Jamilah Abdul-Sabur  Ela Boyd  Misael Diaz
Adrienne Garbini  Jesse Harding  Edward Kihn
Sam Kronick  Benjamin Lotan  Frankie Martin
Rebecca Monarrez  Nina Preisendorfer  Daniel Rehn
Emily Sevier  Allison Spence  Josh Tonies

MFA 2013
MFA 2013

Department of Visual Arts
May 30-June 28, 2013

The MFA 2013 exhibition and accompanying catalog has been organized by Melinda Guillen and Samara Kaplan, PhD students in Art History, Theory & Criticism in the UCSD Department of Visual Arts.

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Edited by Melinda Guillen & Samara Kaplan.

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Special thanks to Merete Kjaer.

We’d also like to congratulate all fifteen artists of the 2013 MFA graduating class.
Endnotes
Melinda Guillen and Samara Kaplan

We didn't curate these artists; we curated the space. That doesn't mean that we didn't have varying degrees of developed relationships with the 2013 MFA candidates throughout the curatorial process. It means that we (and they) have been challenged to create an all-inclusive exhibition of disparate practices. Because of this, from the outset, we have resisted the attempt to search for a curatorial premise or conceptual framework that would be so magical in its expanse that it could encompass this entire group of artists. It is our hope that the conscious decision to abstain has permitted for the specificity of the work to remain at the fore.

However, the lack of curatorial thematic (apart from the implied commemoration of achievement that comes at the end, or near end, of acquiring a Master of Fine Arts) is not to suggest that there are no existing commonalities among the artists represented here or that we have no curatorial methodology at work. To begin, there is a highly particularized individuality to each of the artists' practices, a strong, prevailing sense of interiority matched by a high level of rigor in the execution of their work. Regardless of scale or medium, this is evident in all of the pieces featured in the exhibition.

Some artists have developed a writing component to their work, no doubt an element that extends from the UCSD Department of Visual Arts emphasis on critical theory and research methods. Because of this, it was necessary to deviate from the conventional formulaic approach to exhibition catalogs, in favor of including texts written or selected by the artists themselves. Conversely, some opted to keep a visual representation only. The images are from both new work produced for the exhibition and also previous/ongoing projects. This approach is not meant to abstract their practices but to permit the images alone to act as interpretive points of entry.

For the exhibition, we should note that a large portion of these artists require darkness and specific spatial conditions for their work. While this has the practical value of making projections visible and installations navigable, still, we wondered why environment is such a central interest. Although it is impossible (and not our goal) to capture the conceptual complexities motivating the practices featured in the exhibition, we do have some of our own informed speculations regarding the emphasis on environment or site; perhaps it originates from a palpable interest in the body and performing itself through such forms as humor, immersion, identity, and materiality. It may also have to do with a consideration of immediate location. San Diego is, after all, a border site that is particularly complex in terms of issues of land use, exchange, migration and human interaction. These considerations have yielded compelling site investigations, interrogations of cognitive processes and even the construction of imaginative worlds that is evident in some of the work. Undoubtedly, these various temporal, spatial, conceptual and material conditions manifest in various forms among the group with both distinct overlap and points of divergence.

As curators, we wanted to provide an open plan for the exhibition and catalog that would encourage multiple ways of seeing and engaging with these practices. While we have suggested only a few approaches here, there are endlessly rich aesthetic and discursive paths to explore.

We hope you enjoy it.
Jamilah Abdul-Sabur
Ela Boyd’s video installation work explores issues of representation and visual perception in terms of the body, time and space. She considers the ways in which instances of multiplicity instantiate the actuality of simultaneous modalities of embodied presence. In her research and practice, Boyd looks to constructions of cinematic production (character, set, context and linear succession) as an analogy for our experience of perceiving, apprehending and simulating a continuous reality; whereas the formal aspects of film/video media, such as frames, pixels, editing/remixing and spatial presence, evince properties inherent to space-time outside of our perception of it.

