This issue of SCAN explores the possibility of reconfiguring the past, present, and future. We think it is integral to art practice. Two notions that significantly impact this question that implicates a certain exchange between art and world are distance and experience. Critical distance has often been regarded as the important construct for critique. But the case against critical distance as the standard bearer of critique a panacea has been mounting for some decades. The strongest contemporary accounts against maintaining critical distance hinge upon identity. Issues of gender, race and sexuality reimagine the past, present and future precisely by substituting distance for proximity, embodiment or identification. In this sense critical distance imposes constraints not only on how we produce art but also interact with art. Thus one of the most common ways that contemporary artists and viewers navigate the art work: art history. The discipline requires that we lean heaviest on citation, thematic elements and medium-specific questions. All at the expense of experience. The encounter with the artwork is a far more challenging endeavor. Far broader considerations are required to unpack its content. We viewers find our way into the work by virtue of our practical experiences with the outside world. This expanded notion of the art encounter bridges space, and because darting between past and present, offers up an alternative future.

Sarah Blanchard and Danielle Fenn
Gary Wilder’s new book *Freedom Time: Négritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* is a wake-up call concerning the history of postnational democratic imagination. As he writes in the opening line of chapter one, “this book is about ‘the problem of freedom’ after the end of empire” (1). As Wilder argues repeatedly throughout the book, the problem of freedom during the post-war period of decolonization (1945–1960) is how to think of popular sovereignty without state sovereignty; how to think of decolonization without national independence; how to think of non-national political experiments without territorial sovereignty. As Wilder makes clear, these are all different versions of the same question: how to think colonial emancipation without state sovereignty as inherited by past attempts to do the same in figures such as Césaire and Senghor as an alternative form of decolonization were necessarily the right ones. Instead, Wilder is concerned with those wholesale dismissals and denunciations of Césaire and Senghor as an alternative form of decolonization that were necessarily reactionary. As an antidote to this allergic reaction, Wilder urges us to take their poetic and political visions of postnational democracy for what they really were—serious and significant attempts to imagine a form of decolonization that would transcend the assumed end-goal of state sovereignty at a particular moment in history when the geopolitical landscape of imperialism had come to create an intercontinental climate of global interdependence.

The historical significance and possible necessity of post-war national decolonization notwithstanding, Césaire and Senghor’s claim that colonial emancipation would never bring about genuine postcolonial freedom so long as it remained premised on the principle of state sovereignty remains all too relevant to our own historical moment. As Wilder emphasizes, admitting that the utopian political vision and pragmatic political policies of these thinkers may not have been the right (nor the only) solution to the concrete conditions and contradictions of their time (or their place) does not mean that they were necessarily wrong in presenting a political form that sought to address their dire diagnosis: that national decolonization was bound to give birth to neocolonialism. After all, the colonies-turned-nation-states have been living in the neocolonial shadow of decolonization for over half a century in a world where state sovereignty continues to be celebrated as though it were a law of nature, serving as the foundation for entities such as the United Nations (promised on territorial sovereignty), such global movements as human rights (promised on citizenship rights) and Indigenous rights (promised on settler state sovereignty), such fields as international law (promised on non-binding agreements between sovereign states), and such friend one another as the European Union (promised on bankocracy and border militarization), to say nothing of the WTO, IMF, OECD, or the World Bank.

In his concluding chapter, Wilder takes some time to reflect on the freedom time of these thinkers as it relates to our own time: “[Césaire] and Senghor’s visions of self-determination without state sovereignty, legacies that they inherited and willed, should surely count as a secular source for an effective history of our present throughout which to glimpse a possible future” (251). He then goes on to write: “But we can only begin to recognize their futures past, let alone hear their transgenerational call to possible heirs, if we unthink entrenched assumptions about Négritude as a nativism, decolonization as national independence, and the post-war period as the Cold War order that came to be rather than an opening in which a range of non-national political experiments were envisioned and enacted” (257).

Just as Césaire and Senghor saw their own attempts to think colonial emancipation without state sovereignty as inherited by past attempts to do the same in figures such as Toussaint L’Ouverture and Victor Schoelcher, Wilder concludes with the suggestion that we might listen to the “past’s present” and “futures past” of these thinkers in order to rethink our own post-Cold War present not as the neocolonial order that came to be but rather as a historical opening in its own right, in which a range of non-national political experiments continue to be envisioned and enacted, and where the political stakes of these experiments continue to be, as they were for Césaire and Senghor, nothing other than the “future of the world.”

Wilder then provides a brief survey of some of these current non-national political experiments, and how we might understand their relationship to a longer history of
imagining postnational decolonization inherited from such figures as Césaire and Senghor.

Wilder’s survey is certainly not intended to be a comprehensive list nor a detailed description of all the individual thinkers and collective movements currently aspiring to some form of postnational democracy. Nevertheless, there is a particular absence from the list that I believe needs to be highlighted, if only to further Wilder’s argument by probing its particular relevance to the particular location in which Wilder himself works, and where much discussion of the book has begun to take place. I am referring to the decolonization movement of Indigenous resurgence in settler colonial contexts, of which the United States is a prime example. Wilder refers to the movements across Latin America that “seek to rearticulate, renew and Indigenous forms of decolonization on Turtle Island actually stretches the significance and deepens the implications of what already follows in Wilder’s own argument. By extension Wilder’s) argument is only that much more obvious in a settler colonial context, where any genuine project of decolonization does not mean contesting a nation-state whose headquarters are overseas in the colonial metropole, but rather requires challenging a nation-state whose very existence depends upon the continued occupation of Indigenous lands in the here and now. In other words, any project of Indigenous decolonization, regardless of whether it is articulated as an assertion of state sovereignty, requires unthinking the settler colonial category of the “United States” or “Canada” (to name only two).

