



Fenwick Gallery

CALL & RESPONSE 2015: LINEAGE

September 19 - October 31, 2015

Fenwick Library, 1st Floor | Fairfax Campus



CURATOR'S STATEMENT

Call & Response 2015: Lineage

“The picture on my wall, art object and art process, is a living line of movement, a wave of colour that repercussions in my body, colouring it, colouring the new present, the future, and even the past, which cannot now be considered outside of the light of the painting.”

--Jeanette Winterson, “Art Objects”

“Lineage,” applied to the conversation between art, literature, culture, and self, asks the question: what is the legacy of art and speech in our everyday lives? In society? How does artistic expression in and alongside social movements result in a solidarity of tradition, a larger communal identity?

Starting in 2009, Susan Tichy and Helen Frederick have curated an annual exhibition in collaboration between the MFA program in creative writing and the School of Art. The exhibition is up during the Fall for the Book literary festival in September. The exhibit has been a themed Call and Response since 2010.


Call and Response: a succession of two distinct phrases played or sung by different musicians, where the second phrase is heard as direct response to or commentary on the first. Common to African, African-American, American folk, and Indian classical traditions. Pervasive in military cadences. In West Africa: also a mode of democratic participation in ritual, and in public discussion of civic affairs.

Call & Response: a collaboration between writers and visual artists, in which one calls and one responds. The result is a set of paired works, resonating with each other, demonstrating the interplay of artistic media, and speaking of our times.

Call & Response 2015: Lineage is curated by Anne Smith, M. Mack, Marcos Martínez, and Qinglan Wang.

IMAGE COVER: Melissa Hill, *Kismet Tapestry Detail*, 2015, Felt, Thread, 39 x 102 inches

IMAGE LEFT: Ariel Rudolph Harwick, *Grandmother Detail*, 2015, Laser Cut Cloth on Wood Table, 30 x 43 x 60 inches



Participants

Sarah Batcheller and Melissa Hill

Benjamin Bever and Nathan Loda

Nikki Brugnoli and Justin Lafreniere

Meaghan Busch and Benjamin Brezner

Anya Creightney and Ariel Harwick

Madeline Graham and Holly Mason

Noor Y. Hamidaddin and M. Mack

Ah-reum Han and Michael Walton

Kelly Hendrickson and Brittany Kerfoot

Marcos L. Martínez and Josh Whipkey

Lina Patton and Melody Cook

Sean Pears and Marianne Epstein

Alice Quatrochi and Douglas Luman

Qinglan Wang, Ariel Goldenthal and Anne Smith

Sarah Zuckerman and Carina Yun

IMAGE: Anne Smith, *Nameless Place* Detail, 2015, Paper and Acrylic Paint, 16 x 16 x 16 inches



IMAGE: Melissa Hill, *Kismet Tapestry*, 2015, Felt, Thread, 39 x 102 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)

Faces

Sarah Batcheller

Standing in front of the glass double-doors of the Museum of Chinese in America, I peered in through the cubical lobby, past the plush leather couches, and over the gleaming, marble countertop. The two women on the other side of the check-in desk had mirrored features: dense, arrow-straight, black hair, porcelain complexions, and eyes that could cut flesh. Adjusting my vision, I inspected my own reflection: chocolate-caramel tones running through soft curls, olive skin, round eyes. The changes that resulted from such small adjustments to background were astounding. It was like we were worlds away. Yet, here the three of us were in SoHo, with nothing but two glass doors between us.

Stepping inside, the cool air invigorated me. Being able to see past the desk piqued my interest more than ever. I'd come here hoping to find something that validated me; something to make me think, "That's why I'm like that." Even though it was an outrageous expectation, I really thought that somewhere down the line, I'd see something that would make sense of a comment my mother may have once made, allow me to imagine the village where my family was from, or suddenly teach me Cantonese. I wanted to uncover something.

The first exhibit was a re-born apothecary. Jars filled with powders and ointments lined the shelves, their tiny silver spoons accompanying them. Later exhibits displayed festive paraphernalia and vaguely racist Chinese food ads from the Sixties. But, what electrified me was the faux-laundromat. My grandparents operated a real one when they came to New York after Japan bombed their village. My mother's entire family, including her parents, herself, five sisters, and one brother, worked there in order to keep themselves afloat. Their work paid for college for the seven siblings.

The overhead stereos played tunes reminiscent of what my grandmother always has on in her kitchen. The tablecloths and kitchenware mimicked hers. The authenticity surprised me, to say the least. Little by little, I started to feel more at home.

In an exhibit of the Transcontinental Railroad, I sat down on a bench and remembered a comment one of my Korean-American friends made years before: "Eventually, everyone in America is only going to speak English, because of people like you who are only half and don't learn their language." I've always found that notion so unreasonable, but I couldn't help but let it hit home. For years, I pondered that statement, wondering if I was what was wrong with our country, if I was a disgrace.

An undeniable truth was evident here, though. This museum didn't determine languages or looks. It was telling a story, and somewhere in the deepest nook, in the smallest slit in the wood, there was a story about a mother, her seven children, and her children's children.