Combining performing bodies with projected imagistic bodies, Boyd uses the body-in-space to address what is considered to be actual/viable embodiment, new forms of intersubjectivity and to generate a sense of de-centralized presence. The mirrored self and the reflected self evoke the ephemeral/metaphysical body. As in her video installation, Apparition, the phantom-like body appears to the audience as a vision, an ontical presence that has to be confronted rather than a representation pointing to a “real” body elsewhere. The cinematic/imagistic body in her installation works, Staircase to Cinema and Two Shades deconstructs the semiotic body and positions the imagistic self as a simultaneous or alternate self. In her ontological theory, multiple selves exist in various modalities simultaneously. These selves continue to proliferate via media and “time-travel” within our conscious projections in the form of memory, dream and fantasy. The fantasy body presented in the nostalgic 1960s Sci-Fi characters of Mirroring Myself evoke the imagined or dreamed self, possible and potential selves. Video installations that combine images of mirroring (via mirrors, reflections and multiplied characters) along with actual experiences of seeing the self mirrored and reflected creates an experience of intersubjectivity. Multiple perspectives collapse into a simultaneous seeing from within the self, seeing the self from an outside perspective and connecting with “the other”. The other is accessed by identifying with the point of view of the subject in the video, subjectively watching the subject and connecting with fellow audience members/participants.

The multiplicity scenarios map recorded scenes to actual reality. Three temporal schemes are evinced in Boyd's installation works: parallel, sequential and potential time. Moments overlap in the presentation of projection mapping; the actual and the recorded loop in tandem. Sequential time is evinced in the overarching theme of cinematic history and nostalgia. On a smaller scale a simulation of continuity occurs in comparing each moment, each frame to the last. Potential time is suggested in the Sci-Fi/other-worldly aesthetic themes. Temporal potentiality is inherent to media itself (re-enacting previously recorded footage, potential selves/scenarios within narrative, flash-back, etc.). As with the temporal scenarios, three forms of spatial engagement are enacted within Boyd's video installation strategies; flattened space, extended space and multi-dimensional/conceptual space. Images have an inherent shallow spatial plane, yet Boyd uses installation strategies to both expanded and collapse one's perception of the image and of spatial depth perception. Images are bounced off mirrors and refracted to other spaces. The participant's image is bounced around the room via reflections and silhouetted shadows. The self becomes a de-centralized presence and space becomes a network of multi-faceted vantage points.

In extending and inverting the filmic space into a sculptural installation one is aware of a constructed reality via media and Gestaltian processes of conscious perception. Looping videos present the nature of time as merely a series of “nows” of equal value re-writing one another. Each still frame is an instant, a now, that is instantiated and replaced each second in viewing film.
My recent work traces the historical evolution of intersubjective exchange at the U.S./Mexico border, exploring the way markets and popular culture dictate patterns of exclusion/inclusion that have shaped the construction of national imaginaries, and analyzing how these are both amplified and fragmented at the border.

Approximation diagrams different levels of confrontation with otherness as it relates to the space of the border during the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s. Three postcards from the period capture three distinct relationships to the Other, which are highlighted by line intervention: 1) abject object to be negated, 2) degraded body to be maintained at a close distance, and 3) human being to identify/recognize. These relationships to the Other continue to form the basis of socio-political discourse along the U.S./Mexico border, as the psychological line that divides Self/Other becomes the basis for the geo-political line that divides the two nations into two autonomous territories.

Readymade (After Helguera) was purchased at a Salvation Army in San Diego. The background is an iconic print by Jesus Helguera, a prolific Mexican painter whose work was instrumental in consolidating a Mexican national imaginary that married ethnicity (past) to territory (present) in the decades after the Mexican Revolution. The multi-window matte placed over the Helguera print however, predicts its ultimate fate: to be supplanted by personal photographs. The central discourse of nation represented in Helguera is fragmented and personal memory comes to take precedence over a collective mythic history.
Adrienne Garbini
Jesse Harding
Slow Internet

When we get comfortable enough with a system, the nuances of its topology fade away. Our words begin to mirror our internal mapping of concepts, apparent when we use a word like WIFI as a metonym for the Internet in whole. But WIFI only takes us to another local node, not to our data spread around the world. Before our bits hit the wild Internet, they must pass through a router, or as this type of computer was originally called, a gateway. While we don’t often consider the different types of physical gates or doors we use every day, we at least understand there is a radical difference between the experience of a border crossing and a shower curtain. Computer networks are no less diverse.