This language of exploding and unthinking the settler colonial nation-state is certainly not new in the history of Indigenous decolonization movements in the “new world,” where the post-colonial period has yet to arrive, and where the liberation of Indigenous nations depends upon the deconstruction of the settler state. That so many expressions of Indigenous sovereignty have and continue to be articulated in terms that have nothing to do with the nation-state is even more telling in this regard. It’s not that Indigenous resurgence does not mean the resurgence of Indigenous nationhood (it certainly does), but that Indigenous resurgence certainly does not mean the resurgence of new Westphalian nation-states, whether restricted or reduced to the colonies, but in fact requires the decolonization or the “explosion” of the very category of “France.” As Wilder notes in a recent interview, this book is not so much about rethinking France as it is about unthinking France. In this sense, Césaire and Senghor’s assertion of state sovereignty, requires fundamentally rethinking our relationship to a “Canada” that continues to demand our unthinking support to ensure that its state sovereignty is not revealed in the violence, displacement, and exploitation of Indigenous peoples. In the words of Annishinaabe writer Leanne Simpson, “I am not a nation-state, nor do I strive to be one.” Countless other Indigenous feminist scholars and writers – Audra Simpson, Sarah Hunt, Mishuana Goeman, Patricia Monture-Angus, Aikin Morson-Robinson, Eve Tuck, Rosanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Jeannette Armstrong, Lee Maracle, among many others – have and continue to affirm Indigenous sovereignty in a way that is decisively different in political form than that of the settler colonial nation-state.

In Canada, this is precisely what makes the current rhetoric of renewing a “Nation to Nation” relationship so contradictory. After all, we are talking about two fundamentally different forms of nationhood. The Canadian settler nation-state, as is political-economic core, parasitic upon the dispossession of Indigenous lands and thus of Indigenous sovereignty. As Glen Coulthard asserts with regard to the Guswenta (Two Row Wampum Treaty), it is no longer sensible to speak of the Haudenosaunee canoe and the European ship as morally equivalent vessels: respecting the sovereignty of the former requires sinking the sovereignty of the latter. This is why the Supreme Court of Canada’s continual call for the reconstitution of Crown and Indigenous sovereignty a contradiction in terms (akin to calling for the reconciliation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat), since truly recognizing the latter would mean radically reconfiguring the former. For settlers, this would mean fundamentally rethinking our relationship to a “Canada” that continues to demand our unthinking support to ensure that its state sovereignty is not revealed in the violence, displacement, and exploitation of Indigenous peoples.

Wilder’s reading of Césaire and Senghor therefore suggests that their political projects cannot be reduced to an instrumental rejection of European empire. Rather, Césaire and Senghor must be taken seriously as global thinkers grappling with what kind of world will be built in place of empire, and how we might bring such a world to being. I am here again reminded of Leanne Simpson’s words: “I am not so concerned with how we dismantle the master’s house…. I am very concerned with how we (re)build our own house, or our own houses. I have spent enough time taking down the master’s house and now I want most of my energy to go into visioning and building our new home.”

This is perhaps the difference between a project of decolonization that tells us what to knock down and a project of Indigenous resurgence that embodies alternative models and visions of the world we might inhabit instead. In this sense, it is not merely a question of provincializing nation-state forms of sovereignty, but of universalizing Indigenous forms of sovereignty. This is not a call for settlers to adopt and appropriate Indigenous languages, and lifeways so as to use them as tools to our own ends. Instead, it means that settlers must work in decolonizing ways with and on the terms of Indigenous peoples in order to undo and remake our relationships with one another and with the land in such a way that we do not reproduce the very relations of domination that we are seeking to transcend. It also means that the legitimacy of the settler state and its colonial-capitalist character must be challenged every step of the way. 4 To suggest that non-national forms of sovereignty are a new idea or that we need to go back to the drawing board is, in other words, an exercise in erasing the existence of Indigenous peoples and their sovereign nation-states.

I am not suggesting that “Indigenous sovereignty” is some sort of panacea to be adopted uncritically as a catch-all solution to the problem of postnational democracy. That there is a long history of the settler left romanticizing Indigenous political forms and cultural models, though they constitute a singular, static entity for which Indigenous peoples are nostalgic and which settlers can help them recover must be understood for what it is: racist. Nor am I suggesting that Indigenous forms of decolonization, whether theoretically or practically, can be carried out in isolation or ignorance of class struggle.6 What I am suggesting is that Indigenous resurgence and decolonization is a project that always already precedes and exceeds settler state sovereignty. As an inescapably political project, it cannot be reduced

Another central claim in Wilder’s book is that Césaire and Senghor were at their core planetary thinkers. Again and again, he argues that their political projects were not concerned with critiquing European universalism from the standpoint of African particularism, so as to expose the former as a particularization of its own. Instead, they were concerned with “challenging the assumption that the universal is European property” (10). In other words, it’s not simply that Césaire and Senghor were talking back to the colonizer to critique Europe’s claim to universality from the standpoint of the colonized, but that Césaire and Senghor were claiming the universal for themselves by putting forth planetary political visions that had something to teach humanity about what kind of world we want to live in after empire came crashing down. Wilder stresses that their projects were, in this regard, neither secessionist nor assimilationist, but humanist. In a recent article speaking to the concept of the political, Wilder writes: “Césaire and Senghor were not simply demanding that overseas peoples be fully integrated within the existing national state: they were proposing a type of revolutionary integration that would reconstitute France itself, by quietly exploding the nation-state from within.” It should be clear from such a formulation that these thinkers were not talking about liberal notions of multicultural inclusion within a nation-state that is by its very nature designed to exclude. Césaire and Senghor clearly had something else in mind: a truly transformative process of decolonization in which state sovereignty would not survive uncathed. Indeed, it would not survive at all.

In this sense, it is not merely a question of provincializing the settler state and its colonial-capitalist character must be challenged every step of the way 4 To suggest that non-national forms of sovereignty are a new idea or that we need to go back to the drawing board is, in other words, an exercise in erasing the existence of Indigenous peoples and their sovereign nation-states.

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to certain Indigenous cultural practices and traditions that are so often fetishized by settlers without considering that the resurgence of these practices and traditions actually poses fundamental problems for the political-economy of settler society. Doing so suggests that culture can be treated independently of the political-economic formation of which it is born (and which it in turn influences), which is why it is no surprise that settler liberals and their multiculturalism are so appealing. By the same token, it would be a mistake to suggest that Indigenous peoples must argue that Indigenous peoples must stand without state sovereignty as Indigenous peoples. (179)

In other words, the resurgence of Indigenous lifeways is not for destroying these lifeways. To the contrary, it is part and parcel of (re)building a new/old home, a home that can stand without state sovereignty and in which Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples might live together on the basis of mutual respect and peaceful co-existence on and with the land. Instead of reducing Indigenous legal and political traditions to an instrumental agent of radical change (a favoured move of settler socialists), we ought to realize that these traditions have a great deal to teach the world about alternative political-economic and ecological orders from which everyone has something to gain. Much like Césaire and Senghor, who chose to heed the visions and voices of postnational freedom that came before them, it’s time the settler world listen to Indigenous visions and voices of sovereignty that have long been in the business of answering the “problem of freedom” after empire.