It was dusk when I left the museum. I paused outside of the glass doors and tried to envision the city in 1945. Then I tried to envision it in 2045. Neither was possible for me in that moment. Total uniqueness can't just materialize, it's something that sculpts itself over time. So, as I made my way back down Centre Street, I noticed faces and voices. I watched the way people walked, heard how they talked, and decided that this would never happen again.



IMAGE: Nathan Loda, *Traditions*, 2015, Oil on Panel, 11 x 12 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)

Chicomecoatli¹ Aztec Corn Goddess

Ben Bever

Take your flowers to the priest, little girl—
Remove your stiff green dress,
you won't be needing it anymore.
Remove your silky hair,
throw it on the fire;
you won't need it anymore.
Remove your head,
anoint the statue with your blood.
You don't need it anymore.
Remove your skin
for the priest to wear,
he will need it more than you.

Bring terror to bed, woman—
The Hairy One whose love is death.
Yours are the hands that kill,
your embrace is the hempen
noose waiting in the temple,
your legs are the open grave
that welcomes us all in the end,
your breasts hide the coiled
viper of your heart.

Protect us, mother—
Shield us with the sun you carry
on your arm, the life
you bring with each harvest
ripe with new roots
stalks standing tall
green leaves wrapped tight
hiding tender young fleshbuds
grown strong on the milk
of your blood.

¹ She is shown in three different forms: a young girl carrying flowers, a woman who brings death with her embraces, and a mother who uses the sun as a shield

These Things Outlast Us

Justin Lafreniere

I. These things outlast us.

II. I’ve only seen this place twice in the past twenty years. Why I’ve come back, I’m not sure. It isn’t quite clear. It isn’t quite like I remember. But how it’s changed, that’s incomprehensible too. Literally, unable to be understood. But also: limitless.

III. You built with blocks as a child but as you grew those were put away. There’s no thought of that now. But out here, there’s the evidence of construction, the lasting impressions of peat and stoked fires. There were thousands of these ovens and their noxious fumes. Work for workers, blue collars and rough hands. They stoked the fires until late and their smoke might have blocked out the stars. You wonder and you feel the muscles in your back, shoulders. Could you? Your hands are fleshy and swollen and soft. Humanity can be industrious, insidious. These holes have permanency. Strip through wrought soil and it’ll remain after the coal or iron ore is gone. There’s no reclamation. Grass might sprout between these rocks but it comes like a weed, alien and ugly, threadbare. You must walk carefully, watch the ground. Step over these things, this disfigurement, this art.

IV. We have marked the earth, slugged claw of backhoe through the hillsides like a child letting the dirt fall through the sieve of her hands, pouring out between fingertips and dirtying nails. What’s left? The incomprehensible hole? The empty space we stare into and ask, How deep does it go? when really we should wonder, How long will it last? The concrete hemisphere, the hollow holes twinned like sockets, the look back. This Eastern Pennsylvania forest is quiet. so quiet we might forget what brought us out here, that persistent thing buzzing like a living hive.

V. You have outlasted yourself. Congratulations. And again, outlasted. Each time, at the end of every sentence and word you have made it some small leap into the future and your body, your body will continue on for as long as it can but have you ever considered your wake, what is behind you not in space, but in time?

VI. I am returning. Despite the cracks along the rim, the small bits of concrete that have fallen to form this miniature quarry, the mound beneath the leaves I can see my shadow in the wan light, how cool the day has become. Sticks like bones. Stones on top of stones. Twigs crossed in a fallen chandelier. If the darkness could touch me it would reach out now.

VII. These things outlast us.



IMAGES: Nikki Brugnoli, *Reckoning Space*, Series of 2, 2015, Digital Photographs, 8 x 8 inches each (Detail Image Facing Page)

Two-Eyes
Ben Brezner

The sound of a tumbler
quivering, blooming from the stairs,
as viewed
from a stem-high time-lapse camera.

Fills the floor with silver leaves.

*

A white whale (compare: the giant squid)
loops the dark cold beneath skin.

Grim Two-Eyes sees all sides,
her soles grown thick, hale.

The habit of sweeping glass
rabbits under the rug.

Later, a wet inflection. Tin Man blur.

*

But back then, a together on the bed
and a die-cut story, or forty-two.

Smattering of absolutes. Burning breath.

Which insular nymph are you?

*

Just the up-plot, and the dream
of Excalibur that puts,
by her estimate, everyone
around the table.

It's related. We heard the one counsel.
We don't have to ruin everything.

Too extra-sized to communicate.

*

In the blinkered morning,
two pairs of twinkling wings
worry the air. His black boots
strapped, he mashes his eyes
with his palms.

He climbs towards the silver filtering through.
He climbs towards the diffusion of silver filtering through.
He climbs in the general direction of the silver filtering through.
He climbs in the general direction of the silver, diffused as it filters through.
He climbs up.

Up and away.

*

Epilogue of embering coals
in the pot-bellied stove.

Melting of parts back together,
an attempt. Full of gold.

Some whisper, some wolf-eyed kiss
of guilt inside her coiled filmroll.

The whale surfaces, exhales.
Spume of shredded, silver leaves.



