

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund  
**FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS 2016**

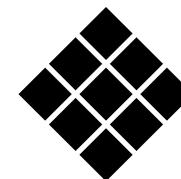


The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund  
**FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS 2016**

Jesse **McLEAN**  
Joseph **MOUGEL**

Rose **CURLEY**  
Robin **JEBAVY**  
Brooke **THIELE**

**June 8-September 17, 2017**



**HAGGERTY**  
MUSEUM OF ART  
MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

For more than a century, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation has helped individuals, families and organizations realize their philanthropic goals and make a difference in the community, during their lifetimes and for future generations. The Foundation consists of more than 1,300 individual charitable funds, each created by donors to serve the charitable causes of their choice. The Foundation also deploys both human and financial resources to address the most critical needs of the community and ensure the vitality of the region. Established in 1915, the Foundation was one of the first community foundations in the world and is now among the largest.

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#### Catalogue Credits

Polly Morris, Editor  
Craig Kroeger, Designer

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Inside covers:  
Brooke Thiele, *The Fall to a Sea Called Home*, 2017

Opposite title page:  
Robin Jebavy, *Plate with Wreath (Forest)* detail, 2016-17

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

In 2003, when the Greater Milwaukee Foundation decided to use a portion of a bequest from artist Mary L. Nohl to underwrite a fellowship program for individual visual artists, it made a major investment in local artists who historically lacked access to support. The program, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund Fellowships for Individual Artists, makes unrestricted awards to artists to create new work or complete work in progress and is open to practicing artists residing in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties. It is administered in collaboration with the Bradley Family Foundation.

Nohl, a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, died in December 2001 at the age of 87. She rarely exhibited her work, yet she gained national recognition for the art environment she created in and around her home in Fox Point on the shores of Lake Michigan. Her bequest, by supporting local visual artists and arts education programs, keeps Nohl's passion for the visual arts alive in our community.

The fellowship program was designed to support artists at two critical career stages; to encourage artists to remain in greater Milwaukee where they can continue to enrich our lives; and to establish—through the jurying process—an opportunity for curators from outside the area to see the work of local artists. Over the course of fourteen cycles, ninety-one fellowships have been awarded, and the majority of the recipients have stayed in greater Milwaukee, contributing to its cultural life. Forty-two curators from around the country have come to Milwaukee to view the work of more than 150 artists each year, acquiring knowledge of the area's artistic production that would be impossible to gain in other ways.

Over 290 artists, including many former Nohl Fellows, have received support from the Suitcase Export Fund, which assists with the transportation of artists and their work to exhibitions and screenings outside the area. These artists have exhibited in venues throughout the United States, Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the former Soviet Union, bringing greater Milwaukee to the world. These fellowships and awards have kept artists working and sharing their work with a wider public—an impressive legacy for Mary L. Nohl, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and our community.

The Nohl Fellowship program and the companion Suitcase Export Fund have always been responsive to the needs of artists, jurors, and institutions, as well as to changes in the art world and the local art landscape. Small adjustments to the program were common during the first dozen years. The 2015 cycle, however, was a time of major transition: shifting economic realities meant that the awards were no longer large enough to tempt artists to take time off from their day jobs. The larger awards we instituted—\$20,000 for established artists and \$10,000 for emerging artists—restored our ability to create time and space for artists. Similarly, the reduction in the number of fellows from five to seven recognized the growing demands of the program on those who run it. Over the years, we have steadily increased the amount of time we spend advising fellows, working with them on the exhibition and catalogue, and making and arranging studio visits with curators, critics, collectors, and fellow artists. Working with a smaller class of fellows guarantees that the quality of this professional development and support will continue to improve. Finally, moving the exhibition up to the midway point in the fellowship year has created opportunities for artists to take risks, make experiments, and think expansively about practice in the second half of the year.

In the fourteenth cycle, two fellowships were awarded to established artists Jesse McLean and Joseph Mougel, and three emerging artists were recognized: Rose Curley, Robin Jebavy, and Brooke Thiele. The fellows were selected from a field of 151 applicants by a panel of jurors who spent two days reviewing work samples and artists' statements, making studio visits, and talking to local artists: JoAnne Northrup, Curatorial Director and Curator of Contemporary Art, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno; Valerie Cassel Oliver, Senior Curator at Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and Julie Rodrigues Widholm, Director and Chief Curator, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago.

Each year, the Nohl exhibition invites us to stop and consider what it means to be an artist in greater Milwaukee at a specific moment in time. The 2016 cycle recognizes five artists working in video, photography, graphic memoir, painting, and animation and performance. Many of the artists are showing work that narrates experiences of "traveling across"—time, space, cultures, and technologies. Some of these narratives are personal: Rose Curley and Brooke Thiele make very different work about being adopted. Curley traces the history of growing up as a Black child in a white family in her graphic memoir, and Thiele explores her journey from South Korea to Green Bay, Wisconsin, in a performance and installation fusing traditional Korean art forms with the zoetrope, an early animation technology. Jesse McLean's collaged videos reference twentieth-century found footage precursors but explore our shaky twenty-first-century personal relationship to modern technology. Joseph Mougel reinterprets nineteenth-century landscape photographs of the American West via Google Earth and other mapping software, creating ambrotypes that integrate an old wet plate photographic process with the disarming glitches of LIDAR topography. Robin Jebavy makes large paintings of glassware that at first glance appear to be formal studies. But, like her seventeenth-century Dutch predecessors, she uses the still-life form to explore contemporary metaphysical questions.

All of the 2016 Nohl Fellows share an interest in the human condition and private experience, whether it's the deeply personal condition of a Black or Korean child growing up in a white Wisconsin home, or a broader question, raised by Jesse McLean, about the ways our emotions are lived in an age of mediated experience. Rose Curley calls herself "a student of the human condition." Robin Jebavy characterizes the glass vessels that are her ostensible subject as "conduits into liminal, ecstatic states of being." Even Joseph Mougel's seemingly technocratic synthesis of new and old processes creates images that are, as Dan Torop notes in his catalogue essay, containers for "feeling and metaphor."

This exhibition would not be possible without the support of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation; the enthusiasm of Susan Longhenry, director of the Haggerty Museum of Art, and her staff; and the imagination and dedication of the five artists who received the Nohl Fellowship in 2016.

