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CARE IS LIKE A FOREST

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An exhibition catalogue for *Between
You and Me* at the John Michael Kohler
Arts Center coauthored by the Harriet
Tubman Middle School Center for
Expanded Curatorial Practice.

6	Introduction
8	How to Make an Us <small>SHANNON R. STRATTON</small>
11	Chloë Bass
23	Sara Clugage
35	General Sisters— Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi
47	Lawrence Oliver III and Public Annex
61	John Preus
73	Benjamin Todd Wills
85	Christine Wong Yap

Introduction

The Harriet Tubman Middle School Center for Expanded Practice (HTC) project is a Dr. MLK Jr. School Museum of Contemporary Art (KSMoCA) satellite project founded in the 2018-19 school year. It is directed by Portland State University professors Lisa Jarrett and Harrell Fletcher along with support from the PSU Art and Social Practice MFA Program, students and alumni from the PSU School of Art + Design, professional curators, artists, and arts organizations both locally and nationally. The project works with Harriet Tubman Middle School students on a weekly basis. Students learn about various curatorial approaches that include working with visual art, performance, public art, historical materials, social practice, as well as writing and critical assessment of contemporary art and culture. The students also apply their skills as a curatorial team working on projects at the middle school and various off-site locations.

The interviews in this catalogue were coauthored by the Harriet Tubman Middle School Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice (HTC) team.

For *Between You and Me* we curated the work of Lawrence Oliver III, who is part of Public Annex—an organization in Portland, Oregon, that works with adults with developmental disabilities. Additionally, we learned about all of the artists in the exhibition and wrote the interviews on the following pages. We also talked with the curator Shannon R. Stratton, wrote wall labels for Lawrence's work, and coauthored this catalogue as part of our work for the exhibition.

We learned that a lot of people can create art including people with disabilities and we think it's important for everyone to know that. When you're making art nothing should hold you back from doing what you want to do. When you do these things like making art throughout your journeys then you can put it out there with pride. Other people should be able to see the work too so they can enjoy it. It was a great opportunity to work with all of the artists. We hope you find our work together interesting and we are happy to share the work that we have done for *Between You and Me* with you. Usually this kind of curatorial work doesn't happen with middle school students and that's an achievement in and of itself for us. We want to tell other people our age to pursue their dreams and not to stop until you get there.

—Bea, Elliot, Esperanza, Harrell, Joyce, Lisa, Nora, and Syncier

How to Make an Us

Shannon R. Stratton

I could never have guessed that a show named *Between You and Me* would be scheduled to open during a pandemic that would both isolate people from friends and loved ones as well as force proximity with others. Then as the stay-at-home orders began to be lifted (even though the virus has not gone away), that the United States (and the world) would erupt in long-overdue antiracism protests, ignited by opposition to the police violence, brutality, and murder that Black Americans are relentlessly subject to. I could never have predicted that negotiating relationships—the “between” that makes an “us” would be thrown into such high relief.

Between You and Me, curated to demonstrate the ways that relational art practices are about care, opens in this moment—and now, in this moment, I wish it could be more. It is a gentle exhibition, born out of exploring the relationship between “to curate” (which comes from the Latin *cura*, “to care”) and the way artists often can and do that labor in their creative work. It was organized to coincide with an election year, in a county that is very purple; organized during a season when the John Michael Kohler Arts Center would open a new building, to house its collection, that sits on a road connecting Kohler and Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The show was created as a bridge, as a starting place for conversations about interdependence, belonging, hospitality, friendship, support—ways of being in the world that extend oneself to others with mindfulness and compassion.

I think wanting more is the fuel that can bring in the adjacent, the next, the successor—the version 2.0 as we have come to think of things in their improvement and expansion. The year 2020 has been one in which the practical has been under constant revision, pivoting to adapt to the conditions of living in a pandemic. The pandemic and the protests have also forced open a more aggressive critique of systemic inequities, free-market capitalism, use (or misuse) of public funds, the impact of environmental exploitation and abuse, and a growing list of other untenable and ailing structures.

Notably, the etymology of “care” includes the Old High German words *chara* and *charon*, which mean grief and to grieve. Perhaps my wanting more right now is a desire to reframe so much of the work artists

have done emphasizing interdependence as an act of collective grieving. There is work to do, and there will always be more work to do. Just as there is no “back to normal,” there are no simple resolutions. Change begets more change. And care begets more care. And the two together require the processing of grief—from neglect, frustration, loss, regret, and the deep pain of living within a system that has constrained and harmed so many for so long.

The human ego is helpful for the survival of self, but it can get in the way of an ability to connect and leave space for listening, growing, changing. Living in a culture that places a high value on individuality has obscured the reality of interdependence—the fact that nobody thinks or creates in a vacuum. If anything, people are all vectors for one thing or another, transmitting ideas that have coalesced in and around us at any given time. The “between” of you and me is the real wisdom behind the work—it’s the exchange that is happening constantly, day in and day out, between people, that feeds healing and transformation. Empathy is the nourishment required to sustain a tender “us” now and in the future.

The artists in *Between You and Me* are working with and reaching out to different people in their practices, different partners, different neighbors, different audiences, and/or different communities. Together as a group these projects start to illustrate a wide net of interconnectedness. They start to demonstrate the reach of creative work. The impact of its attention and tenderness. So with weeks to go before the show opens and as people slowly, carefully begin to reexplore the experience of public space, I write in hopes that they will bring with them a reaffirmed sense of purpose in their relationships, a recognition that care is complex and political—that the work of care is both toward those who are near us and those whom we may have yet to meet; that care extends far from our immediate circumstances into the ways we live and participate in our communities, to neighbors and future neighbors.

What would it mean to practice radical care, generosity, compassion, and hospitality toward others? What would it mean to concern ourselves primarily with what makes an “us” over what makes an “I”? *Between You and Me* starts that dialogue, within the

work itself, and with each person that might encounter it. And while all of these projects are very real—they have manifested in the world and are in motion—in the gallery or museum, they become propositions: they ask each of us to look around ourselves and recognize the ways in which we extend ourselves to others. Here are the spaces within which we create. Spaces of interdependence, spaces of reciprocation, spaces of care.

Thank you to the artists in *Between You and Me* for your ideas, work, ambition, care, and patience during this time and always: Chloë Bass, Sara Clugage, General Sisters (Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi), John Preus, Benjamin Todd Wills, and Christine Wong Yap. To Bea, Elliot, Esperanza, Harrell, Joyce, Lisa, Nora, and Syncier of the Harriet Tubman Middle School Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice, thank you for bringing Public Annex and artist Lawrence Oliver III into the fold and for your contributions to the exhibition, including this publication—a special act of care in itself for capturing the voices of these artists for future audiences.

Shannon R. Stratton is executive director of Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency in Saugatuck, Michigan. Her past work with the John Michael Kohler Arts Center includes curating An Encounter with Presence: Emery Blagdon (2017) and Even thread [has] a speech (2019). She previously served for four years as chief curator at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York.

Chloë

Bass

Chloë Bass is a multiform conceptual artist working in performance, situation, conversation, publication, and installation. Her work uses daily life as a site of deep research to address scales of intimacy where patterns hold and break as group sizes expand.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

I didn't go to a school that had a separate middle school. We had an elementary school, which went up through sixth grade, and a high school, which went from seventh through twelfth grades. We had a lot of art resources available to us, which was really lucky: classes in art and art history, classes in the performing arts, like music and theater, and also, which was probably the greatest thing, partnerships with museums in New York City so that we could have free memberships. So that meant being able to go to places like the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art all for free, whether or not it was an official school trip.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

My mother is also an artist. Her name is Erica Mapp, and she makes abstract, geometric paintings, prints, and sculptures. I grew up around a lot of art, and, more specifically, around a lot of other people who were artists. It was very common for me to know people who were making things, either professionally or as a hobby.

I initially thought I was going to go into a different kind of art: the performing arts. I studied theater, and before that I studied music. I wound up moving more toward a visual arts realm as I got older. Previously, I'd thought that wasn't what I wanted to do, because I wasn't that inclined to making objects—I preferred to make things like performances, or situations, or events. But I think the visual arts world has expanded to include a lot of different kinds of practices, and I also think that as I've been working as an artist, my work has expanded toward certain types of object-making, too.

EVERYONE

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

It's not a dog! Actually, I don't think I have a favorite animal. I am currently a member of an Animal Club, which has two members so far: me and a buddy of mine

who's four years old. We haven't picked favorites, but we do agree, in his words, that "all cats are the same beautiful."

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

I am part of many different cultures, but at the moment I think the culture I most strongly connect with is being a New Yorker. New York City, which is where I was born and still live, is made up of many—millions!—of different types of people who are often living together in close quarters. New Yorkers have a reputation for being rude, but I think we're actually some of the nicest people around—it's just that we don't spend a lot of time slowing down to show it. What I love about New York City is that we find ways to get along with one another even sometimes against the odds. That takes its own type of care and attention.

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

My art relates to people: my work involves the study of human intimacy at gradually increasing group sizes. Any work that relates to people, and the relationships among people, also relates to care.

SYNCIER

What inspires you to start making work?

I am inspired the most by things that I regularly see people doing around me. I find tiny habits to be really fascinating. I'm a little bit like a kid: in my art, I like to ask questions about *why* things are the way they are. How did certain types of behavior become normal? Why are other similar things seen as not being normal? What would it mean to make different things normal, or to call attention to stuff that is usually normal, but seems really strange when I think about it? How would that change the world, even if it's totally temporary?

These kinds of questions drive me to look closely at the world all the time, and that's how I develop the ideas that eventually become my art.

BEA

How do you think doing this alone is different from doing this work with the public?

My work often combines a number of elements that I've done alone, and a number of elements that are done with the public. Sometimes the parts done with the public are research: a way for me to start to see an idea in a specific form. Other times, the idea doesn't reach the public until the project is over, which I think is more traditional for art: the artist works in private, and then unveils the work to the public.

My work for *Between You and Me* is all taken from my long project *The Book of Everyday Instruction*. That project was really eight smaller projects, some of which had direct public components, and others of which didn't. And some had both public and private elements! I think doing things with the public always asks an artist to be fairly specific about what she/he/they are doing, whereas doing things in private can lead to a dreamier, less specific kind of production. Although, to be honest, I like to be dreamy with the public, too, when I can. I think in some ways I'm telescoping public and private together, apart, and back again with the projects I make.

ELLIOT

Your work seems really abstract; what led you to abstraction? How do you hope people will respond to or understand your work?

I would say that in the traditions of visual art, some of my work is abstract and some of it isn't. For example, I have a series of photographs that feature my hands. I don't consider this series to be abstract in the way that it looks: it's a direct representation of my hand holding another, smaller photograph, framed by the immediate environment I was in at the time—a small house and yard in Cleveland. In another way, it is kind of abstract, though: each photograph actually represents a moment of time that I had spent with someone else in the previous weeks, where I joined strangers in their everyday lives, standing in for their usual activity partners. So it's conceptually a bit abstract, to call the photograph a moment of time. Of course any photo captures a moment—that's what a camera does;

it takes fluid actions within a moving world and turns them into a single frame—but I mean this a little bit differently: these photos represent a certain form of interaction that I had with someone else, an interaction that the people who see the photos weren't present for, but are meant to *feel* when they look at them.

