind of negotiation or condition or niceties even.

Stevens: Impartial care. Care without responsibility.

Price: Exactly. A sense of, this is what we have right now. I don't think that really relates to trying to funnel what one needs through an institution or through resources, but that's what it seems to me we're almost always lacking, the sense of being able to do something or suffer something or offer something without a lot of cost.

Stevens: Like having the pain, the price of the ticket, go away.

Price: Yes, and especially thinking about Columbus [Ohio], thinking about someone being brutalized in a specific way, or not having what they needed in a specific way, it just seems like so often what is on the table is an exchange of some kind.

Levin: Discomfort is a kind of perception, right? It seems like a powerful tool for describing institutional limits, which then enables us to really take stock of what is missing. I really appreciated what you said

about wanting to be recognized in a certain way but also that recognition can come at a cost. Acknowledging the ways institutional recognition often comes with certain conditions might be the first step toward inventing something that doesn't rely on what already exists and enable us to imagine modes of affirmation and validation that are not bound up with exclusionary operations of power.

Stevens: Erica, your question about discomfort had that in it, I think, almost like the requirement to be that subject who needs this remediation, and that institutional requirement of remediation in order to obtain recognition was problematic.

Levin: I think that's true. I was thinking about holes, negative space, and debt and the language some of the artists [in the exhibition] are using that cuts across different issues.⁶ Maybe because Pope.L is coming [for a site visit], I was thinking about his idea of the hole and being in the hole, and the hole as a way of talking about being in debt, but also describing an absence or a constrained situation.⁷ In this sense, recognizing holes becomes a precondition for something new to come. That's something that excites me about how this exhibition is organized: the idea that there are ways of looking at what these artists are working on that cut across issues. It's not just the climate people over here, and the Disability Justice people over here, but that somehow [the exhibition] enables us to see how different aesthetic strategies, logics, or processes might speak to one another.

NOTES

1. Tanya Titchkosky, *The Question of Access: Disability, Space, Meaning* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 4.

2. Mia Mingus, "Access Intimacy: The Missing Link," *Leaving Evidence* (blog), May 5, 2011, <https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/05/05/access-intimacy-the-missing-link/>.

3. "Lines are both created by being followed and are followed by being created. The lines that direct us, as lines of thought as well as lines of motion, are in this way performative: they depend on the repetition of norms and conventions, of routes and paths taken, but they are also created as an effect of this repetition. To say that lines are performative is to say that we find our way and we know which direction we face only as an effect of work, which is often hidden from view." Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 16.

4. See adrienne maree brown, *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2019).

5. See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952; London: Penguin Classics, 2019).

6. See "Constantina Zavitsanos: Speculative Planning Session with Fred Moten and Stefano Harney," April 25, 2015, <https://livestream.com/accounts/3605883/events/3991702>, part of Zavitsanos's residency *THIS COULD BE US* at the New Museum, New York.

7. See Pope.L's "Hole Theory" in William Pope.L: *The Friendliest Black Artist in America*, ed. Mark H. C. Bessire (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION

Dave Hullfish Bailey

"The habits of mind have been sedimented as well as the habits of using the land."

—Dave Hullfish Bailey

"Land use" is not an especially vivid term. A cousin to "land management," it suggests a drily utilitarian view of the environment, coding the earth as a resource freely available to human operation—and also, more darkly, as a meek accomplice in the operations of industrial extraction, real-estate development, and colonial extermination. A dissenter from this regime of spatial abstraction, Dave Hullfish Bailey asks us to consider how the land might be released from the burden of functionality, countering the mapmaker's worldview with a proliferation of "speculative geography," as he describes his practice, which combines rigorous place-based research with sideways leaps of imagination and invention.

Bailey's projects often take the form of DIY propositions—jerry-rigged models of technological and pedagogical systems—for remapping and redressing environmental (and social) damage. Between 1996 and 2005, he developed a project to convert the Schindler House, an iconic example of California's modern architecture (currently home to the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles), into an emergency shelter. Beginning in 2006, Bailey and the late Aboriginal writer and activist Sam Watson collaborated on a project to reroute the itinerary of ferry boats in Brisbane, Australia, honoring a sacred site along the riverbank. And in his 2018 exhibition *Hardscrabble* at REDCAT, Los Angeles, Bailey turned his attention to models of alternative education nested in the rural hinterlands of the western United States—a preoccupation that also informs his project for *Climate Changing*. **DM**

Chris Burden

Shoot is the title of Chris Burden's best-known artwork, a 1971 performance in which he willingly sustained a gunshot wound to his arm delivered by a friend at close range. Perhaps appropriately, the term "shoot" also holds currency in the world of professional wrestling, referring to a wrestler's unintentional departure from the scripted performance. As a young artist in Los Angeles, Burden treated art in ways not unlike pro wrestling, combining masochistic feats (the artist

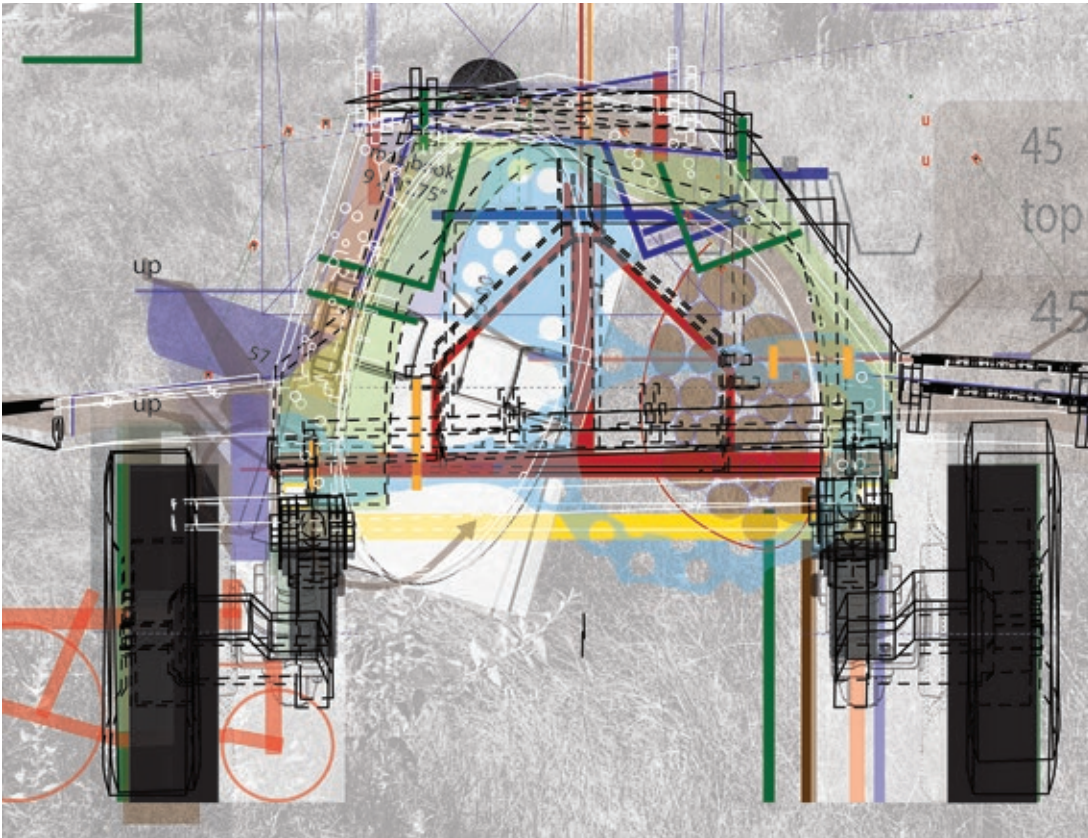
traps himself in a school locker!—he crawls over broken glass!—he lies motionless under a tarp alongside a busy road!) with shameless self-promotion, even placing his own name at the end of a list of world-famous artists in his 1976 TV commercial *Chris Burden Promo*.

