

SHARED ECOLOGIES

A FIELD GUIDE

2017–18 Field Trip /
Field Notes / Field
Guide

Graduate Consortium
Fellows

Volume III

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Fellows

Volume III

Shared Ecologies

Starring
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INTRODUCTION 2018

Guided by the theme “shared ecologies,” Field Guide: Volume 3 is produced by the Graduate Fellow Consortium Field Trip | Field Notes | Field Guide. This is a compendium of the experiences, examinations, and reflections of the 2017–18 Fellows, who collectively went on five field trips over the course of the academic year. Conceived and initiated in 2015 by the University of Chicago’s Art, Science + Culture Initiative, in collaboration with the School of Art & Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Earl + Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaborations at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Department of Art, Theory, & Practice at Northwestern University, this is an unprecedented inter-institutional and trans-disciplinary platform for research and exchange, which began as an experiment but has grown into a yearly program. Our intention is to build an interdisciplinary community, provoke unexpected exchanges, build collegial relationships, and allow for unique encounters that would not typically occur within an institutional setting.

Supporting a select group of faculty-nominated Fellows from the participating institutions, Field Trip | Field Notes | Field Guide connects exceptional graduate students and recent MFA alumni from the visual arts, music, architecture, humanities, sciences, and social sciences over the course of a year as they pursue their work in the studio, the lab, the classroom, and “in the field.” In its conception, the consortium provides an open framework, intended to augment and broaden the support offered to the Fellows by each of the four institutions.

Through self-organized field trips, the Fellows together explore and digest Chicago’s vibrant urban environment as a shared landscape in which to critically formulate and communicate their diverse disciplinary concerns. Curiosity and the desire to explore through collective observation drives this extraordinary group of thinkers and makers—our future visual artists, architects, anthropologists, composers, and art historians. It is our belief that bringing together students from diverse disciplines to actively share their methodologies and

Shared Ecologies

tools around the fertile resources of our city is highly productive for their research and artistic production.

Ultimately, it is the ten authors of Field Guide: Volume 3 who lead us through their disciplinary lenses and collective insights as they took in the sights, sounds, smells and encounters with people along the way. After discussions about the theme of “shared ecologies,” these Fellows focused their investigation on five field trips in Chicago and beyond: Calumet Forest Preserve—Big Marsh (engineered landscapes), the Overpass at Damen Avenue/I-55 Potluck (community), New Era Windows Cooperative (labor), Horseshoe Hammond Indiana Casino, (leisure), and Fermi National Laboratory, Batavia, Illinois (origins of the universe). The contents of this “Field Guide” are the Fellows’ reflections on the people and places they visited and the collective experience of shared travels.

We deeply admire the contribution these PhD candidates and MFA alumni have made to each other’s education—providing a model of co-teaching and co-production. We are grateful to our co-institution collaborators, who took a risk on an experiment that worked: Jennifer Reeder, Professor and Interim Director, School of Art & Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Pablo Garcia, Director, and Jaclyn Jacunski, Director of Civic Engagement, Earl & Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration at the School of the Art Institute, Irena Haiduk, Assistant Professor, and Matt Martin, Program Assistant, Department of Art Theory & Practice, Northwestern University. We extend a special thank you to Naomi Blumberg, Assistant Director, Arts, Science + Culture Initiative for her thoughtful insights and for keeping us all on course.

Sincerely,

Julie Marie Lemon, Director | Curator
Arts, Science + Culture Initiative
UChicago Arts, University of Chicago

SITE PROPOSAL DESCRIPTIONS

Big Marsh park

an ‘eco-recreation park’ whose model is land reclamation, public health improvement and local economy stimulation. My experiences with SAIC at Homan Square makes me curious how other organizations (and the City of Chicago) are choosing to respond to social engagement and public health in relation to the land, to landscape.
(Melody Williams, SAIC)

Calumet River system on the South Side of Chicago

This industrial site is a highly manipulated landscape, as marshland that has been dredged, filled, and shaped into canals. Nevertheless, it still functions as a natural landscape, as a popular spot for fishing and birding. A biking trail/greenway is currently under construction along the river.
(Robyn Mericle, PhD ‘18, Art History, UIC)

Fermilab, in Batavia

is a national energy laboratory and was the site of one of the preeminent particle accelerators in the world. Since the particle accelerator required so much land, it has evolved to function as a wildlife sanctuary for a herd of bison and other animals. I’m interested in how places like Fermilab that are used intensely for scientific and military purposes can end up being wildlife sanctuaries.
(Robyn Mericle, PhD candidate, Art History, UIC)

Horseshoe Hammond Casino (Hammond, IN)

I would like for us to take one of the free buses run by Chinatown companies to the casino in Hammond. If possible, I would love to coordinate with the casino to learn more about how it runs and who works and gambles there. This is

Shared Ecologies

part of my ongoing research into gambling spaces—meant to evoke the sense of being out of real time and space—and their links to the communities they share land and resources with.
(Nellie Kluz, MFA '17, UIC)

New Era Windows Cooperative (Brighton Park, Chicago)

Currently the only worker-owned manufacturing coop-erative in the city, employees of the former Republic Windows & Doors took control of their factory in 2012. Our visit will engage the social (with a presentation by worker-owners on sharing a workplace without hierarchy), the material (with an introduction to the machinery involved in the production process), and the environmental (with a tour of the factory and discussion of architecture and energy efficiency).
(Dan Miller, MFA '16, Northwestern)

Damen Avenue — I-55 Overpass Potluck

meet at night on the safe sidewalk area of a busy avenue that passes over a major highway, railroad tracks, and a shipping river, and that provides a 360° view of the city (i.e. a non-scenic viewpoint/nowhere's land of intersections. Set up a table and hold a potluck, candlelit dinner in this urban liminal zone. Topics: public space, urban intersections, fraught urban ecologies, rituals of wholeness.
(James Pepper Kelly, MAVCS '17, SAIC)

Andrew Bearnot CALUMET



Shared Ecologies



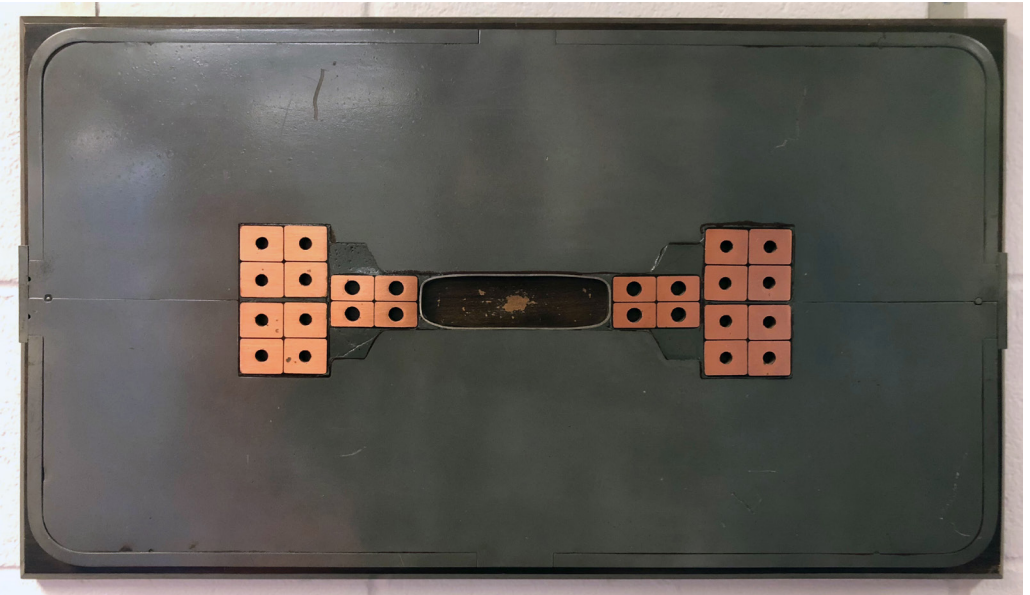


Shared Ecologies

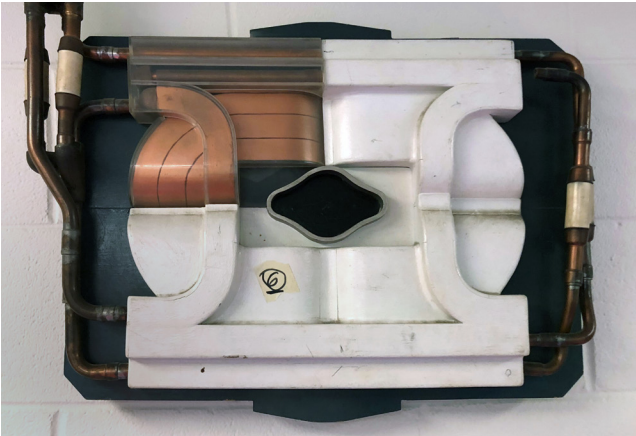
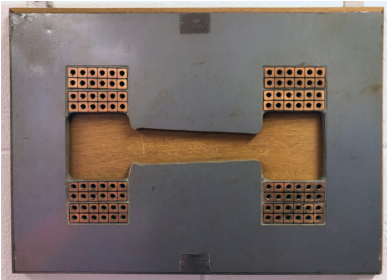
CASINO