ESPERANZA

Why did you begin to broaden your work slowly?

I think I actually learn really slowly. When I look at things quickly, it's hard for me to know what I'm really looking at. I'm not a visual thinker. I'm not even a fast reader. Words come to me quickly, and sometimes I speak quickly. Sometimes an idea comes to me in a flash, but I like to have a long time to carry out that idea. Even if the overall concept doesn't change, the way I see the concept operating in the world often develops a lot from my initial discovery, and I also want to have time to figure out what the final representation of the idea might be. Is it a performance? A photo and text series? A book? A film? There's no clear-cut answer for me, since I make many different types of things.

I need a lot of time both to do the kinds of research that I do and to figure out how to make objects or events that can share the research with an audience. Having a long time to do a project allows me to sit with it: is this *really* a good idea? How could it be better? What else is there to learn, and who can I learn it from?

ESPERANZA

We read about Obligation To Others Holds Me In My Place—how do your ideas about individual versus group interactions impact racial differences, both generally and within families?

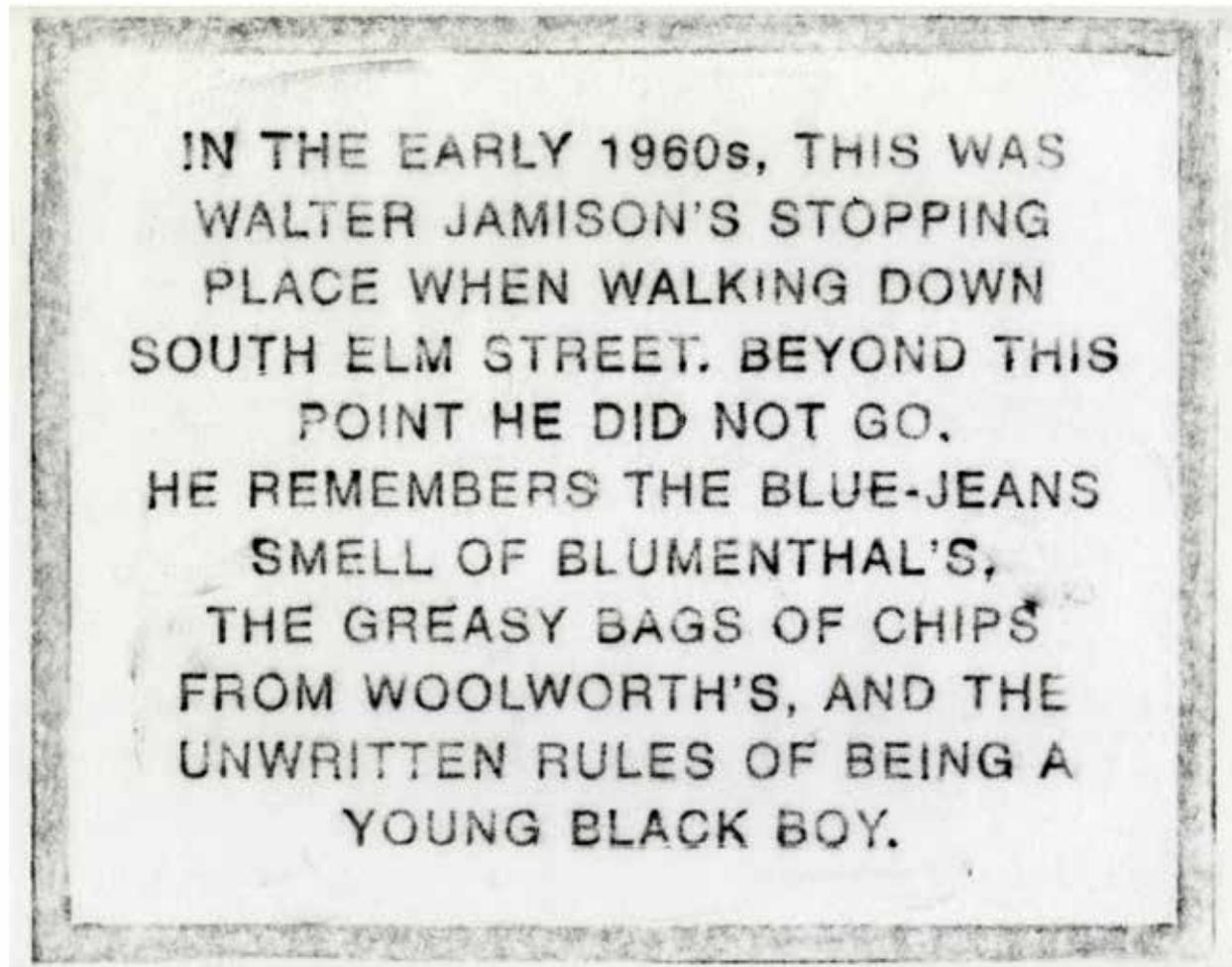
I haven't started researching group interactions larger than families yet, so I don't know if I can really answer this question. However, I can say that this question, for me, connects back to the question about how my culture impacts my artistic practice. I come from a family that has many different types of people within it: my mother is Black Caribbean from Trinidad, and my father is a white, Jewish New Yorker. My cousins on my father's side are half Chinese; my cousins

on my mother's side are half Nigerian. And this is only the beginning! So I'm used to living in a family where people can't necessarily assume that everyone culturally understands one another, because we actually don't. We have to take the time to step back and learn to see how different family members do things, or what they eat, or how they celebrate, or what they do and don't want to talk about. I think most people should be taking the time to do that even with people who are very similar to them, or very familiar to them. It's a great way to figure out where we're not actually the same, even if we think we are, and that's worth time and effort to know. I don't think we gain that much by assuming that we're the same as other people. I like all of the fruitful space that's found when we acknowledge that difference is present, and that it's really productive.

NORA

Did demographic shifts or familial shifts inform this work?

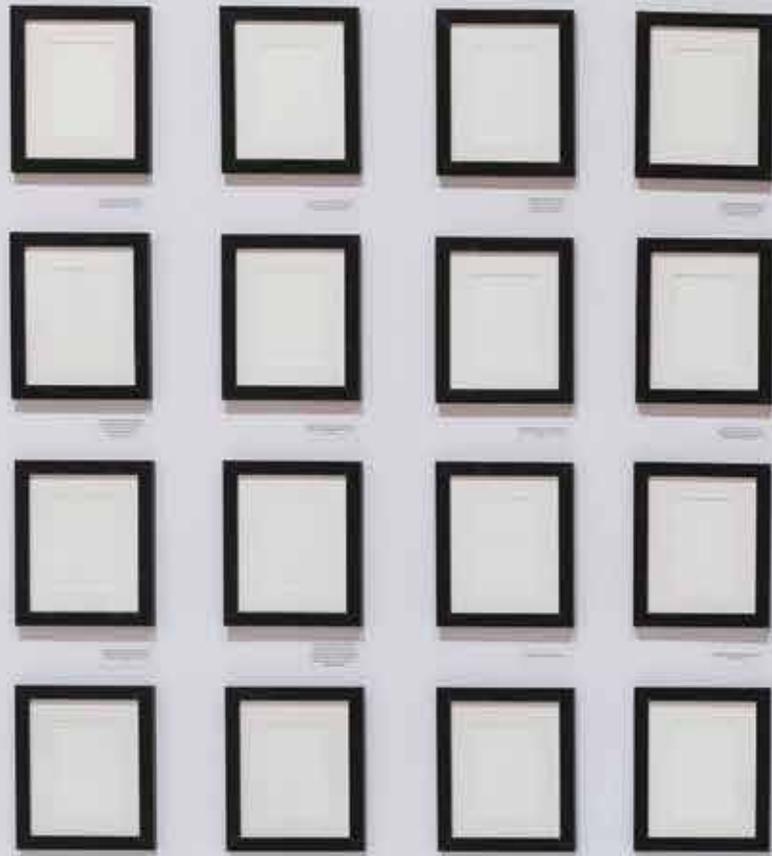
No, not really. I was always part of the kind of family that I grew up in, so I think this is just my own way of showing how something about the type of world I'm really familiar with, and kind of took for granted, might have resonance with a larger audience!



Chloë Bass, *The Book of Everyday Instruction*,
*Chapter Three: We walk the world two by
two (Walter)*, 2016; wax rubbing on fabric
paper made from custom historic plaque;
13 × 15 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Chloë Bass, *The Four Phases of Love*
(from *The Book of Everyday Instruction*,
Chapter Six: What is shared, what is offered),
2017; four inkjet prints on canvas; shelf
with four custom-labeled spice jars;
installation variable; prints: 44 × 44 in.
each. Courtesy of the artist.



to safety.

Chapter One: you + me together.
How do we know when we're really together?





Sara

Clugage

Previous spread: Chloë Bass, *The Book of Everyday Instruction* (detail, installation view, John Michael Kohler Arts Center), 2018; dimensions variable. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Chloë Bass, *The Book of Everyday Instruction*, Chapter Eight: Complete upon arrival (Student), 2018; dye sublimation print on aluminum; 12 × 18 in. Courtesy of the artist.

Sara Clugage is interested in how individuals connect over food and in the parallels between today and the Gilded Age that relate to the unequal distribution of wealth. Although wealthy Gilded Age individuals built many libraries and museums, these institutions struggle today to open their doors to the public in a welcoming manner. Clugage sees food as a remedy to this dilemma. To that end, she hosts salon dinners themed on the economic models and culinary styles of diverse periods in art history. Clugage strives to enact radical hospitality at her dinners through games, lectures, and culinary interactions, thus creating a welcoming space for all.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

I don't think I had any visual art resources at school. I did do things like horse riding and dance and sports and theater, but I didn't take any art classes. But through fifth grade I took art classes at the Santa Cruz Art Foundation, which I loved: ceramics and pastels and painting. I wish I had had an arts program like yours!

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

I'm not completely sure that I *am* making art as a profession! Being a professional in something means, among other things, that you make money by doing it, and I don't really meet that criterion. I do have other professional markers, though, like a formal education and a network of colleagues and some public recognition, so on balance I tend to feel pretty professional about it. I also do a lot of things besides make art, like most artists do. I edit an online magazine that I started, *Dilettante Army*, and I write and teach. All those things are part of my same goal, to learn things. I got into art because I realized that pictures and art objects, like books, hold an astonishing amount of information. Art contains systems, puzzles, relationships, and understandings.

EVERYONE

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

I have been waiting my whole life for this question—thank you so much for asking. My answer will be in three parts.

My favorite animal, bar none, is the giant squid. First off, how amazing would it be to have tentacles? And thinking more deeply, full fathom five: no one has ever seen a giant squid in its natural habitat, the deep ocean, with their own human eyes. Only with a camera, and that just happened for the first time in 2019! We can't get to where they live without a lot of expensive equipment and labor, which means that giant squid remain very mysterious. No one knows how many there are; there could be millions. And no one knows

what their behavior is like, or what *their* favorite animals are—probably jellyfish. With the oceans rapidly warming, it is possible that they could go extinct before we know much more about them, and they will always be a mystery to us. The giant squid has the largest eyes of any animal in the world: each eyeball is up to ten inches in diameter. I think it's remarkable that an animal we can't see at all is capable of seeing us in ways beyond our comprehension. Squid resist visibility.

