



over-undo-overundo-

exhibition organizers:

chalet comellas baker  
arièle dionne-krosnick  
didier morelli  
clinton sleeper

work by:

allana clarke  
carrie fonder  
steve giasson  
myriam jacob-allard  
julie lequin  
kelly lloyd  
nathaniel wong

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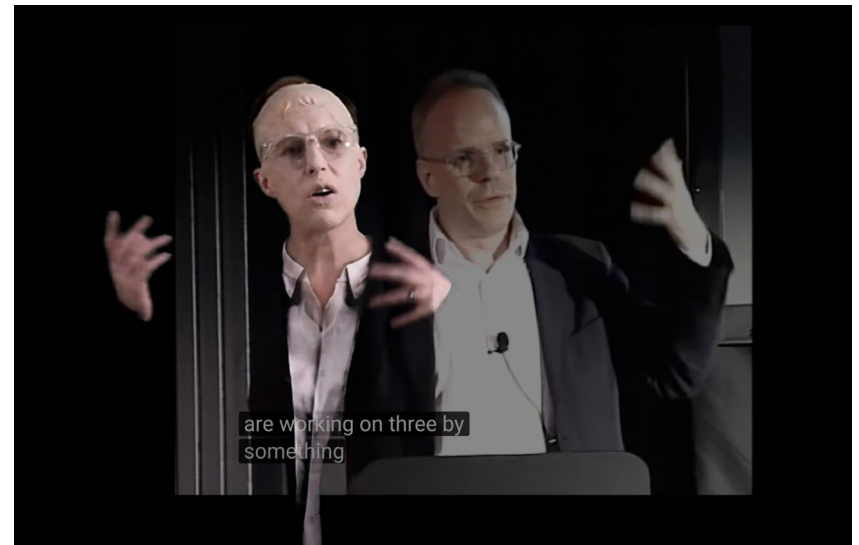
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carrie fonder

OUII HUO

2017

digital video



# appropriation meditation

“Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.” \*  
Charles Caleb Colton (c. 1820)

In *Une voix me rappelle toujours* (2016), Myriam Jacob-Allard adopts the role of media-archivist-ethnographer-performer-collector, by cataloguing the particular (peculiar?) tradition of western themed bars in Québec, Canada. Instead of re-creating the acts of the country western singers themselves, Jacob-Allard chooses to re-perform the amateur YouTube renditions of these same songs. Fulfilling all the best YouTube tropes—domestic settings, awkward framing, garish backdrops—Jacob-Allard’s videos are funny, yet oddly intimate and sentimental. As commentary on fandom and a specific and fast-disappearing subculture, Jacob-Allard’s piece is a testament to the power of song as oral history, the ways in which we put ourselves on display, and our inherent longing to belong.

Carrie Fonder undertakes a different kind of internet imitation. In *OUH HUO* (2017) the artist impersonates star-curator Hans Ulrich Obrist giving a TED Talk. The piece is at once a re-enactment (after the fact) and an intervention (in real time): a doubling occurs as the impersonator is overlaid with their subject. Fonder is physically transformed

using prosthetics, makeup and costume, but the mimicry extends to the body language, gestures, and tone of voice. Reading aloud from faulty-closed captioning of the original presentation, Obrist's voice is eclipsed and all original meaning is lost. The effect is confusing, absurd, revealing. Fonder slyly gestures at the opacity of artspeak, to the loss of meaning inherent in HUU's own speech, and the insularity of the artworld.

Allana Clarke also tackles privilege in the artworld with her video *Diagram of the Gaze: After Hal, Jacques, and other white boys* (2013). Both content and title will delight the savvy viewer, with Easter egg references that keep you guessing at additional interpretations. The performers, lathered in an oil-like substance, attempt to lie on top of one another, an impossible task given the slickness of their slippery skin. The slime green stripe and white title card recalls movies' preview screen, while other sequences seem to loop, GIF-like, and all the while slow-motion scenes, glitches, and distortions occur. The piece recalls an iconic work of performance art, Zhang Huan's *To Add a Meter to an Anonymous Mountain* (1995), but where Huan is serious and poised, Clarke's work is clever and playful but no less insightful. Challenging the (usually) male (definitely) white gaze, the performers' autonomy and assuredness

signals their active participation in the piece, while laughter and bodily noises of flesh and bottles squirting defuse any latent erotic tension.