**Polly Morris** is the executive director of the Bradley Family Foundation and the Lynden Sculpture Garden.

## ESTABLISHED ARTISTS

Jesse McLEAN

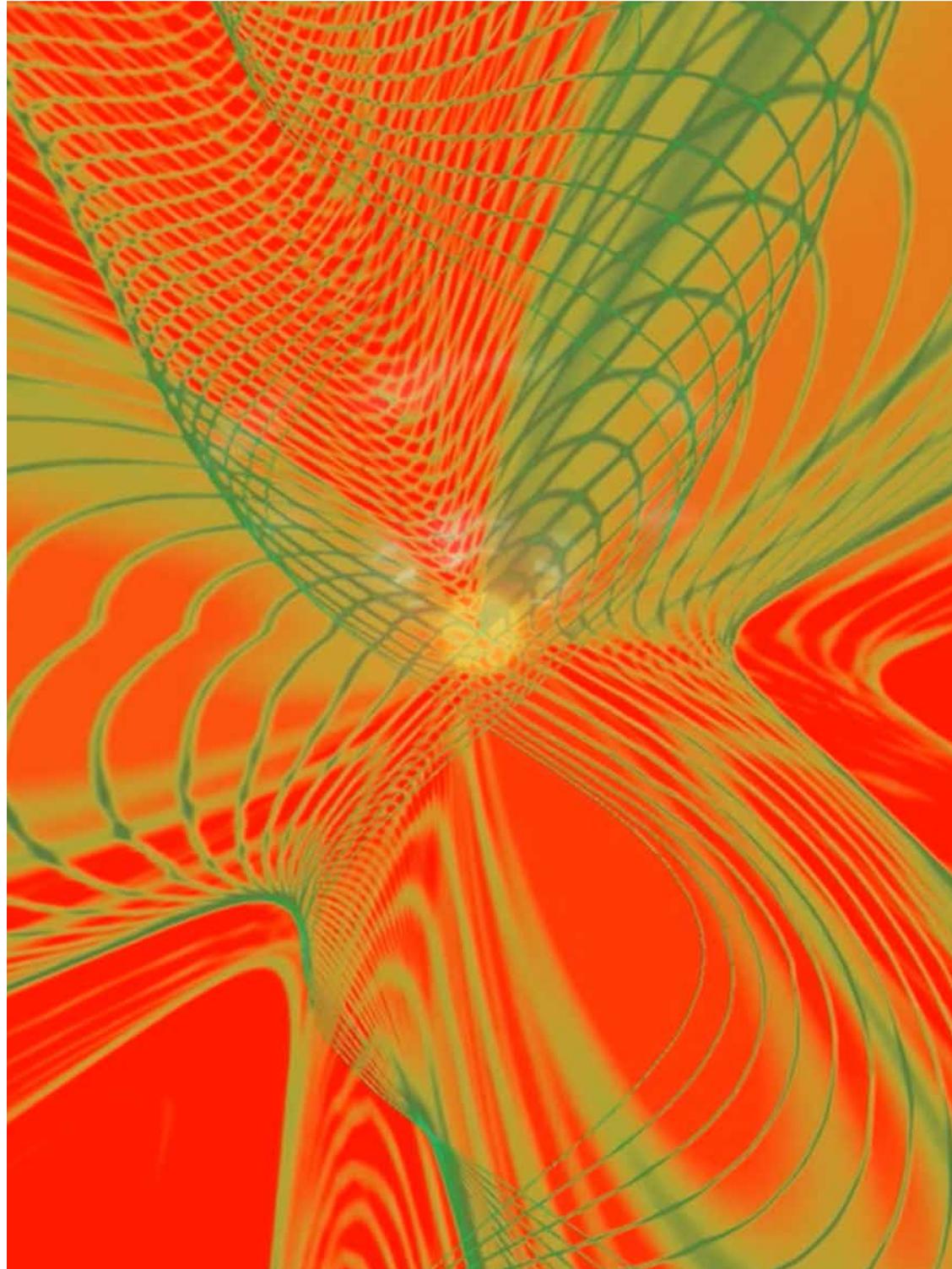
Joseph MOUGEL

## EMERGING ARTISTS

Rose CURLEY

Robin JEBAVY

Brooke THIELE



# Jesse McLEAN

## See, Hear, There, Wherever

With an anthropological focus that consolidates the activities of the detective and the collagist, Jesse McLean's videos yield remarkable discoveries. Her curiosity surrounding the affective power of mass media to shape everyday life clarifies once discursively invisible or inarticulable qualities. Over her years of practice, motif clusters appear in McLean's videos, but are punctuated with dramatic entrances into new territory. Her two latest pieces reflect one such ingress. While her previous cycle of films grappled with celebrity culture and the uncanny emotional resonances of media, *See a Dog, Hear a Dog* (2016) and *Wherever You Go, There We Are* (2017) take up themes of anthropomorphism, AI algorithms, technology, and virtuality.

*See a Dog, Hear a Dog* mines the human desire for communication, exploring the nexus between the aspiration for sentient technology and an anthropomorphic projection onto animals—specifically dogs. The intractable instinct to attribute human qualities to machines and animals is itself evidence of a deeper impulse to graft familiar social schemas onto non-human others. In the video, audiovisual materials from early AI programs, humanoid robots, and music visualizations clash with famous dogs throughout history, a singing Basenji, and a triad of performers (only two of which are human) unsuccessfully attempting meaningful contact. Influenced by the work of Canadian found footage innovator Arthur Lipsett, McLean experiments with what she calls “rupture strategies”—associative imagery edited into frenetically charged montage sequences. Erupting like synapses firing, these rhythmic bursts of imagery reflect a dizzying breadth of research and may be likened to the experience of thought itself.

Comprised of voice-over culled from spam emails juxtaposed with antique postcards, *Wherever You Go, There We Are* continues McLean's investigation of virtually mediated communication. Spam emails are frequently the work of bots, prone to writing wacky solecisms and preposterously intimate overtures. But built into these communiqués is a menacing air of threat, opening up a linguistic “uncanny valley” that reinforces the chasm that still exists between the human and artificial intelligence. McLean offers a productive counterpoint to spam through images of vintage postcards, a medium that fuses intimacy and transparency, and that by design can “speak” to those not meant to be addressed. The faces of these thrift store postcards all feature a process called Photochrom, which adds color to black-and-white images, contributing to a sense of the fraudulent and the unnatural.

Continuities with these newer works are found in *Climbing* (2009), a short experiment merging virtual space with embodied experience. Assembling composites of hundreds of mountains sourced online, McLean ascends these summits via a Photoshop cursor. The hand-shaped cursor reiterates theorist Michele White's assertion, in *The Body and the Screen: Theories of Internet Spectatorship*, that interfaces “conflate material bodies and objects with Internet and computer representations.” As the films on view in this exhibition illustrate, McLean continues to surprise and take risks, leaving an indelible mark on found footage cinema, and proving to be one of its most consequential practitioners.

**Eli Horwatt** is a visiting assistant professor of Film and Media Studies at Colgate University.

## *Wherever You Go, There We Are*

### **Artist Statement**

A primary focus of all my work is the power—and the failure—of the mediated experience to bring people together. I am motivated by a deep curiosity about human behavior and relationships and the ways emotions are lived in an age of mediated experience. Recent projects explore the fraught relationships people have with computers, a technology we simultaneously rely on and resent, and contrast our infinite human desires with finite technological capacity. Influenced by popular culture, cinema, and Soviet montage theory, my work is often a collage of sources, from recognizable, appropriated excerpts to more elusive material and footage that I generate myself. This collagist approach is both formal and conceptual, allowing me to complicate familiar forms, create complex readings, and make the joint processes of deconstruction and reassembly an aesthetic experience in itself.

### **About the Artist**

Jesse McLean's videos have been exhibited at museums, galleries, and film festivals worldwide, including the New York Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Wexner Center for the Arts, Anthology Film Archives, The Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. She was the recipient of an International Critics' Prize (FIPRESCI Prize) at the Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen and a Jury Prize in the International Competition at the 2013 Videoex Festival. She received a MacDowell Fellowship in 2016. She is an assistant professor of Film, Video, Animation, & New Genres at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

### **Checklist**

*Wherever You Go, There We Are*, 2017  
Video, 12:00

*See a Dog, Hear a Dog*, 2016  
Video, 17:40

*Climbing*, 2009  
Single-channel video loop, 6:30

A program of Jesse McLean's recent films will be screened as part of the Experimental Tuesdays series at the UWM Union Cinema this fall.



*Wherever You Go, There We Are*, 2017



*Wherever You Go, There We Are, 2017*



*Wherever You Go, There We Are, 2017*





*See a Dog, Hear a Dog, 2016*



*Wherever You Go, There We Are, 2017*



# Joseph MOUGEL

## Reconstructed Landscape

Joseph Mougel tells us not to confuse what is with what people say. When he was in the Marines, he photographed humanitarian evacuation missions in West and Central Africa. Mougel felt good about the work. He was doing what mattered.