Refusing to break character (in wrestling terms, *Shoot* was not "a shoot," as the plan went off as scripted), Burden tested both the audience's complicity and the limits of institutional liability, sounding the horizons of permissible harm. In the late 1970s Burden turned from live performance to video and sculpture, and then from sculpture to architectural models and installations, including *Wexner Castle* (1990). The slapstick monumentality of Burden's architectural projects—they include a mock carnival ride marrying the Eiffel Tower with two replicas of the Titanic and a rudimentary skyscraper just short enough to pass Los Angeles code restrictions—resonates with theorist Sianne Ngai's notion of the gimmick, which she posits as "capitalism's most successful aesthetic category but also its biggest embarrassment and structural problem."* Disturbingly, Ngai argues, gimmicks reveal the operations of labor-sparing and pleasure-cheapening at work within the economy's profit-driven core. As performances of radical devaluation (of the artist's body, per *Shoot*, and of postmodernist architecture, in *Wexner Castle*), Burden's interventions expose what most cultural institutions—the Wex among them—prefer to keep hidden: a capacity, and even a repressed yen, for vulgarity. **DM**

*Sianne Ngai, *Theory of the Gimmick: Aesthetic Judgment and Capitalist Form* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020), 2.

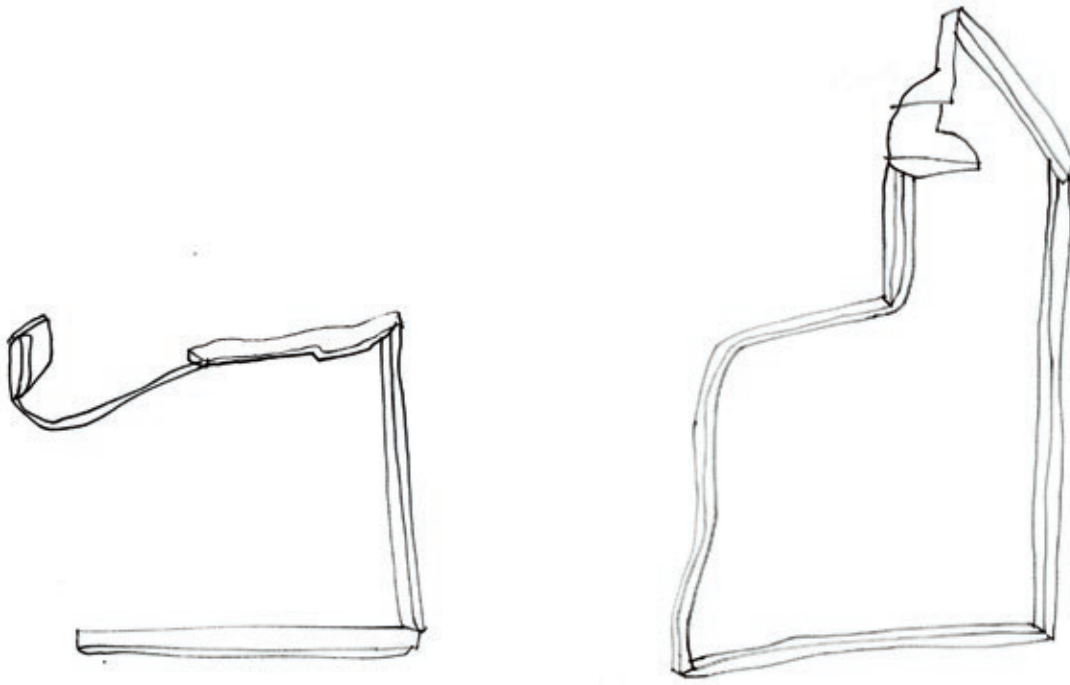
Abraham Cruzvillegas

The words "provisional" and "improvisational" derive, in part, from the Latin verb *providere*—to see, or look, ahead. Mexican artist Abraham Cruzvillegas seems to hold all of these terms in mind while creating his artworks, which often take the form of architectural structures but may also resemble assemblages, games, tools, or instructions. Cruzvillegas has built his practice around the concept of *autoconstrucción*, or self-construction, an idea borrowed from the ad hoc architectures built (and constantly renovated and expanded) in Colonia Ajusco, the Mexico City neighborhood of his youth. Buildings there, it seems, are never quite finished,



Dave Hullfish Bailey, *Thinking Outward* (from *Drop City site*), 2021. Digital collage, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

Image description: Cross section of a digital rendering of a trailer made up of many colored lines and shapes. The trailer is digitally collaged onto a desaturated photograph of tall grasses.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT
Abraham Cruzvillegas, *Untitled Sketches for Climate Changing 3 and 5*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and kurimanzutto, New York and Mexico City.

Image description: Abstract forms hand drawn with black lines on a white background.



Torkwase Dyson, *Liberation Scaled (Bird and Lava)*, 2020. Charcoal, acrylic, oil stick, graphite, and collage, 102 x 91 in. Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery, New York.

Image description: An abstract, mixed-media work that includes various geometric forms including circles and semicircles, trapezoids, and triangles. A small trapezoidal shape under a circle is repeated many times in the composition.

offering some promise of continued evolution through their incompleteness.

