



Current Tendencies

ARTISTS FROM MILWAUKEE

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August 31-December 31, 2011

Current Tendencies II

ARTISTS FROM MILWAUKEE

Current Tendencies II features 10 Milwaukee artists working in a variety of media including:

photography, painting, drawing, printmaking, video and sculpture. The exhibition presents many all-new, never-before-seen works, created specifically for the Haggerty Museum. Each artist was paired with a Marquette professor who wrote a reflection of the artist's work based on the professor's area of expertise, creating dialogue between artist and scholar and connecting philosophy, theology, political science, communications, etc., to the works in the exhibition.

Artists featured in Current Tendencies II include:

Reginald Baylor
Mark Brautigam
Julian Correa
Lisa Hecht
Sharon Kerry-Harlan
Luc Leplae
Will Pergl
Nathaniel Stern and
Jessica Meuninck-Ganger
Jordan Waraksa

Marquette professors participating in the Current Tendencies II writing project include:

Dr. Bonnie Brennen (Journalism)
Dr. Roberta Coles (Social and Cultural Sciences)
Dr. Ryan Hanley (Political Science)
Dr. Thomas Jablonsky (History/Institute for Urban Life)
Dr. Jason Ladd (Music)
Dr. Richard Lewis (Educational Opportunity Program)
Dr. Danielle Nussberger (Theology)
Dr. Melissa Shew (Philosophy)
Dr. Larry Watson (English)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This exhibition is sponsored in part by the Friends of the Haggerty, the Joan Pick Endowment Fund, the Marquette University Andrew W. Mellon Fund and the Kathleen and Frank Thometz Charitable Foundation.

Haggerty Museum of Art
Marquette University
Milwaukee, WI



Mark Brautigam
American, b. 1972
Eau Claire River, Wausau, 2008
From the *On Wisconsin* series
Archival pigment print
20 x 25"
Courtesy of the Tory Follard Gallery and the artist

Gazing at a Reginald Baylor painting or drawing is akin to playing the picture puzzle games I grew up with, the ones where you tried to find the hidden objects embedded in an illustration. In many of his works, one can find a Frank Lloyd Wright house, Dr. Seuss's Things 1 & 2, an Apple Jacks cereal icon, and an Andy Warhol pig. In addition, Baylor embeds objects that have personal meaning for him—a square watermelon (representing what is possible), a square basketball (representing the impossible, the useless), trucks and road signs (from the years he spent as an over-the-road truck driver). This dense, symbol-ridden style is found throughout Baylor's prolific pop culture collection, which in many ways chronicles post-WWII American culture.

Baylor grew up in Mequon, Wisconsin, the middle son of a mother with a doctorate in social work and a father who was a truck driver. As an African American, Baylor says people often expect that his artwork should have social justice themes, but influenced by pop artist Andy Warhol and abstract expressionist Cy Twombly, Baylor seems most fascinated by the infinite playful possibilities discovered in the lines, colors and shapes of life's most ordinary scenes and objects: a porch, a chair, popcorn, nasturtiums, paper dolls, a cereal box, a Hollywood icon, a Google image. Nonetheless, his works lend themselves to multiple interpretations, intended or not, and Baylor likes it that way.

Baylor sees himself foremost as an architect, as his early works were largely land and cityscapes built mostly with geometric straight lines and angles, resulting in Lego-like florals. Now his signature style uses flowing lines and shapes to construct landscapes, still lifes, and portraits with a stained-glass or paint-by-numbers mosaic quality. A passionate pragmatist, yet risk taker, Baylor makes his work more accessible to the public by transforming his older works into new works through the use of digital technology and continuous experimentation with new media, such as chalk, cloth, and wood. Let Baylor's works stimulate your own imaginings of what is possible.

This dense, symbol-ridden style is found throughout Baylor's prolific pop culture collection, which in many ways chronicles post-WWII American culture.



Reginald Baylor
American, b. 1966
Puzzled White Woman with Pink Contacts, 2011
From the *Puzzled* series
Digital animation
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

REGINALD BAYLOR

Reginald Baylor focuses much of his time working within his community preserving the importance of art for all generations. Baylor works in a variety of media including: acrylic on canvas paintings, woodcuts, digital media, prints on paper and mixed media on fabric. His prints and paintings have been exhibited nationally and featured in publications throughout the Midwest. Baylor has been the recipient of numerous awards, fellowships, commissions, and residencies. In 2007 he was selected for a monthlong residency at Ragdale in Lake Forest, Illinois. As a direct result of the residency he decided to end his truck-driving day job and pursue a full-time career in fine art. In 2009 Baylor was chosen as the inaugural

artist-in-residence at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 2010 he received a Wisconsin Arts Board Artist Fellowship Award. Baylor has a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

Baylor's current technique grew out of a philosophy class discussion that later sparked the artist's infatuation with "the line" and its associated theories and functions. The pivotal point in this path came from talking to Serge Armando, a straight-edge California Minimalist artist, who suggested that Baylor use masking tape as a tool for decisively executing the linear quality of his work.



