

MANIFEST™ v67

REWORK (Aristotle Georgiades)

| Lost Horizon (art about history)



MANIFEST™

CREATIVE RESEARCH GALLERY
AND DRAWING CENTER

volume 67

REWORK

Sculpture by Aristotle Georgiades

Lost Horizon

Art About History

MANIFEST VOLUME SIXTY-SEVEN

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November 9 – December 7, 2012

REWORK

Sculpture by Aristotle Georgiades

This solo exhibition of sculptures by Aristotle Georgiades is one of six selected from among 150 proposals submitted for consideration for Manifest's 9th season.

Aristotle Georgiades received his B.F.A. from the University of Michigan and his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work ranges from issues of male identity, labor economics, and more recently, the changing American landscape in a post-industrial economy. He works in wood, metal, and recycled architectural materials. Georgiades lives and works in Stoughton, Wisconsin and has been professor of sculpture at the University of Wisconsin, Madison since 1999.

He has exhibited his artwork nationally and internationally in both curated group and solo exhibitions. His work has been reviewed in various publications including Art In America, Sculpture Magazine and The Chicago Tribune. He is also part of the collaborative public art team Actual Size Artworks which has been producing large scale permanent and temporary public works for over fifteen years.

Of his work Georgiades states:

In today's economy more modest ideals abound and one must be prepared to find alternative means to an end. In my new projects and those planned for the future I find my selection of materials to be based more on common objects and materials that are approaching obsolescence and are of little value in their present state. Most of my current works have an intention or ambition that has been redirected for one reason or another; the emotional content of this change in direction is the subject of this new work.

Learn more at:

www.arisgeorgiades.com

www.actualsizeartworks.com



Bent Door, repurposed wooden door and trim with interior fluorescent light, 86" x 36" x 12", 2011



