JOSEPHINE HALVORSON

SLOW BURN

JOSEPHINE HALVORSON

SLOW BURN

SECCA

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
Cora Fisher
6

III, VI, XII
Wesley Miller
14

HISTORY PAINTING - SOUTHERN 992321
Peter Buckley
22

MINER MEMORIAL
Josh Smith
28

I-BEAMS
Laura Preston
31

SHED DOOR
Megan Ewing
38

ÉCHELLE PAINTINGS: FLUVIALES
Dorothée Deyries-Henry
41

ÉCHELLE PAINTINGS: RIVERWORKS
Dorothée Deyries-Henry
46

SHUTTER 1, 2013
Thomas Wong
54

BORN BURN
Cora Fisher
60

HEAT 4 HEAT 2
Jarrett Earnest
64

WORKS
71

List of exhibited works
120

Contributors
122

Acknowledgements
124

INTRODUCTION

CORA FISHER \ Curator of Contemporary Art

Josephine Halvorson's paintings are of and about time. It is their signature subject: the specific objects she chooses to portray signify age and undergo transformation over the course of her engagement with them. In making a painting, time is a natural condition and constraint, a material used (as all paintings are to varying degrees time-hungry), and it is the precious supply asked for and richly rewarded when looking at her work.

Slow Burn is an exhibition of Halvorson's work that invites a longer look. It presents twenty-three of Halvorson's canvases made across the United States and Europe. Several of these paintings form groups and others stand alone. Individually and collectively, they show the contingency and variability of physical markers in our world. The slow burn speaks of the temporal exchange necessary for realization to occur when we experience Halvorson's painting – time being the marrow of such realization, yet only one source of their meaning.

This accompanying publication therefore gathers a multiplicity of viewpoints from a fellow artist, a writer, a documentary filmmaker, a historian, a poet, a collector, a former student, and a curator – people who have been arrested, as I have been over the years, by Halvorson's paintings and her approach to making art. Halvorson captures the life of the inanimate, where each painting is a record of the time she shares with her subjects, as she paints a canvas from start to finish in a single session, over the course of one day.

Beforehand, there is the time Halvorson spends »roving« in search of a place that seems right, one in which »hanging out there making a painting I wouldn't feel like I'm trespassing.« Feeling out a place is the first step in a ritual that could be described as a discovery, and then as a personal exchange and investment with what she finds in a given cultural context or locale. Halvorson reorients the tradition of plein air painting towards a more relational practice. She is mobile; she sets up an easel outside. In the expenditure of time to make a painting, the artist has said that the haptic relationship with what she finds represents an accounting of a day of her life. She remembers every moment she records through paint.

There is also time embedded in the objects she depicts, seen in their distressed surface quality or in the patina of age she transmutes into the color of oil paint. Among her family of found objects – both pedestrian and singular – are industrial coils spotted with rust, weathered doors and exteriors, gravestones etched with worn letters, and stoves and fireplaces filled with spent embers.

Halvorson stokes the traditions of still life and memento mori. More than morbid specimen, however, these surfaces and creatures of the observable world brim with life: a flame; lively signatures of anonymous authors on a chalkboard; or the spark of humor in the crumbled face of a block of cheese (*Cheese*). The animating energy and time she invests give a feeling of surplus: despite the exhaustion of a retired machine or of an overlooked gutter (*Grate*), these objects can perform again.

Several of the paintings in *Slow Burn* depict time by way of measurement, as they are metrical or modular to begin with: immersion rulers from a riverside (*Échelle 1*, *Échelle 3*) and industrial beams (*I-Beam 3*, *I-Beam 5*, *I-Beam Recess*) among them. So too are Halvorson's numbered series of clock faces, (*Clock Mural III*, *VI*, *XII*) where time is at once literalized, symbolized, and suspended in the material.

Yet, over time spent painting and looking, the objects become less constrained by their identifiability. We come to perceive their function as a locus through which a set of temporal relations transit, of which we are a part. The writings in this publication demonstrate the historical, art historical, artistic, interpersonal, and situational dimensions of her pictures. These paintings are storied, and they also tell stories, though often through a degree of abstraction or minimalism, combined with luscious descriptive marks. They have surface tension. Even while looking at them, the surfaces can coalesce into a recognizable thing or break apart into bits of information. The consonant scale between the objects depicted and the paintings themselves gives a sense of seeing in close-up, which adds to their abstraction. Halvorson paints that which is »at arm's length,« an idea that implicates a perceptual approach and the capacity of the artist to make visible the relations between objects, people and place.

Though many would consider her a painter's painter, Halvorson traffics her found objects amidst several, often divergent, genealogies of art: minimalism and its arguments on objecthood; the Flemish and Dutch 16th and 17th century memento mori; American still life, as represented by Raphaelle Peale, William Harnett or John Peto; land art; abstract painting of the mid-to-late-20th century; Modernist industrial photography, as represented by Berndt and Hilla Becher; as well as site-specific practices in the vein of Alan McCollum's *Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah* (1994), where the artist made castings of a given place and therein traced an object-based psychogeography.

Most especially, I am reminded of Robert Smithson's wending journey through the newfangled, yet somehow already ruinous industrial suburbs in his 1967 photo-essay, »A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey.«[1] Already, the format of the photo-essay resonates with her itinerant, out-of-doors approach. During his passage through Jersey, and somehow in the bleak landscape under development, Smithson imagines a new ordinance of history and futurity strangely amalgamated into one, captured in »minor monuments« he sees along the way:

> Along the Passaic River banks were many minor monuments such as concrete abutments that supported the shoulders of a new highway in the process of being built. River Drive was in part bulldozed and in part intact. It was hard to tell the new highway from the old road; they were both confounded into a unitary chaos. Since it was Saturday, many machines were not working, and this caused them to resemble pre-historic creatures trapped in the mud, or better, extinct machines – mechanical dinosaurs stripped of their skin.

Halvorson has portrayed the anthropomorphic countenance of industrial objects, as Smithson saw in the bulldozers used for highway construction. And in her comprehension of the pre/present/post lifecycle of these nodal objects, like I-Beams or stoves, she has smuggled in a commentary of the post-industrial culture of the West. This is the arc that makes it possible for the word »manufacture,« once meaning »made by hand,« to become overwritten with the opposite sense, where making is defined by the machines that have replaced those hands. And yet, the idea of making must by now include both senses of manufacture, as our culture has absorbed both the radical discontinuity between Industrial Revolutions and its earlier agrarian past, and now negotiates the overlay of »digital« culture onto a sagging or, in some places, an entirely absented machine industry.[2] Halvorson returns the meaning of manufacture back to its roots in the handmade, yet decisively detours through the obsolescent fixtures of industry to get there. She asserts both.

In Thomaston, Connecticut, where Halvorson made a series of paintings of clock faces, she was interested in the making of paintings as much as in the post-industrial setting: a former factory town that »made time.« She learned that during Connecticut's industrial heydey, clocks and timepieces were machined in Thomaston, from the smelting of metals to the finished product. Yet, like Smithson on the Passaic, she decamps here at a moment when machine industry is down, perhaps on the precipice of another period of urban reinvention:

> One thing that stood out to me in the town was this mural at a site where there had been a building, maybe a car dealership, that had been demolished and so there were the remnants of the foundation – concrete with weeds growing up. And on a vertical retaining wall was a community mural project in progress.

Here, as in many other places, Halvorson had found a ready picture of place and time to relate with. After haunting the town awhile, grabbing coffee at the local donut shop and scoping out the people, she began to situate herself beside this living image of time. Other people were also painting murals on the wall. She, not quite fully embedded in the place, captured a portion of the whole scene, an excerpt of the wall that is now a mnemonic marker of the exchange.

Oil paint is an elastic temporal medium, particularly conducive to a certain kind of documenting or witnessing. Its drying time can be accelerated or decelerated, and in that window of time – for Halvorson it's one day – the image must emerge. The viscous substance can be whipped up in service to artifice or, in Halvorson's case, can be used to candidly, subjectively record. The wet-on-wet technique of painting assures that nothing is hidden. While other oil painters might build up a painting layer by layer, in glassy coats, Halvorson's are unvarnished. Though she has a great ease with the substance and can paint shimmering and complicated things quickly, she paints less for the sake of virtuosity than for a felt experience. The material allows her to make a remembering surface.

Slow Burn charts Josephine Halvorson's course of discovery outside of the studio. For her chosen objects, transformation is once again imminent. Her portraits transmit the moment of encounter where, found on the brink of change or neglect, these distinct material presences are renewed in their exchange with the painter's brush and body. I join the other writers in thanking the artist for letting us go alongside her in the process of discovery.

[1] Robert Smithson, »A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic New Jersey« in Jack Flam ed. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) p. 68–74.

[2] »Digital,« like »manufacture« speaks less of »fingers« or hands making goods than of the virtualization of labor toward service sector jobs and within an economy speculating on abstract capital.

