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Multiple Contingencies

November 15-18, 2018

with works by Mitchell Akiyama, Raul Altosaar, Francesca Chudnoff, Lai-Tze Fan, Jesse Jackson, Brad Necyk, Stephanie Rothenberg, and Maria Whiteman

featuring *She Falls for Ages*, a machinima by Skawennati

curated by Belinda Kwan

presented as a part of *Out of Mind*: the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA)

<http://litsciarts.org/slsa18/>

acknowledgements

commitment to the land + indigenous sovereignty

(Feel free to read aloud in the space, or modify in a constructive way.)

Those of us who are settlers would like to acknowledge and give thanks to the Indigenous communities that continue to live on and steward the land upon which this project takes place: the *Rotinonshión:ni* (Haudenosaunee/Iroquois), specifically the *Huron-Wyendot* (Wendat); the *Tsonontowane'á:ka* (Seneca), settled on *Cobechenonk* River, also known as the Humber, the *Tionontati* (Pétun); the *Métis*; and the *Anishinaabeg* (Chippewa/Ojibwe), specifically the *Mississaugas* of the Credit River (also known as the *Missinihe* [Trusting Water] River).

We continue to gain insight from Indigenous knowledge and organizing strategies. We acknowledge the colonial histories that we have inherited by settling and doing work here, and we endeavour to honour the legacy of *T'karonto* as a gathering place for exchange, to support Indigenous sovereignty, and to live in right relations with one another and these territories.



exhibition team

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special thanks

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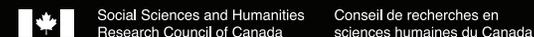


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exhibition hours

open from

Thursday	12 pm–5 pm
Friday	8:30 am–8 pm
Saturday	8:30 am–8 pm
Sunday	8:30 am–12 pm

opening reception

Thursday, November 15 from 6:30–9 pm

bring your own e-waste

Visitors are invited to add their unwanted electronic waste to Lai-Tze Fan's *e-Waste Peep Show*, 2018 during the gallery hours. Any contributions will be re-used, taken apart, and/or properly disposed of by Waterloo students as a part of their academic study.

Protect your privacy: Please note that we are not responsible for personal information contained on your electronic devices. Clear all personal information from computers, cell phones and electronics prior to collection/drop-off/donation (wipe your drives/clear your SIM cards).

performances + workshops

francesca chudnoff: *an ongoing draft, lingering in the body*, 2018

daily performances, varying schedule

Thursday	3:30 pm–5 pm + 6:30 pm–7:30 pm
Friday	3:30 pm–7 pm
Saturday	1:30 pm–6 pm
Sunday	8:30 am–12 pm

A mysterious logic moves through the space. Lingers like Styrofoam nostalgia. Unfolds as foreign self soaked in amniotic memory. Learns through mimesis. Understands Hegel through the segments of an orange. And repeats. Logic space moves through a mystery. Styrofoam lingers like nostalgia. Amniotic unfolding taking a dip in the self, remembering. Orange mimesis learns from going-through. Repeats and spaces itself throughout the logical mysterious. Styrofoam fingers touch the Hegelian nose, congeal like the fluid of your amniotic dreams. The biomimicry is pedagogical. Rhymes with orange. And re-peels...

modular making with marching cubes:
a workshop with jesse jackson

friday, november 16 from 1:30–3 pm

In the 1980s, researchers devised an algorithm for generating computer graphics from medical scan data. It featured an underlying language of faceted cubes, and became known as the *Marching Cubes* (MC) algorithm.

Jesse Jackson's eponymous artwork translates this virtual procedure into an interactive physical installation. By translating the MC algorithm into physical building blocks, this workshop brings a screen-based algorithm into haptic reality. Moving away from the flat and cognitarian traditions of computer graphics,¹ as well as the restrictions of medical constructs, Jackson welcomes visitors to physically build, and so image, sculptural forms of their choice.

Notes

1. Franco "Bifo" Berardi, "Cognitarian Subjectivation," *e-flux* #20 (November 2010). <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/20/67633/cognitarian-subjectivation>.

eliminating the bee in honey production?:
a talk by mitchell akiyama

saturday, november 17 from 1:30–3 pm

Melliferology is a new discipline dedicated to the study of bee-less honey production. Developed as a response to the honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) crisis, it explores some of the ways that human innovation and production can replace or mitigate bee labour.

In this talk, melliferologist Mitchell Akiyama, PhD will be presenting his research on the extraction of flower nectar by hand. Co-written with Brock Harpur and Miles Rufelds, the paper evaluates the viability of manual nectar collection and its implications for the human production of honey.

curatorial essay

I.

In response to the *Out of Mind* theme of this year's SLSA conference, *Multiple Contingencies* explores some of the foreign and extra-rational forces that challenge and undo the way our minds run.

The notion of 'contingency' carries countless contradictions. It asks that we prepare for unforeseen circumstances; costs us resources we may not have; and resists one's obsession to know *for sure*. It demands a long term plan but threatens to sabotage with a fierce immediacy, offering no guarantee of how it'll all play out. As a result, we are subject to a plurality of encounters: a multiplicity that is often overwhelming and anxiety-inducing.

Sometimes, we contend with that infinite possibility and unending precarity by compressing it into a single feeling of uncertainty. Dealing in the singular allows us to contain it in our minds—systemize it, intellectualize it. But there's no denying the slippery, overflowing character of chance. Uncertainty of this kind shakes the psychological drive for estimation: our drive to *know* in advance, to *know* what to expect and to act in accordance with that. No matter how thoroughly we conceptualize a plan and check for risks, we are always subject to some level of unpredictability, some force of nature ready to deter or destroy our plans. In many ways, this unpredictability is humbling, even humiliating. For some, it is terrifying. It's no wonder, then, we spend so much time preparing for and worrying about the future.

It goes without saying that even when chance and control contradict each other, they have a productive relationship. Retrospective reflections with chance encounters become insight and constitute preparation for the future. And often, even in the face of chance, forethought and intention can pay off.

