



# CROSS- POLLINATED

*Hybrid Art Abuzz*

**Lynn Tomlinson**

**September 11, 2015—December 12, 2015**

**Center for the Arts Gallery,  
Towson University**



The steady advance of technology is a double-edged sword that provides unimaginable convenience while fundamentally changing our relationship to the natural world. How artists incorporate this dichotomy into their work both theoretically and practically, especially through animation and by playing with technologies both new and old, forms the crux of this exhibition. To animate is to enliven, either through the natural process of birth and regeneration or through artificial manipulation by humans. As such the process of animation acts as a connecting force between nature and technology, a visual and auditory aid in the cross-pollination of ideas. The works in this exhibition celebrate the delighted cacophony available to us when we take the time to truly interact with nature in all of its idiosyncratic connectedness, and remind us at the same time of its utter bounty and unnerving fragility.

The theme of cross-pollination is explored here in ways both obvious and surprising. Artists consider the idea in its most traditional sense—the interdependency of bees and flowers, and in the rich vein of creativity found in collaboration between artists and scientists. But also in how traditional fine arts, crafts, and performing arts have merged to form hybrid works, and the manner in which contemporary digital technologies collide with age-old hand crafted processes. A number of artists represented here explore how animation has jumped off of the screen to interact with the mediums of dance, sculpture, performance, or installation. There

is a purposeful cross-pollination of the senses, as viewers experience the work—hearing the buzzing of bees, feeling the textures of hair and wire, and watching video that illuminates natural and manmade spaces in unexpected ways, from plants given agency in self-care through robotics to handmade puppets that provide migratory assistance for birds, and film treated with sand and nail polish to illustrate the breakdown of plastic in the oceans.

This catalog and the exhibition that accompanies it is part of a larger project undertaken by its curator Lynn Tomlinson, a faculty member at Towson University in the Department of Electronic Media and Film. In her own work and scholarship, Lynn uses animation and other media to explore ideas of metamorphosis and environmental change. The cross-pollination made possible by collaboration between various participants and disciplines is a crucial component of her work, one that she utilizes as a means of empowerment and that finds expression in the thoughtful curation of this exhibition.

We are grateful to the many artists whose work appears in this exhibition—as in nature, creative variety and the crossbreeding of media serves to produce a stronger and more vibrant experience for all. This exhibition was made possible with support, both financial and institutional, from the Maryland State Arts Council; the Department of Electronic Media & Film; Susan E. Picinich, Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication; Dr. Nancy Siegel, Chair of the Department of Art + Design, Art History, Art Education; Dr. J. Susan Isaacs, Curator of the Department of Art + Design Galleries; Michael Bouyoucas, gallery technician; and Venetia Zachary, Director of the Visual Resource Center. Thank you to all.

**Erin Lehman, PhD**  
Director, Department of Art + Design,  
Art History, Art Education Galleries  
Towson University

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# cross-pol·li·na·tion

Pronunciation: (krô's'pol"u-nà'shun, kros'-) n

1. Bot. the transfer of pollen from the flower of one plant to the flower of a plant having a different genetic constitution. Cf. **self-pollination**.
2. A sharing or interchange of knowledge, ideas, etc., as for mutual enrichment; cross-fertilization.

*Random House Unabridged Dictionary, Copyright © 1997, by Random House, Inc.*

Using a metaphor borrowed from botany, we call the work in this show cross-pollinated. This exhibition brings together contemporary artists whose work is enriched and informed by an exchange of knowledge to create new forms. The emphasis here is on animated, digital, and kinetic work linked to processes found in the natural world. Ideas from one field germinate and take root in another. Interdisciplinary artists fly between a

variety of media, and boundaries break down. The artists featured are agents of change, often carrying seeds of inspiration from one art form to another and from the field of science to that of the visual arts, or vice versa. Cross-pollination is not only integral to the creative process; it is also often the literal subject matter. The art captures pollinators: bees, flies, moths, insects, birds, wind—or the pollinated: plants, trees, vines, and flowers.

The work in this gallery is alive. It vibrates. It's hairy. It's wiry. It wiggles. It makes funny noises. It fans you as it flips. You have to peek and peer to see what's there.

Many of the artists included in this show work as animators and this sensibility enlivens the gallery. Recently animation has begun to pervade gallery spaces, leaving the screening room and the limits of the film frame. Expanded animation is not new: a rich interdisciplinary history of experimental animation connects with dance, performance, kinetic sculpture, collage, and abstract painting. Animation, broadly defined as breathing life into things, appeals in this time of environmental threat and looming extinctions. The work in this show provokes recognition of the “animacy,” or “aliveness” of animals, plants, machines, and inanimate beings, or the aliveness of the artwork itself. Derived from linguistics the word animacy serves in grammar as a way to rank words on the basis of perceived aliveness, and encompasses notions of anthropomorphism, agency, expressivity, sentience, cognizance, and mobility. Every time an artwork stimulates the feeling of the uncanny, or empathy, or recognition, it is because the artists are toying with our sense of animacy.

Just as hybrid plants display new features and different characteristics from their parents, becoming something altogether new, several artists included in this show take processes derived from math, science, or engineering and apply them to their work in order to innovate. Conversely the sciences sometimes look toward the arts for new ideas about playful and effective experimentation. Working together, artists and scientists collaborate across fields of inquiry and experience new ways of thinking. Some the pieces in this show are explicitly interspecies collaborations, humans working with non-human creatures as creative collaborators.

In the *IndaPlant Project, An Act of Trans-Species Giving*, the artist **Elizabeth Demaray** and her collaborators **Ahmed Elgammal**, **Qingze Zou** and **Simeon Kotchoni** at Rutgers University in Camden,

NJ, are designing assistive technology to allow plants to find their own water and light. They are building robotic platforms that enable plants to roam freely of their own accord indoors, in order to fulfill their needs. We think of plants as having less animacy than animals, in part because they don't move (at least not ambulating as most animals do). But, of course, plants do turn to face the light, they grow, they drop their leaves. *The IndaPlant Project* allows plants to act on their desires. Enabling plants to have mobility and autonomy has both metaphoric and scientific value. Like many of Demaray's projects, it is absurd, yet completely practical, with real-world possibilities and objectives. Another interspecies project is based at **Patuxent Wildlife Research Center** in Laurel, Maryland, where baby whooping cranes are raised by white-costumed human volunteers using crane puppets to teach chicks to forage, while avoiding human imprinting. Later, the chicks learn to follow these surrogate parents flying ultralight aircraft that will lead the young whoopers on their first migration. Craig Saper documented the chick training on video for the *Cross-Pollinated* show. Watching this performance is bizarre, like a surrealist skit, because its rules are not designed for human benefit: it is a “puppet show for the birds.”