IMAGES: Meaghan Busch, *Two-Eyes*, Series of 4, 2015, Monotypes, 8.5 x 5 inches each (Detail Image Facing Page)



IMAGES: Ariel Rudolph Harwick, *Grandmother*, 2015, Laser Cut Cloth on Wood Table, 30 x 43 x 60 inches (Detail Image Bottom and Facing Page)

Los Angeles

Anya Creightney

I remember my grandparent’s house as an orange tree

The kitchen, a bowl of dropped fruit, both orderly and overfilled

The hallway, one eloquent branch of perpetual evening light

The bathroom tile and tub, green on green, waving a rococo crown

The sleep lace-covered dining room voicing honey-grass blossoms

The porch, forever tugging dark dirt, a breathing susurrus, out then in

The roof, variegated and worn, warming in the sun like cracked bark

And my grandmother, the heartwood, watching the yard and

whispering a psalm

Still, there was a time she didn’t want me -- her child’s seed.

To Make A Shrine For You

Holly Mason

I.

When you come home
I will wash your feet under the old faucet
And the kettle will whistle its hymn
They call it “idolatry.”
Let it be so.

II.

When my grandmother passed
After being married to my grandfather for 64 years
I heard him downstairs that morning
Talking to himself or maybe to no one or to her
Asking
Well, what do I do now?

Four years later

Cleaning out his house
After he passed
I found a wooden sign he painted and glued a picture onto
Inscribed, She is my Nortina, and I am her James.

Above the piano, he framed a letter from her:
I look over in the morning and see my honey and think
My, I’m lucky.

III.

We used to play ukulele together.

I won’t play it anymore.



IMAGE: Madeline Graham, *Cantate Domino*, 2015, Matte Print, 8 x 10 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)



IMAGES: Noor Hamidaddin, *Janbiyah*, 2006, 35mm digital photograph, 12 x 12 inches each (Detail Image Bottom and Facing Page)

The Names We Give and Get

M. Mack

I. for DCM

My father's middle name was water. When he held me with a clumsy, controlled fist, I slipped out from underneath his fingers. Between.

He dropped all kinds of things. Waves are not good cooks. He damaged what he managed to hold--curled brittle pages of his favorite books.

I began to think of him not only as the keeper of liquid-filled bottles that rolled from under lived surfaces but as the bottled liquid itself. Not water.

II. For BAP

My best friend's middle name was Allan. At his memorial service, I met the uncle he was named for. Allan said, *When men get angry,*

they kill someone. When women get angry, they kill themselves. My partner and I looked and shook at him, determining how two people are linked. She

and I held hands, too tightly, until we didn't. To honor someone who resisted the urge. The night we spent making calls, we made sure to say: not by his own hand.

III. For BZD. For MCM. For APH.

My middle name is a chore. A length. A link. I redact it so often to its letter. Initials. I am known by the way things begin. I use a letter as a name. My wife's middle name

carries over the letter that she was known by for decades. A chosen homage. My friend goes by their middle name, has redacted a letter from the center for a gender-neutral

spelling. The power of a letter. A gesture. The ways we make symbols of ourselves. The ways we signify the ways that we are signs. The things we keep for ourselves.

Beach Bumster and the Marie Claires

Ah-reum Han

It’s almost morning before my father stumbles home from his latest client and takes us to our spot in the mangroves. Swaying ankle-deep in saltwater, he rakes his fingers through the fine black mud, slow, like it’s tangled hair. He’s looking for oysters. “*Marie Claires* go nuts for this shit, boy,” he slurs, “Makes them want to fuck.”

He thumbs a shell clean and tosses it on shore, where I crack it open with a rock. He’s wearing new jeans, no shirt, flaunting the clean lines of muscle that keep us fed. I tell him I want to be just like him, and he laughs. I tell him I’ll farm, and he calls me a fool. “Fisher or farmer, bumster or priest, the Gambia—she’s a bitch to us all. Just look around.”

The land buckles under the weight of the rains that never came, though we begged. Life lies dormant in this bleached landscape, blank as a page until the first rains pen life from the ground. Yes, we remember the smell of rain at dawn—*Inshallah*, this year, this year—and afterwards, the hum of dusk, the cool gasp of night.

But meanwhile, students hitchhike to school on truckbeds, eyes closed and dry-mouthed, and, facing east, vendors perform their ablutions in single beads of water, kneading the damp. In the village, ancient baobabs grow pregnant with the bones of holy men and papered prayers, and in the city, small boys beg, tin cans to their elbow. Its contents rattle like dying breath, coins to secure paradise for anyone with spare change.

My father splashes back to me, jeans damp, and he tosses a few broken shells back into the water. “Walways pay big money for love and war,” he says, “Be a soldier, kid.” A bumster by trade, he tells me he knows something of heaven and hell, and the real heaven exists at the bottom of a bottle and on the other side of the ocean with all the lonely white women.



IMAGE: Mike Walton, *Harmony*, 2015, Cast Stone and Steel, 8 x 8 x 13 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)



IMAGE: Kelly Lorraine Hendrickson, *I Am Become Death*, 2015, Steel, Paper, Resin, 60 x 60 inches

DESTROYER OF WORLDS

Brittany Kerfoot

I was in the basement the day the world ended. I was looking for Jack’s baseball glove—the one Jen packed away last winter in one of the dozens of neatly-labeled boxes stacked in the corners of the room.