Speaking of eyes, of all the animals I have any chance of meeting in real life, my favorite is the horse. Did you know that horses have the largest eyes of any land animal, even bigger than elephants? When I look into a horse's eye she seems like the wisest, calmest, most understanding creature in the world.

And thirdly, as to dog breeds, my favorite is the basset hound. They've got the same sort of enormous, soulful eyes—plus long floppy ears, or, as I call them, “the tentacles of the face.”

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

I'm a white woman living in the United States, and I come from a settler colonialist culture with a long history in this country. My family is also wealthy and highly educated. A lot of people in the art world come from a background like mine, and my culture is often treated as the default culture of “fine” art. My art practice investigates systems and rules, things that I learned early because systems generally worked to my benefit. I still enjoy structures and systems, which can be wonderfully complex and curious, but I have learned not to trust them. In my work, I have the voice of a skeptic, and I try to balance orderly elements with imagination and experimentation. In art, you can make your own rules. Art lets me play around with things I don't really understand yet—I love the gooey mess of that. But both ways of working—the building out and the tearing down—are ways of reaching toward equity and freedom. Like Fannie Lou Hamer said, nobody's free until everybody's free, and I think art should do useful work in pursuit of a just world.

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

My work in *Between You and Me* is about feeding people, which is a pretty classic example of care. I think that art asks a lot of the people who view it or participate in it, in terms of their time and understanding and attention, and I like to make work that supports them in turn. At the dinner parties I hold, which are all based on the art economies of different periods in art history, I feed people elaborate meals. During each course, diners hear a short lecture about what they're eating and how it relates to art history. And then we play trivia! I think of each of those components—the food, the information, and the games—as instances of care. It's important to me, first of all, that I offer people some kind of material support; it's an act of generosity to cook dinner for someone, to care for their body and meet their needs. The information is also offered generously—people need facts and ideas to understand the pictures, words, and people they encounter, and I offer folks at these dinners some tools for visual literacy that will help them move safely and confidently through the world. And the trivia game we play creates a social bond between us and relieves some stress. Humor, I think, is the most basic of human emotions.

ELLIOT

What is your experience with gatherings similar to your previous artwork?

I started making dinner parties as artworks because I was researching amateur clubs and societies that have contributed to art history, mainly the Society of Dilettanti, a club of art aficionados that started in London around 1732 and is still going. The Society of Dilettanti were important early practitioners of art history and archaeology before those disciplines existed, but they were mostly good-time guys who wanted to socialize and eat and drink—they were not well-behaved. I started looking for other examples of art schools or movements that were heavily social, and somewhat to my surprise I realized that they all are. Art, for most people, is a leisure-time activity that takes place outside of normal work hours, when

they also need to eat and drink and socialize. Art is a social industry. I go to so many art-related parties: openings, fundraisers, talks, book launches. I think those parties, and their food, are under-theorized. Eating together is a social act, so if people are making cultural decisions over food, the question bears asking: what do they eat?

NORA

Did your family or culture base their gatherings around food?

My wonderful mom, Sue Ann Clugage, cooked for my brother and sister and me while we were growing up. It was a real act of love and care because she doesn't much like cooking! I'll always be grateful that she let me experiment in the kitchen from an early age: she would let me choose and mix the spices that would go on the fish she was grilling, or we would make a pie together. I don't think I realized until recently how much I have used cooking as a mode of inquiry, as a way of thinking through materials and associations and sensations. There's always a tension in cooking between drudgery and revelation, which makes it a lot like art. But cooking for people gives them something that a painting or even a quilt can't give them, which is sustenance. When you digest something I made for you, it becomes part of your body, you transform it to serve your own purposes and maintain your own life. That generosity in exchange is deeply meaningful to me.

BEA

How does the golden age relate to food? How has it changed today?

The "golden age" is a term we get from ancient Greek poets like Hesiod, and it refers to a mythical time of peace and prosperity. My most recent dinner was a departure from that because it concerned the Gilded Age, a period in US history between Reconstruction and World War I—roughly 1870 to 1910—that was a time of peace and great prosperity for some people. The name "Gilded Age" comes from a novel written by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner called

The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today, which was a scathing satire about the greed, corruption, and pretensions of characters with "new money." The idea is that the age doesn't have the solidity or authenticity of solid gold, just a deceptive layer of gold paint laid over a baser substance.

US foodways changed a lot over the course of the Gilded Age because technology was rapidly evolving. During that time cooks got gas stoves, electricity, and refrigerators. The way we got our food also changed, because new railways with refrigerated cars connected parts of the country to each other with such speed that you could order fresh celery sent from Kalamazoo to New York City and have it on the table for dinner. A very few people made a lot of money from booming industries like steel, oil, and railways; most people didn't get any richer at all.

The gap between rich people and poor people is what relates the Gilded Age to today. During the twentieth century that gap shrank, but now it's back again to where it was in the Gilded Age. The separation that you can see in our larger society you can also see in the art industry; a few donors, collectors, and star artists dominate the enormously profitable contemporary art market, but most artists, administrators, and nonprofit workers earn little to nothing. That wealth inequality, and the labor exploitation on which it stands, affects both the art we make and the food we eat, or if we can eat at all.

ESPERANZA

Who do you usually invite to your gatherings/dinners? How do you decide who comes?

I invite my friends and colleagues to come to the dinners, for sure. They're also open to the public, so anyone who wants to can buy a ticket for about twenty dollars. Alongside the food that regular folks would have historically eaten, these dinners also include food that was eaten only by the rich. It's therefore important to me that these events are cheap or free, because I don't see the point in re-creating the meals of historical rich people for other rich people now. That would be a reenactment, not an artistic intervention. And besides, people who are trained chefs could do a much

better job with a reenactment than I could! I invite everyone, first come, first served.

SYNCIER

What do you envision food to have been like in the golden age?

I imagine food in the golden age to have involved a lot of fruit and seeds and berries and milk and honey. Have you noticed that no one in utopian or fantasy novels knows how to cook? They just pick an apple off a tree and eat it, or they find a beehive with a comb of honey in the nook of a tree. The fantasy is to have food without sacrifice or work. So: no bread, because wheat is too labor-intensive a crop; no meat, because the violence of slaughtering an animal would spoil the peaceful mood; no spices from far-off lands, because you would have to go get them. In our world, food comes to us through the time and effort of other people; none of us grow and cook all of our own food. When we talk about the golden age, we fantasize about being alone in a land of abundance, and we pretend that other people don't exist. In the Gilded Age, colonialist powers like the United States likewise took land and crops and labor that they thought of as ripe for the taking. And in this new Gilded Age, nations and corporations continue to do so, even though we know better.



Sara Clugage, *Gilded Age New York: A Wealth Inequality Dinner*; January 20, 2019; food, lectures, trivia. Courtesy of the artist. Photos by Liz Ligon.





Sara Clugage, working alongside the Sprechgesang Institute under the direction of Sarah Williams, *Gradient Cocktail*; July 12 and 13, 2019; flavored ice cubes and champagne. Courtesy of the artist and the Bronx Museum of the Arts. Photos by Argenis Apolinario.



I'M ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT
THE LANGUAGE BETWEEN HOW THINGS TALK TO EACH OTHER. HOW WE TALK TO EACH OTHER
THROUGH THINGS, AND HOW THAT'S CARRIED ON THROUGH MATERIAL RELATIONSHIPS
AND MATERIAL HISTORIES.
-JOHN PHELPS





Previous spread: *Between You and Me* installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, work by Sara Clugage, 2020. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Sara Clugage, *Gilded Age New York: A Wealth Inequality Dinner* (installation view, John Michael Kohler Arts Center), silverware, custom-printed tablecloth, napkin, menu, trivia answer sheet, and iPad. Originally part of the salon dinner held in Brooklyn, New York, on January 20, 2019. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

General
Sisters—
Dana
Bishop-Root
and
Ginger
Brooks
Takahashi

General Sisters look on neighborliness, or “sistering,” as an extreme act. In an era when individuals are unlikely to know their fellow community members, General Sisters bring neighbors together through collective acts of nurturing. With their neighbors, the Sisters nurture soil, grow food, and care for their community in North Braddock, Pennsylvania. They also run a store named General Sisters in North Braddock. Their earth-based practice extends to the air, as they also monitor local coal-plant emissions. With their Arts Center installation, General Sisters focus their neighboring practice on water and the ecological impact that caring for both bodies of water and wastewater can have on communities.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

GINGER BROOKS TAKAHASHI

Calapooia Middle School [in Albany, Oregon] in the early 1990s had an art teacher, classroom, and class that I loved. Outside of that, I’m not sure what other resources there were.

DANA BISHOP-ROOT

It is hard to remember middle school. I was in Richmond, Indiana.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

GINGER

I studied art in college and was inspired by what I read and looked at, and by the people who taught me. I moved to New York and worked as a graphic designer in fashion and continued to find community through conversation and action with other queer artists. I think that continued inspiration has made art something I continue to return to.

DANA

I had a challenging time in high school; fitting in, feeling challenged—not challenged enough or challenged too much—social codes and constructions and dominant learning styles. The art room became my refuge to push and pull at all of these challenges. Expression and collaboration through the process of art making became a way for me to learn, to grow, to nurture and be nurtured, and to build agency and community. Art is a part of who I am, though I would not be able to say it is my “profession.” It is part of my tool kit for how I engage with the world.

EVERYONE

What’s your favorite animal, and if it’s a dog, what breed?

GINGER

We both love the companionship of dogs. My dog is a rescue mix of pit bull, Chihuahua, and a bunch of other breeds.

DANA

My dog is an old English bulldog—his name is Snaxx. As Ginger said, it is companionship and for me also a reminder of the presence and experience of joy. It is also a delight to see the joy he brings to other people. So, for sure, he is my favorite animal. My friend just introduced me to flying foxes and they have me totally distracted.

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

GINGER

Being mixed race—Japanese American/Scotch Irish—is my lived experience and it influences everything whether I choose it or not.

DANA

Culture influences my practice, my own, as I learn it and define it, how it pushes and pulls and is of other cultures. I am a white, eastern European, Jewish, queer resister of homogeneity so all of these elements inform my culture and therefore my art practice. I also think a lot about how culture cannot be possessive, like even saying “my” culture as a white person perpetuates colonization. Believing in plurality also makes it impossible for culture to be singular. My and not my culture directly influences my work and culture is also created from my work!

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

DANA AND GINGER

Care is an ingredient in mutual aid, in being a neighbor. The practice of being a neighbor is at the core of General Sisters. Care translates between you and me: us and the land, the land and us, water, air, and soil.

SYNCIER

What is a compost toilet? Is it a fertilizer toilet? What goes in there?

GINGER

In its simplest form, a compost toilet is a bucket with a toilet seat. Every time you poop, you add a scoop

of hardwood sawdust. The bucket gets emptied and cleaned before it's full. The contents are emptied into a compost pile, which slowly breaks down and becomes compost, full of nutrients that can be added back to your garden.

ESPERANZA

How does a compost toilet function? How is it different from the toilet in your bathroom?

GINGER

A compost toilet is different from the traditional plumbed toilet in your bathroom in that it isn't connected to your municipal plumbing system. So when you poop or pee, you aren't contaminating clean water.