Extension, repurposed aluminum ladder, 72" x 24" x 54", 2009



New Old Growth, repurposed wooden ladder, oak branches, 120" x 54" x 4", 2012



Weary, repurposed wooden ladder, 48" x 24" x 54", 2009



Homesick, repurposed wooden architectural trim, 40" x 12" x 12", 2012

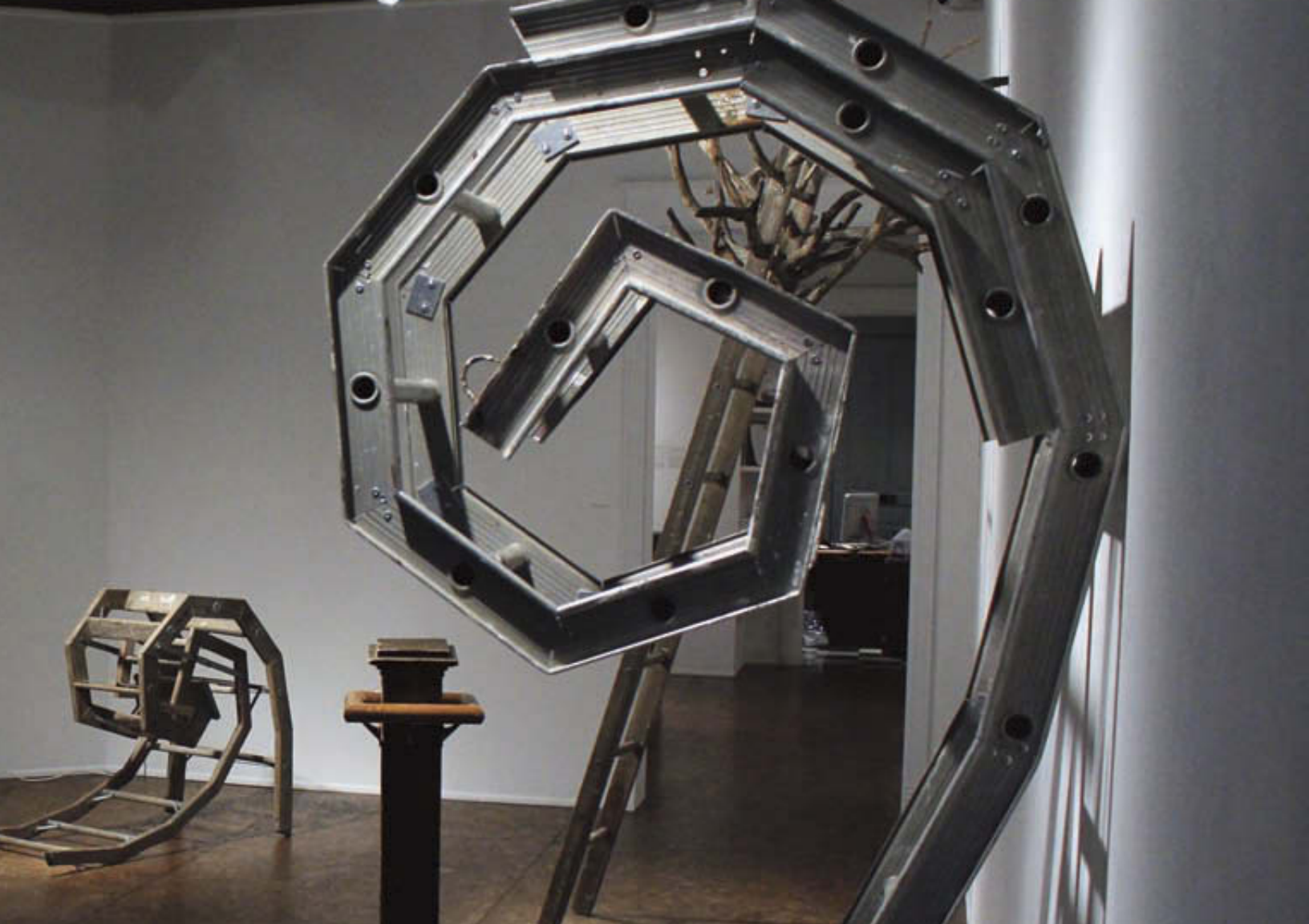


Hard Day, repurposed wooden ladder, paint can and painted wood disc, 90" x 24" x 48', 2012



Main Gallery installation of *REWORK* at Manifest, November 2012





November 9 – December 7, 2012

Zach Cohen
But-Yam, Israel

Catherine Dreiss
Des Moines, Iowa

Alexandra Emberley
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Ivan Fortushniak
Indiana, Pennsylvania

Melissa Furness
Denver, Colorado

Zach Koch
Bloomington, Indiana

Hanna Kozlowski-Slone
Sterling, Kansas

Adam Mysock
New Orleans, Louisiana

Sara Pearce
Cincinnati, Ohio

Justin Plakas
Athens, Georgia

Doug Russell
Laramie, Wyoming

Laura Spalding Best
Tempe, Arizona

Adele Vallance
Amphill, England

Jave Yoshimoto
Polk, Nebraska

LOST HORIZON

Art About History

Curated by Tim Parsley

A small slice of the leading edge of the wave of time is documented, encapsulated, and frozen in the form of human history. They say that history is written by the winners. Perhaps it is more true to say that it is written by those who survive, and only for the brief time in which they can still talk (or make art) about it. That, we suppose, would be the collective *us*.

History is generally divided into two philosophies, speculative and critical. Regardless of which, key words apply, and include terms such as progress, truth, fact, civilization, cycles, patterns, society, past, direction, humanity, linear, evolution... and the list goes on. Inevitably, history is a view of humanity across time.

How do artists reflect upon, and even participate in history? Surely some do it consciously, as a subject of focus. Others may have it in mind, without the intention of feeding into or addressing it at all. Whatever the case may be, Manifest offers *Lost Horizon* as a survey of how artists working today make art which is in one way or another about history.

Manifest received 626 entries from 273 artists in 41 states and 16 countries around the world for this project. The exhibit features sixteen works by artists from eleven states and the countries of Canada, England, and Israel. Tim Parsley, Manifest's Associate Curator, curated this exhibition from the pool of jury-approved works. He offers a compelling statement about the exhibit concept and final assembly of artwork.

Jason Franz, Executive Director and Chief Curator



Curator's Statement

by Tim Parsley, Associate Curator

WHEN WE occasionally gather with friends from the past, our conversations often revolve around “Remember when...” stories where we rehash the familiar shared experiences and favorite memories that have been told and retold, countless times. It seems that some essential part of our relationship is built upon these shared past experiences, and the oral history keeps them alive. Our history together, in many ways, helps to define our present.