Appropriation. Citation. Re-enactment. Reference. These strategies lay bare the fallacy of the genius artist in his ivory tower. There is no art devoid of history. Appropriation can be used to reframe the conversation and to claim a seat at the table. It can also be a powerful tool against forgetfulness, bringing into focus an object, element, or gesture from another time and place. The work of Clarke, Fonder, and Jacob-Allard is rich in meaning, clever and generous, and not a little bit humorous. Appropriation is potent because it makes us question the limits of originality, authorship, and authenticity—values that are always being challenged in art—but also qualities that are especially highly prized in a society where the meaning of “truth” (who tells it? who is believed?) is up for grabs.

\*The origins of this well-worn phrase were unknown to me, but a quick Google search revealed it was coined by an English cleric named Charles Caleb Colton in 1820. His books of collected aphorisms were incredibly popular, and though his words are still replicated in memes and quotation books today, his name has mostly been forgotten except on websites like goodreads.com, wikiquote.org, and brainyquote.com.



nathaniel wong

interview with agnes martin (1997)

2014

digital video



# artstar karaoke

There is a lot to consider when unpacking why we appropriate, impersonate, and borrow. As a young artist, critic, and historian, I was regularly presented with a singular canon. While I often saw myself in it, I also recognized its shortcomings and inequalities. In coming to define my own trajectory I often traced a path that responded to this lineage. Accounting for the relationships I held with those who came before me, I began worldbuilding. These new creations were never entirely rational, nor were they simply parodies. Many of the artists in this exhibition share this interest in revisiting and challenging the perceived narratives of art history, theory, and popular culture. They above all employ overlapping methodologies to dissect, delve into, and reconfigure their subjects of choice. Oscillating between irony and sincerity, optimism and doubt, they carve out a niche—a space between what was, what is, and what could be.

Kelly Lloyd's *In 1945 Newman Had Not Yet Found Himself* (2013) is a banner that usually hangs over my bed. The sentence is lifted from the entryway paragraph to Barnett Newman's

*Stations of the Cross*, exhibited at the Smithsonian National Gallery of Art in 2013. Naïvely bright, cute, and colorful, Lloyd deflates the mythic rhetoric used to describe the abex painter by turning the words into a party decoration. By appropriating and decontextualizing museum wall text, it is a reminder of the persistent shortcomings of artspeak to articulate coherent and cogent thoughts. Confusingly incomplete yet comfortingly open ended, the piece initiates questions about the text's provenance and purpose.

This process of deconstructing and repurposing pre-existing parts resurfaces in Julie Lequin's *Car Talk* (2009). Knitting together excerpts from NPR's popular show of the same name (1987-2012), the Québécois artist fabricates her own responses in a fictional conversation that dives into questions of linguistic, cultural, and artistic identity. I grew up listening to 'Car Talk' with my uncle, and the sound of the Magliozzi brothers' voices resonates deeply in my memory. Lequin takes on the role of both brothers in her video in playfully exaggerated costumes that evoke the magical aura of radio personalities who traditionally

remain faceless. Seamlessly edited, the composite work is both deeply touching and disconcerting as the artist's sincerity and vulnerability as a fictional caller clashes with the jocular and boisterous humor of the radio show.

Nathaniel Wong uses another form of impersonation in *Interview with Agnes Martin (1997)* (2015), a video in which he re-performs an interview by the abstract painter conducted at her studio in Taos, New Mexico. Wong and I were part of the same MFA cohort at Simon Fraser University and I always marvelled at his uncanny ability to shape-shift and effortlessly adopt artworld personas. Transposing the original excerpt into an "artist talk karaoke," he here pays homage to the seminal painter's legacy while playing on the nature of her thoughts on art, creativity, and imitation. Wong lip-synching Martin discussing the concept of an original idea in art produces a reflection in which singularity, genius, and value are folded in on each other.

