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Jojin Van Winkle
Eric Wolever



MFA 2016

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
MADISON GRAD CATALOG



MFA 2016



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This catalog marks the seventh in a series of publications that showcase the work of our graduating Master of Fine Arts students. This year, 25 students received degrees and presented solo exhibitions in one of our two galleries on campus. The exhibitions this spring were outstanding, and we hope that this catalogue will give you an idea of the range of artistic work being produced in the Art Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our program offers a three-year experience for art students at the graduate level to expand their artistic visions and work closely with faculty and their peers in helping to create the next generation of artists. As faculty, we consider ourselves fortunate to be able to mentor these talented students and spend time getting to know them. We are extremely proud of their

accomplishments, culminating in their thesis exhibitions every spring. Although we are sad to see them leave, we are excited for them to move on to their life as practicing artists. It is a life about which we as faculty are most passionate, and we hope that passion is shared by this graduating class. Congratulations and good luck.

Nancy Mladenoff
Associate/Graduate Chair

And a special thanks to Justin Eccles for a year of excellent graphic design work for our department, including this catalog.



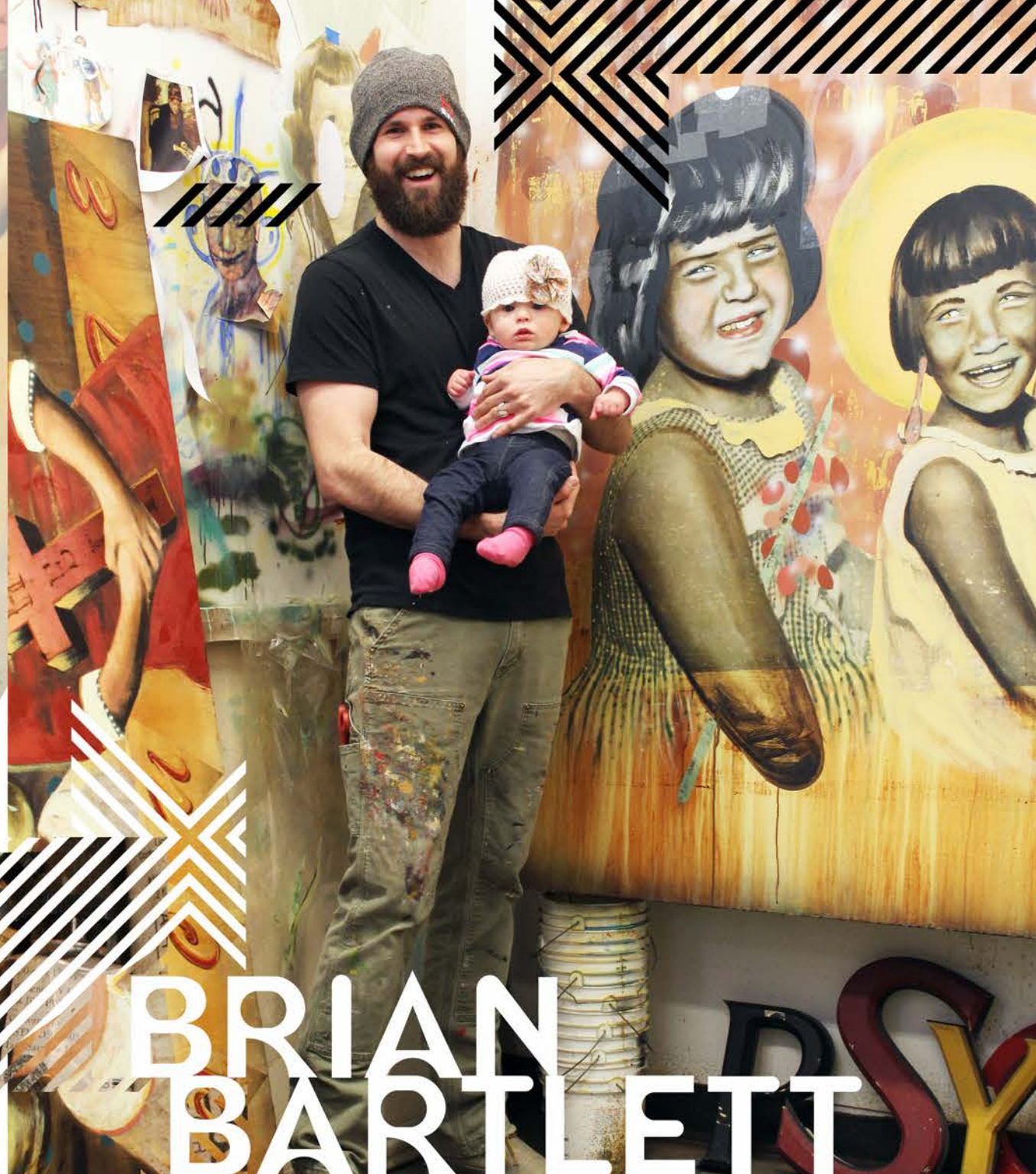
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remember, perhaps inaccurately that have contributed to my foundation and development as both an individual and an artist. Memory is an amusing thing because you rarely remember the whole of it, but rather that sweltering, momentous, disjointed detail that becomes ingrained in the back of your mind. My distorted childhood memories have resulted in disintegrated recollections. Through selective reinforcement I recount experiences with an altered narrative encouraging vivid detail of familiar episodes. For the most part these events are insignificant at the time they occur; yet they're loaded with personal narrative. These episodic accounts are the oddly shaped personal and cathartic experiences that remain in my mind and emerge in a hypnagogic state. These works embody reflective nostalgia, identifying fragmented dialogue of iconic individuals and events. As my work demonstrates, I am interested in the dialogue between the mind's splinter of an experience and its creation of a surrounding allegory to support memorable narratives.