Like the residences of his childhood neighborhood, Cruzvillegas's conceptual and physical structures are conceived with flexibility, adaptability, and transparency built-in. Born of both necessity and opportunity, Cruzvillegas's sculptures and environments incorporate found, repurposed resources that reflect the material vernaculars of their places of origin. Objects are transformed and cobbled together into forms that fulfill an immediate, if temporary, purpose. The possibility for transformation, growth, augmentation, or interpretation inflects Cruzvillegas's creations with an openness that mirrors his vision for social and communal configurations. The artist often speaks of his own identity as a sort of *autoconstrucción*—one formed intentionally but continually, adapting to the demands of the present. **LRHG**

Demian DinéYazhi'

A recent Instagram post by @riseindigenous—an account run by the collective R.I.S.E: Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment, the brainchild of artist/curator/writer Demian DinéYazhi'—superimposes the slogan RE“THEY”TRIA TE THE LAND over a photograph of a scrubby desert plant. Phrased this way, “they” carries several meanings, invoking contemporary genderqueer and nonbinary terminology in tandem with the multiplicity of gender positions and identities available within many Indigenous societies, including DinéYazhi's ancestral Diné (Navajo) people, the point being to restore native sovereignty and gender fluidity in tandem.

In DinéYazhi's transdisciplinary practice, the pronoun “I” is always already multiple: history saturates the self, and the individual (Indigenous) body bears colonization's toxins in its veins—a condition rendered literal in their agitprop poster *POZ SINCE 1492* (2016), its slogan linking HIV/AIDS with Christopher Columbus. This slippage between singular and plural is often conveyed through the play between image and text: their 2016 video *American Bondage West* opens with a black-and-white photograph of a stream entering the Pacific Ocean accompanied by the caption, “THE CURVE OF AN ARMPIT.” Later in the video, the words “THE LABOR OF ASSIMILATION” overlay a photo of a leather-clad figure's bare bottom, harnessing the pain/pleasure of bondage as a metaphor for colonial subjection. **DM**

Torkwase Dyson

“[H]ow do Black people survive abstraction today as the scope, scale, and density of matter is changing all around us due to climate change?”

—Torkwase Dyson

Wexner Center Artist Residency Award recipient Torkwase Dyson's abstraction spans a nexus of systems and issues such as climate change, migration and fugitivity, architecture, and infrastructure and brings these topics into conversation with both historical and contemporary meditations on Black and brown people's spatial practices and strategies of liberation. Dyson has a system of her own, Black Compositional Thought, as well as a geometric vernacular, the Hypershapes, both of which take into account the lived experience and movement of BIPOC populations through natural and built environments.

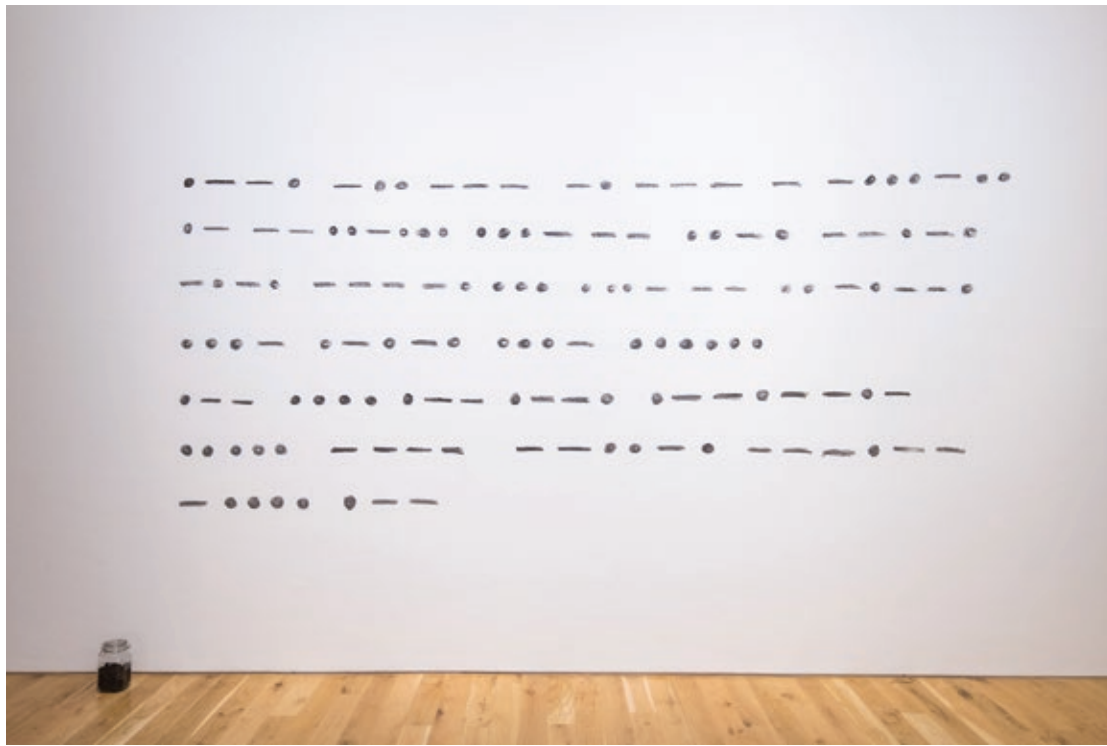
Her investigations that raise questions of embodiment echo scholar Sara Ahmed's writing on phenomenology: “failed orientations, when bodies inhabit spaces that do not extend their shape, means that something happens other than the reproduction of matter” or of what already exists.* Indeed, Dyson's work might be understood as an exercise in disorientation. Rather than replicating the tragedy of being raced and erased, or not being accepted into a world that has propped up white supremacy in her work, Dyson turns her attention to “that something other” that happens, to the genius and agency of Black people, and how both historic and future models of resistance and resilience might be envisioned and put into practice. **LZ**

*Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 147.

Futurefarmers

Founded by Amy Franceschini in San Francisco in the mid-1990s, the collective Futurefarmers has no stable roster of members. Nor does it hold a fixed conception of its overall project. Rather, the collective constitutes itself according to the needs of the project at hand. Usually catalyzed through an invitation to share work with the public, the group forms and re-forms based on the parameters of each new project, inviting new collaborators and incorporating their capabilities into a communal, open structure. This ever-evolving collective has included artists, designers, farmers, anthropologists, ecologists, sailors, architects, and philosophers—alongside many others.