We had been told this day would come if we didn’t shape up. We received memos in the mail and saw billboards on our way home from our jobs, cautioning us about the dangers of our ways. None us took these warnings seriously, though; we always assumed it was just a scare tactic.

I stood there amongst all of our forgotten things and watched the room go dark. The square of sunlight from the window above turned off like a lamp, and for just a moment, there was complete silence—a kind of quiet that had never before befallen the earth. I could hear my lungs contracting and my blood rushing to the organs that kept me alive, although at first I was unsure if I still was or not.

Then came the screams.

Then everything just stopped.

*

It has been days, or years. I remember very little about how I got to the new world. I arrived with everyone else, standing in a line so long I could see neither the beginning nor end. We spent days waiting, though we didn’t know what for. And we were all alone, without our families or friends, unsure if any of them had even made it here. It wasn’t until I received my housing assignment that I finally saw Jen; she was pregnant with Jack and I was not yet an adult.

The new world is like no place I have ever seen before, not even in the movies. Every surface is black; a kind of tar-like resin covers the ground and scales every building. Natural resources are scarce; the whole planet is on rations for water, and no one but the government is allowed to plant trees. There are no flowers, no colors.

There is no time here; the old world was the only one in our universe that observed it. It makes me feel like we were a lesser culture, like we needed something guiding us through our days, something larger that everyone could agree on, as if time were the only thing that united us. That’s what got us here in the first place: our inability to unite.

No time. It threw me off at first—waking one day next to a warm body, her eyes fluttering with the movement of a fleeting dream, and the next she is gone, and I am suddenly and inexplicably old and alone.

I stopped sleeping; I wanted to stay awake to see it happen, to watch Jen disappear from the kitchen, hear the dish drop from her hand and shatter on the floor. I wanted to be able to grab her, keep her from going, stop her from reappearing as a child or a teenager—a girl I do not know. But it doesn’t work. She slips through my grip, disintegrates into the stratosphere and goes where I cannot find her.

And then there’s Jack. On Monday, he is the child I knew in the old world: funny, inquisitive, shy around strangers. On Tuesday, he’s an adult, a man with a trim waist and the receding hairline he inherited from me; it is just one of the unfortunate details of his new life. I am trying to understand this place in which we live, this planet we were fated for. In the old world, the streets hosted civil wars of a new kind every day. Mothers killed their children, children killed each other, and we wasted everything we were given: food, oil, land, love.

Several weeks before the end, we had seen the last of the bees. We watched them leave, following their queens like drones on a mission. They blacked out the skies with their masses. They were last sighted in Columbia, and



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Several weeks before the end, we had seen the last of the bees. We watched them leave, following their queens like drones on a mission. They blacked out the skies with their masses. They were last sighted in Columbia, and then never again. The next day, the price of honey increased more than ten-fold, and I thought about how this by-product was worth more than the bees ever were.

We were sent to the new world to protect the Earth from us, and to protect us from ourselves.

When Jen and Jack are gone, I spend most of my day researching time. There are no clocks here. There is no way to know if it is early morning or the middle of the night; it is constantly partly cloudy with no way to see the sun or the moon. I sleep when I'm tired, which is almost always.

Time is linear, or it is cyclical. It was the fundamental structure of the old universe. Ray Cummings, a science fiction author my father used to read and quote at the dinner table, said that "time is what keeps everything from happening at once." But here, without it, events and memories seem to bump into each other continuously, to mix and blend like anxious thoughts. I rarely know where I am, or who. TK: insight about instant gratification, and how everyone wants to know the future and "make it to Friday" and get to the next step, but it's taken for granted because no one lives in the moment. And in this world, there is no future, and each moment is more fleeting than it ever was.

Jen just appeared at the door. She is a child, with flushed cheeks and perfectly smooth skin. When she smiles at me, I can see that she has recently lost several teeth; she bared her pink gums unabashedly, and stuck the tip of her tongue through one of the holes on the top row. I remember the story she told me of the day she was at a playground with her mother, showing off her newly-acquired skill of walking the balance beam. She tripped over a loose shoelace and her mouth knocked against the beam before she hit the ground. Her mother ran to her in hysterics, even told another parent to call an ambulance.

"Blood everywhere," she had said. "My mom lost her mind." She laughed and shook her head at the memory. I imagined how she would react if Jack ever experienced such a fall, and I know she would be calm and soothing. She would scoop him up in her arms and shush him. She would pick the mulch chips out of his hair and hold her scarf to his bleeding mouth. She would not panic or make a scene, just rock him quietly until his world righted itself again.

"It hurt so badly," she remembered. "But I didn't shed a tear."

END

IMAGE: Kelly Lorraine Hendrickson, *I Am Become Death*, 2015, Steel, Paper, Resin, 60 x 60 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)

What the Body Said [untranslated]
Marcos L. Martínez

In the history of us
no truth lies
between borders bounded by rivers
rivulets of ancestry: bloodlines.
The pulse and angina of—
Stop. Pump. Breathe.
Repeat the pulse.
Pump. Listen. Thrum
against neckline flutters
the pump and beat
the beat and pulp—force
life back into remission.