In Montreal, animator/artist/media historian **Alison Reiko Loader** collaborated with entomologist **Christopher Plenzich**, and his research subjects, *Malacosoma disstria* (forest tent caterpillars). In *Caterpillar Choreography*, the humans drew pheromone trails for the caterpillars to follow. The larval creatures crawled along in sequence, tracing a curving path. Sometimes a rogue caterpillar might venture off the trail, laying down its own scent lines for its siblings to follow, creating a shared choreographed line-dance. The video of the choreographed caterpillars is projected on screens created from hand-stretched silk from silkworm cocoons, as silkworms are close cousins of forest tent caterpillars. With her background in animation, Loader considered the long history of moth and insect bodies in animation, from Ladislav Starevich's use of beetle carapaces in his stop-motion films

like *The Cameraman's Revenge* (1912), to Stan Brakhage's *Mothlight* (1963). The making of *Caterpillar Choreography* suggests the process of computer animation, where an artist creates a path or a curve and sets particles or objects to move along it; and like a generative program it allows for a degree of randomness and surprise.

Other artists in the show use generative art processes and digital manipulation to explore or reveal patterns and design in nature. The artist sets the parameters, makes choices, and reveals what is hidden through digital processes and technologies. **Dennis Hlynsky** digitally processes video to reveal movement patterns of insects, birds, and fish. The movement of fruit flies on the surfaces of peaches, apples, and grapes in a bowl of fruit draws a still life; birds' paths in the air are revealed as calligraphic flourishes; super slow-motion video reveals the voluptuous sensuousness of a bumblebee's caress of its desired blossom. **Nicky Assmann's** *Human Swarm*, documentation of a performance, along with a script for reenacting the performance, references computer scientist Craig Reynold's famous computer model "boids" that used simple commands to create a simulation of flocking or schooling behavior. Using this swarming algorithm Assmann choreographed a performance of human actors wearing masks that limit their perspective, so that they move in a randomized but predictable swarm.

**Brandon Morse's** code-based work uses generative processes to create organic 3D animated moving forms, with stripped-down color and minimal distraction. *Splitting Hairs*, a revolving shaggy ciliated mass split down the middle, exemplifies how Morse's mathematical code creates a tactile physicality on screen. We can't touch it, but we still imagine how it feels. **Douglas Hudson** is another animator and animation professor. His video, *Floating Leaf Meditation*, is not an animation, but a close study of movement in nature: a found moment of beauty to contemplate, a leaf mid-air on a beautiful autumn day, floating in place, levitating as if by magic, caught in a spider web. Animating a falling leaf is a common

introductory movement exercise for many animation students and at first Hudson thought this video would be just a reference study. But on watching the video play back, he realized it was already complete, there was "simply nothing to be added...the film was finished before it began and serves its purpose as meditative experience," he said. The leaf, as it turns in the quiet forest light, sculpts space. The sense of touch—or in the gallery, where touch is often forbidden, the imagined sense of touch—is created through the physical impact of this work.

Through motion detectors that turn on fans, the presence of gallery visitors directly impacts the movement of *Current Recorder*, **Billy Friebele's** wind-powered drawing machine. Built from a shopping cart, wind turbine, and other spare parts, this thoughtfully slap-dash assemblage draws circles with markers, always making different marks, depending on the whims of chance. By capturing wind's force in a drawing, the machine points to the capricious agency of breezes and gusts of air. **Monteith McCollum** works in experimental documentary film, animation, sound, and sculpture, creating connections between different media. His two sculptural pieces, *Din Din* and *Resonance of an Indeterminate Landscape*, are imaginatively decrepit machines combining cranky obsolete technology with nano-projections of poetic video on weathered glass surfaces. They are imaginary machines showing ghostly images and recall the shared history of séances and film, the otherworldly projections and spectacles that populated pre-cinematic experimentation. McCollum's pieces also explore the importance of both tactility and sound as a vibrating sculptural element in the gallery.

**Juan Fontanive's** flip-book machine, *Ornithology P*, also emits a whirring buzz and shows a similar interest in proto-cinematic devices. Made from clock and bike parts, the petite machine plays a constantly looping animation, creating an uncanny effect: a bird-machine hybrid. The pages fan you as you watch the hummingbird pictures zip by; you can feel the process of flipping that animates the birds. The screen-printed

images reference Audubon-like guidebooks images, changing from one species to the next in every frame, creating the illusion of motion by juxtaposing similar poses of the hovering hummers. **Ariana Gerstein** often subverts the expectations of a medium, as in her short films made using a scanner as a camera to capture sequential images. In her installation, *Cycle*, she examines the phenomena of moving image technologies, and considers film as a physical material and process. The work, created over a number of years, is made up of three elements that work together to explore the tension between movement and stillness. Boxes and frames serve as an organizing structure. Frames of film cut up are made into a backlit single image, a deconstructed animation. Holographic images are suspended, with images only revealed as the viewer moves by. A projection of the original source film completes the piece.

Like Gerstein's lightboxes, **Clarissa Gregory's** one-person dioramas also ask you to peer inside. *Habitat—a series: seascape, urbanscape, luray caverns, north American forest* includes four different views of diminutive landscapes created from a variety of materials with carefully painted background environments. Viewed through individual two-inch lenses built into the top of wooden pedestals, the dioramas become intimate, one-person artworks. Gregory calls it "a micro iteration of a natural habitat, which represents a macro ecosystem." Also included is *small growth*, a video atop a pedestal with an animated line-drawing inspired by mosses and lichens, the line crawling and unfurling on the screen surface. Gregory is a dancer and choreographer as well as a stop-motion animator and sculptor. Time, movement, and tactile materials play a part in all her work. **Allison Schulnik** also has a background in dance and works in painting and sculpture. Her clay animated films move with unusual grace and lush abandon. In *Eager*, moody gestures flow from a cast of gloomy characters: spectral figures, a downcast horse-like creature, and viscerally transforming flowers, mushrooms, and leaves, all dance in animated choreography. Made entirely by hand of simple materials like clay, wood, fabric, glue, and

wire, Schulnik's evocative stop-motion animation transcends its materials. It's a garden come to life, visceral and primordial. Like many of the works in the show, it connects us with the inner lives of non-human beings.

Cameraless animation, made by drawing or manipulating film stock directly, is the process used by two artists in the exhibit with very different outcomes. **Gina Kamentsky**, an artist who works in kinetic sculpture, comics, and animation, is drawn to time-based media. She created *Secret Bee* from a 35mm trailer for the film *The Secret Life of Bees* (2008). Using dabs of clear nail polish, she masked off certain images and areas of the film, and then bleached the rest of the film stock. Then she painted and drew on it with fine-tipped permanent pens and colorful inks. The result is a vibrantly chaotic collage of doodles, drawings, and fragments. A similar tactility but very different tone is created by **Ruth Hayes'** direct cinema film with the descriptive title *Sand Photogram with Iridescent Glitter Nail Polish*. Here, the magnified projection of the 16mm original film stock, covered with sand, exposed briefly to light, then hand-processed and dabbed with glitter nail polish, reveals tiny plastic prisms among the sand, a beautiful yet troubling reminder of the colored bits of microplastic in the ocean. *Supermoon Sand Photograms*, made from film exposed only by the light of the moon on a Pacific shore, reveals the scientific process of chemicals and traces of shadows and light. Our imagining of the artist's process of crafting the film on the moonlit beach is the poetry of the piece.