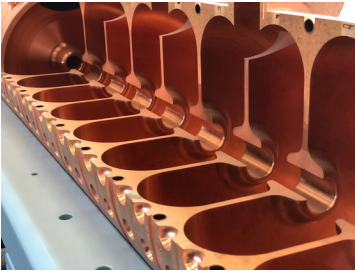
FERMILAB



Shared Ecologies



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Shared Ecologies

Andrew Bearnot

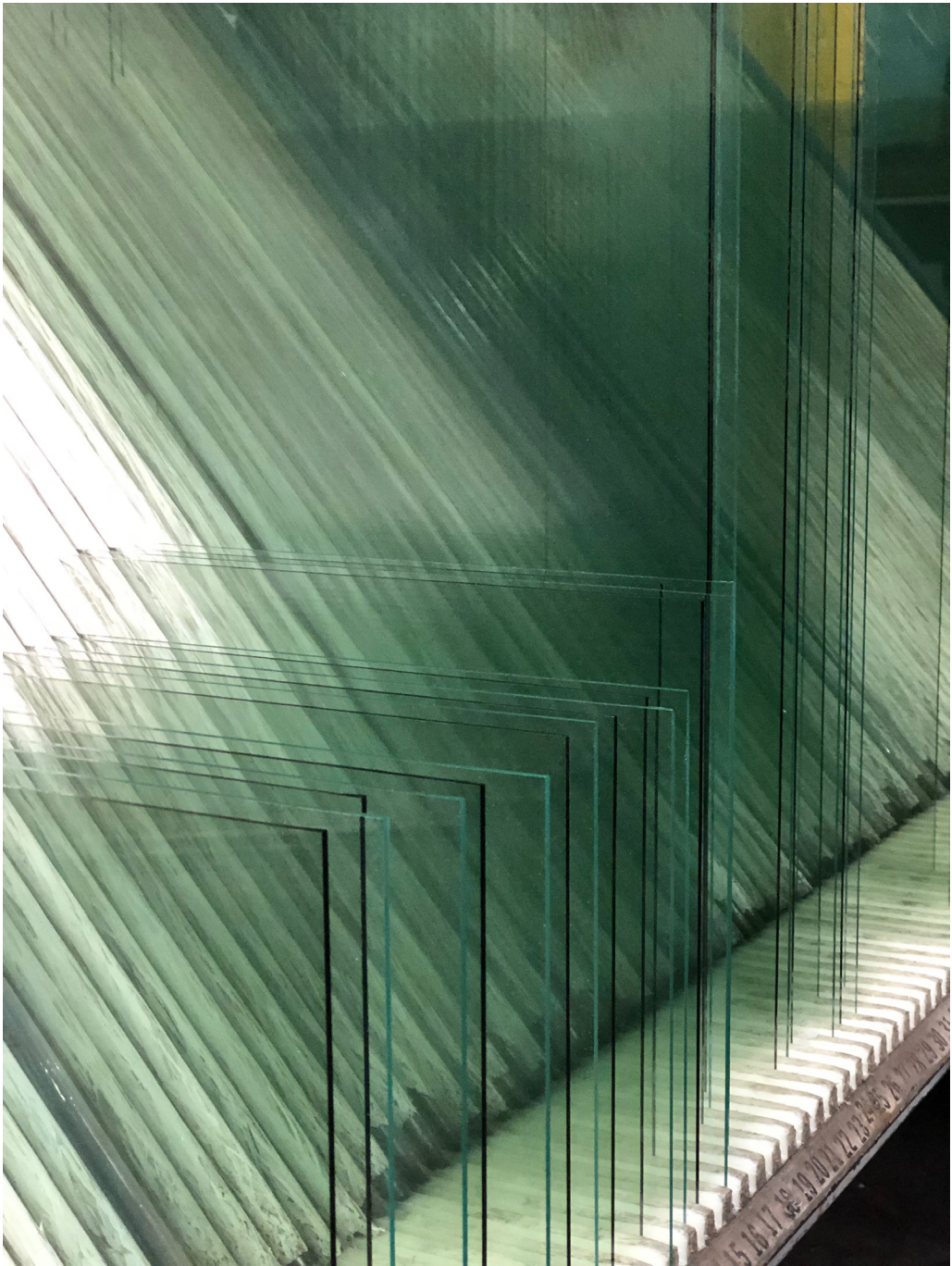




Shared Ecologies

Andrew Bearnot

NEW ERA





Shared Ecologies

Dan Miller

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT
(PRE-EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE) (AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: LAST FIRST MIDDLE
PRESENT ADDRESS: STREET CITY STATE ZIP
PERMANENT ADDRESS: STREET CITY STATE ZIP
PHONE NO. AREA CODE NUMBER EXTENSION No ☐ Yes ☐
ARE YOU PREVENTED FROM LAWFUL RESIDENCE IN THIS COUNTRY BECAUSE OF VISAS? Yes ☐ No ☐

EMPLOYMENT DESIRED

POSITION DATE YOU CAN START SALARY DESIRED
ARE YOU EMPLOYED NOW? IF SO MAY WE INQUIRE OF YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER?
EVER EMPLOYED TO THIS COMPANY BEFORE? WHERE? WHEN?
RECOMMENDED BY

EDUCATION

	NAME	LOCATION OF SCHOOL	*NO OF YEARS	WAS YOU GRADUATE?	SUBJECTS STUDIED
GRAMMAR SCHOOL					
HIGH SCHOOL					
COLLEGE					
TRADE, BUSINESS OR CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL					

GENERAL

SUBJECTS OF SPECIAL STUDY OR RESEARCH WORK

SPECIAL SKILLS

ACTIVITIES: (CIVIC, ATHLETIC, ETC.) EXCLUDE ORGANIZATIONS, THE NAME OF WHICH INDICATES THE RACE, COLOR, SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, COLOR OR ORIGIN OF ITS MEMBERS.

U.S. MILITARY OR NAVAL SERVICE: RANK PRESENT MEMBERSHIP IN NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVES

This form has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the final regulations and interpretive guidance promulgated by the EEOC on 11/18/2009.

TOPS FORM 3225 (10-01) (CONTINUED ON OT) LITHO IN U.S.A.

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APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT
(PRE-EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE) (AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: **COOP** DATE: _____
PRESENT ADDRESS: _____ STREET _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PERMANENT ADDRESS: _____ STREET _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE NO. _____ ARE YOU 18 YEARS OR OLDER? Yes ☐ No ☐

ARE YOU PREVENTED FROM LAWFULLY BECOMING EMPLOYED IN THIS COUNTRY BY RESIDENCY, VISAS, OR IMMIGRATION STATUS? Yes ☐ No ☐

EMPLOYMENT DESIRED

POSITION: _____ DATE YOU CAN START: _____ SALARY DESIRED: _____
ARE YOU EMPLOYED? _____ IF SO, NAME OF YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER: _____ WHERE? _____ WHEN? _____
REferred BY: _____

EDUCATION

EDUCATION: _____ LOCATION OF SCHOOL: _____ NO OF YEARS ATTENDED: _____ DID YOU GRADUATE? _____ SUBJECTS STUDIED: _____
GRAMMAR SCHOOL: _____
HIGH SCHOOL: _____
COLLEGE: _____
TRADE, BUSINESS, CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

SUBJECT OF SPECIAL STUDY OR RESEARCH WORK: _____
SPECIAL SKILLS: _____
ACTIVITIES: (CIVIC, ATHLETIC, ETC.) _____
EXCLUDE ORGANIZATIONS, THE NAME OF WHICH INDICATES THE RACE, CREED, SEX, AGE, NATIONAL STATUS, COLOR OR NATION OF ORIGIN OF ITS MEMBERS.

U.S. MILITARY OR NAVAL SERVICE: _____ RANK: _____ PRESENT MEMBERSHIP IN NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVES: _____

COOPERATION

*This form has been revised to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the final regulations and interpretive guidance promulgated by the EEOC on July 26, 1991.

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(CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE)

LITHO IN U.S.A.

Jan Brugger
IN THE BEGINNING
OF THIS
FELLOWSHIP, OUR
IDEA OF “SHARED
ECOLOGIES” WAS
MEANT TO BE
CENTERED AROUND
FELIX GUATTARI’S
THE THREE
ECOLOGIES, WHERE
THE PHILOSOPHER
ARGUES FOR
A NEW RESPECT FOR
THE DIFFERENCES

Shared Ecologies

Jan Brügger

or boundaries of different living systems, so that we might better link the economic, the social, and our environment.