I set out to make work of events that I have experienced or could imagine experiencing. I am interested in depicting issues of desire, obsession, and humor. Jokes are import-



BRIAN
BARTLETT

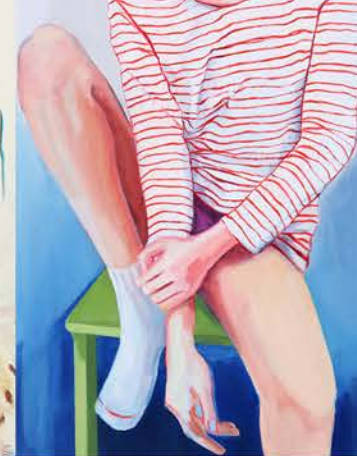


ant to me and sometimes function as a departure point for paintings or drawings. As I set out to make a painting, I work intuitively, but I have a preliminary idea of the image's content. I work from memory and manipulate the composition as I react to what has happened from previous gestures. The finished product, whether set in an interior or exterior, is a scene occupied with elements from my everyday life.

Eager to Please is a series of paintings and works on paper that explores the broader notions of female experiences, where appearances are deliberately curated, and self-awareness is both stigmatized and celebrated.



**TIM
BRENNER**



My pseudo-portraits celebrate moments that embody our worst anxieties: being watched when we do not want to be seen, or judged when we do. I construct awkward snapshots, fragments within a larger narrative defined by the rules of social expectation in contemporary culture. In conjunction with these thematic concerns, unapologetic girly signifiers elicit the melodrama commonly attributed to these issues. A loose approach to figuration permits me to achieve something stranger and more candid than traditional realism would allow.

