



Josephine Pryde, *Have I Got My Shoes On - Am I Still Me?*, 2009. C-Print on aluminum tube. Courtesy Reena Spaulings Fine Art.



**Mercer Union, a centre for contemporary art**  
1286 Bloor Street West, Toronto ON M6H 1N9 Canada  
(one block east of Lansdowne TTC Station)  
office@mercunion.org www.mercunion.org

**Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM**  
Tours every Saturday at 2PM – Free, all welcome

**Executive Director:** York Lethbridge  
**Director of Exhibitions & Programs:** Julia Paoli  
**Lead Preparator:** Danielle Greer  
**Programming:** Cameron Lee  
**Gallery Administrative Coordinator:** Liana Schmidt  
**Educational Programming Intern:** Mahshid Rafiei

**Board of Directors:** Joseph Borowiec, Miles Collyer, Alyssa Fearon, Rebecca Houston, Corrie Jackson, Sara Knelman, Jeremy Laing, Charlene Lau, Vanessa Runions, Michael Salem, Nicola Spunt, Negin Zebarjad

Mercer Union acknowledges the support of its staff, volunteers and members, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council.



ISBN: 978-1-926627-44-1

Cover image: detail from Anne Low, *Greasy head*, 2017. Cotton, etching on paper, feather pillow, hand-dyed and woven silk, newsprint, paper, silver, walnut. Courtesy the artist.  
Photo: Blaine Campbell.



## BIOGRAPHIES

**Emre Hüner** lives and works in Istanbul. Working with drawing, video, sculpture and installations, Hüner’s practice focuses on constructed narratives and eclectic assemblages which explore the subjects of utopia, archeology, ideas of progress and future through re-imagination of the spatial and architectural entities, organic and artificial forms. Recent solo exhibitions include *Emre Hüner*, Protocinema, New York, USA (2017), *Neochronophobia*, STUK, Leuven, Belgium (2016); *Floating Cabin Rider Capsule Reactor Cycle*, CCA Kitakyushu, Japan (2015); *Aeolian*, Rodeo, Istanbul, Turkey (2013); and group exhibitions 14<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial - *Saltwater: a Theory of Thought Forms*, Istanbul (2015); *Approximately Infinite Universe*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, USA (2013) and Manifesta 9, The European Biennale of Contemporary Art, Genk, Belgium (2012).

**Jen Hutton** is an artist and writer. She lives in Los Angeles.

**Steffani Jemison** was born in Berkeley, California, and is currently based in Brooklyn, New York. She holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2009) and a BA in Comparative Literature from Columbia University (2003). She has served as a visiting artist at many institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania, Brown University, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Hampshire College, the Evergreen State College, and Georgia State University. She has taught fine art at Columbia University, Parsons The New School for Design, Wellesley College, Trinity College, Rice University, the Cooper Union, and other institutions. She is the 2016-2017 Arthur J. Levitt ‘52 Artist-in-Residence at Williams College.

**Steve Kado** is an artist, writer and musician from North York, Toronto. His most recent show was “Pleasure” at Paul Petro in Toronto. His recent writing has appeared in *Flash Art*, *C* magazine and *Artforum*. He co-hosts *The Talking Show* on KCHUNG radio for/about/on talking in visual arts with Nicolas Miller. His band LEAD with Amy Howden-Chapman is about to release their first eponymous LP.

**Jacob Korczynski** is an independent curator and the editor of Andrew James Paterson’s *Collection/Correction* (Kunstverein Toronto & Mousse Publishing). He has curated projects for the Stedelijk Museum, Oakville Galleries, *If I Can’t Dance I Don’t Want to Be Part of Your Revolution* and the *Badischer Kunstverein*. His writing has been published by *art-agenda*, *Girls Like Us*, *Flash Art* and *Little Joe*.