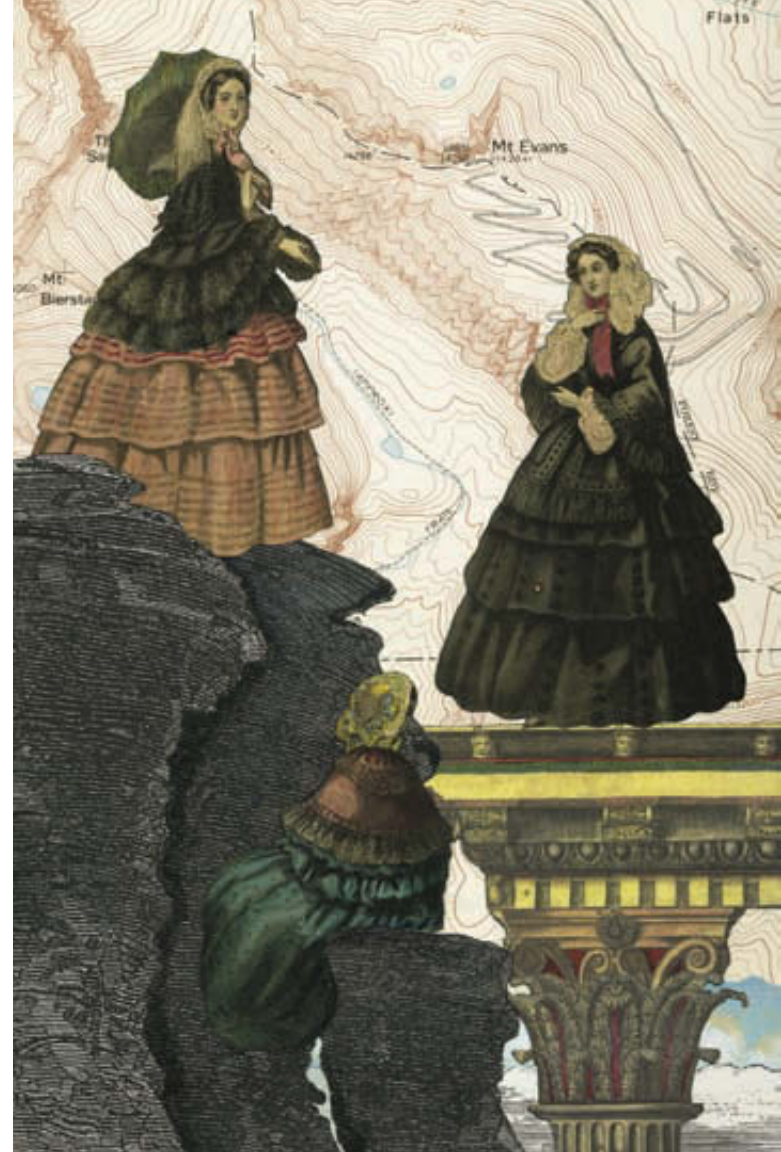
Of course, inevitably some of these shared stories have different versions, and the arguments over the “true facts” of those experiences are part of what give the conversations their renewed vitality. The story begins again and someone in the group interjects: “No, no – that’s not how it *really* happened!”

Differing perspectives on what “really happened” are the constant companions to discussions of the past. Even when all the primary sources have been researched and the expert historians have been consulted, any assertion of an historic account invites critical disagreement. Libraries run out of shelf space because of such disagreements.

Historical theorist Keith Jenkins contends that this is because of a fundamental confusion between the *past* and *history*, the former being what really happened, the latter being the “neighboring discourses” that we engage in to try and make sense of what really happened. Jenkins asserts that what we generally consider to be history is, in fact, an interpretative framework that is beholden to our own subjective perspectives, and therefore, “History is a discourse about, but categorically different from, the past.”¹ Put simply, what happened is only what we think happened. That our conclusions regarding history are, at best, educated opinions is not a new concept. Napoleon Bonaparte wryly asked, “What is history but a fable agreed upon?”