My work is an investigation into the constantly changing built environment. I'm interested in how objects and materials in our urban space shift and warp our interaction with the natural world. Currently, I'm focusing on everyday objects relating to the built environment, emphasizing the fluctuation that could occur in our impending urban

DIANA
CAVALLERO

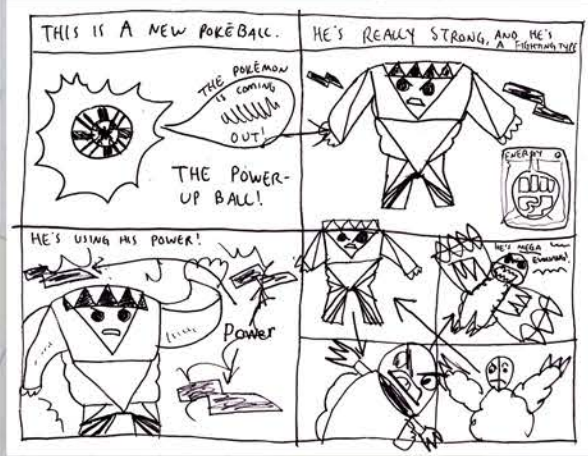


systems and structures. My work references the destruction, consumption, and displacement of these networks. These objects depict natural or unnatural forces that are imposed upon them, creating a dialogue between the organic and the inorganic. These environmental changes could cause objects to transform into archaeological ruin and become anthropomorphic.

Working with the UW Comics Club and the Madison Children's Museum has invigorated my cartooning practice and prompted several experimental series. In Notes on Art History, I use both spontaneous doodles and careful illustrations to wrestle with concepts discussed in seminars on art history and theory. When creating cartoons collaboratively with children, my focus has been on



SARAH
DEPPE



recording the way the child tells the story, including how s/he freely moves between drawing and performing. Each drawing for the series A Cartoonist a Day pays homage to the particular style of cartoonists I admire, including many of my fellow students. In my future studies, I hope to contribute to a conversation about the role of comics in the history of art and to develop a body of challenging comic work.

My work documents the ever-changing cultural landscape of my home of Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico. My Tewa cultural ceremonies, traditions, and stories, as well as twenty-first-century popular culture, comic books, and technology influence my art.

Using traditional materials and traditional Pueblo pottery techniques, along with various printmaking techniques,



JOSH
DUNCAN



including lithography, serigraphy, and intaglio etching, I seek to keep alive the ceramic traditions that have been passed down to me since time immemorial. I feel that these materials and techniques connect me to my ancestral past and landscape, but also connect me and future generations to our Tewa cultural traditions. The printmaking media is another way of creating and teaching these stories and traditions to a wider audience.

There is a theme of concentric circles found in the work. Some of the toughest moments of my journey, in which I have learned to overcome my challenges, are depicted in these pieces. The circles represent the “here we go again, again and again,” making no progress with the situation at hand. There were many moments during which I felt trapped in this cycle. The “again, and again” sentiment also reminds me of the corruption of Latin American governments. Here we go again, doing the same thing over and over, and no one questions this perpetual round. I have,



JASON
GARCIA



ADA
GONZALEZ



thankfully, broken out of the circle(s)!

I bleed red too is the most political piece of my portfolio. It represents how our government doesn't deal with some issues; we simply place temporary Band-Aids on them, and don't really resolve problems. We forget or perhaps don't want to face how our government's actions impact human beings. For many, the pursuit of happiness is compromised by the decisions we don't make.

I am interested in appetites. You can have an appetite—a craving, a certain taste—for anything. I'm especially interested in why we like the things we like, and why we do the things we do. Is it a matter of nature or nurture? On what level are we attracted to or seduced by certain things? I am curious about where our instincts and cultural constructions originate, and where they sometimes collide or blur. My work is most inspired by the sensual appetite. I seek to evoke some type of sensation or memory through my imagery, revealing the associations that our brains formulate.