When the post-9/11 wars started, digital was coming in. No more need to load rolls of film into noses of observation planes. Mougel got switched to mortuary duty, to accompany corpses of soldiers home. He resigned. His friends gave him a hard time for dropping out right when they were all about to do something that mattered.

Out of the service, Mougel started thinking about the rescue missions he'd worked on, about how his expeditionary force had pulled civilians from Zaire, where the United States had mining interests, but not from Rwanda. What people said about what they did wasn't always the same as what they did.

In the late nineteenth century, the United States commissioned surveys of recently acquired territories. Photographers who had documented Civil War battles, accompanied by soldiers, now made images of the West. Since the conquistadors searched for metal, since Officers Lewis and Clark, guided by Sacagawea, led their Corps, militaries have walked across this continent.

At the sites of the best-known topographic survey photographs, a Google StreetView car already has driven its many-lensed camera to the highway's observation point. But when Mougel pans across satellite images—stretched onto LIDAR topography by Google Earth's code—he can see the strange wonder of Devils Tower and Weber Canyon, and discover digital glitches through which stars shine.

Mougel spent a week, like a drifter, browsing Google's digital capture of Virginia City, seeking the site of an obscure survey photograph of Sugarloaf Mine. Virginia City is where the young Mark Twain wrote bits for a local newspaper. Downtown now is a rendition of itself, surrounded by folding canyons. Mougel has never been to Virginia City. He never found Sugarloaf Mine, and presumes it long since razed. Mougel did find the Sugarloaf Mountain Motel, and out front a view of a gaunt man walking down the street. Mougel picked images, composited them, cleaned up joints, but didn't touch the stuttering centerline of the road. He loaded the resulting data onto an iPad and placed it above a photographic enlarger lens. The image shined down onto a glass plate wet with emulsion.

In recent years, lovers of art photography have talked about the formal and the procedural. Photography became technocracy. But the lonely figure by the side of the virtually rendered road, walking by a motel that shares a name with a missing hole in the ground, holds feeling and metaphor. What people say about what they want in pictures isn't as true as what they need in pictures.

**Dan Torop** is a photographer of landscapes and an assistant professor in the Department of Art at Florida State University.

## Silver Pixels

### Artist Statement

We no longer need to traverse mountain peaks or ford canyon rivers to know a place. Instead, our understanding of the land is expanded through archives of images and data, easily accessible anywhere. Nor do we, like the photographers who first documented the Western landscape, need to carry our darkrooms with us; our small portable cameras easily capture and store thousands of images. *Silver Pixels* utilizes a nineteenth-century positive process to create new landscapes based on historical photographs of the American West, reinterpreted through satellite images and digital capture techniques. Virtual topographical and pictorial sources cast their illuminating glow onto glass, making an old wet-plate process mimic a digital screen. By returning to the process-oriented methodologies of the past, *Silver Pixels* spans the history of photographic imaging, with ambrotypes captured from altitudes and perspectives that were previously unachievable. Photographers have always carried their equipment out into the field; now we have the freedom to bring the world into the darkroom.

### About the Artist

After serving as a combat correspondent in the U.S. Marine Corps, Joseph Mougel completed a BFA in studio art at the University of Georgia and an MFA in photography at the University of New Mexico, where he also studied video, performance, and interactive media. He participated in the field-based studio program Land Arts of the American West, and has created site-responsive work for residencies at Elsewhere Artists Collaborative, Ucross Foundation, and Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. His work is held in collections including those of the Nevada Museum of Art, University of New Mexico Art Museum, and the New Mexico Museum of Art. Mougel is the head of the Photography and Imaging program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

### Checklist

All works Joseph Mougel, 2017  
Ambrotype, 20 x 28 inches

*Albany Co. (BLM Rd. 5409)*

*Devils Slide (Quarry)*

*Devils Tower (Untitled)*

*Echo Canyon (Looking East)*

*Half Dome (with Snapshot)*

*Junction of Yampa[h] & Green Rivers (21st c.)*

*Old Mission Church (Pinned)*

*Shoshone Falls (Click to Move)*

*Shoshone Falls (Man on Roadside)*

*Sugarloaf (Motel)*

*Weber Canyon (Milky Way)*

*Weber Canyon (Thousand Mile)*

*Zuni Pueblo (No Photography)*

The following photographs are generously loaned from the collection of the **American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries**.

Timothy O'Sullivan  
(American, b. Ireland 1840-1882)  
All photographs are albumen silver prints from glass negatives.

*Green River Cañons, Junction of Yampah and Green Rivers, [1872]*  
7 13/16 x 12 inches

*Old Mission Church, Zuni Pueblo, N.M. View from the plaza, 1873*  
7 15/16 x 10 13/16 inches

*Shoshone Falls, Idaho, [1868]*  
7 11/16 x 10 9/16 inches

*Sugar Loaf Mining Camp, near Virginia City, Nevada, [1868]*  
7 11/16 x 10 9/16 inches

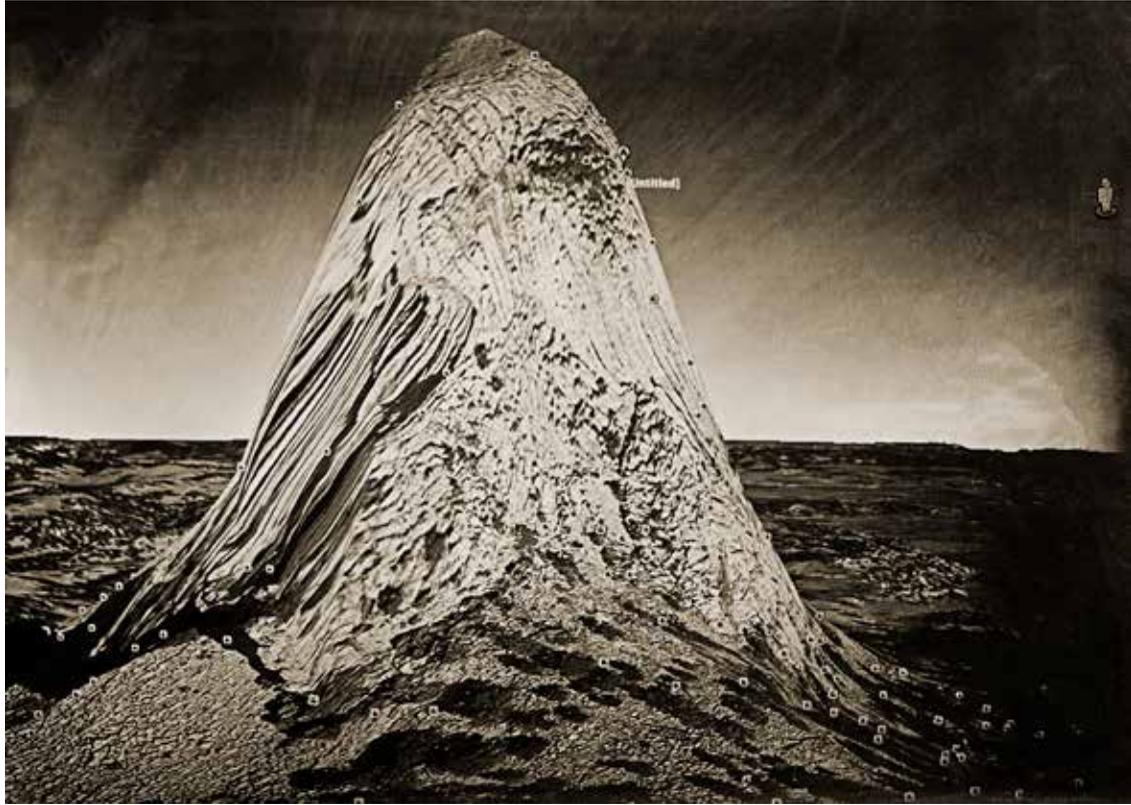
*Tertiary bluffs, Echo Cañon, Utah, [1869]*  
7 3/4 x 11 1/8 inches



U. S.  
ENGINEER DEPARTMENT.  
GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION.  
FORTIETH PARALLEL.

T. H. OSULLIVAN, Photographer.

Timothy O'Sullivan (1840-1882), *Sugar Loaf Mining Camp, near Virginia City, Nevada, [1868]*. Courtesy of the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. 79:97.