Indeed, in today's post-deconstructed cultural collage, it is hard to imagine how elementary school history textbooks are still compiled. Editors and educators must be stalled hopelessly by questions of exactly *which* histories they should include. As Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel write, "Throughout the modern period in the West, an allegiance to the idea of historical truth remained paramount... Today a singular truth of history is no longer assumed."²

It would seem, then, that this mixed textbook of historic interpretations would provide fertile ground for today's visual artists. After all, historically speaking (or perhaps we should say, *in the past...*) artists have served as a vehicle for our understandings of the past. For centuries, epically-scaled paintings and monumental sculptures have enshrined the great moments of history, providing a lens through which the viewer can time-travel back and celebrate, contemplate, and commiserate over that which has gone before. A number of well-known contemporary artists continue this role, though with a particularly postmodern inversion, often copy-and-pasting the themes and images of the past into new configurations. Two notable examples include Neo Rauch's pseudo-surrealist narratives of post-industrial alienation and malaise and Kara Walker's silhouetted cut-out dramas which peel back the scab of antebellum America. These artists do not just ask us to consider history or the past, but they use history as a tool for a reconsideration of the past, and therefore, a reframing of the present.



Still, the return to history as a mode of artistic practice has had its challenges. Since Courbet's break from the genre, history has been suspect - at best nostalgic, at worst propagandistic. Courbet's aim was to create "a living art" founded upon his belief that the only true history painting was that which captured the real-time events and persons of his day. In characteristic brashness, he said, "The artists of one century [are] basically incapable of reproducing the aspect of a past or future century..."³

However, artists today continue to plumb the past, though generally not with the goal of reproduction. For contemporary artists, the past is a clue to the present, and history provides a visual and conceptual discourse that is rife with new interpretations. The 14 artists included in *Lost Horizon* each approach history with a fresh reconsideration of the past. In comparison, their respective histories would yield the predictable disagreements. In cooperation, they reveal a panoramic view where we can scan the poly-historic horizon of the collective past.

Several of the artists in *Lost Horizon* adopt a baroque lens in their consideration of the past, seeing through the decorative density and rose-colored warmth of nostalgia, to reveal questionable notions of beauty and genteel society. Catherine Dreiss' two matriarchal portraits preside, holding their places as exemplars of refinement and grace, even as they remain frozen in an icy blue. Melissa Furness' mixed-media works show us figures vaulting and twirling with Tiepolo-like anti-gravitational exuberance, intertwined with and consumed by the decorative sublime of their environments. In other instances, the decorative nearly obscures the past entirely, as in Hanna Kozłowski-Slone's "Rummaging Through."

Other artists in this exhibit explore history as a series of forces, advancing forward and upward. Ivan Fortushniak's little green army men transcend their miniature playfulness as they take the ridge, issuing orders and lobbing grenades into the fog of war. Doug Russell's "Ebb and Flow #14" invites us to marvel again at humanity's Babel-building potential, even as we anticipate its looming fate. In some cases, the forces of history are not driven by the hand of man, but rather, by the relentless press of the natural world. Jave Yoshimoto's "Harbinger of Late Winter Day's Dusk" brings us back to horrific scenes of Tsunami destruction, where humanity flees in terror, desperate to escape this monster crashing down upon them.

There are moments as well where the artists offer a more contemplative consideration of history's horizons. Adam Mysock's "Mountains Named After Presidents, Seen from a Distance" includes five washed-out mountain peaks, atmospherically dissolving in the distance. We see them, but we feel our eyes straining to climb their heights. Perhaps this is the vantage point we all share when it comes to the past. The horizon, at least from a western perspective, is often seen as a pivot point of potential. The horizon is the goal, it's line representing a destination promising new possibilities. But what does that horizon look like once we've crossed over it and come to the other side? Does the horizon ever advance before our steps, or can we step over it's vanishing point and gain some retrospective distance? Our eyes strain through that distance. What they find will certainly differ from artist to artist, but will also give renewed vitality to dusty stories and a reframed perspective on the histories we are creating today.



¹ Jenkins, Keith, *Re-Thinking History*, Routledge, London, 1991.

² Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2005.

³ Faunce, Sarah and Linda Nochlin, *Courbet Reconsidered*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1988.



