



THE NATURE LAB

AN HOMAGE TO THE RISD
NATURE LAB
AND ITS FOUNDER
EDNA LAWRENCE
CURATED BY ERIC WOLF



Edna Lawrence. Courtesy of the RISD Archives

LABspace presents

THE NATURE LAB

AN HOMAGE TO THE RISD NATURE LAB
AND ITS FOUNDER EDNA LAWRENCE

CURATED BY ERIC WOLF

Essays by NEAL OVERSTROM and PATRICK NEAL

Photographs of The Nature Lab by BILL JACOBSON

February 17 through March 17, 2018



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At Play in the Fields of Sea Stars and Katydids

by Patrick Neal

The Nature Lab at the Rhode Island School of Design is a strange and wonderful institution on campus that is as spiritually comforting as it is aesthetically revealing. Founded in 1937 by faculty member Edna W. Lawrence, an alumna of the Painting program, the lab is a combination of a natural history museum, cabinet-of-curiosities and lending library.¹ Lawrence would go on adventures, traveling around the country or abroad to sketch, collect and learn. Before her retirement in the 1970's, she had amassed a collection of over 25,000 natural, animal, industrial and textile specimens that were instrumental in her drawing classes.

Artist Eric Wolf has curated *The Nature Lab*, an exhibition at LAB-space that is an homage to the actual institution, and the show happens to coincide with the RISD community's own celebration of the eightieth anniversary of the Nature Lab. With ninety-two artists, he has suggested the participants make pilgrimages to the lab where it can be appreciated and absorbed first hand. Indeed, such trips have gotten the creative juices flowing. Several pieces were done on site, including Bill Jacobson's photographs of the facilities and some its hooved, winged, fanged and skeletal inhabitants, and Pamela Lawton's sketches of jellyfish that are as luminescent and wriggly as her more familiar skyscraper subjects. Some of the artists are alumni, including Alberto de Braud, Jay Feinberg, Ricky Boscarino, Lawre Stone, Mark Giglio and Scott Cohen. For other artists, this is a first opportunity to visit RISD, and Wolf has invited artists to contribute an existing piece or create an entirely new artwork for the occasion.

RISD's website for the Nature Lab is a work of art itself. Visitors can microscopically zoom in on such curiosities as a butterfly proboscis, kelp konbu or chick embryo and closely observe the fine details of feathers, scales or crystals. The Nature Lab's scholarship and investigations into various aspects of the human/nature connection come to life through a range of gorgeous imagery, video documentation and scientific inquiry. This online experience of a multivalent learning excursion is echoed in the curatorial selection Wolf has put together, as micro and macroscopic perspectives of things animal, vegetable and mineral make unexpected connections. Through their work, the artists extend lifelines in myriad directions resulting in eccentric and unique ways of revealing their own connections to the universe.

The abstract painter Rachael Wren contributes a syncopated abstraction keyed around cool blues and greens that could just as easily be a close-up of a dragonfly's eye. Similarly, Sue Muskat's study of a mushroom, turns the organic hood, stem and roots of the fungus into a stylized design of meshed net. Amy Talluto and Alexander Ross take us deep into the woods to familiar or surreal places while the work of Liza Phillips, Katy Schneider, Paul Wirhun and Laura Murray evoke de-



cay, dystopia and civilization through bones, skeletons, fossils and skulls. Joanne Carson's *Headspace*, Elizabeth Hazan's *Field* and Alyssa Fanning's *Great Salt Pond* span the lay of the land from up-close or panoramic, comic to transcendent. Other works, like Tamas Veszi's *Bonfire*, Christopher Schade's *Center Tree 2 (Lightening Bolt)*, Erik Schoonebeek's picture of a volcano, *Untitled (A4)* and Itty Neuhaus's picture of an iceberg, *Won't Quit*, viscerally harness the four elements of fire, water, air and earth. The theme of nature as an electric, abstract force is contemplated in fine contour with works by M. Benjamin Herndon and Anne Lindberg. On the other end of the spectrum, Zoe Pettijohn Schade, Margot Glass, Joshua Marsh and Eric Rhein render leaves, seeds, nuts and pods with a lively, scientific precision that would make Audubon proud.

These are just some of the artworks in the show. Wolf's exhibition is encyclopedic, and for viewers willing to spend some time with the individual works, the experience can be enlightening. Emily Feinstein's sculpture, *A. Loeb's Playhouse* is both a witty tribute and direct link to the Dutch scientist, Arthur Loeb, whose teaching collection on the science of design resides at RISD. Other artists consider the architecture, taxonomy and archival practices of the lab itself, such as Francis Cape's *Cabinet 61*, the *Nature Cabinet* complete with padlocks and hasps or Danny Licul's loquacious *Specimen Cabinet*. Others like Vicky Sambunaris and Steed Taylor, concentrate on what might be inside a display case, pinned to a board, pickled in mason jars or pressed between lab glass. The animals and insects that parade through the exhibition comprise octopi, owls, butterflies, beetles, birds, frogs, flying fish, sasquatch, alebrijes, a giant chicken, and a swarm of flies.

Viewing the artworks resplendent in *The Nature Lab* exhibition while perusing the scholarship that the Nature Lab fosters, evokes what the scientist Andreas Weber calls a "Poetic Ecology", the subjective expression and feeling of organisms as they understand themselves in relation to one another.² Weber's ideas draw on the work of the evolutionary biologist Edward O. Wilson, who proposed the Biophilic Hypothesis: humans innate connection to life and the natural world.³ Wilson's study of ants and travels deep into Brazil's rainforests and the Huon Peninsula of New Guinea enforced his belief that mankind's connection to nature is intrinsic to our own psychological and emotional development. Weber's boyhood fascination, staring into ponds to watch newts swim and surface for air, sparked an exuberance toward our own flesh and blood corporeality, so analogous to the living, breathing animals with which we share the

planet. Both men understand that we are more than just our minds, and feel something is amiss in contemporary society, a disconnection from the natural world fundamental to our survival on the planet.

Biophilia, Field Connections, Living Systems and Biomimetics are some of the educational pathways The Nature Lab travels down, and in 2018, Edna W. Lawrence's foresight into what constitutes a holistic and humanizing education is more prescient than ever. At a time of increased global capitalization, climate unrest and political upheaval, now is a perfect moment to remind ourselves that humans are animals and sentient beings, coexisting in a living, breathing web with all other life.

Contemplating this exhibition and conversing with Wolf about a childhood spent playing in nature, I couldn't help but think of author Michael Chabon's musings on the abandon of his own childhood compared with the more regimented and stultifying treatment of kids today.⁴ But if, at a young age, one has been fortunate enough to experience swimming, camping, zoos or a family pet, the stage has been set for a sensual appreciation of nature in early adulthood. And, if one considers the hands on physicality of examining and translating a still life item into a drawn or painted form, it's not difficult to understand how this tactile, phenomenological experience would extend further out of the classroom straight into the wilderness. Hats off to Edna W. Lawrence for getting there first and showing the way!

WORKS CITED

1. *About: Edna W. Lawrence Natural History Collection*. RISD Nature Lab website. 2018. <http://naturelab.risd.edu/>

2. Andreas Weber. "Introduction: Towards a Poetic Ecology" in *Biology of Wonder: Aliveness, Feeling and the Metamorphosis of Science*. British Colombia: New Society Publishers. 2016

3. Edward O. Wilson. *Biophilia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1984

4. Chabon, Michael. "Manhood for Amateurs: The Wilderness of Childhood" in *The New York Review of Books*. July 2009





The Nature Imperative

by Neal Overstrom

Walking into the Nature Lab at Rhode Island School of Design is like stepping into a Victorian cabinet of curiosities. Worn floorboards creaking underfoot, we're surrounded by wood and glass cabinets brimming with taxidermic birds and mammals, vertebrate bones, dried plants and seeds, mollusk shells, marine corals, and other such artifacts from the living world. Head mounts of African and North American game animals peer down from above, butterflies in glass boxes form a colorful mosaic, and if we look carefully we might even find a winged rabbit tucked away on a shelf. In so many ways the space seems reminiscent of an era when natural history was a dominant field of science, Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace advanced new ideas on the origins of life, and the notion prevailed that through careful collection, observation, and categorizing of specimens even laypeople could understand the relationships between living things and the processes of evolution.

Commenting on cabinets of curiosity that emerged from this era, evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould once wrote, "I have long recognized the theory and aesthetic of such comprehensive display: show everything and incite wonder by sheer variety."¹ Wonder is indeed a typical response to the Nature Lab, but in the digital age natural history collections such as ours may seem anachronistic. Today, technology can deliver captivating images of the natural world in an instant, just as advances in molecular biology yield new tools for studying biodiversity. These developments have prompted many natural history museums to re-examine the significance and roles of their collections in research.² The Nature Lab, by contrast, has never been a more relevant resource for RISD's students and faculty. A site for many forms of observation and inquiry, it supports critically important education on hands-on learning, the subjectivity of "natural orders," biological influences on art and design, and art-science and human-nature connections.

Housed in RISD's Waterman Building, the first structure designed and constructed specifically for the school, the Nature Lab collection occupies a library and museum space that later became the classroom of long-time faculty member Edna Lawrence. Born in the New York City borough of Staten Island in 1898, Lawrence attended RISD, graduating in 1920 and returning in 1922 to accept a faculty position that allowed her to grow as an artist and develop a style of realism in her paintings and drawings for which she would gain critical praise. Adventurous and with a keen interest in nature, Lawrence began in the 1920s and '30s what would become an an-

nual ritual of summer — “sketching trips,” camping her way by automobile across the United States or Canada one year, voyaging aboard export freighters to Europe or South America the next. By 1935 she had taken in the Canadian Maritimes, driven cross-country to California and back, and visited by ship many of the countries along the Mediterranean coast and the islands of the Caribbean. Each fall she returned to RISD to teach and share her experiences with students.

In 1937 the RISD library, then housed in Waterman, moved to a new location on campus. Lawrence and two other faculty members began assembling a materials-research laboratory in the newly vacated space, gathering industrial products, textile samples, and most significantly, natural history objects for students to use in her nature drawing class, a requirement for all freshmen. Thus, beginning with her own specimens, Lawrence built a collection over four decades that today numbers tens of thousands of objects acquired through other museums, donated from personal collections, or collected by Lawrence herself. Since Lawrence’s retirement in 1977, curators with expertise in biology and science have managed the collection and continued her vision.

Hands-on Learning and Personal Taxonomies

There are many reasons why the Nature Lab thrives but foremost is that it is neither an exhibition space nor a scientific research collection; it is a teaching collection and lending library where specimens can be removed from their cabinets, touched, examined, and even loaned out for detailed study in the dormitory room or studio. Staffed by work-study students and open 80 hours per week, the lab circulates more than 7,000 specimens each year to individual students and faculty. Therein lies the cornerstone of the Nature Lab experience: hands-on, unmediated access to authentic natural history specimens. As faculty member Juliette Simpson has noted, “Natural history museums can be disappointing in that every specimen is locked away in a protective glass case. But the Nature Lab truly embodies the spirit of a laboratory; every bird and skull and shell is available, approachable, [and] ready for interaction. . . . ‘Nature’ goes from abstraction to reality there because you are surrounded by it, immersed in it, in a way that is not often possible in an academic environment.”³

A consequence of this hands-on approach is that the Nature Lab can also be a bit messy. The objects

often require ongoing cleaning and sometimes replacement after exposure to charcoal, gouache, and modeling clay. During certain weeks of figure drawing each semester a squad of human skeletons is invariably found draped across tables and chairs or dangling from railings, fulfilling their duties in a variety of study poses that muscles and ligaments would surely not allow in a living person.⁴ Drawing easels often cram the space and a web of extension cords feeding portable lamps crisscrosses the room. Comparing the Nature Lab with other campus spaces, RISD graduate and exhibit designer Margaret Middleton wrote of her fellow students, “They preferred the cluttered, noisier, grittier atmosphere of the Nature Lab. To them, the Nature Lab was much more accessible . . . the place is nearly always packed. And effortlessly: no programs, no big exhibitions, just old animal skulls and sea shells.”⁵ Tangible, dynamic, interactive — these qualities distinguish the Nature Lab from many other kinds of learning environments.