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<td>1 With regard to Indigenous rights, I am referring to the concluding article of The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which reads: “Nothing in this declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, peoples, group, or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States” (Article 46, UNDRIP).</td>
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<td>2 It is worth noting, as Scott Lauria Morgensen has recently argued, that the settler colonial nation-state form has had its fair share of historical influence upon the form of the (non-settler) nation-state of the “old” continent.</td>
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<td>3 While it is surely not his intention, I am concerned that Widders’ argument concerning Césaire and Senghor’s call for a non-territorial political form of popular sovereignty might be read in such a way as to undermine indigenous claims to traditional territories that settler-colonial nation-states continue to claim as their own. If sovereignty is to be determinatized, as I agree it must (under imperialism is bad), this cannot mean delegitimizing indigenous claims to territory. A central characteristic of indigenous sovereignty, after all, is its relationship to the land.</td>
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<td>4 Doing the work of delegitimizing without indigenizing manifests itself in movements like Occupy that reproduce the very relations of settler colonial occupation in the name of ostensibly radical change (on this point, see Tuck and Yang, 2012).</td>
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<td>6 On the need for an organizational praxis that is both decolonial and anti-capitalist, see Natalie Knight’s “Building Rages”: Decolonizing Class War. Also on this topic, see Himani Bannerji’s Building from Marx: Reflections on Race and Class.</td>
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<td>7 Fanon was of course writing and working in a context where the pre-colonial culture (belonging to an agricultural or tithe mode of production) was far from egalitarian.</td>
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<td>8 I am certainly not suggesting that such a home must be made accountable to the claims of settlers concerning their future on Indigenous lands. To the contrary, I am referring to a vision of decolonization that, like Occupy that reproduce the very relations of settler colonial occupation in the name of ostensibly radical change (on this point, see Tuck and Yang, 2012).</td>
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Marcel Dzama and the Most Incredible Thing: a cautionary tale regarding enchantment in contemporary art.

by Danielle Fenn

Canadian born, Brooklyn-based artist Marcel Dzama is best known for his works on paper. His watercolor and ink drawings depicting whimsical yet dystopian worlds filled with hybrid animal and human characters led to his representation by David Zwirner Gallery in 1998. [1] Dzama now self defines as a mixed media artist working in ceramics, sculpture, and video, although drawing remains the backbone of his practice. [2] I recently had the opportunity to see Dzama’s fantastical drawings spring to life at one of the New York City Ballet Art Series performances featuring a collaborative adaptation of the Hans Christian Andersen tale The Most Incredible Thing, for which Dzama designed the sets and costumes. Dzama, who often composes the characters he draws in theatrical settings like the stage or the court, has worked with dancers before in his own video creations such as A Game of Chess and Death Disco Dance, as well as in a Department of Eagles music video collaboration for No One Does It Like You. In examining these past video works it is easy to see clear links to his drawing practice. His reference lineage is strong, retaining his artistic voice and integrity as he transforms his two-dimensional work into three dimensions. While I enjoyed the dazzling visual spectacle that was The Most Incredible Thing, key differences mark the production as a notable departure from Dzama’s normally self-imposed neutral and ambiguous narrative style. Through looking at these differences and deconstructing some of the heavy negative criticism published about the ballet, it is clear that the hackneyed binary fairy tale diminishes the splendor of Dzama’s ingenuity and artistry. While the production is not his strongest collaboration to date, Dzama’s concurrent installation in the promenade of the David H. Koch Theatre still demonstrates what the artist is capable of when he holds the visionary reigns.

I arrived early to the David H. Koch Theatre on the evening of February 19th, the last night of the special Artist Series performances. I was greeted by Marquerite Mehler the Director of Production for New York City Ballet with whom I had arranged a back stage tour to see the set and the costumes. Dzama designed a backdrop, a scrim, a screen that is opaque when lit from the front and transparent when lit from the back, as well as two entrance slides specifically for the ballet. The artist rendered drawings for the set at a quarter inch scale, which were then blown up to sixty by forty feet by a team of set painters. The stage, in a theatre designed to resemble a jewelry box, felt small and ordinary as I stood on it listening to Mehler discuss the logistics of the production. Justin Peck, the 28-year-old resident choreographer and rising star at the New York City Ballet, approached Dzama after seeing his 2014 solo show, Une Danse des Bouffons (A Jester’s Dance), at David Zwirner Gallery. Both Peck and Bryce Dessner, a musical collaborator who composed the original score, “were interested in the fact that Marcel had this kind of semi-infatuation with dancers and dance.” [3] Atypically, the team was established before the project was determined, the project being the production of a story ballet. [4]

The Most Incredible Thing is Peck’s first attempt at a story ballet. A difficult move for someone working in the shadow of the City Ballet founder George Balanchine, who “did away with characters, plot, sets, and conventional costumes. As he proved repeatedly, music and steps could create their own compelling stories.” [5] Contrary to Balanchine’s approach, Peck toned down his typically movement-heavy choreography in this production in order to make room for Dzama’s creations to exist. [6] This departure from the pure celebration of dance is something that Peck has received significant criticism for in reviews. However, I didn’t attend the performance with expectations that dance should be showcased in its own right. Rather, I attended to see the transformation of Dzama’s drawings on the stage, which left me feeling, temporarily enchanted by the opulence of the piece as a whole. It was only after time and reflection that the hollowness of the experience began to weigh on my consciousness.

I left Mahler after seeing the intricate costumes hung lifeless and limp in the dressing rooms. The Most Incredible Thing was the last of five performances to be showcased. The production had gone way over budget and the order of the dances had to be shuffled around to accommodate the elaborate hair and make-up changes to realize Dzama’s full vision. This is what I was thinking about as the curtain started to rise. The stage I had stood on hours before seemed expansive under the glow of the lights and the costumes were now full of life transforming the dancers and making them nearly unidentifiable. While, as Alastair Macaulay wrote in his New York Times...
review, some of the costumes don’t make sense in perplexing ways. For example, “why are the five senses all alike?”[7] Others, however, like the two-headed king performed by two dancers, convey the feeling of the costume until they parted like a gate, and the spring cuckoo who waved swathes of fabric elongated with sticks in alluring formations, were compelling even if they were nonsensical. The costumes are graphic and bright. Some of them, like the Autumn Bird, are enjoyable for the auditory experience of soft rustling as well as the visual aspects. The narrative was easy to follow in its simplicity and the lack of intellectual energy required to piece together the events allowed me to take pleasure in the viewing experience and the rise and fall of the emotional arch.