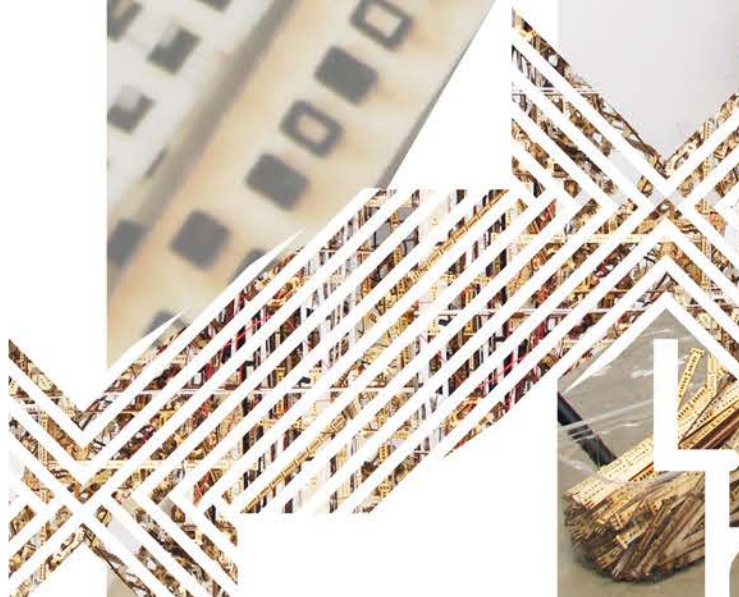
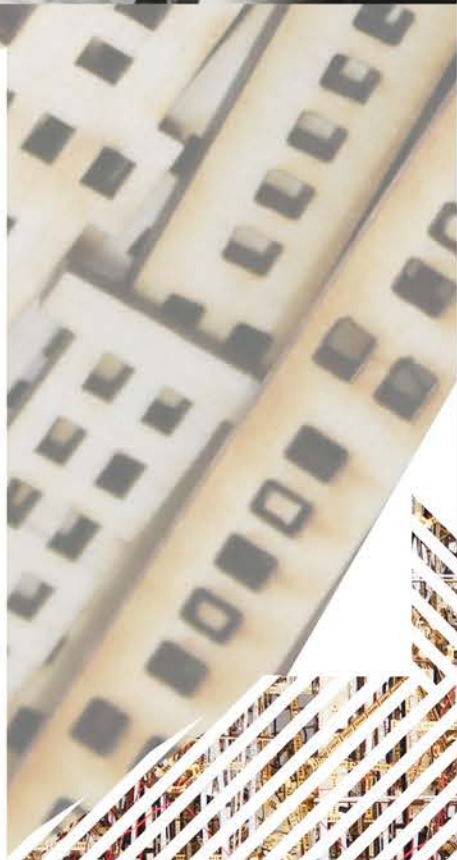
The recent conceptual points of my artwork most directly relate to personal cross-cultural experiences and self-awareness observation. In our society, there are lots of elements, which may become barriers. They are always between communicators and receivers. Those barriers could be cultural experiences, people's backgrounds, language systems, knowledge, or even people themselves—that is, their physical bodies, which affect their lives every day as they strive to establish personal identities, create relationships with others, and understand unknown worlds. However, people's desire or curiosity can inspire them to surmount those barriers and find their own answers. Barriers can thus turn into filters that refine, transform, and divide original information and ideas into fragments and



meaningless materials. Thus, people might redefine those materials into completely different compositions or into a simple abstraction.

This current body of work draws stylistically from the practice of Cabinets of Curiosity. Historically these cabinets included objects from natural history, cultural artifacts, relics, works of art, and antiquities. This form of collecting during the Renaissance was the precursor to the modern-day museum. In my own cabinet I am exploring the connections we have to our ancestors and to the natural world. Focusing on family and memory, I am visually exploring what we carry with us through the objects we inherit from previous generations, including genetic, physical, and emotional traits. I am revealing the inherent values held by generations past through the lens of my own.

The cabinet is composed of family photographs and objects, along with my own contemporary photographs,



LU HSUAN-YING



ANGELA
JOHNSON



which use alternative processes. I began this work by mining family photo albums from the late nineteenth century. They revealed images of my great-grandparents and other relatives, whose lives in south central Wisconsin were so different from my own.