XII

III, VI, XII

WESLEY MILLER

Time was a problem. No, *the* problem. It's what initially drew me to Josephine's work because it made me endlessly anxious. I can't recall how or when I learned that her paintings were made in a single day, but I can confirm that knowing this had a sneaky way of changing everything. Why take such a firm stance? Was it a calculated position about authenticity? And why tell people about it? Was I meant to appreciate the paintings more or less by being privy to the process? Why is the time it takes her to make a painting so unnerving?

I make films about the creative process and, for this reason, just so happen to like a lot of trouble. Josephine agreed to meet at her studio in the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 2010. We talked for hours: a mix of friendly gossip, imagining what producing a film might entail, and putting clumsy words to paintings on the wall. But what struck me most was how evident it was that she did very little painting in this studio. These paintings were being made somewhere out in the world. And yet this peculiar arena – a room that would induce any other New Yorker to salivate – was an essential extension of her process. This was where she edited paintings.

It's still an odd thing to say: edit paintings. The closest approximation I can think of is to another time-based media: photography. A lot of the immediate action in the photographic process happens in a box with a lens, in an instant on film, in the dark with chemicals, and nowadays in small cities of circuits called computers. But it's in the careful editing and sequencing of images, in the excruciatingly slow culling of options, that a picture becomes a work of art. Something similar was at issue in this clean well-lit room. With a weary shrug, Josephine told me half of the paintings here wouldn't make it. *Make it?* Yes, she said, the ones that stick around will be shown and hopefully sold. *And the rest?* I build a fire, she smiled.

The paintings surrounding us were hung not on sturdy walls but on the debate we'd been having all along that day, their fates sealed by incalculable hours of Josephine looking, doubting, and judging. It wasn't just about the time it took to paint a picture, but something intangibly more. It would be another year before Josephine and I would make a short documentary about her work – the occasion being an exhibition at Sikkema Jenkins & Co. – and yet another year before we would attempt to do a film about the making of a painting in a single day.

It's the summer of 2012. I hear from Josephine that she's been stalking a subject to paint for several weeks. It's a mural of a clock, she says excitedly, and it's located in a town that's curiously out of sync with time. The location is Thomaston, Connecticut, which in the nineteenth century was famous for clock making. The local industry has since withered and yet, symbolically, the town is still defined by its past. I arrive with a film crew the evening before she's set to work. Josephine introduces us to her van, which she's outfitted as a painting-mobile. We swing by a barn that's her temporary studio. Inside are paintings of red sliding doors, green window shutters, orange road signs, and yellow train springs. It occurs to me that many of Josephine's paintings are of other painted things, but rarely newly painted things. Quickly made paintings meant to last of things painted quickly yet left to age slowly.

It's painting day. 8AM & 75°F. Josephine preps supplies, loads a large blank canvas into the van, and we drive to the location. 9AM & 80°F. The clock mural is situated on a concrete retaining wall in front of a vacant parking lot soaking up the heat. She erects a shaded canopy, plants her easel, and sizes up the challenge. She approvingly remarks on how the mural is painted with grace and speed. 10AM

& 85°F. With a dry brush, she sketches out the composition of the clock face with its Roman numerals and THOMASTON emblazoned above. An ironing board topped with a sheet of plexiglass serves as a palette. 12PM & 90°F. She blocks out large areas of underpainting and begins to address the major forms. We chat some about the process but are interrupted by scorching wind gusts that lift the canopy like a sail. 1:30PM & 95°F. The harsh conditions reduce everyone to silence. Josephine's having trouble concentrating, so the film crew ventures into town to film quaint New England scenes, if only to lift the mood. 4PM & 95°F. The heat is so intense that the oil paint dries within minutes. Clouds mercifully begin to roll in. Gone are the canopy and the lettering above the clock face. 5PM & 90°F. The prolonged heat is obviously getting to her. Josephine has a Christmas tune deliriously stuck in her head. She fears the clock looks like a kitschy holiday display. 6PM & 85°F. She says the next hour is critical. It's all about the myriad surface details falling into place. She points to the pockmarks in the wall. 8:30PM & 80°F. The light is gone but she persists until all the colors turn gray. Quiet resignation dominates the drive home.

Three months later, at Josephine's studio in Brooklyn, we're finally able to joke about the hubris of trying to make a film and a painting about time. Her clock painting hangs on the wall but its fate is far from certain. I naively ask, are there things you would fix if you could? No, she says, because she hates concealment and deception in painting, and she hasn't found a way to avoid them when working over multiple days. She doesn't rule out that she'll one day find a way, but that this is the right language at the right time for the right person. I head off to edit a film with an uncertain ending. A few months later, Josephine calls to say that she's secretly returned to Thomaston to paint the mural four more times, picking off each of the Roman numerals one by one. *But what about the first clock painting?* No words come through, but I expect the answer is ashes.

HISTORY PAINTING - SOUTHERN 992321

PETER BUCKLEY

> »Invention in painting does not imply the invention of the subject, for that is commonly supplied by the poet or historian.«

With Joshua Reynolds' welcome pronouncement from his *Fourth Discourse* (1774) the historian feels on firm, indeed the highest ground. Historians supply the heroes through narrative and painters produce a »mental picture« through the exercise of the viewer's imagination. Both are in joint service to the required sense of »grandeur« and »veneration« as Reynolds builds up his famous definition of history painting as the most esteemed of all the arts.

Yet that is not where Reynolds begins. It is difficult now to recognize, given his status as a patriarch of artistic hierarchy and of snobbish discrimination, that the first president of the Royal Academy was concerned most of all with making painting accessible at a time when it had been declared barely alive in England. Somewhat a populist, Reynolds had only one real requirement for painting: »There must be something, either in the action or in the object, in which men are universally concerned and which powerfully strikes upon the public sympathy.«

Southern 992321 is one of many 40-foot gondola freight cars that have served as maintenance-of-way equipment over the entire Norfolk and Southern system from Kansas City, Missouri to Jacksonville, Florida. Over the years, the sundry railroad ties, lumps of concrete and rock, and piles of rebar have pushed the steel plates of the car outwards. Weather, manifest tags, odd welds and several coats of paint have kept the gondola from bulging further. More than simply showing the signs of age and wear, its panels are the hieroglyphs of American production and transport, in their way heroic, though not perhaps a record with which many people are concerned.

Seemingly abandoned, Southern 992321 has come to rest for the last decade alongside Chestnut Avenue in a town first called Coal Creek, Tennessee. The train car's resting place is close to the switch for the branch line that once went south-west up to Fraterville and Briceville in the richest coal seam of the eastern Cumberland Plateau. Millions of tons of bituminous coal passed through Coal Creek in the early 20th century on the way to Knoxville and beyond on the Southern Railway (or the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad before 1894). Along these same lines travelled news of the numerous mining disasters, such as the one at Fraterville in 1902, with at least 216 dead, and at Cross Mountain in 1911, a further 89 casualties – disasters heroic in their way as well.

Coal Creek adopted the name »Lake City« in 1936 after the completion of nearby Norris Dam, which formed a 85-mile-lake. These waters generated electricity to the Oak Ridge facility and the production phase of the Manhattan Project. Settled by people wishing largely to escape modernity over 200 hundred years ago, Anderson County, Tennessee has managed to witness the spread of slavery, a Civil War, deforestation, massive coal extraction and TVA dam building. Since Josephine's painting was finished in 2012, the town has changed its name again, this time to »Rocky Top« after the Bryant duo's lyric from 1967, now a University of Tennessee marching band fight song. »In exchange for Lake City changing its name to Rocky Top, [developers] have promised to build a Disney-style interactive, 3-D animated theater, a live music venue, an indoor-outdoor waterpark and a 500-seat paddleboat restaurant on an as yet-to-be-constructed artificial lake«.[1] The history of Coal Creek has not just been overlooked: it has been twice buried, or twice flooded. »It's a pity that life can't be simple again,« as the last verse of Rocky Top relates.

And what of the painting itself? An object made from Belgian linen and wood from California, before which was a painter from Brewster, Massachusetts and a British historian off to one side then wondering about the supply of subjects. Throughout the day, CSX freights passed by on the higher rail line, carrying more coal for electrical generation. The police came by warning of trespass. Two retired miners walking their dogs told their stories, one showed a belly scar from an explosive fuse burn. And towards dusk a family came across the tracks from Railroad Avenue to give the painter a gift of a woven plastic bracelet.

Walter Benjamin was never clear about his fugitive concept of a »dialectical image,« a flash of synthesis between what has been and now, though I am certain that he would recognize *Southern 992321* as one. The painting offers a different path to historical understanding from the ones I know or those that Reynolds recommended. Not through the subjects of Greek myth or religious scenes, though it surely possesses a measure of veneration, the painting offers us a constellation of quotidian marks, and only part of the script. To me the »mental picture« Reynolds required of painting is all there…the heat coming off the dirty ballast, the caked oil, the coal still moving, the dead buried in the cemetery off the branch line, the living in hope for a future for their town.