Science and speculation informs **Amy Hicks'** work, which takes an imaginative approach to historical and socio-political subjects. Hicks created *Aluminum Poof Can*, a digitally animated film that draws connections between the manufacturing process that exploits resources like aluminum, and the industrialized computer animation industry that operates like a factory, erasing the human touch from the final product. A can hangs from an alligator clip in the cold gaze of the camera. The can swells and shrinks in

time with the rhythm of recorded breaths, a metallic stand-in for human lungs, aluminum as vibrant matter. Hicks wanted to re-insert “the human presence, the breath of life...the cough, the wheeze, the snuffle in the cold.” So the can breathes, then transforms in a “poof” into a fragment of foil -- one item swapped for the other with a puff of cotton in the frame between, an old animation trick at the root of the stop-motion process. **Kelly Gallagher’s** *Pen Up The Pigs* is overtly political, a work of contemporary animated agitprop, and looks like a zine on screen. It is a commentary on the legacy of police brutality and racism, particularly apt for this time and location near Baltimore, not long after the Spring 2015 uprising. Gallagher is deeply invested in handcrafted cinema, and sees the use of available, low-cost materials, like markers, glitter, paper, tape, and collage, as a revolutionary act to seize the means of production. In this film, flowers and natural images rise up whenever acts of resistance take place, a flowering of support.

**Lee Boot** also approaches media-making as a socio-political act. In *Brick Garden Series*, the artist uses an iterative process, painting and recording on video, layering images as he creates them, trying to make sense of the organic life of the city. It appears like a kind of game he plays, a way of synthesizing his work from other parts of his life. Like a sliding puzzle, he moves the painted square components from place to place in the digital collage to find new combinations and connections. Puzzle logic also animates **Nadav Weissman’s** film *Late Excavations*. Weissman is an interdisciplinary artist who works in sculpture and painting with an animated feel, so this animated digital video works with the same elements the artist uses in his artwork to bring them to life. The film plays

on themes including home, family, and archaeology. The animated bones and teeth that sprout from the heads of the man and woman on screen are fragments that construct paths to form a schematic house, a boat of bones and a caterpillar track of teeth, stirring thoughts of relics. The piece has a flat, 2-D design that brings to mind a video game, and seems to operate according to surrealist game rules. **Bill Tomlinson** and **Rebecca Black** developed an iPad app that brings together their interests in education, biological science, computer science and animation. The two professors collaborated to create this thoughtful app that shows that educational media for children can be beautiful, effective, and scientifically sound. *Seed Cycle* combines animation with a tactile process of learning to make a colorful, interactive game for young children, where the goal is to pollinate and grow a garden, being sure to take care of all the growing plants’ needs so the virtual garden can thrive.

The hybrid animate art in this show draws on various languages and processes: painting, dance, sculpture, drawing, entomology, ornithology, ecology, archaeology, computer programming, digital processing, robotics and mechanical engineering. The artworks provoke imaginative speculation and show sensitivity to the animacy of objects, animals, and non-human forces at work in the world. Most of the work in the show moves, because movement is how we understand things as alive, as animate.

**Lynn Tomlinson,**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Electronic Media and Film,  
Towson University

# Biographies

## NICKY ASSMANN

is based in Rotterdam, Netherlands, where she creates installations and artwork incorporating scientific research and natural phenomena. She earned a BA from the University of Amsterdam and an MA from the Interfaculty of the Royal Conservatoire & the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague. In *Human Swarm* (2008), human participants, masked to obscure part of their field of vision, follow simple instructions to mimic the apparently-random swarming movement of flocks of birds or schools of fish. In this piece Assmann explores connections

between computer animation, algorithmic art, choreography, and performance, and raises questions concerning personal and private space, group behavior, and automated processes. Assmann has exhibited her work at Saatchi Gallery, London; National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts; Wood Street Galleries, Pittsburgh; and Art Rotterdam Week, among others. She received an Honorary Mention for the 2010 Artificial Light Award on Reflection and the 2011 StartPoint Prize and was nominated for the 2015 Prix de Rome 2015.



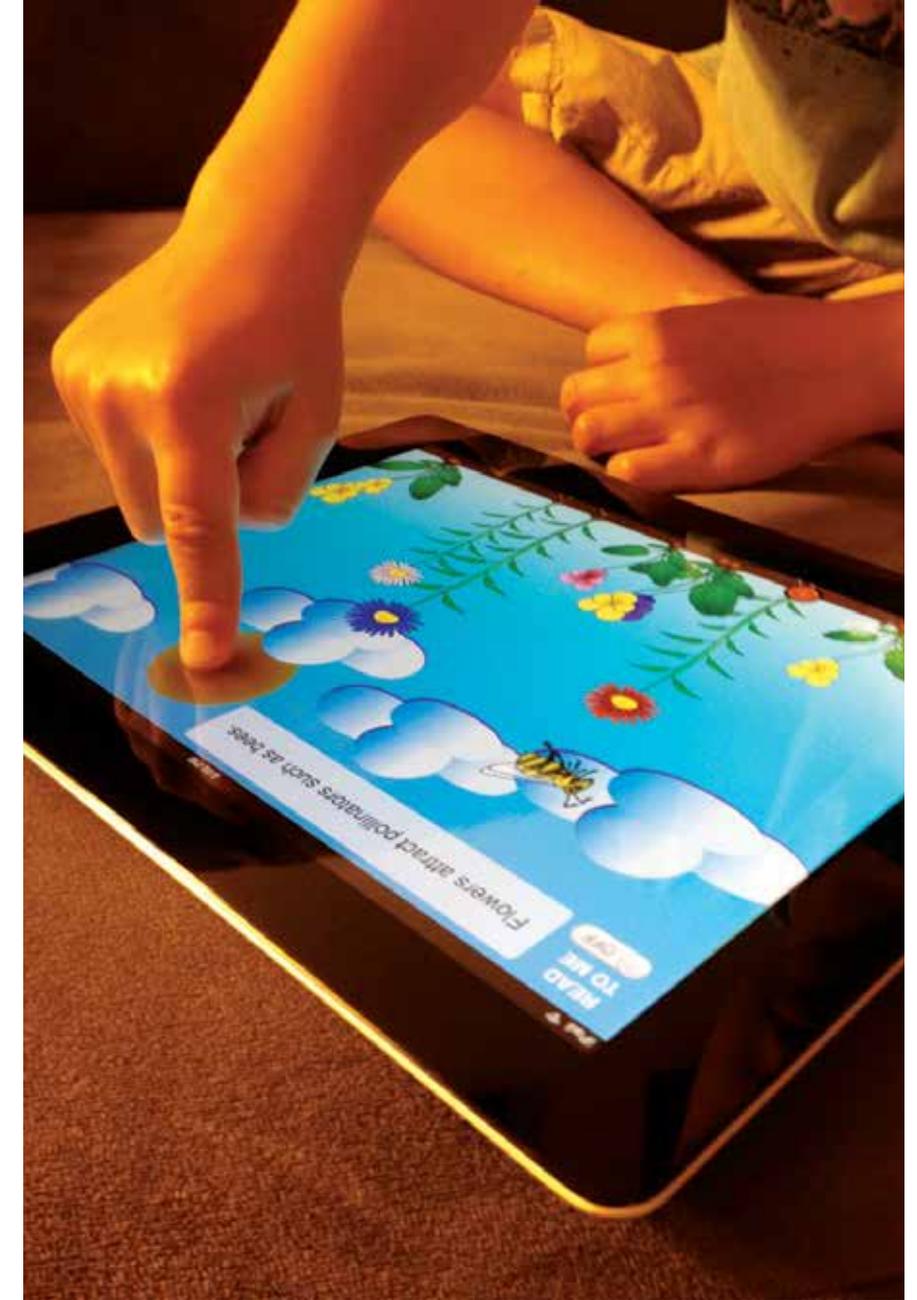
Nicky Assmann, *Human Swarm*, video documentation of performance, 2008.