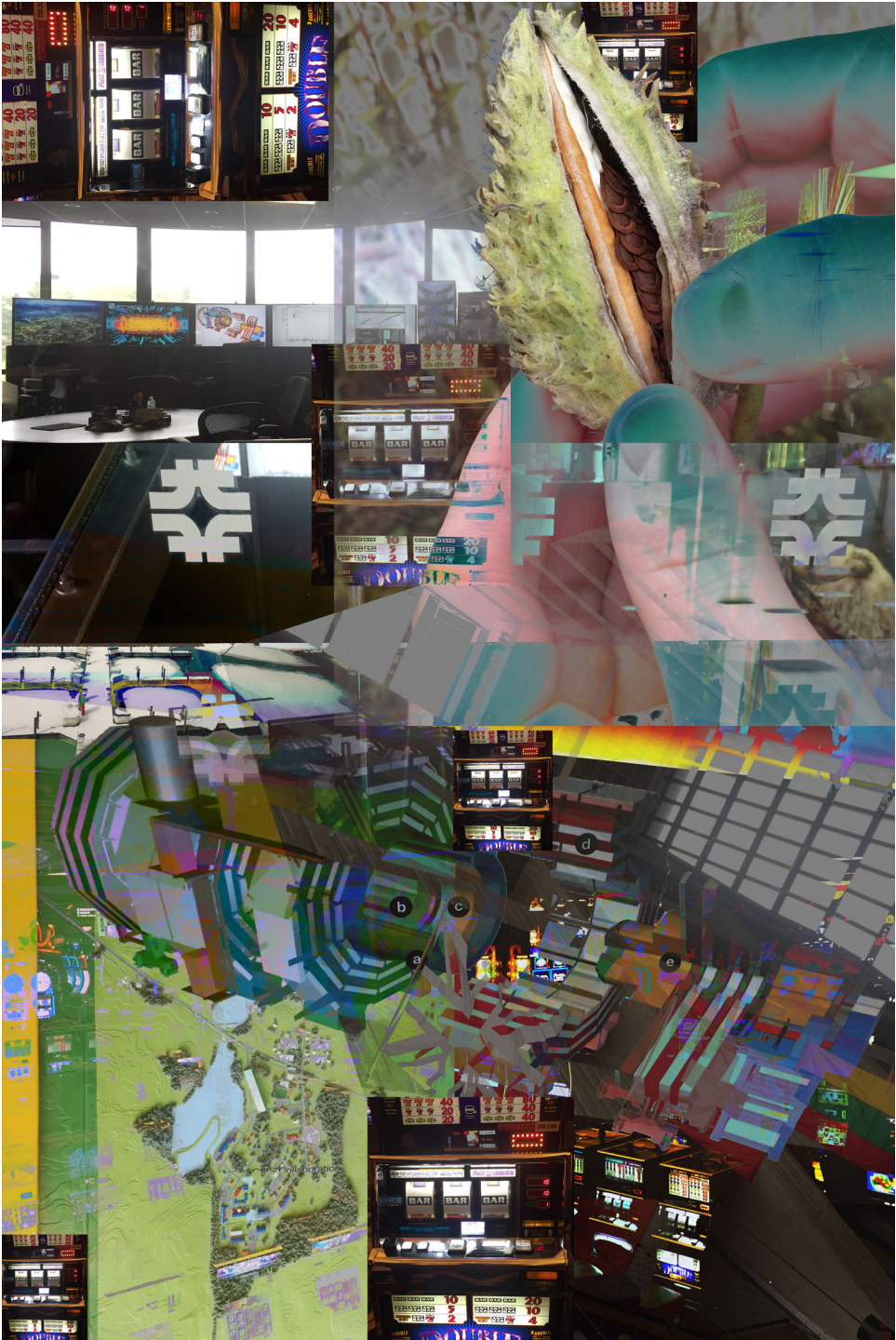
During our trips in the field, I found sad economic imbalances, disheartening environmental situations, a scientific utopia, and (maybe most importantly) a supportive, animated circle of new friends. These findings and experiences felt to me entirely separate, while at the same time completely linked.

What our field trips did not provide me were answers as to how to better integrate the ecologies mentioned above, or ideas that might help make the world function as a better place for humans and other ecosystems. For me, Guattari's last book Chaosmosis seemed a more fitting tool for my reflection on the things that I saw and felt on these trips. In it he writes:

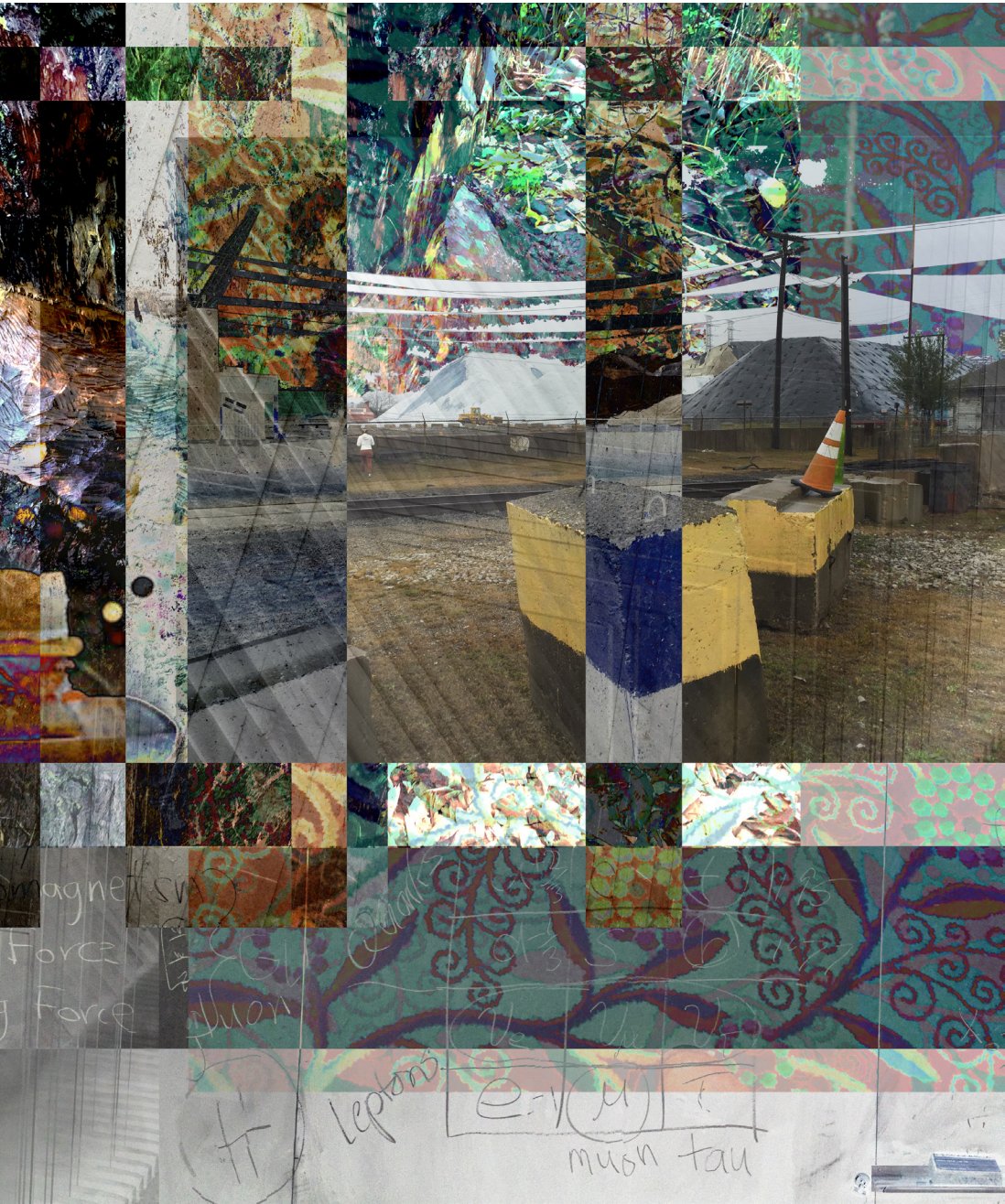
The contemporary world — tied up in its ecological, demographic and urban impasses — is incapable of absorbing, in a way that is compatible with the interests of humanity, the extraordinary technico-scientific mutations which shake it. It is locked in a vertiginous race towards ruin or radical renewal. All the bearings — economic, social, political, moral, traditional — break down one after the other. It has become imperative to recast the axes of values, the fundamental finalities of human relations and productive activity. An ecology of the virtual is thus just as pressing as ecologies of the visible world. And in this regard, poetry, music, the plastic arts, the cinema — particularly in their performance or performative modalities — have an important role to play ... Beyond the relations of actualised forces, virtual ecology will not simply attempt to preserve the endangered species of cultural life but equally to engender conditions for the creation and development of unprecedented formations of subjectivity that have never been seen and never felt. (91-2)

Thus, the aesthetic experiments that I present in this book, a series titled Blocks of Sensation, deconstruct the structures, perceptions, connections, and feelings related to my findings in the field in attempt to discover new formations and ways of looking that would, in an ideal world, lead to new understandings and mentalities.