[1] http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/06/26/tennessee-town-changes-name-to-rocky-top-in-bid-to-attract-tourists/

MINER MEMORIAL

JOSH SMITH

A couple of years back, Josephine Halvorson spent some time in east Tennessee. In Lake City, Tennessee she found the inspiration for her painting *Miner Memorial*.

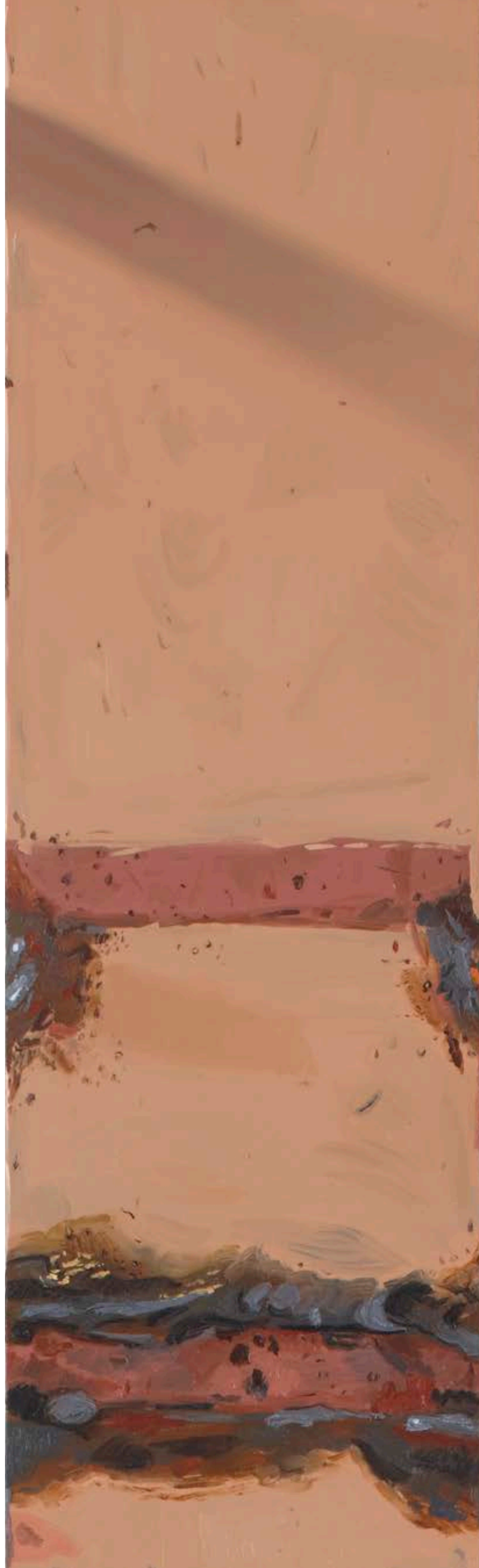
Lake City got that name when the government built the Dam. Norris Dam was built in 1936. The government formed the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). At the time, they dammed the Tennessee River wherever they could. This generated power and made lakes everywhere. The lakes are flooded valleys, most of which were farms before the government decided they needed the land back. Norris Dam resulted in Norris Lake. Norris Lake is gigantic, and Lake City lines just a small part of it. Norris Lake is the prettiest, deepest lake I have ever seen. The deep water is a vivid blue-green color.

Lake City is just a name, though. It was renamed in an effort to move past the heavy coal history. Before Lake City it was known as Coal Creek.

It's a beautiful, quiet place. It is tough to make a living and a lot of people have a hard time. As America's need for coal grew, small towns instantly began to appear throughout the Appalachian Mountains. For me, coal defines this place. The area has been relentlessly sacked for its resources. Coal mining has been the most enduring source of income. The coal industry is rough business. Coal is black and dusty. The fine oily dust coal makes when it is hammered and moved is lethal. Short lives are common. People there rely on faith and family to get through hardships.

Lake City now has a different name. In 2014, the name of the town was changed to Rocky Top. An entity interested in developing a theme park paid the depressed town to switch its name in an attempt to make it more notable. Who knows if the theme park will ever appear.

Miner Memorial captures the place well. Despite all the natural beauty, its reality is gray, murky, and weighted with souls.



I-BEAMS

LAURA PRESTON

The real I-beams are in New Jersey. They stand at attention beneath the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab, where on weekdays from nine until five the US Department of Energy is smashing apart atoms in hopes of someday forging an artificial sun. Josephine Halvorson's I-beams hang on the wall, and the paintings are strange, charming, and a little funny. They might even be a joke. Like all of Halvorson's works, they transcribe known things in the known world, yet these paintings summon the spirits of post-war minimalism, of Barnett Newman and Anne Truitt. Is that the joke? An I-beam is a Herculean object, weight-bearing and erect, yet the peachy, blushing tint of the caked-on paint, the kiss of scarlet, and the long, droolish drips all read as vaguely cosmetic. Foundation/foundation. Is that the joke? The I-beams are anthropomorphic; they stand and confront. *I-Beam 5* is an ancient totem to the kissing-face emoji; *I-Beam 6* is angry with you.

Take a look at the word »I-beam« – it's a tidy word, isn't it? The abstract »beam« points left to an ideogram of the thing-in-itself. To make an I-beam, float a Roman capital I in space, rotate it ninety degrees on the xy-plane, then ninety degrees on the xz-plane. Now stretch it vertically like an I freefalling in four dimensions. Face it head on and you have, once again, a capital I, only this time stripped of its foot and cap, streamlined, de-serifed.

A central concern in Halvorson's practice is what happens when language is birthed into the spatial world and subjected to the laws of physics. Search Halvorson's body of work and find words that have been warped, subtracted, or partially effaced: the hand-painted numerals on a clock that never ticks, or Twombly-esque loops of penciled graffiti, or stout numbers weeping rust. Find, too, the imposters of language: the runic markings on a green shutter, or alien

letter E's that stretch to infinity, or scratches on a grate like hieratic scrawl. Yet Halvorson's work seems to orbit a profound linguistic silence – her eye gravitates towards those orphaned objects that exist outside of semantic categories, those which slip through the binds of language and have no definite names. Her subjects are so visually specific that each work becomes, in effect, an argument for the relevance of representational painting as a poetic medium. You couldn't convey these things in words – or perhaps you could, but you'd be better off painting them.

Halvorson painted the I-beams in the spring of 2013 while teaching an advanced painting course at Princeton, (I was one of her students). We spent the semester painting at the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab's C-Site MG, a startlingly huge bi-level warehouse that used to house sixteen motor generators. Each generator was a colossal wheel suspended in a deep, black hole, and collectively, they powered everything. Set loose from their cradles, the wheels would have rolled forty-two miles across New Jersey's coastal plain and come to rest somewhere in midtown Manhattan. By the time we got there the generators were gone, as new technologies had rendered them obsolete. All that remained were deep pits in the floor that yawned like graves, and an emptiness that against common sense, seemed dense, almost material.

When we arrived at the site with our traveling easels and lab-issued IDs, we saw that the place was overrun with language. Etched on nearly every surface were dispatches from a vanished world: arcane lists, safety directives, dirty jokes, hurried calculations, footprints, handprints, diagrams of sexual positions. Despite the past's hypergraphic presence on the walls, however, the space felt clogged with an intense wordlessness. A constant buzzing sound, source unknown, drowned out our speech, our thoughts, and our NPR stations. Molds and minerals bloomed in the corners. The light was strangely pickled; it cast everything in an orange-violet glow. Entering the C-Site MG was like entering a skull addled with ecstatic, schizoid brain-chatter, deafeningly loud but sapped of any real sense. (When I think back to it now, there might be a metaphor in there: when time collapses, when the scientists leave and their machines start to rust, the artists show up. They sharpen their pencils.)

It was an interesting place to make paintings. There was no shifting sun to contend with, just the same inorganic light that never dimmed and never changed its angle.

There were no weather events, no seasons, no visible clocks. Time dilated in some places and contracted in others. In rooms above us, scientists were accelerating particles to inhuman speeds, knocking electrons out of orbit, and casting violet arcs of plasma in thick glass cylinders. Most projects had timelines that stretched far outside the life spans of the scientists leading them. At the C-Site MG, Halvorson's paintings were the only things that seemed to keep pace with time itself. One painting equaled one day.

Sometime after Halvorson painted *I-Beam 3*, *I-Beam 5*, and *I-Beam Recess*, we arrived at the C-Site MG to discover that new markings had appeared on the beams overnight. The beams now had black rings on their faces, and inside each ring a letter and a number. The glyphs had all the qualities of an organizational system, but whatever meaning it was meant to convey eluded us.