Another distinctive feature of the Nature Lab is that unlike most natural history museums the collection is not rigidly organized by taxonomy. Once living specimens are only loosely divided by Kingdoms of Life and rocks and minerals are housed without specific reference to their geologic origins. In a sense the collection can be considered a composition, a place for visual experimentation. Plant seeds are often found arranged without consideration of evolutionary relationships but instead simply by size and shape. A drawer filled with minerals is organized by color rather than other



chemical or physical properties, anathema to a right-minded geologist. Edna Lawrence herself organized specimens in idiosyncratic ways, arranging samples in an odd assortment of boxes that once held sewing needles or typewriter ribbons to compose modest but thoughtful studies of symmetry, color, pattern, texture, and form.

Comparison, juxtaposition, and composition — all integral aspects of art and design — help students see myriad potential systems, a process that mirrors the way cognitive scientists believe the human brain organizes information and conceptualizes the world. Assemblages of objects represent physical manifestations of what has been referred to as the “collaging” process of the mind — with images, experiences, and ideas being sorted and configured in particular ways.⁶ By simply arranging a group of objects, we connect deeply to how we learn and make meaning. In one Nature Lab workshop students are asked to divide a subset of the collection into categories based on any characteristics they consider significant. Sometimes this leads to similar outcomes, for instance when moths and butterflies are divided into their own groups. Other times, however, participants free themselves from identification to imagine other possible schemes — arranging things by size, texture, symmetry, or color — thereby overcoming existing knowledge to see things in new ways.

Notes

1. Stephen J. Gould, “Cabinet Museums: Alive, Alive, O!,” in *Dinosaurs in a Haystack: Reflections in Natural History* (New York: Harmony Books, 1995), 244.
2. For further discussion on the future role of natural history museums in research and education see Kevin Winker, “Natural History Museums in a Postbiodiversity Era,” *Bio science* 54 (2004): 455–59.
3. E-mail to the author, December 14, 2012.
4. In the studio, students work from highly accurate reproductions of human skulls and skeletons. Real human skulls and skeletons are viewed through protective cases.
5. See <http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2010/05/guest-post-tale-of-two-university.html>.
6. Julia Marshall, “Connecting Art, Learning, and Creativity: A Case for Curriculum Integration,” *Studies in Art Education* 46 (2005): 227–41.

The Nature Imperative by Neal Overstrom, from *The Art of Critical Making: Rhode Island School of Design on Creative Practice*. Copyright © 2013 of Rhode Island School of Design. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.





Francis Cape
Cabinet 61, The Nature Cabinet, 2017
 White pine, linseed oil
 26 x 13 x 3 inches
 Courtesy of Janice Guy
www.franciscap.com



Alan Wiener
Untitled, 2017
 Found brick, Aquaresin, 5.25 x 8 x 2 inches
www.alanwiener.org



Peter Dudek
Home Sweet Home #6, 2016
 Ink on wood, 7 x 9 x 1 inches
www.peterdudek.com



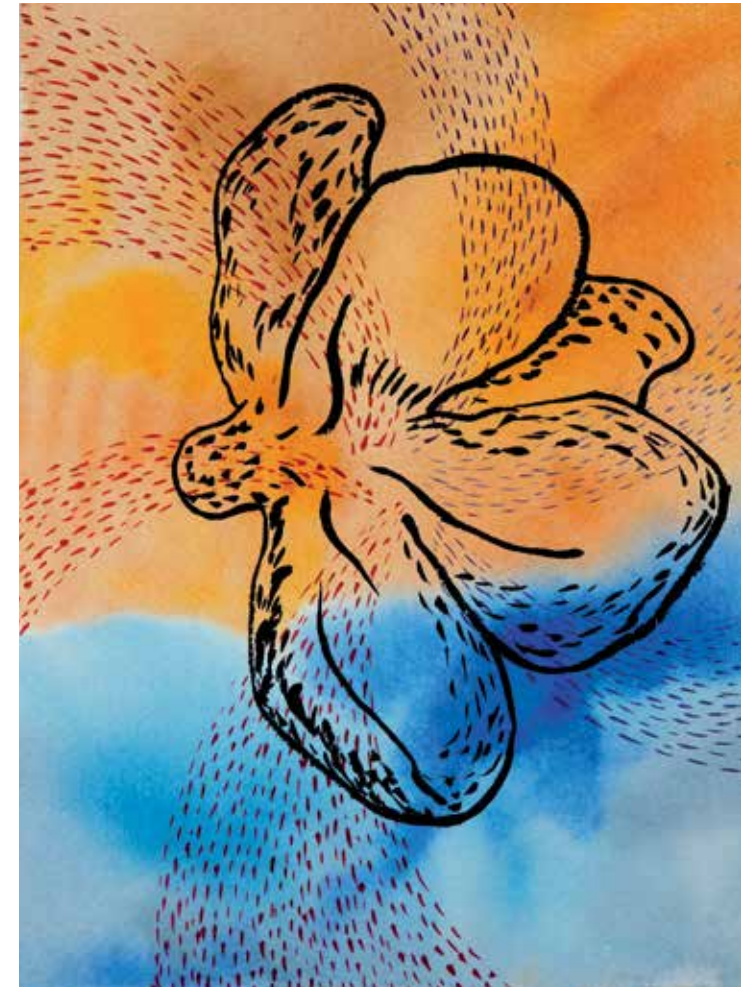
Christian Maychack
Compound Flat #49, 2016
 Epoxy clay, pigment, and wood, 20 x 14.5 x 2.5 inches
 Courtesy of Gregory Lind Gallery
www.christianmaychack.com



Emily Feinstein
A. Loeb's Playhouse, 2017
 Mahogany, pine, poplar, and veneer, 11 x 10 x 8.5 inches
www.Emily-Feinstein.com



Julie Evans
Nature Lab 1, 2017
 Ink, acrylic, colored pencil, on paper, on wood
 30 x 22 inches
julieevans-art.com



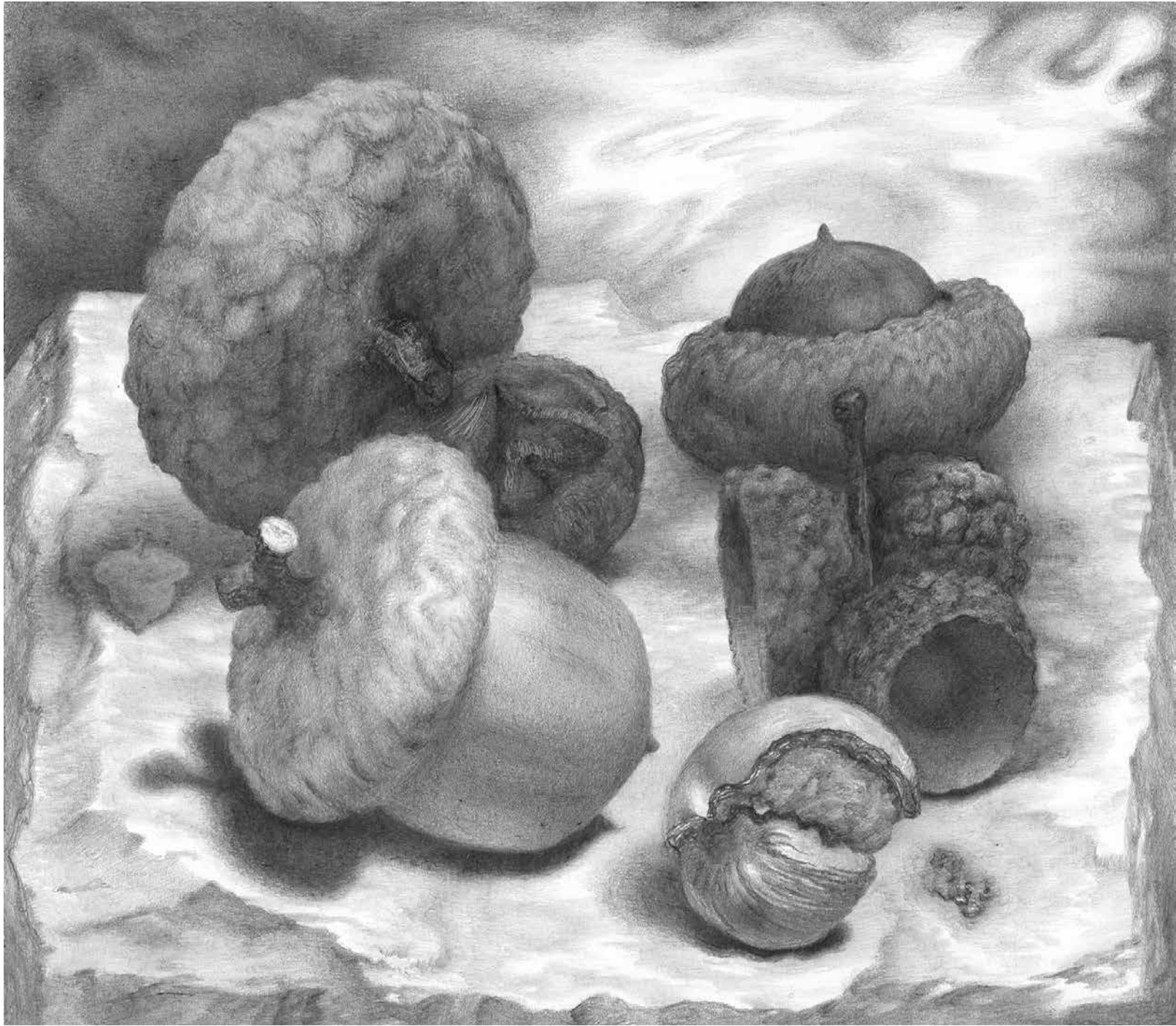
This page clockwise:

Lawre Stone
From Trying to Make a Painting With the Feeling of a Dying Sunflower, Dawn 2017, Watercolor and india ink on Arches paper, 15 x 11 inches
www.lawrestone.com

Jane Fine
Angel Avenue, 2016, Acrylic and ink on wood, 12 x 9 inches, Courtesy the artist and Pierogi, Photo by James Esber, www.pierogi2000.com

Alyssa E. Fanning
Great Salt Pond, 2017, Colored pencil on paper, 6 x 9 inches (drawing)
www.alyssaefanning.com

Elena Sisto
Untitled, 2017, Oil on linen, 12 x 9 inches
 Courtesy of Bookstein Projects, www.elenasisto.com



This page:

Joshua Marsh

Acorns, 2017
Graphite on paper
7 x 8 inches
Courtesy
Jeff Bailey Gallery
www.joshuamarsh.com

Right page clockwise:

Eric Rhein

Felix and Ross (Felix Gonzalez-Torres and Ross Laycock) 2015
(From *Leaves an AIDS memorial*)
Wire and paper
16 x 19 x 2 inches
www.ericrhein.com