In mi abuela's version:
Pancho Villa tomó
mi bisabuela as his
wife después de María Luz, cradled
against earth cuarteadá,
nombró su amigo Dorotéo his—
True / not true / loves
me / loves me
knot and fray: Who is to say
what las lomas listened to,
qual deseo es de amor?

Linger here. Spook
a glance past borders and time
las colonias gestating in cholera
tratamos de sobrevivir
but why bother—
another dead end
like mi tío Pancho
cuffed for —
Is there even any reason
needed? Not Villa but —,
not father but — not
husband but —
no longer — but —.
Once Uncle: now —.

His erasure haunts me.



IMAGES: Josh Whipkey, *Untitled Sketches*, 2015, Pencil and Photo Transfer on Paper, 7 x 7 inches (Detail Image Facing Page and Bottom)

Family Objects

Lina Patton

HANGING TENNIS BALL

To this day, in our garage, my father hangs a tennis ball from a string to mark where the car should stop (when it’s far enough in, the tennis ball bumps the windshield). Each time I go home, after being picked up from the airport and winding back through familiar roads, it’s not until we pull into the garage and I see—feel—that small, gentle tap that I know I am truly home.

7-UP & SALTINE CRACKERS

Every time I get the stomach bug, I immediately want 7-Up and saltine crackers. It was the go-to for my mom and her mom, and now, for me. I was in the middle of Africa a few years ago and the day after having a rough stomach bug, I was hunting all around the Masai Mara to find saltine crackers. I’m not even sure it works, but it will always be a source of comfort.

REMOTE CONTROL

Since I was little, my whole family has always called the remote control “the zapper.” It’s not something I ever thought twice about until college, when I would ask my roommate or friend to hand it to me, and they’d stare at me, blankly. I remember the first time it happened, it kind of shocked me, made me so homesick. It was also the first time I realized how strange it is that the walls of your house, your home, create your ideas and expectations of the normal world—even if it’s just the name for the remote.

TREE COOKIE

Every year at Christmas my whole extended family would go cut down Christmas trees together. There was a tree farm nearby, and we’d pile into my uncle’s truck—almost not fitting with all the layers of scarves and hats and mittens (this was the northeast)—and set out to find our tree. Each year, I’d make my dad cut an extra slice off the end of the tree trunk—my ‘tree cookie.’ I’d always press it to my cold nose, inhaling the piney, nostalgic smell. I collected them for years until time and distance ended our tradition, and I treasure them now even more.

DRESSING ROOM MIRROR

People always tell me I look like my mother, who also looks just like her mother. I can see their resemblance, but never my own. Even in old pictures of my mom people would point and say look! It’s you! How can you not see! But I just couldn’t. Then one day, in my thirties, I was walking in the mall somewhere, and I caught a glimpse of myself in some dressing room mirror, you know the ones where they’re all angled, and somehow, seeing myself quickly from the random, rare profile, I swear I had seen my mom. It made me happy and proud in a strange, indescribable way.

FORTUNE COOKIE/LOTTO TICKET

Anytime my grandfather happened to be eating Chinese food, he’d buy a lottery ticket that day and play the numbers from the back of his fortune cookie. I don’t think he ever bought them just to get the numbers—it was more an after thought from the happenstance of eating Chinese—but I’ll never forget it. When we’d eat with him, he’d take my brother’s and mine too, telling us they were his golden tickets, that we were lucky. Every time I see those printed little red numbers, I think of him and smile.

NUMBER SEVEN

It’s become habit now, but sometimes if I’m handing a number to someone else, or writing slowly, I’ll recognize how whenever I write the number seven, I put a little slash through it, just like mom. I don’t know when it started or why exactly, but it’s just one other way she is a part of me.

them about it. There’s always this gap in generations that fascinates and saddens me: the youth not knowing to care enough to ask the elders in their lives about themselves, their stories, until it’s too late.



IMAGE: Melody Cook, *Shared Treasures*, 2015, Linocut, 33 x 6 x 39 inches (Detail Image Facing Page)

STRAWBERRY MIMOSAS

Every holiday, my mom spends hours making homemade strawberry juice for mimosas. It’s such a vivid memory, when I think about her moving around the kitchen, the straps of her apron swaying as she presses the sautéed berries to release their juices, as she lifts the back of her hand to wipe her forehead, I swear I can feel her presence. No holiday would be complete without them.

MODEL SHIP

At my grandparents’ house, they used to have this model ship in the basement. I honestly don’t know what it was a model of, or where it has even ended up now, but my sisters and I used to always make little paper dolls and pretend they were sailing away on it. Every time I see a model ship, I think of my grandparents, and wish I had asked them about it. There’s always this gap in generations that fascinates and saddens me: the youth not knowing to care enough to ask the elders in their lives about themselves, their stories, until it’s too late.

“CHOOKIE EGGS”

Anytime I ever stayed with my grandmother—whether it was for breakfast, lunch, or dinner—we’d have what she called “chookie eggs.” Basically, it was a few soft-boiled eggs and toast mashed up together in a bowl. Basic, but delicious, and such a great way to revisit her memory.