In the moment, the production was highly enjoyable. But the story was so tidy, the distinctions between right and wrong and good and evil so clear, that there was nothing left to null over and discuss. This is where I see the collaboration as a flat point for Dzama’s independent work is often anarchonic and tends to “conjure in the viewer nostalgia for an unfamiliar history.”[8] The Most Incredible Thing ends up presenting a tired narrative in a visually seductive manner that enchant but does little to empower or subvert standard women stereotypes, dictator power scenario, The Most Incredible Thing, because he read it around the time that ISIS was publicly destroying many artworks.[14] The fairy tale that depicts the resurrection of art in order to defeat evil is highly seductive when framed as a parallel to this contemporary moment. However, while the cuteness in No One Does It Like You allows for easy reception and makes light of potentially dark and complex subject matter, there is danger in the enchantment of The Most Incredible Thing to delude and lead to overly simplistic moralistic judgments.

I met Dzama while I was wandering through his installation, The tension around which history is built, in the Promenade after the premiere. It was his third time viewing the production, he was extremely interested and a bit concerned for the production showed, and rightly so. His contributions do really shine despite my criticism of the adapted narrative. While watching the video portion of the installation in which Amy Sedaris impersonates Dzama as a dictator on the set of a production, it is clear that Dzama is at his best when he constructs his own narratives. The self reflexive humor had returned and, while there is no shortage of evil women characters, the dominant power figures are not typically female. Sculptures made in various media were shown in addition to the video work. Dzama’s most fascinating creation is the promenade was a kinetic piece with figures constructed out of recycled tin scavenged during a past residency in Guadalajara, Mexico.[15] Doralma’s potential set designs were complete with hand carved figures smudged with graphite revealing frequent interaction with the objects. Leaving the theatre felt like leaving a toy shop. The Most Incredible Thing, because he read it around the time that ISIS was publicly destroying many artworks.[14] The fairy tale that depicts the resurrection of art in order to defeat evil is highly seductive when framed as a parallel to this contemporary moment. However, while the cuteness in No One Does It Like You allows for easy reception and makes light of potentially dark and complex subject matter, there is danger in the enchantment of The Most Incredible Thing to delude and lead to overly simplistic moralistic judgments.

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The Problem of Distance: Where do the blues come from?

by Kelly Campbell

Have you seen, or have you heard of, Shirin Neshat’s video work Turbulent? It’s a two-channel piece installed on facing screens. On one, a man sings a traditional Persian love song in a Mississippi prison. She then played a West African call to prayer; the melody is remarkably, disarmingly similar. The notes are bridged using the same microtonal characteristics of traditional Islamic singing. Just as in Neshat’s piece, those who are unable to access their voice find a new way to speak.

The woman in Turbulent and the blues singer both have lost, singing was not outlawed. On the podcast, a historian played a 1930s recording of a man singing a blues song in a Mississippi prison. The woman in Turbulent and the blues singer both have

work for and are invested in the power and authority of the establishment. Roy, an impassioned political essayist and author, describes the official response to her essays as the Expert’s Anthem: “You’re too emotional. You don’t understand, and it’s too complicated to explain.” (Roy, Power Politics, 25). The international dam industry experts discussed in Roy’s essay submerge entire towns and valleys in India with the water redirected by their faulty, unnecessary dams. When confronted with the angry protests of those whose lives have been destroyed, they invoke their Anthem: if only the villagers could calm themselves, we experts would explain the long-term benefits of hydroelectric dams are not good for you, a citizen of India, regardless of your home is flooded, you understand that hydroelectric power upon the nation, the economy, and ultimately the new reference points are created using what is available:

new reference points are created using what is available: personal emotional experience. Which description of the experience of slavery and its legacy would the institution favor: unlimited numbers of historical accounts and journal papers; unlimited access to history, official knowledge, and place; or a black man singing the blues in prison during the 1930s?

Bibliography:

An institutional expert cannot access or understand a lived experience outside their own. To understand the work of an artist confronting a struggle he is not a part of, the expert must first admit that he cannot understand it.
**Touchy Feely**

Erica Mendritzki’s exhibition at the Maison des Artistes Culturelles, Simon l’Hiver is an emotive response to the problem of the contemporary female artist: the history of the male artistic genius. This baggage weighs on practicing and re-examining the works – in particular for Mendritzki’s Touchy. This piece is emblematic of the attack on the male genius and domination of the art historical landscape realized through Mendritzki’s painting. While this piece does not offer a solution to these issues, it brings the distressing questions to the fore and actualizes the mental brooding the artist undergoes in dealing with these problems. I will first detail the historical concerns that are central to this work. Secondly, the analysis of supplements to the piece, the artist’s presence in the work and the interpretation of the network of signs giving context to where these issues are being mentally exercised.

**On a formal level, the work bears similarities to that of Rael de Keverse, in the use of palette and thought accurate to paint. De Kevser uses a primarily muted palette and in a block-like application as a field on the canvas. Feely Touchy is not as reductive in these fields however there are instances of these divisions of planes that are purposeful in their self-sufficiency.**

*Excerpt from the document*
Post Mortem: Karel Funk at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.
by Shep Steiner

There were a number of surprises in Karel Funk’s mid-career retrospective at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The first surprise were the paintings themselves. Seeing the paintings on the walls of the gallery and seeing their effects ran a close second and third. Having only known Funk’s paintings from reproduction, I was initially amazed by how painterly the works actually are. Funk’s paintings, especially early in his career, are not nearly so photographic as they are proto-photographic. In person, an entire range of details constantly remind us that photography is only a general horizon of expectation and not as necessarily consubstantial with the mimetic enterprise of the works as we contemporary viewers would like to believe. The color is sometimes off; we realize that it took the painter a while to master the painting of life-like skin. Up close we can see that cloth is easier to capture than flesh, and that stubble on a man’s chin will only ever be an index of the movement of a single bristled brush between the artist’s fingers. Early paintings like Untitled, 2002 and Untitled #3, 2003 are good examples. They belong right next to Hans Holbein’s The Dead Christ in the Tomb, 1521 and Giovanni Bellini’s Portrait of a Venetian Gentleman, 1500. Those strands of hair! That Renaissance profile!