The cliche of cyberspace is founded in such a spatial conception of information systems—a user of a network experiences being in a place, clicking through login screens and menus as if they were landmarks or checkpoints on a journey. Our everyday routines lead us along familiar routes: from the devices we use to the local networks we access; to the websites we check regularly, but our vocabulary is weak when it comes to scrutinizing these spaces in comparison to our nuanced language in discussing the politics of our cities.

When gadgets and gadget-makers are such prominent topics of contemporary conversation, it is worth noting that one of the many devices which serve a pivotal function in the consumer electronics ecosystem seems to thoroughly dissolve into the collective unconscious: the Internet router, a cornerstone of any home network, is rendered invisible in its role as diligent and uncomplicated access point. Despite the fact that the entirety of a household’s correspondence, inquiries, and entertainment pass through this single object, the device itself is left completely untouched by the experience, free from any marks which could evoke the conditions of its use. Unlike other devices that serve as constant companions, living in pockets and backpacks, subject to regular contact with the flesh of their users, a router is touched infrequently, if at all, between the moments of installation and disposal. It witnesses all but accumulates no memories; it is the non-place of cyberspace.
Frankie Martin

WE ARE WILD DOGS
WITH TURQUOISE FOR
LAUGHING
AT FULL MOONS

Directed and Produced by Frankie Martin with help from The Russell Franks
Cinematography: adorable Finkenauer, Frankie Martin, and Stolle Fin, Artwork: Brenna Fig, Danny Seiver, Set Design: Bergold Tomadottir, Trust in Martin, Adrienne Gribbin, Jesse Haring, Nicki Person, Jeffery O'Leary, and Erin Sonnen.
Film Synopsis
Comedy and art collide in this semi-fictional portrait of Frankly, a young sculptor seeking to make something of worth. Frankly is part of The Hands of Light, a female art collective, whose unity is disrupted by the screens present in their daily lives. The one person who reaches out beyond the screen to Frankly is Shithead, a cross dressing crust punk who unintentionally threatens her sense of purpose.

Excerpt from the book
Here we are in real time, between space. It is real but does not feel so. Everything is possible here. Anxiety grows just being here with you. Are you taping this? Are you watching me being watched or just looking at your own box, seeing how it looks when you talk to me? Anything is possible here. You don’t adjust to the format, pouring out your heart out in a way you shouldn’t. Or you do adjust and the interaction is a joke. In this place we strip off our clothes and show our assholes, when we never would in person. When I see you again, in real time, will we pretend this never happened? Or will we continue on this whim meant only for that metherworld?

Excerpt from the screenplay
AQUAPOKE LIVINGROOM SCENE
Frankly lies on the teal couch with Mustard the multi-colored cat, gazing at Herm the purple fish who circles in a small bowl. The doorbell rings. Frankly’s head jerks. When she sees that it is her favorite band, AQUAPOKE, she becomes excited/suspicious and jumps up to greet them at the door.

JONATHAN
Heeey Frankly! We’re playing a show on Sunday. We were just passing out flyers.

FRANKLY
Sunday? Awesome! (pause) Why didn’t u just footbook me? You know I would have reposted.

SHITHEAD
Frankly, I am sick and disgusted of that book confronting my face.

JONATHAN
We don’t have that book. (shaking head exaggeratedly, looking at the floor)

FRANKLY
Oh. Right. Realtime is way better.

JONATHAN
Like right now! (dramatic hand movement)

FRANKLY
Oh. (composes herself) Do you think things r getting worse? (pause)

JONATHAN
Like I mean more awkward here and by here I mean now and by now I mean in this time, our time. I mean do you think its because of faketime, real-time is getting weirder? Do you think we forgot how?

SHITHEAD
No.

FRANKLY
Frankly looks to Jonathan, who shrugs.

Watermeloonoonononononons!

A giant half watermelon with 3 spoons sticking out is thrown from off camera.

SHITHEAD / JONATHAN / FRANKLY
Moo Hooo! / Bon Apetit! / Yummy starts now!

They sit around the coffee table, stuffing each other’s faces with the fruit.

FRANKLY
I wish I were a wild dog.
Nina Preisendorfer
Seven lives she has they say. Seven! While my own singular existence will come to an end sooner or later.
I decide to pay her a visit.