Shared Ecologies



Shared Ecologies





Shared Ecologies

James Pepper Kelly
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT "SHARED
ECOLOGIES" MEANS.
IT'S CLEVER.
WE DIDN'T COME UP
WITH IT,
THE INSTITUTIONAL
FORCES THAT
BROUGHT US
TOGETHER NAMED IT
TO US AT THE
FIRST MEETING. IT IS
CLEVER. A COMPLEX,
PURPOSEFULLY

vague construction. Meaningful plug and play. Shared Ecologies: how do you relate? You do. You know how. Tell us how.

“Ecologies” is what does it. Lifestyle: put a bird on it (Portland). Food culture: put an egg on it (Brooklyn). Discursive sophistication: put “ecologies” on it (Chicago). This has happened in front of me. Our graduate thesis seminar advice was to devise new words and phrases. One student researched St. Joan of Arc Chapel in Milwaukee. Someone raised their hand to suggest “religious ecologies.” Oh yes, we all nodded. The presenter wrote it down, deliberately, on her paper. Oh, yes.

Where I live now is different. Rural Ohio. Birds, eggs, or ecologies do not link us here. The shared signs are different, not signs so much as immediate presences. The first we noted were black snakes, black snakes much too big to be black snakes but THERE all the same sliding round the bases of homes and daycares we stopped at. Miles apart, demarcating space. They are one layer that binds this place together. One layer of what is shared.

Donna Haraway organizes writerly and literal space using the metaphor of string games. She creates linkages to inform scientific thought through feminism and alternative foundational stories. Kurt Vonnegut does a little of this, too. Both share science backgrounds. Are thinkers with science backgrounds drawn to the multipoint movement of string work? But remember, sometimes strings have agency. Sometimes they separate from the perceptible whole to slide off on their own. Sometimes they are snakes. Dis/connected animations that occur and reoccur and then again.

Are they shared? That’s the other word. Let’s talk about “shared.” Shar*. It means more. It gives the phrase “Shared Ecologies” a soul. What is shar*?

I sit on the floor reading a Huckleberry Finn board book to my daughter. I say: “It was kind of solemn drifting down the big, still river, laying on our backs, looking up at the stars.” She turns the pages. Huck and Jim drift towards freedom. We see an underwater snake curled ‘round a fishing line, smiling out at us. Is she in Freud’s oral stage? Or Lacan’s mirror stage? Or Kristeva’s post-chora, pre-linguistic stage? Her immediacy

Shared Ecologies



surpasses all these. On the back cover the snake reappears.
Enlarged. Shared.

What does she know about shar*? When I was a newborn photographer at a south side Catholic hospital, I went for a one-year anniversary shoot. Between setups the baby manipulated an iPad. I'd say, "Okay." Her parents would grab it away and smile. I pushed the button. The baby cried. Again. Again. Once I took away the device myself. She looked up at me. Dazed. She urgently swiped one palm across the other. "Oh, that's the sign for 'share,'" said the mother. Share. Give me it back. Share. Give it to me. Share.

How does this relate to "sharing?" This, this here, involves sharing. But it's just a stepping stone. It is not sharing as self-commoditized confessional. Or unstable subjectivity as the height of self-knowledge. Remember that shar-e/-ing is primarily a social media term.

"Shared" is different. It almost runs counter to sharing. Shared:commonality::sharing:individualization. In explicit situations the two cross over and layer onto one another, like snakes keeping warm. But they are different. Something may be shared, but that is not the same as sharing. Think of the staff with two snakes that signifies medical institutions. The story is that the Greek baby Asclepius had his ears licked by snakes lying in his cradle. They granted him knowledge of medicine and the power to heal. According to this duality, one snake was Sharing and the other was Shared, one medicine, the other healing. But this story has an error. Somewhere along the way this stick with two snakes—caduceus—got confused with the original, the one-snake staff of Asclepius. The two-snake story is false. But some people ran with it. Especially in the United States. There was actually only one snake. Really. It licked both ears. Other countries tend to get this right and use the single-snake in medical logos. The two-snake rod belonged to another god altogether, Mercury and he ruled speed and commerce. We have confused commerce & speed with healing & knowledge. We confused sharing with what's shared. We've forgotten that knowledge is not bifurcated. That healing is singular. One snake. We killed the original and replaced its miraculous saliva with dormant oil from its corpse.

During Shared Ecologies we cleaved together and apart. Bodies intermittently brought together. The first time we wander

Shared Ecologies

James Pepper Kelly

round Calumet in drizzle and mist. Why? I drive a big white van and play The Jim Carroll band on repeat, the album with “Wicked Gravity,” “Nothing Is True (everything is permitted),” and “Catholic Boy.” We: wander through a foggy park, get tailed by mining security in unmarked white SUVs, walk over a bridge, hunt for industrial byproduct, eat fried fish by a draw-bridge, go home. Maybe we could all be in love.

Later on, one night after three drinks, a man tells me a deeper Calumet. He was born there. He and his friends played in the polluted lake, they would swim out to floating telephone poles and drift across the scummy water. They’ve really cleaned it up. What happened to the friends? Did they become people who died? Maybe. Now he drives a car for the sharing economy. Monitored tracking across Chicagoland, point to point.

There were other trips. What did we share? The possibility of unknowns. Who are you→who are we (→who am I). Our awkwardness. As investigators, documenters, etc. A handful of meals. The year flipped. Our numbers dwindled.

In my life, the baby is born. I see a William Blake exhibition at Northwestern. Prelapsarian Adam strokes the Snake’s head while naming the animals. Postlapsarian Eve consorts with a serpent under a waning moon. The curators tie Blake to Allen Ginsburg, to Agnes Martin, to Afrofuturism. Black and white images show a long running, now defunct Church of William Blake in a remote Ohio town. Where, unbeknownst to anyone, I will be living in six months. But before then there were more trips.

#2 Casino: stale waiting room, dead souls on the bus arriving back through the night, Snakes and Ladders slot machine, memorized facts about numbers as a lens on the hopelessness, we eat plentiful, cornstarched buffet food.

#3 Fermilab: structure-structure-structure. Overcast again. Briefed in a conference room labeled “Snake Pit.” I read out Peter Meinke’s “Atomic Pantoum (in a chain reaction)” against the echoing building. We listen to Sun Ra’s “Nuclear War” on the way home.

#4 Glass Factory: overcast. Again. Our lowest numbers yet. So we can actually talk. Lunch at Pleasant House, British pies. We argue about capitalism, factory work, quality of life in

America and abroad. Kate comes with the baby. We'd used these pies for a Blake-themed pre-celebration party for her. Andrew Rafacz is eating when we arrive, we feel connected to a larger art scene. The baby crawls on my head. She tugs at my hair, we drink more coffee, talk more. W. J. T. Mitchell tells a story about something similar in a visual culture essay. A student brings a baby to class to describe him in visual terms but the baby simultaneously performs itself. Mitchell's mesmerized by the "contrapuntal, mixed-media performance which stressed the dissonance or lack of suturing between vision and voice, showing and telling, while demonstrating something quite complex about the very nature of the show and tell ritual as such." It was like that but different. A drifting towards synthesis. "That conversation," Kate said on the way home, "is exactly what schools want."

#5 Interchange: cold and raining, no-moon night. Potluck on an overpass. Below a freeway + freight line + shipping lane. People drive by, honk, take pictures. We arrive and depart at intervals. Drifting off into the night. Shared Ecologies dissipates. What was shared was good but now Time Is Up.

What is left? What, then, is this book? What can it be? What could it ever be?

It is, of course, a souvenir of life shared. That perhaps can open back out for any of us a little easier now. A Grand Incubator of Deep Thoughts + Future Projects. Or research memento of brief punctuations in our lives. Or maybe just a tunnel to us/then. Any of those is enough.

But what for you? You who were unnamed then and may yet remain so. Who retroactively join us under mute skies. Who pick this book up, scanning, read maybe a word here or two. What can it be? It is. A quick movement across the palms. An ambiguous gesture towards what might be shared. A momentary, communal drift.

Shared Ecologies

Liz McCarthy REFLECTIONS ON NEW ERA WINDOW FACTORY

Some Notes:

2008 - closed and reopened - over 200 employees previous to first closing (much larger operation) - now only 30-40 employees

Funder Brandon Morgan - Working World - fronting money for material

14 owners - voting process to become owner

Workers - Transition back and forth from laborer to administration

Membership \$1000 for owners for a year

Hire people and then they become owners later

"Mentally crack" - sacrifice and work for the business

Paid per window - commission-based structure.