But these forms of control can also give way to paranoia, oversurveillance, and an unquenchable thirst for authority. And maybe there's something intensely satisfying about not being in control; *not* knowing. Complete predictability is arguably just a path to ennui, so we can thank the extra-rational, extra-cognitive domains of our lives for helping us avoid a fate of monotonous determination. Perhaps more encouragingly, the existence of phenomena that can act or think otherwise offers up potential for beneficial forms of interdependency and trust. Maybe we don't always have to be in control. Maybe we can depend on or benefit from other ways of thinking and being. Whatever it may be, this much is clear: there is room for the forgetful, speculative, imaginary, nonsensical, and extra-rational dimensions that drive our encounters with the unexpected. There is room for being "*out of your mind*," as much as there is room for mindful and intellectually robust endeavours. And if we are to *re*-mind or *re*-wire ourselves for a different kind of potential, maybe we need to consider what lies beyond the self-assurance of "level-headed" and neurocentric thinking.

II.

When we consider its history of usage, the phrase “*out of mind*” takes us in different directions. There is the old proverb that declares “*out of sight, out of mind*,” suggesting that we are less likely to remember people or things that are no longer visible to us. There is the state of *being out of one’s mind*, implying insanity, often used to denigrate the pursuit of (or belief in) in something regarded as highly improbable. And there is the state of being *mindless*, which characterizes action taken without justification or concern for the consequences, as well as activity that is so simple and repetitive that it can be performed automatically without thought or skill.

Also apparent is how the phrase gestures toward alternative ways of knowing and being. This may pertain to what we have little-to-no contact with, do not know, or fail to understand, as well as that which escapes our intellectual control. Such knowledges exist in conversation with the epistemes we denigrate and refuse to adopt, and opens up the discussion to topics such as artificial intelligence and algorithmic logics; ‘alternative facts’; woo versus non-woo forms of healthcare (which is a highly intellectualized discipline); and various object-, plant-, and other-oriented epistem/ont/ologies. Ranging from the emerging to the established, these schools of thought materialize, develop, and dissipate amidst the chaos of globalization and overflowing data. In one respect, the plurality and disarray of it all produces a deep weariness and distrust of the things around us. But perhaps we can also understand it through

the possibility of working and moving together with the partially, not-yet-, or never-will-be- known.

Donna Haraway’s ‘feminist objectivity’ is one model that hints at the possibility of productive interdependency between different worlds of knowledge. Acknowledging the interplay between individual and collective experience, Haraway’s logic of feminist objectivity prevents us from seeing intellectual sovereignty, interdependency, and/or hybridity as mutually exclusive endeavours. She acknowledges the need for partial translation instead of total universality, writing that while

[w]e... don’t want to theorize the world, much less act within it, in terms of Global Systems... we do need an earth-wide network of connections, including the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different—and power-differentiated—communities. We need the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meanings and bodies, but in order to build meanings and bodies that have a chance for life.¹

Here, ‘situated and embodied knowledges’ with ‘partial perspectives’ can inform and shape the world at large, in lieu of an irresponsible “doctrine of objectivity that promises transcendence... and unlimited instrumental power.”² In this model of feminist objectivity, onto- and epistemo-logical differences are not subjugated,

stifled, or erased to the point of oppression. Instead, they become an active part of social and world-building processes. We can scale these insights up to think about feminism's intersections with indigeneity, race, gender, sexuality, international relations, and more. But we also can scale it down into a consideration of how the self is itself an assemblage of units trying to make sense of one another and constitute a body and/or mind.

III.

The way that these intertwined social processes of 'knowing' and 'becoming' actually happen, and the tensions they involve, is central to Haraway's assertions. The notion of contingency epitomizes these tensions by indicating the simultaneous preparation for, resistance against, and response to epistemological and ontological ruptures. The question of how we might mentally conceptualize, prepare for, and/or respond to the unknown may seem ridiculous and contradictory, but it speaks to the human condition nonetheless.

Multiple Contingencies engages this complicated quandary with artworks that test the relationship between the known and unknown, the predictive and the improvisational. The curatorial process is itself a test of faith and errors, relying on an intuition not yet established, and with the provisional knowledge that the exhibition will fall apart in some places and cohere in others. At this juncture, imagination and speculation play roles of paramount

importance, serving as buffers and experimental points of departure for knowledge production and reception.

Keeping true to the curatorial notion of contingency (planning for something before you know what exactly is going to happen), this publication contains speculative renderings of each work prior to their manifestation inside of the exhibition space. As you move throughout the artworks, it is my hope that you will encounter new ways of representing, thinking, and communicating—some haphazard, some rational, and some a combination of both.

—Belinda Kwan, *Curator*

Notes

1. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3178066.pdf>, pp. 579–580.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 579.



Figure 1. Skawennati's *She Falls For Ages* logo, 2017. Image courtesy of the artist.

Skawennati

She Falls For Ages, 2017

Machinima

21 m 2 s

Twins Tehahontsihsónkhwa and Otsitsakáion have special powers. Gifted with telekinesis, Tehahontsihsónkhwa can move objects with his mind. Otsitsakáion, on the other hand, has been gifted with the power of telekinesis. When the celestial tree that lights and powers the world begins to die, one of the twins bravely steps forward to bring new life into the universe, creating A'nó:wara tsi kawè:note (Turtle Island).

The feature work by Montréal-based *Kanien'kehá:ka* (Mohawk) artist *Skawennati*, titled *She Falls for Ages* (2017), retells the *Rotinonshión:ni* (Haudenosaunee/Iroquois) creation story in a different dimension than expected. Produced as a *machinima*, a genre of films produced in video game environments, *She Falls for Ages* renders *Rotinonshión:ni* history into the digital spaces of contemporary popular culture. This act of digitization and quasi-gamification carves out a grassroots space for Indigenous feminism and cultural sovereignty within the highly corporate and patriarchal video game universe. The tension between the filmic and the gamified aspects of the work is productive—while the visual sensibility of 3D computer graphics implies interactivity and creative possibility for the viewer, the fixed screenplay preserves *Skawennati*'s directorial agency, asking the viewer to learn from an Indigenous woman and her people's story before embarking on their own machinimic pursuits. Throughout the work, *Skawennati* moves through different temporalities and re-writes history for the sake of the future.