Laura Spalding Best, Tempe, Arizona
All the Utility Poles of Farmer Avenue, oil on metal, 13" diameter, 2012



Zach Cohen, But-Yam, Israel
Paradise Lost, oil on canvas, 39" x 39", 2012



Catherine Dreiss, Des Moines, Iowa
The Handsome Woman, woodcut, 36" x 24", 2009



Catherine Dreiss, Des Moines, Iowa
The Learned Woman, woodcut, 36" x 24", 2009



Alexandra Emberley, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Fur, Remnant 1 (Wing), photopolymer film etching & chine collé, 24" x 16", 2012



Ivan Fortushniak, Indiana, Pennsylvania
The Unexpected Return, mixed media, 16" x 20", 2012



Descent, mixed media painting: gouache, pencil, acrylic, collage, and oil on panel, 48" x 48", 2009



Melissa Furness, Denver, Colorado

Wake, mixed media painting: gouache, pencil, acrylic, collage, and oil on panel, 48" x 48", 2008



Zach Koch, Bloomington, Indiana
Prom Night, oil on panel, 8" x 6", 2012

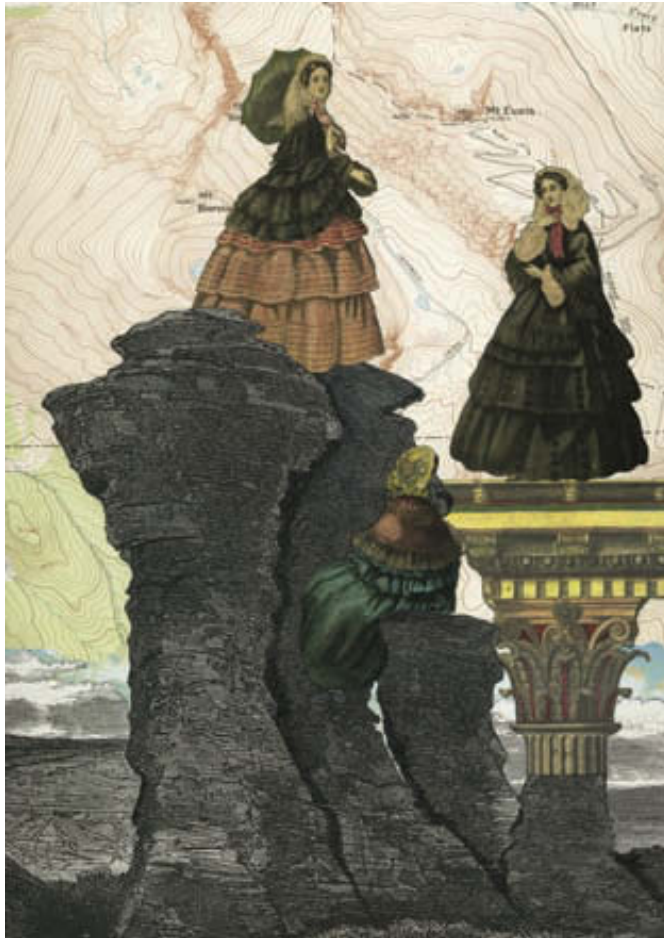




Hanna Kozlowski-Slone, Sterling, Kansas
Rummaging Through, inkjet print, hand-cut & mounted on canvas, 13" x 40", 2010