Drawing from the strengths of many, Futurefarmers' practice is rooted in research and inquiry. Its collective brand of research, however, aims to preserve and even privilege uncertainty rather than to arrive at unconditional conclusions. Futurefarmers is interested in forms of transmission, systems of knowledge, and in the discourse of “the commons”—cultural and natural resources that are shared freely. Its members



Futurefarmers, *Morse message sent by Johan Swård: "We do not need museums to preserve varieties What we want is to grow them."*, 2016. Mural with charcoal from oven archive. Image courtesy of the artists.

Image description: A morse code message drawn as a mural in charcoal on a white gallery wall. A glass jar filled with charcoal sits on the floor to the left of the mural.



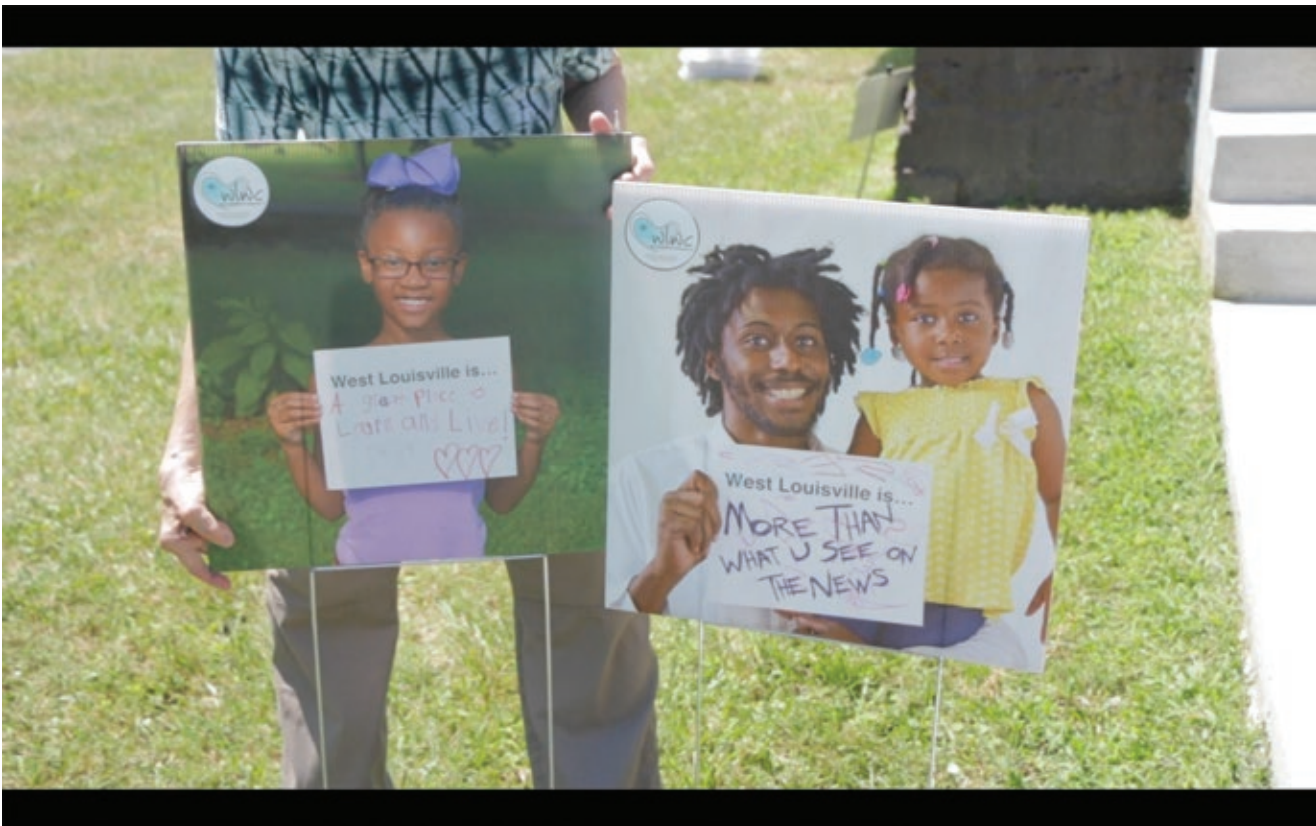
Futurefarmers attaching SSTV antennae to Mast, 2016. Image courtesy of the artists, photo: Amy Franceschini.

Image description: A docked wooden sailboat with its sails lowered. A person climbs the lines near the mast to install an antenna. Two people stand below on the boat deck to assist.



Futurefarmers, *Map of Seed Journey*, 2017. Watercolor on paper by Amy Franceschini, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artists.

Image description: A black-and-white watercolor map of the European Union, the western part of Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa. Lines and dashes are drawn to chart a path between Oslo, Moscow, Istanbul, Bethlehem, Lecce, Cagliari, San Sebastian, Santander, Jersey Island, Antwerp, London, Cardiff, and Vejle. The text in the upper-left corner reads, "Seed Journey 2016, 2017," with a small symbol above. A map key runs vertically along the bottom of the map.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *We Don't Need Another Mural*, 2019/21 (stills). Multichannel video installation with Astroturf and yard signs; 22:49 mins., 10:04 mins., 5:25 mins.; 3:21 mins. Image courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi Gallery, Los Angeles.

Image description (top): Two images of the same person wearing a black VR headset are collaged on top of the other. In the background, a larger image of the person faces right-of-center and the frame is cropped from their shoulders. In the foreground, the person is pictured from the waist up, and raises their right hand, gesturing upward with two fingers. The background features a concrete wall and shaded foliage with a raised highway in the distance.

Image description (bottom): Two yard signs for West Louisville Women's Collaborative. The sign on the left is of a preadolescent child wearing glasses and smiling with a blue bow in their hair who holds a sign that says "West Louisville is...A great place to learn and live!" with three hearts drawn beneath the words. The other sign features an adult holding a child. The adult holds a sign that reads, "West Louisville is... more than what u see on the news."

create situations in which exchange is possible and even necessary, operating through trade, educational programs, shared voyages, and occasionally, through the production of objects. As the collective's name implies, Futurefarmers is interested in growth, the cultivation and circulation of ideas, and the conception of possible futures. **LRHG**

Jibade-Khalil Huffman

It makes sense, viewing the works of Jibade-Khalil Huffman, that the visual artist was first a poet. Working now with installation, video, and photography, as well as language, Huffman does not put forth narratives. Rather, he continues to communicate through strings of idioms, stanzas of unfinished phrases, and nested layers of images. These segments, arranged by the artist, serve to interrupt, complicate, obscure, or complete one another. Huffman's montages of imag-eries, surfaces, and sounds offer up partial pieces of information that the viewer may—or may not—choose to loop together into meanings.