You want one of my lives? she asks purringly, seeing right through me with green-yellow eyes.

Yes. I answer, slightly embarrassed.

It won’t be for free, a life is something precious, to be valued even when one has several.

What do you propose? I inquire.

I propose a challenge, she says, I will give you one of my lives if you find what is called happiness in your current one and bring it to me. Only if you found happiness in your first life, I can be sure that you will truly appreciate your second one.

But I already tried, I tried pretty much all my life, I exclaim.

Well, then I might not be able to help you.

Her purring sound almost transforms into a growl.

I’m not going to give up, I hasten to say, it’s just...

By then she has already turned around.

I will come back I call after her.

A faint whisper seems to say don’t think you’re the first one who tried, but it’s so faint, that I can’t be sure.
You can create art and beauty on a computer. 30,000
Computer art will have to overcome its flatness or else embrace its limitations as a new aesthetic. 31,500
You buy your teenager a computer and modem. Sometime later you find your lawn littered with beer bottles and dog up with fence marks. 32,000
If we stay close to our hearts we can make Cyberpunk more than just a packaging logo, and turn it into what it was meant to be. 32,500
I really like the face of this Internet, and the support for the network. 32,600
I just bought a flatbed scanner and, finding a TV VHS handy, placed the TV face down on the scanner to acquire a 33,000
AICA Wilkie is very cool. It's like Turbo Graphix on grungy, crashes a bit, but hey, so do Porsches and other things Paul 33,400
Here's a flawless relationship. Get to know the club/ rave scene. Fit out an album. 33,900
I am no longer addicted to TV. I am addicted instead to 34,000
We are going to seek all the available information out of the Earth, EEEE
My shoe hesitates in lifting as I walk through the creek bed, sticking for a split second before rising up. The mud lifts along with my foot, leaving my shoe’s silhouette in damp sand below. When my foot lands again, it slurs and pushes the mud apart, sinking slightly. It takes a lot of water to get this muddy. The soil in San Diego is stubborn. Even after a heavy drenching with the garden hose, the dirt remains dry only a few inches under the surface. The ground rejects water not recognizing its thirst. During a heavy rain water pools for a couple seconds before the earth wakes up to soak it in.

The creek where I stand fits the description of a “wash” more accurately than a “creek” with its bipolar states of dry and rushing torrent. Water does not linger here. It pushes through, leaving a path of cornmeal-sized pebbles and broken glass. The finer particles of clay and silt ride the water more freely, depositing themselves along the creek bank at catch points where a branch or piece of debris interrupts the flow of water. These miniature dams grow with the collection of twigs and leaf material along with plastic bags, bottles, t-shirts, and paper coffee cups. As the accumulation of silt, garbage, and organic material expands, the edges of the creek shift to redirect the water’s path. When it rains, the creek rushes the debris and silt ahead, not allowing it to pause and settle. The water opens up the banks of the creek in its haste and pushes the land towards the ocean. Where the terrain flattens, the creek widens and the water slows to claim its territory in a smear of mud. It is this mud that sucks on my shoe. Reminding me that I am part of this place.

Water carved the space where I stand, reforming the region in which I live. Water is the reason I am here. By being here I am complicit in the conversation between the land and water as a collaborator, traitor, and mercenary. The conditions that shaped the landscape are the conditions that brought me here, a momentary intersection, not fate but a coincidental shaping. Runoff flows downhill collecting in the ravine to form the creek, which travels to the ocean, pulling sediment and debris with it to deposit in the San Diego Bay. Generations of speculators built their dreams around this Bay as the key to San Diego’s economic future. These dreams are the reason that the creek I stand in, less than a mile from the Bay, is in the United States and not Mexico. Without the Bay, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo may never have tilted the border southward to scoop San Diego for the United States. The United States Military would not have chosen San Diego for a naval port. Without the Navy, I would not have the opportunity to address you under the aegis of the University of California, San Diego.