Next generation of laborers - Children of workers enter labor force, acting more as organizers, admin, and marketing.

PROFIT? Barely?

Most making around \$15/hour - does include some workman's comp

Most only background in blue collar labor

Recently hired a factory supervisor to oversee workflow and manage

Visiting New Era was both terrifying and exciting. What great idealism these folks have had structuring this cooperatively owned manufacturing plant. Listening to the reality of the business however revealed a brutal process of trying to stay open, fighting against manufacturing gatekeepers (material distribution, lenders, and dealers), and mediating the internal conflict of running as a collective. During this visit I had a flashback to my own experience running an arts space in Pilsen as a collective of 11 people, many egos and agendas

converging to generate a cultural product. After three years of this, I was exhausted and burnt out, and dropped out of the collective. These workers have been running this now for about 10 years, and the commitment still seems present and persistent. Now running my own small business as a the sole owner, I realize the advantages to a top down approach, where there is one uncompromising entity structuring the business, and impulsively acting when necessary to make changes that generate profit. The many voices of New Era drives the company's ideological position, but after ten years the business is still just barely breaking even. This experience revealed to me, that perhaps these alternative models for manufacturing and business might be good strategies for dismantling capitalism theoretically, in practice this entity is still battling to have agency in a capitalist system, where the harsh realities of free trade economics benefit those participating in and not against the rules of engagement. The children of the founding members are now starting to work for the business, and offer more millennial understanding of neo-liberal capitalism. I think their ability to brand the product as a radical alternative, romanticising the uniqueness of the co-op, might help the company participate more successfully as a profitable business. I believe that although alternative models to capitalist production provide glimpses of what could be, these experiments must eventually adopt capitalist approaches to profit growth and expansion in order to survive.



Shared Ecologies



FOR TRASH MOUNTAIN MAJESTIES, ABOVE THE DEBRIS PLAIN.

Trash Mountain was what my Step Father called the park near our apartment in Virginia Beach. I was about four years old at the time, and never really understood why he called it this, but I did really enjoy running to the top of the large mound and then hurling my little body down the side, in horizontal position, gaining momentum as I reached the bottom. Trash Mountain's formal name is Mount Trashmore Park, was opened in 1974 and spans 165 Acres.¹ This trek of land had formerly been a massive dump in the middle of Virginia Beach, a large present reminder of America's waste problem right in the middle of the city's thoroughfare, emitting foul gases and attracting a variety of vermin. What was a city to do with this blemish on the landscape, especially as the area quickly developed into a destination for beach tourism? Cover it up with dirt and put a park on it.

There is not much residual research on the lasting effects of this monument's environmental impact. The surrounding groundwater was tested for any leaching and rated safe, and there were small flaming pipes installed around the perimeter to slowly release flammable gas building up on the interior.² This experiment became a model for an American waste problem, cover it up, push it back into the ground.

Wandering Calumet Forest Preserve on the southern perimeter of Chicago, I am reminded of Trash Mountain, and the proximity of waste material that continues to surround my body. The material artifacts of the Calumet woods harken its previous use. The ground is littered with crumbling bricks, iron





slags, weathered glass brick. Although these fragments are now just 1-inch to 1-foot diameter shards, it is easy to imagine the looming industrial complex that once existed. These artifacts echo not just the specific sites' labor and production, but also a now fading era of America's industrial prosperity.

Also littering the ground are signs of a new prosperity, few green shoots, insect tracks, chunks of wood chipped by beavers. Like a fresh sheet at the murder scene, there is a layer of new life draped over the industrial gore. Although now just burgeoning on the surface, the young greenery makes promises and threat of what is possible when human monuments crumble, nature will again creep back in, creating just another layer in the crust of our earth's history.

The human body is an incredible biological machine with the ability to respond and adapt to stress and exposure. The liver works to constantly filter the toxins that we surround it with. Human bodies in Chicago are constantly bombarded with challenging materials like lead and other heavy metals

Shared Ecologies

Liz McCarthy

leaching into our water supply and air pollution from cars and other manufacturing. The residents of the City of Calumet are still physically harboring the effects of the fading industry, with high rates of cancer and other various toxic exposure related terminal illnesses.³ As a fragile ecosystem emerges from these woods, the bodies of humans in the area battle to maintain homeostasis after the shock of this industrial era.

I wonder what toxins my own body have harbored and processed as it is exposed to these seemingly stagnant sites. Virginia Beach is a well-known Navy harbor and military complex.⁴ For years it has been inundated with industrial materials as the military operated on the outskirts of this bustling tourist destination. The Atlantic bay water serves to bathe relaxing swimmers, like my toddler body in the 80's, as well as house ginormous military vessels seeping various fuels and waste product. In my neighborhood in Chicago, Pilsen, the EPA regularly combs backyards, trying to determine just how much industrial bi-product remains from the factories and coal plant that once thrived there, ghosts of this past industry still slowly poisoning our human bodies.⁵ Calumet Woods is also a specter, a reminder of what existed before the toxic industry, and what will thrive after. A resilient natural ecosystem persists, heedless of human bodies.

NOTES

1 "Mount Trashmore Park." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 22 Aug. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Trashmore_Park.

2 Hartough, Sarah. "Mount Trashmore." Baltimoresun.com, 10 Feb. 2015, www.baltimoresun.com/travel/beaches/bal-bab-vatrashmore-story.html.

3 Stark, Kevin, et al. "How Pollution Seeped Into The Lives Of East Chicago Residents." Curious City: What If the Great Chicago Fire Never Happened?, interactive.wbez.org/curiouscity/east-chicago/.

4 Parallel Crossing of the Chesapeake Bay, U.S. 13, Virginia Beach-Northampton County, Virginia: Draft Environmental Impact Statement/4(f) Statement. 5th Coast Guard District, 1993.

5 "Pilsen Area Soil Site." EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, 31 Oct. 2018, www.epa.gov/il/pilsen-area-soil-site.

Taykhoom Biviji PRESENT ALIENS

At the start of the fellowship, we were presented with an already decided theme/topic/direction/idea of “Shared Ecologies.” A pretty broad term and somewhat political for 2017, it set in the direction of our inquiry as part of the fellowship. We selected locations that didn’t have anything in com-



mon to one another, a casino, a particle physics and accelerator laboratory, an eco-recreation park and a section of the freeway. There was another site, but I didn’t make the field trip. Out of the four field trips I did participate in, two stood out for me, which were the eco-recreation park — Big Marsh — and the par-

ticle physics and accelerator laboratory — Fermilab. A major reason for this was the wide-open green space that existed at these sites and my inability for two years to exit the city of Chicago.

What is fascinating and mind-boggling for me is how these two sites came to have massive green open spaces so close to the city and how they have somehow managed to remain



under the radar for the most part. The site of steel mills and heavy industry, Big Marsh has been transformed into an ecological preserve of sorts as a form of soil remediation and taking back of land destroyed by industrialization. The park has been praised as

Shared Ecologies





fact that he was invested in building the laboratory on egalitarian ideals. Fun fact: he introduced American Bison on the campus and they have since then become a tourist attraction.

The common thread besides the vegetation was how the sites seemed out of this world to me. The plants growing at Big Marsh and the landscape had a post-apocalyptic feel or maybe even something

a paradise for cyclists as well as birders. And as you walk about the park you're completely taken over by the lush vegetation that cover the 27 acres of the park.

Fermilab came to have its own massive green space due to the sheer size of the facility and the need for some amount of isolation, but also due to the vision of its first director Robert Rathbun Wilson. On our guided tour of the facility, every possible opportunity was utilized to tell us about how great a leader and visionary Wilson was. And I am not debating the fact or questioning it, he probably was very instrumental in making Fermilab what it is now and possibly on the



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out of a movie about distant worlds in the “Marvel Universe.” I should mention we did conduct the field trip on a cloudy and rainy day so that definitely added in to the overall experience. And Fermilab with all its grand equipment and the design of buildings that could be found in the cartoon show The Jetsons seemed to be part of another world as well. To me Fermilab could be its own little planet based on the founding ideas of its first director Robert Wilson who the citizens hold in high regard. Obviously, because he gave them a planet capable of harnessing the mysteries of the universe while being the final stronghold of the American Bison.

So, for a while, I meddled with the idea of writing a fictitious piece connecting the sites through otherworldly interactions or due to aliens. I obviously am not doing that but I did do some research. A simple search for UFO sightings in Chicago took me to the website of the National UFO Reporting Center (NUFORC). It claims to be “the web’s most comprehensive and up to date UFO information source.” Founded in 1974, the organization has catalogued almost 90,000 reported UFO sightings over its history, most of which were in the United States. If you’re wondering, Illinois is quite a center when it comes to UFO sightings and while I couldn’t find any data about sightings on either site, it made me wonder if I were to re-write the T.V show Ancient Aliens, then I would start with these two sites. Of course, Ancient Aliens is all about how the ancient civilizations couldn’t have built themselves without the help of outsiders, here being aliens. So Present Aliens would be about how Illinois came to bury or cover up industries with what seems to be a bird paradise while also “present aliens” discovered the mysteries of the universe at Fermilab. And the location to host the show would be at a bar not too far from Big Marsh and still in a heavily industrialized area. The name of the bar — “Who Cares?” (pictured here).