Flipping through channels, spinning the dial of the radio, or scrolling through a social media feed become apt analogies for Huffman's collage-like video works that conflate various streams of input, historical moments, and spatialities. We are able to pick out bits of sight or sound that key us into Huffman's interests in culture, history, and community. His video installation *We Don't Need Another Mural* (2019/2021) which sketches out a fragmentary portrait of a community in Louisville, Kentucky, takes up issues of race, resources, and access in ways that are both particular and universal. His constructions remain suggestive but not prescriptive, their open structures echoing the sparseness of a poetry that is as determined by its blank spaces as its words. **LRHG**

Baseera Khan

In its presence and absence, Baseera Khan's own body is employed as medium and subject to create the potential for resilience, agency, and expression as a queer Muslim femme entrenched in America's converging systems of marginalization and oppression. It's fitting that collage is a central de/constructive tool in their practice, as it manifests the many identities Khan represents and the rupture and volatility that is felt in navigating this hostile world filled with often opposing expectations.

How can one represent and disseminate the conflicting experiences of a femme Muslim in this country? In *Braidage* (2017–18), Khan cast 99 molds from the edges of their own body and used them as rock climbing holds, scaling them in an endurance performance wearing Nike iD Air Force Ones embroidered with the word

"iamuslima." Khan used the title to circumvent Nike's list of banned words (including "Islam" and "Muslim") seen by the company as "content construed to incite violence."* The shoes were appropriate gear for an enervating performance that requires training and pushes the artist's body to the point of physical exhaustion.

Khan's work does not exclusively meditate on anger and alienation; faith, spirituality, and conviviality are also important themes. Khan has made burqa-like shrouds from acoustic sound blankets; they created a Karaoke Spiritual center; and, most recently, Khan recorded the pilot for a television series in a simulacrum of their own apartment featuring conversations with friends in the midst of the global pandemic. **LZ**

*Jane Ursula Harris, "Baseera Khan," *Art in America*, May 26, 2017, <https://www.artnews.com/art-in-america/aia-reviews/baseera-khan-62356/>.

Carolyn Lazard

Often relying on recognizable images and objects from institutional settings like hospitals and prisons, Carolyn Lazard implants an infrastructure of care into the museum, rethinking how its site can be adapted as a model of accessibility. More specifically, their work considers how disability and illness can be reconceptualized as a source of new potential.

Through the lens of disability politics, Lazard critiques the social significance placed on productivity, usefulness, and reciprocity—capitalist values that ultimately prioritize certain bodies over others. By modifying devices that are typically used to serve these ideals, the artist queers capitalist ambitions that seek to control the body and reform it into standardized modes of production.

Integrating personal histories and sometimes archival research, Lazard's work questions current concepts of accessibility and their points of intersectionality, asking essentially, who is accessibility centered on and how can that center be subverted? How can accessibility be reformulated in a way that prioritizes pleasure and joy over rights and compliance? Through their work, Lazard explores how time and space can be transformed in ways that allow for alternative forms of being, doing, and living. **SK**

Park McArthur

Which bodies and what forms of cognitive diversity and neurodiversity are being served? What information is being prioritized? Whose abilities and needs are being considered?

Informed by her life experience with a physical disability, Park McArthur addresses these questions and



ABOVE

Baseera Khan, installation view of *Baseera Khan: snake skin*, Simone Subal Gallery, New York, 2019. Image courtesy of the artist and Simone Subal Gallery, New York. Photo: Dario Lasagni.

Image description: Three sculptures on display at a gallery. They are round and flat sections of a fluted column. One section is propped up by another that lays flat on the ground. The third sculpture stands on its side in the far corner of the room. The outer edges of each work are wrapped with collaged silk rugs with multicolored floral patterns.

LEFT

Baseera Khan, *Column 5*, 2019. Pink Panther foamular, plywood, resin dye, and custom silk rugs handmade in Kashmir, India, 72 x 22 x 72 in. Image courtesy of the artist and Simone Subal Gallery, New York, photo: Dario Lasagni.

Image description: Three-quarter view of a sculpture that resembles a column fragment, resting on its side. Its outer edge is covered with collaged silk rugs with multicolored floral designs. There are portions where the rug appears to have been stripped away, revealing bright turquoise foam. The interior of the sculpture is made from mauve insulation foam and a circular piece of orange resin covers the hollow core.



Carolyn Lazard, *Extended Stay*, 2019. Articulating medical arm mount, personal patient monitor, and basic cable subscription, infinite duration. Installation view at the Whitney Biennial 2019, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Courtesy of the artist and Essex Street, New York.

Image description: A person depicted in profile, sitting on a gallery bench. Their arms are crossed, resting in their lap, and their back is against the white wall. Their head is cocked as they look at a flatscreen monitor on a cream-colored articulating medical arm mount that is installed on the wall above their head.



Carolyn Lazard, *Pain Scale*, 2019. Vinyl decals; six parts, 12 × 12 in. each, 148 × 12 in. overall. Courtesy of the artist and Essex Street, New York.

Image description: Installation view of six identical round vinyl decals of a brown smiley face icon, adhered to a white gallery wall in a horizontal row, evenly spaced apart.



Park McArthur, *Carried and Held*, 2021.
Ink on paper mounted to Sytrene board,
40 x 8 in. Courtesy of the artist and
Essex Street, New York.

Image description: A 40-inch-long
museum label installed on a white wall
in a gallery space. Text runs almost
halfway down the label.



Danielle Julian Norton, *Stage for a Blank Memory*, 2019. Wood, wire, mud, ceramic, fan, fish tank, plants, snails, fabric, metal, and speakers, 73 x 120 x 143 ½ in. Installation view in *Double Yellow Line*, Angela Meleca Gallery, Columbus, Ohio. Photo: Hanna Mendel.

Image description: A wooden sculpture divided into two open rectangular levels. On the left, orange steps rise halfway up the side of the sculpture leading to the back wall and the second level of the sculpture. On the top level of the sculpture is a yellow square of fabric hanging on the left; a smaller turquoise square is painted on the back wall of the top level; an orange beam is positioned horizontally at the top. On the bottom level sits a large brown rounded stone and a small green ladder.

challenges institutional infrastructures in her work. Placed on pedestals, medical items for caregiving and care receiving become intimate monuments to dependency. Disposable air filters from the ventilator McArthur uses to sleep and wheelchair access ramps (some provisionally built for the artist to enter exhibition venues) become thematic connectors bridging states of sleep and wakefulness, individual and public existence, being outside and inside institutions.