Mark Brautigam
 American, b. 1972
Superior, 2007
 From the *On Wisconsin* series
 Archival pigment print
 20 x 25"
 Courtesy of the Tory Folliard Gallery
 and the artist

MARK BRAUTIGAM

Mark Brautigam is a photographer living in Milwaukee. In 2010, he completed his first major project, *On Wisconsin*. In 2009 he was a Mary L. Nohl Fellowship Emerging Artist finalist and the recipient of the Arthur P. Haas Memorial Photography Award. Brautigam attended the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. He holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Minnesota and served as an officer in the United States Marine Corps for four years. Brautigam is an art director at GS Design in Glendale, Wisconsin.

In 2004 Brautigam began to make photographs in Wisconsin, his home state. Initially he never set out with a specific theme or destination. Guided both by the act of looking deeply into a familiar place and the allure of the unexpected, he sought to make photographs that are personal, yet open-ended enough to absorb the viewer. As he made these photographs over the years, early memories of a simpler existence and an acute need to escape our over-connected and increasingly alienating society began to meld with the muted landscapes, subtle narratives, and everyday characters for which he actively searched. Each image a paragraph unto itself, the resulting photographs inhabit both fiction and memory. From summer's exuberance to wintry isolation, the seasonal patterns on which they flow reflect the natural hunger and boredom of everyday life, revealing a sense of wonder in the ordinary.

LARRY WATSON, Ph.D.

Visiting Professor
 Department of English

The human eye is a narrative-making organ, though that function is not always turned on and is unpredictably activated. Of all the images we take in during the course of a day, only a few truly stop us. I don't mean the freakish or contrived sights—the man with the pet tarantula on his shoulder or the woman in the dress made of Post-It notes—but those everyday images that suddenly arrest our attention, that we look at and that somehow look back at us and make us feel, *there's a story here*.

This is what occurs repeatedly when we look at Mark Brautigam's photographs. We see something, and no matter how ordinary the sight might be—a group of sunbathers somehow isolated even in their own company, an old woman raking her garden, a horse turned toward us with an almost-human gaze—our own imaginations have been unexpectedly set into motion. The stories behind these pictures probably can't be known, but that doesn't matter. Confronted with these photographs we feel a significance that accompanies the best narratives, even if that significance can't be fully articulated.

Just as stories have both character and setting, Mark Brautigam's photographs direct us to people and places. Is it possible to look at that man standing outside a Superior, Wisconsin, bar and not wonder about his life—and the building's? Has there ever been a storyteller who has conjured a setting as beautiful and mysterious—yet as commonplace—as that simple white house, lit with butter-yellow light and surrounded by the deep dark blues of snow and night sky? What must it be like to live in one of those monochrome, buff-colored buildings that huddle under the water-tower word "Luck"? These are quiet, subtle images, but they have remarkable expressive power.

This ability, to make us question and to feel, to lodge visions in our minds that stick, is Mark Brautigam's great talent. Of course craft is involved, the camera and its settings, the photographer's patience with light and shadow, but first is the artist's sensibility. This is Mark Brautigam's gift, and it travels from his eye to ours.

This ability, to make us question and to feel, to lodge visions in our minds that stick, is Mark Brautigam's great talent.

THOMAS JABLONSKY, Ph.D.

Professor/Director, Institute for Urban Life
Department of History

Cities are considered to be the most dramatic expression of the human footprint on this planet. Hundreds of years from now when the remains of our civilization are dug up and interpreted, remnants of our cities are likely to be the central focus for these investigators by virtue of its sheer volume of material. Over the past century and a half in America, cities have awed and intimidated millions of newcomers, whether from the countryside or foreign lands, through the size of their structures, the accumulation of human beings banging about within limited spaces, and the cacophony of sounds and sights assaulting each lone individual.