It was morning, and we had painted late into the night the evening before. As painting for long stretches of uninterrupted time can have a narcotic effect on the brain and make everything look strange, shimmering, somewhat uncanny, it seemed reasonable in the moment that we might have been hallucinating. It also seemed reasonable that we had gotten lost, that we had somehow arrived at a different basement with different I-beams in a different part of the lab, or that the black rings had been there all along, and that through some sort of shared agnosia we hadn't noticed them until that moment.

As we explored the basement that day, we found a small still life assembled on a ledge. There was a hemispherical metal cup with traces of black ink on the rim, a thick black marker, and an inky rag. The trio of props invoked the ghost of a person who, hours before, must have traced the rings, but that person had long vanished and they never returned.

Halvorson painted *I-Beam 6* soon afterwards. At the start of the day, she clamped the left edge of the canvas flush against the I-beam itself. By nine o'clock that evening it looked as if the beam had doubled. Once Halvorson finished, I helped her maneuver the wet canvas out of the basement. We held on to opposite ends of the painting, fishtailed it up a set of stairs, angled it around a crook in the landing, and seesawed it over a gate. We were careful not to smudge it. We didn't leave any paint in our wake. Carrying the counterfeit I-beam up the stairs and out into the damp spring night felt like a heist.

SHED DOOR, 2013

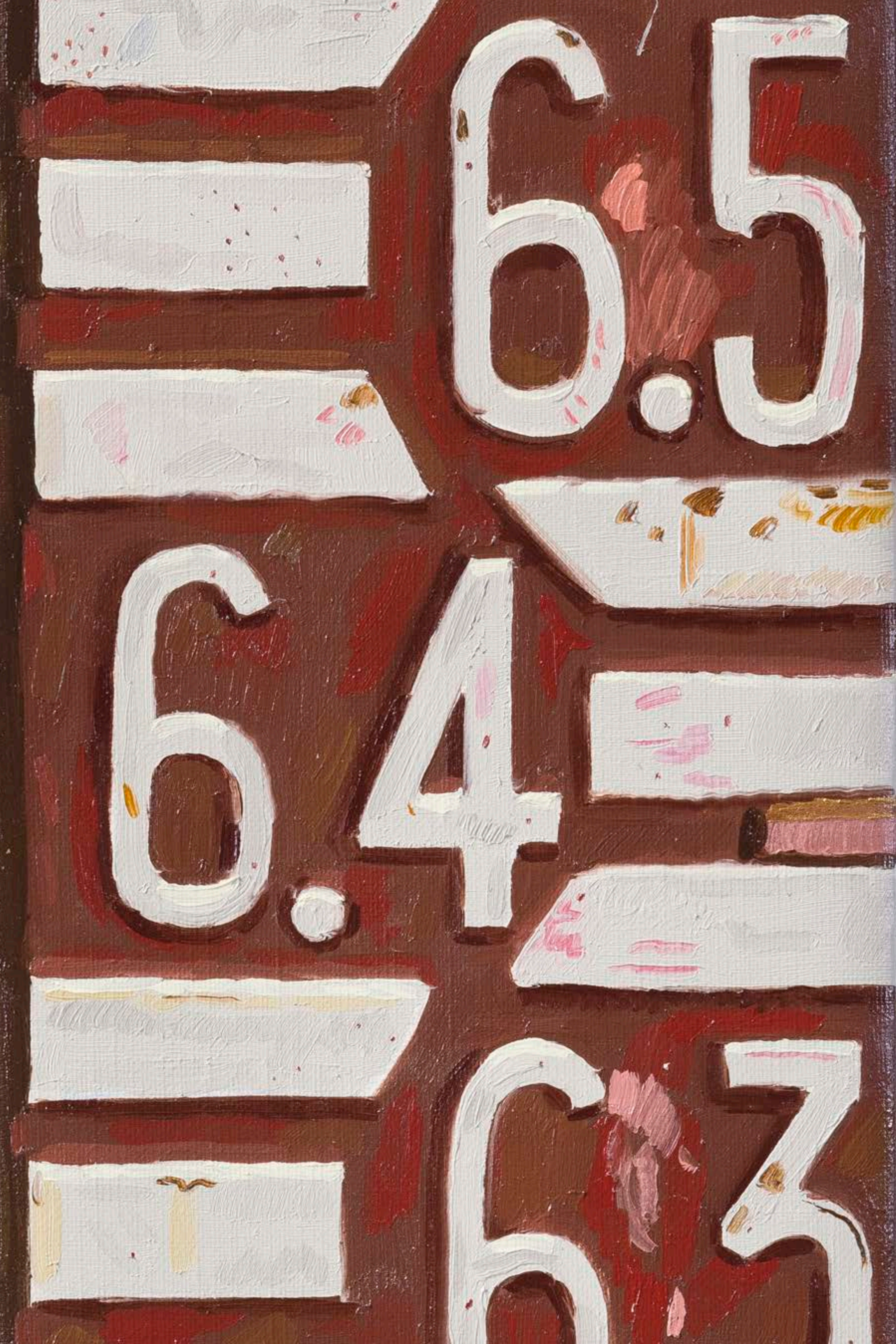
MEGAN EWING

What is small
enough to carry
Independent
a question & local
New Canaan portal
Spring loading the pond
A house for a garden
Post office & boneyard
Farmhouse,
now disappearing

DON'T
talk yourself out of things
not sensation attention or slowness
I have seen the door
It is a slow door
I have seen the door pregnant
Form the door whole

Tell me whose is duration
my daughter of metal
daughter of stone
daughter of linseed oil, linen
who hates to wake and to sleep
Show me who rise and who seize

HEAT
is concrete, just as
LIGHT
is concrete
Accretion a principle
tool to felt time
Coming short on my way
For things disappear
return planned
to no there, there
you
NEED NOT
»survive history«
A metric, your ton
a pressure on hinges
contingent
on persons
on forms
whom I trust



ÉCHELLE PAINTINGS: FLUVIALES

DOROTHÉE DEYRIES-HENRY

Invitée à la résidence d'artistes de Moly-Sabata, à Sablons (Isère, France), Josephine Halvorson s'installe pour un séjour de trois mois dans l'ancienne maison de bateliers arrimée au bord du Rhône. Si elle choisit de peindre dans le vieil atelier d'Anne Dangar,[1] Halvorson explore les environs, promenant son chevalet comme à son habitude. Est-ce qu'elle cherche dans ce paysage les signes et les fragments qui vont lui permettre d'évoquer ou de cerner la dimension industrielle du site? Nous savons qu'elle va à la rencontre des lieux hors de sa sphère sociale, qu'il lui arrive de peindre sur le motif des machines et leurs mécaniques hors d'âge (*Grippers*, 2011, *Ride Control*, *Barber-Bettendorf*, 2012), des lieux abandonnés, comme cette mine de Tecopa en Californie, qui hanta quelques temps son travail et plus largement ses écrits et son projet.[2]

À Moly-Sabata, Halvorson peint principalement des objets présents dans l'atelier – un tablier en cuir, un poêle, un dessin d'oiseau – et quelques éléments d'architecture qui en marquent le seuil – une porte, une grille.

Le mouvement d'ouverture qui toujours conduit Halvorson vers de nouveaux horizons caractérise la série d'œuvres qu'elle peint pendant l'été 2014. On y découvre des espaces intermédiaires, indéterminés, qui montrent que la relation entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur n'est pas donnée d'avance mais un lien à construire, un espace fluide où la pensée, le geste de l'artiste et le regard du spectateur circulent. Une acception ancienne, datant de 1675, définit l'échelle comme une escale, le lieu, précisément, où l'on pose l'échelle pour débarquer. Peut-être les peintures d'échelles d'Halvorson correspondent-elles métaphoriquement à ce lieu transitoire – la résidence, la peinture et son évolution constante et imprévisible? *Échelle 1* nous entraîne de son mouvement ondulé, comme musical, vers *Échelle 3*,

dont elle est graphiquement assez proche. Ces deux œuvres permettent à l'artiste d'évoquer la matérialité comme le caractère hautement artisanal d'un objet daté mais encore en usage.

Halvorson ne fabrique pas un système et il peut paraître surprenant qu'à travers les *Échelles* paintings des exemples de systèmes de mesure entrent dans sa peinture. C'est sans doute cette mesure même qu'elle examine. Les échelles de crue de Josephine Halvorson sont intéressantes du point de vue de l'histoire de la peinture américaine, marquée après l'Expressionnisme abstrait par une volonté de contrôle de l'image ou du geste créateur (Noland, Stella puis Johns, Celmins, Close, ...). Ponctuées par des chiffres, interrompues visuellement en leur centre par un tracé sinueux, brouillées par les taches de peinture (celles présentes sur l'objet), *Échelle 1* et *Échelle 3* échappent à toute catégorisation et normalisation tout en affirmant, à la manière de Jasper Johns, le rapport de l'œuvre à un modèle ou ensemble de références, ici de la partition musicale à la grille.[3]

Les échelles de crue que l'on rencontre le long du Rhône, fixées verticalement sur la berge bétonnée, sont des règles graduées, étalonnées à partir de la cote normale du cours d'eau. Elles servent de référence car elles permettent d'établir une histoire des crues, de mesurer chaque année la hauteur des eaux ou au contraire leur niveau le plus bas. Ces petites échelles suffisent à évaluer l'importance de la crue, et donc, à mesurer les débordements de la nature: elles tentent de faire entrer une parcelle du temps géologique dans le temps humain.