Pushing against the preexisting usage of institutional protocols that are often invisible to visitors, McArthur exposes the museum's assumption of neutrality. By enlarging artworks' wall labels, disseminating a Wi-Fi password as a wall mural while extending its network beyond the museum's vicinity, or expanding the audio descriptors in access guides, she underscores the embedded privilege and ableism of institutions. Advocating for access, inclusion, and equity, McArthur calls to action bodies overlooked and sublimated by institutions as agents of change. **JT**

Danielle Julian Norton

In 2017, Danielle Julian Norton purchased 30 acres of land in Appalachian Ohio and called it Zippitydirtada. Together with fellow artists, Norton is always finding new experimental potential for this land as a feral outdoor studio space meets artist-run practice site. Zippity serves as an asylum from technology and screens and allows for remapping and deepening connections with the environment as much as with fellow artists and the local community in Southeast Ohio. She and her collaborators have hosted workshops on kiln-building; mapping the land, creating pathways, and documenting water quality with area organization Rural Action; plant identification; and more.

Norton's impetus for Zippitydirtada arose from her investment in living an ecologically conscious life, her curiosity about alternative models of living and working that sprung up through the counterculture of the 1960s and 70s, and her thinking about how she could tend to what is immediately around her following the presidential election in 2016. Her recent sculptures and installations reflect that interest in care (and scales of care) within ecosystems. Combining such elements as dripping water, aquariums, living plants with grow lights, and even a spinning beer can, Norton's platforms and scaffolded structures are Fluxus-style studies where process meets DIY abstraction, often with a welcome dose of offbeat humor. **LZ**

Pope.L

"Have-not-ness permeates everything I do."
—Pope.L

In 1978, Pope.L crawled along the streets of New York, traversing 42nd Street as his skin and pinstriped suit scraped across the pavement. This performance, *Times Square Crawl*, marked an early instance of the artist testing the limits of his physical endurance. After nearly three decades of crawling on the street, tying himself to an ATM, and ingesting newspapers, Pope.L has expanded his practice beyond performative actions to create texts, drawings, paintings, installations, and sculptures that similarly enact the socially absurd, destabilizing conceptions of reality prevalent in the United States and their perceived state of normalcy. Residing somewhere between the humorous and the unnerving, his works have addressed a wide range of topics, including the precarious position of the Black man in public space and the harmful conditions of America's capitalist culture.

Claiming to take advantage of his own "have-not-ness," as he describes it, Pope.L has often used whatever resources might be at his immediate disposal. In the past, that has included his own body (*Times Square Crawl*), edible condiments (*Map of the World*, 1999–2000), or water from the Flint River (*Flint Water Project*, 2017). It is through this emphasis on his own lack—whether that might pertain to a lack of materials or a lack of social power—that he makes once-invisible cultural forces palpable and political. Through these artistic explorations, he critiques the contradictions at work in unjust systems of power that create strict binaries between the "haves" and "have-nots." Pope.L specifically sees Blackness as a state of have-not-ness, one in which he finds simultaneous pain, joy, failure, and opportunity. **SK**

Raqs Media Collective

Based in Delhi, where it came into being in 1992, Raqs Media Collective is Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula, and Shuddhabrata Sengupta. Here's how they unpack the group's name: "Raqs is a word in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and our own Urdu that denotes a whirling, a dancing, a practice and cultivation of ecstatic contemplation founded in kinesis. So our name, our artistic signature, comes from the whirling—the Raqs—of whirling dervishes."*

Sensitivity to language and its traditions (and to the perpetual global imperatives of translation) commands a central role within Raqs' public projects, which deploy a dazzling array of expressive media: moving images, photos, banners, installation forms, symposia, publications, sculptural interventions, and, preeminently, words. The collective's most heartfelt instincts embrace spoken and written language (from fiction, philosophy, poetry, mysticism, and journalism...just for a start), making those idioms and tongues theirs and their viewers' own property,



Pope.L, *A Vessel in a Vessel in a Vessel and So On*, 2007. Pirate lady statue, Martin Luther King Jr. plaster bust, wood, pump, light, and liquid chocolate, 113 ¼ x 33 x 28 in. Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York © Pope.L.

Image description: A sculpture of a figure standing on a dark pedestal hangs upside-down from the ceiling of a gallery space with white walls and a concrete floor. The sculpture is a female pirate wearing white pants, a red-and-navy open coat, and a button-down shirt tied above the figure's navel with gold necklaces. She holds a tray. The head of the sculpture is a bronze-colored plaster bust of Martin Luther King Jr. There is a puddle of chocolate sauce on the floor directly below the sculpture.

**LEFT**

Raqs Media Collective, *Let the Future Praise Us* (2), 2018. Text and gold foil print on handwoven dhurrie, 57 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 34 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. Image courtesy of the artists and Frith Street Gallery, London. Photo: Sebastian Pellion di Persano.

Image description: A dhurrie rug hanging from a silver rod. The rug's colors are rich red, navy blue, green, and muted orange tones. The words "PROVISIONS FOR EVERYBODY" are printed in gold foil on the top half of the carpet, with printed gold tassels cascading down from the ends of the text.

BOTTOM

Raqs Media Collective, *Provisions for Everybody*, 2018 (still). 4K video with color and sound, 53:11 mins. Image courtesy of the artists and Frith Street Gallery, London.

Image description: Four large rock formations spaced equidistantly in tall, yellow grasses blowing in the wind. In the top left-hand quadrant of the film still there is a white text caption that reads "Anybody, everybody, somebody, nobody have stood their ground in the wind, and are still standing."



and in that way sustaining binding threads among post-postcolonial citizens within the global drift.

In the collective's *Provisions for Everybody*, the eaves-dropping and admired literary presence is George Orwell, whose path to socialism followed his return to England in the mid-1930s after serving almost six years in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma. Raqs' luminous video is a meditation on his hard passage on the road from Mandalay to Wigan Pier, drawing from his writings on "living labour, dead labour, and, yes, ghost labour." With the onscreen text declaring "from Burma to Barcelona, everything is burning," Raqs narrows the focus, joining their own words to Orwell's to produce a lyrical and unsentimental commentary on want and abundance, growth and waste, restoring and destroying, all witnessed around our common world as they found it in 2018. **BH**

*Shuddhabrata Sengupta, "Learning from the Horizon: Practicing Art. Imagining Politics" (talk, 2nd FORMER WEST Research Congress, Istanbul Technical University, November 5, 2010).

Related Tactics

Formed in the Bay Area in 2016, Related Tactics describes itself as "a collective of artists and cultural workers producing creative projects, opportunities, and interventions at the intersection of race and culture." In its earliest statements, the term "provocation" crops up repeatedly, posing the group's interventions in the future tense—as contributions to a cultural-political reckoning still in gestation.