Doing-over was a central tenet of Steve Giasson's work when we first met during the performance art

festival 'VIVA! Art Action' (2017), where Giasson performed a series of self-reflective works on being a "real artist" inspired by the work of Keith Arnatt and Joseph Kosuth. In *Steve Giasson Eats A Hamburger (After Bismuth After Warhol)* (2013) and *Steve Giasson Eats Another Hamburger (After Bismuth After Warhol)* (2018) he replicates both Andy Warhol eating Burger King in Jørgen Leth's documentary *66 Scenes from America* (1982) and the subsequent re-performance of this act by Pierre Bismuth (2008). In doing so, Giasson develops a set of re-enactments that explore notions of duplication, appropriation, and citation. Inscribing himself within a lineage, echoing past choreographies of Pierre Bismuth-mimicking-Warhol-mimicking-America, Giasson carries the archive forward with his own interventions on consumer capitalism. In this self-referential loop, a closed circuit of canonical conceptual artworks, content is replicated and layered in order to continuously create new interpretations.

A "do-over" implies a chance of enacting something for a second or nth time, most likely after an unsuccessful or unsatisfactory first attempt. In no way does it assume the primacy of the original, or the finality of the current

attempt. While it hints at failure, it does so in ways that inspire potential future outcomes. The works in this exhibition are engaged in this type of prospecting. Mining the landscape for historical and archival material to build from, they launch into different and unexpected directions. Not locked into themselves, or their pasts, they look forward with critical rigor and inventiveness.

kelly lloyd

in 1945 newman had not  
yet found himself

2013

party banner



allana clarke

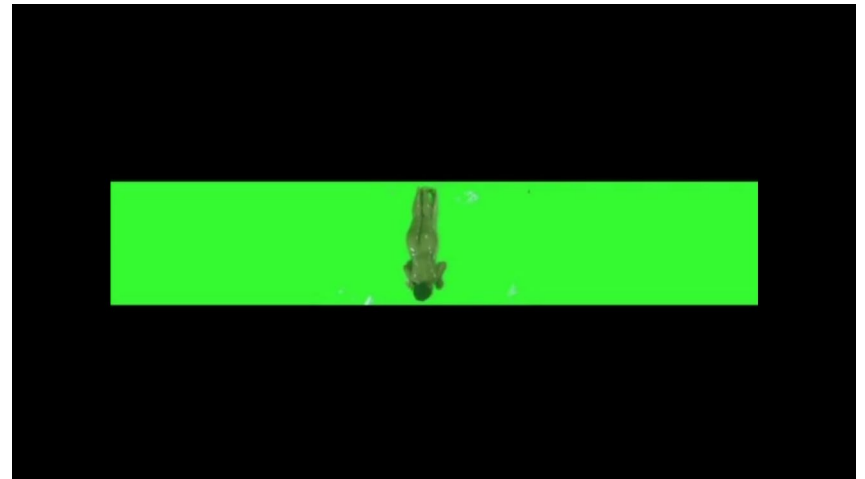
diagram of the gaze: after hal,  
jacques, and other white boys

2013

digital video

performers:

Allana Clarke, Jennifer Leigh Wright,  
Samantha Fein & Ada Pinkston





myriam jacob-allard

une voix me rappelle toujours

2016

digital video

## brief notes

(on divination and damnation in do-over)

It seems that much of what keeps the institution of Art (A) culturally relevant is the uncanny ability of that institution to fold in the most convincing arguments for subversion, along with those detractors, as new caveats and disciples of the same faith. Once canonized in the echo chamber of art, and in particular academic art, these privileged voices grow to ear piercing pitches inside the feedback machine. The loop begins again as those familiar voices are subverted, critiqued, unseated, damned.