By now it is common knowledge that Funk’s visits to the Frick Collection while he was studying in New York were formative for his early portraiture. However, it should also be clear that in his early paintings death is almost always present. Thus, with eyes closed Untitled, 2002 might well be the head of a cadaver lying on an autopsy table. Indeed, though I hesitate to belabor the point, it is tempting to see Funk’s corpus as a sweeping analytics of death: Untitled, 2002 being “the living image of a dead thing” and later works like Untitled #62, 2014 or Untitled #78, 2016 standing as death’s heads of one kind or another. Between these works—and here I am on firmer ground—one sees etched ever deeper the lineaments of what Walter Benjamin called “the facies hyppocratica of history.” But we are getting ahead of ourselves. A more methodical approach is necessitated by Funk’s corpus.

The second surprise this viewer was not at all prepared for were the white grounds of Funk’s paintings. Ideally Funk’s paintings should not be framed. What was the National Gallery thinking when it framed Untitled #10, 2004? In a gallery the unframed works produce a very optical effect, which tethers the work to the wall. In short, these paintings are keyed to the question of display. In fact, I noticed in the case of some middle to late paintings that the white background had been rolleried on to simulate the texture of white paint on the gallery wall. Moreover, the varieties of white Funk uses are very unpainterly, seemingly intended more for the wall than the frame. This gives Funk’s paintings a double purchase on institutional critique (via the gesture to the wall) and modernist painting (via the optical equivalence or bleed between painting and wall).

Third, I was struck by how striking and accentuated the silhouettes of the later works become. This is what I would describe as a cut and paste aesthetic, and it’s where the most recent painting comes cleanest about.
its technological mediation. We know that Funk traces the outlines of his figures using a projector, and that he works from multiple digital images to arrive at the figures he will finally paint. Karel Funk: Untitled, 2016, a film by Caelum Vatnsdal commissioned by the WAG, is especially strong on this point. It shows this metaphysics of touch as it emerges from Funk’s process: we see the painter’s brush tracing the outlines of light projected from a digital apparatus onto the painterly surface. This is no great reveal in itself, given the omnipresence of the silhouette, but it certainly confirms the suspicions of the attentive viewer. And, of course, the problem of photography is an infinitely slippery one in this corpus. Funk himself admits these are painterly images. At one point in the film, he says something like: “They don’t look like photographs.” True and false I would say. The photographic verisimilitude of the paintings is a constant, if variable horizon.

Four, pragmatically speaking, as a viewer I was continually checking the paintings to make sure they were not in fact photographs. This tends to happen with some frequency and intensity. One is constantly moving in close to see where the fiction of painting (and as often the fiction of photography) breaks down; admittedly more so with the later works, in which, from a distance, technique outpaces vision and the outline is so photographic. Nevertheless I was constantly stooping and looking from below and from the side and with the aid of strafing gallery lights to see the trace of brushstrokes as they stood out against the very flat, smooth effects of the painted surface. To some extent the frontal view is the photographic perspective while the look from the side is the painterly reveal. More complexly, the frontal view from 10 feet out is photographic, while up close the perspective is painterly. I liked the fact that these different techniques of viewing seemed to negotiate the different technologies involved, and of course the processes of looking are nowhere near as simple as I make out. For example, the silhouette edge is never totally sharp; in many cases it is blurred and only gains its sharpness by virtue of a differential system of details that are both in and out of focus—a point on which photography comes up again as depth of field.

Five, and this is a question of value, the sharpness of stitching was something that really seduced me, far more for instance, than the hair. In Untitled #1 I found the hair to be greasy and felt that the beard could easily have been attached to that of a cadaver. The complexion of the red haired figure in Untitled #25, 2006 was similar. I found this economy of attraction and repulsion—always a question of aesthetic value—playing out in various ways in the works, perhaps most revealingly in Untitled #58, 2013, a painting of a plastic skull and cactus, and Untitled #61, 2014 a painting of plastic containers, both of which had me and many others pronouncing the works as “bad.” It took a little while to shake free of my aesthetic prejudices in face of these works, which are obviously mediated by photography, or, more succinctly, by the primacy of life-likeness in the corpus as a whole. This seems to be a point on which Funk appeals to the Romantic (i.e., anti-modern) sensibilities in each of us—perhaps we are all like Heidi, preferring Grandfather’s hut in the mountains to the city’s decadence—but it is also a moment when both the stories of Pygmalion and Zeuxis mediate our relationship with the work. The larger point here being not that I found myself constantly checking in on details as a way to confirm that the controlling metaphor of Funk’s work is in fact mimesis—whether equating the artificiality of plastic in painting with the artificiality of plastic in the world or equating stitch in painting with stitch in world—but rather that the real controlling metaphor of Funk’s work is the breakdown or failure of the mimetic apparatus, whether that comes off as painting or photography. We might profitably call this interpretative undertaking digging the line between death and representation. Thus, I note that after painting his second momento mori Untitled #61, Funk painted Untitled #62 a projective mirror whose hidden countenance seems to whisper, “remember you too must die.”

When looking at Funk’s paintings one always eventually crosses a threshold that marks a cessation of engagement with the mimetic fiction; a point at which photography folds into painting, hyper realism is revealed as process, depth as surface and so on. And presumably the focused acts of attention through which we viewers perform this labor somehow reproduces a similar moment of labor performed by the artist and keyed to the finishedness of a particular detail in the painting or the painting as a whole. All of which raises something every viewer knows about Funk’s painting but has no way of integrating into their encounter with it without anecdotal evidence or supplementary reading: that duration is built into the very bones of the practice. Long, hard, painstakingly laborious hours before the canvas are a given in this
corpus. Whether we confront one of his plastic works or a magnificent painting like Untitled #78, 2015, it is an a priori given that the frozen moment depicted was worked up to the point of a sufficiently symbolic intensity over a period of months.

Of the essays in the Karel Funk catalogue which accompanied this fine exhibition curated by Andrew Kear, I found Jarret Gregory’s “Sensory Deprivation” the most contemporary, albeit a contemporaneity that is framed generationally, and which primarily plays out as an argument that Funk’s kind of painting belongs to a kind of zeitgeist that cuts across a number of mediums. If painting is to be interesting again it is clear that it has to assimilate the tactics of the neo avant-garde rather than flog the old dead horse of medium specificity that many critics still defend. Nevertheless, the medium is still the medium. This said, I like the fact that Gregory’s account pushed emptiness, the lack of frame and what I felt was a decidedly anti-humanist edge or a version of contemporary nihilism tethered to the internet. Given my preceding discussion I think it should be clear that if Funk’s paintings participate in the varied discourses of contemporary art, then they do so on two levels: both through subject matter (Gregory’s emphasis) and more interestingly through the optic of a very restricted and traditional version of what painting is. But then if we are talking about the contemporary, it seems equally clear that Funk’s subject matter, like that of Tim Gardner and Peter Doig, is shot through with Canadian identity. A winter parks is a passport.