*Devils Tower (Untitled), 2017*



*Half Dome (with Snapshot), 2017*



*Old Mission Church (Pinned), 2017*



*Weber Canyon (Milky Way), 2017*



# Rose CURLEY

## A Cabin of One's Own

Rose Curley did her undergraduate work at the Rhode Island School of Design where she studied fine art, industrial design, set design, filmmaking, and documentary production. But when we met, she was a graduate student in a writing program, beginning a graphic memoir about transracial adoption. It was her story, but it was also a larger story about race in America.

The writing was tight; the drawings showed a startling visual and emotional clarity; right away I could see how she was coming out of a sophisticated tradition of comics that includes Alison Bechdel and Daniel Clowes. But our early conversations weren't easy. I was a forty-something white woman talking to a twenty-something Black woman who was newly and painfully aware of systemic racism. How could the conversation *not* be charged with questions of privilege, consumption, positioning, pleasure, shame, and power? Even more ridiculous, she was the one who could draw and I was the one sitting on the authoritative side of the desk. After our first meeting, Rose emailed about a structural question and added casually, "I hadn't slept, so I apologize if I was unpleasant."

For the record, she wasn't unpleasant. What's unpleasant is the political reality of race which, as James Baldwin said, is "not a human or a personal reality." And it is from these powerful unrealities that Rose Curley's compelling work comes.

Every memoir needs time to run along at least two rails: there is the "I" who is telling the story from a particular place, and there is the historical "I," the character to whom the memoir's events happened. To differentiate these past and present selves—the young brown girl who is raised not to question the white hegemonic culture, and the woman who is now investigating concepts of whiteness and Blackness by writing a memoir in a more socially nuanced present—Rose creates two visual styles of representation. The younger self is drawn simply, her memories unfurling without a frame. The present self is figured in a three-dimensional cabin, built out of paper and artist's tape, then photographed to produce a two-dimensional image, upon which the artist layers hand-drawn, hand-cut human figures. All the images are done in black and white, but there is a startling and rich texture to the present self, the one who is sifting through her fears in an attempt to see what she has refused to see about race.

Take a peek into the cabin of Rose Curley. What you'll find here, elegantly built on layers of historical and personal research, are images that crackle with authority and stories that reflect her sharp intelligence and disarmingly observant eye.

**Sara Levine** is a professor in the Writing Program at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is the author of the novel *Treasure Island!!!* and the story collection *Short Dark Oracles*.

## *The Coloring Book*

### Artist Statement

My project began four years ago, but accomplished graphic memoirists have assured me that this slow, steady pace is common, even necessary, for the form. Taking my time has allowed me to explore possibilities in the narrative design and to reconsider the construction of the page, but the historic events of the past four years have demanded a different kind of patience. My story is one of intersectionality, a Bildungsroman in which coming-of-age means becoming aware of what it means to be Black in America, the invisibility of whiteness, the absurd nature of perception versus reality, and the inevitable need to search for truth in a sea of lies.

### About the Artist

Rose Margaret Curley was born and raised in Milwaukee in the 1990s. Her Nigerian and European ancestry and the traditions of her Sicilian-American and Irish Catholic family inform her perspective as an artist, writer, filmmaker, and student of the human condition.

### Checklist

Pages from *The Coloring Book* (work in progress)

"About to Say Something Racist Meant to Be a Compliment," 2017  
Graphite on paper  
12 x 18 inches

"Birthday Picture," 2017  
Ink on paper  
11 x 14 inches

"Say That Again," excerpt, 2017  
Ink on paper  
Eight pages, 14 x 11 inches each

"Tupac is My Spirit Guide," excerpt, 2017  
Ink on paper  
Eight pages, 24 x 18 inches each

"A Stern Warning," 2016  
Ink on paper  
24 x 18 inches

"The Cabin at Night," 2016  
Ink on paper  
11 x 14 inches

"Through the Windows," 2016  
Ink on paper  
6 x 12 x 9 inches

"Transracial Adoption Research Excerpt No. 2," 2015  
Ink on paper  
10 x 10 inches

*Building Drawings*, 2017  
Video, 5:00

*Paper Dollhouse*, 2017  
Illustration board, paper, ink, chart tape  
8 1/2 x 18 x 12 inches

*Paper Dollhouse Drawings* (series), 2017  
Four framed photographs  
30 x 30 inches each

*Self Portrait*, 2017  
Permanent marker  
7 x 11 feet

*The Coloring Book* Screenplay, 2017  
Three-ring binder

*The Coloring Book*, screenplay excerpt, 2017  
Eight framed pages, 11 x 8 1/2 inches each