Their project *Declarations for the New Year*, an exhibition cocurated with San Francisco's Southern Exposure in January 2016, consisted of affirmations and negations authored by 40 individual contributors, "a gathering of provocations" that included declarations of BIPOC futurity—"THRIVING AS AN ARTIST OF COLOR IS MY RADICAL PRACTICE"—alongside warnings to the 1%—"ART PAID FOR BY YOUR PARENTS DOESN'T COUNT." The following year, the collective conceived an exhibition of printed messages—again, "provocations"—questioning the artworld's commitment to institutional diversity, equity, and inclusion. In the wake of protests over the 2020 police murder of George Floyd, these provocations have lost none of their power; only their tense has changed. As the Black Panthers used to say, "Seize the time!" **DM**

Jacolby Satterwhite

Jacolby Satterwhite merges performance, animation, and personal archives to create a queer virtual reality. In this alternate world, bodies thrash, twirl, and intertwine to produce a conglomeration of avatars that are multiplied ad infinitum, enhancing the surreal qualities of his digital landscapes. Some of these figures are engaged in a range of sexual acts, while others endlessly dance, gyrating to the groove and twisting their bodies into impossibly contorted poses. The various actions displayed throughout his settings seem to demonstrate the potential resonances that exist between ritualistic performances, sadomasochistic deeds, and ballroom vogueing.

To construct these environments for his videos, installations, and virtual realities, Satterwhite uses a range of visual sources, including materials left behind by his mother, who composed songs and illustrated her own consumer products as a means of coping with schizophrenia. By integrating the remnants of his mother's documents into his own augmented realities, the artist commingles the categories of private and public, personal and collective, and real and imagined into a queer technotopia. Through his work, Satterwhite explores the prospects of a queer Black future where time, space, and bodies become boundless through a series of entangled, collaborative networks. **SK**

Sable Elyse Smith

Sable Elyse Smith exposes the injustices imposed on Black lives through her drawings, photographs, videos, and sculptural installations—works that serve as acts of resistance against systemic racism and the multi-billion-dollar prison industry in the United States.

Growing up visiting her father who was incarcerated for 19 years, Smith casts the logic of the prison-industrial complex into doubt by intertwining this personal history in her art. Her works challenge the status of things—reconfiguring objects, pushing against the limits of language, manipulating the video form. Sculptures such as *ScapeG.O.A.T.* (2019) twist prison visitation tables into shapes evoking clusters, rhizomes, and portals. By also recalling metal detectors and playground equipment, the ongoing series of sculptures frames the African American experience and state violence against Black and brown families within what theorist Jackie Wang calls "carceral capitalism."*

A poet of words and moving images, Smith breaks down the rhythm of language and temporality with a forensic simplicity that also lays bare the construction of desire and queer intimacy. Language appears as a body in a landscape, and videos play as ruptures of time and memory, as in all her defiant works that operate as resistance on refrain, on a constant loop. **JT**

*Jackie Wang, *Carceral Capitalism*, Semiotext(e)/Intervention (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018).

Constantina Zavitsanos

Foregrounding abundance in a world that exploits and monetizes lack and depletion, Constantina Zavitsanos makes space at the limits of human perception to forge a shared alliance of our senses—providing a way out of the binary notion of dis/ability while underscoring access as a model of interdependency.

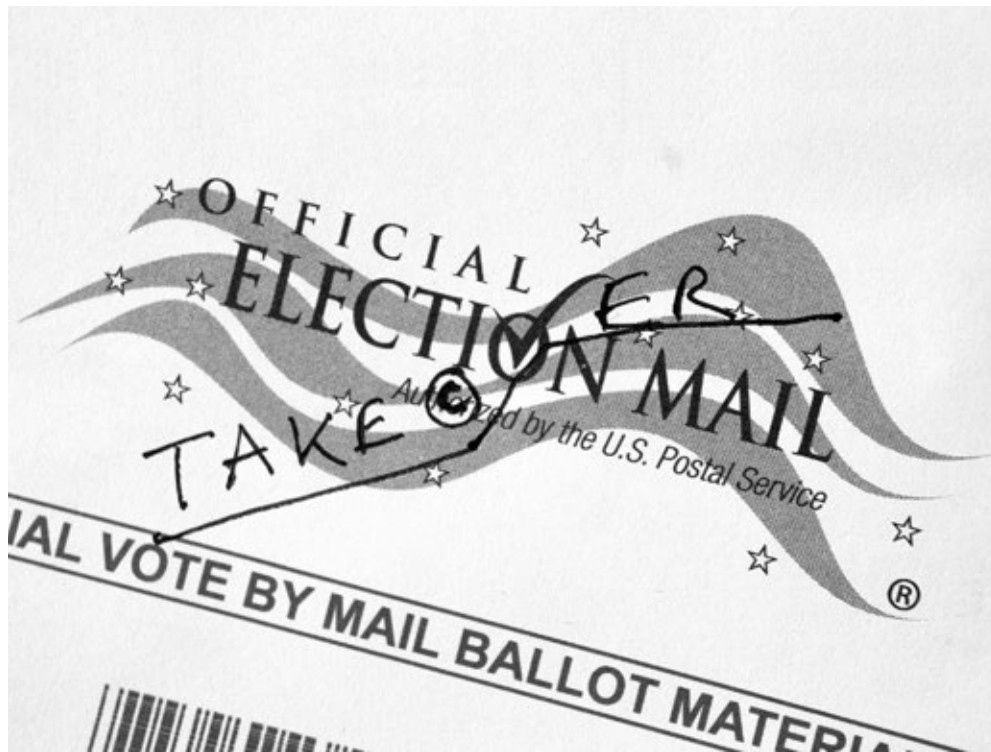
Through sculptures, performances, and works that incorporate sound and text, Zavitsanos tackles systems of care, disability, and debt, using these themes as materials and also treating institutions as mutable bodies. In addition to gestures of care such as lowering works to wheelchair height in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and prioritizing American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and Audio Description (AD) as in their 2019 exhibition *L&D Motel* at Participant Inc., New York, Zavitsanos collaborates with artists who take capacity and debility as a framework, including Carolyn Lazard and Park McArthur.* Together, they enlist networks of care where each other's needs are understood, calling attention to what Disability Justice activist Mia Mingus calls an “access intimacy.”