Furthermore, I felt Jarret’s slightly nihilist edge (something I would push further) was a necessary antidote to Stephen Borys’ art historical account, which is too restricted and traditional version of what painting is. Borys raises these qualities to back up his argument for the sacred. However, I think these are not qualities of the subject proper as trope or painterly motif, but more importantly of the space that surrounds the subject. The point is important because it marks a departure from the fullness of presence in the portrait subject to a fullness that surrounds the subject and hence is inclusive of the subject/object relationship and more. My point here is that the literal and fictive space around Funk’s subjects is moody, atmospheric, quiet and still and that this is grammatically injected into the subjects. Conversely, these paintings are spatially energizing in the Baroque sense; things spill out of the frame, or discrete portrait, and into the space of the white cube, or studio, and presumably also into the scene of address between painting and painter. In this sense, portraiture is used for other than the usual ends. Rather than promising a moment of subjectification based on the fiction of an interpersonal relationship, Funk’s mature version of portraiture really only makes the space around the subject hum with life. Metaphysical presence is not exactly the point here, for it arrives second hand in the form of a spatial supplement. This is something unique to my mind.

This point is tackled differently in Andrew Kear’s “Hidden in Plain Sight,” a thoughtful piece of thematic criticism, though in my view too reliant on a theory of genres. I think portraiture is important of course, but no more important than putting the whole question of portraiture under pressure, even to the point of blowing the genre wide open into sculpture or space, or into the reproduction of a situation—by which I mean recreating the quietness of the studio encounter in the gallery setting. This is
precisely the point I was making above, for the air of stillness inside the work bleeds into our reverential attitude toward it and vice versa. For who is not captured and stilled by these paintings? Even kids can appreciate the fiction. Nevertheless, in noting the absence of the subject, Kear does not go far enough in registering the truly unsettling effects of these paintings. For surely the most worrying thing about these hollowed out and empty portraits is that in spite of this lack, we believe them to be portraits nevertheless. This is not simply the anti-humanism pointed to in Kear’s text, but something more like an “anti-anti-humanism” that has surfaced before in Canadian portraiture—most importantly in the work of Ken Lum.6

One more point: the question of absorption is entirely missing from the literature on Funk. Funk’s figures—when human beings appear and even when they do not—are paradigmatically absorptive figures and more than anyone else Michael Fried has consolidated this body of painterly knowledge and tropes.7 And readers may or may not know but, this body of practices bleed quite nicely into the experience of the hyper urban environment of New York, which is where Funk says he ultimately found his subject matter. Walker Evans’ subway portraits, which Fried discusses in his book on photography, are the absorptive equivalent of Funk’s figure studies.8

Which brings me to my tenth and final point, again a point that has received little if any comment in the literature on Funk. It is mind-boggling just how shaped and structured this artist’s corpus is. In 2002, when he painted Untitled, 2002, he was a painter with a whole life ahead of him. With Untitled #2, 2003, I presume his life’s work was all sketched out. No need to write an autobiography after the last painting is completed—the work has been writing the life from the very beginning. Because Funk has numbered his paintings consecutively from “1” we feel his development in very particular ways: the way he constantly gets better at painting, the intractable restrictions he places on himself, his boredom, his attempts to break out of the portrait format, his worries over what is next, etc. Funk’s notion of the corpus is a very conceptual one. It turns his thoroughly visual practice into something non-retinal. Obviously, Marcel Duchamp is somewhere in the shadows here, as are Andy Warhol and On Kawara. I wonder too, given his early fascination with morbidity, how closely his life studies verge on death, and how he has managed the inherent risks of titling, if at one time he was considering actuarial science as a career? Given the logic of Funk’s version of paint by numbers, we can count on the fact that there will be more Untitled paintings to come, that they will be better, etc., and ultimately that all things will come to an end.

(Endnotes)

8 Michael Fried, Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
Laura Letinsky’s Photography: Remnants of Presence
by Sarah Blanchard

For artist Laura Letinsky, photographs “show but also tell what the world is.” Letinsky’s work offers a secondary form of subsistence, and both the medium and subject matter of her artistic practice can be considered intermediary and supplemental. As observed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, “everything begins with the intermediary.” This statement refers to the immediacy of presence, realized through a lack and its deferral to a supplement. Untitled #62 (Fig. 1) will be analyzed through an exploration of the work’s visual language, its reference and modification of historical artistic practice, and applicability to Derrida’s theory.

The photograph Untitled #62 points to an initial state, a reference of what has been and no longer exists, an absence felt in a spare presence. When faced with this sparseness, the viewer is forced to ask ‘what is there?’ or rather, ‘what is left?’ This is where an analysis of Untitled #62 will begin. In the corner of a room, at the edge of the table, there is a slice of cake on a white plate. The cake slice has three layered sections, surrounded with icing. The slice is not entirely intact, evidenced by a concave dip that faces towards a fork. This fork also rests on the plate, with the tines adjacent to the cake slice, and the handle slightly extending off the table’s side. The overhanging tablecloth forms diagonals from the creased fabric, and scattered across the cloth are crumbs as well as distinct drink stains, which are a faded crimson. With its subdued palette, the most saturated aspects of Untitled #62 are the shadowed creases in the tablecloth, the sage green corner of the room, and the stains spilt from a supposed glass. The source of light hits the wall that is furthest in the background, as well as the top of the table, resulting in a bright white surface. The edge of the table and the tablecloth sharply converge with the linear corner in the background. The observation that the stains and crumbs are on an area of cloth which is draping over the side of the table suggest that there has been a shift in the cloth’s placement. This could indicate that the tablecloth is in fact falling off the table, which results in threatening the stability of the objects as well. The frame indicates where the photographic space ends and reality begins, and in this way the tablecloth can extend and enter into the viewer’s space. The table and the objects placed on it seem accessible and tangible due to their placement in the forefront of the photograph. A notion of precariousness can be sensed as this tangibility elicits a feeling of uncertainty and instability that transfers to the viewer.