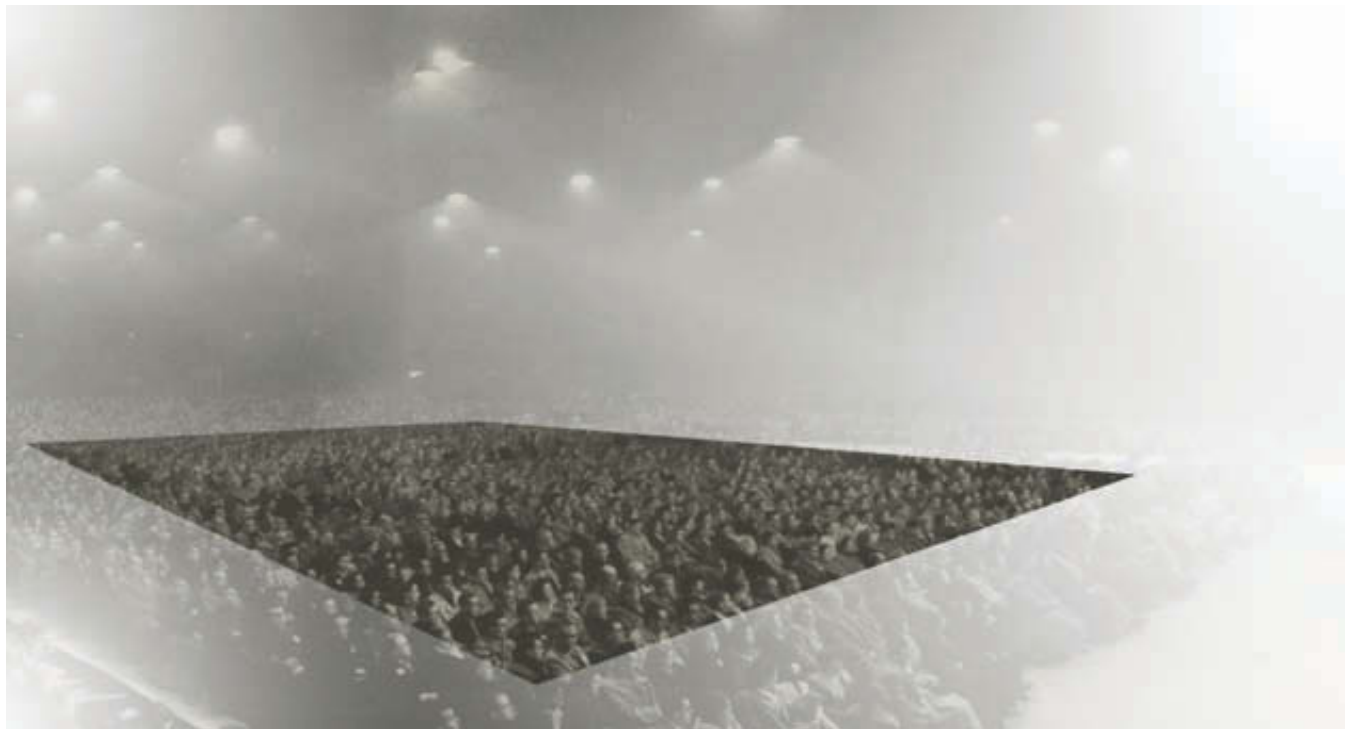


Adam Mysock, New Orleans, Louisiana
Mountains Named After Presidents, Seen from a Distance, acrylic on panel, 2.94" x 4" (each), 2011



Sara Pearce, Cincinnati, Ohio

The Grand Tour: The Davenport Sisters Were Perfectly Capable of Putting Themselves on a Pedestal, mixed-media collage, 11.5" x 8", 2012