A significant part of a city's power to impress—and overwhelm—derives from its visualness, from the height and volume of the buildings or the density of its structures, roadways, and crowds. Among the contributors to these landscapes are urban artists who share their talents through expressions such as murals, billboards, and, yes, graffiti. Markings by storeowners, churches, homeowners, and even gangs extend invitations or signify territoriality amid the ruckus of cities.

Julian Correa comes by his artistic talents genetically, it seems, for some of his earliest memories are of his sign-painter grandfather leaving his graphically creative messages on the fronts of grocery stores, hailing passersby to the values contained behind glass storefronts. Julian also warms to memories of beautifully scrolled messages on birthday cards from his grandfather where the design of the presentation meant as much as the words themselves. Capturing the dynamism of human behavior in our cities stirs this Milwaukee-based artist. He creates one-, two-, and three-dimensional surfaces using a myriad of materials. His creations can be found on commercial signs, on the interior walls of businesses, on custom-worked motorcycles, and on public murals. He has traveled to New York City, Philadelphia, and Puerto Rico to observe, to learn, and ultimately to participate in “visual conversations.” He has worked alone and in groups as large as forty.

Whether in—or outdoors, a piece of art offers different messages at different distances. In the initial encounter, the viewer is usually some “safe” distance, constructing a “first impression.” In time, the visitor is lured to consider the art piece up close, perhaps scrambling his/her impressions, delivering altered emphases. In this particular creation by Julian Correa, see the excitement, the pressure of life explode from various distances and angles. And see if you can find your own chip in the human mosaic known as Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

*Capturing the dynamism of human behavior in our cities
stirs this Milwaukee-based artist.*



Julian Correa
American, b. 1978
Contents Under Pressure, (detail), 2011
Paint, wood, foam, steel, aluminum
15 x 27 ½ x 14" (approx.)
Courtesy of the artist

JULIAN CORREA

Julian Correa is a Milwaukee painter who uses diverse processes to create work on one-, two-, and three-dimensional surfaces of myriad materials. His commercial work includes sign painting, interior design and custom motorcycle design, while his fine art work includes public murals and paintings on board and canvas. Correa is best known for the graffiti work that he produces both individually and collaboratively. He has performed “live painting” and exhibited his work in cities in the United States, Germany, and Puerto Rico. Recent awards include an invitation to paint in the Graffiti Hall of Fame in New York City and representing the United States at the *Write 4 Gold* competition in Germany,

where he worked with a team of artists from New York, Milwaukee, and Puerto Rico. Correa attended UW-Parkside and the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.

In this installation, the spray can is the epicenter of an explosion that projects letters, designs, and images across the room. The sprayed contents propel outward marking the walls and morphing into painted murals. Like the essence of the spray can—“contents under pressure”—the installation serves as a metaphor for the life of the artist and the execution of the art where myriad forces inside and out affect the magnitude and outcome of the explosion.



Lisa Hecht
Canadian, b. 1972
The Other Side of the Mirror,
(wallpaper detail), 2011
Hand-printed wallpaper, bed,
stones, fabric, mirror
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

LISA HECHT

Lisa Hecht is a visual artist whose multidisciplinary practice includes printmaking, photography, and site-specific installation. She has participated in group exhibitions in the United States, Canada, and Europe, including *Walls are Talking: Wallpaper, Art and Culture* at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, U.K., *Circulation*, a public arts event organized by the New York-based artist cooperative REPOhistory, and *Paper Politics* organized by Just Seeds. She has attended multiple artist residencies including the Women's Studio Workshop, the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris and the Internationale Austausch Ateliers Region Basel (IAAB) in Switzerland. She has received several grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et

des lettres du Québec. Hecht received her M.F.A. from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her B.F.A. from Concordia University in Montréal. She currently teaches at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Lisa Hecht's work examines the breakdown between public and private space through the infiltration of media-based images into the domestic realm. Her recent work juxtaposes newspaper clippings and decorative repeat patterns to create socio/political narratives that investigate our understanding of an image through collective memory, cultural symbols, and our subjective interpretation of current events. More importantly, Hecht is interested in how a repeated pattern can become political. Within a domestic space a decorative pattern deals with the expected; the repeated pattern is mathematical and calculated with specific results in mind that deal with space, comfort, beauty, and desire. When the pattern is politicized it deals with the unexpected, discomfort, threat, and uncertainty.