DANA

And the materials from our bodies have an opportunity to become resources to replenish soil and contribute to our food system. It's exciting to us because a compost toilet allows for our bodies to participate in a generative system as opposed to a system of waste. How much would it change each of our experiences in the world if we fully understood and practiced that what we put into our body could become a valuable resource that contributes to a healthier ecosystem for all of us, cleaner waterways, and fertile soil! Would we change if instead of thinking about poop and pee as waste products we thought of them as gold?

NORA

How does the compost toilet impact resources? Does a compost toilet lower the cost of your water bill? And decrease water use?

GINGER

A compost toilet will keep human waste out of your municipal water system. It will lower the cost of your water bill. You don't "flush." It doesn't use any water aside from the water you use to clean your buckets and tools.

DANA

Keeping our water systems cleaner impacts all of us. We may not see it immediately, but if water treatment

was less necessary our water bills would be less for sure. Also, when we take a step back, we see the value of these resources beyond the immediate impact of month to month bills.

ELLIOT

What made you see toilet paper as art?

DANA

We were working on a piece for an exhibition at the Jewish Museum [in New York] and the concept given to us was to make a multiple that could be taken by visitors. At that time the government in North Carolina was attempting to ban transgender people from utilizing bathrooms that matched their gender identity—at the same time our government was creating even more carceral consequences and restrictions at the US/Mexico border. It felt important to Ginger and me to not make something as a multiple that just created more disposability and waste. So we thought about the objects in a museum that were already multiples. Toilet paper was one of those things! And toilet paper made so much sense to us in relationship with the existing context of the fight for transgender rights in bathrooms. We were also very guided by Tourmaline, who says, "no one is disposable." So, considering immigrants and the US imperialist system of othering and creating disposability with both trans people and migrants, we decided to print the text on the toilet paper: "I am not illegal."

ESPERANZA

What made you want to start making composting toilets? Is it because of your environment?

GINGER

There is a toilet in General Sisters but no plumbing. We started using a compost toilet there out of necessity. Bathrooms are important, a signifier of both public and private, they are legislated, they are seen as sites for transgression, they make rules about whose body enters where. When we made our site visit to Kohler, we were already thinking about how human life is dependent on water. As growers, we acknowledge

DANA

I love this question! We must ask, what scarcity are we acting from? What are we afraid to lose? What do we think we need? I guess toilet paper was one of those things! There is something to say about the implicit shared, everyday object—there was panic, people were afraid, it somehow makes sense to me that people grabbed ahold of an object we all take for granted.

that all of our food is totally dependent on access to water, and we were interested in Kohler as a company that makes plumbing fixtures, and so we decided to engage with the space of the toilet and human waste and value systems around what is considered waste.

BEA

Does it ever make your life harder to think of everyday objects as art?

DANA

Things are hard. Ableism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity make life hard for everyone; some are impacted more than others. Everyday objects as art can create some kind of ease, relief, possibility of joy that can exist alongside the hardness and harm.

ELLIOT

How does something you use on your butt become art?

GINGER

Anything can be art. Look up *Fountain* by Duchamp, considered the first readymade.

DANA

Our butts are precious! It is a relationship, we are utilizing an everyday action that we all participate in and expanding on it poetically and literally to expand, and push and pull how we think about these everyday objects.

NORA

Why do you think toilet paper was the thing everyone gravitated toward during a global pandemic, instead of all the other things we could use?

GINGER

Perhaps because it is a product that almost everyone uses multiple times each day and it isn't something we can readily make ourselves or substitute with another product. I know that toilet bidet hoses became popular as an alternative to toilet paper at the beginning of the pandemic.



General Sisters (Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi), *A koolyok to talk about food apartheid*, 2017; screen print on paper folded into cone to hold bread. Courtesy of the artists. Photos by Nica Ross.



General Sisters (Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi), *I am not illegal*, 2016; print edition on toilet paper, installed in Jewish Museum bathroom. Courtesy of the artists and the Jewish Museum.



General Sisters (Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi), *The Aspiration is Decomposition*, 2020; installation and site-specific collaboration with community garden Faberlidsoddingen, including slideshow, print, materials (seaweed, straw, horse manure, oyster shells, maple leaves, wood ash, eggshells), and containers for collecting. Courtesy of the artists. Photos by Kate Romane.

Facing page: General Sisters, (center) *Singing We Must Rage* wallpaper roll (detail, installation view, John Michael Kohler Arts Center), 2020; digitally printed wallpaper; 25 x 60 in. (left and right) *Sistering* pattern wallpaper (detail), 2013; screenprinted wallpaper; 18 x 24 in. each. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.





Between You and Me installation view
at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center,
2020. Photo courtesy of John Michael
Kohler Arts Center.

Lawrence
Oliver III
and

Public Annex

I have had a passion for art ever since I was little. I like to make sculptures. I use drywall shims, papier-mâché and papier-mâché clay, wood glue, masking tape, paper, and poster board for my art practices. I make functional sculptures sometimes, and I think it's amazing that you can make art to do art.

As a kid I was fascinated by weeds and plants, and I like to mimic what I see in nature. I'm interested in the connections between the things I make and personal stories. I like when people find joy in looking at my work.

—

Public Annex is a nonprofit organization in Portland, Oregon, that provides accessible urban farming and arts programming, focusing on inclusivity of artists and farmers with developmental disabilities. Our mission is to break down systemic barriers that prohibit marginalized populations from inclusivity by building a community around accessible farming and art programming.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

I didn't have very many. I had very few.

LO MORAN

Did you have an art teacher?

I had one named Miss Miller.

LO

Was she a good art teacher?

Somewhat? One time I got a paddling by her.

LO

That's not good. Were you making art at home as a middle schooler?

I didn't have all the resources.

LO

You didn't have any resources to make art yet? That happened when you were older?

Yeah. I was born with a talent for art, but I had no resources. I always had an interest in art but had no resources.

LO

You were always interested in it, but no one could really help you get the supplies you needed and stuff?

Yeah, I had no resources. That's pretty sad to think about. It breaks my heart when I think about that.

LO

You've worked really hard to get resources, I think. Now you have this room full of art materials we are in.

I have resources, huh? I wish I had had them as a kid.

LO

What do you think would have helped with that?

If I had it as a kid that would have made my life easier.

LO

Did you ever have an art teacher that was supportive?

I had one teacher. I drew a picture and she wanted to keep it on her desk. She just kept it on her desk. One time I made something out of Legos. She just took the structure that I made and put it on display.

LO

She appreciated your art.

I was going to take it apart and she said, No, no, don't take it apart, here, why don't you put the pieces back on. She just took it and put it on display.

LO

What was it a sculpture of?

It was like a house with a propeller on top of it. At some point I was wishing she was my mom.

LO

So she was a really good teacher?

I was like, I wish she was my mom. She was somewhat supportive. Not perfect but somewhat supportive.

LO

What was her name? Do you remember?

Miss Ramsey? She was one of the best teachers I had. Even though she was pretty strict. She wasn't mean; she was just strict. I never threw any major tantrums on her. I pouted every once and awhile.

LO

Maybe because you felt appreciated by her.

I would pout every once in a while. I would just pout, instead of throwing myself on the floor or throwing things, I would just pout.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

I have had a passion for art ever since I was little.

LO

Do you remember what got you into that passion?

Watching certain programs on television.

LO

What made you decide to keep making art as an adult?

It's something that was just planted in me. The next teacher I had wouldn't let me draw at all, she would just force me to do spelling words. I didn't like that. But one funny story, one time, I made some hearts, and she took the best one. I told her she could have it. That was me trying to be generous. I said you can put it on your wall, I said that.

LO

What inspired you to become an artist?

Different programs, TV shows and programs.

LO

What are some of the TV shows that inspired you?

Something like *Barney and Friends*, the art they would do.

LO

Oh, like when you saw people drawing on TV? Did you ever watch Bob Ross?

Yeah, programs like that. That's what turned me on to drawing. Oh, yeah, and my dad was an artist. He would make big playboards for us. He would take these little boards and put different components on them [laughs]. That was years ago when we were little kids.

LO

That's really cool that your dad inspired you to be an artist.

Yeah, that's one of the things that inspired me as a kid. My dad doesn't do art any more for some reason.

LO

You should try to get him to do art with you someday!

One time, my dad drew me a picture of a train and I only gave him a little piece of lead to work with. He said [doing an impression of his dad], This boy just brought me this little bitty piece of lead!

BEA

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

My favorite animal would be a raccoon. I'd like to have a raccoon for a pet. They don't make good pets, huh?

LO

I feel like they are pretty mischievous.

Another one would be a rabbit.

LO

What do you like about rabbits?

They're real cuddly. When I was little I used to try to draw on newspapers. I would use ink pens instead of pencil. I would just draw random things. I was trying to draw fish. I would draw fish like this with the tail like this [draws the classic circle with triangle tail fish]. I would just try to draw fish. I was into fish. I wanted to draw fish. I remember I would always draw fish like this. And I can always make it professional by erasing the lines.

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

It's kind of hard to explain. Some of the questions are complicated [still drawing fish]. See how I did the tail? It looks more realistic now.

LO

I like it.

Fish tails look kind of funny.

LO

What do you feel like is your culture, like how would you define it?

Maybe art?

LO

Art is your culture?

Yeah. And being a Christian. Which one of these fish looks more realistic?

LO

I think this one. I think fish usually have like a more pointed face, too, if you're going for making it slowly more realistic. I like the mouth.

It looks realistic now, huh? I didn't have to do much erasing at all, huh?

ELLIOT

What's your favorite Minecraft music disc?

LO

Have you ever played the game Minecraft?

Nah.

LO

We maybe should mention you do have lots of other video games and all different game consoles here, though—Nintendo, PlayStation, and Wii. And you have that rad Sonic the Hedgehog furnace drawing.

Yeah [still drawing fish]. They look like real fish, huh? First they looked simple and now they look like this. I decided to erase the little marks in the beginning and make it look more three-dimensional.

LO

I guess that's one of the basics of drawing, right? You kind of break it down into simple parts and then build off of that. Another question, How do you feel like your art relates to care?

What does that mean?

LO

Like, hmm, how people take care of each other? Or maybe to rephrase, what do you want people to feel when they look at your art?

I want people to feel happy.

LO

Maybe that's a form of care.

[still drawing fish] I'm just using different basic shapes, huh? I want to make the mouth more.... [keeps drawing]

LO

I'm thinking about your art in the show, like the pink tree. What do you want people to think when they see your pink tree sculpture?

I want them to say it looks like a real tree. I might add another fin. Which [fish] looks more realistic?

LO

They all look realistic now.

This one doesn't. That one just looks like this basic shape. That's how I used to draw fish. Now that I'm older, I can draw fish realistic, huh? I just did this here without looking at a reference. What do you think of that?

LO

I think you've been teaching yourself drawing for a long time. OK, next question is if you don't think your art is about care, why do you think you were curated into the exhibition? I guess if the exhibition is all about care, how do you think your work relates to that?

In a lot of ways. I think it's hard to draw fish from different angles, like from the front. That would be hard to draw. I can learn how to do it, huh? Fish. Drawing fish has become easy to me. It's not a kid's version of a fish, huh? This one right here. It looks professional, huh?

LO

Why do you think the curatorial team chose your art?

Maybe because they think it's fascinating.

LO

Do you want to talk about your process?

Yeah.

LO

So how would you describe the process of how you made the pink tree?