In his peculiar text on sock puppetry and its role in impersonation, the late Alexander “Sandy” Welsh generously interprets Hobbes for readers. He notes that a transitional chapter in *Leviathan* attempts to get clear about the etymology of personation and impersonation; for Hobbes a useful distinction in considering the omniscient against impersonators. Undoubtedly the Bible is rich with characters who effectively personate the protagonist (“to beare his Person, or act in his name”), and the frequent impersonator who lacks the same authority.

For us, a more playful deliberation on personation and impersonation riddles the exhibition. Undeniably, Nathaniel Wong acknowledges her-holiness when he chops his own hair short performing as a vehicle for the spirit of Agnes Martin. The bizarre divination of Martin elucidates her life and her habits, her

own effort to personate inspiration, 'born to do it' - she convincingly reassures her interviewer. Steve Giasson allows a further remove, a performance amplified like a choreographic score that highlights even the most banal behavior of the divine. Again, we are compelled to wonder how closely the mimicry should stand between the personated and the impersonated. Who is Warhol if not a well-dressed neo-liberal Zeus?

The exhibition further complicates the divination of art-world personas with the work of Carrie Fonder and Allana Clarke. In Fonder's *OUH HUO*, the notable Hans Ulrich Obrist is impersonated with a different reverence. Fonder humorously sweeps a receding hairline and exaggerates a prominent forehead vein as she serves to undermine a seemingly omnipresent, current curatorial voice. Allana Clarke, on the other hand, transcends the philosophy of recent critical theorists and places a subversive voice on the image and the audio collage. Effectively the personation is less about embodiment, but the complexities of impersonating popular philosophy serve to illustrate the Hobbesian concern differently. Imploringly, Clarke shifts the power dynamic and we are moved beyond the problematics of personation, in considering the work alongside its exacting title.

Julie Lequin and Myriam Jacob-Allard help us to expand our concern for the complexities of

impersonation as their practices independently explore popular culture in divergent ways. Lequin at once mocks and praises her 'Car Talk' subjects in a video where the role of celebrity is undermined, performed, and teased in various physical or intellectual modes. Her characters seem to be lesser figures in a world of celebrity worship. Jacob-Allard, in some ways like Giasson, performs in a lineage, her work is fashioned in such a way as I can't help but notice how her impersonation of the karaoke singer seeks to pay homage to some figure outside the work. Country music in particular carries this function around. Its standards and formulas award certain players and performers a larger than life identity, and down the lineage, its impersonators are less like satirical anti-heroes, and more like vehicles for the voices of idols.

The works in the exhibition compel the viewer to consider a more sophisticated set of questions regarding artistic influence, the impersonator, the personator, and the impersonated.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Ed. C. B. Macpherson. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968 (1651).

Welsh, Alexander "Sandy". "State-of-the-Art Impersonations for Comedy and Everyday." *Social Research: An International Quarterly* Johns Hopkins University Press Volume 74, Number 4, Winter 2008, pp. 1059-1084.



steve giasson

steve giasson eats a hamburger (after  
bismuth after warhol)

steve giasson eats another hamburger  
(after bismuth after warhol)

2013, 2018

digital video





julie lequin

car talk

2008

digital video

a r t i s t   b i o   g r a p h i e s

## Allana Clarke

Allana Clarke (b.1987 Trinidad & Tobago) is a conceptual artist working in video, sculpture, installation, and performance. She has completed residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, The Vermont Studio Center, Ordinary Projects, and Lighthouse Works. Clarke is also a Toby Devan Lewis Fellowship recipient, Franklin Furnace grant, Peter W. Brooke Fellowship, a recipient of a 2019 Pearl Arts Diving Movement Fellowship and will be in residence at Yaddo this summer.

Clarke's work has been screened and performed at Gibney Dance in New York, Invisible Export NY, New School Glassbox Studio NY, FRAC in Nantes, France, SAVVY Contemporary in Berlin and was featured in the Bauhaus Centennial edition 'Bauhaus Now: Is Modernity an Attitude.'