DANIELLE NUSSBERGER, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Department of Theology

When theology contemplates the mystery of God, it simultaneously probes the nature of human personhood, both in its dependence upon God as Other and in its genesis within a community of other persons. Theology posits that 'positive distance' between persons is indispensable, insofar as honoring difference preserves each individual's unique identity so that authentic intimacy in community can thrive. This 'positive distance' between individuals can become warped into a 'negative distance,' however, when a person or group alienates, persecutes, or destroys the other in her difference. In the human quest to overcome such destructive separation, we are faced with the ultimate 'negative distance' that is the dissolution of the other in death.

Lisa Hecht's installation provides an artistic space for an intense interaction with the multifaceted reality of distance. The separation of communities within the human family is brought close together within the space of the domestic. The political is made personal. The wallpaper's repeated pattern of the Seal of Solomon—a symbol that carries profound meaning for both Judaism and Islam—surrounds the observers and they begin to question themselves: "Are we distant from these religious and communal identities, such that we embrace them in their difference? Or, are we safeguarding a 'negative distance' that fosters alienation, confusion, and resentment?"

When the viewers approach the tidily made bed with its crisp white sheets, they gravitate toward the stones that bespeak tending the graves of the dead. They find their own sorrow in another's mourning for a deceased beloved. They witness the world's cruelty that eradicates individuals and communities, annihilating the 'positive distance' of difference and otherness. Again, they query: "Are we implicated in such violence? Do we recognize our own suffering, but ignore the cataclysmic loss that paralyzes the oppressed populations of this world?" They turn away from the shrouded bed and confront their disoriented forms in the mirror. The mirror exposes their aloneness, as well as their unity with the others who are participating in this artistic space along with them: "Are we willing to truly see others, to see what they see and to share our vision with them?" The mirror provides the opportunity to see this space and all others with a vigorous imagination—envisioning a new world that upholds 'positive distance' and that does not perpetuate its negative counterpart.

Theology engages with art and meditates upon its penetrating representation of the human condition in order to dialog with it. Lisa Hecht has masterfully created a space for such conversation, fostering the fruitfulness of human questioning, so that the observers face the distance between persons like themselves and persons who are different from them, between the communities to which they belong and those that they rarely or never interact with, and between the living and the dead. This is a space to reflect upon our lived existence within the distances that hold us and within the distances that tragically rip us apart from one another due to misunderstanding, anger, and violence. Only when we ask the necessary questions regarding our place within the spaces of our lives, can we begin to participate in the re-creation of those spaces as places for the flourishing of otherness in a distance of peace and mutual understanding.

This is a space to reflect upon our lived existence within the distances that hold us and within the distances that tragically rip us apart from one another due to misunderstanding, anger, and violence.

If Sharon Kerry-Harlan had not already titled her body of work, *About Face*, someone might have embroidered “I Heard That!” into a fabric “corner” the way Whitman tags his “handkerchief” in “Song of Myself.” Viewers cannot forget Kerry-Harlan’s close-up portraits from her collaged crowds, groupings that regale us with one message: “We know stunning truths you need to hear!” These works usher viewers into the complex conversations these figures have started among themselves.

But what might viewers learn? The answer has been prepared by Fred Neil’s familiar lyrics that interpret Kerry-Harlan’s one-sided conversations: “Everybody’s talkin’ at me. I don’t hear a word they’re saying!” (“Everybody’s Talkin’,” 1966). Some figures refuse to shut their agitated yapping; while others struggle to puff out barely audible whispers, and a few terrified witnesses clamp their lips together refusing to speak. Still, in the weighty silence of their muted voices, we hear the incessant testimonies of their experiences. A literary way to gain that listening insight is prescribed in Leif Enger’s novel, *Peace Like A River*, which admonishes us that it is the duty of each person “to be a witness” (Enger 4), to tell what he/she has seen, heard, and known.

Beware! For viewing this astounding body of work will conjure up voices. Sharon’s large piece, *On The Face Of It*, which features seemingly uncountable human heads whose mouths part in every configuration, teases out subliminal messages just on the tips of the viewers’ and the figures’ tongues alike. Some viewers will recall a similar linguistic confusion around the ancient “brick” and “asphalt mortar” tower of Babel on the “plain...of Shinar” (Gen. 11:1-9), here newly quilted onto soft fabric canvases. These figures (with or without torso)—nostrils flared, mouths frozen in gaping exhortation, eyes snapped wide-open beneath arched eyebrows, squinted tightly, or fixed blankly over smiles and smirks—call out, demand, doubt, hope, inquire...stay silent.