Proposing an Indigenous futurism that thrives on careful stewardship, voluntary and compassionate sacrifice, and innovative world-building skills, the artist not only resists the erasure and relegation of Indigenous people to the past, but puts faith in and gives encouragement to the present and coming generations. In stark contrast to colonial and patriarchal narratives, *Skawennati* makes several changes to the typical creation story. She introduces the people of *Karonhia:ke* (Sky World) as a technologically and ethically advanced race, and renders them in different colours to challenge outdated notions of race and blood quantum. In *Skawennati*'s retelling, *Otsitsakáion* (Sky Woman/Ancient Flower) bravely takes the responsibility of creating a new world, making a sacrifice of her own accord. This act of grace creates a new and hopeful world out of loss and sorrow, which allows the narrative to take up a desire-based framework rather than a damage-centred one.¹ The palette used in the film extends this framework further: made up of *Skawennati*'s favourite colours, it imbues the work with an authorial pleasure instead of perpetuating the myth of the tormented artist.

Though it has elements of the utopic, *She Falls for Ages* is neither uncritical nor escapist. Instead, *Skawennati* combines adaptation and innovation to pave a way toward Indigenous futurism. She makes use of existing histories, tools, and vocabularies, but innovates with them, warping them into an accessible and improved blueprint of the future that is both empowering for herself and her own community. While acknowledging that the future is contingent on present and coming generations, *Skawennati* asserts that these generations are prepared and capable of what's to come.

Notes

1. Tuck, Eve. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities". *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 79, no. 3. pp. 409–427.

See also

Loretta Todd, "Aboriginal Narratives in Cyberspace", *Immersed in Technology*, MIT Press, Cambridge; 1996, pp. 179–194.

Walking the clouds: Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction, edited by Grace L. Dillon, University of Arizona Press, 2012.

works: slsa members

Mitchell Akiyama

If not by hand, 2018

Pop-up melliferology lab

Dimensions vary

The 49 McCaul kitchenette has become a lab for the bee-less, human production of honey—the study of which is called 'melliferology'. With bees dying in droves,¹ this emerging field of study holds the promise of a world where human work can replace bee labour, or, at the very least, relieve some of the pressure on bee colonies to sustain the production of honey.

In late 2006, a group of scientists with members from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Pennsylvania State University, and the Florida Department of Agriculture recorded "unprecedented" losses in US honeybee populations from October–December 2006. That December, they released a report on the phenomenon, tentatively naming it the 'Fall Dwindle Disease' and laying out possible causes for it such as pesticide contamination (especially that caused by neonicotinoids, which later gained significant attention from the masses), digestive tract abnormalities, and fungal pathogen strains. Later revisions saw the renaming of the phenomenon to 'Colony Collapse Disorder' (CCD), a term that stuck and became the central focus of the working group. Soon afterward, the news broke that honeybees were vanishing.² This impending sense of bee extinction took on more and more of an urgent edge as scientists and reporters linked it to food insecurity risks and implied its connection to a coming human extinction.

Unsurprisingly, the crisis proceeded to achieve meme status, with corporations, news platforms, and social media sites rushing to cover the plight of the small but influential honeybee, and its extinction's implications for the human condition. Meanwhile, several scientists and scientific journalists have criticized this wave of popular interest as sensationalizing and unnuanced, pointing out how the overall population of honeybees in the US, Canada and Europe has actually stayed steady or increased slightly since the widespread adoption of neonics in the 1990s.³ These back and forth dialogues between stakeholders of bee life have incited controversy, bringing forward questions of who to trust (who is an expert) as well as what does or does not constitute a crisis.

Taking the bee crisis conversation as a point of departure, Akiyama explores the intellectualization and fetishization of animal life. He adopts the persona of a scientist who misguidedly attempts to deal with the threat of honey bee extinction with the solution of human honey production, and poses the question of how one might respond to an ecological crisis that may or may not happen.

Notes

1. Dennis vanEngelsdorp et al, "Fall-Dwindle Disease": *Investigations into the causes of sudden and alarming colony losses experienced by beekeepers in the fall of 2006*. (Preliminary Report: First Revision), Florida Department of Agriculture, 2006-7, <https://www.apiservices.biz/en/articles/sort-by-popularity/492-colony-collapse-disorder-ccd>.
2. Randal R. Rucker and Walter N. Thurman, "Colony Collapse Disorder: The Market Response to Bee Disease", *PERC Policy Series*, no. 50, edited by Roger Meiners, <https://www.perc.org/wp-content/uploads/old/ps50.pdf>.
3. Jon Entine, "The Bee Apocalypse Was Never Real; Here's Why," *American Council on Science and Health*, 17 April 2018, <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/04/17/bee-apocalypse-was-never-real-heres-why-12851>.

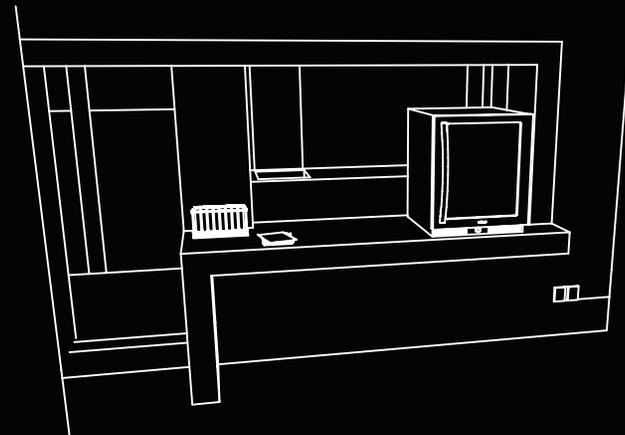


Figure 2. Speculative rendering of Mitchell Akiyama's *If not by hand*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Raul Altosaar