**Anne Low** is based in Vancouver, Canada. Recent solo exhibitions have been mounted at organizations including *Artspeak*, Vancouver (2017) and *The Taut and the Tame*, Berlin (2012). Recent and forthcoming group exhibitions include *Soon Enough – Art in Action*, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm (2018); *Clive Hodgson & Anne Low*, The Block, London (2017); *Dream Islands*, Nanaimo Art Gallery (2017); *Ambivalent Pleasures*, Vancouver Art Gallery (2016) and *Reading the Line*, The Western Front, Vancouver (2015). Her collaboration with Evan Calder Williams, *A Fine Line of Deviation*, was shown at Issue Project Room, New York in 2016. Her ongoing project with Derya Akay, *Elaine*, has hosted events at AKA Artist Run Centre, Saskatoon; *Haunt*, Vancouver, and the Vancouver Art Gallery.

**Josephine Pryde** is an artist based in London, England, and Berlin, Germany. She uses photography and sculpture to explore the nature of image making and display. Recent solo exhibitions include *Traces of Accessibility*, Goton, Paris, France (2017); *Lapses in Thinking by the Person I Am*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Pennsylvania, USA (2015). Her work has been featured in numerous group shows including *subjektiv*, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden (2017); *Social Surfaces*, Artists Space, New York, USA (2017); *Collected by... Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016). Pryde was a nominee for the 2016 Turner Prize.

**Hassan Sharif** (born 1951, North Iran – died 2016, Dubai, United Arab Emirates) lived and worked in Dubai. Recognized as a pioneer of conceptual art and experimental practice in the Middle East, Sharif’s artworks surpass the limits of discipline, encompassing performance, installation, drawing, painting, and assemblage. Since the late 1970s, he maintained a practice as a cultural producer and facilitator, moving between roles as artist, educator, critic, activist, and mentor. In 2011 his retrospective *Hassan Sharif: Experiments & Objects 1979-2011*, curated by Catherine David and Mohammed Kazem, was presented by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture & Heritage/Platform for Visual Arts, U.A.E. His work has been shown in exhibitions at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar (2016); the Sharjah Biennial (2015); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2015); New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2014); Fundação Casa França-Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil (2014); and the International Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia (2012); among others. Sharif was featured in the inaugural United Arab Emirates National Pavilion at the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Italy. His work is included in the collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; M+ Museum, Hong Kong; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar; the Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, U.A.E.; the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; the Sittard Center, The Netherlands; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.; and Guggenheim, New York. Sharif’s work is currently on view at the Sharjah Art Foundation as part of the exhibitions *Do It* curated by Hoor Al Qasimi and Hans Ulrich Obrist and *1980 – Today: Exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates* curated by Hoor Al Qasimi.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

**ARTIST TALK: Anne Low**  
Saturday 2 December 2017, 2:30PM

Please join us for a public artist talk by Low in conversation with Jacob Korczynski. Admission is free and all are welcome.

**To receive future publications by mail and many other advantages, become a member of Mercer Union. Cultivating artists and challenging audiences since 1979.**



separations  
penetrates

Emre Hüner, Jen Hutton, Steffani Jemison, Steve Kado, Anne Low,  
Josephine Pryde, Hassan Sharif

Curated by Jacob Korczynski

1 December 2017 – 3 February 2018

Opening Friday 1 December, 7PM



*Start together – then separate.*

In Emre Hüner's *Diamond Head Diving Man* (2012), the scattered fragments of an architectural model sit adjacent to a series of amorphous clay forms. His deconstruction of this replica and his accompanying sculptures dominate each frame of this silent film. The structure itself is Shangri La, a mansion commissioned by the American heiress, art collector and philanthropist, Doris Duke. Built between 1936 and 1938 using Islamic architectural elements pilloined from Egypt, Iran, Morocco and Turkey, amongst other nations, Shangri La is an act of cultural appropriation constructed on the island of O'ahu on land expropriated from Indigenous Hawi'ians.

And yet the scattering of the structure in Hüner's project isn't a simple disavowal of Doris Duke. Produced following his stay in Shangri La, the disconnection between the geometry of the exposed architecture and the organic forms of clay is echoed in the separation between Duke and the culture she coveted and again between Hüner and his relationship to what is the traditional territory of the Kānaka Maoli.

A restless study of surfaces, *Diamond Head Diving Man* does not present a case or establish an argument. Instead it is an accumulation with no total.