As spectators pause to listen, to scan the faces, unsuspecting viewers quickstep, in a military manner, through 180° turns that spin each spectator abruptly into “About Face” confrontations with themselves: Behold, “We the People!” Surprisingly, those who see, find themselves seen. What has been said, what has not been said, and what will be said and what will not be said is being said now in these works. Wait, among these dissonant fragments, we feel the same cadences of incredulity as in Maya Angelou’s “Phenomenal Woman”: “But when I start to tell them, / They think I’m telling lies” (*And Still I Rise*, 1978). That plaintive cry for truth rumbles in our throats as our eyes dart right to left, corner to corner, and trace the parameter back into the center, trying to register those cloth-figured conversations “talkin’at” us.

In Kerry-Harlan’s works, a style directly from the African Diaspora pervades, but her black-on-copper color scheme establishes a consistently earthy tone that draws all the pieces toward the center away from ethnicity itself. Expecting spiritual revelation, I tried to mute the urgent cacophony of competing resolutions; yet, with stunning clarity, I heard what they are saying—all those messages encoded orally in this visual medium. Sharon Kerry-Harlan’s work relishes these eye-to-ear transfers that leap from mind to heart.

Beware! For viewing this astounding body of work will conjure up voices.



Photography: Rob Quinn

Sharon Kerry-Harlan
American, b. 1951
Locks, 2011
From the *About Face* series
Mixed media textile
(One-of-a-kind artist-designed fabric)
46 ½ x 82 ¾"
Courtesy of the artist

SHARON KERRY-HARLAN

Sharon Kerry-Harlan was born in Miami, Florida, and currently resides in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. She received a B.A. from Marquette University and studied art at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.

Kerry-Harlan’s work includes textiles, mixed media and photography. Her art has been exhibited locally, nationally and internationally at the Smithsonian/Renwick Gallery, the American Craft Museum, the Harn Museum, the Milwaukee Art Museum and many others. Her work has been published in books and art catalogues. Kerry-Harlan taught textile/quilting courses for six years as an adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Presently, she works at Marquette University in the Educational Opportunity Program.

Kerry-Harlan’s current body of work, *About Face*, uses the human figure to make statements about the quick turnarounds that confront us both in life’s mundane and unexpected circumstances. The artist is particularly intrigued by the human face—what it reveals to the world and what it disguises from the world.



Luc Leplae
 Belgian, 1930-2000
The Mine, ca. 1995
 From Vol. XIV
 Felt-tip pen and color pencil on paper
 8 1/2 x 11"
 Courtesy of the artist

LUC LEPLAE

Luc Leplae was born in Belgium in 1930 and spent his youth there under German occupation. Both of his parents were artists but he chose to study physics and was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in the United States, where he received his Ph.D. Leplae eventually moved to Milwaukee with his family to join the Department of Physics at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He taught there until 1993 when he received a liver transplant and was forced to retire.

During his convalescence, Leplae decided to write his autobiography as a series of comics and spent the next seven years until his death creating them. With a spare, colorful style and dry sense of humor, his work recounts childhood wartime experiences, family memories, and his struggles with madness following the transplant. Some of his comics have been published posthumously as two books, *Wartime & Playtime* and *A Period of Madness*.

RYAN HANLEY, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
 Department of Political Science

Autobiographies can be many things, but they're rarely playful. And comic strips too can be many things, but they're rarely serious. A combination of the two would thus seem to bode ill. All the more remarkable then is the achievement of the self-taught artist Luc Leplae. In deciding to write his life history in the form of comics, Luc chose a medium that proves remarkably successful at allowing us to enter into both the joys of his childhood as well as the challenges of a less innocent world.

Some of Luc's most striking work has been gathered under the title *Wartime & Play Time*—a title that nicely captures the juxtapositioning of light and dark that defines both the style and substance of his autobiography as a whole. *Wartime*, for Luc, refers to the Nazi occupation of his native Belgium. Luc was only 10 years old when the occupation began in 1940 and his chronicle highlights a series of terrifying moments to which the young boy was a witness: a mine detonation that destroys a fishing boat, a parachuting airman falling to his death on the yard beside his school, bombing raids that send friends and family scurrying into self-dug trenches. As we read these accounts it is impossible not to feel the sentiment expressed so often by Luc himself in these stories: *quelle horreur*. Cartoon bubbles do nothing to mitigate this horror, and indeed only serve to increase it by reminding us of the tremendous psychological costs suffered by a generation that came of age during the war.