The promise of the Bay divided the region into parcels and planted houses on the hillside above the place where I stand with my feet in the mud. The hillside and the mud kept the parcels traversing them from being built upon, leaving the space open and picturesque with feral Spring blooms of daisies, nasturtium, and wild radish punctuated by eucalyptus, palm and acacia trees. These garden escapees are sunny colonizers, much like you and me, growing, living, thriving, engrained into the landscape, but heedless of both the force and forces behind our presence. Standing in the mud, I am part of the malleable landscape along with the trash and the daisies. Mud, the mixture of water and dirt, is a reminder that nothing is static. The hard earth becomes soft and fluid, traveling through drainage pipes to replace the sediment dredged from the Bay.
things.

If, when walking like Little Red Riding Hood in the forest, you come upon a wolf, you should not talk to it. Instead, you should reach into the wolf’s gaping mouth, push back until you have found the fleshy bit of its tail, and pull. You turn the creature inside out, and like a trained dog it will stay still and no longer be a threat. This is the kind of folkloric wisdom that has been passed down for generations. If Little Red had followed these instructions she would have been able to see the wolf’s insides without first being swallowed by it, without having to familiarize herself with its digestive tract while waiting in its stomach for the woodcutter to arrive. There is something deeply suspicious about the idea that Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother leapt whole and not partially-digested from the wolf after the woodcutter’s appearance; as if the wolf had a stomach as expandable and patient as a boa constrictor’s. Although, you would assume that the girl would exhibit considerably greater suspicion of the wolf that was posing as her dear granny if it had a grandmother-shaped mass filing its stomach.

Or was the wolf’s imitation of her grandmother just that convincing?

Assimilated identities. The fear that our bodies are simply containers for things that cannot be seen and therefore cannot be known. The Big Bad Wolf becomes a single sled dog in the imagination of John Carpenter. It enters the arctic camp at the beginning of The Thing already in disguise. It is a creature whose survival depends on the ingestion and assimilation of the bodies around it, posing an extreme threat to the group of scientists and researchers assembled there.

The creature’s disguise is a perfect replication down to the very organs inside of it, but in order to feed it will split itself open like the unfurling of a flower bud and its ‘truest’ form will burst out—a bloody, dripping mass with thin, slashing tentacles and insect legs. It will absorb all living things that it comes into contact with, will store them inside of itself like a library of costumes—its boundaries become limitless, its identity contains the multitudes that it ingests. The men watch in horror as it absorbs several other dogs, its contours unnaturally expanding past its former limits, slowly reforming and compressing itself into dog-like ligaments and musculature.

Raspé writes an account of the Baron Munchausen encountering a wolf while walking through the forest. Defenseless, the threat of the wolf pushes the Baron to a moment of ‘mechanical instinct,’ which causes him to thrust his arm into the wolf’s open mouth, grab hold of its tail, and turn the beast inside out ‘like a glove,’ flinging it to the ground. The account, which is surrounded by similar stories of the Baron’s resourcefulness against the threats of the natural world, is a testament to his mastery over it. The wolf turned inside out divulges all of its mysteries. Its body becomes as mundane as a piece of discarded clothing.

They realize that they must kill this thing. They must take it apart and identify it. Its corpse is like a motion blur, frozen in the process of becoming, of rebuilding itself from the inside out. It is a terrifying mass of bloody tissue, with body parts that are recognizable as ours, yet contorted and stretched like rubber before it snaps around the boundaries of a new object. It is a slimy mass of organs and bones so similar to its object that they can only label it as an abomination. They begin to question their own ranks; they can no longer trust the bodies around them. Any one of them may suddenly expand and envelope their neighbor. They wonder which one of them is holding this threat inside of them. Which of them is truly human and which of them is an it, a thing?

The men are faced with their worst fear, as the discerning eye of science is struck blind by these perfect organic imitations. Their bodies no longer define their humanity but instead are as much of a thing as the creature; the only way to distinguish themselves is through their own self-awareness.

‘I know that I’m human,’ the main character, MacReady, declares.

But how can you quantify the intangible?

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1 Rudolf Erich Raspe, The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen.
To Whom It May Concern

Over a year ago, I had the great pleasure of visiting with Josh Tonies and learning about his work. He was a new student in the MFA program at University of California San Diego. During our initial meeting I looked at some of his paper-based collage work and also his videos Green Hazard and Horton Plaza. I was taken with the way, particularly in regards to Horton Plaza, he managed to re-contextualize an architectural space that is at once familiar and foreign. His videos emphasize the significance of place, while also exuding a sense of playfulness. Our initial conversation included a brief discussion of Gustav Stickley and the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park in San Diego, these historical relationships seemed significant and worthy of teasing out in future projects.