Her artistic practice is informed by post-colonialism, cultural criticism, art history and her experiences as a Trinidadian immigrant growing up in the United States, contending with ideas of Blackness, daily performances of our identities, and the cultural signifiers we activate through our bodies regardless of whether they belong to us or not. Clarke received an MFA in interdisciplinary studies at MICA in Baltimore and is currently a Visiting Lecturer at Williams College.

## Carrie Fonder

Carrie Fonder is a sculptor, installation, and video artist whose work uses humor to play with issues of power. Fonder earned her MFA in sculpture at Cranbrook Academy of Art and her BFA in sculpture at Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. In 2010 she was awarded a Fulbright Nehru Award to explore the influence of culture on gender identity via depictions of the feminine in India. Currently, a member of Good Children Gallery in New Orleans, Louisiana, she has exhibited her work nationally and internationally from Detroit to New Delhi. Fonder is a Assistant Professor of Art at the University of West Florida.

## Steve Giasson

Steve Giasson (b. 1979, Québec) is a conceptual artist. In his work, ideas and language are prioritized over images and forms. The choice of the adopted medium (conceptual writing, performance art, sculptural micro-intervention, video, photography...) to realize his works depends each time on the idea he wants to transmit or shape and, to a certain extent, on the context of exhibition and ongoing research. Most often, the works produced are characterized by a great economy of means and the use of fragile and ephemeral materials that affirm his strong rejection of the spectacular and decorative. In addition, his committed and tongue-in-cheek practice is generally based on pre-existing works, historical or daily fragments, which he appropriates more or less openly and in different ways, between tribute and outrage. He is pursuing a PhD in Études et pratiques des arts (Université du Québec à Montréal). His work has been shown across twelve countries in North America, Europe and Asia in six solo exhibitions and several group exhibitions. He has several artist and poetry books and booklets to his credit. He lives and works in Montréal and is represented by the Edmund Felson Gallery (Berlin).

## Myriam Jacob-Allard

Originally from Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Myriam Jacob-Allard is an interdisciplinary artist who works and lives in Montréal. She holds an MFA in Visual and Media Arts from UQAM and was awarded the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Fellowship in Contemporary Art in 2015. Her work has been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions as well as in festivals across Canada, Europe and South America. Recent exhibitions include “T’envoler” at Dazibao (2019), “Once Upon a Time... The Western: A New Frontier in Art and Film” at the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal (2017-2018), “The Grand Balcony” at the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal in the context of the Biennale de Montréal (2016-2017). L’Œil de poisson (Québec) will be presenting *L’écho de ta voix* in the spring of 2019.

## Julie Lequin

Julie Lequin is a French-Canadian visual artist. Her work is multidisciplinary; it includes video art, performance, sculpture, watercolor, props and costumes, as well as written lists and notes for scripts. She received a BFA from Concordia University (Montréal) in 2001 and an MFA from Art Center College of Design (Pasadena, CA) in 2005. Julie has presented work across Canada and the US, including Centre Clark and Optica, Montréal; YYZ Artists' Outlet, Toronto; Or Gallery, Vancouver; Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City; Art in General and White Columns, NYC; and Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum. Past residencies include Yaddo, Art Omi, Macdowell Colony, Hiap (Helsinki), Québec Studio (Mexico City), Les Recollets (Paris) and more recently Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Sweden). Julie's work has been featured in La Presse+, Canadian Art, C Magazine, Le Devoir, Art 21 and the CBC. Current projects include a drawing project about parenting and a puppet show about past crushes and boyfriends.



## Kelly Lloyd

Kelly Lloyd is a multidisciplinary conceptual artist who focuses on issues of representation and knowledge production and prioritizes public-facing collaborative research. Lloyd received a dual MFA in Painting and MA in Visual & Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015, and earned a BA from Oberlin College in 2008. Recent projects include solo exhibitions at the Institute for Contemporary Art Baltimore and Shane Campbell Gallery (Lincoln Park), and inclusion in “Fleeting Monuments for the Wall of Respect” for the Museum of Vernacular Art in Zürich, Chicago and Vienna. Lloyd performed with Flux Factory at ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum in 2018, and with ACRE TV at Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art in 2016. Her essay “Katie Sokoler Your Construction Paper Tears Can’t Hide Your Yayoi Kusama Neurotic Underbelly” is included in *The Retro-Futurism of Cuteness* (punctum press, October 2017), and she is currently working with Beatrice Press on a series of essays about “Sexy Man Artists.” Kelly Lloyd is currently the Starr Fellow at the Royal Academy Schools in London.