“One is inside  
then outside what one has been inside  
One feels empty  
because there is nothing inside oneself  
One tries to get inside oneself  
that inside of the outside  
that one was once inside  
once one tries to get oneself inside what  
one is outside:  
to eat and to be eaten  
to have the outside inside and to be  
inside the outside”<sup>1</sup>

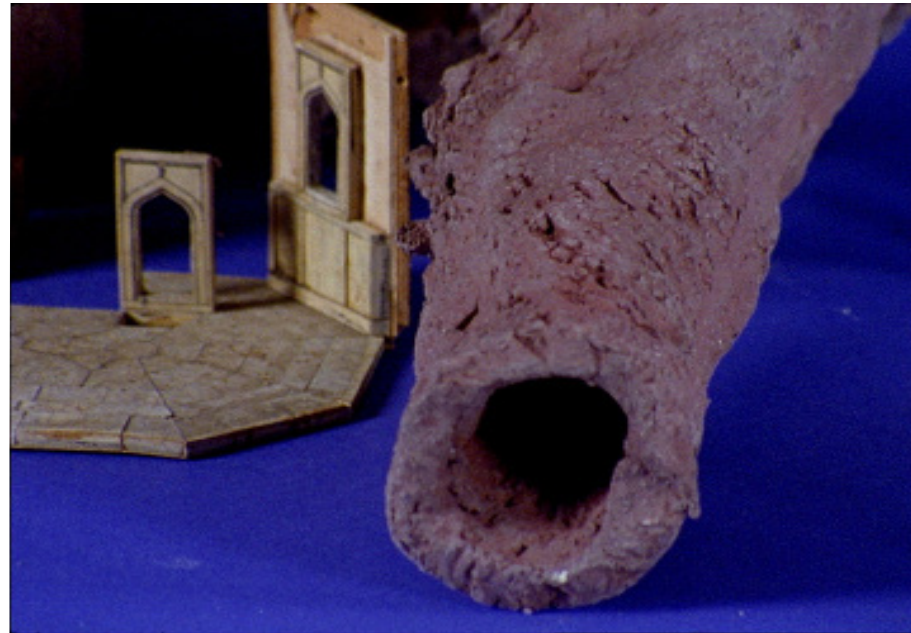
While knots can be complicated to untangle they don't always hold. Just a few years after publishing *Knots* (1970), his study of relationships through monologue and dialogue, R.D. Laing developed another book that traced exchanges between his two children. In the introduction to *Conversations with Adam and Natasha* (1977), Laing rejects the knot as relationship model in favour of the interweave – two or more subjects brought into proximity but not collapsed together or confused for the other.

A desire for connection with art objects, ideas or the kinship of others can betray the fundamental difference between the bodies and histories that form and sustain us. We can also come together, around this text or in this exhibition, but to do so we must also understand how we remain apart.

In her introduction to the second collection of published interviews about her practice, filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha describes the opening of the interval:

“Intervals allow a rupture with mere reflections and present a perception of space as breaks. They constitute interruptions and irruptions in a uniform series of surface; they designate a temporal hiatus, an intermission, a distance, a pause, a lapse, or gap between different states; and they are what comes up at the threshold of representation and communication – what often appears in the doorway...”<sup>2</sup>

As engaged by the artists in this exhibition, both interweave and interval act as caesurae – interruptions in an artwork, pauses that produce spaces where there can be a presence that is our own.



Emre Hüner, still from *Diamond Head Diving Man*, 2012. Video transfer, 16mm silent film. Courtesy the artist and Rodeo Gallery, London.



Steve Kado *AGPTL:Office Tarp*, 2016. Vinyl banner. Courtesy the Artist. Photo: Dawn Blackman.

Steve Kado's *AGPTL:NZ* (2016) is part of an ongoing series of landscape photographs printed on commercial-grade vinyl banners. It offers a view onto a portion of MacArthur Park from the building that houses his studio in Los Angeles. Temporarily located in the city where the artist was born and raised, a displaced view from his here becomes our elsewhere. A soft sculpture of sorts, the flexibility of its material guides the final form of *AGPTL:NZ*, as it responds to extant architecture and art objects alike. Retaining its integrity as a single object, here the interweave does not emerge from a series of segments. Instead every edge of the banner is an unfinished seam that marks the distance between his production site and our exhibition site.