Christopher Schade

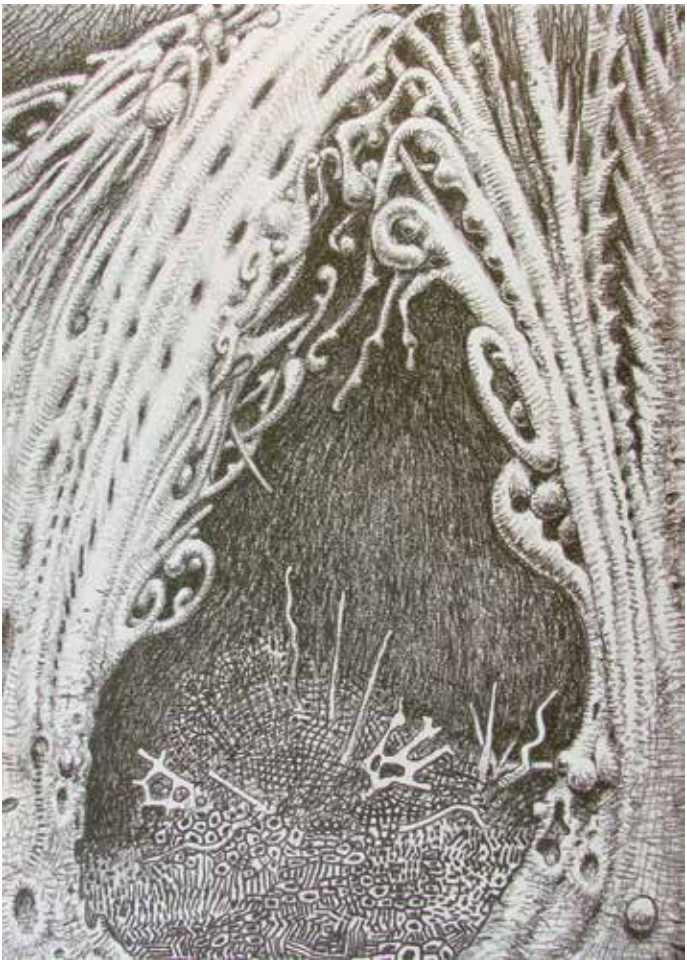
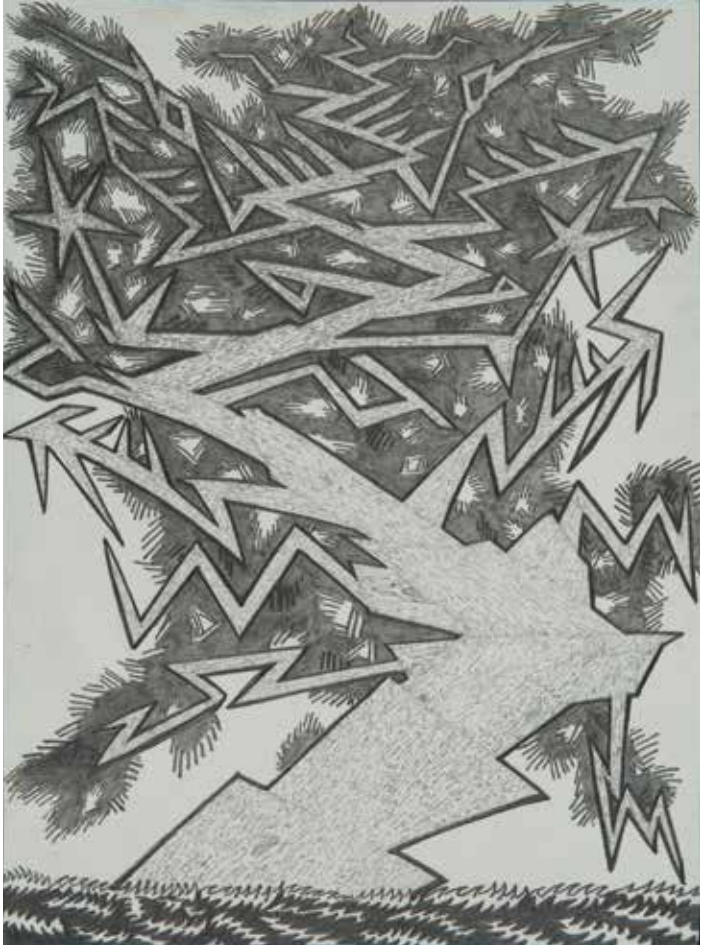
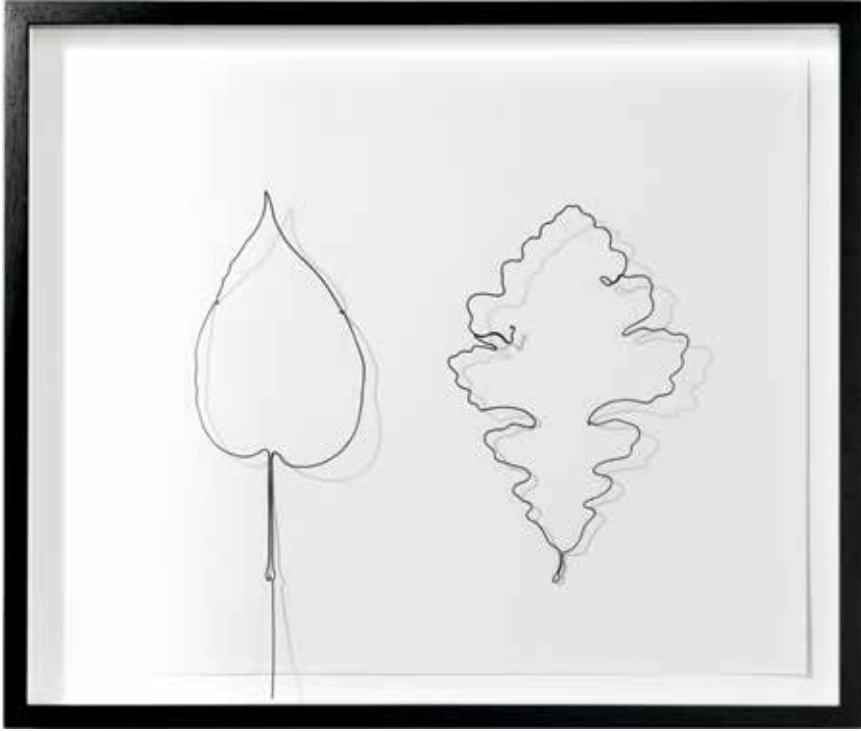
Center Tree 2 (Lightning Bolt), 2014
Graphite on paper
8.5 x 6.25 inches
Photo by Susan Alzner
www.christopherschade.com

Robert Murray

Lookout Island, 2017
Graphite on cold press
watercolor paper
9 x 12 inches

Alexander Ross

Untitled, 2014
Sepia crayon on paper
16.875 x 12.75 inches
www.alexanderross.work



Judy Fox
Model for Large Octopus 2, 2017
 Fired clay, painted in casien
 11.5 x 9 x 10 inches
www.judyfox.net



Jay Feinberg
Crane on Lily Pad Figurine, 2016
 Brass / Enamel Paint / Swarovski Crystals
 Crane: 17"wide, 27.75"tall, 8"deep. Lily Pad base: 12.75 inches wide
 Courtesy of Jay Strongwater, www.jaystrongwater.com



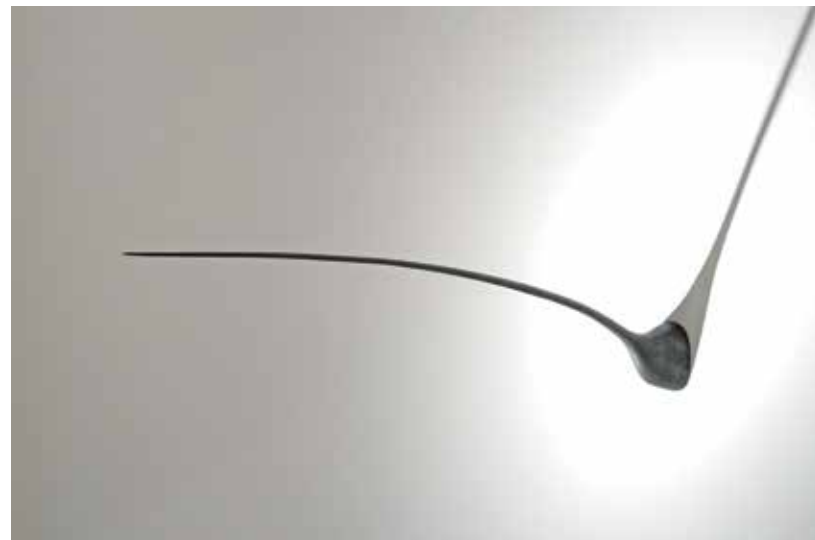
Nancy Grimes
Still Life Underwater, 1997
 Oil on linen, 12.5 x17 inches
www.nancygrimes.net



Patrick Neal
Seashells (Vieques), 2017
 Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 inches
www.patrickneal-art.com



Dennis Kardon
Blurred Intentions, 2008, (DK-P-03-08)
 Oil on linen, 20 x 16 inches
www.denniskardon.com



This page clockwise:

Bill Jacobson

Lines In My Eyes #8982, 2017

Edition 1/5, Pigment print mounted to archival museum board, framed
11 x 9 inch print; 20 x 16 inch board

Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, www.billjacobsonstudio.com

Seth Koen

Red Queen's Race, 2014

Camphor wood and graphite, 12 x 31 x 3 inches

Courtesy Gregory Lind Gallery

www.sethkoen.com

Paul David Young

Dad Died/Dead Bird in Winter, 2017

Video, 3 minutes 26 seconds

www.pauldavidyoung.com

Jenny Lynn McNutt

Chimera, 2015

Ceramic with glaze, 9 x 9 x 10 inches

Photo by Jane Huntington

www.jennyllynnmcnutt.com

Right page:

Victoria Sambunaris

Grenadier (Caelorinchus caribbeus, family Macrouridae)