But Luc's comics also remind us that life—even life in wartime—is not without its moments of joy and even absurdity. Hence playtime. Here we're treated to a series of sketches from Luc's boyhood that beautifully capture both the mischievousness of youth and the enterprising and projecting spirit of a boy who would later become an esteemed physicist: a combination uniquely on display in his accounts of efforts to make his own homemade recording device and to rig up a still for making homemade cherry brandy. When we later read of his son's efforts, while a student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, to fly from the campus to Bradford Beach by balloon, we know where the inspiration came from!

Luc's work thus chronicles life's light as well as its dark sides. But for me its most remarkable feature is his ability to see the comic in the tragic itself. Luc's story of his psychosis following the liver transplant that led him to retire from academic life captures this powerfully. For even amid his many reminders of the costs his family and friends suffered during his "period of madness," we can't help but laugh when Luc gives us a glimpse of the inner workings of his mind—a mind which seems to have been particularly exercised by creating elaborate conspiracy theories concerning the cafés and groceries of Shorewood. Yet whether he is chronicling the ostensible dark side of suburban Milwaukee politics in 1993 or the true political darkness which he witnessed firsthand in Brussels in 1940 and Beijing in 1989, Luc Leplae generously displays an acute sensitivity to the darker and the lighter sides of both political life and the human person.

But Luc's comics also remind us that life—even life in wartime—is not without its moments of joy and even absurdity.



Jessica Meunick-Ganger

American, b. 1972

Nathaniel Stern

American, b. 1977

Production team: Joe Grennier, Angie McFarlane,
Foster Stimp

13 Views of a Journey, (detail), 2011

Screenprint, relief cut, intaglio, video, animation,
machinima, found footage, custom software
6 x 8'

Courtesy of the artists

MELISSA SHEW, Ph.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy

You are kept at a distance.

What you see: A large installation that weaves together traditional and contemporary artistic techniques. You see etchings, video, dialogue, and artists old and new. You are disoriented—a proper feeling in our contemporary world—and you wonder: How can I really see this work of art? It impresses you immediately with its manifold expression of exuberant fervor for play—lots of play—between art and artist, past and present, what fades away and what holds. And more. You see that the work is in two halves, and from there, four quadrants. The quadrants connect in a book; the book unfolds history; and through it, time passes as the pages turn. A narrative askew, the work unfolds a metanarrative about art, about life: Informed by the past (do you note the beautiful etchings?) and desiring the future (do you see the power and potential of collaborative work here?), we continue to be displaced in the present, which flashes and fades like the dialogue you see—never totalizing, always gesturing beyond this moment. A hint here and there, a signpost for a destination always deferred.

You look closer. You see dead artists and their art, living artists and their art. You note five vignettes that loop quasi-randomly as the artists of this installation travel from time to time to visit those who have shaped their collaborative practices: Utagawa Hiroshige, whose *ukiyo-e* school woodblock prints and paintings demonstrate the ephemeral beauty of the everyday; Johannes Gutenberg, who changed the world with the printing press; Eadweard Muybridge, a groundbreaking photographer of human and animal movement; Andy Warhol—well, you know him; Nam June Paik, a Korean-born American video artist whose work inspires contemporary artistic media. You see examples of their art—a tribute to the artists, and you see their influence on our artists’ work—again, a tribute. Thirteen vignettes in total—these five, plus eight of the artists’ own collaborative projects.

You step back. You consider the whole once again, and you view the journey. You understand that this installation speaks to the multilayered, prismatically dimensioned interplay between space and time. Your reflections might include the following: The past is irretrievable and the future not-yet; we are thrown into an open space that is not a space, and a time that is not a time. Like so many before us, we may long to return to our origin, or to the origin of all that is. But we know that this nostalgia signifies an impossible longing for home, an uncanny understanding of what never was in the first place—our simple belonging to the world.

Thus, we search. We realize that there is more for us to learn from this work, and we realize our error: We thought we could see it by ourselves, in isolation. You by yourself, and me by myself. Each of us alone. But it was not conceptualized by one artist, but two, and even more than two—its debt to the dead betrays the artists’ sensibilities, and suddenly, too suddenly, the cards are on the table: This work is not about the artists, past and present; it is not about correctness in terms of history or technique; it is not about influence and deference. Not exclusively, at least. Rather, this work concerns what is possible through collaboration, through layering and uncovering, film and print. And so it concerns what’s in-between—the artists and you, the art and me, you and me, ourselves and the world. We might see that what’s possible for us is found “in-between,” and that creativity springs from here and nowhere else. We look closer.