Justin Plakas, Athens, Georgia
Bout, mixed media, 20" x 40", 2011

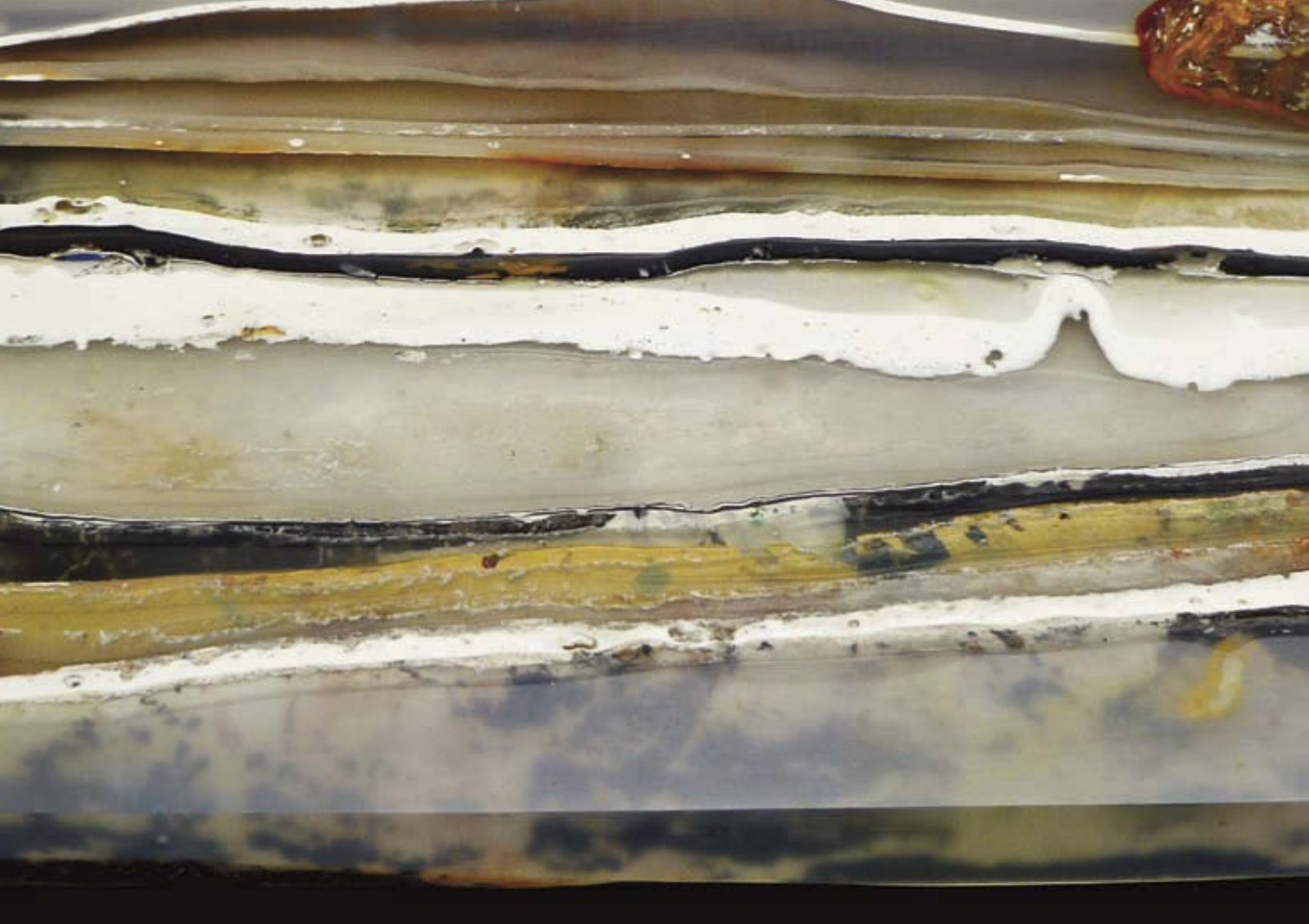


Doug Russell, Laramie, Wyoming

Ebb and Flow #14, graphite, china marker, black prisma color pencil, ink on mylar, 64" x 40", 2011



Adele Vallance, Ampthill, England
Horizon, resin, glue and creative debris, 3" x 5" x .5", 2012





Jave Yoshimoto, Polk, Nebraska
Harbinger Of Late Winter Day's Dusk, Holbein acrylic gouache on BFK rives 270gm paper, 30" x 41", 2012

About Manifest

Founded in 2004 by professors and students from area Universities, Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization headquartered in the historic urban neighborhood of East Walnut Hills in Cincinnati, Ohio. The 1000 square foot museum-quality street level gallery offers three distinct exhibition spaces, and is minutes away from downtown Cincinnati, and the numerous academic institutions of higher learning in the region. Its central location in the Woodburn Avenue district and DeSales Corner places it within an energetic, creative, and revitalizing community that includes other galleries, shops, restaurants and artists' studios.

The gallery benefits from its location within easy walking distance of a historic neighborhood populated by residents from all walks of life. The galleries are free and open to the public five hours a day, five days a week, presenting works of all kinds by student and professional artists from around the world. The Manifest Drawing Center Studio is located in nearby Madisonville.

Manifest is supported by grants and public donations and has the goal to support student professionalism, integrate the arts into the urban residential community and raise the bar on artistic standards. The mission also includes the exploration of the relationship between art and design, as well as the ongoing support and display of drawing in all its various forms.

Mission

Manifest stands for the quality presentation, experience, and documentation of the visual arts, engaging students, professionals, and the public from around the world through accessible world-class exhibits, studio programs, and publications.

Manifest Gallery

...a neighborhood gallery for the world.

Manifest Press

...take every exhibit home.

Manifest Drawing Center

...because learning to draw is learning to see.

Manifest Artist Residency

...supporting individual artists, one year at a time.

Executive Director & Chief Curator

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Associate Curator

Tim Parsley

Office Manager

Katie Schoeny

Exhibition & Drawing Center Coordinator

Katie Baker

Board of Directors

April Besl

Dan Dutro

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Brigid O'Kane

Carrie Pollick

Chrissy Rother

Volunteer Interns

Laura Brooks

Joanne Easton (*gallery assistant*)

Liz Hardy

Hernan Luyo

Nick Mannira

Chrissy Rother (*gallery assistant*)

Serenity Strull

Jacqui Underwood

Chris Von Holle







MANIFEST
CREATIVE RESEARCH GALLERY AND DRAWING CENTER

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