Several of Zavitsanos's works activate the sensorial dimensions of scientific concepts such as quantum entanglement—in *Interferometer (Quantum Eraser)* (2018), made with Amalle Dublon—or point to the threshold of human perception—as in the installation *Call to Post*, on view in *Climate Changing*, which uses infrasonic frequencies that operate below our audible spectrum. In so doing, the artist centers a sense of agency and liberation that is experienced both in and out-of-body while deftly enacting the politics embedded in visibility and legibility—creating bonds beyond measure between those experiencing their works via interference and interdependency. **JT**

*Jasbir K. Puar uses the term debility to disrupt the binary of ability/disability as well as to think about how systemic inequity and injustice wear on bodies over time, particularly under capitalism and its demands for bodily capacity. See *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

Contributors

Liz Rae Heise-Glass (LRHG)
 Bill Horrigan (BH)
 Stephanie Kang (SK)
 Daniel Marcus (DM)
 Jo-ey Tang (JT)
 Lucy I. Zimmerman (LZ)



Allan deSouza for *Ready*, 2020, a project by Related Tactics. Inkjet print, 33 x 44 in. Courtesy of the artists.

Image description: Cropped black-and-white photo of an envelope with the words "OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL" and in smaller letters below "Authorized by the U.S. Postal Service" with three gray, wavy forms and stars behind the text, and a check mark running through the O in the word "election." Handwritten in black ink are the words "TAKE COVER" using the O and check mark to spell the phrase. Partial text below reads "VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT MATE..." and there is a bit of barcode visible in the bottom left of the photo.



Jacolby Satterwhite, *Throne*, 2019. LED, plexiglass, silicone, velvet chairs, carpet, and plastic plants. With *Domestika*, 2017, HD virtual reality color video with sound. Installation view of *Room for Living* at the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, 2019. Courtesy of the artist; the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York; Morán Morán, Los Angeles; and Lundgren Gallery, Palma de Mallorca.

Image description: Dimly lit room with two people seated in black swivel chairs, holding VR headsets covering their eyes. There are potted palm plants on a black area rug on the floor that sit in between two people, and the wall behind has an LED sculpture mounted on plexiglass that says "Throne."



Sable Elyse Smith, *Landscape II*, 2017. Neon, 16 x 108 in. Collection of Antonia Josten. Image courtesy of the artist; JTT, New York; and Carlos Ishikawa, London.

Image description: White neon text glowing against a wall reads “Planking or the lying down game” and hovers above a single thin yellow neon line. Electric cords trail down from the sculpture to black transformers on the floor.



Constantina Zavitsanos, *L&D Motel*, 2019. Installation view, Participant Inc., New York. Image courtesy of Participant Inc., photo: Mark Waldhauser.

Image description: A darkened gallery space with black walls, wooden floor, and red light. White open captions are projected dimly onto the left wall. A wooden ramp curls up the back wall. Two people are mid-way up the ramp; the person on the right reclines with arms behind their head and feet facing out front, and the person on the left sits upright facing their friend. Two corridors flank the back wall. A soft red glow fills the space behind the back wall.

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Lucy I. Zimmerman



Climate Changing has been an enormous undertaking, and I'd like to express my gratitude to all the artists who agreed to participate, and in particular to those who agreed to produce new work. I'm grateful to the many people who were vital in bringing this exhibition to fruition, especially my colleagues in the exhibitions department who rose to the challenges I presented with this ambitious installation. Dave Dickas, Nick Stull, James-David Mericle, Mary VanWassenhove, Kim Kollman, and Debra Lemak are exceptionally dedicated, skilled, organized, and constant sources of motivation and good humor. I should express my deep appreciation as well to Wexner Center Executive Director Johanna Burton, Chief Operating Officer Megan Cavanaugh, and Curator at Large Bill Horrigan for listening, encouraging, and advising on the concepts and direction of this exhibition. I'm also thankful to graduate interns Dareen Hussein and Anna Talarico, without whose support *Climate Changing* could not have happened. Finally, my thanks go to Associate Curator Daniel Marcus, Curatorial Associate Kristin Helmick-Brunet, Film/Video Studio Curator Jennifer Lange, former Senior Curator of Exhibitions Michael Goodson, Publications Editor Ryan Shafer, Senior Graphic Designer Kendall Markley, Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications Sylke Krell, our art handlers, and all the other Wexner staff members who contributed to various facets of this show.

In addition to the participating artists, members of their studios and the staff of their galleries provided invaluable support and assistance. My thanks go to Bree Zucker, kurimanzutto, New York; Haru Heshiki, Abraham Cruzvillegas's studio; Yayoi Shionoiri, Chris Burden Estate; Andria Hickey, James Sadek, Sylvain Marchand, Joe Baptista, and Hansi Liao of Pace Gallery; Fernanda Carlovich from Torkwase Dyson's studio; Simone Subal and Kelly McGee of Simone Subal Gallery; Maxwell Graham of Essex Street; artist assistants Corey Harris and Reg Zehner as well as Columbus College of Art & Design faculty and staff Rob Papson, Brian Wasson, Tim Rietenbach, John Wasson, and Bruce Hanners, who all provided crucial advice on Danielle Julian Norton's outdoor sculpture; Courtney Willis Blair and Isabelle Hogenkamp of Mitchell-Innes

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and other upcoming programs.

All events are online except as noted.

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THE BOX

In/Stability

Part One: *Apocalyptic Landscapes*
Fri, Jan 1–Sat, Feb 28

Part Two: *Disembodied Communication*
Mon, Mar 1–Fri, Apr 30
Online and in The Box

WORKSHOPS

Writing Workshop with Jibade-Khalil Huffman

Wed, Feb 3 | 4:30 PM
AGES 18+

Maurice Stevens and Lucille Toth

Distance/Climate/Access/Contact

A Four-Movement Conversation
Wed, Mar 17 | 3 PM
ALL AGES

DIVERSITIES IN PRACTICE ARTIST TALKS

Torkwase Dyson

with Ann Hamilton and Sandhya Kochar
Thu, Mar 4 | 7 PM

Carolyn Lazard and Constantina Zavitsanos

Thu, Apr 8 | 7 PM
Cosponsored with Ohio State's Department
of Art's Visiting Artist Program

COLOPHON

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CLIMATE CHANGING: ON ARTISTS, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts and curated by Associate Curator of Exhibitions Lucy I. Zimmerman with assistance from Ohio State Contemporary Art Curatorial Practice MA students Dareen Hussein and Anna Talarico.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Wexner Center for the Arts would like to acknowledge that the land on which the center sits is the traditional homeland of the Shawnee, Miami, Wyandotte, Delaware, and other Indigenous nations with strong ties to these lands. We honor and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this territory.

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Tell them it's not your first time but it's your first time with them.

When they ask you if you have any sensitive areas tell them

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Remind them that backs are also body, baby.

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ON VIEW JAN 30–MAY 9 2021

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