I made them out of paper with pink spray paint and I cut off the petals and I glued them on to the sculpture. I wanted to make it look like a real flower.

LO

And using a stencil, right, to make all of them the same?

Yeah. The base of the tree is a bamboo stick and the branches are wire hangers. I want to make another tree.

LO

That's exciting. What are some of your materials that you use? Do you want to talk about that?

Yeah. I use drywall shims to build things.

LO

And that's a really unique kind of method that you've developed.

I wonder what if they found out about that?

LO

You can tell the world! And maybe give a demo someday.

[demonstrating with drywall shims] So first I'll take some pieces and glue them together, take them together, and layer them, I will take each one, taken together like this, then I would put glue between the cracks and move the tape. I will do that again. Then I would take these, flip, layer them, and make them thicker and make them bigger.

LO

So you take these kind of thin pieces of cardboard and you layer them, you kind of laminate them together, and then you kind of carve into them and cut them and stuff and build things. It ends up almost like wood.

Yeah.



Lawrence Oliver III, *Untitled (Vase)*
 (installation view, John Michael Kohler
 Arts Center), 2015; papier-mâché, news-
 paper, and glue; 5 × 7 in. Courtesy of the
 artist. Photo courtesy of John Michael
 Kohler Arts Center.



Lawrence Oliver III, *Handmade Chandelier*, 2016; wire, paper, wood glue, ceramic, paint, rope, and paper clips; 37 × 21 × 21 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.



Lawrence Oliver III, *Handmade Chandelier (pink)*, 2016; wire, paper, wood glue, ceramic, paint, rope, and paper clips; 37 × 21 × 21 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Following spread: *Between You and Me* installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2020. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.





...understanding what
communities can look like
...can look like

Korean Textiles
Caption for Exhibition
Commercial Practice



Previous spread: (Background) Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice: Selected work by Lawrence Oliver III, part of *Between You and Me*, installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2020. View also contains work by Christine Wong Yap and John Preus. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Lawrence Oliver III, *Untitled (Kite)* (installation view, John Michael Kohler Arts Center), 2019; umbrella, sticks from pinwheels, and ribbons; 24 × 48 × 25 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

John

Preus

A trained artist and furniture maker, John Preus straddles the line between sculptor, painter, and craftsperson. Preus's practice focuses on materials, appropriation, ethical norms, and the clash of cultures. His work reconstitutes materials salvaged from sites such as recently demolished Chicago public schools. Preus believes in the power of collaboration and questions traditional notions of authorship. He expresses his skepticism for the author by selecting apprentices who have a relationship to the salvaged materials, thus making each sculpture a collaborative process with a lesson from the craftsman to the apprentice as its catalyst.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

My middle school was pretty well stocked for art supplies, though I don't recall spending much time in art classes. I do remember becoming very interested in art in high school, and I had a great teacher who was very encouraging, and to whom I probably owe credit for becoming an artist.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

I think the main factor when I was younger was having lots of people who encouraged me to keep making things, while also helping me learn new skills and techniques, and ways to think about what I was doing. It is also worth saying that I thought it was a cool thing to be when I was young. I am not sure why I thought that, or where I got that idea, but it seemed like artists got to do what they wanted and didn't have to spend as much time worrying about fitting in and acting normal. But I always thought that eventually I would also be an art teacher. I have taught a handful of college courses, but because it paid so poorly, and because I already had children by the time I finished grad school, the teaching thing never quite worked out for me. So I kept working as a carpenter and furniture maker to earn enough money to live on, while also working as an artist. Now my income is partially from both of those things, and they weave themselves together in interesting ways.

EVERYONE

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

When I was a kid it was a raccoon because of a book that I read called *Little Rascal*, about a boy who finds a baby raccoon and raises it as a pet. I was obsessed. Now I would say my favorite animal is probably a sloth.

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

Hmm. I grew up in Tanzania and have spent lots of time in Europe, so my sense of culture is a little

different from the average American kid. I hadn't seen television until I was six. And I grew up just running around outside all the time. My parents were teachers and Lutheran pastors, so I grew up in a religious family, and my familiarity with Christian history and stories definitely informs how I think about the ways in which we use pictures to influence one another, and the ways certain things become special, or "sacred." One way to think about what is sacred is to try to imagine what is the thing or things we pay the most attention to? That is our god. I am very interested in why we pay attention to the things we do and am often thinking about that in somewhat religious terms. But I am also heavily influenced by American popular culture, by music, by movies, and probably mostly by my friends and family.

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

There are lots of ways to care, more or less specific or abstract, or directed at one person, or directed at humanity in general, or directed at the planet... I like to imagine someone specific interacting with the artwork. I like to think of people who might have spent lots of time studying and thinking about art and the history of art, but I also like to imagine someone who hasn't, but who might still find something interesting about the artwork. When we talk about art, sometimes we discuss who we think of as our "audience," the people we want to reach, the people that we care about talking to. I would like to talk to as many people as possible and find a way in.

EVERYONE

If you don't think your art is about care, why do you think you were curated into the exhibition Between You and Me?

I don't know if my artwork is "about" care. There are ways in which it demonstrates a kind of care. I imagine [my work] was included because of the ways in which I try to incorporate lots of people into my art-making processes. I try to find ways to force myself to learn new things, and to bring younger artists into the process

so they might learn some things from me while I am learning things from them. I think my work also tries to find ways to amplify stories that might not be heard, to make spaces for conversations that might not be happening as often as I would like, and to make a stage, literally in many cases, for people to perform and speak who are not often spoken to or heard from.

Thank you all for your wonderful questions and your interest in the stoops!

ELLIOT

For your project Stoop Culture, why did you specifically choose stoops? Do they have a specific meaning to you?

I like thinking about how furniture came to be the shape that it is, and if it could be different. And if it were different, would our bodies change? Especially as a kid, I spent a lot of my social time with my friends sitting outside on a stoop somewhere. It is like a living room, a place to have some degree of privacy but still be outside and interacting with the world. In that way it sits at a kind of threshold between what is public and what is private. And I like to imagine how to make things that have a leg in both worlds, the public and the private.

NORA

In the photograph on your website we noticed each of the stoops looked different. What materials did you use and what is the reason?

Yes. They are all made from different materials. Some of the stoops I would begin with a piece of school furniture, like a tabletop, and then the scrap pieces I had left over from the first one would be used to start the second one. I like when the materials I have help me better understand how to use them. I feel a little lost with a blank canvas. So the materials are all intermingled. Many of the materials are pieces of cut-up furniture from closed schools, there is a quilt that came from my house, some clothing that my kids outgrew, some pieces of fabric, an old beach towel, leather from couches that I find in the alley and strip the leather off. There are lots of reasons for the choices I make. The choices have to do with how they look, or

where they came from, and the relationships among them.

BEA

Did the apprenticeship process include collaborating on the idea or was it just producing the objects together?

Just producing the objects. It would have been nice to be able to do a longer term and deeper collaboration and apprenticeship but most projects have limitations built into them. I hope to continue to deepen those relationships.

BEA

How do you feel about the concept of giving your apprentices credit for their participation?

It's a complicated question. Probably many of the artworks that we are familiar with have stories behind them that we don't know, and some level of credit that should be granted to someone else for helping develop the idea. There is a funny quote I have heard that "bad artists copy, but good artists steal." All ideas are shared in some respect. Ask yourself where an idea comes from. Nobody knows, really. But we know that thinking is something like exercising, and that if you devote time to trying to develop certain ideas, they grow, like muscles. But just like muscles, or plants, or animals, we don't really know how they grow, or where that energy comes from. I try to give credit where credit is due, but I am also part of a machine that grants value to things in part according to who did it, and people don't have time for confusing stories, so often the history of a thing gets shortened and cleaned up dramatically so it sounds more interesting. But it is nice when a show offers us the opportunity to talk more honestly and deeply about how things are produced and where they come from.

SYNCIER

How did stoops become interesting to you? How did you get into making these as artworks?

I think I would give a similar response as to Elliot's question above, so take a look at that.

ESPERANZA

Why are you talking about the end of the world and annihilation and stoops at the same time?

Good question! I'm trying to remember what I said about the end of the world! I think I said something about how uncertain the world is at present, and how quickly things are changing, and that we are living in a time when there are risks around us that didn't exist even a hundred years ago. I have children myself and I don't really know what to teach them because the world is changing so fast. So, I tried to talk about how, no matter what happens, good or bad, we still have to find ways to build things, to make shelter, to wash things, to prepare food, and to be social and work with other people. The stoop is a social setting where people sit and talk and watch the world go by, which I made a bit more like a piece of living room furniture. But it is also a useful tool for getting up and down, which I like to think of as both a functional and a social aspect. We talk about people moving up and down the social ladder, the financial ladder. It is both a thing and a metaphor at the same time, as are many of the things that we use and interact with every day. So the idea of learning a skill is one way to think about moving up a ladder.

BEA

Some of your stoops look like stairs and some look like boxes. What's up with that?

The boxes are not stoops. I call them cubes. They are more for just sitting on or looking at.

BEA

How do you feel your art piece interacts with people and their senses? We noticed in one photograph people were pictured and in another there weren't any people.

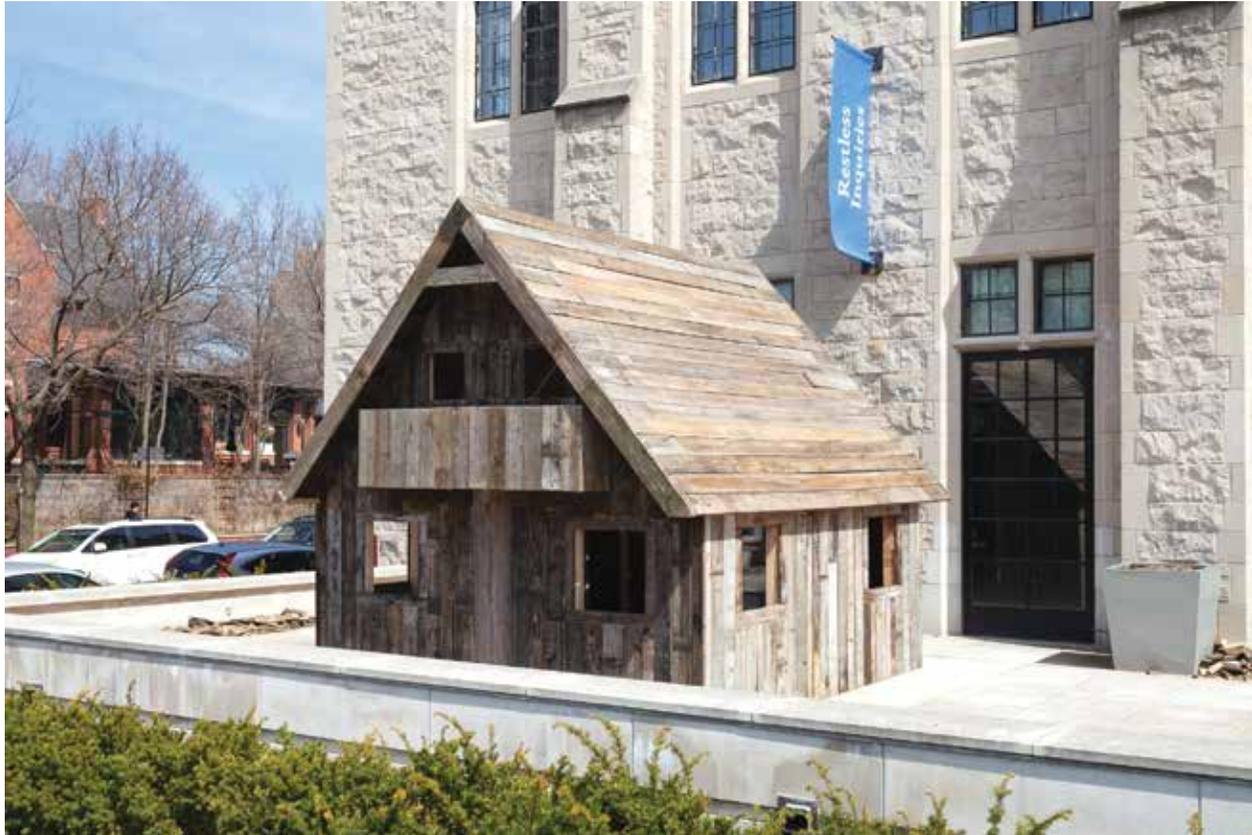
I like to see people using things and making them useful. For a long time, people thought of art as a very precious thing that was removed from daily life. I think that is a valuable idea, too, that certain things are removed from use so as to become "sacred" or special in some way and treated with a great deal of respect and dignity and protected at all costs. There are