History is constantly being brought forward by the present, and the present has the ability to further certain aspects of history. As well, since the present moment is not granted the insight of its own retrospect, seeing the alteration in perspectives over time towards history can amplify the subjective malleability of the present. In this way, there is a reciprocal relationship between the past and present that informs one another. Another work from Letinsky’s series Hardly More Than Ever is Untitled #32 (Fig. 2). Along with other pieces within this series, it has been likened to the still life paintings of Johannes Vermeer during the Dutch Golden Age. Vermeer’s interest in, “naturalistic effects, his carefully balanced compositions, and his domestic subjects… the behavior of light and other optical effects such as sudden recessions and changes

Figure 1, Laura Letinsky, Untitled #62 from the series Hardly More Than Ever, Inkjet Print, 2002.
Courtesy the Yancey Richardson Gallery, N.Y.
of focus,” closely correlates with similar emphasis placed within Letinsky’s works. For example, Untitled #32 features a brightly lit room with rich blues of Chinese porcelain, accompanied by orange fruits and a white lily, perpetuating the subject matter of objects that were obtained and proudly presented in the still life paintings during the Dutch Golden Age. But rather than offering a fresh visual display of vegetation in this interior space, what is shown in Untitled #32 are fruits and fallen petals strewn across the table. The flowers have wilted and are beginning to rot, as indicated by the brackish water in the vase. Although Letinsky’s photographs diverge from the paintings of Old Masters due to their decaying subject matter, she characterizes the remarkably palpable sense within her works in relation to the medium of oil paint by emphasizing “that the photographs hover between being painterly – in the sense of light, color, composition, and plasticity – and being insistently photographic.” For creating art, Letinsky doesn’t see the “post-everything moment’ as burdensome, but rather utilizes it as a format in which she can question “why certain things were obtained and proudly presented. Digestion is an astute term in the context of Letinsky’s practice, which combines a physical and mental fixation on food and what is leftover. This notion extends into Laura Letinsky’s larger body of works, and also speaks to her ability to both borrow and inform a new take on the still life.

Untitled #62 can be regarded as a supplemental intermediary through traces found within the work. As Derrida states, the supplement “compensates for a lack. ”What is lacking in this photograph is what the cake was created and intended for, and it is through the presence of the cake and stains on the tablecloth that the absence of its consumer is more strongly indicated. A supplement, in Derrida’s theory, is “something that completes or makes an addition.” The slice of cake and the stains in Untitled #62 provide something that would not have been evident if a person was present within the piece. An intermediate state that can be drawn out resides in connecting the cake with the person eating it, and the moment of bringing food up to one’s mouth is a hovering of what is unseen and what will be consumed. It is unclear if the cake in Untitled #62 will be returned to and consumed or left and discarded.

To be filled by food has literal and figurative connotations, and the significance and reasons for the cake being un eaten can be considered as well. Cake is a marker but also an expectation during celebrations, and in light of this notion, cake that is eaten without the context of external pleasure may indicate inner dissatisfaction. For Derrida, “the original is always deferred – never to be grasped.” In her series Venus Inferred (Fig. 3), Letinsky refers to the insatiable longing of romance, and her works address the question, “why do we structure along the want?” What surrounded couples in the living spaces she photographed were objects, as telling details indicative of who occupied those intimate spaces, and what that entailed. Letinsky recalls becoming more interested in these objects: “I began to look at the debris and think about the idea of leftovers...You can’t have utopia without its loss, and so you’re always stuck in this position.” This marks a shift in her approach to photography, which would lead to creating still life works such as Untitled #62. Since her earlier works, Letinsky expressed that she wanted “there to be a palpable absence, this feeling of something missing.” Laura Letinsky’s pieceUntitled #62 perpetuates this sense of loss and longing, but also provides a temporal and intermediary space, both invoking and deferring to a moment outside of the work.

Letinsky’s Untitled #62 offers a secondary form of substance eating it, and both the medium and subject matter of her artistic practice can be considered intermediary and supplemental. The remnants of a time that has past goes beyond the contemporary instance of Laura Letinsky’s photographs, and pays homage to the history of art. Despite the distinction made between the mediums of painting and photography, the particular notion of documentation in photography provides a format in which what is unseen retains identifiable traces, and also coincides with aims of the still life historically. The focus throughout her career on what is leftover functions as indications of what is lacking in broader terms. In Untitled #62 the slice of cake is a remnant of the past, and stains on the tablecloth are a sign of what has been. When examining these meager remains, the viewer enters potential narratives, and uses the absence within the work as an expanded vacancy to be filled.


Liedtke, Walter. “Still-Life Painting in Northern Europe,

(Endnotes)
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8 Ibid.
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Taking in Michael Dumontier's latest show at Lisa Kehler Projects put me in mind of some recent concerns around the status we accord things in our culture. Mr. Dumontier seems to be a whittler of sorts – to my mind no bad thing – as the work he shows is, above much else, the product of careful consideration; a paring down bordering on anemic. His objects are shorn of everything one might deem excessive. In the absence of any high-key visual drama, Dumontier delivers an unusual, if somewhat deadpan, level of attentiveness to subtle differences in surface and shade. Not to say he's against the decorative, or a minimalist, exactly speaking – it’s more like if minimalism had been invented in the 1920’s, Dumontier, had he been alive, might have been one of its practitioners.

Which brings me to one thought extracted from this scene – that of time, and how it is expressed in the making of objects, which we can call style; our current fascination with anachronisms, such as the short-lived monocle "craze" (the epicenter of which was a few square blocks of Williamsburg, New York), elegantly trimmed beards gracing the faces of men who rarely leave the city; most things bespoke, and every film made by Wes Anderson. To be fair, as a founding member of the Royal Art Lodge, Dumontier has as authentic a claim to this inauthentic stuff as anyone. The ironies appended to that claim would not be lost on this artist; they may in fact be a large part of what keeps Dumontier going back to the studio.

Dumontier’s object-images are from a bygone world, when things still had the good fortune (bestowed upon them by their “designers” – although like many things that word seems to have taken on new, outsized dimensions, aspirations, and pretensions) of being generic. Windsor chairs, wooden coat racks, tools such as hatchets and Swiss army pocket knives, loaves of bread characterized by “caps,” indicative of being baked in rectangular tins... What these things have in common is their commonness or, commonality, if you prefer. They were once new, then elevated to the vernacular, and are now beating a retreat towards either the dustbin of history or the nearest maker of bespoke goods.