BEER BOTTLE CAPS

For years, my father collected the caps to beer bottles. He’d keep them in a huge glass jar in our basement, and eventually, he’d use them to cover a coffee table or make some magnets or just give them away (I don’t know to whom). Growing up, I used to like to play with them like they were special coins or tokens. Today, I always look for odd beers with special tops, and I’ve even started collecting them myself, just to remind me of him.

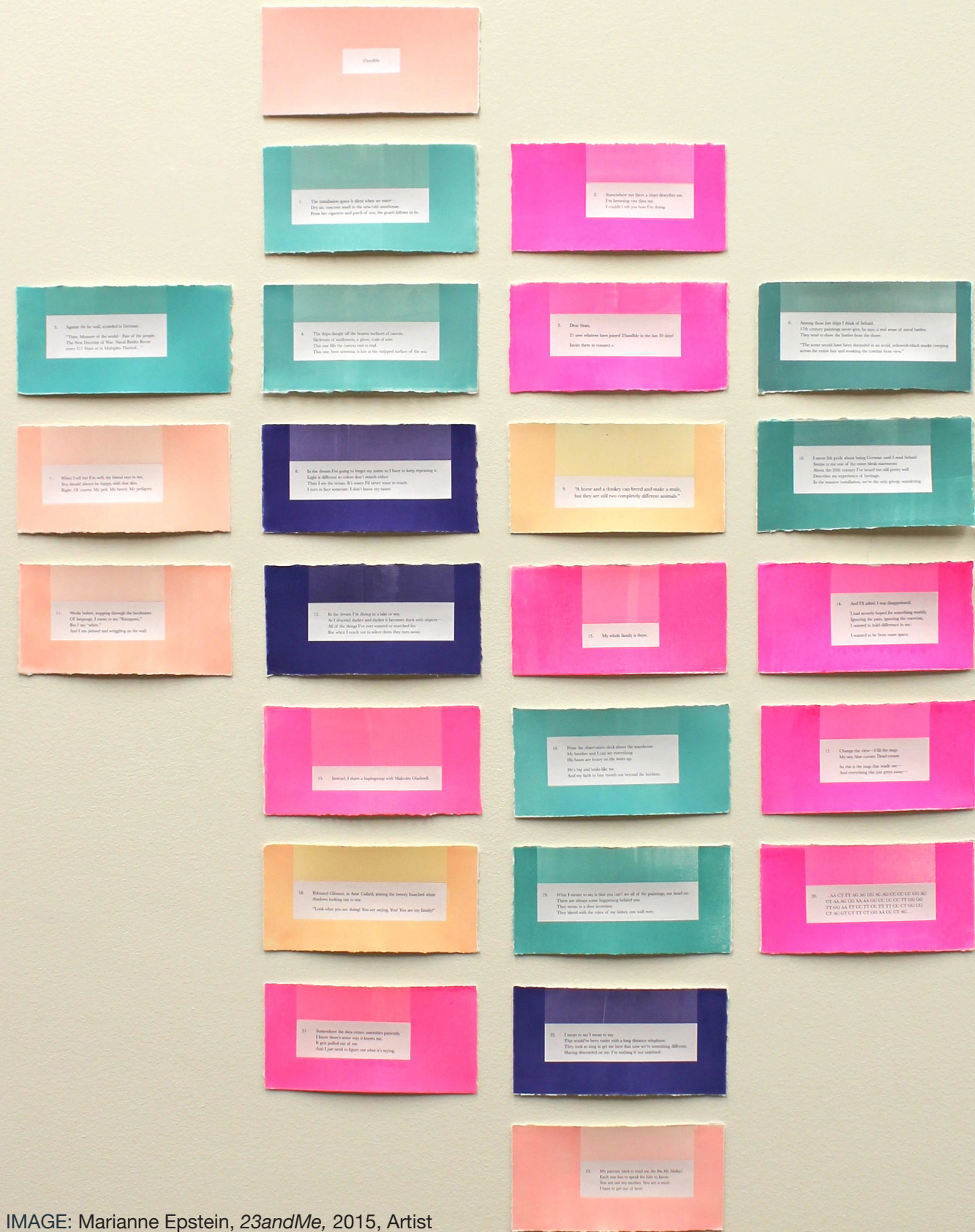


IMAGE: Marianne Epstein, *23andMe*, 2015, Artist Book of Monoprints, 7 x 3.5 x 1 inches, 41 x 31 inches, display size (Detail Image Next Spread)

23andMe

Sean Pears

1.

The installation space is silent when we enter—

Dry air, concrete smell in the new/old warehouse.

From her cigarette and patch of sun, the guard follows us in.

2.

Somewhere out there a chart describes me. I'm browsing raw data me.

I couldn't tell you how I'm doing.

3.

Against the far wall, scrawled in German:

"Time, Measure of the world—Fate of the people. The New Doctrine of War: Naval Battles Recur every 317 Years or in Multiples Thereof..."

4.

The ships dangle off the beaten surfaces of canvas.

Skeletons of sunflowers, a glove, coils of wire.

This one fills the canvas end to end.

This one, bent antenna, is lost at the stripped surface of the sea.

5.

Dear Sean,

21 new relatives have joined 23andMe in the last 30 days! Invite them to connect »

6.