My colleague, Alexander Jarman, Manager of Public Programs at The San Diego Museum of Art, and I invited Josh to display a work during the Museum’s annual Summer Salon Series during 2011. With his videos on exhibit one Thursday night last summer (the Summer Salon Series invites artists to create one night performances, interventions, or exhibitions), the entire season of programming seemed enhanced by Josh’s work. In these large-scale projections, Josh dealt with iconic architectural forms and seamlessly melded animation and collage technique.

More recently, I saw Josh’s video, Allure of the Seas, and his two-dimensional collage work in an exhibition at Southwestern College in San Diego. This summer, Josh will return to the Museum as a part of the Summer Salon Series. While we try to keep the programs varied and use different artists, Josh was one of the few artists that we knew we needed to include again. This year’s Summer Salon Series, entitled Beyond the Banner, examines how histories are constructed and explores the thin line between fact and fiction. As a part of this endeavor, Josh will develop a project using resources from the library archives at the Museum. The results of Josh’s research are highly anticipated by me and by many colleagues.

Josh enriches the San Diego art community. His work and his creative vision stand out among a group of highly talented MFA students at UCSD. After visiting Josh’s studio on a couple of occasions and seeing his work exhibited in different environments, I am excited to see where he takes his work and where his work takes him. He demonstrates dedication to his craft and possesses a vast amount of knowledge about history, art history, and technique.

Amy Galpin, Ph.D.
Assistant Curator, Art of the Americas
The San Diego Museum of Art
(pages 3) Jamilah Abdul-Sabur
Playing Possum
2012
Single-channel video

(pages 4-5) Jamilah Abdul-Sabur
Moving Organs
2013
Single-channel video

(pages 4-5) Jamilah Abdul-Sabur
Zinna and White
2013
Single-channel video

(page 7) Ela Boyd
Mirroring Myself
2013
Video Installation, Performance

(page 9) Ela Boyd
Stainway to Cinema
2013
Video Installation

(page 11) Misael Diaz
Approximation
2012

(pages 16-17) Adrienne Garbini
Resitentialism, Platform, Your Lives
Do Not Work, Platitude Blotter: In Tribute to Pure Minds, Practice Diagram, For Sale/That’s Not For Sale, Aesthetics/Snay: Study, Cognitive Clock, There is no need to parade your problems, Popaged States, Object Puzzle, The Object With Haim Steinbach/Reverberation, Houseplants
To Grow If You Have No Sun, Interior Taxonomy, Reductive Process, Health and Light, The Alternating Original, Fake Dead Plant, Graduate School Book Collection, What Can Be Said (with Alex DeCarli), No Problems, Blank Response (with Alex DeCarli), All’s Well/I am on fire, Idea of Reference Waste (Not Pictured), No Nowhere Fridge (with Alex DeCarli), The Solar Lodge, ABRACADABRA, Trash, Symbolic Storage, IMPOSSIBLE/October 2011, Studio Photography, No Future/No Past (Not Pictured), Ceramics, Grave (Not Pictured), Paperback Shelves, Mathemagic, Drive (Not Pictured), Candles, Passive Obsessive, Roof, July 11, 2012, San Diego, California (with Aranzazu Pala Manriquez), Bunker, Floor Piece, Resin Front Door Window, August 1, 2012, San Diego, California (with Aranzazu Pala Manriquez), Blocks Flag, Summer 2012 (with Aranzazu Pala Manriquez), Walk, Styrofoam, Set Design Self Portrait, Chickens of the Woods, Face Governance (with Jesse Harding), Forward (with Jesse Harding), Popular Entropy, METAPHYSICS, Installation of METAPHYSICS, Face Off (with Catherine Czacki), Together Separately, Party Over, Modern Sculptress (with Catherine Czacki) 2010-2013 Mixed Media