The interdisciplinary practice of Hassan Sharif moves between corporeal sculptures and ephemeral actions known only through documentation; the former often amass identical objects, thereby making strange our everyday accumulation of commodities. His sculptures centre upon weaving as methodology with assemblages that alternatively occupy walls, plinths or floors, depending on the final form of the work.

His late-period sculpture *Cotton Rope 8* (2012) includes both an end and an opening through the interlacing of the eponymous commercial-grade cord. Here, an object that is used to suspend or restrain is itself bound – long loops fastened into a new form by coils of copper wire. Together the bits and pieces that he arranges in this work are incapable of performing an intended use. Here the caesura is located in the separation between their roles in a seeming self-sufficient structure and the enforced break from our use and disposal of these same objects.

While Hassan Sharif takes the interweave as a means of organization, a system in which everyday objects are aligned, Anne Low's practice is informed by the material and political history of weaving as a craft. Beginning on a loom, Low's recent sculptures such as *Greasy head* (2017) and *Tromp as writ* (2017) are assemblages of found objects that include elements she has handwoven. For *Greasy head*, a mattress produced by Low from handwoven and upholstered silk is propped up against the wall by a wooden bar. A pillow softens this line of pressure and also functions as a kind of shelf upon which rest a number of disparate images and items. *Tromp as writ* is anchored by a panel that Low made from the handspun wool inherited from a fellow weaver and is accompanied by a workshirt woven by the artist. As sculptures, the soft surfaces in Low's work are no longer pliant in anticipation of our bodies, but rather support structures for an assembly of distinct segments.

The accumulated discontinuity at work in Anne Low's *Greasy head* or *Tromp as writ* finds its opposite in the singularity of form and material in Jen Hutton's *Large Black Manta* (2011) – a work that moves between painting and sculpture. A process of repeating coats of gesso on denim (rather than canvas) enables the slash that begins at the centre and continues until the lower edge to remain perpetually unfrayed. The layers of flat black stand in stark contrast to white gallery walls. It begins with a single peak at the top and ends with a bifurcated bottom. These two points provides the work with a shape that echoes the likeness to the aquatic animal of its title. Hutton reveals painting and sculpture as divided (material) subjects.

Josephine Pryde's practice takes presentation modes of photography as one of the elements of her work. Often producing and exhibiting her photographs in series, she directly counters the self-evidentiary status of discrete images. Furthermore, working with seriality proposes a beside, where each work continues to shift and split vis-à-vis the permutations of form and content as we move from image to image. In both *Have I Got My Shoes On – Am I Still Me?* (2009) and *Style, My Daughter* (2009), colour photographs of in-store promotional gala events are wrapped around aluminum tubes, making the frame of each image irresolvable from a single viewing position.

In these two works the position of beside in her previous series is incorporated into their very form with both tubes supporting an image that feeds back, creating a seam along its own frame. Here the interval is incorporated into the work itself.



Hassan Sharif, *Cotton Rope 8*, 2012. Cotton rope and copper wire. Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York.

Whether working in partnership with performers inside institutions or solo in the studio, Steffani Jemison's practice is anchored in the address of bodies, either the choreography of her collaborators or ours, as individual viewers oriented by her abstraction of text and/or image.

Consider the series *Untitled (X)* (2013). Made prior to the onslaught of Hurricane Sandy in New York, these photographs of window frames position us towards an unidentified landscape on the horizon. At the same time, intersecting lines of tape on the pane – their shape referencing the letter of the title – are coupled to support one another and (supposedly) strengthen the structure.

A few years later in a series titled *Stroke* (2016), two twinned bands of black acrylic float on transparent archival polyester film. They are alternatively crossed, contiguous and discrete. An act of tenderness and an approach of intimacy, a stroke is also a strike upon the keys before me, an action required for writing.

As I write, each additional mark I make is also a break between you and this exhibition – each stroke is a caesura.

– Jacob Korczynski

<sup>1</sup> Laing, R.D. *Knots*, Tavistock, London, 1970, p.83

<sup>2</sup> Trinh, T. Mihn-ha, “Beware of Wolf Intervals,” in *Cinema Interval*, Routledge, London, 1999, p. xii.