1156 feet, bottom, deep ocean
2016,

Archival pigment print, framed
11 x 14 inches,

www.victoriasambunaris.com



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Chris Pennock



Carol Betsch



M. Benjamin Herndon



Anne Lindberg



John Kelly



Lisa Corinne Davis



Peter Dudek



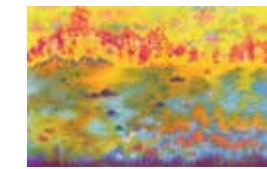
Danny Licul



James Esber



Black Lake



Alyssa E. Fanning



Erik Schoonebeek



Robert Murray



Carl D'Alvia



Nancy Grimes



Royalyne Ward-Davis



Elizabeth Hazan



Tamas Veszi



Jenny Lynn McNutt



Alan Weiner



JoAnne Carson



Donna Moylan



Joel Longenecker



Monica Sosnowski



James O. Clark



David Deutsch



Caitlin Palmer



Liza Phillips



Patrick Neal



Joshua Marsh



Christian Maychack



Christopher Schade



Victoria Sambunaris



Jane Fine



Laura Murray



Itty S. Neuhaus



Dave Gloman



Christopher Joy



Amy Talluto



Sarah Walker



Susan Rabinowitz



Kate Gilmore



Pamela Lawton



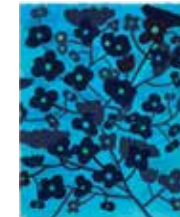
Julie Evans



Loren Britton



Lawre Stone



Ruby Palmer



Katy Schneider



Zachary Keeting



Nancy Goldring



Nichole Van Beek



Philip Knoll



Elliot Green



Carol Diehl



Michael Lee



Sabrina Marques



Carleen Sheehan



Margot Glass



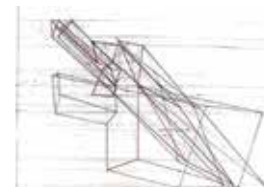
Nader Meykadeh



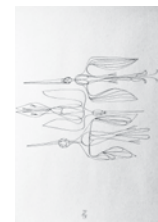
Emily Feinstein



Elena Sisto



Preston Scott Cohen



John Paul Philippe



Bill Schuck



Chie Fueki



Thomas Pihl



Paul Wirhun



Sue Muskat



Alberto de Braud



Snow

a poem by
Geoffrey Young



Bill Jacobson



Alex Ross



Francis Cape



Ricky Boscarino



Dennis Kardon



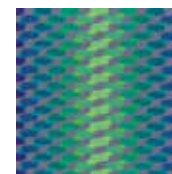
Elana Herzog



Judy Fox



Slink G. Moss



Rachel Wren



Shimon Attie



Steed Taylor



Meg Lipke



Franklin Evans



Mark Giglio



Seth Koen



Betsy Friedman



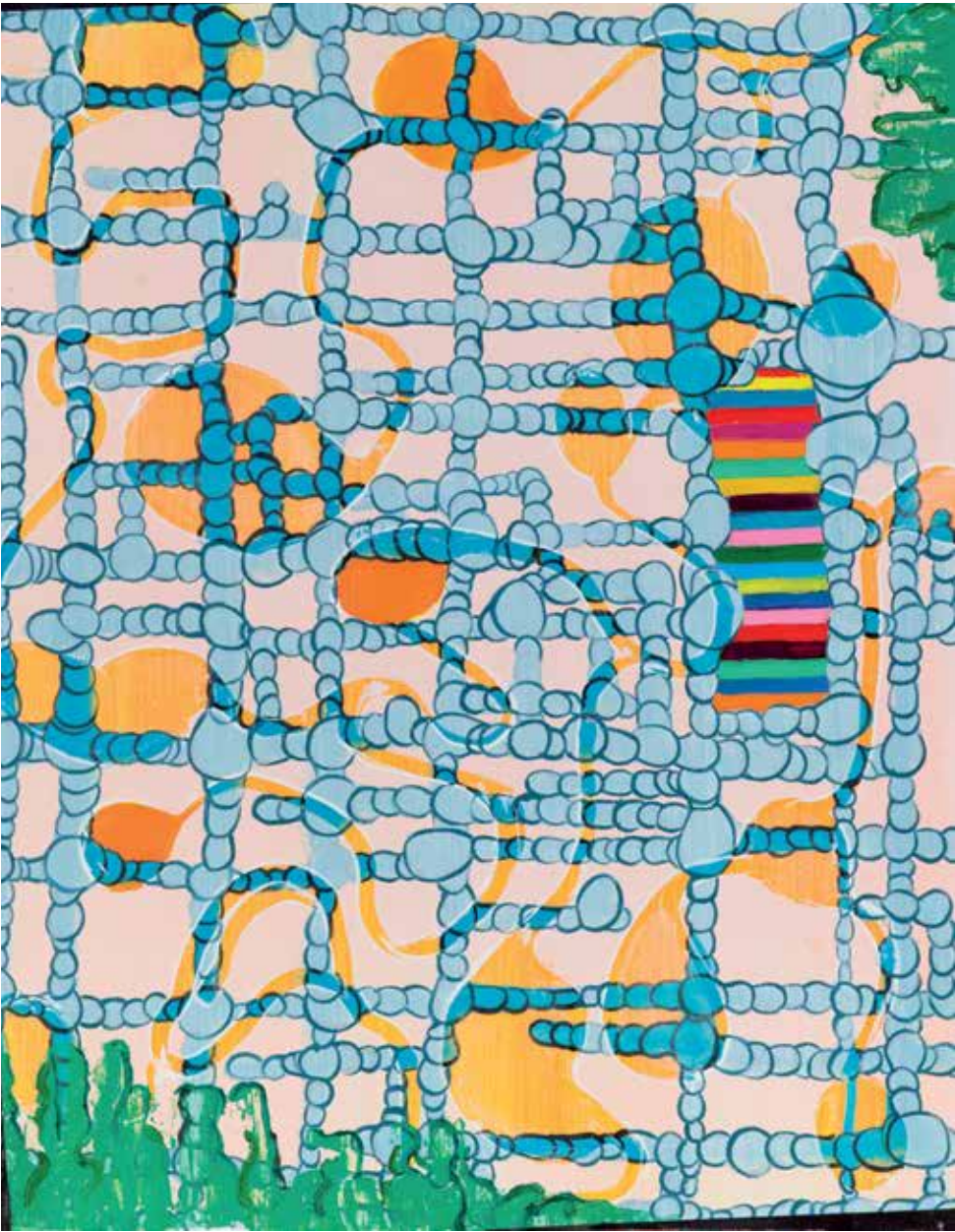
Eric Rhein



Paul David Young



Linda Stillman



Lisa Corinne DAVIS
Capricious Cytology, 2017
Oil on panel 10 x 7.5 inches

Alyssa E. FANNING
The Yellow Landscape, 2017
Colored pencil on paper 1.75 x 2.75 inches

Ricky BOSCARINO
Stag Beetle, 2017
Ceramic earthenware, 16 x 16 x 8 inches



Katy SCHNEIDER
Turn it Blue, 2017
Oil on panel 3.5 x 14.5 inches

Donna MOYLAN
Nature mound, 2017
Oil and acrylic on panel 8 x 8 inches

LONGENECKER Danny **LICUL** Meg **LIPKE** Sabrina **MARQUES** Joshua **MARSH** Christian **MAYCHACK**
Jenny Lynn **MC NUTT** Nader **MEYKADEH** Slink **MOSS** Donna **MOYLAN** Robert **MURRAY** Laura
MURRAY Sue **MUSKAT** Patrick **NEAL** Itty **NEUHAUS** Ruby **PALMER** Caitlin **PARKER** Chris **PENNOCK**
Zoe **PETTIJOHN-SCHADE** John Paul **PHILIPPE** Liza **PHILLIPS** Thomas **PIHL** Susan **RABINOWITZ**
Eric **RHEIN** Alexander **ROSS** Victoria **SAMBUNARIS** Christopher **SCHADE** Katy **SCHNEIDER** Erik
SCHOONEBEEK Carleen **SHEEHAN** Bill **SCHUCK** Elena **SISTO** Monika **SOSNOWSKI** Linda **STILLMAN**
Lawre **STONE** Amy **TALLUTO** Steed **TAYLOR** Nichole **VAN BEEK** Tamas **VESZI** Sarah **WALKER** Royalyne
WARD-DAVIS Alan **WIENER** Paul **WIRHUN** Rachael **WREN** Geoffrey **YOUNG** Paul David **YOUNG**

Shimon **ATTIE** Carol **BETSCH** Ricky
BOSCARINO Loren **BRITTON** Francis **CAPE**
JoAnne **CARSON** James O. **CLARK** Preston
Scott **COHEN** CARL **D'ALVIA** Lisa Corinne
DAVIS Lucky **DEBELLEVUE** Alberto **DE**
BRAUD David **DEUTSCH** Carol **DIEHL** Peter
DUDEK James **ESBER** Franklin **EVANS** Julie
EVANS Alyssa **FANNING** Jay **FEINBERG**
Emily **FEINSTEIN** Jane **FINE** Judy **FOX** Betsy
FRIEDMAN Chie **FUEKI** Mark **GIGLIO** Kate
GILMORE Margot **GLASS** Dave **GLOMAN**
Nancy **GOLDRING** Elliott **GREEN** Nancy
GRIMES Elizabeth **HAZAN** Benjamin **HERNDON**
Elana **HERZOG** Bill **JACOBSON** Chris **JOY**
Dennis **KARDON** John **KELLY** Zach **KEETING**
Seth **KOEN** Philip **KNOLL** Black **LAKE** Pamela
LAWTON Michael **LEE** Anne **LINDBERG** Joel



Left page:

James Esber
Untitled (Crown of Thorns), 2017
 Acrylic and ink on paper mounted on panel
 20 x 15 inches
 Courtesy of Pierogi Gallery
www.jamesesber.com

This page clockwise:

Black Lake
(Slink Moss and Susan Jennings). Help Others, 2014
 18 x 14 x 3 inches
 Mixed Media on panel with glass projections

Donna Moylan
Untitled, 2017
 Oil and acrylic on panel 16 x 22 inches
www.donnamoylan.com

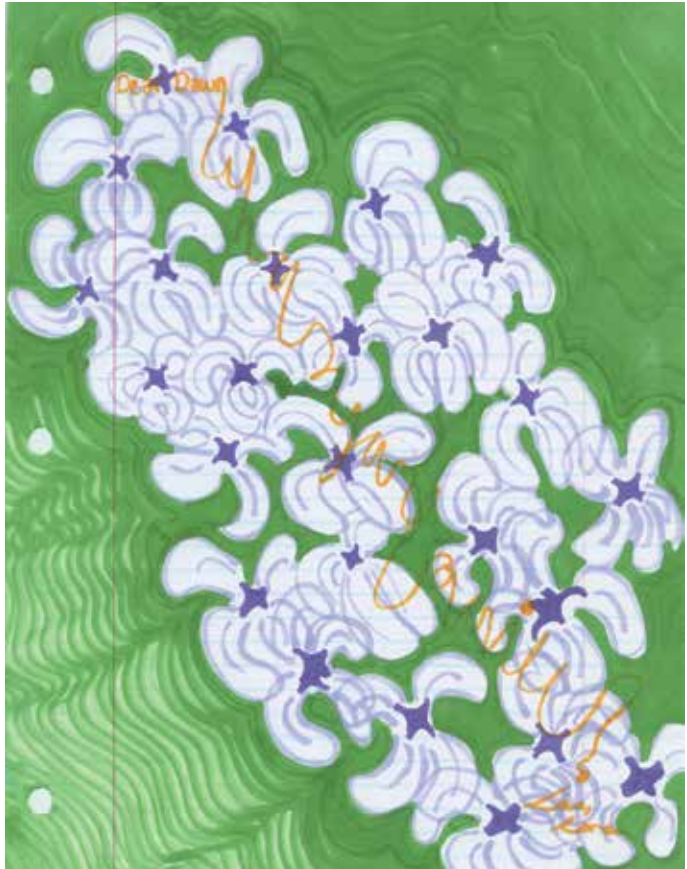
Danny Licul
Specimin Cabinet, 2017
 Oil and acrylic on wood
 15 x 11.5 inches
www.dannylicul.com