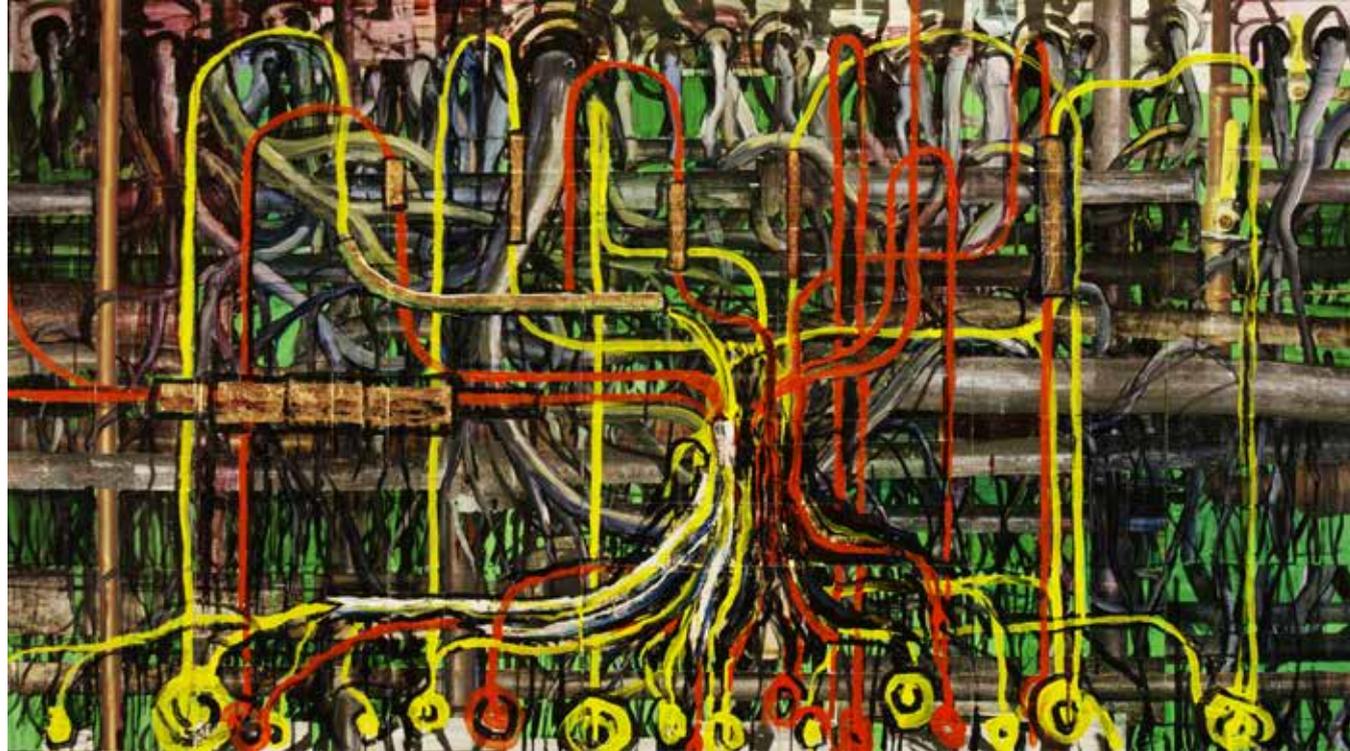
## REBECCA BLACK AND BILL TOMLINSON

live in Irvine, California, with their two young children. Black earned her doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, while Tomlinson holds a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The couple are professors at the University of California, Irvine, where Black teaches in the School of Education and Tomlinson in the Informatics Department. They collaborated on the creation of *Seed Cycle*, an interactive educational iPad app that teaches young children about pollination and the growth and reproduction of flowers. The app grew

from their shared interests in animation, ecology, and online learning. Prolific writers, Black is the author of *Adolescents and online fan fiction* (2008) and Tomlinson of *Greening through IT* (2010). They are currently in the midst of a substantial US Department of Education grant entitled "The Pathway to Academic Success: A Cognitive Strategies Approach to Text-Based Analytical Writing to Improve Academic Outcomes for Secondary English Language Learners" and between the two have received numerous National Science Foundation grants.



Rebecca Black and Bill Tomlinson, *Seed Cycle*, iPad app, 2011. Photo by Bill Tomlinson.



## LEE BOOT

is a Baltimore, Maryland-based artist and the founder of the experimental media studio, InfoCulture. He earned a BFA from Syracuse University and an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and is currently Associate Research Scholar and Associate Director at the Imaging Research Center at University of Maryland, Baltimore County. *Brick Garden Series*, the video included in this exhibit, uses an iterative production process combining painting, scanning, printmaking, collage, filmmaking, and editing. The

exhibit also includes one of the 112 square wooden panels created in the video-making process. Compiled in video, together the panels form a meditation on data, culture, and the synthesis involved in Boot's process of knowing-through-making. Boot has exhibited at venues including the Johannesburg Biennial in South Africa and London's Serpentine Gallery. His feature film, *Euphoria*, won the Gold Award for documentary at the Houston International Film Festival in 2005.



Lee Boot, *Brick Garden Series*, painting and digital video, 2015.