Shared Ecologies



Nellie Kluz
OUR VISIT TO
CALUMET'S
BIG MARSH CAME



SOON AFTER
MY SEEING THE 1979
SCIENCE FICTION
FILM STALKER BY
ANDREI TARKOVSKY
FOR THE FIRST
TIME. THAT FILM

Shared Ecologies

Nellie Kluz

made me feel a location more than any other I can think of; it constructs its damp, supernatural setting, “The Zone,” out of fog, overgrown industrial wasteland, and the constant sounds of dripping water. The Big Marsh was clouded in fog when we arrived there, and all I could think about was The Zone; an eerily quiet place that feels far away from the city, with a sinister industrial past almost visible underneath the vegetation.

In my experience it's rare and exciting to find landscape in Chicago that feels otherworldly, like a set; I spent most of our visit thinking about the possibilities of the marsh as a filming location, and in fact the only other people we came across on our visit were a group of students making some kind of movie. The process of defining something as a location (as in for a film) is something that I think about a lot; the alchemy of staking out a regular space and transforming it into something else. After much searching for the right location, Stalker was filmed at an abandoned electrical plant in Estonia, where environmental toxins are commonly cited as causing illnesses among the film's crew, including Tarkovsky who died of cancer in 1986. The analogies between Big Marsh and The Zone had me thinking about how the visuals of a place can't truly be separated from the material qualities of it.



Robyn Mericle

SHARED ECOLOGIES: UTOPIA/ARCADIA

In the past couple decades, there have been discoveries of landscapes that were previously devastated by a scientific militarism and have since become havens for wildlife. The most famous example is wolves of Chernobyl: a population of wolves who have taken up residence in the area around the failed Chernobyl nuclear reactor, which is still far too toxic for human habitation but is functioning quite well as a wolf habitat. In the U.S., there is the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge in Colorado: built in 1942 to manufacture chemical weapons, closed in 1985, and subsequently designated as a top priority cleanup site by the Environmental Protection Agency. In the process of remediating the site it was discovered that 330 different wildlife species had settled in the region; it was subsequently turned into a national wildlife preserve. My interest in these clashes between science, militarism, landscape and animals made me want to visit the Fermilab National Accelerator Laboratory and the bison herd roaming their property; I assumed the bison at Fermilab were a similarly recent development, a late recognition that the vast tract of land needed to bury a particle accelerator could also sustain some wildlife. But instead I learned that the bison were brought there in 1969 by the lab's first director, Robert Wilson.

On May 12, 2018, the Field Trip | Field Guide | Field Notes (FTFNFG) Fellows visited Fermilab. We were given a crash course in particle physics, a tour of the facilities, and a drive around the grounds, including a brief glimpse through the rain of the bison herd. One of the first things we noticed when getting in the elevator of the main building was a flyer advertising Taco Tuesdays at the lab, open to the public. There is something that felt impossibly earnest and maybe even old-fashioned about these multi-pronged ambitions, ranging from Taco Tuesdays to Saturday morning physics lessons, from caring for a bison herd to performing cutting-edge physics research. This sense was furthered by the earnest

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Robyn Mericle

optimism of the tour guides and the stories they told about Robert Wilson and the early days of the lab—Wilson’s vision for a collaborative, collegial atmosphere for the workers; the art programs; the festive parties; and Wilson’s own contributions of sculpture and architecture to the site. When our guides showed us the particle accelerators, they pointed out the carefully considered color schemes of the floors and the machinery, including NAL Blue, a color developed specifically for Fermilab by the Rustoleum Paint Company and intended to reference the farms that used to occupy the site. These and other details in the experience of touring Fermilab initially led me to see the facility as Wilson’s personal attempt at a utopian space, an ambition that was undergirded by the need to redeem science after the devastation that was unleashed by the development of the atomic bomb during World War II.



Wilson was in his late twenties when he joined the Manhattan Project and went to work in Los Alamos under Robert Oppenheimer. The scientists at Los Alamos were persuaded to work on the project in the belief that they had to outpace the Nazis in the development of a nuclear bomb, but when the Germans surrendered in 1945 and it was discovered that their program was years behind that of the US, the work at Los Alamos continued unabated. Wilson discussed this moment

in the 1980 documentary The Day After Trinity, expressing regret that he hadn't fought harder at that moment to stop the bomb's momentum. He appeared speechless and sick at the mention of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While other scientists interviewed for The Day After Trinity expressed different levels of regret, disjunction, and detachment regarding the effects of the project they had been so intimately involved in, Wilson stood out from the others, in that he seemed to stay relatively in touch with a sense of moral judgment and genuine emotions of remorse, outrage, and compassion.



The lives and work of these early scientists of the Manhattan Project were discussed by Rebecca Solnit in her 1994 book Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Hidden Wars of the American West. The book is equal parts history, landscape theory, and first-hand account of her participation in the ongoing protests at the Nevada Test Site throughout the 1980s and 90s. Solnit first noticed a kind of utopianism among the scientists she encountered at the Test Site, an attitude that she describes as “reaching for their shimmering vision of a perfectible future with all the authority and technology within their grasp.”¹ In her experience, this utopianism could be contrasted to the Arcadianism of the protestors at the Test Site,

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Robyn Mericle

largely environmentalists who “believe that Paradise was in the past; [and] propose that we return to a simpler state, a lost state of grace...”² The Arcadian is derived from the pastoral tradition in Western art and literature, a tradition that includes not just ideas about nature in opposition to the city, but a slow and contemplative practice of walking, talking, and thinking. In researching the history of the Manhattan Project, Solnit was surprised to find that, unlike the technological utopianism of scientists working at the Test Site in the 1990s, those who originally laid the groundwork for, and then built, the atomic bomb seemed to embody something else. She proposes that these early scientists—including Wilson, but also more famous figures like Enrico Fermi, Niels Bohr, and Robert Oppenheimer—had turned from their pastoral, Arcadian philosophical wanderings in the early twentieth century to a hardened utopianism during the war that allowed them to accept the tremendous costs of developing the atomic bomb as somehow necessary for the progress of mankind.



After the war, Wilson seemed anxious to return to those pre-war pastoral wanderings of science; he seemed to, at least on some level, regret his participation in the Manhattan Project and everything it unleashed. Perhaps Fermilab was

his attempt to recuperate those pastoral origins of twentieth century particle physics. For Wilson, science—if Fermilab is any indication—needed to be entangled with art, architecture, design, community engagement, and wildlife to keep it from wreaking destructive harm upon the world. If the utopianism of the Manhattan Project aimed to forcefully control nature on a previously unimagined scale, Wilson’s vision for Fermilab appears—at least superficially—more oriented toward the peaceful investigation of, and coexistence with, nature.



Given the historical context of the Manhattan Project and the devastation it wrought, not just during the war but in the countless nuclear tests in the American southwest and in the Pacific islands that would continue throughout subsequent decades, Fermilab’s founding in 1969 becomes a desperate and important second chance for science. There was an urgency to Wilson’s need to decouple the pursuit of scientific knowledge from the workings of militarism and processes of national security. This seems to be confirmed by an excerpt of his testimony to Congress in 1969, when requesting government funding for the building of Fermilab (this exchange was part of the crash course in particle physics the FTFNFG Fellows received on our tour):

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SENATOR PASTORE. Is there anything connected in the hopes of this accelerator that in any way involves the security of the country?

DR. WILSON. No, sir; I do not believe so.

SENATOR PASTORE. Nothing at all?

DR. WILSON. Nothing at all.

SENATOR PASTORE. It has no value in that respect?

DR. WILSON. It only has to do with the respect with which we regard one another, the dignity of men, our love of culture. It has to do with those things. It has nothing to do with the military. I am sorry.³

In this testimony, Wilson went on to detail how the project would also attempt to address issues of social and racial justice: twenty communities in the vicinity of the project passed open housing laws under encouragement from Fermilab; twenty-three young, African-American men from Chicago were given the opportunity to train at Oak Ridge National Laboratory with the promise of jobs at the lab on their return;

and twenty percent of the lab's workforce was non-white, with Wilson expressing the goal of higher percentages in the future.