## Nathaniel Wong

Nathaniel Wong draws on compressed histories and formal conventions as his subject matter and material. Invoking the codes and established practices of music and cinema. The installations, video and sculptures by Wong relate engrained creative habits, ritual acts and blithe theatricality. As a working method he uses techniques of appropriation that incorporate humour to re-examine authority in historical narratives, especially those pertaining to that of the genius, the shaman, and the rebel. Wong holds a BA from the University of British Columbia, a BA from Simon Fraser University, and an MFA from Simon Fraser University. He currently resides in Edmonton, Canada and is a teaching artist for expressive arts and viola at YONA Sistema, a program for social change through music education.

o r g a n i z e r

b i o   g r a p h i e s

## Chalet Comellas Baker

Chalet Comellas Baker is an artist, curator, and Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Art at Florida State University. She holds an MFA from Florida State University. Her research explores a variety of artistic practices relating to cultural, social and ecological issues and creates new media projects that integrate sculpture, collage, video and sound. Comellas' work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in museums, galleries and fairs, including; P.S. Satellites: A Project of Prospect New Orleans, at the Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, LA (2017) Toronto Art Book Fair in Toronto, Canada (2017), Amplify & Multiply, Colorado Springs, CO (2017), Tempus Projects, Tampa, FL (2017), InLight Richmond, Richmond, VA (2017, 2016 and 2014), EYEDRUM, Atlanta, GA (2016), Grace Exhibition Space, Brooklyn, NY (2013), Fountain Art Fair, Miami, FL (2012), Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL (2007). She collaborates with Clinton Sleeper to organize exhibitions and screenings at Unrequited Leisure, a gallery in Nashville, TN.

## Arièle Dionne-Krosnick

Arièle Dionne-Krosnick is a Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Architecture and Design at MoMA. Her work focuses mainly on issues in contemporary architecture and the intersections between the social and design realms, such as equity, feminism, sustainability, and social housing. She worked in Chicago as a Curatorial Assistant for the inaugural 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial and at the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts (2013-2015). She has also worked at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal, in Visitor Services and Communications (2008-2012). She completed her BFA in Art History and Studio Arts (2012) at Concordia University, Montréal, and holds an MA in Visual and Critical Studies (2014) from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

## Didier Morelli

Didier Morelli is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Performance Studies at Northwestern University, Chicago. His dissertation, *Form Follows Action: performance in and against the city, New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985)* focuses on the relationship between the built environment and the kinaesthetic nature of performing bodies. As an interdisciplinary artist, Morelli combines practice and research in both his academic and performative explorations. Prior to undertaking his PhD, he completed a Master of Fine Arts at the School for Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver (2014), as well as an MA from the Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto (2012). His writing has been published in *Canadian Theatre Review*, *C Magazine*, *Decoy Magazine*, *esse arts + opinions*, *Performa Magazine*, and *TDR: The Drama Review*.

## Clinton Sleeper

Clinton Sleeper is an educator and artist working in Tallahassee, FL. His interdisciplinary approaches engage with recent technologies and the humorous/tragic end of capitalism. At times foolishly optimistic and at once tediously dramatic, the resulting performances, videos, and objects attempt to highlight a fleeting poetic moment. In addition to works released independently, Sleeper works on a myriad of collaborative projects including interactive installations, large scale instruments, coded forms, and audio-visual performances. Finally, he collaborates with Chalet Comellas Baker to organize exhibitions and screenings at Unrequited Leisure, a gallery in Nashville, TN. Sleeper is an Assistant Professor at Florida State University. He holds an MFA from Simon Fraser University and a BA from the University of Nevada, Reno.