## ELIZABETH DEMARAY

lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She earned both a BA and an MFA from the University of California, Berkeley. Demaray is an Associate Professor of Fine Art and Head of the Sculpture Concentration at Rutgers University-Camden. Many of her artistic projects, practical and absurd at the same time, are designed to “lend a helping hand” to the natural world: she has knit sweaters for plants and created ideal plastic shell-homes for hermit crabs. In the *IndaPlant Project: An Act of Trans-Species Giving*, she is working with an interdisciplinary team of artists, engineers, botanists, and computer scientists,

including **Gingze Zou, Ahmed Elgammal, and Simeon Kotchoni**, to design and construct robotic mobile supports that enable potted plants to roam freely indoors in search of sunlight and water. Demaray’s work has been exhibited at New York MOMA/ P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center; DADApost, Berlin; the Lloyd Digital Lab, Amsterdam; the Center d’Art Marnay Art Center, France; and the M.H. deYoung Memorial Museum, San Francisco. Demaray received the National Studio Award at the New York MOMA/ P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Sculpture.



Elizabeth Demaray, *IndaPlant Project: An Act of Trans-Species Giving*, digital video documentation., 2015.



## JUAN FONTANIVE

lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He earned a BA from Syracuse University and an MFA from the Royal College of Art in London. His flipbook machines, made from clock and push-bike parts, are an updated take on a proto-cinematic device that creates a film without film, a moving image without projection. The continuous mechanical flutter of *Ornithology P*, included in this show, animates jewel-like prints of hummingbirds in a simulation of flight. Constantly flipping in a continuous loop, the prints of various hummingbirds in the process of pollinating flowers creates a riot of color, an illusion of one flitting,

hybrid hummingbird to suggest a proxy mechanical re-animation of a Victorian diorama where collectors might pin jewel-like dead hummingbirds in a mimicry of life. Fontanive has exhibited at the Royal Academy of Art, London; Fridge Gallery, Prague; Noir Gallery, Turin, Italy; Carbono Galeria, São Paulo; and has an upcoming solo show at Riflemaker Gallery, London. He was shortlisted for the 2010 Jerwood Painting Prize, Jerwood Space, London.



Juan Fontanive, *Ornithology P*, four-color screen print on Bristol paper, stainless steel, aluminum, motor and electronics, 2014.

## BILLY FRIEBELE

is a multimedia artist working in the DC metro region. He has a BA from St. Mary's College of Maryland and a MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and is an Assistant Professor of Art at Loyola University Maryland. *Current Recorder* is a kinetic drawing machine constructed from a turbine mounted on a shopping cart, so it can be mobile. The machine can also operate outdoors. The wind-powered gizmo draws circular images, also mounted in the show, that vary according to the movements of gallery

visitors. Friebele creates artwork examining expanded notions of drawing using GPS systems, video, kinetic sculpture, and installation. He is a co-founder of Freespace Collective and FLEX, a group of artists and curators who produce ephemeral art exhibitions in non-art spaces. Billy has exhibited at the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Orlando Museum of Art, Art Museum of the Americas, and the Katzen Center for the Arts.



Billy Friebele, *Current Recorder*, kinetic drawing machine, 2012. Photo by Jerry Troung.



## KELLY GALLAGHER

is an experimental animator and filmmaker living in Yellow Springs, Ohio. She received her BA from Penn State University and her MFA from the University of Iowa. She is currently Assistant Professor of Media Arts at Antioch College. An outspoken advocate of handcrafted filmmaking and accessible materials for filmmakers, Gallagher explores how experimental and handcrafted animations make labor visible. *Pen Up the Pigs* is a visual exploration of the the historical connections between slavery and modern-day racist policing and mass incarceration. This collage animation was manipulated frame-by-frame under the camera, to illustrate the militant resistance of nature,

“gesturing towards the life that is possible when oppressed people fight back against the violence of their exploitation.” Gallagher has recently curated a number of film screenings around Iowa City, and her own work has screened at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, Winnipeg Underground Film Festival, ICA Artists’ Film Biennial, Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, Bryn Mawr Film Institute, UC Berkeley, London’s Hackney Picturehouse, Berlin Mobile Kino, and Italy’s Lucca Film Festival. *Pen Up the Pigs* was awarded the 2014 Helen Hill Award at the Indie Grits Film Festival.



Kelly Gallagher, *Pen Up the Pigs*, hand-crafted animation and collage, 2014.



## ARIANA GERSTEIN

works in experimental documentary media. She earned an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is on the faculty of the Cinema Department at Binghamton University. Her work investigates the tension between single still images and multiple images played in sequence, showing time through motion. *Cycles*, a three part installation of work is shown together for the first time in this exhibit includes film frames, framed images, and sculptural light boxes. The root of this work is a film seen in three different forms: as holograms, projection, and a collage of illuminated 16mm film frames that glow like stained glass, rescuing 16mm film from obsolescence by reimagining it as a still-image medium, the opposite of animation. *Cycles*

explores the interaction between seeing the natural world as material and as an expression of time through both media and technology. Gerstein's films have been screened and awarded prizes at festivals worldwide including International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam, European Media Arts Festival in Germany, Media City in Canada, New York Film Festival and SXSW in Texas. Her work has been awarded grants by the New York Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowship. Two of her experimental documentaries were nationally broadcast on the PBS series P.O.V. She is a 2015 recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship.

Ariana Gerstein, *Cycle*, Installation including lightbox with 16mm film frames, 2015.

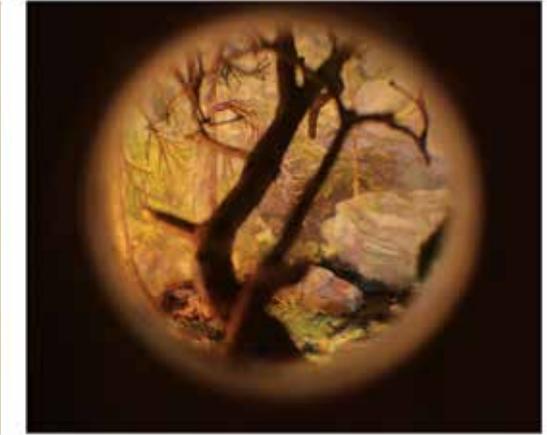




## CLARISSA GREGORY

is based in Baltimore and works in varied forms including dance, drawing, animation, sculptural models and dioramas. She holds a BA from Hope College and an MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art. She teaches art at Maryland Institute College of Art, Johns Hopkins University, and the Community College of Baltimore County. *Habitat: a series* consists of four miniature dioramas enclosed in individual pedestals. Viewers peep through lenses into carefully constructed worlds, “an intimate micro-iteration of a natural habitat...” Her second pedestal-mounted work in the show, *small growth*, captures a meditative hand-drawn animation that unfurls on screen, as

lines grow like moss or lichen, simple black lines created as a meditation on organic growth. Gregory is a dancer/performer for Effervescent Collective, a modern dance company based in Baltimore. Gregory’s exhibitions and performances include the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington; The Charles Theater, Baltimore; The United Film Festival, San Francisco; and *Pull/Drift*, a site-specific performance in Patapsco Valley State Park in Ellicott City, MD. She was twice a semifinalist for the Sondheim Artscape Prize and the recipient of scholarships from the Baltimore Clayworks and the Vermont Studio Center.