In Savage Dreams, Solnit associates the scientists' turn from their Arcadian wanderings to a technological Utopianism with the change in venue, from the forests of Europe to the deserts of New Mexico: "... physics turned from philosophy to war technology, left the gracious European forests in which so many of its crucial ideas had been realized, and moved into the desert expanse that has been its terrain ever since."⁴ The indigenous landscape around Batavia, Illinois, is neither forest nor desert, but prairie. Prairie landscapes share a few overlapping characteristics of forests and deserts—the wide flat expanse of the desert, combined with an abundance of flora more similar to a forest—but they are also, of course, distinct landscapes in their own right. Moving a national laboratory to Batavia made sense on a practical level, being close to Chicago and centrally located in the middle of the country, but it also means that science found itself in an environment that resists the dichotomy that Solnit saw in the forest-to-desert transition.

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Robyn Mericle

Prairies are complex and picturesque in their own way, but I would argue that they haven't been so culturally determined as forests and deserts in the Western imagination. By the time the lab was built, the native prairie ecosystems throughout Illinois had long been destroyed, but in the early 1970s the Fermilab Prairie Committee was formed to restore hundreds of acres of the site to the original tallgrass prairie. Supporting prairie restoration and bringing the bison herd to Fermilab indicates a level of attentiveness to the specificity of the prairie landscape, and these efforts anticipated later prairie restorations throughout the Midwest.⁵ In any case, the presence of the bison on site provides an atmosphere of pastoral meandering to the grounds, and perhaps even a sort of temporal suspension from the march of progress that the lab's research processes embody.



If Wilson's ambition was utopian, it was a utopianism whose grand ambitions (for cutting-edge research, or creating dramatic modernist architecture) were persistently interrupted by Arcadian meanderings and by modest, incremental, adaptable gestures. Perhaps there is a kind of utopian energy originally set in motion by Wilson and other early administrators, being carried out—imperfectly, and perhaps awkwardly at

times—throughout the daily workings of the lab, including the Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment, but also the carefully planned color schemes, Saturday physics lessons, and



Taco Tuesdays. In this framework, the almost comic mundanity of public Taco Tuesdays, along with other small gestures, becomes essential to keeping the processes of the lab grounded in a place and time, in the community around Batavia, and in the everyday lives of the people working at Fermilab. The uneasy layers of grand, mundane, modest, ambitious, incremental, adjustable, outdated imaginings mark it as a place that is, however improbably, navigating a path between a wistfully nostalgic Arcadianism and a relentlessly optimistic technological utopianism.

Notes

1 Rebecca Solnit, Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Hidden Wars of the American West (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) 112.

2 Ibid.

3 Fermilab History and Archives Project, “R.R. Wilson’s Congressional Testimony, April 1969,” <https://history.fnal.gov/testimony.html> (accessed October 13, 2018).

4 Solnit, Savage Dreams, 136.

5 For instance, see Lauren Zumbach, “Bison to roam Midewin prairie again,” Chicago Tribune, March 28, 2015, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/chi-bison-illinois-20150328-20150328-story.html>. Accessed October 14, 2018.

Shared Ecologies

Melody Williams

Calumet
Sara Zalek **CALUMET** *World Listening Project*

Sara's Facebook page

Midwest Society Acoustic Ecology

Jesse Davis - Big Marsh, Center Director
jesse.davis@chicagoparkdistrict.com

Norman Long - *Gay* INTO-THE-BREAKS parkdistrict

Taking the Waters - Eco Design Riverwaters Chicago
Eric Leonardson

Kevin Stark, journalist

↳ { East Chicago & West Calumet
Chicago Reader } "toxic doughnut"
Pacific Standard } *Paul at Sports article / interview*

Lindsey & Sara Li - At the Headwaters - exhibition

Southeast Environmental task Force - offers tours
* we ended up running into them -

Hello Sara and Norman,

I'm writing because Eric Leonardson directed me your way—I'm planning a trip with a group of artists and researchers to Big Marsh Park & the Calumet area and he suggested I reach out regarding your collaborative work at the park.

Norman, I really appreciated your writing response: how to be in a place that is old and new, and the progression in questioning, starting with I and moving toward We. Thank you for sharing some of the experiences, sounds, images on your blog.¹

The research fellowship I'm a part of is focused on ecology—in bio life and as a way to understand interconnectedness. I'd love to talk if you have a little time in the next week or so. Or, if you'd like to send any resources (readings/media/experiences) I should follow up on, or perhaps to share some considerations I should meditate on, that would also be helpful.

Thanks so much for your time.

Nice to hear from you, thanks for reaching out. I like so much the idea of repair of ecology to exploring how to redefine and rediscover ways of connecting, with nature, other people, communities, resources, bio diversity and the literal reconstructing of a huge area ... this was/is a waste DUMP, like very nasty metal slag and chemical damage...the place itself still leaves many questions for me, as for motives of the city/government with big industry pipeline going in very close to this site, the clay "capping" of soil, and wanting to understand if this is really a viable way to revitalize land...has me thinking about disguise, about experimentation, transparency, distribution of monies... NW and I are meeting up next Wed so we can share some more thoughts on it, if you have any specific questions or ideas and want to send them along, we could respond together.

Take care~
Sara

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Melody Williams

It's nice to hear from you, too. Thank you for your generosity in sharing some candid thoughts...

Disguise is an excellent word. I've been leaning toward framing the trip as a play between official narratives and paths, and straying off them. I believe the facade of a naturalist motivation falls away pretty quickly as soon as we leave the curated paths. Still, I love being in these "natural" environments, and am feeling that tension... between the industrial, chemical and sometimes nuclear waste sites and uninhabitable land, and the development of preserves.

Warmly,
M

What actually does constitute a brownfield (areas like the marshes) and a Superfund site? Public perception and outrage? The power to authorize the land as a superfund? I am thinking a lot about this because within our research project there is an assumption of Ecology-As-Sharing. Sharing is a benefit. If ecologies more or less signify only the presence of a relationship, what kind of relationship is it? This to me seems antagonistic, an antibiosis...a toxic relationship. Through projects of rejuvenation and of research, I feel we are covering up and revealing as much about ourselves as we do the land.

Thank you for reaching out and your interest in the projects I'm doing. I've been reading Drosscape by Alan Berger recently. The book talks about waste in relation to urban growth. It has a chapter and graphics specifically about the Lake Calumet region. I've also found James Corner's Recovering Landscape useful as well... Rasheea Phillips's Community Futures lab <https://www.blackquantumfuturism.com/community-futures-lab-tumblr>. I've also attached the City of Chicago's proposal for Park 564 as well (if you hadn't seen it yet). I'd love to talk more on this topic. Take care.

Best
Norm

“Since the 1990s brownfields have received increasing attention from the federal government. From 2003 to 2005 more than \$225 million in federal grants were dispersed to states to promote the redevelopment of contaminated landscapes... Today developers seek out contaminated sites instead of clean ones...developers can generate a higher rate of return from contaminated properties than from non-contaminated properties.”

“The term brownfield, however, is somewhat confusing and difficult for most people to comprehend. The majority of U.S. cities do not have a brownfield department program. The reason for this is that the actual number of urban sites containing real (not perceived) contamination is unknown. Cities typically apply for federal brownfield funding... in order to assess the levels of contamination on sites perceived to have such conditions... When contamination is found... land value is significantly decreased.

Cities do not map brownfields!

Cities, therefore, will apply for federal assessment only when a party is interested in purchasing or redeveloping a given site.”

Alan Berger — Drosscape (2007) pp.70–71

“For landscape to be properly recovered it must be remade, designed, invented anew; it cannot be simply restored, as in an old painting.”