Among those lost ships I think of Sebald.

17th century paintings never give, he says, a real sense of naval battles. They tend to show the battles from the shore.

"The scene would have been shrouded in an acrid, yellowish-black smoke creeping across the entire bay and masking the combat from view."

7.

When I tell her I'm well, my friend says to me, You should always be happy, with that skin. Right. Of course. My pelt. My breed. My pedigree.

8.

In the dream I’m going to forget my name so I have to keep repeating it. Light is different so colors don’t match either.

Then I see the ocean. It’s water I’d never want to touch.

I turn to face someone. I don’t know my name.

9.

“A horse and a donkey can breed and make a mule, but they are still two completely different animals.”

10.

I never felt pride about being German until I read Sebald Seems to me one of the more bleak statements

About the 20th century I’ve heard but still pretty well Describes my experience of heritage.

In the massive installation, we’re the only group, wandering. 11.

Weeks before, stepping through the landmines Of language, I mean to say “European,”

But I say “white.”

And I am pinned and wriggling on the wall.

12.

In the dream I’m diving in a lake or sea.

As I descend darker and darker it becomes thick with objects— All of the things I’ve ever wanted or searched for.

But when I reach out to select them they turn away.

13.

My whole family is there.

14.

And I’ll admit I was disappointed.

I had secretly hoped for something muddy. Ignoring the pain, ignoring the coercion,

I wanted to hold difference in me.

I wanted to be from outer space.

15.

Instead, I share a haplogroup with Malcolm Gladwell. 16.

From the observation deck above the warehouse My brother and I can see everything.

His boots are heavy on the stairs up.

He’s big and looks like me

And my faith in him travels out beyond the horizon.

17.

Change the view—I fill the map. My tiny blue corner. Dead center.

So this is the map that made me— And everything else just greys away—

18.

Edouard Glissant, at Anse Cafard, among the twenty hunched white shadows looking out to sea:

“Look what you are doing! You are saying, You! You are my family!” 19.

What I meant to say is that you can’t see all of the paintings, not head on. There are always some happening behind you.

They mean in a slow accretion.

They blend with the voice of my father, one wall over.

20.

...AA CT TT AG AG GG AC AG CC CC CC GG AC CT AA AG GG AA AA GG CC CC CC TT GG GG TT GG AA TT
CC TT CC TT TT CC CT GG CG CT AC GT CT TT CT GG AA CC CT AG...

21.

Somewhere the data center assembles patiently. I know there’s some way it knows me.

It gets pulled out of me.

And I just need to figure out what it’s saying.

22.

I mean to say I mean to say.

This would’ve been easier with a long distance telephone.

They took so long to get me here that now we’re something different. Having descended on me. I’m nothing if not indebted.

23.

My parents used to read me Are You My Mother? Each one has to speak for him to know.

You are not my mother. You are a snort.

I have to get out of here.

Crop Rotation

Douglas Luman

Learn something of the habits of a house.

At night watch it walk; ghosts ticking above the mantelshelf. There is no clock in that room; there is no moon.

*

Time’s a little insect that bores in wood—haven’t you ever heard of it. It foretells a death in the house whose words sound hollow as if spoken from a well.

Notice how time spends the seasons. In the spring, it makes itself. The soil stirs deeply.

Hardly a season passes.

*

I well recall the excitement of candle-making, a thing which never stayed done.

I’ll try climbing my dear childhood.

To return to here & now—or rather, here & next year.

*

A rare lot o’ quinces I’ve got this year. They do make fine jam. I’ll be making quince jam before long.

But, rather, give me a large apple. Larger than that. No. Give me the largest of all.

*

Verily all men are as trees walking. There’s no talking of plants—it’s he’s no good & he wants prunin’, & you’ll see what I’ll do to him.

The ranchman would style this “watching out for trouble.”

He is obvious too small for this job—like a pair of year-before-last trousers.

*

One of the most dangerous qualities of the house is that it does not always & at once produce a definite disease. It slowly & insidiously causes ill health & general weakness.

*

It is a place most menfolk do not respect & everyone knows some spot “out back” they are ashamed of.

How much water has spilled there since you have known it.

*

Sometimes I long impatiently to turn the wheel of the seasons forward a spoke or two, that the hour may arrive for planting clematis. It is hard to sit waiting for the season ordained for doing things when there is so much to be done. It is all plain before me, like a picture, & I contemplate the garden that is to be, until it gets so real I waken with a start to the garden that is.



IMAGE: Alice Quatrochi, *Fantasy sprouts Fallow*, 2015, Sculptural Book: Appropriated Paper and Handmade Flax, 36 x 5 x 10 inches (Detail Image This Spread)

Homeloss

Qinglan Wang

Where do I begin in defining a homeland that fits my body?

The bond between home and body is fragile, translucent, unnoticeable. When the body is present in the *homeland*, the mind does not notice this connection. The mind is unaware of the value of a, unaware of its existence until it is no longer there. It is an underwhelming connection until it is severed.

Somewhere along the distancing of the body from *homeland*, a change occurs.

The physical place ceases to be familiar

Home – Land = Land – Home =
A separation of home from land is another nameless place

There are 206 bones in an adult human body.