Quand l'on pense à l'expérience maintes fois répétée de représenter par la peinture la puissance des éléments, l'immensité écrasante de la nature ou au contraire, son caractère sublime et transcendant, qui culminent dans la peinture romantique, l'on peut se demander ce que ces échelles peintes, rudimentaires et réduites à l'essentiel, disent de ce rapport à la nature. Dans *Échelle 1* et *Échelle 3*, la lecture des chiffres – 6.9, 6.8, 6.7, 6.6, 6.5, ... – résonne comme le tic-tac d'une horloge qui marquerait de son rythme l'écoulement entre le temps passé (une crue ancienne) et un avenir possible mais incertain (une crue nouvelle), entre ce qui a été et pourrait être, ce qui a eu lieu et que l'on doit pouvoir prédire alors, mesurer : un avenir maîtrisé. Les *Échelles* d'Halvorson peuvent être lues comme de nouvelles formes de *vanités*.

À travers ces représentations, l'artiste examine les efforts constants des individus pour organiser leur relation à la nature, pour juguler les éléments.

En fin de compte, nous ne serons pas totalement surpris de découvrir qu'elle choisit ces échelles pour évoquer la puissance d'un fleuve qui à lui seul fait le paysage.

C'est le fleuve, en fait, qui règle la relation et l'organisation des hommes à la nature et au site qu'ils occupent, pour un temps. Dans *Échelle 1* et *Échelle 3*, c'est bien lui qui crée le rythme et donne le ton.

[1] Peintre à Paris, formée à l'académie d'André Lhote dans les années 1920 et proche d'Albert Gleizes, l'artiste d'origine australienne s'installe en 1930 à Moly-Sabata où elle demeurera jusqu'à sa mort en 1951.

[2] »Shame: The One That Got Away«, de Josephine Halvorson, *ArtJournal*, ed. Katy Siegel (Winter 2012 Issue) http://artjournal.collegeart.org/?p=3542

[3] La grille apparaît d'ailleurs dans la série d'œuvres qu'Halvorson peint à Moly-Sabata. Dans *Grille Spirale*, elle décrit la volute centrale de la grille extérieure de l'entrée de la résidence, ses barreaux parallèles et croisés, sur un fond animé dont les petits points font écho à l'usure et aux repeints de la grille elle-même.

ÉCHELLE PAINTINGS: RIVERWORKS

DOROTHÉE DEYRIES-HENRY

As a guest at the Moly-Sabata artists' residence in Sablons, 50 kilometers south of Lyon, Josephine Halvorson spent three months in this former bargemen's house on the banks of the Rhône. As a workspace she opted for the studio once belonging to Anne Dangar,[1] but as is her habit she was often out exploring the area, taking her easel with her. Maybe probing the local landscape for signs and fragments that would help her conjure up its industrial past. We know she goes out hunting for places outside her social sphere; and sometimes paints ancient machines and their workings from the motif – *Grippers* (2011), for example, and *Ride Control* and *Barber-Bettendorf* (both 2012) – as well as abandoned sites like the mine in Tecopa, California, prominent in her painting for a time and more generally in her writings and her project.[2]

At Moly-Sabata Halvorson mainly painted found objects from her studio – a leather apron, a stove, a drawing of a bird – and a few details of the entrance: a door, an iron gate.

The receptiveness that always takes Halvorson towards new horizons is manifest in the series from the summer of 2014: intermediate, indeterminate spaces telling us that the interior/exterior connection is not a given, but rather a link to be forged, a fluid circulation space for ideas, the artistic act, and the viewing eye. In today's French *échelle* means »ladder« or »scale«, but in another definition dating from 1675 it also means »stopover« – the place where the ladder is dropped when temporarily disembarking from a boat. Could it be that Halvorson's *Échelle* paintings – pictures of immersion scales (or »flood markers«) – are also a metaphorical reference to the transitory: to her residency and to painting and its constant, unpredictable evolution?

With its undulating, mellifluous movement, *Échelle 1* bears us along towards the graphically akin *Échelle 3*; these are works that summon up both the physicality and the frankly artisanal character of an object at once dated and still very much in use.

Halvorson's no creator of systems, and it might seem surprising that through the *Échelle* paintings a system of measurement finds its way into her work. In all likelihood, it's this measurement that she's investigating here. Her immersion scales spark interest in terms of the history of American painting, marked as it was after Abstract Expressionism by an urge to control the image and the creative act: think Noland and Stella, and Johns, Celmins, and Close. Punctuated with numbers, visually bisected by a wavy line, and paint-spattered like their subjects, *Échelle 1* and *Échelle 3* defy all classification or reduction to a norm; at the same time, like the paintings of Jasper Johns, they assert the work's relationship to a model or a group of references extending in this case from the musical score to the abstract grid.[3]

The vertical immersion scales you find along the concrete embankment of the Rhône are rulers calibrated according to the normal level of the water. They serve as a point of reference, helping to establish a history of the river's highest and lowest levels, and providing a measure of nature's excesses: they are an attempt at introducing a segment of geological time into human time.

Looking back at painters' endless efforts to represent the power of the elements, nature's crushing immensity or, on the contrary, its sublime and transcendental side – efforts that culminated in Romantic painting – we find ourselves wondering what these painted scales, rudimentary and reduced to the bare essentials, have to say about humanity's relationship with nature. A reading of the figures in *Échelle 1* and *Échelle 3 – 6.9, 6.8, 6.7, 6.6, 6.5* and so on – brings to mind the rhythmic ticking of a clock marking out the flow of time between the past (a previous high water mark) and a possible but uncertain future (a new high water mark): between what has been and what might be, what has happened and what we need to be able to predict and measure – a controlled future. Halvorson's *Échelles* can be interpreted as a new form of the vanitas, an exploration of people's constant striving to organize their relationship with nature and quell the elements.
Ultimately we're not really surprised to realize that she has chosen these scales to evoke the sheer force of a river which, alone, has carved out the surrounding landscape.

For it is the river that governs people's relationship with nature and the sites they provisionally occupy. In *Échelle 1* and *Échelle 3* it is assuredly the river that establishes the rhythm, and sets the mood.

Translated by John Tittensor

[1] An Australian painter and potter who worked in Paris after training under André Lhote in the 1920s. A close friend of Albert Gleizes, Dangar moved into Moly-Sabata in 1930 and remained there until her death in 1951.

[2] Josephine Halvorson, »Shame: The One That Got Away«, in Katy Siegel, (ed.) *ArtJournal*, 29 April 2013. http://artjournal.collegeart.org/?p=3542

[3] The grid appears in Halvorson's Moly-Sabata paintings. In *Grille Spirale* she describes the central scroll and the parallel and intersecting bars of the residence's gateway, setting them against a backdrop whose dots echo the wear and tear on the gate and its repainted patches.

SHUTTER 1

THOMAS WONG

Hanging in a transitional space by the landing of a long, steep stairwell, the unmistakable warmth of Josephine Halvorson's *Shutter 1* rises to compete with and to complement the light out the adjacent window. A detail of the painting often catches my attention as peripheral vision. That detail might be the white, unpainted edge of canvas poking through the gap between the panels of the diptych, or the stately green gash along the right panel that gives off its own light, or the shadows at the louvers' edges, or the nuances of color that disturb the illusion of an even field, or the dapple of texture that cuts the touch of stained, rubbed wood. These all cry out, »Stop!« And, sometimes – once, and often – I stop.

A color, or the lingering memory of a color, initiates my journey of associations as my eyes travel across the surface of the painting. Redolent colors quickly give rise to questions. Can I name the green of these shutters so reminiscent of Manet's shutters in *Le Balcon*? Did I see that unmistakable green alongside Titian at the Doge's Palace? A sense of proportion starts me along a different line of inquiry. Is the aspect ratio of *Shutter 1* identical to Duchamp's *Fresh Widow*? Are these greens similar or identical? Is Duchamp's work all green or are there black panels too? Are there 4, 6 or 8 panels? Movement and scale opens yet another path. That enigmatic gash at the center of the dual panels reminds me of Newman's zip in *Onement, I*. But can I compare, can I even remember, *that* orange or *that* proportionate scale?