*Thought Collector*, 2017  
Video, 5:00

*A Replica of Racist Iconography*, 2015  
Ink on paper  
5 x 2 inches

*Phone*, 2015  
Ink on paper  
5 x 5 inches

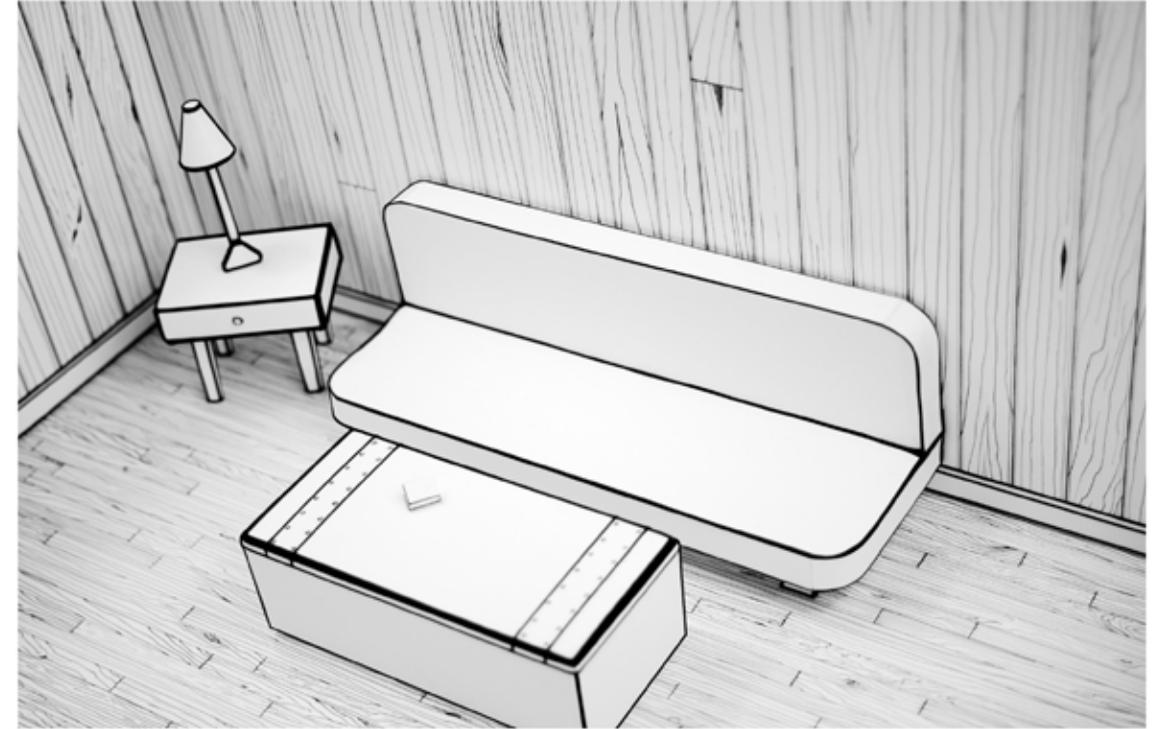
Artifacts, 1990-2017



"The Cabin at Night" from *The Coloring Book*, 2015

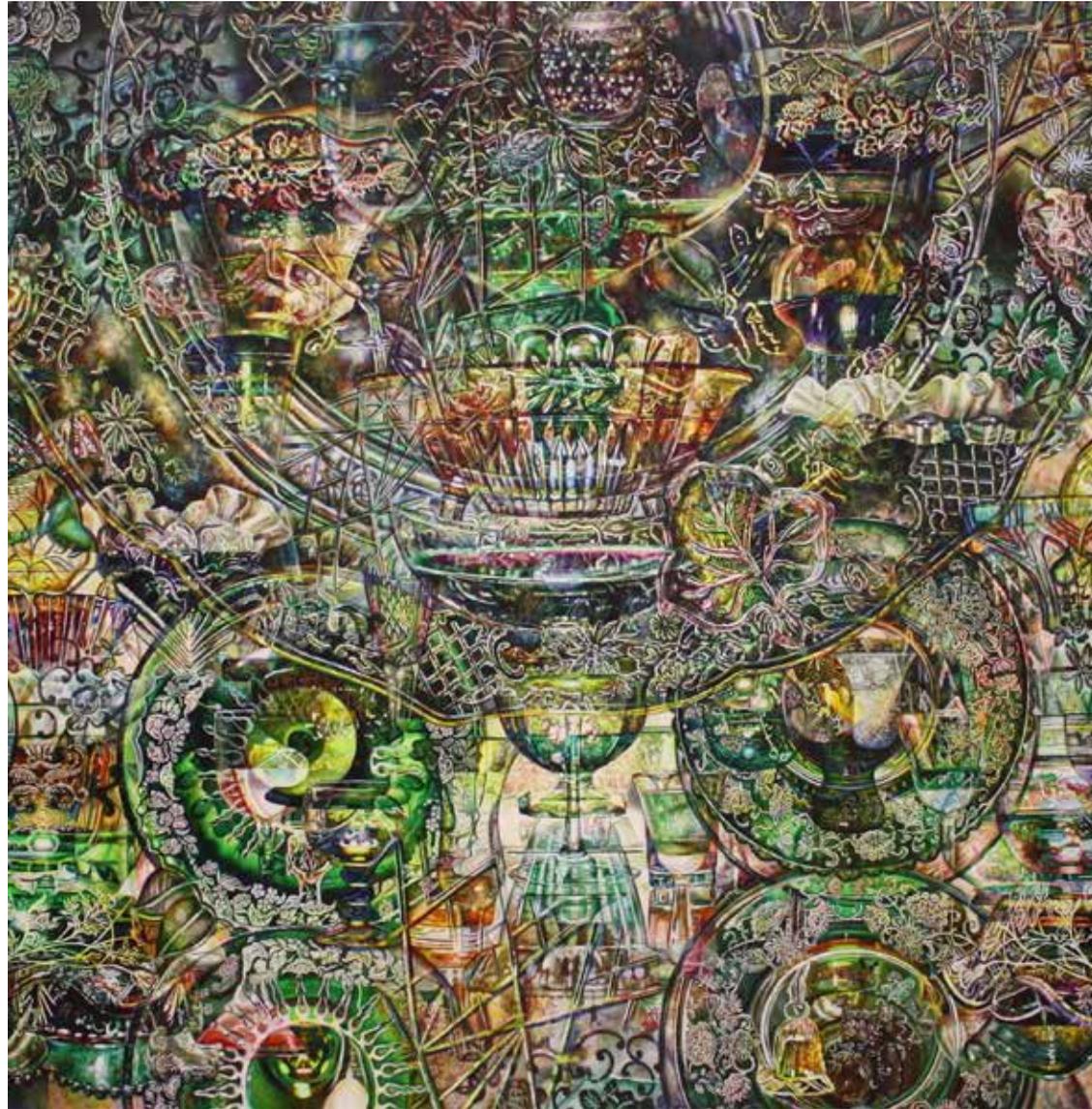


"Through the Windows" from *The Coloring Book*, 2016



*Paper Dollhouse*, 2017





# Robin JEBAVY

## Beyond the Glint on the Glassware

The still-life tradition of the Dutch Golden Age is a striking reference in Robin Jebavy's stunning acrylic paintings of glassware. I am not the first to make note of her place in this artistic genealogy, and Jebavy herself acknowledges that she looks at examples of *pronkstilleven*, or "luxury still lifes"—paintings that aimed to display an abundance of opulent and rare material goods. Each of the exquisite objects shown in these historical paintings carried the heavy symbolic burden of *vanitas*, but in the best examples of seventeenth-century *pronkstilleven*, artists also demonstrated their virtuosic skill through the visual description of color, shape, light, and texture.

The display of virtuosic skill through the depiction of carefully selected and arranged objects is evident in Jebavy's paintings, too, though her imagery originates from a different source: photography. Jebavy has amassed a glassware collection from family treasures and thrift store finds. As she begins a painting, she arranges these glass objects and then photographs the resulting composition. She typically uses spotlights to achieve dramatic shadows and luminous reflections. Jebavy repeats this process a few times with different selections of glassware and then, using Photoshop, combines and manipulates the photographs into a reference image that she works from loosely while painting.

In Jebavy's newest painting, *Plate with Wreath (Forest)*, her admiration for Dutch *pronkstilleven* and her innovative use of photography to create source imagery converge. In this large and complex composition, the precisely rendered forms of etched goblets, cordial glasses, and plates repeat in a densely packed but imperfectly symmetrical orbit around a transparent central platter. The sense of luxury and ornament found in a Dutch still life—reminders of the emptiness of material wealth to seventeenth-century viewers, but appealing to our twenty-first-century eyes—permeates Jebavy's paintings. Her fidelity to the play of light and shadow, to depth and transparency, and to the optical qualities of glass itself demonstrates her close attention to the representational potentials of photography as well.

This close attention to photographic representation in Jebavy's paintings summons another historical reference for me: Englishman William Henry Fox Talbot's photograph of glassware from his own collection at Lacock Abbey. In *Articles of Glass*, Plate IV from *The Pencil of Nature* (1844), Talbot created a photograph of objects tidily spaced along three shelves against a dark background. Light reflects off the surfaces of the various decanters, highballs, and dishes, each facet and ridge in the cut-glass pieces glinting exactly as they do in Jebavy's paintings. In the accompanying text, Talbot addressed the techniques through which the glass objects were best captured in a photograph; he was more engaged with how photographic representation works than in the glassware itself. Jebavy clearly shares with Talbot this deeper preoccupation with the *processes* of representation, privileging them over the glass objects she paints. In her practice, Robin Jebavy persistently meditates on these processes through the still-life form, cleverly configuring her glassware, first through photography, like Talbot, and then through paint, like her seventeenth-century predecessors.