There are eight main islands in the Hawaiian chain. Uneven dots on blue, they curve about the Pacific like a spine.

There are twelve bones in the human spine, the long curve spanning down to the hips. The lumbar, the lower back, has five. I imagine Kaua’i, the oldest island, at the base of the neck, which is located about six bones below the hyoid bone. The other six (Ni’hau, O’ahu, Moloka’i, Lana’i, Kaho’olawe, and Maui) pinch and drop down the spine to the lumbar, where the Big Island, Hawaii-nei, the one with the active volcano, waited.

Before I left, I toyed with the idea of a tattoo, of blue etches chaining my body to one place. But the thought of being permanently chained to a place repulsed me. The urge to escape fills me. Repulsion propels me forward, searching for new landscapes to bury myself in.



IMAGE: Anne Smith, *Nameless Place* Detail, 2015, Paper and Acrylic Paint, 16 x 16 x 16 inches

The first word a child learns in public school is ‘Ohana, which is Hawaiian for family. The word derives from ‘Ohā, the second generation of kalo [taro] growing from the same rootstalk. The term represents an affinity amongst members from the same stock. Unity in family. Creation of inclusion.

‘Ohana goes hand-in-hand with countless drawings of a rainbow. Perfect life lesson. Rainbows are introduced, reintroduced, encouraged, reinforced into children everyday.

A drawing is never complete without a rainbow
so
a child is never bored when asked to draw a rainbow.

- The perfect rainbow never leaves because Hawaii is the Rainbow State:
- Rainbow Shaved Ice
 - Rainbow State license
 - Rainbow Car Plates
 - Rainbow Warriors (Univ. of Hawai‘i’s sports team)

The sun and rain are always in perfect harmony there.
Cyclic and idyllic, there is never an end to the bow.

A child learns that the human hand can also gesture the Rainbow.

- Known as the *Shaka*, also meaning *Hang Loose*:
- Raise the pinky and the thumb.
 - Close the other three fingers into palm.
 - Imagine a Rainbow arcing between pinky and thumb.

*

To this day, I still can’t name the order of colors in a rainbow.



IMAGES: Anne Smith, *Nameless Place* Detail, 2015, Paper and Acrylic Paint, 16 x 16 x 16 inches (Facing Page)

Ariel Goldenthal, Performance in Fenwick Gallery (Top)



IMAGE: Sarah Zuckerman, *Seelen (Souls)*, 2015, Woven Wire Sculpture, Variable Dimensions (Detail Image Facing Page)

Xuètǒng (Lineage)

Carina Yun

My PoPo was born in the 1920s, one of twelve girls from Guangzhou. She knitted men's socks at age eight, while her father smoked opium and worked in the fields sitting on the back of an ox.

In the year of war and famine, she caught tuberculosis, her mother said another daughter will die.

She put both hands on the dinner table and spat up blood in the rice bowl.

*

My PoPo at age ninety dreams of wearing a knapsack, holding a pencil, and reading a book.

Do you know what they do to young girls?

They take their toes and fold them inward, wrap them in ribbons and cloths, to make lotus feet.

The year I fell on my big feet and injured my shins.

She offered to brush my wound with a toothbrush.

Mama does not let her.

*

Mama does not let me skip school

She says one day I'll be a doctor. But I faint at the sight of blood. I want to wear knapsacks, hold pencils and write books. Baba buys me Lisa Frank folders as gifts and I cut them up to make books.

At school, no one notices that I steal paper.

They are for my books.

Mama is the only one that works. Baba sleeps in a sleeping bag behind the couch, and smokes cigarettes.

My first memory of Mama is falling asleep on her lap watching TV commercials in the 80's. I wasn't wearing a diaper. I was clean and tidy even at age four.

When I wake up Mama is gone and I use the toilet by myself. I carry my rubber duck around like a rag doll. When I see Mama walking up the street. I run down the staircase. I cry louder when I hear her unlock the door. Mama asks me how old I am.

About Fenwick Gallery

A SPACE FOR INQUIRY

George Mason University Libraries provides a hybrid, walk-through exhibition space in Fenwick Library to enhance and enrich teaching, learning and culture at the University. This space highlights Mason Libraries' resources together with original visual and multi-media work.

Exhibit themes emphasize facets of the Libraries' collections, research interests of Mason faculty, students and staff, Mason's curriculum and local cultural initiatives. Fenwick Gallery is dedicated to exhibiting high quality works by students, faculty, staff and other emerging and experienced artists that highlight aspects of the Libraries' collections.

For more information, visit: fenwickgallery.gmu.edu

OUR GOALS

- Promote the Libraries' collections and encourage scholarly and cultural inquiry at George Mason University
- Focus on research and scholarship at/of George Mason University
- Collaborate and engage with relevant Mason faculty to incorporate and/or embed gallery exhibitions into course instruction
- Stimulate intellectual and creative reflection through visual and multi-media exhibitions, discussions, etc.
- Promote the Libraries' academic and cultural mission
- Support the Libraries' development program and goals



IMAGES: Installation Images of Call & Response 2015: Lineage (Facing Page, Top and Left) Image of Ariel Goldenthal's performance in the gallery. (Bottom)