You bring your own illusions to this viewing moment, as the painting connects your experiences, your associations, and your futures in new and unexpected ways. Instead of art historical references, you may see, may feel, green stop lights and

street signs; edamame, mint cookies and green M & M's; black iron fence posts and empty voids in winter; and moments I cannot conjure because my memories are not your memories, and because this place is not your place. The interplay between painting, memory and sensation is often misnamed »nostalgia,« but there is no nostalgia here. Halvorson's painting propels you to the future, not to the past, since it represents no past place. From your own associations, it creates only this moment, now.

The moment never lasts long. Either I turn away to verify a color, concept or a connection, or I draw nearer, and the stability of the painting dissolves. Artifice reappears and must resolve itself again at this closer scale. Perhaps a new detail emerges, like the guano at the lower left side. Or, close-up, I discover that the brushwork of the zip is no zip at all. Instead of downward, confident, expressive gestures, I find only the small controlled strokes I associate with Mondrian. But most often, what happens is the painting gives way to its instability. The more I stare and the more I think I recognize what I see, the more the painting breaks down. Straight is not quite straight; shadows are mere dashes of paint; lines that must connect do not quite connect; and colors do not match.

And because the colors do not match, I suddenly realize that this cannot be a pair of shutters operating as a pair of shutters because the right panel is a shutter seen from the inside, if closed and hung from the outside, while the left panel is a shutter seen from the outside. Either we are looking at the front and back of the same shutter or front and back of a pair of shutters. There is no optical illusion, no trompe l'oeil. The painting is as it was, but I have caught myself.[1]

Perhaps without giving away the recto-verso panels, your impression of either an inside or an outside might have persisted. But having seen, and knowing it is impossible to be both inside and outside at the same time, you turn away and move on, until you return again. The vertigo of cognitive disorientation brings you back to looking closely in search of an ever-fixed mark, but each grasp of the mind or eye dissolves, and you realize that the promise of this artistic nuance is a humanism of chaos [2] in which each individual experience is complete unto itself. This demands your presence to see it, to understand it. That is Halvorson's art. No photographs, no images, and certainly no words stand in for one's own experience.

At the time of my decision to acquire *Shutter 1*, having just purchased my first iPhone at the start of the year, the proliferation of images seemed to be everywhere and all the time. Naturally, I became interested in how artists respond to this condition of making art – do they, after all, see a difference between art and an image of art, or are these simply mechanisms of distribution?

Collectors collect from as many motivations as artists make art. Obsessions like gluttony, avarice and jealousy; past wrongs suffered and imagined; future hopes, expectations and dreams; to reach for that brass ring dimly sensed; to get off one's chest a pain or a passion. All these mix and re-mix with advice, emotions, and reasons until they crystallize into a decision. This, but not that.

I collect with questions in mind, questions, I imagine, anyone asks. These questions exist not in any stated, analytical form, but remain rather ill-formed and ill-said. Art provides provisional answers, answers seeking more questions. In *Shutter 1*, Halvorson's answers quickly become our questions as we, too, transformed by experience, become artists who let the chaos in.

[1] This is different from the hare / duck or hag / lady illusions that contain a trick you do not see. Even with knowledge of the trick, you still might not see. I find these illusions to be conceptually clear but visually unattractive. I turn away because my eye cannot resolve the image. This is different, too, from Tristan Garcia's discussion of square circles in *Form and Object*. These are linguistically stable, conceptually stable, and, as even he admits, boring.

[2] In his novel, *I Married a Communist*, Philip Roth writes, »How can you be an artist and renounce the nuance? ... As an artist the nuance is your task. ... To allow for the chaos, to let it in. You must let it in.«

PORN

BORN BURN

CORA FISHER

It's already scarred and yet it's a beginning. A painting turned seemingly into flesh. The fleshy browns and pinks have pocks and blemishes and the faint appearance of two nipples on the canvas' torso, above which the word BORN is ambiguously scrawled. Born? Burn? A state of life before language acquisition, when letters are not yet sounds but rather ciphers pointing to a world in formation.

Born Burn is one among several exteriors whose surface Josephine Halvorson has exposed to scrutiny and to the nurturing intellect of her brush. The surface she has conveyed – putty-colored, scrawled over with a faint X – has the candor of human portrait, where the sitter's flaws and quirks are met with the painter's observation – studious, perhaps even spiritual. She spends a good deal of time mixing the colors and in this finds an improbable blend of non-judgmental love and discrimination.

The painting, on linen, is sibling to the object it depicts, a wooden panel that could be the support of a painting but has, in this uncanny displacement, become instead the skin of another. As she plucks it from a pile of wooden panels that have been retired from use on a construction site, she holds in her regard the object's attestation of existence. Just got here. Still here. Just here.

Such boards were used to build the artist's home in Western Massachusetts, where the foundation had just been poured when she found this particular panel. Two notches of blue interrupt the top band of metal rivets. A crooked comb – part of a locking mechanism – hangs limply in a pose of disuse. We are seeing a plywood mold that, when tiled and locked together, forms an abutment for the wet concrete until it has set. Imagine the sound of those suctioned surfaces when pulled apart, and the grain of the plywood that leaves its impression on the freshly-set concrete. Cleaved from its life of service, the panel marks a new foundation for the artist's life and is paid homage.

Though indeed more arduous, building is not in principle unlike the work of Halvorson's painting. She has often described them as corollary to castings and to earth works. An adjacent practice helps loosen the interpretation, helps us see the process of construction, even after the paint has dried.

And though we arrive at the panel scabbed, caked, rusted, chipped and dented, if we pore over the surface we find that its battered skin is made with soft brushes and creamy marks. It is tough and it is tender.

HEAT 4
HEAT 2

JARRETT EARNEST

> *I believe neither in what I see nor in what I touch;*
> *I believe only in what I do not see and what I feel.*
> — Gustave Moreau

We have a view inside a cast-iron stove the width of a ribcage, so you almost feel it should hang aligned with your heart. The fire in *Heat 4* has smoldered down to the dusky golden light of a desert sky, warming the entire atmosphere so that even the slate grays slide toward amber. In the absence of flames, we contemplate the subject: *heat* – a transfer of energy – in this case traveling from burning wood through air and into the body.

You've never seen such nougaty ashes. Or for that matter a sooty wall of cast-iron with as gentle a dark chocolate sheen. Josephine Halvorson keeps her paint oily, letting her brushwork be fast and descriptive while staying relatively flat. Overall, her surfaces have the smoothed texture of ganache, in places curling down over the canvas's outer edge. This material quality combines with a sumptuous palette to radiate love, each painting a tender confection. The front grate's teeth should be regular and machine-straight, but Halvorson makes no effort to recreate its industrial perfection; every line in this painting has the assured quiver of the hand, which is also the shimmer of human perception in time. Even the riveted band hugging the top slightly bows.

Staring into the stove, the image melts into landscape: lunar, apocalyptic, surrealist. The disk on the back wall becomes a black sun, moon, planet, or eclipse, bearing down on a horizon of pale ash, heaping up like snow. It recalls Gaston Bachelard's sense of »intimate immensity,« the thoracic confines of the stove expanding

to cosmic dimensions. Finding such sprawling visions inside a hearth is not coincidental; as Bachelard said elsewhere, staring into fire is the most primal form of human reverie, the very image of thinking and imagining.

***

> from Bachelard's *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*:
> The fire confined to the fireplace was no doubt for man the first object of reverie, the symbol of repose, the invitation to repose. One can hardly conceive of a philosophy of repose that would not include a reverie before a flaming log fire. Thus, in our opinion, to be deprived of a reverie before a burning fire is to lose the first use and the truly human use of fire. To be sure, a fire warms us and gives us comfort. But one only becomes fully aware of this comforting sensation after quite a long period of contemplation of the flames; one only receives comfort from the fire when one leans his elbows on his knees and holds his head in his hands. This attitude comes from the distant past. The child by the fire assumes it naturally. Not for nothing is it the attitude of the Thinker. It leads to a very special kind of attention which has nothing in common with the attention involved in watching or observing. Very rarely is it utilized for any other kind of contemplation. When near the fire, one must be seated; one must rest without sleeping; one must engage in reverie on a specific object.

***

By contrast, *Heat 2* is hotter than its mate but the overall colors in the painting are cooler. In reproductions it's yellowed, but looking at the physical object you see it's strikingly pitched toward blue. Even the blacks slant to violet. While *Heat 4* is suffused with the even radiance of embers, *Heat 2*'s fire is actively burning. By cooling down the rest of the palette, the red-orange flames intensify, actually getting *hotter*–she's stoked the orange/blue complements into doing their special kind of contrast. Another surprise arrives upon seeing how dark these bright flames actually are–what in context reads as the brightest maraschino is in fact a deep carroty-orange laid beside a shady scarlet. This charged color relationship evokes the instability of the flame itself, which, no matter how carefully you look, can ever be arrested or sharply defined. Fire is always an actively flickering process of change. Thus, the »special kind of attention« Bachelard identifies in fire gazing becomes a way of attending to art more broadly: the reverie of Halvorson in the act of painting, and that of the viewer contemplating the finished work.