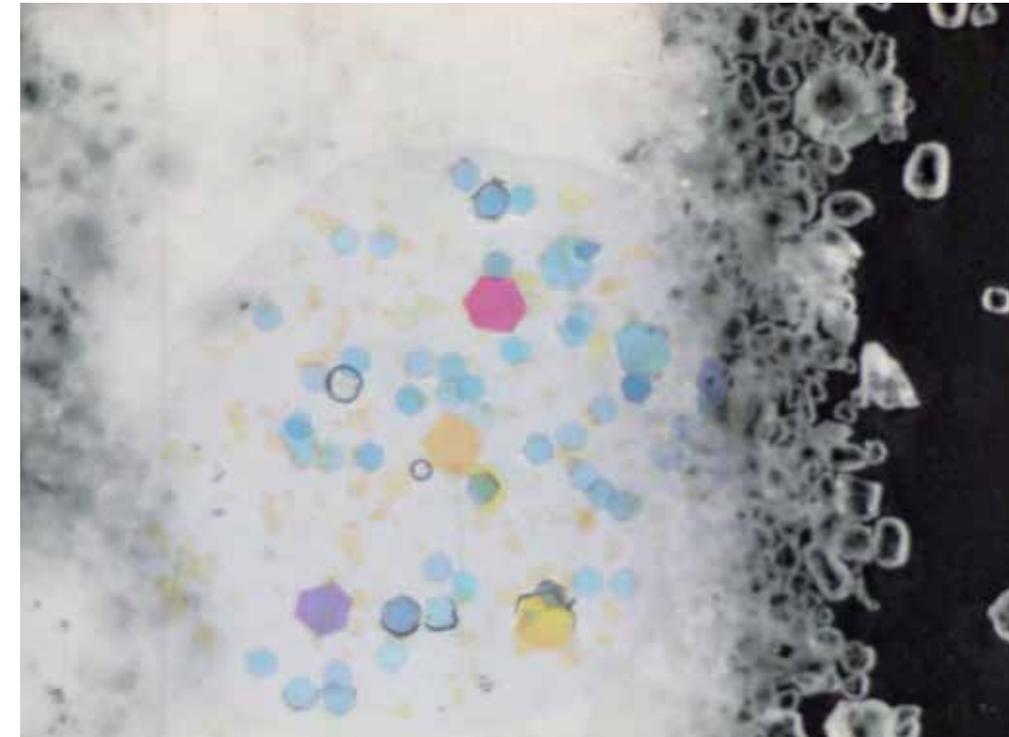


Clarissa Gregory, *Habitat - a series: seascape, urbanscape, lurray caverns, north American forest*, wooden diorama boxes (mixed media), wooden step-stool, 2014.

## RUTH HAYES

creates experimental works in film, video and digital media, as well as flipbooks and other pre-cinematic formats. She has a BA from Harvard College and an MFA from California Institute of the Arts. She lives in Olympia, Washington, and teaches at The Evergreen State College. This show includes two examples of her recent phenomenological investigations of materials through cameraless filmmaking. A sand-covered length of film exposed to light, hand processed and dabbed with nail polish, *Sand Photogram with Iridescent Glitter Nail Polish* comments on the breakdown of plastic in the ocean. Hayes writes, "The glitter in nail polish comes in a variety of shapes and microscopic sizes. It's all plastic. Plastic bits this

small and smaller, suspended in layers of ocean water and attractive to marine organisms, are gradually entering the food chain. We'll be eating them soon ourselves." Hayes' animation has been exhibited internationally, including the Kunsthalle Dusseldorf; The Havana Festival of New Latin American Cinema; The New York Film Festival; the Kuandu International Animation Festival, Taipei; the Learning Channel; and the Kecskemét Animation Film Festival, Hungary. To create this work, she has received generous support from the Evergreen State College Foundation, the Washington State Arts Commission, Artist Trust, The Seattle Arts Commission, 4 Culture, and the US Department of Education among others.



Ruth Hayes, *Sand Photogram with Iridescent Glitter Nail Polish*, digital transfer from 16mm film, 2014.



## AMY HICKS

works with a range of time-based media including film, photography, video projection and low-tech animation. She holds a BA from the University of California, Riverside and an MFA from Stanford University. Hicks lives and works in Philadelphia and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware. Her piece *Aluminum Poof Can* is about the disconnect between the time it takes to watch an animation and the lived work experience of the animator: the untold hours of time clocked to make the image move. The aluminum can breathes and wheezes as it hangs in the cold studio, a metallic stand-in for the artist and her assistant. This work draws a connection with the

invisibility of labor in the production of manufactured goods with the invisibility of labor in film animation. Hicks' award-winning films and videos have screened at the Ann Arbor Film Festival; Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain Strasbourg, France; San Francisco International Film Festival; San Jose Museum of Art; and Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia. Hicks has been awarded Individual Artist Grants from the San Francisco Art Commission and Film Arts Foundation among others. Her collaborative multi-faceted project with IDOK Center for Research has also toured internationally.

Amy Hicks, *Aluminum Poof Can*, digital video and audio, 2015.



## DENNIS HLYNSKY

lives in Providence, Rhode Island. He is a professor and the chair of the Film/Animation/Video Department at Rhode Island School of Design, where he was among the first students in the video program. He has been using electronic media since 1973. Hlynsky has received international recognition for his processed video of small animals moving en masse. Three short films from his large body of work are included. In all, manipulated video reveals hidden patterns in animal movement. In *Fruit Fly*, the tiny flies' movement trails on a bowl of fruit draw colored lines, sketching a still life. In *Pink Clouds*, *Windy Day*, flocks of starlings leave layered digital trails that whirl like astounding calligraphy. And in

*Pollination* extreme slow motion slows time and reveals the hidden sensuous act between bee and flower. Hlynsky was a co-founder of Electron Movers, a regional media center and performance space in Providence. Selected Screenings include OK Center for Contemporary Art - Linz, Austria; Transartfest, Supermarkt, Berlin, Germany; FedSquare, Melbourne, VIC; and Front Room Gallery, Williamsburg, Brooklyn. His films have a worldwide online presence appearing in numerous blogs and zines including *Mashable*, *Colossal*, *Wired*, *The Atlantic*, *Computational Ecologies*, and *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications*.



Dennis Hlynsky, *Autonomous Collaboration*, digital video, 2014.

## DOUGLAS HUDSON

lives and works in Kansas City as an independent animation director and educator. He founded the animation department for Kansas City Art Institute, where he has taught since 2005. Hudson earned a BFA degree in animation in 1997 from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and an MFA degree in experimental animation in 2000 from the California Institute of the Arts. *Floating Leaf Meditation* is a moment of suspended animation found in nature, a pure revelatory experience captured without digital

manipulation. It is one that Hudson, having extensive computer animation experience, captured because it shows the inability of simulation to match the magical tricks that nature can play. The work asks you to meditate on the perfection and mystery of an autumn leaf naturally suspended mid-air. Hudson's work ranges from experimental abstractions to wry observational narratives. In addition to many honors and distinctions over the years, three of his students won a Student Academy Award in 2010.