(page 19) Jesse Harding
Rotation Negation
2012
Sculpture detail

(page 20) Jesse Harding
Move Pattern Generator
2012
Mixed media sculpture

(page 21, both) Jesse Harding
Still from video

(page 23, both & pages 24-25) Edward Kohn
excerpts from Scenario 2012 16mm film

(page 27, top) Sam Kronick
WiFi Antenna in Clover Ridge Subdevelopment (from Networks + New Towns) 2013 Video still

(page 27, bottom) Sam Kronick
Bored Cable Warning (from Networks + New Towns) 2013 Video still

(page 29) Sam Kronick
Study for Nodes 2013 Sculpture: Used WiFi routers, carpet, plywood Courtesy of The Slow Internet Foundation

(page 31) Benjamin Lotan
Performance 2010-2013 Performance documentation

(page 32) Benjamin Lotan
Cultural Production 2012 Performance documentation / mixed media sculpture

(page 33) Benjamin Lotan
Cash 2012 Performance documentation

(page 36) Frankie Martin
Still from We are wild dogs with turquoise fur laughing at full moons 2012 71 minute HDV for projection, in progress: out in Winter 2013

(page 39, top) Rebecca Monjarrez
RMx69 (installation detail) 2013 wig, glues

(page 39, bottom) Rebecca Monjarrez
RMx69 (installation detail) 2012 sp00k

(pages 40-41) Rebecca Monjarrez
30in x 32in plush, rabbit and goat fur, foam board 2013 Untitled

(page 43) Nina Pressendorfer
16/8 2013 plush, rabbit and goat fur, foam board 30in x 52in

(page 44) Nina Pressendorfer
Untitled 2013 wallpaper 6ft x 4ft

(page 47) Daniel Rehn
Selected texts from WWW/TXT [www.wtxt.org] 2012-

(page 48) Daniel Rehn
SysOperate v0.2 (pink and blue) by Daniel Rehn + Sarah Caluag 2012

(page 49) Daniel Rehn

(pages 52-53) Emily Sevier
Arpoyo 2013 Digital Photo Collage

(page 56-57) Allison Spence
Big Moss 2013 Oil on canvas 72” x 120”

(page 59, both) Josh Tonies
Genesis Rock, 4 views (detail) 2013 Acrylic on birch

(page 60, both) Josh Tonies
Allure of the Seas 2012 Animation still
Postscript
Jordan Crandall
Professor & Chair
Department of Visual Arts

The UC San Diego Department of Visual Arts is one of the few institutions in the country that combines its MFA and PhD programs in a single scholarly and artistic community. With artists, curators, critics, and historians brought into close proximity and dialogue, diverse domains of practice are synergized in novel forms of production, analysis, organization, and display. The outcomes of this activity congeal in vibrant forms like this—our MFA 2013 exhibition.

The artists and scholars in our program have long probed the necessary interconnection between art, culture, and political life. They have sought to develop new modes of public engagement, new forms of organizational, performative, and political agency. Their work is often engaged with a diverse range of research methodologies and disciplinary specializations, however situated it might be within a particular historical or disciplinary domain. It might bridge artistic practice with forms of intellectual inquiry and creative production in the sciences, or it might involve research into urban and ecological transformations and their critical relationship to arts and culture.

Through various studio- or site-based engagements and various performative or presentational modes, these researchers embody the hybrid forms of cultural practice that are emerging in an increasingly networked world—a world where new creative forms emerge in a changing ecology of contemporary art production, scientific research, communication technology, and social and institutional space. What commitments to materiality, history, and critical awareness will be maintained in these new scholarly and artistic pursuits? Just as these practitioners may well go on to become significant figures in contemporary art and criticism, they may well go on to invent entirely new forms of cultural practice and analysis—forms that are barely visible to us today.

The Department of Visual Arts is proud to present this exhibition of exemplary work from our graduating MFA class of 2013 as organized through the curatorial team of PhD scholars Melinda Guillen and Samara Kaplan. The exhibition could not have been possible without the efforts of faculty advisors Anya Gallaccio and Norman Bryson and the faculty and staff of our Department, the Division of the Arts & Humanities, and the University Art Gallery. Their efforts enable a unique pedagogical environment for the furthering of creative research, critical discourse, and cultural practice, embodied in the outstanding works of these artists.