Wisconsin native **Beth A. Zinsli** is the director and curator of the Wriston Art Galleries at Lawrence University in Appleton. She also teaches courses in the history and theory of photography and museum studies, and serves as the director of the Museum Studies program.

## *The Physics and Metaphysics of Still Life*

### **Artist Statement**

In my paintings, I experiment with glassware imagery—a reference to our fragile and often precarious human condition—to ask questions about our intimate relationship with the external world. I use simple vessels that are at once functional containers, symbols of poetic thought, and conduits into liminal, ecstatic states of being to explore the fusion of our inner world's intuitive, unbounded expanse with domestic, private experience. I often incorporate glassware forms that call to mind elements of cathedral interiors, suggesting their massive architectural supports, stained glass windows, fine ornamentation, and decorative flourishes. This intersection of painting and architecture enables me to conflate monumentality with modest, everyday objects. The complex, structured edifices that emerge, while referencing Baroque motifs of grandeur and theatricality, also read as illusory, groundless fragments of experience—like elemental, mystical utopias that hover before our eyes.

### **About the Artist**

Robin Jebavy has been exploring glassware imagery in painting for many years, drawing inspiration from still-life artists including Paul Cézanne, Giorgio Morandi, Janet Fish, and Beth Lipman. Jebavy first experimented with the representation of glass at Bennington College, where she received her BA in Visual Arts and Philosophy in 2004, and later at the University of Iowa, where she earned her MFA in Painting and Drawing in 2008. She has since shown her work at a number of venues across the Midwest, including the Lynden Sculpture Garden and Portrait Society Gallery in Milwaukee, and Iowa Contemporary Art in Fairfield, Iowa.

### **Checklist**

*Plate with Wreath (Forest)*, 2016-17

Acrylic on canvas  
90 x 85 inches

*Plate with Wreath (Pond)*, 2016

Acrylic on canvas  
68 x 67 inches

*J.S. Bach's Organ*, 2015

Acrylic on canvas  
68 x 84 inches

*Joy of Life*, 2013

Oil on canvas  
70 x 84 inches



*J.S. Bach's Organ*, 2015



## *Glass and the Persistence of Transformation and Immutability*

Robert Jebavy

As Robin's father and a fellow artist, I talk regularly with her about her work as she is creating it. Robin's goal is to make paintings that are universal yet promote personal interpretation. She embraces the contemporary worldview, common to both science and philosophy, that at the heart of all matter there is nothing tangible and solid, nothing to latch onto—only vibrating fields of energy that hold everything together. Everything we experience is in constant flux; what we see is temporal and momentary in its unrelenting process of evolution. These fields of energy—a complex interplay of forces that reveal effects of causes that in turn become causes of other effects—connect all things. Past and present, every thing has affected us and connected us to everything else, creating a breathtaking, unified singularity.

Robin's paintings demand time to get lost in their simple complexities. There is, at first glance, an overriding imposition of formal orderliness and stability as she meticulously balances colors, shapes, and values. Although the paintings appear solid and permanent, our eyes never stop roving from details to overall structure, between shallow and deep space. The viewer becomes the vehicle for change as the glassware atomizes and reconfigures. We are asked to consider: What is the subject and what the object? Is this a representation of glass or merely a composition of shapes and color values that plays with our minds? What is literal and what is symbolic? What is our role as an observer in creating a visual experience that can never be repeated in the same way twice?

Recent discoveries in quantum physics have led scientists to conclude that symmetry governs the underlying structure of the forces of nature. Robin effectively uses this device in her paintings to make her work accessible through anthropomorphic reference and cosmic (spherical) example. The approximate symmetry provides a foundation that we experience as a unifying, architectural stability. Robin's use of oscillating dualities—ephemerality and permanence, reality and illusion, analysis and intuition—is purposeful. She is promoting a conversation in our minds. But the paintings make us aware that the dualities are not separate, that each is dependent on its counterpart for its very existence, and this awareness neatly reinforces the interdependence of the crystalline parts and the whole.

If we imagine our lifespan as an eyeblink in the vastness of universal time, these paintings remind us to enjoy the beauty of our "moment." They invite us to embrace our conscious awareness of the complexities of the smallest fragments of matter as they aggregate through symmetrical, Gordian entanglements into our most basic existential inquiries—investigations suffused with both reason and mystery. These moments, and these paintings, bring poignancy, urgency, and gratitude into our lives.



# Brooke THIELE

## Brooke Thiele's Vertiginous Art of Bridging Cultures

Works of art are often labors of love, but it is rare that their creation entails such disparate and demanding tasks as studying a foreign language, learning a new art form, and confronting emotionally charged episodes dating back to early childhood. In Brooke Thiele's *The Fall to a Sea Called Home*, the result is a multimedia work that embraces tradition from the standpoint of innovation and uses individual experience to reflect on the human condition.

Thiele was adopted at the tender age of nine months, leaving her native Daegu, South Korea, for Green Bay, Wisconsin. Her past work with baked goods has drawn inspiration from her adopted culinary culture and, in her recent film *The Deer Queen*, from formative childhood activities such as deer hunting. In *The Fall to a Sea Called Home*, Thiele returns to the culture that is, paradoxically, hers by birthright and yet entirely foreign.

The template of the work comes from *pansori*, a traditional Korean style of musical storytelling performed by one or more vocalists and a drummer. The art form flourished in the nineteenth century, but languished under Japanese rule and westernization. Today only five stories are still performed. Thiele has composed a new *madang* (story) grounded in her study of *pansori* and inspired by her life story.

Thiele has also designed and hand-painted a *hanbok*, a traditional Korean dress. Savvy eyes see symbolic value in the colors, patterns, and images of a *hanbok*, and Thiele's creation is no exception. Whereas a bride's *hanbok* is often red, a color that symbolizes wealth and good fortune in Korean culture, Thiele has chosen denim, a quintessentially American fabric. While retaining the form and symbolic function of a traditional *hanbok*, Thiele imports her adopted culture into the bespoke garment to create something new, which—like all adoptees, immigrants, and citizens of a globalized world—is neither entirely one thing nor the other. Though the subject matter of *The Fall to a Sea Called Home* is derived from Thiele's singular life experience, and its materials reference traditional Korean culture, its overarching themes of identity and belonging are universal.

Thiele has emblazoned the pleats of the denim *chima* (skirt) with leaves, making it both a canvas and a movie screen. When set upon its spinning platform and illuminated with a strobe light, the precise spacing of the figures becomes apparent: the spinning *chima* animates a leaf in perpetual tumble. Not content to simply bring the animation to life, Thiele will sometimes don the *hanbok* and sit atop the revolving platform. The spinning puts Thiele into a trance-like state, but it also dizzies the viewer, creating a kind of physiological empathy with Thiele's personal experience. Safe to say, most of us suffer some form of alienation: confused relationships, occupational dissatisfaction, acute political bemusement, general unidentified malaise. It is the virtue of Thiele's art that her dizziness speaks to our own.

**J Tyler Friedman** is a freelance arts writer as well as a lecturer and doctoral candidate in Philosophy at Marquette University.

## *The Fall to a Sea Called Home*

### Artist Statement

As an artist I'm constantly questioning myself, and questioning myself in the context of the world around me. Consequently, my motivations tend to reveal themselves from the inside out. The work that results illustrates my struggle to locate myself in the world. I do not confine myself to a single medium, but instead explore several: animation, film, mixed media installations and, recently, performance. I find the immediacy of performance creates an immersive experience for performer and audience member alike; one that celebrates the fluidity of the moment while still maintaining a balance between life and truth.