Distributed Computation, 2018
Sound-only VR system, objects
Dimensions vary

I could regurgitate some words about being captured by the internet, computers and networked communities but running through everything that I have ever assembled is deep incredulity at the fact that we live in these things called bodies which move around on this thing called the planet. The fact that my fingers have evolved to move things around and drop them and type these letters at the same time as I'm forgetting I'm breathing while the neurons in my stomach are blindly processing the sunlight outside and my legs are itching to go step into a pile of fresh asphalt... I forget about most of these things most of the time but they are simple truths that come before everything else.¹

—Raul Altosaar

A windswept tree blows in the computational wind. It is held down with zip-ties and rocks that sing in virtual melody. Beside it are a worn-out fishbowl that rattles like a shower curtain, hanging from the ceiling via a knotted modem cable, and a pile of clay-saturated dirt spilling out of a white, industrial bucket.

Activated by virtually-mediated sonic zones of interaction, these objects become a room-scale instrument, calling for sensor(y) s(t)imulations that are both embodied and virtual. Together, they invite haptic play and encounter, encouraging the exploration of analog ontologies that challenge the body-mind rigidity of computational logics.²

Notes

1. Raul Altosaar + Richard Bright, "Experiencing human-computer interaction," *Interalia Magazine*, 2018. Accessed October 2018. <https://www.interaliomag.org/interviews/raul-altosaar/>.
2. Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Why Computers Must Have Bodies in Order to Be Intelligent," *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 21, No. 1. pp. 13-32.

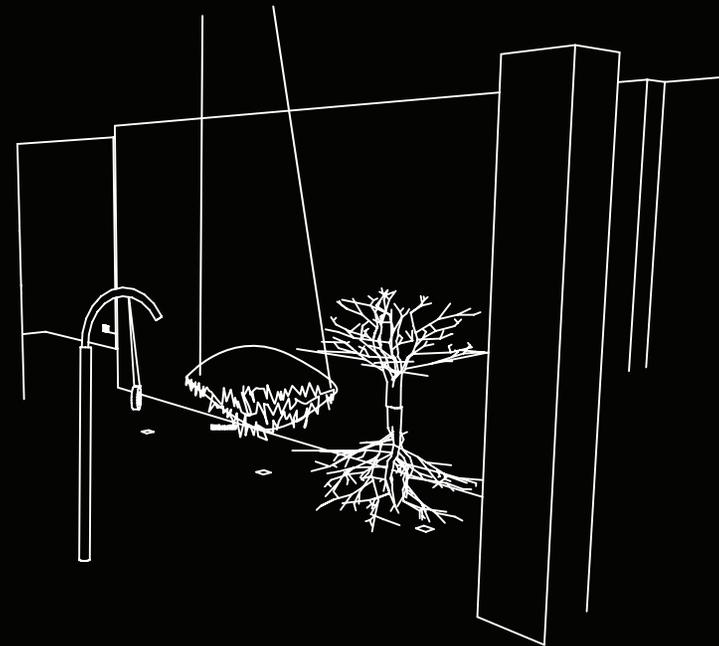


Figure 3. Speculative rendering of Raul Altosaar's *Distributed Computation*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Francesca Chudnoff

an ongoing draft, lingering in the body, 2018

Performance & multi-media costume

3-4 Hours/Day

In a meditation on the accumulation of memory and movement, the memetic relationship between mind and body, objects as/extensions of/bodies, fatigue and forgetting. Francesca Chudnoff performs an improvisational/choreographic piece in response to the space/exhibition. She works with planned and intuitive movements, exploring the interplay between new encounters and the mnemonic impulse. Beginning with a predetermined choreography, Chudnoff enters the space and loops in new movements based on her encounters of the space and the artworks around her. Every day, she tries to recall and reperform the movement produced the day before. The body and memory accumulate detritus and let it slip away again; forget and produce plastic memories again.

In her absence, Chudnoff's garments are given a moment to breathe and sleep.

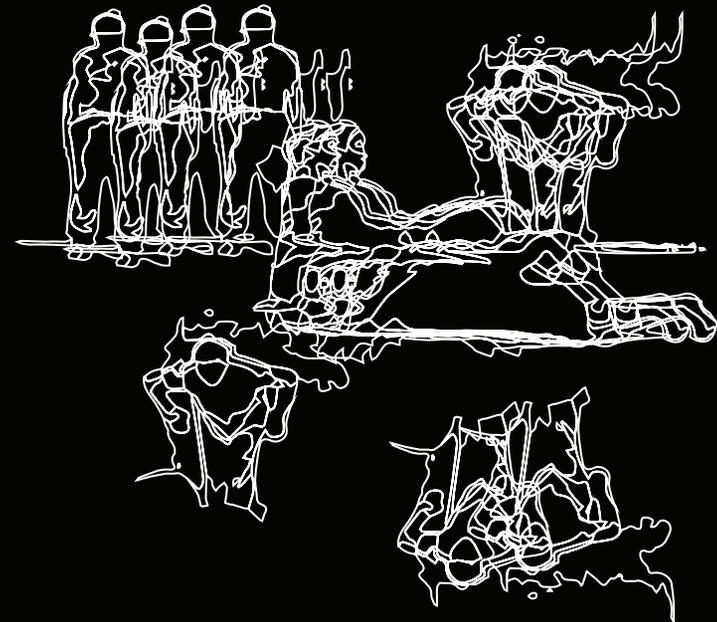


Figure 4. Speculative rendering of Francesca Chudnoff's *an ongoing draft, lingering in the body*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Lai-Tze Fan

e-Waste Peep Show, 2018

iPhone video + mixed media installation

Dimensions vary

Behind the veil of the global technocultural market is the unseen exploitative labour that keeps the machine grinding forward... The toxic work of taking apart discarded digital devices is given to poor labourers in illegal plants within parts of East, Southeast, and South Asia—a veritable network of unseen hands in invisible spaces.