And we are invited in.

You understand that this installation speaks to the multilayered, prismatically dimensioned interplay between space and time.

JESSICA MEUNINCK-GANGER

Jessica Meuninck-Ganger is an artist and printmaker residing in Milwaukee. She produces print assemblages and installations that incorporate the structural techniques of sculpture and book arts, and employ a variety of time-based strategies, both old and new. She received her M.F.A. in Studio Arts from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and a B.S. in Visual Arts Education from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. Her prints, artist’s books and mixed media works have been exhibited regionally, nationally and

internationally and her prints and books are included in several publications and private collections, as well as in portfolios owned by the Weisman Museum of Art and the Target Corporation.

She has received numerous residencies and fellowships and has instructed various printmaking courses and workshops. Meuninck-Ganger is currently the Print and Narrative Forms area head at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

NATHANIEL STERN

Nathaniel Stern is an experimental installation and video artist, net.artist, printmaker and writer. He has produced and collaborated on projects ranging from interactive and immersive environments, mixed reality art and multimedia physical theater performances, to digital and traditional printmaking, concrete sculpture and slam poetry. He has won many awards, fellowships,

commissions and residencies between South Africa, America, and all over Europe. Stern holds a design degree from Cornell University, a studio-based masters in art from the Interactive Telecommunications Program at NYU, and a research Ph.D. from Trinity College, Dublin. He is an assistant professor in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

In Jessica Meuninck-Ganger and Nathaniel Stern’s collaborative practice, they permanently mount translucent prints and drawings directly on top of video screens, creating moving images on paper. They incorporate technologies and aesthetics from traditional printmaking, including woodblock, silkscreen, etching, lithography, photogravure, etc., with the technologies and aesthetics of contemporary digital, video and networked art to explore images as multidimensional. Their juxtaposition of anachronistic and disparate methods, materials and content—print and video, paper and electronics, real and virtual—enables novel approaches to understanding each. In this new work, Meuninck-Ganger and Stern incorporate historical people and events, book arts strategies and pop culture icons as part of their first large-scale installation.



Will Pergl
American, b. 1969
43-05-26.0 N 087-53-50.0 W: *The Tallest Free-Standing Tower in the World of August 1962*, (detail), 2011
Wood
140 x 99 x 33"
Courtesy of the artist

WILL PERGL

Will Pergl is a multidisciplinary artist based in Milwaukee. Working with an affinity for minimalism and process, Pergl's studio practice involves the critical use of sculpture, drawing, installation and video. His award-winning work has been shown in more than twenty solo exhibitions and has been included in more than thirty group exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. Pergl holds a master's degree from Cornell University and a bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He is currently an associate professor in the Fine Art Department at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.

The manner in which we produce and, in turn, are shaped by our products is a source of fascination for Pergl. He is particularly interested in technology's role in this interchange between our mental architecture and our physical world. According to the artist, "Our daily visual experiences offered by screen media, our interconnections through electronic devices and our time spent conceptually within digital interfaces are all persistent conventions to which we adapt our perceptions and expectations."

Pergl's current studio practice combines digital media and physical form to explore gaps in sensation and comprehension in a technologically driven society. This body of work varies in material from a figurative sculpture digitally carved in marble to a handmade wooden transmission tower copied from a digital photocollage. Content ranges from a minimalist video exploring the embodiment of an amputee to work concerning the most boring day in the 20th century. These combined gestures take on a conceptual, rather than emotive, reading as the work seeks to epitomize a kind of traveling through fragmented perspectives.

BONNIE BRENNEN, Ph.D.

Nieman Professor of Journalism
J. William and Mary Diederich College of Communication

Will Pergl's installation for **Current Tendencies II** explores the disconnect between the digital realm and the physical realm. From his hand-carved wooden cell phone tower, constructed from digital imagery, to his digitally carved marble sculpture of a reattached finger, Pergl explores the role of technology in the construction of art, juxtaposing the hand-made with the computer-mediated. He explores a variety of cultural products that are transmitted through some form of media, interrogates the role of interpretation in the construction of art, and assesses the digital context for the things that we see and use.

While each piece offers insightful commentary on the role of technology in contemporary society, the collection as a whole provides a nuanced understanding of the conceptual components of a fragmented, mediated environment. For example, following a computer analysis of more than 300 million facts, April 11, 1954, has been heralded as the most boring day of the twentieth century. Pergl's work, emphasizing a day that was determined by a computer to be devoid of any major news events or the birth or death of anyone famous, illustrates the contradictions inherent in a day that is now notable for being boring.