things that are so valuable to our identity that we think of them as untouchable. And if we lost them, we would lose some part of who we are as people. Other artworks are so much a part of our daily lives that we hardly notice them, and because of their importance, they are also a critical aspect of who we are. I like to make artworks that are on the border of being useful and being precious. Some things are only precious because of where we put them—on a pedestal, in a glass case, in a picture frame...—we separate them off from the world to show that we think of them as special, like our children's drawings even if they are not great art. Some things are fragile and require special care and attention, like china or jewelry. Some things become special because of who used them, or how they were used, like Lincoln's eyeglasses, or Frederick Douglass's work boots. But everything in the world wants our attention. That is maybe the most precious human resource: attention. Spend your attention wisely and try to honor the attention that is given to you by others. When my artwork draws attention to itself, I like to think about what you might be getting in return for your attention. The French painter Henri Matisse said he wanted his paintings to feel like a comfortable armchair. Other artists want their work to be disruptive, or aggressive, or provocative. I want my work to be some combination of all of those things.

ESPERANZA

Do they have a scent? Smell or scent is often overlooked, but it is really important. What do you think about that?

Funny you should ask! Actually, some of the stoops do have a smell. Wood smells nice, wood finishes smell weird, like gasoline or something chemical. But most surprising is that some of the stoops have gum stuck all over them because I used pieces of furniture that kids would stick gum under. So, if you pick a little bit of the gum off with your fingernail it smells very much like I imagine it smelled when the student was chewing it. I know it is gross, but it is also a very familiar thing to see in school furniture, so I wanted to include it in the stoops.



John Preus, *On the Alleged Barbarism of Writing Poetry After Auschwitz*, installation view at the Neubauer Collegium, 2019. Photo courtesy of Neubauer Collegium, University of Chicago.



John Preus, *The Beast*, 2014; found felt, wood, and furniture collected from closed Chicago public schools; 20 × 40 × 18 ft. Hyde Park Art Center. Photo courtesy of the artist.

John Preus, *The Beast*, installation view at the Hyde Park Art Center, 2014. Hyde Park Art Center. Interior during youth-led open mic event. Photo courtesy of the artist.



John Preus, *Stage Set for Dunning Kruger Uprising. (Trigger Warning) Et. Al.*, installation view at the Rhona Hoffman Gallery, 2017. Courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery.

John Preus with apprentice Kendall Hill sitting on *Stoop Americana*, installation view at artist's studio, 2019. Photo by Almudena Caso.



John Preus, *Lateral Movements (Rocking with Tiny Dancer)*, installation view at the Rhona Hoffman Gallery, 2017. Courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery.

Following spread: John Preus, *Stoop 5*, 2019; found fabric scraps, materials salvaged from closed Chicago public schools, and children's outgrown clothing; 24 × 42 × 24 in. Courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery, supported by Daniel Eisenberg, Ellen Rothenberg, and the Sullivan Gallery. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.



On Being Here (and There)

In a time of social distancing and isolation, *On Being Here (and There)* highlights the ways artists, cultural organizations, and communities initiate connections, encourage belonging, and provide social sustenance. The works presented in this series of exhibitions reveal how artistic practices can enhance and activate our communities.

The themes of care, connectivity, and relationship building are at the center of *On Being Here (and There)*. These are expressed through participatory practices that take art from the studio to the public sphere, acts of generosity and exchange, and projects that shed light on timely social issues or give voice and visibility to the marginalized.

The series is anchored by a group exhibition titled *Between You and Me*, which brings together contemporary artists whose practices are intentional acts of care for their neighbors and broader communities.

Complementing *Between You and Me* are two exhibitions that engage the John Michael Kohler Arts Center's history of collaboration, collecting, and preservation. *Tokens of Appreciation* is a story about the unique relationships that develop between Kohler Co. factory associates and artists participating in the Arts/Industry residency program. *Good Road to Follow*, which draws from the Arts Center's collection, evokes Adolph Vandertie's in-house museum of hobo and tramp art and explores the role of grass-roots archiving in preserving community culture. Photographs by David Eberhardt, who rode the rails throughout the United States, surround the Vandertie installation and poignantly portray the lives of his fellow travelers.

These exhibitions are supplemented by The Projector Room, a gallery newly dedicated to the showing of film and video artworks that expand on themes found in the galleries. Screenings will include Bill Daniel's *Who Is Bozo Texino?*, Ailbhe Ní Bhriain's *Inscriptions of an Immense Theater*, and Kevin Schmidt's *EDM House*.

The exhibitions, events, and activities that comprise *On Being Here (and There)* demonstrate that what artists and arts organizations make happen is just as important as the objects they create and exhibit.

On Being Here (and There) is supported by the Kohler Trust for Arts and Education, the Frederic Cornell Kohler Charitable Trust, Kohler Foundation, Inc., Winfield Foundation, and the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Arts Center thanks its many members for their support of exhibitions and programs through the year.



Between You and Me installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, work by John Preus, 2020. Courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery, supported by Daniel Eisenberg, Ellen Rothenberg, and the Sullivan Gallery. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Benjamin Todd Wills

Benjamin Todd Wills creates art that functions as metaphorical portraits of American institutions, such as penal systems. His work coalesces around nostalgia, the environment, and social justice. Wills often relies on collaborative engagement for his works to be realized. In this way, his work depends upon the participant-collaborators as much as upon Wills, erasing and blurring notions of the artist-as-author and morphing into the artist-as-facilitator. The resulting institutional portraits are bolstered through this collaborative process, featuring nuance and insight from a variety of stakeholders. Wills provides space in his projects for participants to express creativity and longing, and to experience themselves in the role of artist.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

My middle school, Ken Caryl Middle School, in Littleton, Colorado, had both art and music classes. My art teacher was named Mr. Sherry, and he built a black-and-white photography lab so that we could process film. He also introduced me to Prismacolor colored pencils.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

I studied art at the University of Georgia. While I was there, I had the opportunity to spend a semester studying in Cortona, Italy. Experiencing a new culture, largely through art, was a life-changing experience, and is still at the heart of why I love making art. I am greatly interested in how storytelling and history are recorded through visual art, and I love attempting to make contributions to the field.

EVERYONE

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

My favorite animal is my dog, Tornado. She is a mix of shepherd, rottweiler, Chinese shar-pei, boxer, border collie, and husky. We did a DNA test on her, and it probably created more questions than answers about her genealogy. Beyond her, my favorite animal is the rainbow trout.

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

My work addresses mass incarceration, so not only do I do a great deal of reading about penal systems, but also writing to inmates and meeting with groups inside of prisons. If you consider that, from an economic perspective, the penal system is built to create a cheap labor force that large businesses and corporations like Walmart, Target, Victoria's Secret, and Verizon exploit, and then consider how embedded their products and companies are into the fabric of our commodity-based culture—our everyday lives—my work becomes a way to identify cultural structures

and systemic issues. Like journalists, I interview people, ask lots of questions, and try to make connections between incarceration and broader cultural issues.

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

Beyond the physical act of making art, I am examining the role the artist plays within a community as maker, neighbor, and organizer. This work relies on bringing different groups of people together, addressing local community issues, and creating opportunities for others to participate. I think artists have a unique opportunity to discuss problematic systems, or unmet needs, with large groups of people. These conversations can significantly impact community dialogue.

BEA

Do you take credit for the work of incarcerated individuals or are you taking credit even though you technically didn't make the work?

I think of myself as more of a collection steward with this project. It is important that people understand that I don't make paper airplanes, but that I correspond with incarcerated people who, at my request, send me airplanes. Each plane is made on a different kind of paper, folded in a different way, decorated with different materials, and created by a different incarcerated individual, and my hope is that my art humanizes each of the inmates that participated in my project.

SYNCIER

Did you end up also creating some of the paper airplanes or did they all come from the inmates?

I don't make any airplanes that are in the project. Each airplane has a different maker who is incarcerated somewhere in the United States.

ESPERANZA

How did you get the inmates to participate? Did you ask them to make paper airplanes?

I started collecting them by asking for paper airplanes, but now I get many airplanes from inmates who find out about the project from someone else in prison. When the project is installed somewhere, I take a photograph of the installation and have it turned into a postcard, which then gets sent to all of the inmates who have participated in the project. That way, they are able to see the project as it grows and travels around the country.

SYNCIER

We noticed the variety of the planes you showed online. Did you provide instructions or materials?

At the end of the letters I write, I'll say, "If you have time, I'd love if you would provide an airplane for my project." It's completely up to the maker how they want to fold and decorate the plane.

SYNCIER

It seems like you were interested in how these took you back to your childhood. Do you think they did the same thing for the incarcerated people?

One of the compelling components of this project for me is the universality of a paper airplane. Everyone makes them differently, and you can make them out of any paper, but they're always recognizable as paper airplanes. I think most people grow up making these, so in that way they evoke childhood. A lot of the contributors write to me that they "haven't made one of these since they were a kid..." or "I think I remember how to make a plane..." So, yes, if you examine the collection, I think many of the inmates tapped into nostalgic childhood memories while making their planes.

BEA

Did you work with multiple prisons or specific types of prisons? What was the main gender of the people you worked with?

I work with people across the entire country, all sexes, all ages, all ethnicities, and I think the collection demonstrates that. By inspecting the airplanes, you can really tell that the project is bringing together

a large group of people with different life experiences, histories, and values from all over the country.

SYNCIER

What were some of the messages you received on the paper airplanes?

Many of the airplanes declare love for their family members, or allegiances to sports teams. Some of the planes are covered in poems and drawings. They're all so very different.