—Lai-Tze Fan

In thinking about the *Out of Mind* theme, it is necessary to consider what we try to forget or ignore in order to survive in a capitalist technocultural world. Based on an iPhone video that she took while visiting an illegal e-waste dump in Hong Kong, Lai-Tze Fan's work simultaneously explores the ethics of spectatorship and technological excess. The 2-minute clip is filmed through a very small peephole in the corrugated steel fencing that keeps the dump hidden. The iPhone magnification of the peep hole reveals a woman sorting through the waste.

During the installation process, the curator and artist were given the opportunity to add to the work with e-waste from OCADU. The cardboard boxes that the visitor sees in the installation were used to house over \$1.5 million CAD worth of servers bought by the institution. Since their purchase five years ago, they have become obsolete and need to be replaced.

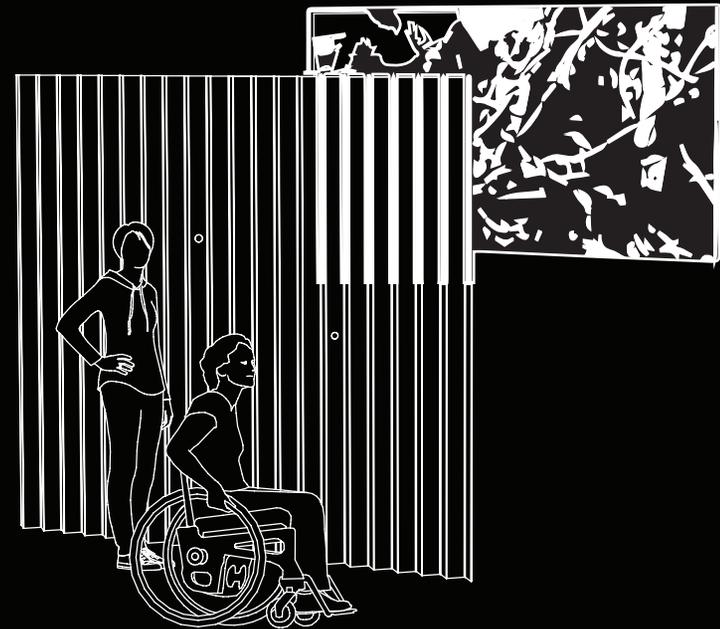


Figure 5. Speculative rendering of Lai-Tze Fan's *e-Waste Peep Show*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Jesse Jackson

Marching Cubes: 1987, 2018

Cold-rolled steel plate, fused deposition polylactic acid, neodymium magnets

Dimensions vary

At the 1987 SIGGRAPH (Special Interest Group on Computer GRAPHics and Interactive Techniques), William E. Lorensen and Harvey E. Cline revealed a new computer imaging algorithm called *Marching Cubes*. As one of the most cited papers in the computer graphics field, their research was influential to medical visualizations such as CT and MRI scan data images.¹

In a sculptural work named after this algorithm, Jesse Jackson renders and 3-D prints modular blocks based on the *Marching Cubes* logic. He produces a fictional MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scan of a skull, turning anatomical data into a kinetic performance. By externalizing the cranial form with digital technologies, Jackson unpacks what it means to render, reshape, and re-encounter ourselves.

Notes

1. William E. Lorensen and Harvey E. Cline, "Marching cubes: A high resolution 3D surface construction algorithm," *ACM siggraph computer graphics*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 163-169. ACM, 1987, http://fab.cba.mit.edu/classes/S62.12/docs/Lorensen_marching_cubes.pdf.

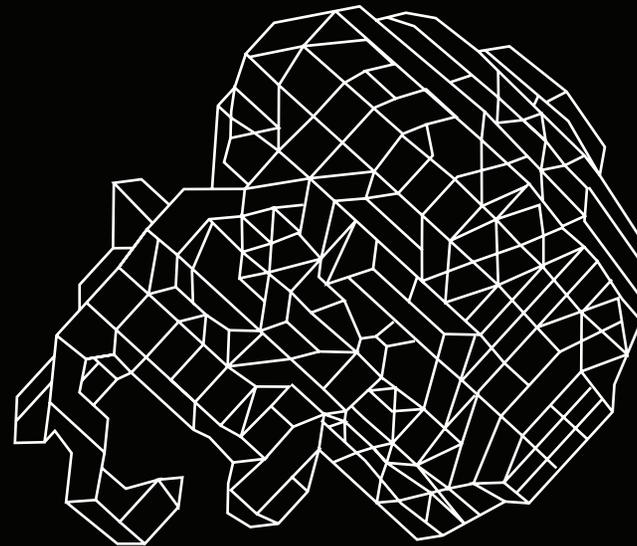


Figure 6. Speculative rendering of Jesse Jackson's *Marching Cubes: 1987, 2018*. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Brad Necyk

Alberta #3 (fragmented), 2018

Multichannel audio/video assemblage

Durations vary

For me, illness is not a catastrophe, one that isn't simply about making-better, or curing, but is a species meaning-making event. It is a very ancient space we all inhabit, it's nested deep within each of us, deeper than genetic strands stretching across a geological timescale of billions of years, one that is in a space for communal immunitary kinship, where our bodies fight off the gnawing of microscopic predators, genetic expressions, and time.

—Brad Necyk, *Alberta #3*

Brad Necyk's *Alberta #3* narrative surfaces as a way to make sense of madness¹ and neurodivergence.² Contrary to what popular definitions might imply, this process of "making sense" refuses to produce a straightforward and static understanding of the mind. Instead, it proposes alternative sense-abilities for navigating the complexities of lived experience, genetic legacy, social proximity, and deep trauma. At the same time that the narrative eschews a neurocentric and pathological approach, it also openly addresses the medical complexes that shape and impose themselves on madness. It speaks candidly of pharmacology and patient treatment, but rejects the pseudo-sterility of 'scientific objectivity' by combining the prosaic with the poetic. It calls up vibrant and sometimes painful images of what it means to forget, not know, and reconstitute one's ecological being³ in an era of distrust.⁴

Following its life as a text, play, film, and public reading, the (fragmented) iteration of *Alberta #3* presents an ever-shifting assemblage of text, voice, and moving image. Playing on completely separate channels, with different durations, Necyk's moments of self-awareness fall apart and press together in perpetual bouts of polyvocality.