Poet *Stéphane Mallarmé* once wrote, »things exist, we don't have to create them, we simply have to see their relationships.« For Halvorson the »things that exist« are the visible objects inhabiting our world, but the connections »we simply have to see« are in fact largely invisible, stretching in-between – among people, amid bits and pieces, across histories. And, it is the specificity of those interconnections that she paints from observation. These two *Heats* display the nuances Halvorson can coax from invisible relations, opening onto different modes of dreaming.

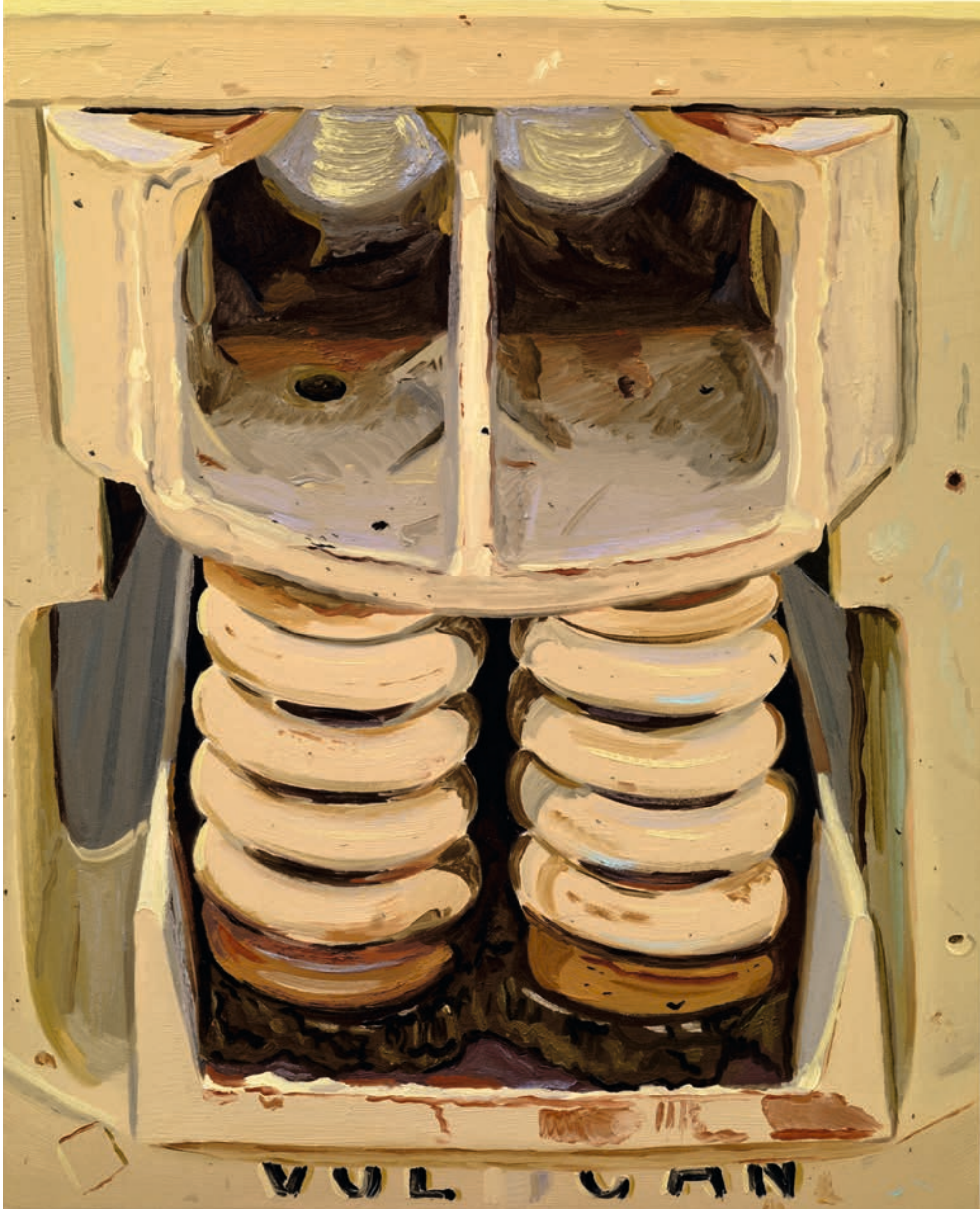
WORKS

Heat 2, 2014

XII, 2012

Clock Mural (III), 2012

Clock Mural (VI), 2012



Vulcan, 2012

Barber-Bettendorf, 2012

Southern 992321, 2012

Tregardock 2, 2012

The Heat Inside, 2011

Miner Memorial, 2012

I-Beam 5, 2013

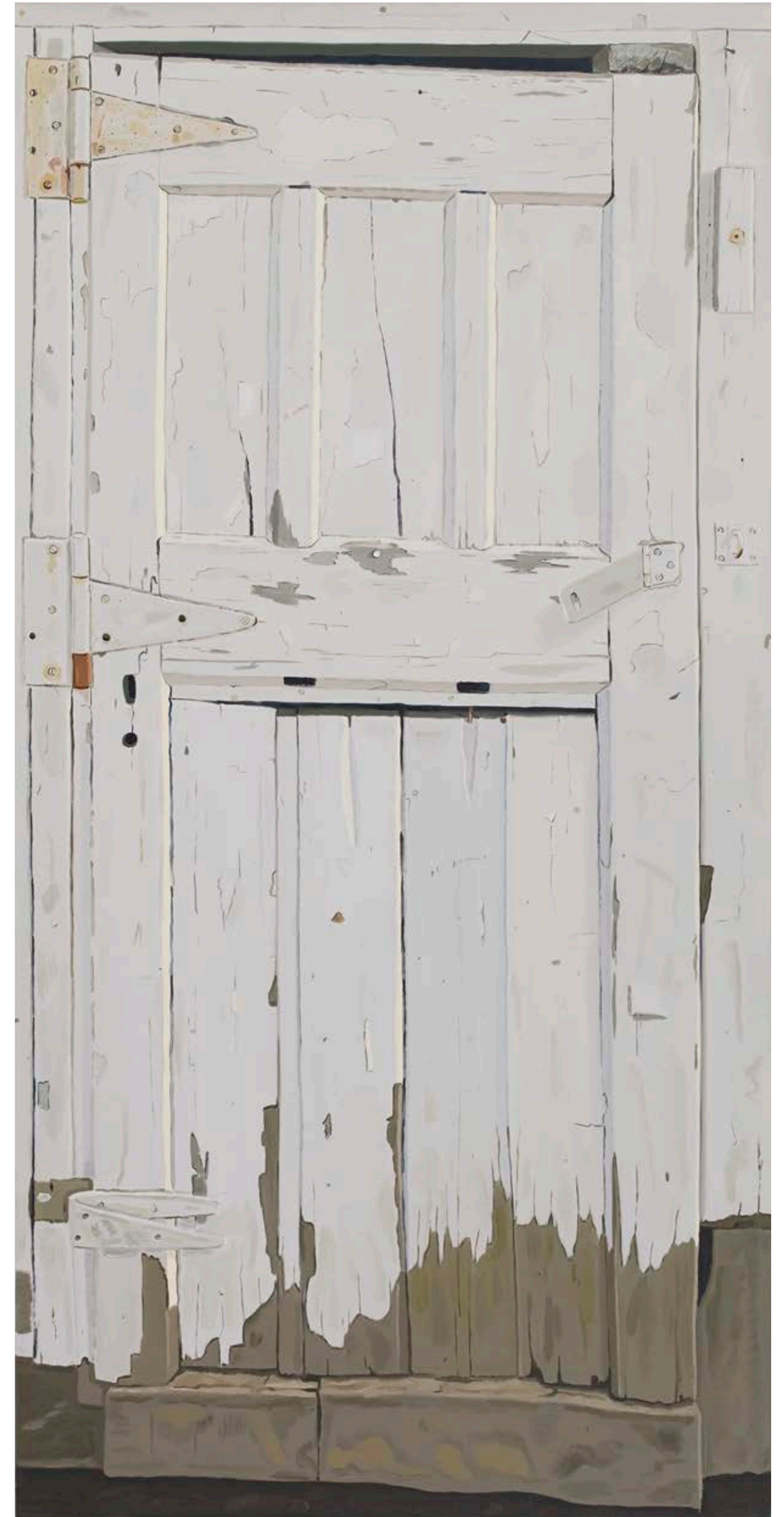
I-Beam Recess, 2013

I-Beam 6, 2013

I-Beam 3, 2013

Exposed Wall, 2013

Cheese, 2012



Woodshed Door, 2013

Échelle 1, 2014

Échelle 3, 2014

Grate, 2013

Shutter 1, 2012

Born Burn, 2014

Heat 4, 2013

Heat 2, 2014
Oil on linen
16 × 19 inches (40.6 × 48.3 cm)
Pergamont Collection

Clock Mural (XII), 2012
Oil on linen
14 × 16 inches (35.6 × 40.6 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Clock Mural (III), 2012
Oil on linen
22 × 13 inches (55.9 × 33 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Clock Mural (VI), 2012
Oil on linen
13 × 17 inches (33 × 43.2 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Vulcan, 2012
Oil on linen
21 × 17 inches (53.3 × 43.2 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Barber-Bettendorf, 2012
Oil on linen
24 × 19 inches (61 × 48.2 cm)
Peter Freeman, Inc.