Like many artists today, Dumontier seems transfixed by these kinds of objects. For those of us born into their world, they are as much images as they are things. You hear “pocket knife” and you think Swiss Army; “dining room chair,” and you think Windsor, etc. Which goes to explain Dumontier’s penchant for inhabiting the bas-relief mode, where image and thing collide. To further underscore the distance from minimalism proper, these are specific takes on generic objects, rather than specific objects. In Dumontier’s idiosyncratic world, the road to objecthood is a Sunday drive. His are works that are as shorn of detail as much as they are devoid of the conventional signs of capital ‘R’ rigor. In place of that rigor, Dumontier’s objects present some sort of intersection between rigor and leisure, which I think may be another way of describing dandyism.

There are parallels here with the work of the American artist Matthew
Brannon, whose graphically inflected print-based works couple anodyne and generic mid-century popular design motifs with phrases and sentiments that manage to convey apathy, cynicism, narcissism, and careerism all at once. While Dumontier’s works are less cynical, (or less reflective of a cynical world – he’s Canadian after all) both artists share similar visual appetites, drawn to the intersections of high modernism and banal décor; the once-popular, re-formatted for today’s appetite for the knowing, the empty, and the elegant. These signifiers at times frame the content, and at other times are the content. The vacillation between these two modes keeps things interesting.

Take, for example, Untitled (hatchet). Comprised of a block of steel cut to the outline of a hatchet and faux-embedded into what could be described as a very narrow and tall chopping block, or better yet, a plinth, it’s both violent and genteel – a high art version of industrial era tools as restaurant décor. But, before reading the decidedly blunt iconography, I was pulled in by the play of surfaces and attention to detail. The particularities of shade (cool, chalky, off-white stained wood playing to the gallery wall, interrupted by iron-oxide rimmed and rusted steel) are particularly satisfying here, and one has the sense with all of the works that material choices are very important. Narrative associations aside, the piece is also a regular polygon violently interrupted by an irregular one, making Untitled (hatchet) a Canadian faux rustic’s riposte to El Lizzitsky’s Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge – all of which highlights Dumontier’s canny ability to convey narrative tension, formalist reduction, and a finely honed sense of materiality.

Dumontier wants us to see both image and object simultaneously, hence the curious decision to have the base of Untitled (hatchet) – the bottom of the chopping block – float above the ground, a few inches higher than the gallery baseboard, where one might expect it to meet the floor. Elsewhere the gallery baseboard itself becomes a kind of stage, used to prop up a narrow slat which in turn serves as shorthand for flat ground holding up the profile of a chair, tilted forward to lean into the corner of the gallery. Here, with Untitled (Leaning Chair), seemingly minimal means are employed to deliver maximum sign slippage. The effect, again, is that of a visual riddle. As with a number of the works (if not all), Dumontier plays with the syntax of the gallery space itself, highlighting its quirks and its deviations from generic “white cube” status.

It took me a few moments to work out how Untitled (Cracked Egg 1) and Untitled (Cracked Egg 2) were made, before I was led to a consideration of the forms themselves – slightly concave cracked eggs, with broken bits protruding as though pecked outward from within. I was tempted to read this pair of identically sized eggs (scaled 1:1 as was everything else in the show) as a joke on both phenomenology (the swelled form of the egg turned back in on itself) and Gestalt Theory’s “pregnanz” or “good form.” Whether or not my reading is at all squared with his intentions, the works are funny and compelling.

Perhaps the centerpieces of the show are his forays into painting – Clock (Wobble) and Clock (Meeting). Far from slackening the aforementioned rigor/leisure dialectic, both take this dialectic up as their content. What else to make of “paintings” (no paint to be found here), which rather than offering relief from time, seem bent on reinforcing our beholdenness to the clock.

Both works feature unprimed cool grey linen stretched tautly over medium profile stretchers bearing mysterious forms on their surfaces. One of the two lightly toned dots on Clock (Meeting) is, miraculously, in motion, tracing a circle as it repeatedly arcs around to meet and pass its stationary partner. With Clock (Wobble), the movement is implied or imperceptible, but I take the title at face value and assume the two circles (one nested into the other) to be the result of some movement or wobble. In both cases the materials listed are “linen, wood, paper, clock movement” (my italics). For me, the riddling aspect of Dumontier’s practice is at its most fertile here – I can’t quite read the pieces, but feel there is something to be read. This feeling can frustrate – especially when a work offers no other apparent reason for existing. But here, care with materials (their good form), the dry protestant sensuality of clean
linen, and the everyday miracle of perfect circular motion holds my attention.

Delving a little more deeply, one also feels there is a whole modern literature of painting being tinkered with here – albeit subtly and non-programmatically, from Matisse’s analogue of the function of painting (to that of a comfortable armchair) to Michael Fried’s notion of a work’s “presence as grace” in his once seminal Art and Objecthood essay. The latter notion held that the highest calling of a modern artwork worthy of the name was its ability to contain a sense of “presentness.” The work’s gift to the viewer was to hold her in its sense of present time, in that the whole was there for the eye simultaneously. The alternative for Fried was minimalism’s theatricality (used pejoratively by Fried); its staging, and heightened awareness of, the subject in relation to the object – the staging of the institution itself, and the potential politics therein, was apparently insufficient or besides the point for Fried. Dumontier’s talent, then, lies in holding these elements in play, adapting them to his own particular artistic language and interests. Less relevant are the stakes for painting, or sculpture, or minimalism, or one’s guarantee of progressiveness depending on one’s stance on these issues. These ideas, having themselves already acquired the quirks of 20th century relics, are perhaps joining the ranks of bespoke monocles and artisanal beards. For makers (and viewers) of the complex objects we call artworks, what these ideas have been replaced by is of course much less certain. For the time being, we will have to make do with their re-surfacing, their re-purposing (both crafty and resourceful), and their curious status as either baubles shorn of ornament, or problems shorn of necessity. It is a curious position to be sure, but one still capable of generating objects like Dumontier’s, which themselves generate pleasure.
Ace Art

Decolonizing Lens

Urban Shaman

LKP
Application Deadline: January 15

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Synthia’s Closet / Ione Thorkelsson
January 12 – February 24, 2017
Reception
February 02, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Artist Talk
February 02, 6:30 pm
136 ARTlab
Kiln Cast Glass demonstration
January 31, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Ceramics Building

1. Lidwen van de Ven: Living On
   curated by Shep Steiner
2. Opening
   March 10
   12:00 – 1:30
3. Gallery Talk
   March 10
   1:30–2:45
   with Lidwen van de Ven and Dr. Axelle Karera

In conjunction with the symposium “Living On” organized by the journal Mosaic.