I create installations that explore my interest in collective trauma and the dehumanization of Black folks in the United States using the vehicles of science fiction, dystopic/utopic narratives, and Black joy. I use PhantomNegro, a shape shifting, gender shifting, time-traveling being, as a tool to explore Black subjectivity, or the Black narrative. PhantomNegro floats through the past, present, and future, placing itself at scenes of injustices. PhantomNegro is an omnipresent being who rewrites the dominant narrative of current and past events involving the dehumanization of Black people. This rewritten narrative is not utopic, but rather a method of filling in the gaps in these stories of injustice, thereby allowing the artist the agency, or power, to understand and alter the past. PhantomNegro, and the artist, create a space in which collective trauma may be reclaimed and restructured into a sense of belonging, thereby carving out space for Black joy



I
hope
the
rainbow
will
always
be
enuf

My work examines romanticized representations of feminine beauty, and how western history, art and popular culture dictate our perception of this venerated beauty. By considering the appealing and revolting aspects of vanity, I am questioning whether attempts to capture contemporary notions of physical attractiveness are futile, or whether masquerading is an important aspect of navigation in an ego-driven society. I am fascinated with how the pursuit of glamour—exploited by fashion, adornment, cosmetics, grooming, surgical modifications, and other alterations to the body—both reveals and masks character. We are mortal; changing and aging is certain. Life is fleeting and death's shadow is persistent. With the artwork in *Voluptuous Vanitas*, I am questioning what is important to legacy: modesty and humility, or glamour and opulence.





ANNIE
KILBORN



I often think about our private spaces and the different ways we present ourselves depending on whom we interact with, including the raw emotion in the everyday routine that often gets overlooked or purposely hidden. My latest body of work has been about turning the viewership onto myself, and the emotions I now run through with recent experiences of loss and grief. Through sculpture and performance I am addressing universal experiences people share, even though my work is generated out of a very personal place. We are often conditioned to hide our emotions from others unless they are positive—and also to dismiss the experiences unless they are considered extraordinary. I prefer to meditate on the seemingly insignificant repetitions of everyday routines and to appreciate them for what they are, the truest experiences of our lives without premeditation for presentation.

I am a multimodal media artist and STEAM educator



who explores the socio-cultural rules that guide the way people interact in public spaces, arts integration into informal science learning, and generational differences in the perceived emotional affect of digital forms. In my MFA show, I examine how people learn through inhibition and how those inhibitions filter our affective response to stimuli. In particular, I encourage people to reflect on, and at times break free of, the learned inhibitions that guide their behavior by drawing on walls and making works that respond to touch and movement.

In *Hard Reset*, I combine digital media and traditional forms in space that mime the domestic, bringing together seemingly disparate themes through an underlying idea that all things are related through personal experience

My three-part MFA exhibit series transforms a genre of consumer-culture ephemera that may be observed either as expressive or as scientifically generated. The first exhibit

STEPHANIE
LIFSHUTZ



staged an indexical installation of collected art material tests. The event seemed transparent—a display of curious found objects—but in reality I took great liberties in editing and subtly manipulating the images. The subsequent exhibits employ painting and assemblage to radically alter the source material. These works posit “the gesture” as a manifestation of a particular state of mind. Each piece captures a schizophrenic gamut of moods, degrees of confidence, and gestural eloquence that might suggest a multiplicity of creators. The multiplicity is real, but it exists within a single mind.

More than anything, I am inspired by quality, the sensation that one gets when one handles something exquisitely made. In particular, I am captivated by the coach-built cars made during the 1920s and 1930s. I am fascinated by the idea of making an object that has a technical function but is completely dominated by the quest for perfection and the aesthetic concerns that accompany this quest. The



method I have chosen to convey this is fountains. Humans seem to be innately drawn to moving water; there is something very primal about it. While my work is inspired by a bygone era, I try to be cognizant of contemporary culture. We live in a time when people expect to be able to interact with just about everything, and I try to incorporate interactivity as much as possible. There are many ways for artists to judge their success. For me, success equates to causing people to smile.

Inventing machines is the quintessential human activity. Humans aren't particularly well adapted to survive on our own; it is only by creating devices to solve problems and adapt to environmental pressures that we, as a species, have survived. Each machine, then, has two pieces of information encoded within its design: the problem it was designed to solve, and the ideal world that will be created



by solving the aforementioned problem. Machines reflect a civilization's collective worldview.