### About the Artist

Brooke Thiele received an MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is a lecturer in the Department of Film, Video, Animation, & New Genres at UWM. Thiele's most recent film, *The Deer Queen*, is currently screening at film festivals here and abroad.

### Checklist

*The Fall to a Sea Called Home*, 2017  
Mixed-media installation and performance.

I, the undersigned, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS of the Republic of Korea, hereby request all whom it may concern to allow MISS EUN-HEE CHOI ( 최은희 ), a national of the Republic of Korea, proceeding to THE U.S.A.

for the purpose of ADOPTION

to pass freely without let or hindrance, and to afford the aforementioned person such assistance and protection as may be necessary.

The validity of this certificate will expire on FEB. 22, 1979 or at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Date: Aug. 22, 1978

*T. Jins Park*

**DESCRIPTION OF BEARER**

Place of Birth: SEOUL, KOREA  
Present Address: 382-14, HAPJEONG-DONG, SEOUL  
Date of Birth: DEC. 7, 1977  
Occupation: NONE  
Height: 70 cm  
Weight:        kg  
Visible Peculiarities: NONE

Signature of bearer



*Travel Certificate, Aug. 22, 1978*



*Pansori Drum* (Photo: Yinan Wang)



*My Jean Jacket from 6th Grade* (Photo: Yinan Wang)

# The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund Suitcase Export Fund for Individual Artists 2015/2016

The Suitcase Export Fund was created to increase opportunities for local artists to exhibit outside the four-county area, and to provide more visibility for individual artists and their work as well as for greater Milwaukee. In the past year, the Fund made nineteen awards to individual artists and collectives. The artists described below—four of them current or past Nohl Fellows—work in a range of media. Their exhibitions took them to Flagstaff, Arizona; Denver and Grand Junction, Colorado; New Brighton, Minnesota; Millerton and New York City, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Austin, Texas; and Park City, Utah. Destinations abroad included Austria, Canada, Japan, Romania, and South Korea.

In addition to selling work, meeting artists and collectors, or beginning relationships with galleries, awardees encountered a range of benefits. Being present at openings, exhibition venues, and screenings has consistently created opportunities for artists: future collaborations; plans for artist and curatorial exchanges with the host city; the essential contacts filmmakers require to get their work in front of an audience.

This year's artists—several of whom run exhibition spaces in Milwaukee—took advantage of the travel to attend residencies, tend to their art practice, or even lend a hand. Kyle Jablonski revealed in the release from quotidian routine: "It was very exciting to be able to spend that amount of time thinking about my work, thinking about effective ways to install it, and talking with other artists about our respective practices." For Sara Caron, the isolated residency environment allowed her to develop "a routine and practice in the studio that I had been struggling with before the trip." Kayle Karbowski used her residency to "get back into a rhythm with her work and ideas" and to give her personal practice her undivided attention for the first time since completing her BFA. Keith Nelson was able to experiment with a site-specific iteration of his latest body of work, making it possible to show it in far-flung locations. Alexander Herzog brought his skills and the Milwaukee can-do spirit to his New York gallery, where he repaired the walls and replaced the lights before installing his solo show.

Suitcase awardees were particularly active building connections between Milwaukee and the people they met during their travels. The collective After School Special visited other D.I.Y. art spaces in Philadelphia and arranged an exchange with GenderFail, a local publishing and curatorial project. Caron and John Riepenhoff worked alongside artists in a ceramics studio in Mashiko, Japan. They gathered new techniques and tools—and an enthusiasm for wood firing—to share with artists back home. They also made multiple studio visits and renewed contacts with artists who had previously visited Milwaukee. Karbowski spent time with other artist-organizers who share her interest in finding a balance between studio and community, and who are also navigating smaller "art cities" that operate outside the national spotlight. After sitting on a panel with members of the Denver Sustainable Food Policy Network, Lindsay Lochman and Barbara Ciurej agreed to host the Mobile Garden of a Denver food justice organization when it arrives in Milwaukee.

Some of the most important gains were personal. For two artists, the Suitcase Fund sent them back out into the world after a hiatus. Kathryn E. Martin, who participated in her first solo exhibition since the birth of her children, observed: "This show was very helpful in reminding me just how important my practice is to me—and my viewers....it provided me with a much-needed wake-up call about how important it is that I remain active as an artist and one capable of bringing in a strong audience outside Milwaukee and Wisconsin." Mark Borchardt, who was showing his first film in 20 years, was pleasantly surprised to find that there were people at Slamdance who maintained an interest in his work: "it definitely reminds one that there is an enthusiastic audience out there."

**After School Special** headed to Philadelphia with two cars full of artists and work. Each of the nine members of the collective (including 2015 Nohl Fellow Zach Hill) made something for *Varsity*, an exhibition at Little Berlin curated by Brett Suemnicht.

**Mark Borchardt** screened *The Dundee Project*, his first film in 20 years, at the Slamdance Festival in Park City, Utah; the festival runs concurrently with Sundance.

**Marna Brauner** and **Rina Yoon** are among a group of six Milwaukee-based artists invited to participate in an exhibition in Jeonju, Korea, during the Jeonju Hanji Festival. Jeonju is known for its handmade paper tradition, and during this ten-day festival there will be many exhibitions, papermaking demonstrations, public events, and activities related to hanji. This is the group's second exhibition in Korea and part of an exchange that included an exhibition at the Villa Terrace Museum in 2015.

**Sara Caron** and **John Riepenhoff** (Nohl Fellow 2009, 2014) spent a month at the Troedsson Villa residency in Nikko, Japan, where they worked with local potters. In Tokyo they participated in the opening of Japanese artist COBRA's show, *Domestic Fantasy*, at Art Center Ongoing. Caron transplanted her nomadic bar, the Bermuda Triangle, and the artists served food on the ceramics they made. Riepenhoff also participated in *Wood-Fired Ramen* at Green Tea Gallery in Iwaki, Fukushima.

Two of **Daniel Fleming's** paintings were selected for *Contemporary 2017: Retellings*, a national juried biennial at the Western Colorado Center for the Arts in Grand Junction. The exhibition focuses on artists who use traditional materials or narratives in new and innovative ways.

**Sheila Held** (Nohl Fellow 2013) shipped several tapestries to the Center for Art, Faith and Culture at the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in New Brighton, Minnesota, for a solo exhibition. The gallery noted that Held's work was "a constant topic of conversation" among the students, and that public events were well-attended.

**Alexander Herzog** exhibited a new group of paintings in a solo show at Geary Contemporary in New York. Because the Suitcase Fund supported the shipping, the gallery was able to print a catalogue. They now represent Herzog.

**Kyle Jablonski** participated in a two-person exhibition, *Jabroni, Jabroni, Jabroni*, at the Shipman Gallery in Brooklyn. He spent four days in New York installing, meeting artists, and seeing lots of work.

**Kayle Karbowski's** month-long residency at MASS Gallery in Austin culminated in a solo exhibition. Upon her return, she was able to show this new work in Chicago.

**Greg Klassen** created a site-specific "nature table"—a self-generating sculpture of plants growing in studio debris—at the Re Institute gallery in Millerton, New York. Located in upstate New York, the Re Institute is a working farm that hosts small group shows in its hayloft; the goal is to allow artists to observe their work in a new context.