Carl D'Alvia
Boid, 2016
 Bronze
 8" x 4" x 9"
 Courtesy of Nathalie Karg Gallery



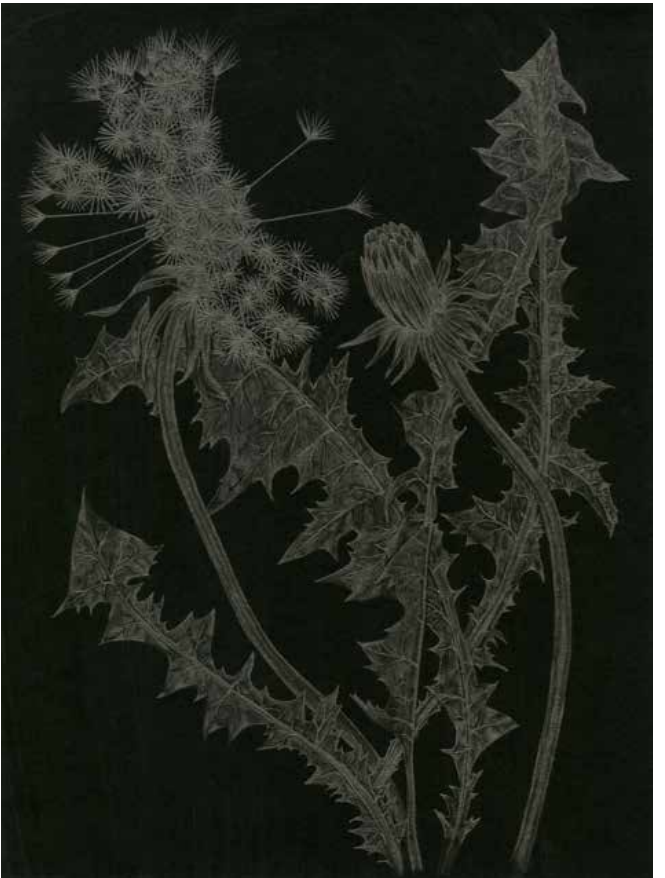
Kate Gilmore
Glass Heart (Bulletproof)
 24" x 24" x 1"
 laser cut bulletproof acrylic glass



Clockwise:

Loren Britton
Dear, Dawn, Lilac, 2017
 Marker on lined paper
 8.5 x 11 inches / 22 x 28 cm
www.lorenbritton.com

Michael Lee
Modernist Fence II, 2017
 Graphite and India ink on paper
 13 x 10 inches
www.MichaelAaronLee.com



Margot Glass
Dandelion, 2017
 Graphite on paper, 12 x 9 inches
www.margotglass.com

Ruby Palmer
Flower Series: Blue on Blue, 2016
 Flashe on Arches watercolor paper
 16 x 20 inches, Photo by Pete Mauney
www.rubypalmer.com



Left page:

JoAnne Carson
Headspace, 2016
 Masonite scratchboard
 7 x 5 inches
www.joannecarson.com

This page:

Monika Sosnowski
Presence (Secret way Back)
2, 2015-2016
 Pigment print 5" x 5" (approx)
www.monikasosnowski.com

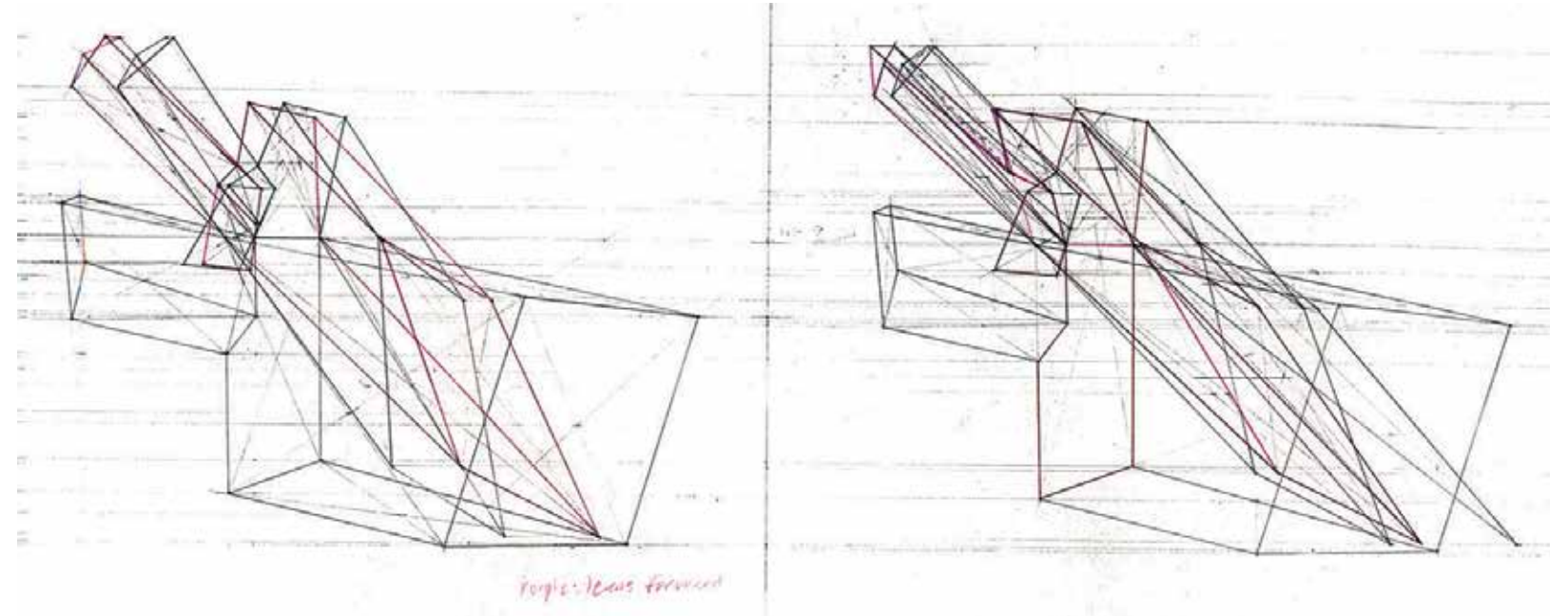
Lucky DeBellevue
Untitled, 2014
 Graphite, wood, wood veneer
 21 x 21 x 5.75 inches (LD13)
 Courtesy of Kai Matsumiya Gallery
www.kaimatsumiya.com





Caitlin Parker
Indigo Landscape #2, 2017
 Indigo and avocado dye on cotton/linen fabric, wood panel, thread
 10 x14 inches
www.caitlinparker.com

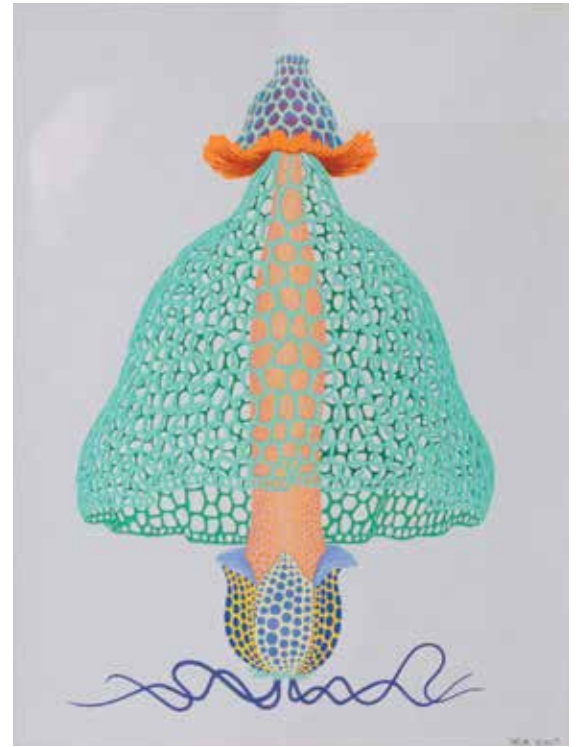
David Deutsch
Shrine, 2002
 Oil on linen, 11 x 17 inches
www.daviddeutsch.net



Preston Scott Cohen
Small Stilicho, 1998, Pencil on paper, 18 x 14 inches, www.prestonscottcohen.com

Carol Betsch
Penitential steps dedicated to the Stations of the Cross, the Five Senses, and the Three Theological Virtues, pilgrimage church of the Good Jesus, Braga, Portugal, 2011, Archival Giclée print, 9.25 x 15 inches





< Joel Longenecker
Crum Elbow, 2017
 Oil and acrylic on wood 21" x 16"
 Courtesy John Davis Gallery
www.joellongenecker.com

This page clockwise:

Chris Pennock
Thoreau Reminder, 2017, 10" x 14", Gesso, gouache, acrylic on wood panel
 "it is a surprising and memorable as well as valuable experience to be lost in the woods any time"

Sue Muskat
Phallus Indusiatus, 2017, Goache on panel, 14 x 11 inches, www.sueknollart.com

Amy Talluto
"Pine with Woodpecker Holes", 2017, Oil on panel, 11" x 14"
www.amytalluto.com

Mark Giglio
Untitled, 2017, Mixed media, 12" x 18" x 1"



This page clockwise:

Thomas Pihl

Untitled #1, 2018

Acrylic on canvas 14 x 11 inches

Shimon Attie

Untitled (from White Nights, Sugar Dreams), 2001

Chromogenic print, 8.625 x 8.625 x 1.25 inches (framed)

Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery

www.ShimonAttie.net

Linda Stillman

The Blues, 2016

flower stains, colored pencil on paper

9.5 x 11 inches

www.lindastillman.com

Right page clockwise:

John Paul Philippe

3 Birds in Flight, 2017

Ink on Paper 10 x 10 inches

www.johnpaulphilippe.com

Bill Schuck

Dispersal 11-3-17, 2017

Ink, paper, string, pump, timer

Dimensions variable

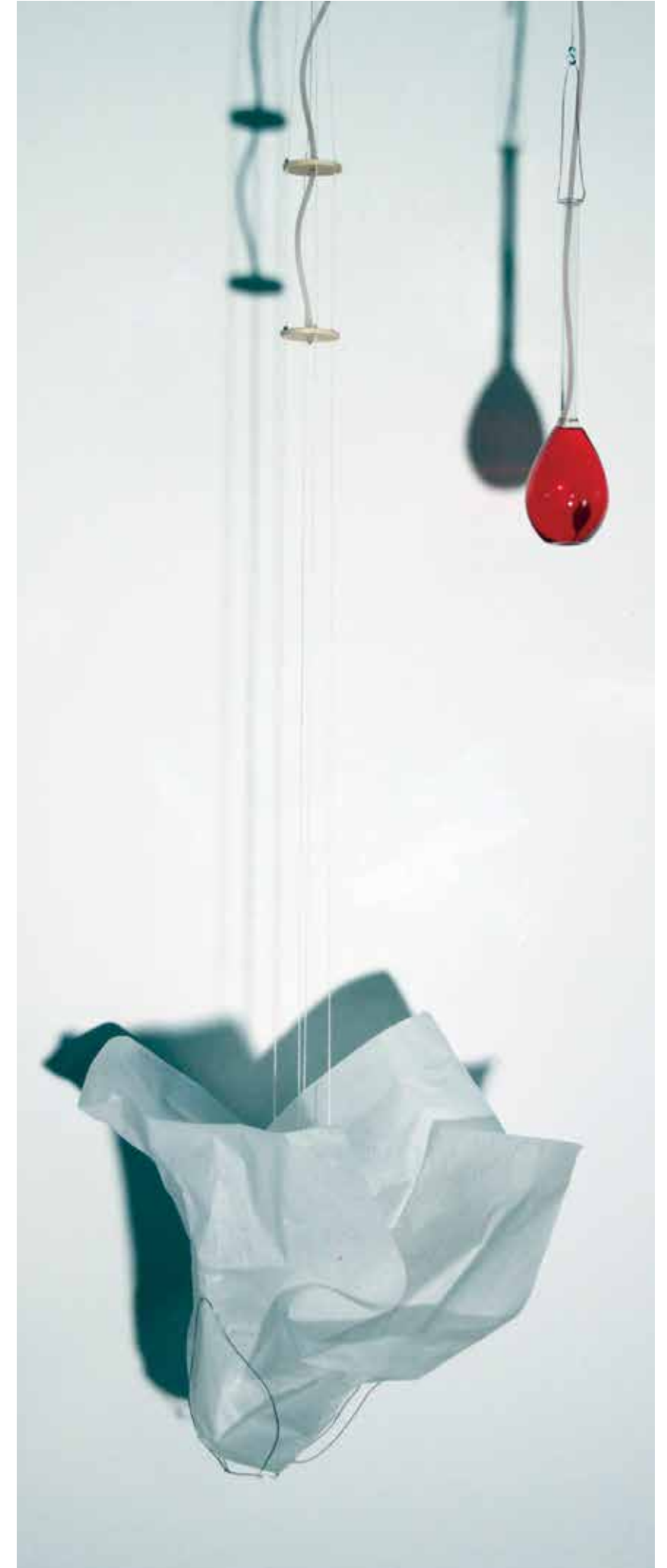
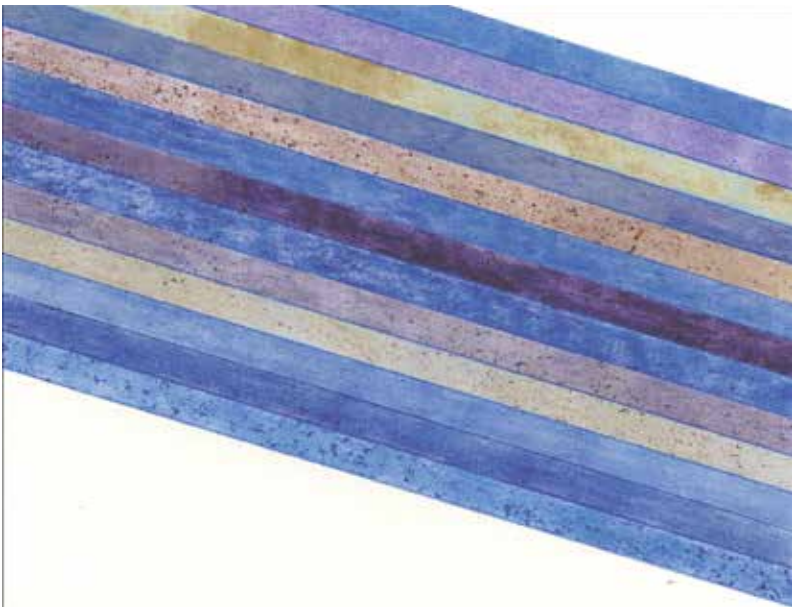
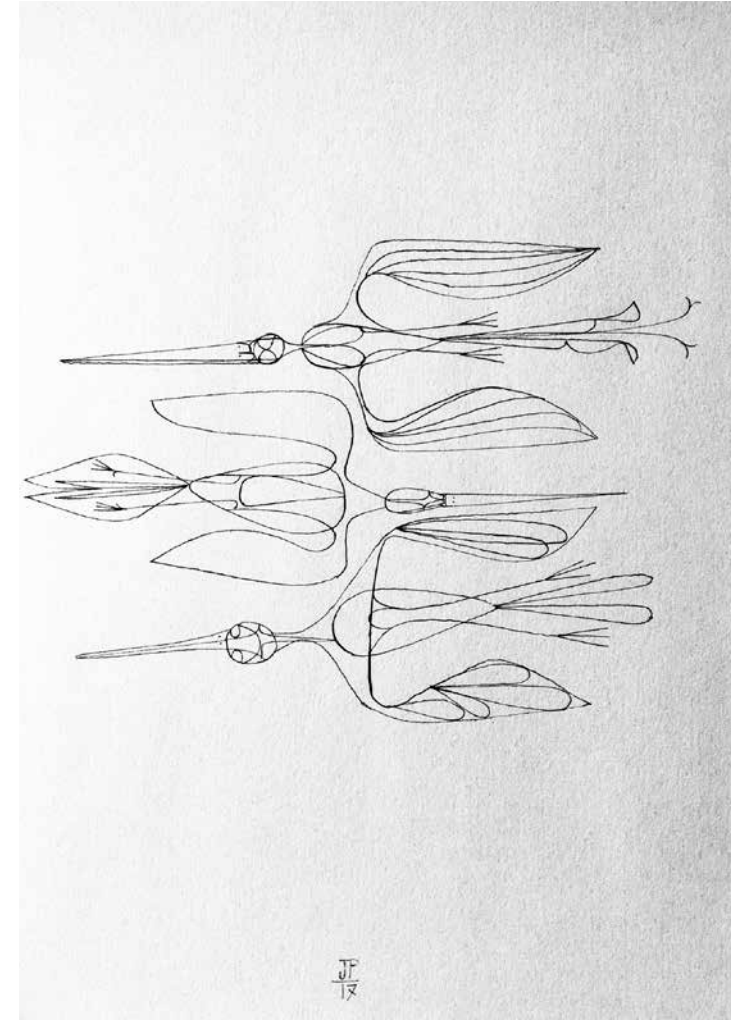
www.billschuck.com

Slink G. Moss

Dill, 2017

Pen and ink, 9 x 14 inches

facebook.com/slink.moss





Laura Murray
Coney Island Sea Horse, 2014
 Acrylic, sand, and garbage on panel
 17 x 8 x 2.5 inches
www.lauramurray.net



Meg Lipke
Pink Horn, 2017
 Muslin, dye and acrylic with polyfil, stainless steel
 22 x 24 x 5 inches



Elana Herzog
Untitled (Log #8), 2014
 Log, metal, staples, 3" x 3" x 19"
www.elanaherzog.com



Paul Wirhun
Radiant Skull, 2017
 Eggshell encrusted board, dyed
 scratched, painted, lacquered sanded
 7.5 x 5 x 1.5 inches
www.paulwirhun.com

Nader Meykadeh
Untitled, 2007
 Glue and hair on paper
 5.5 x 10.5 inches

Steed Taylor
Two Old Friends, 2017
 Acrylic paint and graphite on boxed wood panel, 8 x 10 x 1.5 inches
www.steedtaylor.com



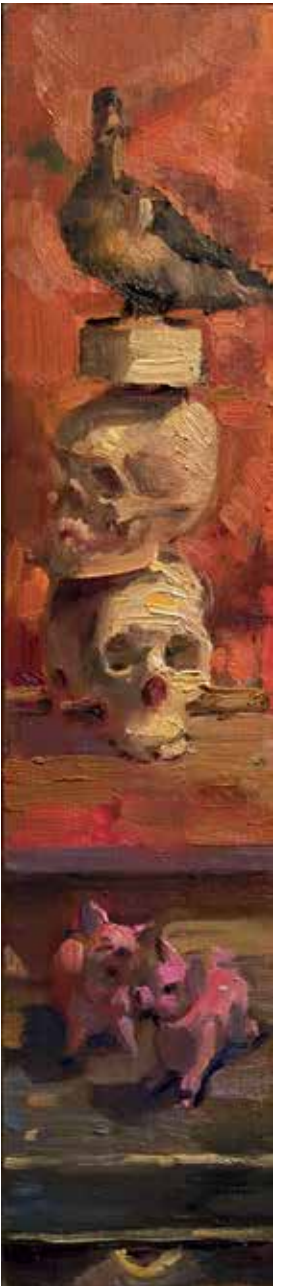
Betsy Friedman
Butterfly Boogie, 2017
 Collage, rhinestones and googley eyes on
 Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"
www.BetsyFriedman.com



Sabrina Marques
Woodland Alebrijes, 2017
 Gouache on panel, 10 x 10 inches
www.sabrinamarques.com

Royalne Ward-Davis
Menagerie, 2002
 Acrylic on canvas, 8 inches diameter
<http://royalyn.pbworks.com/f/images.html>

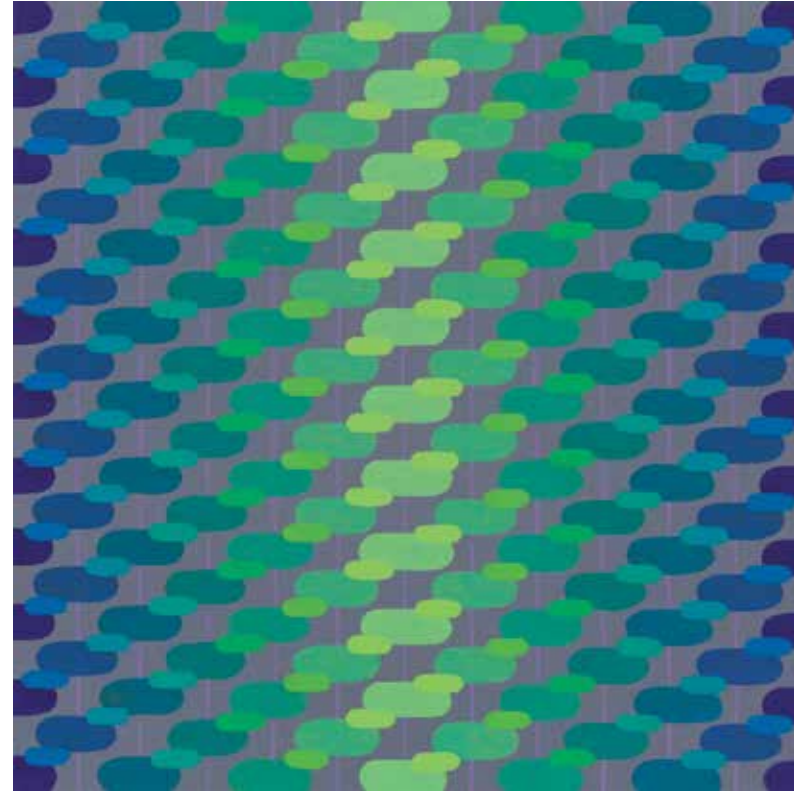
<Chie Fueki
Owl, 2017, Acrylic and color pencil on mulberry paper on wood, 7.75 x 5.75 inches
 Courtesy of Shoshana Wayne Gallery, www.shoshanawayne.com



Katy Schneider
Tower, 2017
 Oil on panel, 2.5 x 11 inches
www.katyschneider.com



Rachael Wren
Lumen, 2011
 Oil on gessoed paper, 8 x 8 inches
www.rachaelwren.com



Ricky Boscarino
Stag Beetle, 2017
 Ceramic earthenware, 16 x 16 x 8 inches
www.lunaparc.com