ELLIOT

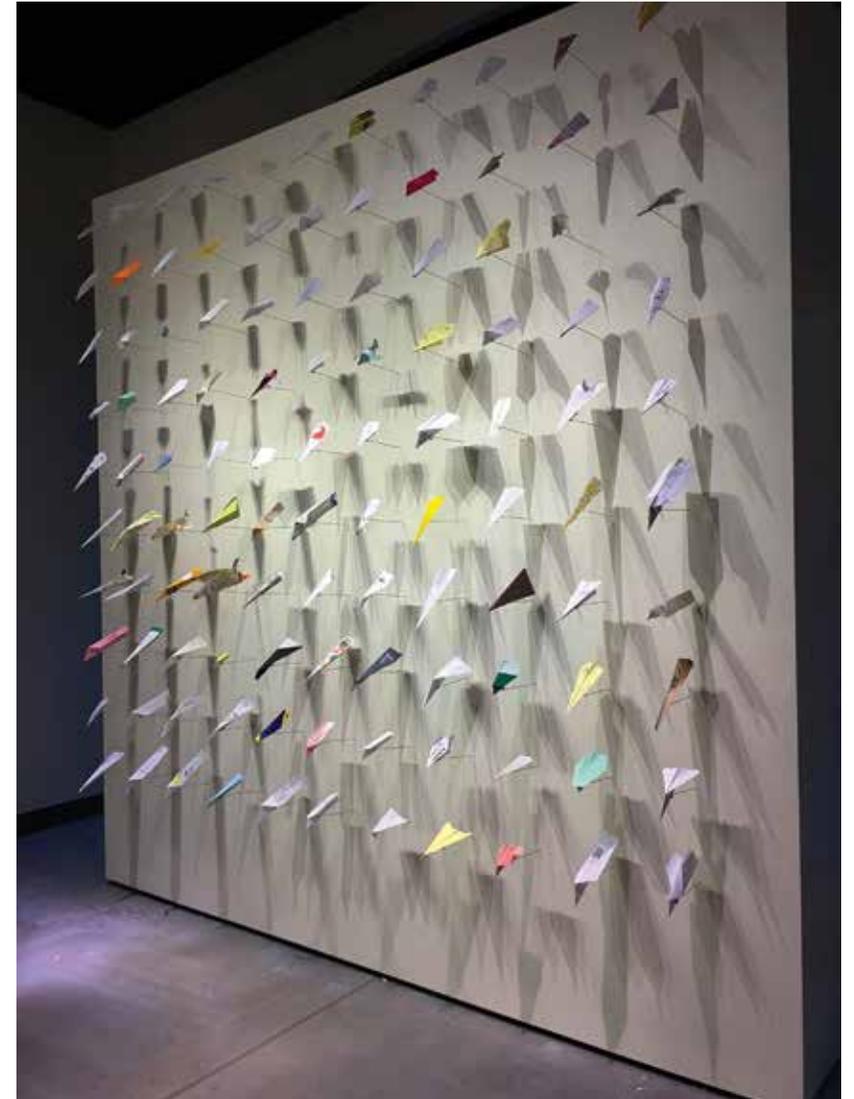
When and why did you start corresponding with incarcerated people? How does this relate to your art practice? Is this why you started doing it?

I started corresponding with incarcerated people in my early twenties around 2008. Initially, I was writing letters to people I knew but quickly started reaching out and finding people who were eager to write. Though I didn't begin incorporating this correspondence in my work until 2010, I think the process of letter writing was beginning to impact my work. The handwritten letter as an object of material culture, collected and presented for artistic purposes, assumes the status of a relic. Letter writing is a sentimental form of communication from an earlier time. Through the inherent process of writing a letter, the object contains traces of the individual who created it—vestiges of the hand. My fascination with handmade objects, and handwriting, has its roots in these initial letters.

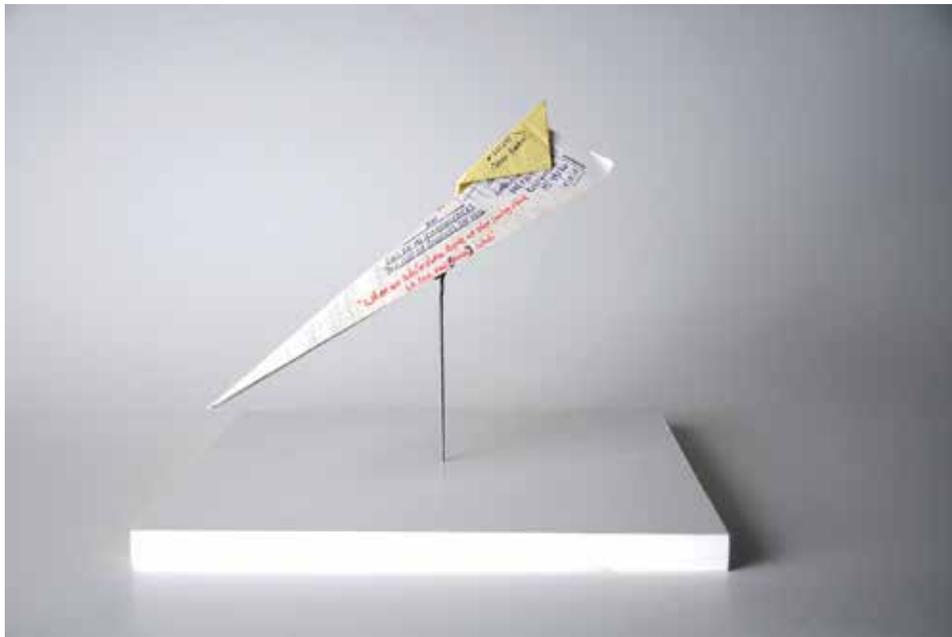
BEA

Do you consider what you do with incarcerated artists to be collaboration?

I have many projects that address mass incarceration and some of them really do feel like collaborations. The primary component that keeps me engaged in these projects is the letter writing itself, so on a foundational level, my work definitely relies on collaboration. I hope that the inmates who end up working with me either as collaborators or contributors take pride in their work, feel as though they are artists, and understand that their work is significant.



Benjamin Todd Wills, *Airplanes*, 2019; paper airplanes collected from inmates of the United States penal system. Courtesy of the artist and the Arcade Gallery at Webster University.



Benjamin Todd Wills, *Airplanes* (detail), 2014-present; paper airplanes collected from inmates of the United States penal system. Courtesy of the artist.



Benjamin Todd Wills, *Airplanes*, 2019; paper airplanes collected from inmates of the United States penal system. Courtesy of the artist and the Eastern State Penitentiary.

Following spread: Benjamin Todd Wills, *Airplanes Project* (detail), 2013-present. Installation with 400 individual pieces. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.



The space of humanity
is not a physical one, but a mental one. It is a space
that exists in the mind and is shaped by our experiences.

ETIQUETTES
OF THE COUPLE, BUT THAT'S
AND LEARN ABOUT IT. SPACE.
SHELL. WE'RE DOING A COLEBRANCE
AT WE MIGHT ENGAGE BY.

IM ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT
THE LANGUAGE BETWEEN THE THINGS. HOW WE CAN LOCK THEM
TOGETHER. HOW WE CAN FIND THE CHAINS OF THINGS. HOW WE CAN
AND HOW WE CAN.





Christine Wong Yap

Previous spread: *Between You and Me*
installation view at the John Michael
Kohler Arts Center, 2020. Photo courtesy
of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Incarcerated Individual Paper Airplane
(detail), ca. 2013; paper; 11 inches in length.
Benjamin Todd Wills, *Airplanes Project*
installation with 400 individual pieces.
Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler
Arts Center.

Christine Wong Yap focuses on manifesting psychological well-being through creative collaboration. Her cooperative art projects allow participants to explore specific dimensions of happiness: belonging, connection, and identity. Her project collaborators engage with writing, printmaking, symbology, and sewing to express the tenets of well-being. Participants in Wong Yap's process not only generate an artistic product, they also gain a firm grasp of the impact of belonging, connection, and identity on inner peace.

NORA

How many art resources did you have at your middle school?

My middle school was in a middle-class neighborhood and pretty well-resourced, though I also remember taking garbage bags full of cans to recycle to earn spirit points to go on a field trip. I can't remember the art studio, but I remember the woodshop was very well-equipped with a table saw, lathe, band saw, router, several tabletop jigsaws, and a separate room for staining. I also took computer classes. This was so long ago the screens could show one color: green. There was also a band class, but I didn't know how to join it. It seemed like all the kids in band had already been in band in elementary school, and my elementary school didn't have one.

SYNCIER

How did you get into making art as a profession?

I like your name, Syncier. I don't know how making art became my profession. It just sort of happened. I loved making art as a child. I was so passionate about studying art in high school that I even took summer classes at art colleges in San Francisco, which really helped me decide to go to an art college for a bachelor's degree. My parents are first-generation Chinese immigrants, and I still feel very lucky that they were supportive of my decision to study art. I kept making art after college, and then I decided to go back to school for my master's degree in art. By then, I had a lot of momentum—and a lot of debt—so I was motivated intrinsically and extrinsically to keep making art and pursuing my dream. I think it helped that I lived in the Bay Area, which had a strong community of artists and an accessible alternative arts scene. Now I still work day jobs as a graphic designer and at a museum as an art handler to make money. Over the past few years, though, I've had more opportunities with more funding, resources, and support. This allows me to work fewer day jobs and do more art. But I can't say that art making is my full-time profession...yet.

EVERYONE

What's your favorite animal, and if it's a dog, what breed?

That's an easy question...I love elephants! They're matriarchal, they watch out for one another, they have caring customs, and the babies are playful and cute. And they also go on rampages! Then again, I also really like rabbits. And baby ducks, when they're very fuzzy. This is not actually an easy question, after all.

JOYCE

How does your culture influence your art practice?

That's an interesting question. Well, being Chinese American, being a child of first-generation immigrants, and identifying as a person of color strongly influences who I am, how I see myself in the world, my politics, and my values around money, family, and relationships. But American culture influences me a lot, too, since I was born and raised here. The text in my art is usually English, not Chinese, for example. There are other cultures I would consider "mine," too, like 1990s DIY and anti-corporate ethos. This made me interested in printmaking, because it can be democratic. I like being able to give my art away and make my art accessible to a wide range of people. In my social practice projects, I try to pay special attention to principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. This comes from recognizing that America's playing field is not level, and that it requires special effort to make everyone feel included. I think identifying as a person of color helped me see that.

EVERYONE

How do you feel that your art relates to care?

My art relates to care because I like to make art that explores positive psychology. Positive psychology is the research-based study of what people do to increase or maintain their happiness or mental health. I think it's important to pay attention to our mental health—to learn about it and to constantly exercise our emotional tools and skills, just like exercising for physical fitness. I like to affirm the positive in my projects. I try to make artworks or experiences that give participants space to reflect, feel connected with others, and think more about things like belonging, collaboration, or interdependence. I hope people feel good after they participate in my projects!

BEA

Where do you get the ideas for your projects?

Sometimes the ideas for my projects come from a feeling, and I think about how to create that feeling for other people. For example, here is how I came up with *Ways and Means*. Sometimes someone will contact me with news about an art opportunity. Part of me is excited, and part of me is terrified: What if I mess up? What if I fail? Then, once, someone contacted me with an opportunity, and instead of feeling self-doubt, I felt confidence, because I realized that even if I couldn't overcome all the obstacles alone, I probably had friends who could help me because they had similar experiences. That made me think about my agency—my powers—and how I am interdependent with others: that I depend on other people, and other people depend on me. That's how I came up with *Ways and Means*, which is about having the ways and means to move between, around, and in spite of unforeseen obstacles. I wanted to see if participants might feel confident, too, by seeing how their and their friends' skills and knowledge are like invisible tools that they carry, like tools in a toolbox.