Notes

1. Alex Gillis, "The rise of Mad Studies," *University Affairs*, 2015, last accessed November 2018, Web, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/mad-studies>.
2. Nick Walker, "Neurodiversity: Some Basic Terms & Definitions," *Neurocosmopolitanism*, 2014, last accessed November 2018, <http://neurocosmopolitanism.com/neurodiversity-some-basic-terms-definitions>.
3. Andrew Metcalfe and Ann Game, "Ecological Being," *Space and Culture*, vol. 17, no. 3, last accessed November 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1206331213495779>.
4. The "era of distrust" can be used to reference the deep insecurities of self fostered by the technologies and social climate of the contemporary era, as well as the skepticism levelled against large institutions and society in general, spurred on by rhetoric about "alternative facts" and the like.



Figure 7. Speculative rendering of Brad Necyk's *Alberta #3 (fragmented)*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Stephanie Rothenberg

Planthropy, 2014

From the *Reversal of Fortune* series

Plastic tube planters, locally sourced plants, automated watering system, LCD screens, Twitter API
Dimensions vary

Three Wi-Fi enabled cyborg planters hang inside the exhibition space, watering plants according to a schedule dictated by tweets about philanthropy. A cactus, representing climate change resistance; a grassy wetland plant, representing animal rights; and medicinal aloe, representing cancer research, grow depending on the bizarre logics of philanthropy-based shadow capitalism.

Stephanie Rothenberg's *Planthropy* combines botanical, algorithmic, and net-based epistem/ont/ologies as a way to understand financial systems of giving. By creating symbolic ecologies out of these disparate dimensions, Rothenberg's work encourages the viewer to interrogate the often-incongruous relationships between computational algorithms, which depend on strict digital infrastructures; financial growth, which projects for exponential profit; and the finite logics of earthly assets, which are subject to decay, death, and extinction.

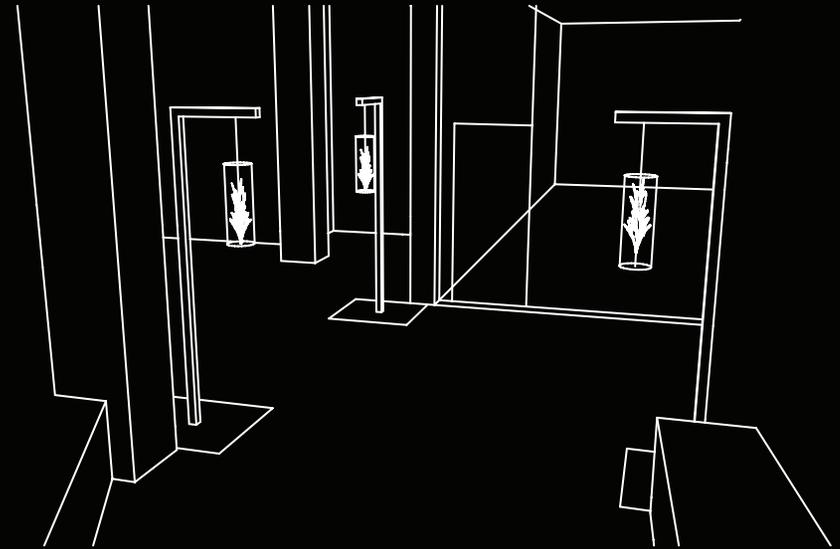


Figure 8. Speculative rendering of Stephanie Rothenberg's *Planthropy*, 2014. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

Maria Whiteman

Mind and Matter, 2018

Aluminum print + mycelium

Dimensions vary

Throughout the exhibition, mycelium and fruiting bodies that belong to the Pleurotus djamor species grow out of soft pillows. They are displayed in conversation with psychedelic images created by Whiteman, whose research on psilocybin and human wellness explores connections between botanical and psychological ecologies.

Fungi can sometimes elicit feelings of disgust, having associations with black mold, yeast infections, and stinky feet. In other contexts, however, they are met with welcome. Take, for instance, the valued status of *ling-zhi* or *reishi* (also known as 灵芝 or *Ganoderma lucidum*), a polypore mushroom which has been accorded royal, religious, and medicinal importance throughout the history of Eastern medicine. More recently, the Western study of psilocybin has re-emerged, with researchers interested in its applications for psychological healing and the improvement of creativity.

Through these contexts, there emerges a conversation around the relationship between human and fungal intelligence. While fungi are often presented as subservient to human values, perhaps it is also valuable to explore the ways that we can learn from fungi and their rhizomatic forms of resistance, regrowth, and sustainability.

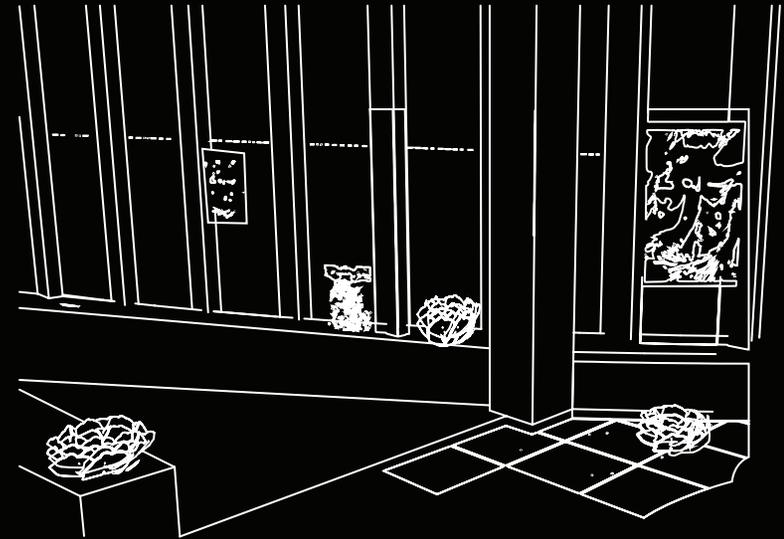


Figure 9. Speculative rendering of Maria Whiteman's *Mind and Matter*, 2018. Image created by curator, with permission from the artist.