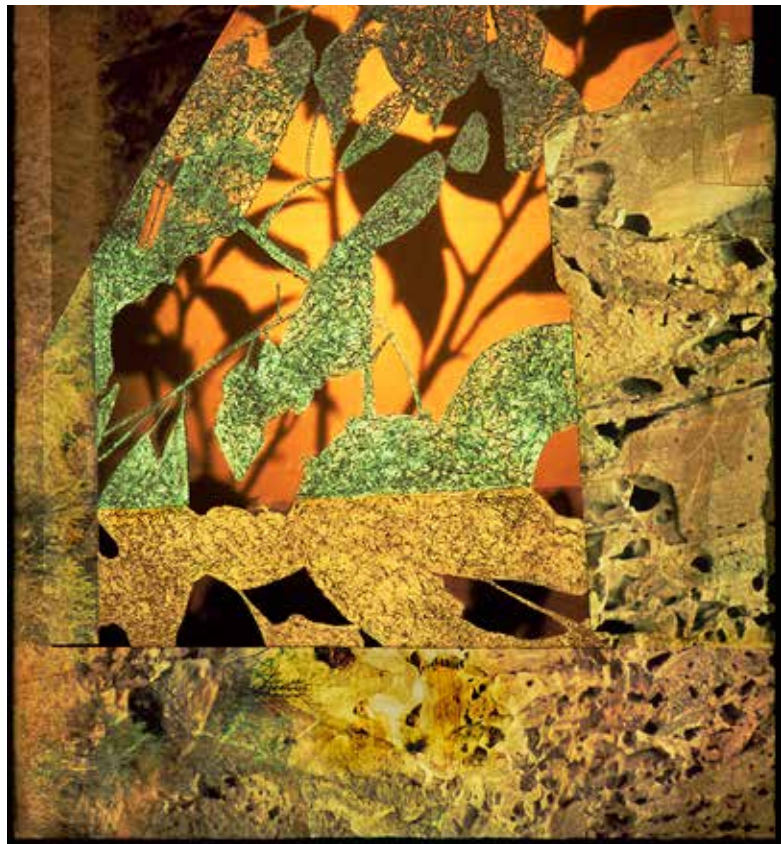


Liza Phillips
Family Phocidae, 2017
 Acrylic on canvas, 12 x 16 inches
www.lizaphillips.com

Alberto de Braud
Mouches, 2013
 Bronze casting, Installation, dimensions 100 x 70 x 1 cm
www.albertodebraud.com



Philip Knoll
Speckled Hen Crossing 7th Street, 2017
 22 x 22 inches
 Watercolor and colored pencil on paper
www.philipknoll.com



Left page clockwise:

Itty S. Neuhaus

Won't Quit, 2014 and 2017
Archival digital print on vellum from photograph of iceberg the Labrador Sea by artist, commercial postcard photographer unknown, cut, fold, lines removed by scratching, red alcohol ink, 20 x 15 inches
www.ittyneuhaus.com

Dave Gloman

Untitled, 2017, Mixed media, 12 x 18 x 1 inches
www.daveglomanart.com

Nancy Goldring

Shadows' Shadows: Fossil Shadow, 2017
Foto-projection digital print on Hahne Muhle paper (edition:1/2), 10 x 11.5 inches, www.nancygoldring.com

Zach Keeting

Jenipapiero Beach, 2017, Acrylic on canvas 30 x 24 inches
Courtesy Fred Giampietro Gallery
www.zacharykeeting.com

This page:

Christopher Joy

Untitled, 2016, Oil on wood, 14 x 20 inches
www.christopherjoy.net

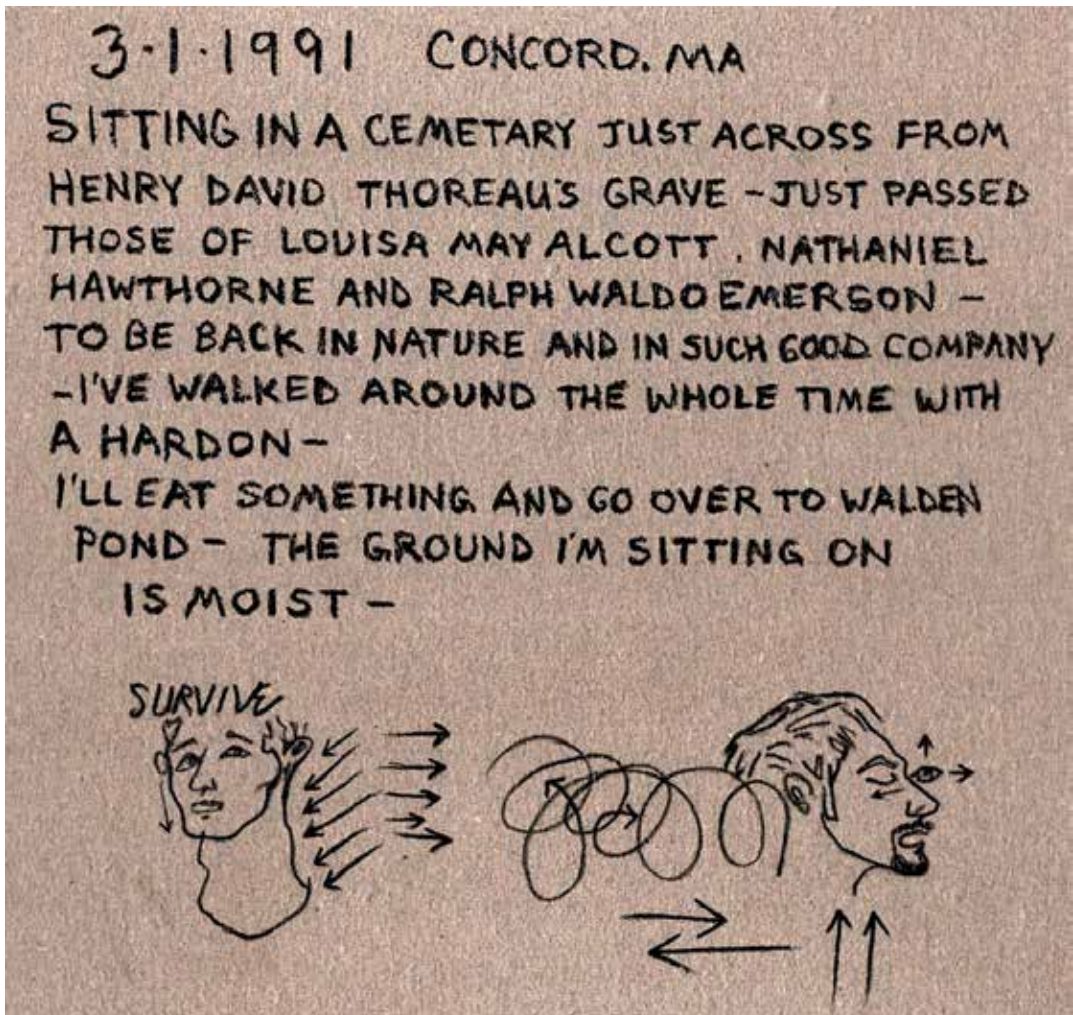
Elliott Green

The Borning, 2016, Oil on linen, 18 x 24 inches
www.elliottgreen.com

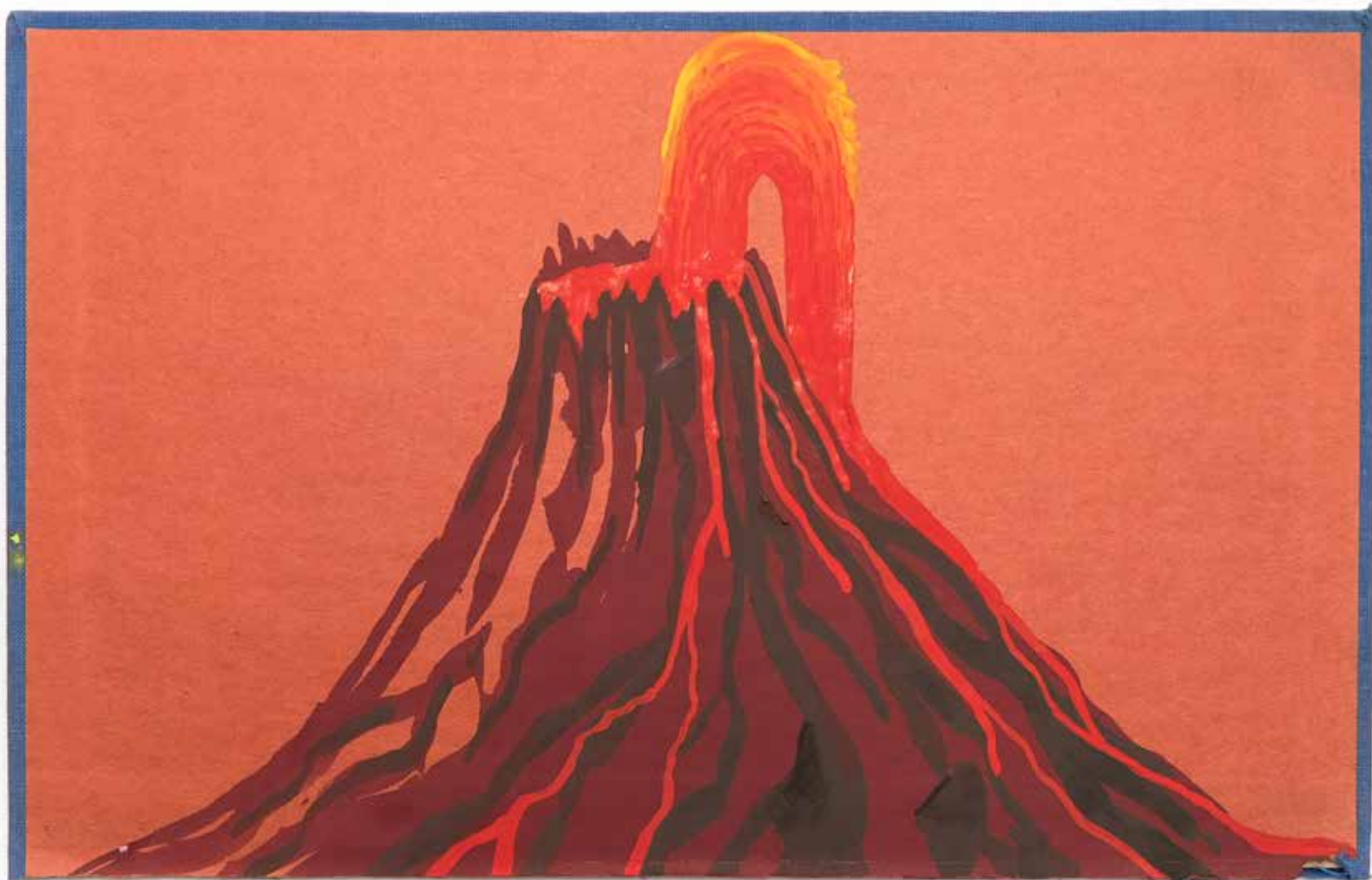
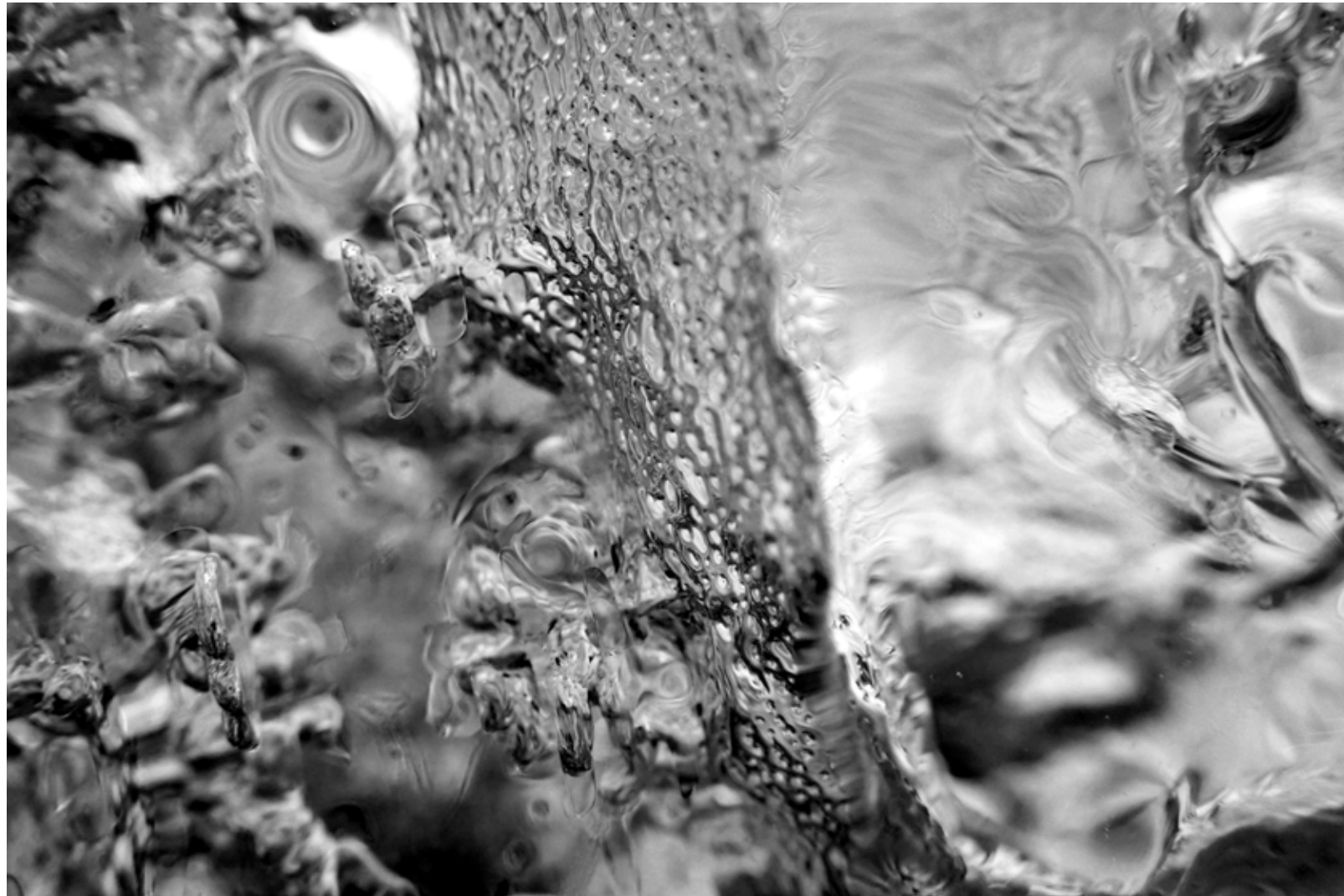