Pergl's representation of April 11, 1954, also reminds me of two competing understandings of the concept of communication. In his book, *Communication as Culture*, James W. Carey suggests that most people consider communication to be the transmission of news and information, over a distance, in order to share ideas and knowledge and to control geographic space and people. The transmission view of communication is the prevailing understanding of communication; it privileges science and embraces new communication technologies uncritically, believing that the additional speed of transmission will improve the communication process.

There is, however, an alternative conceptualization of communication which is known as the ritual view. From this perspective, messages are shared among people to create, shape and maintain a common culture. The ritual view of communication brings people together to construct a belief system that shares ideas, values, perspectives and information and serves to create and reaffirm a specific view of society at a particular time and place. Pergl's emphasis on the physicality of real materials that have been affected by the digital resonates with the ritual view of communication. His installation not only emphasizes how we journey through fragmented experiences, but it also helps us to question our own perceptions of a socially constructed reality.

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JASON S. LADD, Ph.D.

Assistant Director of Instrumental Music
J. William and Mary Diederich College of Communication

Jordan Waraksa majored in sculpture at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design and music at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This sculpture is a marriage of these educations and invites the audience to use both the sense of sight and hearing to investigate the work. There is no one sense which should be a priority. The viewer/listener might ponder, however, where is the sound coming from and where does the visual end and the aural begin?

As with any musical device, sound starts with vibration. The vibrations from this sculpture fill the room as they resonate through intricately crafted pieces of zebrawood. How would this same music sound if this bell-like shape wasn't sculpted from wood but molded from another material? Is what you are hearing coming directly out of the sculpture or are you hearing the diffraction of sound from the surrounding walls? The sound pulls the viewer in to more thoroughly investigate the form and vice versa.

Waraksa's original compositions (emanating from the sculpture) blend folk and classical music with hints of bluegrass, blues, and gypsy tango styling. Most of the music was created for the recently released CD *For Highbrow Sideshows and Rowboat Serenades* by (Waraksa's band) The Vitrolum Republic. The CD title, like the music itself, has a nostalgic feel, evoking thoughts of P.T. Barnum-like carnival curiosities or middle European days of yore. The instruments used to perform the music—violin, piano, guitar, mandolin, bass, banjo—are also made of wood, further enhancing a sense of the past. Music is often intertwined with memories, bringing to mind specific episodes in our lives or transporting us to places and times we have not known firsthand. When initially viewing this sculpture I was reminded of the bell for a phonograph, the first widely popular player of recorded music, and thought of how our great-grandparents were entertained during their lifetimes.

Music, in its most basic definition, is a measure of time. Visiting an art museum, on the other hand, is most often a quiet, visual experience where one easily loses track of time. Waraksa's work bridges the gap between these disparate experiences. The work seamlessly combines old world craftsmanship with modern design. The resulting sound is ambient in nature and should be embraced as if in a comforter of music on a cold Saturday morning.

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Jordan Waraksa
American, b. 1985
Untitled, 2011
Zebrawood, walnut, steel
30 x 30" ea.
Courtesy of the artist

JORDAN WARAKSA

Jordan Waraksa is a sculptor, furniture designer and musician. Having pursued fine art and music educations simultaneously throughout his life, Waraksa often crosses and combines mediums, which is evident in his sound sculpture, kinetic installations and furniture/interior design. His training as a musician influences the delicate craftsmanship and emotive quality of his work and overall creative process. He plays classically influenced acoustic music in The Vitrolum Republic and has performed with local and international symphony orchestras. Waraksa has composed and performed numerous musical compositions for his own sound sculptures and short films, as well as for projects for international art exhibitions and broadcast television.

He has also released two full-length albums of original music and composed an award-winning soundtrack for a short film that was screened at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival. Waraksa holds a B.F.A. in sculpture from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design and a B.A. in music from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Carved a quarter-inch thick and able to produce different pitches, the wooden horn-like sculptures fill the exhibit space with sound. They are displayed on bases that hide hi-fi analog speakers. The shape of the sculptures naturally transform small recorded sound into a live resonate experience. These sculptural amplifiers add a unique and beautiful timbre to the original instrumental compositions that Waraksa has written, performed, and recorded.



Sharon Kerry-Harlan
American, b. 1951
On the Face of It, 2011
From the *About Face* series
Textile collage
71 1/2 x 102 1/2"
Courtesy of the artist

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