exhibition floor plan

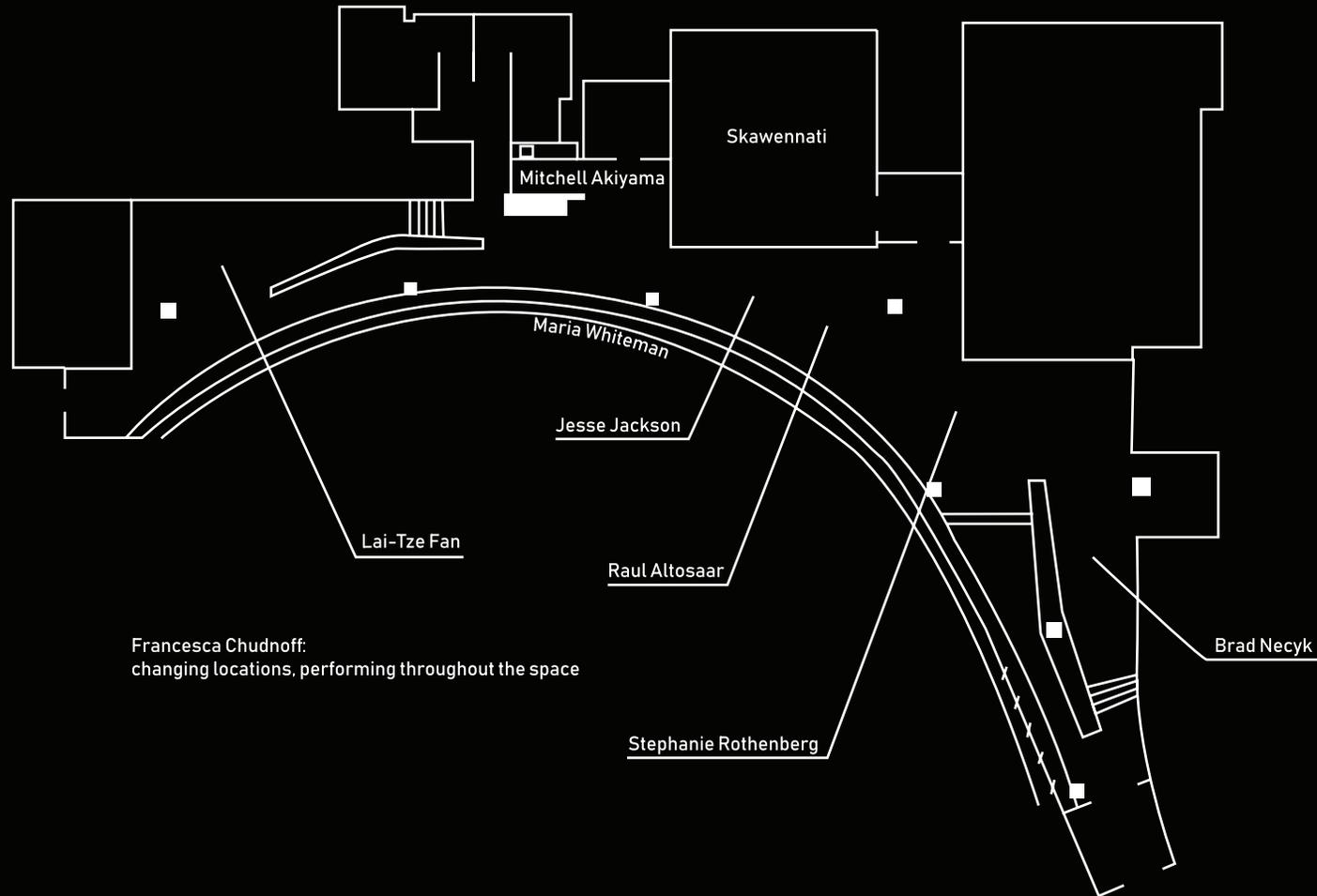


Figure 10. *Multiple Contingencies* exhibition floor plan, OCADU Open Space Gallery, 2018.

artist + curator bios

Skawennati makes art that addresses history, the future, and change. Her pioneering new media projects include the online gallery/chat-space and mixed-reality event, *CyberPowWow* (1997-2004); a paper doll/time-travel journal, *Imagining Indians in the 25th Century* (2001); and *TimeTraveller™* (2008-2013), a multi-platform project featuring nine machinima episodes. These have been widely presented across North America in major exhibitions such as “Now? Now!” at the Biennale of the Americas; “Looking Forward (L’Avenir)” at the Montreal Biennale; and “Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation 3” at the Museum of Art and Design in New York City. She has been honoured to win imagineNative’s 2009 Best New Media Award as well as a 2011 Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship. Her work is included in both public and private collections.

Born in Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, Skawennati is Turtle Clan. She holds a BFA from Concordia University in Montreal, where she is based and is Co-Director of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC) and the Skins workshops in Indigenous storytelling and experimental digital media.

<http://www.skawennati.com/>

Mitchell Akiyama is a Toronto-based scholar, composer, and artist. His eclectic body of work includes writings about sound, metaphors, animals, and media technologies; scores for film and dance; and objects and installations that trouble received ideas about history, perception, and sensory experience. He holds a PhD in communications from McGill University and an MFA from Concordia University and is Assistant Professor of Visual Studies in the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto.

<http://www.mitchellakiyama.com/>

Raul Altosaar is an artist and researcher. He uses video game engines, virtual reality technology, and computer science to build new experiences and tools. These systems prioritize the relationship between our bodies and the physical world. This makes human-computer interaction simpler and more meaningful—but also weirder and more expressive.