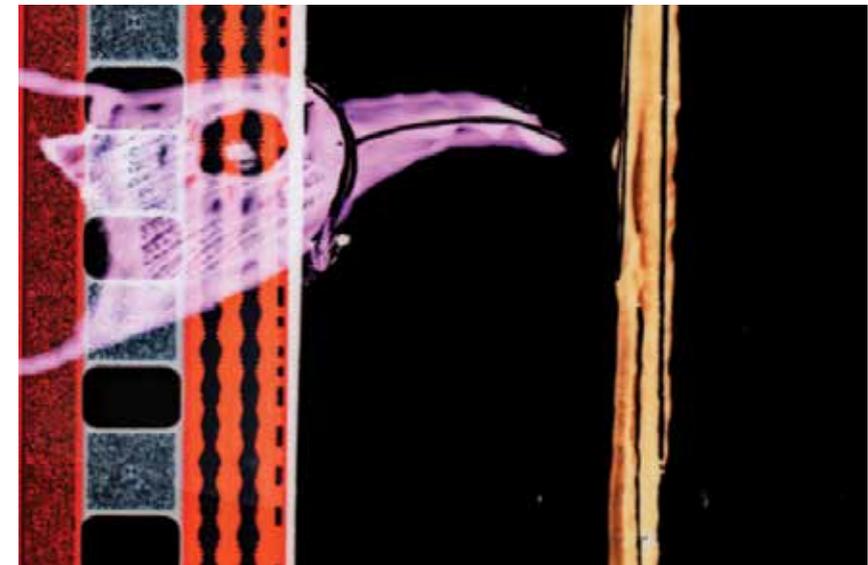
Doug Hudson, *Floating Leaf Meditation*, digital video, 2014



## GINA KAMENSKY

is based in Massachusetts and creates animation, comic books, and kinetic sculptures she calls “Mechanical Confections” that incorporate found objects, metal and electro-mechanical components. She graduated from the Philadelphia College of Art with a degree in industrial design, and has taught at Rhode Island School of Design, and Massachusetts College of Art. The film included in the Cross-Pollinated show is aptly titled *Secret Bee*. With a soundtrack (titled “A Drink on Spike Jones”) compiled of comic buzzes, clangs, honks and beeps, this riot of color, imagery, and texture is a doodle sprung

free from the confines of the page. It was created without a camera through a process known as “Direct Animation:” Kamentsky drew, taped, and painted images directly on the film stock. She says she makes “kinetic sculptures that exist in the somewhat chaotic and messy real world and animated films for the screen where gravity is a bit less of a concern.” Her work has been featured in the Sunday *New York Times*, *Metropolis Magazine*, *L.A. Style* and *The Boston Globe* and exhibited and screened internationally at film festivals including Ann Arbor and the Ottawa International Animation Festival.



Gina Kamentsky, *Secret Bee*, 2010, digital transfer from 35mm film, 2010.



## ALISON REIKO LOADER

lives in Montreal, and is a Ph.D candidate in Communication Studies at Concordia University, where she teaches in Design and Computation Arts. She has worked with entomologists (and their forest tent caterpillar research subjects) including Christopher Plenzich on ongoing projects that led to an exhibit called *En Masse*. Loader considers the work in this show, including *Caterpillar Choreography*, to be an interspecies act of creative collaboration. Loader calls herself “half media artist and half media historian,” and has a background that includes

directing short animated films at the National Film Board of Canada. As a hybrid artist/academic, her exhibitions and publications explore anamorphosis, camera obscuras, stereoscopy, scientific visual culture, and race, gender and animation, while her doctoral research comprises the history of Maria Short and her Popular Observatories and Camera Obscuras in nineteenth-century Edinburgh. Exhibitions include FOFA Gallery, Montreal and Galerie Les Territoires, Montreal.

## CHRISTOPHER PLENZICH

is also based in Montreal. He has a BS in Environmental Science and is an MS candidate in Biology at Concordia University. Fascinated by the fact that the forest tent caterpillars he works with (*M. disstria*) are very loyal to their pheromone trails, he thought it would be interesting to create “live drawings” with the caterpillars in which he would paint with a liquid form of the pheromone and let the caterpillars follow patterns that would otherwise not be seen in nature. Through a colleague he connected

with Loader, and they expanded and documented this in a truly collaborative process. He conducted research and reared caterpillars specifically for the project, which included *Caterpillar Choreography*. A one-minute edit from the *En Masse* exhibit, titled *Mass Transit*, was displayed in the 2014 Toronto Urban Film Festival, the 2015 YUL Performigrations/ Mobile Interventions in Montreal, and at the BLQ Performigrations/Mobile Interventions in Bologna.



Alison Reiko Loader and Christopher Plenzich, *Caterpillar Choreography*, digital video, 2015.



## MONTEITH MCCOLLUM

is an inter-media artist working in film, sound, and sculpture. He is on the faculty of the Cinema Department at Binghamton University. Both pieces in this show, *Din, Din*, and *Resonance of an Indeterminate Landscape*, use sound as an element of sculptural assemblage. Constructed from vintage photographic, film, and audio equipment updated with miniature video projectors, image is used to trigger sound. His films have screened at festivals and museums including The Museum of Modern Art, Hirshhorn, Wexner Center for the Arts, and festivals