**Matthew Warren Lee** had a painting selected for the First Street Gallery's 2016 National Juried Exhibition. It was his first opportunity to exhibit outside the Midwest, and he met curators, gallery directors, and other artists at the opening in New York.

Longtime collaborators **Lindsay Lochman** and **Barbara Ciurej** mounted a solo exhibition of work that addresses sustainable food policy at the Colorado Photographic Arts Center in Denver. While in Colorado they met fellow photographers, worked with high school students, participated in a panel discussion with other artists and members of the Denver Sustainable Food Policy Network, undertook museum research, scouted sites for future projects, and met with the director of a gallery in Fort Collins—who promptly offered them a show.

**kathryn e. martin** flew to Flagstaff for the labor-intensive installation of her solo show at Northern Arizona University Art Museum. She filled three large galleries with 15,000 paper airplanes, 15,000 cast rocks, wall drawings, and piles of discarded objects.

**Keith Nelson** participated in a residency at Hotel Pupik in Austria—an international program that hosts up to 30 artists each year—that culminated in a three-day public exhibition. All of Nelson’s work was made from materials found onsite, and he received two new invitations to exhibit in Europe.

Co-cinematographer **Dan Peters** is one of the core members of the production team for *The Blood Is at the Doorstep*, 2014 Nohl Fellow Erik Ljung’s film about the police killing of Dontre Hamilton. Peters traveled to Austin, Texas for the SXSW (South by Southwest) Documentary Feature Competition, where the film received its world premiere.

When **Madeline Power** screened *Across the Line* at the Astra Film Festival in Romania in October, she was the first virtual reality filmmaker to show VR work in Eastern Europe. As the resident expert, she was much in demand for panels and received invitations to speak at future events.

2014 Nohl Fellow **Kyle Seis** contributed several photographic works to *What Are the Wild Waves Saying*, a two-person exhibition at Dateline, a gallery for emerging artists in Denver, Colorado. The exhibition was part of Denver’s annual “Month of Photography” festival.

*Silently Steal Away*, the new short film by **Andrew Swant** (Nohl Fellow 2008, 2013), was selected for the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. The filmmaker traveled to Toronto for the sold-out premiere screening.

## The Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s Mary L. Nohl Fund Fellowship Recipients 2003-2016

### 2003

**Jurors** Lorelei Stewart (Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois-Chicago), Tim Peterson (Franklin Art Works, Minneapolis), Barbara Hunt (Artists Space, New York)

#### Established Artists

Dick Blau  
Michael Howard  
Mark Mulhern

#### Emerging Artists

Paul Amitai  
Peter Barrickman  
Mark Escribano  
Liz Smith

### 2004

**Jurors** Patricia Hickson (Des Moines Art Center), Habib Kheradgar (POST, Los Angeles), Sue Spaid (independent curator, Cincinnati)

#### Established Artists

Terese Agnew  
Cecelia Condit  
Jennifer Montgomery

#### Emerging Artists

William Andersen  
James Barany  
Steven Burnham  
Frankie Martin

### 2005

**Jurors** René DeGuzman (Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco), Nato Thompson (MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts), Jane Simon (Madison Museum of Contemporary Art)

#### Established Artists

Nicolas Lampert  
Fred Stonehouse  
Jason S. Yi

#### Emerging Artists

Juan Juarez  
Michael K. Julian  
Mat Rappaport  
Steve Wetzel

### 2006

**Jurors** Dominic Molon (MCA Chicago), Alma Ruiz (Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles), Nadine Wasserman (independent curator, New York)

#### Established Artists

Santiago Cucullu  
Scott Reeder  
Chris Smith

#### Emerging Artists

donebestdone  
Dan Klopp  
Christopher Niver  
Marc Tasman

### 2007

**Jurors** Clara Kim (REDCAT, Los Angeles), Ingrid Schaffner (ICA, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia), Hamza Walker (Renaissance Society, Chicago)

#### Established Artists

Gary John Gresl  
Mark Klassen  
Dan Ollman

#### Emerging Artists

Annie Killelea  
Faythe Levine  
Colin Matthes  
Kevin J. Miyazaki

### 2008

**Jurors** Eva Gonzalez-Sancho (FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon, France), Valerie Mercer (Detroit Institute of Arts), Laurel Reuter (North Dakota Museum of Art, Grand Forks)

#### Established Artists

Brent Budsberg & Shana McCaw  
Xav Leplae  
Iverson White

#### Emerging Artists

Tate Bunker  
Special Entertainment: Bobby Ciraldo & Andrew Swant  
Frankie Latina  
Barbara Miner



## 2009

**Jurors** Jennie C. Jones (artist, New York), Toby Kamps (Contemporary Arts Museum Houston), Barbara Wiesen (Gahlberg Gallery, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Illinois)

### Established Artists

Peter Barrickman  
Harvey Opgenorth

### Emerging Artists

Kim Miller  
John Riepenhoff

## 2010

**Jurors** Sheryl Conkelton (art historian/curator/writer, Philadelphia), Nathan Lee (critic/curator, New York), Lucía Sanromán (Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego)

### Established Artists

Brent Coughenour  
Paul Drucke  
Waldek Dynerman

### Emerging Artists

Sarah Buccheri  
Neil Gravander  
Ashley Morgan  
Chris James Thompson

## 2011

**Jurors** Xandra Eden (Weatherspoon Art Museum, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro), Tumelo Mosaka (Krannert Art Museum, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois), Elizabeth Thomas (Berkeley Art Museum, California)

### Established Artists

Nicolas Lampert  
Brad Lichtenstein  
Sonja Thomsen

### Emerging Artists

American Fantasy Classics  
Richard Galling  
Hans Gindlesberger  
Sarah Gail Luther

## 2012

**Jurors** Lisa Dent (Creative Capital, New York), Astria Suparak (Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh), Irene Tsatsos (Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California)

### Established Artists

Danielle Beverly  
Faythe Levine  
Colin Matthes

### Emerging Artists

Lois Bielefeld  
Tyanna J. Buie  
Brad Fiore  
Paul Kjelland

## 2013

**Jurors** Naomi Beckwith (MCA Chicago), Evan J. Garza (School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston & Fire Island Artist Residency, New York), Gretchen Wagner (Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, St. Louis)

### Established Artists

Ray Chi  
Sheila Held  
Special Entertainment: Bobby Ciraldo & Andrew Swant

### Emerging Artists

Cris Siqueira  
Tim Stoelting  
Eddie Villanueva  
Josh Weissbach

## 2014

**Jurors** Courtney Fink (Southern Exposure, San Francisco), Daniel Fuller (Institute of Contemporary Art at the Maine College of Art, Portland), Naima J. Keith (The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York)

### Established Artists

Anne Kingsbury  
Shana McCaw & Brent Budsberg  
John Riepenhoff

### Emerging Artists

Emily Belknap  
Jenna Knapp  
Erik Ljung  
Kyle Seis

## 2015

**Jurors** Jamillah James (Hammer Museum, Los Angeles), Eric May (Roots & Culture Contemporary Art Center, Chicago), Jodi Throckmorton (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia)

### Established Artists

Jon Horvath  
Frankie Latina

### Emerging Artists

Ben Balcom  
Zach Hill  
Maggie Sasso

## 2016

**Jurors** JoAnne Northrup (Nevada Museum of Art, Reno), Valerie Cassel Oliver (Contemporary Arts Museum Houston), Julie Rodrigues Widholm (DePaul Art Museum, Chicago)

### Established Artists

Jesse McLean  
Joseph Mougel

### Emerging Artists

Rose Curley  
Robin Jebavy  
Brooke Thiele