Raul’s work has appeared at conferences including the European Conference on Computer Vision and Music In New Technologies, and has also been exhibited internationally in museums and festivals including the Ontario Science Centre, the LAST Festival at Stanford University, and The Wrong New Digital Art Biennale.

<http://raul.earth>

Francesca Chudnoff is a Toronto-based millennial with a BFA in performance. Her classical dance training began while working as a company member at Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre. Francesca continued her studies at Ryerson University, while also training independently in street dance forms such as breaking and house. After graduating, Francesca became Co-Assistant Director of Alias Dance Project until Spring 2017. She has presented her work at Dance Matters, Toronto Loveln: PS We Are All Here, and Dancemakers Flowchart Performance Series. Her film work has been screened at TUFF, FORM, Art Spin, Rhubarb Festival and FFDN. She is currently an Emerging Artist in Residence at Dancemakers Centre for Creation, and a member of the Lost is Found collective.

<https://www.madebyfranznfriends.com/>

Lai-Tze Fan is a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Digital Media and Rhetoric in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Waterloo, Canada, as well as a Core Researcher of the Critical Media Lab. Her work takes a critical and creative approach to media studies, literary studies, maker culture, and cultural studies. She develops innovative digital approaches and tools (including research-creation) towards a range of related research areas, including: narratives over various media and forms; media materiality and archaeology; environmental humanities; digital culture and user interaction; and the ethics/politics of technological infrastructures. In 2015, Fan received the international ADHO's (Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations) Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen Young Scholar Prize.

<https://laitzefan.com/>

Jesse Jackson is a Canadian artist and designer based in Southern California. His creative practice focuses on object- and image-making as alternative modes of architectural production. Jackson is Associate Professor of Electronic Art and Design at the University of California, Irvine, and is represented by Pari Nadimi Gallery in Toronto.

<http://jessecolinjackson.com/>

Brad Necyk is a Canadian visual artist and curator working through the mediums of drawing, photography, video, film, sculpture, and performance. He recently finished as the Artist in Residence with the Friends of University Hospitals and Transplant Services for Alberta Health Services for the length of 2015-16 and is now a graduate student in Psychiatry. His current work focuses on patient experience, ethnography, psychiatry, pharmaceuticals, and biopolitics. He has been shown internationally, was an artist in the 2015 Alberta Biennial, participates in artists' residencies, delivers academic papers internationally, is a committee member on a number of professional bodies, and is currently teaching a number of senior level courses in Drawing and Intermedia at the University of Alberta.

<https://www.bradnecyk.com/>

Stephanie Rothenberg is an artist using performance, installation and networked media to create provocative public interactions. Her work moves between real and virtual spaces, investigating the power dynamics of techno utopias, global economics and outsourced labor. She has exhibited throughout the US and internationally in venues including Eyebeam in NYC, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams, MA, the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, House of Electronic Arts in Basel, Switzerland, LABORAL in Gijon, Spain, Transmediale in Berlin and ZKM Center for Art & Media in Karlsruhe, Germany. She is a recipient of numerous awards, most recently from the Harpo Foundation and Creative Capital. Her work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art and has been widely reviewed including Artforum, Artnet, The Brooklyn Rail and Hyperallergic. She is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Art at SUNY Buffalo where she teaches courses in design and emerging technologies.

<http://www.pan-o-matic.com/>

Maria Whiteman creates work that enacts the idea of Anima: life as a shared property of different bodies, which live out a common life in the increasingly fragile space we inhabit together. She brings together Art and Philosophy by combining still images with text in her photo-narratives and videos. All her art projects continue to engage in questions around how we co-exist with other sentient beings in this world of climate change caused by global warming and other systems human beings have created. She is currently Artistic Social Practice Fellow at the Environmental Resilience Institute in Bloomington, IN, and she is the incoming Art Liaison 2018 and Second Vice President for SLSA.

<http://maria-whiteman.squarespace.com/>

Belinda 浩恩 Kwan is an emerging curator completing her MA in Art History and GDip in Curatorial Practice at York University. Her interdisciplinary practice combines theoretical knowledge with technical know-how and hands-on experience. She has worked with/for local and international artists in public galleries, academic institutions, and artist-run centres such as Art Gallery of York University (AGYU), Blackwood Gallery, Y+ contemporary, and more.

Although her interests are wide-ranging, her current research critiques the presence of mass incarceration within the American cultural imagination. This body of work explores the racial dynamics of trauma and healing, paying special attention to the interactions between experimental art production, the bureaucratic structures of art museums and galleries, and the lived experience of cultural and symbolic violence.

<https://belindakwan.com/>

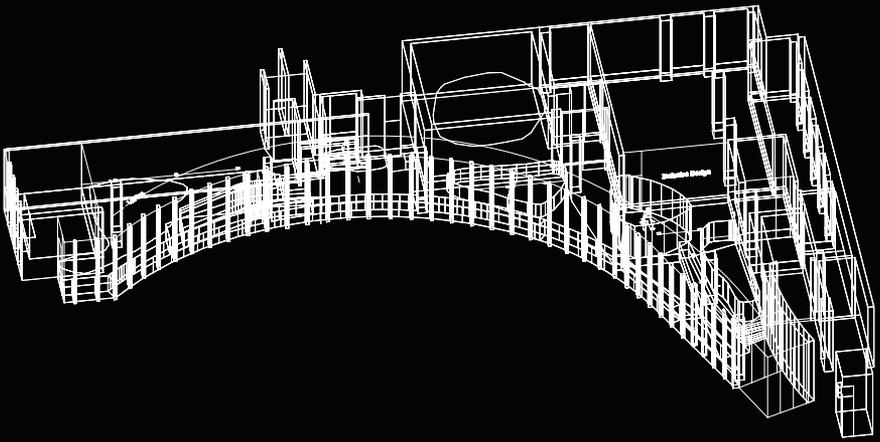


Figure 11. Preliminary diagram of the *Multiple Contingencies* exhibition floor plan, 2018.