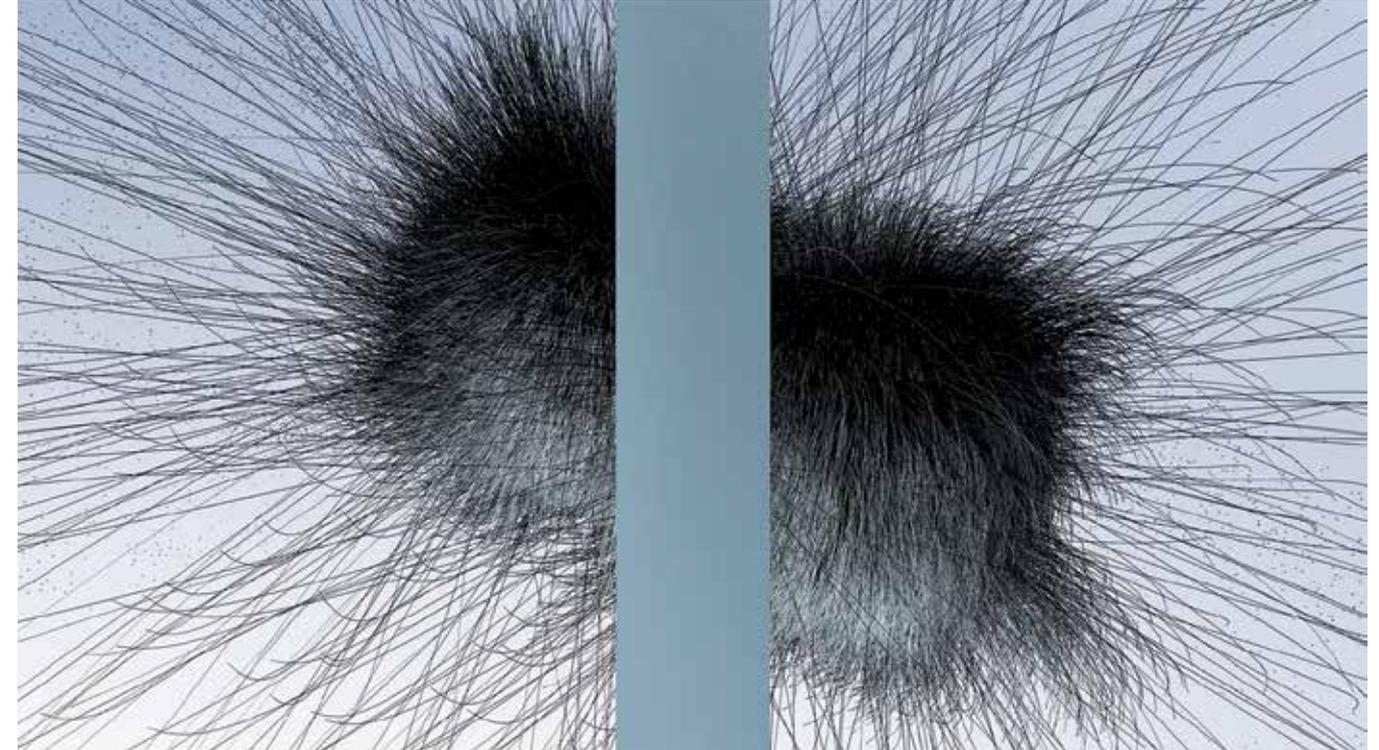
including SXSW, Slamdance, Hot Docs, Amsterdam and Osnabruck European Media Arts Festival. His films have garnered dozens of festival awards including an IFP Truer than Fiction Spirit Award. In addition to making films he creates unique audio compositions for films and performances. His film and sound work has received support from organizations including the Rockefeller Foundation, NEA, Jerome Foundation and Kodak. He is a 2015 recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship.

Monteith McCollum, *Din Din*, steel, wood, glass, latex, wire, vibration motors, photocells, projector, 2014.

## BRANDON MORSE

is a Washington, DC-based artist who works with generative systems to examine how physical phenomena function poetically. He received his BFA from the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point and his MFA in Art & Technology from Ohio State University. He has been teaching at the University of Maryland since 2000. In *Splitting Hairs*, the piece included in this show, a floating, revolving grey ball of hair, split in two by a thick flowing bar of pixels, is mesmerizingly tactile. Morse says the hairs are like cilia which provide our sense of touch, “Much of how we experience our world is mediated through these

hair-like cells, so it made sense to use them as a model in attempting to bring physicality and tactility to screen-based media.” Morse uses code to create videos that draw parallels between complex systems and human behavior. He has exhibited his work in digital video and sound installations nationally and internationally. His exhibitions include the Corcoran Museum of Art in Washington, DC; the Nanjing Museum in China, the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center; Kusthalle Detroit, as well as many gallery exhibitions across the United States, Europe and Asia.



Brandon Morse, *Splitting Hairs*, generative software documented as video, sound loop, 2014–2015.



## PATUXENT WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER

About forty miles south of Towson, a group of biologists and volunteers are helping the highly endangered whooping crane in an extraordinary performance aimed at a non-human audience. The adult whooping crane is a spectacular bird that stands more than five feet tall. Hunted for its black and white plumage and suffering from habitat loss, by 1942 the whooping crane's global population was devastated; only 22 "whoopers" remained. Thanks to habitat restoration and innovative programs like those at PWRC the population has rebounded. This research project includes a group of crane chicks who are taught to forage using a pair of crane-headed puppets—surrogates for mom and dad. Made by Sharon Peregoy and Patuxent Wildlife Research Center staff members, the puppet in this show helped rear young crane chicks. To prevent baby whoopers

from imprinting on their human caretakers, the chick-rearers conceal themselves in white costumes with hoods and face coverings like the one in the show, sewn by veterinary technician Carlyn Caldwell. This way, when the birds are released in the wild, they will keep a healthy fear of humans, says Biological Science Technician Rachel Roberts. As these puppet-raised chicks mature, they learn to follow an ultralight aircraft from a partner organization, Operation Migration. As young "colts," the adolescent cranes are shipped to Wisconsin, where they learn to fly in a small flock, eventually following the aircraft in a migration down to Florida. When the time comes, most of these whoopers return to Wisconsin, following the route they have been taught by their costumed, mechanical, surrogate parents.



Craig Saper, *Documentation of Whooping Crane Rearing*, digital video, 2015.



## ALLISON SCHULNIK

is a Los Angeles-based artist, dancer and musician known for her richly textural paintings, sculpture and clay-animated films and music videos. She holds a BFA from CalArts in Valencia, California. Her clay-animated films, like the elegantly macabre *Eager*, included in this exhibition, are tactile choreographies of clay. Wraiths and flowers dance and spread their petals in a visceral bacchanalia. She hand-makes everything in her films, using plasticine, wood, fabric, glue and wire, and brings it to life through traditional stop-motion animation. Schulnik has had

solo exhibitions at Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Laguna Art Museum, California, Oklahoma City Art Museum and Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Missouri. A selection of her recent group exhibitions include The Royal Scottish Academy of Art and Architecture, Edinburgh; Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel; Glenbow Art Museum, Calgary; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Her films have also screened in festivals in the United States, Europe and Australia.



Allison Schulnik, *Eager*, Stop-motion animation, 2014.

## NADAV WEISSMAN

works in sculpture and painting in Tel Aviv, Israel. He graduated from Haifa University with a BA and received an MA in the Interdisciplinary Program for the Arts from Tel Aviv University. *Late Excavations* is an animated video in which a pair of heads expel lines of bones and teeth that travel in paths across the screen to form a diagram of a house, turning and changing as they move across a plank-like background with a kind of game logic. Bones and teeth are the hard elemental vestiges remaining after death and call up thoughts of archaeological

excavation; the relics of human bodies and schematics of houses piece together past lives and past homes. Disembodied heads and architectural bones hint at uncanny machine-like processes behind daily life. Weissman is the winner of the Ministry of Education and Culture Award for Distinction in the Visual Arts, 2005, and a scholarship for young artists, Mif'al Hapa'is, in Israel in 2002. His solo exhibitions include Kabe Contemporary Gallery, Miami; Florentin 45 Gallery, Tel-Aviv; and Chelouche Gallery for Contemporary Art, Tel-Aviv.



Nadav Weissman, *Late Excavations*, digital video animation, 2011.