Southern 992321, 2012
Oil on linen
38 × 30 inches (96.5 × 76.2 cm)
Anonymous

Tregardock 2, 2012
Oil on linen
24 × 18 inches (61 × 45.7 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

The Heat Inside, 2011
Oil on linen
38 × 30 (96.5 × 76.2 cm)
Collection of Lisa and Stuart Ginsberg

Miner Memorial, 2012
Oil on linen
26 × 21 inches (66 × 53.3 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

I-Beam 5, 2013
Oil on linen
79 × 8 inches (200.7 × 20.3 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

I-Beam Recess, 2013
Oil on linen
21 × 11 inches (53.3 × 27.9 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

I-Beam 6, 2013
Oil on linen
79 × 8 inches (200.7 × 20.3 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

I-Beam 3, 2013
Oil on linen
11 × 7 inches (27.9 × 17.8 cm
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Exposed Wall, 2013
Oil on linen
25 × 21 inches (63.5 × 53.3 cm)
Collection of Peter Freeman

Cheese, 2012
Oil on linen
12 × 17 inches (30.4 × 43.1 cm)
Peter Freeman, Inc.

Woodshed Door, 2013
Oil on linen
70 × 35 inches (177.8 × 88.9 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Échelle 1, 2014
Oil on linen
47 × 7 inches (119.4 × 17.8 cm)
Peter Freeman, Inc.

Échelle 3, 2014
Oil on linen
26 × 7 inches (66 × 17.8 cm)
Peter Freeman, Inc.

Grate, 2013
Oil on linen
18 × 14 inches (45.7 × 35.6 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Shutter 1, 2012
Oil on linen
2 panels, 55 × 15 inches each
(139,7 × 38 cm each)
Pergamont Collection

Born Burn, 2014
Oil on linen
24 × 15 inches (61 × 38.1 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Heat 4, 2013
Oil on linen
16 × 19 inches (40.6 × 48.3 cm)
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

JOSEPHINE HALVORSON has exhibited across the United States, Europe and Asia, with solo shows in New York and Paris. Her work has been a subject of ART21's *New York Close Up* documentary series, and her writings on art have been published in *Art Journal* and *Afterall online*. Halvorson teaches in the graduate program in Painting at Yale University School of Art, and has been a visiting artist at many schools across the country, including the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where she was their artist-in-residence in 2012.
She was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to Austria (2003–4), a Tiffany Foundation Grant (2009), and is currently a fellow at the French Academy in Rome at the Villa Medici. She lives and works between Brooklyn and western Massachusetts. Halvorson holds a BFA from The Cooper Union (2003) and a MFA from Columbia University (2007). She is represented by Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York.

PETER BUCKLEY is an Associate Professor of History at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City, where he teaches nineteenth century American urban and environmental history.

DOROTHÉE DEYRIES-HENRY is a heritage conservator, art historian and curator. Author of a thesis on Vija Celmins and the American art scene, she writes on American art practices inherited from minimalism and conceptual art. As a curator, she has presented exhibitions of Jean-Pascal Flavien, Josephine Halvorson, and Franz Ackermann/Elisabeth Ballet/James Turrell. She has developed transhistorical approaches through: *Scénographies, de Dan Graham à Hubert Robert*; *Célébration, Rêves de nature* for the museum of art and archeology of Valence; and movie programs like »Imaginer Los Angeles« at Centre Pompidou. She is head of the collections department at École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts in Paris.

JARRETT EARNEST is an artist and writer living in New York City. He teaches and is the faculty liaison at the Bruce High Quality Foundation University (BHQFU), the experimental free art school in the east village. His criticism and long-form interviews appear in many publications, most regularly in The Brooklyn Rail and San Francisco Art Quarterly.

MEGAN EWING is a poet and translator living in Dexter, Michigan. She is currently finishing a dissertation on the West German poet and collagist, Rolf Dieter Brinkmann. Work and translations have appeared or are forthcoming in *Triple Canopy*, *Telephone Journal*, *6x6 Magazine* and the *Journal of the Kafka Society of America*.

CORA FISHER is Curator of Contemporary Art at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA), where she has organized *Josephine Halvorson: Slow Burn*, the occasion for this publication. Since 2006, she has worked as an arts writer and editor. She holds a BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art and an MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College.

WESLEY MILLER is a documentary filmmaker and the Associate Curator for ART21. Over the past fifteen years he has collaborated with over 150 contemporary artists to tell stories about the creative process. His projects for ART21 include seven seasons (28 hours) of the Peabody Award-winning PBS television series *Art in the Twenty-First Century* (2001–14); the Peabody Award-winning PBS film *William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible* (2010); and the Webby Award-nominated series *New York Close Up* (2011-ongoing).

LAURA PRESTON graduated from Princeton University in 2013 where she twice received the Francis Le Moyne Page Award for fiction writing. She lives in Brooklyn and works on the editorial staff of A Public Space.

JOSH SMITH is an artist from Knoxville, Tennessee and lives and works between Pennsylvania and New York. He has had several solo exhibitions in the United States and abroad, most notably *The American Dream* at The Brant Foundation in Greenwich, Connecticut (2011) and *Hidden Darts* at MUMOK in Vienna (2008). He has also participated in important group exhibitions such as *The Painting Factory: Abstraction after Warhol* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, *ILLUMInations* in the 2011 Venice Biennale, and MoMA's *The Forever Now: Contemporary Painting in an Atemporal World*. His works are in public collections including the Centre Pompidou, Paris, MUMOK, Vienna, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He is represented by Luhring Augustine Gallery in New York.

THOMAS WONG is a collector living in New York City, and the co-founder of Pergamont. Throughout his career in finance, he has served in management positions at financial institutions in New York and Hong Kong, most recently as Global Head of Proprietary Trading for Morgan Stanley. Born and raised in Silicon Valley, Thomas trained as an engineer while working summers at the Lockheed Palo Alto Research Laboratory. He moved to New York City to trade derivative products for the Bankers Trust Company. Thomas graduated with High Honors from UC Berkeley, with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and serves as a board member of the Threepenny Review and Artists Space.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SECCA and its Curator Cora Fisher would like to thank the lenders to the exhibition, including those who wish to remain anonymous:

Sikkema Jenkins & Co.
Peter Freeman Inc.
Pergamont Collection
Lisa and Stuart Ginsberg

Special thanks to the artist Josephine Halvorson.

Special thanks to our collaborators:

Sikkema Jenkins & Co.: Michael Jenkins, Katie Rashid, Meg Malloy, Albert Weaver and all of the staff.
Peter Freeman, Inc.: Peter Freeman, Suzanne Imber, Christopher Moss, and all of the staff.

For their words:

Peter Buckley, Dorothée Deyries-Henry, Jarrett Earnest, Megan Ewing, Wesley Miller, Laura Preston, Josh Smith, Thomas Wong.

For his translation:

John Tittensor

For photography:

Jason Dowdle, Florian Kleinefenn, and Jason Wyche.

SECCA:

Board of Directors, The entire staff, all patrons, volunteers and interns.

This exhibition and publication are made possible through the support of:

The James G. Hanes Memorial Fund
The North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
Arts Council of Winston-Salem Forsyth County
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Published by: Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA), Winston-Salem

This publication is published on the occasion of the exhibition
Josephine Halvorson: Slow Burn
Curated by Cora Fisher

On view at
Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA)
750 Marguerite Drive, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
from March 26 through May 31, 2015

www.secca.org

Editors: Cora Fisher and Josephine Halvorson
Book Design: Jeanne Betak, Copenhagen
Print: Narayana Press, Denmark
Paper: Condat matt Périgord
Cover: Keaykolour
Type: Program
Print run: 400

Photographers: Jason Dowdle, Florian Kleinefenn, and Jason Wyche
© 2015 Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA)
© 2015 Images reproduced with permission by Sikkema Jenkins & Co. and Peter Freeman, Inc. and the artist

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in retrieval systems, or transmitted in any form by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,
without prior permission of the copyright holder.
SECCA is an affiliate of the North Carolina Museum of Art and a division
of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. SECCA receives
operational funding from The Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County
and by the James G. Hanes Memorial Fund.

Printed in Denmark
ISBN 978-0-9907565-1-4

SECCA