I use machines as a lens through which to critique our civilization. I examine the hidden beliefs embedded within our technology by creating original machines that solve these same problems in new, absurd ways. Alternatively, I create new machines predicated on new problems and hopes for the world. In this way, I subvert technology's ability to encode a civilization's beliefs by suggesting new beliefs, creating machines that try to change civilization itself.

My work is a physical embodiment of the fragmented and temporal workings of my mind, and as such manifests the duality between structure and ephemerality, between perfection and disorder, between anxiety and persistence. I try to work with materials and ideas instead of forcing my vision upon them, and for this reason my work has become a cross between reality and intuition, located



JEFF MASON



somewhere in the imagination but anchored in representation.

Though my work might initially be interpreted as narcissistic self-expression, this is only partially true, for larger concerns wind through it like threads. Thoughts of femininity surface through the misuse of traditional women's craft. I draw on the mysterious ability to "communicate" across species as a way to explore the nature and origin of intellect and creativity within ourselves. I undermine traditional approaches to art making, something between abstraction and representation, in order to uncover something more within them.

Despite a recent and rather significant material shift to acrylic yarn and late nineteenth-century craft techniques, I remain focused on the primary aspects of my work that have developed over the past three years. First among these is an emphasis on the formal qualities of abstraction. My interest lies predominantly in color, shape, line, space, and (most recently) texture. These formal components are



not only valuable subjects to explore individually; they also constitute the vernacular I use to investigate abstraction as a whole.

Second among these is a general fascination with the metaphorical space between abstraction and reality. Whether that takes the form of specific objects/images that are deconstructed to the point just before they slip into pure abstraction, or formal abstractions that have a certain physical logic enforced on them, I value the tension between these concepts more than the individual concepts themselves.

I am interested in boundaries, physical and psychological, between humans and the natural world. This work interprets electron-microscopic images of various species through the medium of lithography. In the electron micrographs, I see landscapes or figurative shapes. The images I perceive evoke memories of places or things and the emotions that accompany them. By altering the scientific images, I emphasize my interpretation of them as visual memories of a journey across an alien landscape. The landscape, though, is no more alien than we are.



There is a human need to domesticate and alter the wild world, to chain, confine and even genetically design life, to prove that we are separate and unique. The reality is that we share a common link with all matter, animate and inanimate. This body of work explores that link at the microscopic level, where its strange beauty is most clearly seen.

The video installation b-roll straddles the border between documentary and fictional visual storytelling. The narrative focuses on the absurd. The subjects seek something they have lost. They attempt to do the impossible and then do the improbable. This work highlights the tensions produced by polarities: humor and sadness, fantastical and everyday, and loss and gain. The story ends with a woman seated on porch steps. She whistles for her pet. She holds a red leash in her hands like a rosary. The middle part of the story involves a woman unpacking her purse. The purse contains an improbable amount of oversized



CHRIS
ROWLEY



objects, which proceed to engulf her. The narrative begins as a woman struggles with an orange juice container. The turning points between these vignettes involve a penny. The footage is shot on old, grainy 16mm film stock with an Arriflex SR II, and then transferred to digital.

For me, childhood and the teenage years were a time of stimulation, reckless abandon, and dreams of fleeing home. I have walked, run, skated and sped over dirt, gravel and tarry asphalt roads. All of these experiences were so blue-collar, America-centric, and rural. It is important that this everyday space be realized; this is the measure of all things, a common ground to critique and reminisce.

I set out to structure my work like a musical record. Every image, icon, and surface traces my steps. The spaces are set up through a series of speeds, colors, notes, and layers. Memory is the driving force behind the work and this so-called album. I begin recording an image, deconstruct everything in between, and finish at the end of the track(s).



CINDY
TIPLER



JOIN VAN WINKLE

I hope to harvest moments of wonderment and endlessness, the blurry sensations experienced when driving on stretches of roads with no end in sight.