BEA

How did you get participants to come to the Ways and Means project? Could anyone come or were there specific people you wanted to be there?

The *Ways and Means* project was shown at a gallery. The community knows the gallery and comes to its openings. Also, openings have snacks and drinks, so people like to come and socialize. A special thing about this gallery is that the organization that runs it also runs a printshop where a lot of artists make prints. Artists tend to be curious and look at things for a long time, and they aren't afraid to ask questions of other artists, even when the artists are strangers. I like it when people ask me questions about my art!

Anyone could come to the opening. There were specific people I wanted to be there. I invited my friends. Many of my friends are artists, and some are curators. It was important to me to show them what I had been working on. This was the first time I did anything like this, and I wanted to know what they

thought because they were familiar with my work, and I respected their opinions. It feels great when other people notice my artistic development.

ELLIOT

How long was the span of creation for Belonging to take place in?

I have finished two projects about *Belonging* so far. During the first project, I only had five weeks to do everything. During the second project, I had five months total. I tried to scale the project for the timeline I had, but I set my goals high and I worked very hard to finish everything both times. On days when I had a lot to do, I would arrive at the printshop around 7 a.m., and I would leave around 8 p.m. But after a big project like this, I would usually need a week or two just to catch up with the rest of life, do laundry, pay bills, take care of relationships, etc.

BEA

In the Irrational Exuberance flag piece, what did the flags represent, because we didn't fully understand your inspiration for this piece?

I wonder: what did you think the flags represent? Usually, flags represent things like countries—the US flag—or ideas, like the rainbow pride flag. But do you think a flag could represent a mood? How do you think you might show a mood? Do you think colors or shapes could show something like exuberance? What if you wanted to show the feeling of being lighthearted and free? What colors or shapes might you use?

One of my inspirations for this project is a psychological experiment. Scientists asked people to tell a story while moving a block upward on a toy. They also asked people to tell the same story while moving the block downward on the toy. The researchers found that when people moved the block upward, they told the story in a more positive and optimistic way. When the people moved the block downward, they told the story in a more negative way. The researchers concluded that humans unconsciously associate “up” with “good.” It makes sense if you think about how when you're sick, you feel like lying down, and when you're well, you want

to get up and play, right? Or if you have a lot of something, say comic books, you have a tall stack that goes upward, whereas when you have less, the stack is lower.

When I was making this project, I was thinking about positivity, optimism, and happiness, and how sometimes you don't have to have a reason to feel happy, you just do. I was also thinking if I can trick people to look up physically, they might also look up figuratively, as in their outlook. What do you think?

BEA

Your art seems to be very colorful and cheerful. Does that happen to fit in with your own personal values or perspectives?

Thank you. I'm glad you noticed that my art is colorful and cheerful. Yes, it fits with my values and perspectives. I'm attracted to people, places, activities, and things that are optimistic, exuberant, and positive in an authentic way. I also think humans are wonderfully diverse and complex. I think emotions are amazing! I think it is a very special phenomenon that we can feel things very deeply, whether inside of each of us, between one another, as a community, and through our shared humanity.

ELLIOT

A lot of your work is really colorful and enthusiastic. In The Eve of... your work seems very dark and serious. What drove you to make a project that contrasts so visually with all of your other art pieces?

That is a very good observation. Do you want to know the truth? The truth is I made *The Eve of...* after my dad passed away. I was in mourning. My heart hurt and I felt a lot of grief and loss. It felt like pieces of me had broken, or that something had fallen away that I could never get back again. I felt like I had to stop moving, and I didn't know how to move again and which direction to go in. I made *The Eve of...* to explore that feeling.

Did you know that black is the presence of all the colors, as pigments combined or overlapped? Did you know that white is also the presence of all the colors, in rays of light? Sometimes I think of different emotions as colors. Just like some colors are mixes of other

colors, some emotions are complex mixes of other emotions. The reason my sadness about my dad was so deep was because that's how deeply I loved him.

Here is a surprising thing that I have learned. Sometimes people—let's call them “cynics”—assume that optimistic and positive people are naive. The cynics call the cheerful people “Pollyannas.” That's a reference to an old Disney movie that you probably never heard of. The cynics think that Pollyannas haven't experienced hardship. Or the cynics think that Pollyannas are in denial that life can be difficult. Here is something I think the cynics don't understand: I think that if you are still able to find joy and hope, live life with an open heart, be vulnerable with others, and express all your emotions—in spite of hardships you've experienced and the terrible cruelties and injustice in the world—it is a special, powerful kind of strength and human spirit.

BEA

What would you describe as a setback and action in relationship to your own work?

Well, I think optimism is about how you react when you encounter a setback. For example, if you make a mistake, an optimist might decide to learn from it, instead of getting angry or giving up. That's also called having a growth mindset. The first time I did a project on belonging, I used the phrase, “Everyone belongs here.” My friend, who is Native, pointed out to me that non-Native people are living on stolen land in North America, and saying that “everyone belongs here” ignores the fact that indigenous people have been systematically told “you don't belong here.” At first, I was upset, because I was stressed out—my opening reception was in a few hours. But this was a good learning experience for me. In response, the actions I took were to thank my friend, because honest feedback is a gift; to omit that phrase in future *Belonging* projects; to think about how I am a guest on this land; and to learn about things like land acknowledgments and other ways to be an ally to indigenous people.



Christine Wong Yap, *Belonging Sign*, 2nd Street SW, Nominated by Jessamyn Lovell, 2017; paint on wood; 18 × 11 × ¼ in. Developed in residence at Sanitary Tortilla Factory, Albuquerque, New Mexico, site-specific installation. Photo by Michael Apolo Gomez.



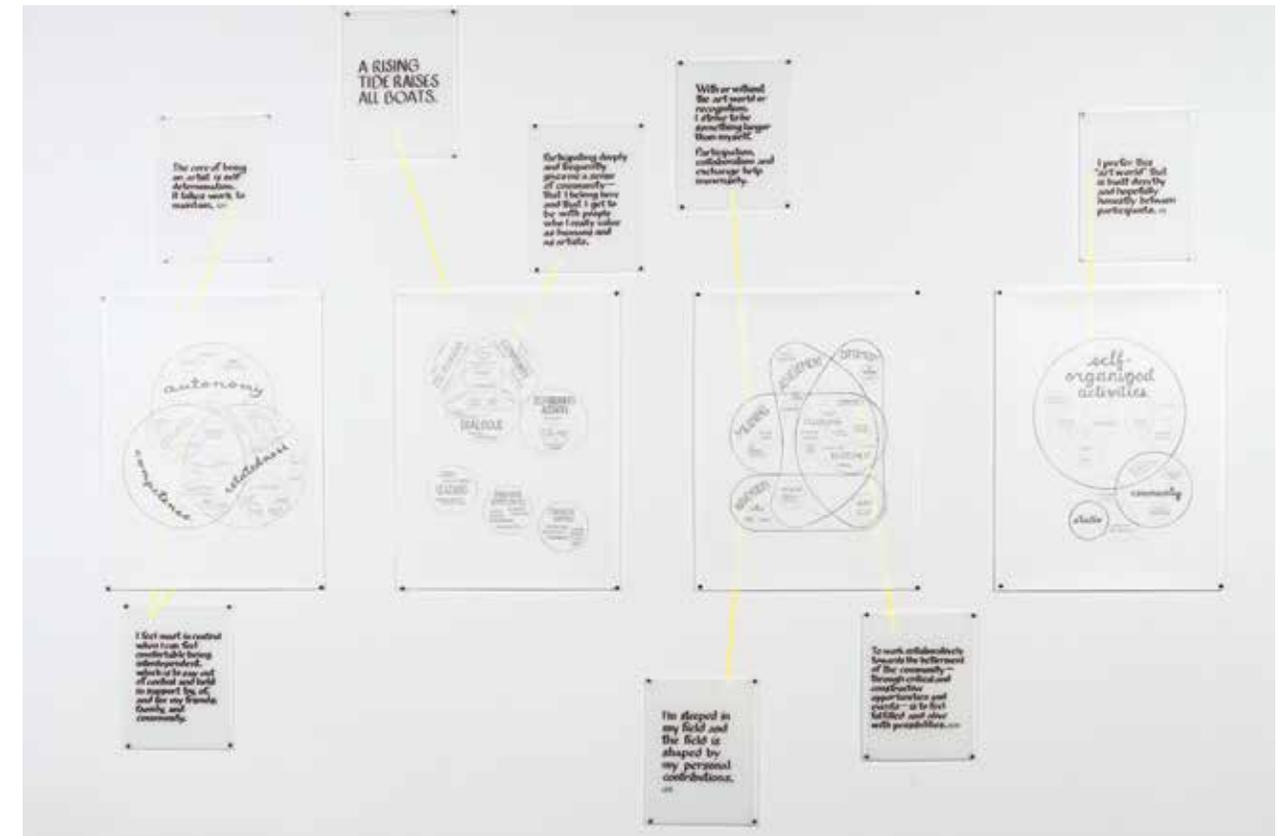
Christine Wong Yap and contributors, *Belonging Certificate: The Stud*, Nominated by Torreya Cummings and John Cartwright, 2019; letterpress print with calligraphy; 12 × 9 in. framed. Developed as inaugural artist-in-residence at the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at the University of California, Berkeley. Site-specific installation. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Christine Wong Yap. Photo by Irene Yi.



Christine Wong Yap, *Ways and Means* (installation view at Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, California), 2016; print installation with letterpress, woodcut, linoleum cut, and screen print on paper and textiles; dimensions variable. Supported by a fellowship from Kala Art Institute and an Artist-in-Residence Workspace Grant from the Center for Book Arts. Photo by Jiajun Wang.

Leah Rosenberg and Christine Wong Yap, *Color | Cootie | Feeling | Catcher*, 2016; 13-color woodblock and polymer plate letterpress print and canvas pouch; 12 × 18 in. Photo courtesy of the artists.



Christine Wong Yap, *Inter/dependence Diagrams*; drawings and calligraphic responses, 2015; graphite and ink on vellum with tape. Overall installation: 65 × 100 in.; diagrams: 24 × 18 in.; quotes: 12 × 9 in. *Inter/dependence* was developed as part of Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Process Space artist residency program. Photo courtesy of the artist.





Between You and Me installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, work by Christine Wong Yap, 2020. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

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PRACTICE**





COLOPHON

Care Is Like a Forest is an artist-produced exhibition catalogue for *Between You and Me*, presented by the John Michael Kohler Arts Center and curated by Shannon R. Stratton. The catalogue was coauthored by the Harriet Tubman Middle School Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice (HTC) in Portland, Oregon, as part of their contribution to the exhibition. The 2019-20 HTC team are Bea, Elliot, Esperanza, Harrell, Joyce, Lisa, Nora, and Syncier.

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Previous two spreads:
Sign in front of Harriet Tubman Middle School, Portland, Oregon, 2019.
Photo courtesy of KSMoCA.

The 2019-20 Harriet Tubman Middle School Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice (HTC) team taking a break on a Portland State University campus playground during a summer curatorial intensive, 2019. Front: Syncier, Back (L-R): Esperanza, Elliot, Joyce, Bea, and Nora. Photo courtesy of KSMoCA.

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