This page clockwise:

- Elizabeth Hazan**
Field #42, 2017, Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches, www.elizabethhazan.com
- M. Benjamin Herndon**
Lead Lines No. 3, 2017, Silverpoint, graphite, gelatin, and marble dust on linen 15 x 14 inches, www.mbenjaminherndon.com
- Anne Lindberg**
vertigo, 2017, (title from poem by Alice Oswald "Vertigo" from *Falling Awake* (2016, Norton), Graphite and colored pencil on mat board, 19 by 18 inches www.annelindeberg.com
- Tamas Veszi**
Bonfire, 2010, Oil and pastel on hand made paper, 8.5 x 11 inches, www.veszi.com
- < James O. Clark**
Untitled, 2017, Vinyl and CCFL (cold cathode fluorescent tube), 12 x 8.5 x 7.5 inches Photograph by Kristi Arnold, www.jamesoclark.com



SNOW
 Caps rocks
 Fills divots
 Gessos streets
 Blankets bushes
 Milks hills
 Darkens glass
 Speckles twilight
 Smears memory
 Chills taste
 Bejewels music
 Fogs breath
 Enshrines hours
 Cracks limbs
 Flannels dreams



Left page clockwise:

John Kelly
Journal Entry Transcription: March 1, 1991
 2017
 Graphite on St. Armand Canal grey flax
 paper on aluminum panel, 10 x 10 inches
www.johnkellyperformance.org

Geoffrey Young
Snow, from ARTISANAL, 2017 with drawings
 by Philip Knoll, © 2018 Gun Control Press

Erik Schoonebeek
Untitled (A-4), 2006
 Gouache on book cover, 6.5 x 9 inches
 Courtesy of Jeff Bailey Gallery
www.baileygallery.com

This page:

Carleen Sheehan
Glacial Scan, 18 June 2017
 Blomstrandbreen, Svalbard, Norway, 2017
 Pigment print on silver-coated paper
 11 x 14 inches
www.carleensheehan.com

Susan Rabinowitz
Untitled, 2017
 Acrylic and flashe on board, 9 x 12 inches 49



Nichole Van Beek
Through the Thuja
 2017
 Acrylic on dyed canvas
 24" x 20"
 Courtesy of
 Jeff Bailey Gallery
www.nicholevanbeek.com



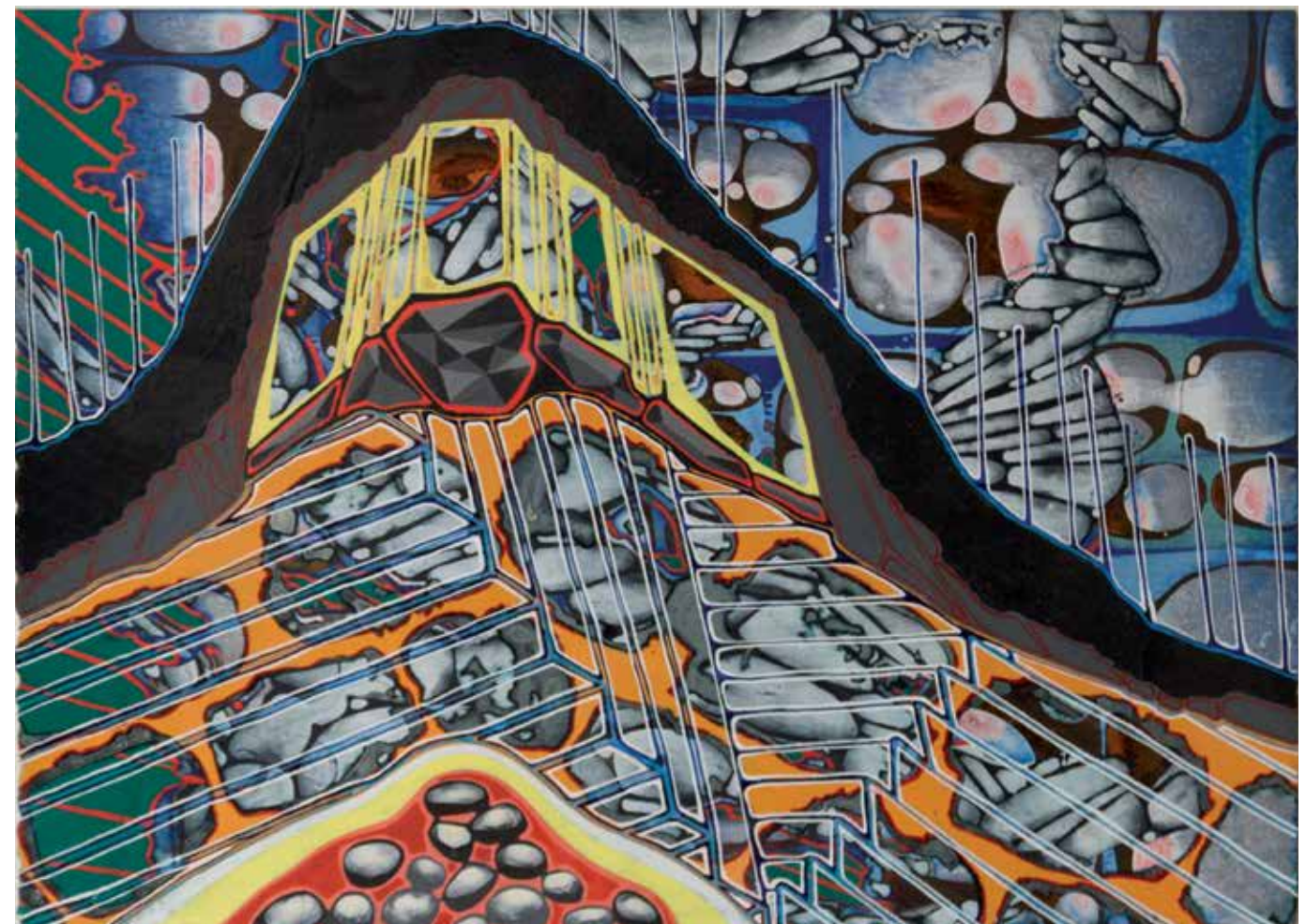
Pamela Lawton
Moon Jellies, V, 2017
 Oil on linen
 16 x 22 inches
www.pamelalawton.com



Carol Diehl
Gloris, 2008, Oil on panel
 12 x 12 inches, www.caroldiehl.com



Franklin Evans
rockspinesrockspinesrockspines, 2017, Acrylic on canvas, 16 x 16 inches
 Courtesy of Miles McEnery Gallery, www.franklinevans.com



Sarah Walker
Outcrop I, 2012
 Acrylic and ink on paper
 10.25 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of
 Pierogi Gallery
www.sarahwalker.org



Acknowledgements

Thank you to Susan Jennings of LABspace, for the opportunity to curate this exhibition. LABspace has devoted itself to a diverse range of artist projects since it's founding in 2014, and Susan's interest in fostering dialogue amongst a community of artists has been a tremendous success. Her embrace of widely varying creative practices has given the gallery it's strong reputation and a very special role in the region.

My gratitude to Neal Overstrom, the Director of the RISD Nature Lab, whose enthusiasm and encouragement have had an extraordinary impact on this project. Artists were invited to visit the Lab, and some of the works created for the show were done on site. Neal is a dynamic and engaging scholar whose knowledge and interests have enriched the facility and the experience for everyone involved. Neal's touching essay, *The Nature Imperative*, embodies the spirit of both the Lab and the exhibition.

Special thanks to my friend Patrick Neal, whose essay, design of the catalog and announcements, creativity, support and advice have been sustaining factors throughout the process of organizing this exhibition. He has generously shared his experience as a curator and helped me to navigate the complexities. Patrick's essay describes the project in eloquent terms. His thoughtful words help to illuminate the subject with a broad perspective on the timeless subject of Nature.

A big thank you to Bill Jacobson who photographed the Nature Lab for this exhibition. His images reveal the power of this extraordinary place which has served as an inspiration and resource for generations of artists and designers.

Special thanks to Doug Stalker, Susan Jennings, Alan Wiener and Jane Hutchinson for taking wonderful photographs of many of the artworks for this catalog.

My deep appreciation to all 92 artists, whose trust and participation have been the central pillar of this effort to honor the RISD Nature Lab.

And finally, my heartfelt fondness to the late Edna W. Lawrence, artist, teacher and visionary, whose project has inspired so many. Her Nature Lab was integral to my time as a student, and has resonated in the artworks and creativity that I continue to discover in the forty years since first stepping into this truly marvelous place.

Eric Wolf
February, 2018



Published on the occasion of the exhibition:

The Nature Lab: An Homage to the RISD Nature Lab and Its Founder Edna Lawrence

Curated by Eric Wolf

February 17–March 17, 2018

LABspace, 2462 Route 23, Hillsdale, NY 12592

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Zoe Pettijohn Schade

Leaf Structure (Societal Model) 7, 2015

Graphite on Paper, 8 x 7 inches

Courtesy of Kai Matsumiya Gallery

www.zoepettijohnschade.com