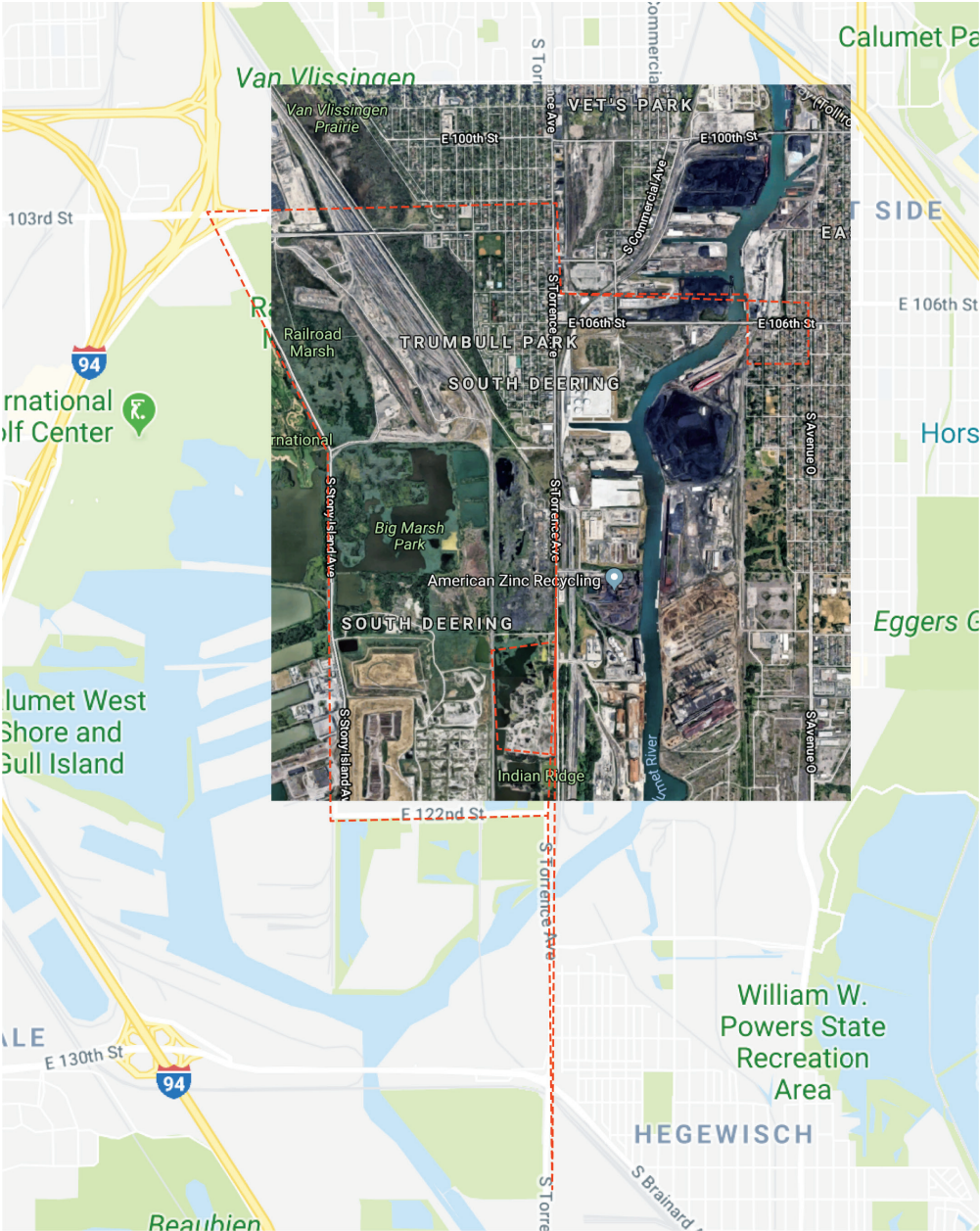
James Corner — Recovering Landscape (1999) xi.

Notes

1 Big Marsh Soundwalks and Performances
<https://intothebreaks.blogspot.com/2017/09/big-marsh-soundwalks-and-performances.html>

2 “Sara Zalek is an artist, choreographer, and curator rooted in Butoh and investigations of personal identity. She is obsessed with time travel, experimental science, hybrid animals, permaculture, and the intentional act of transformation.” www.saratonin.com

3 Norman Long “is a sound artist/designer/composer based in Chicago, IL. His current work focuses on sound art production within the larger context of landscape.” <http://normanlong.wixsite.com/soundartdesign/about>





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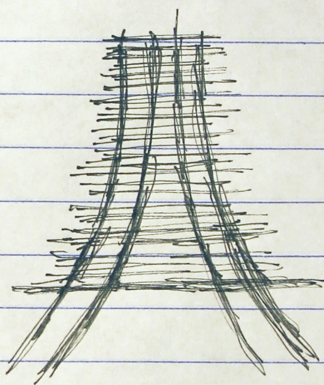
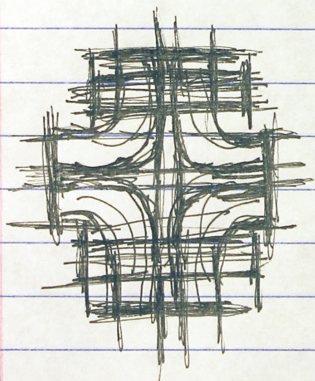


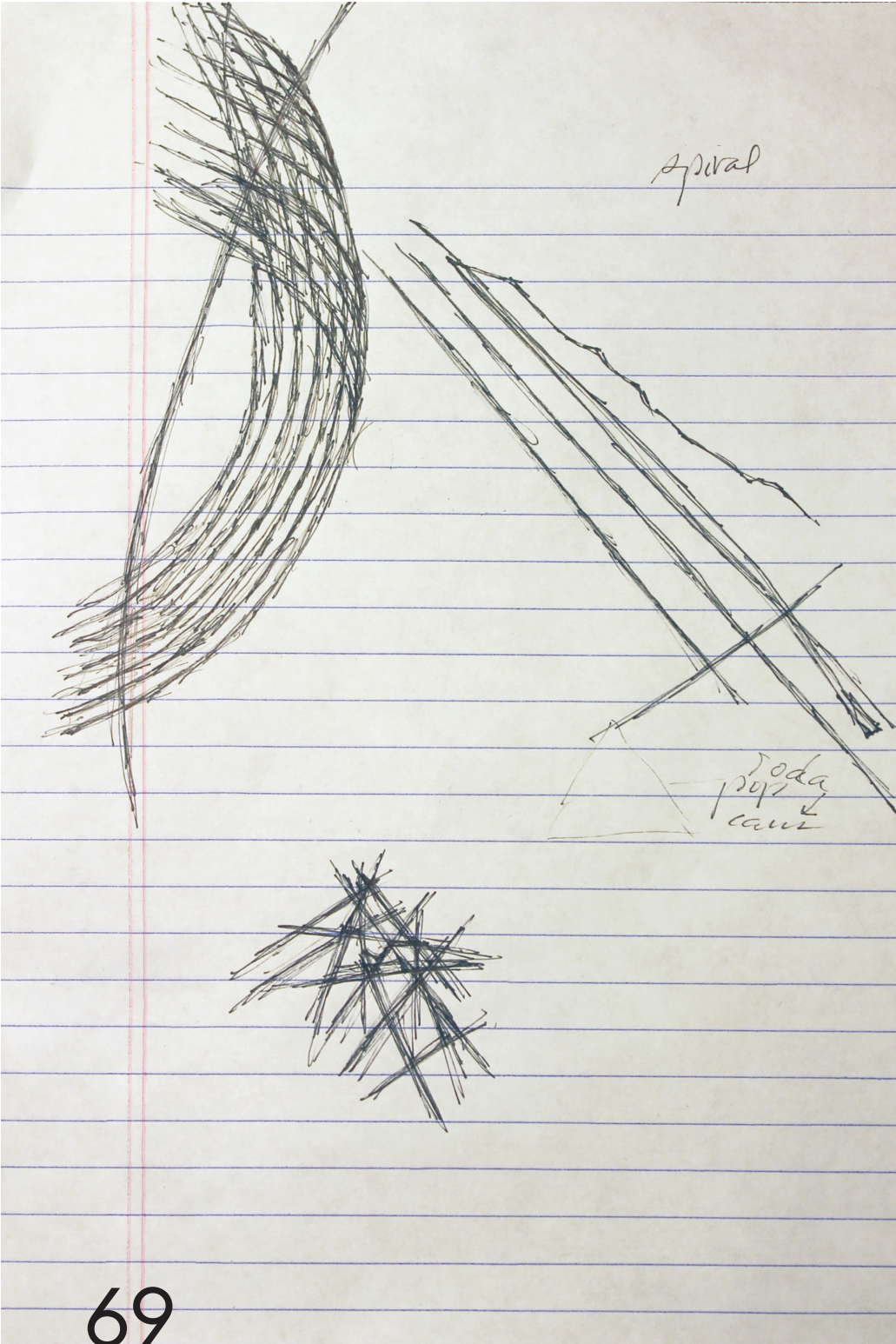


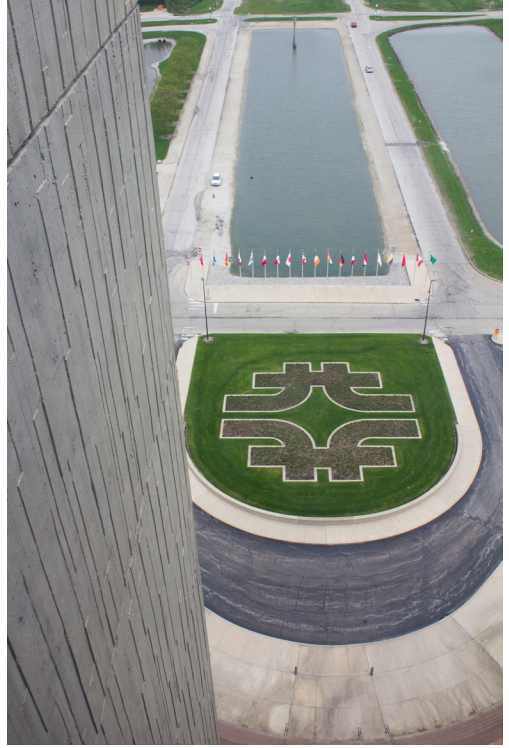
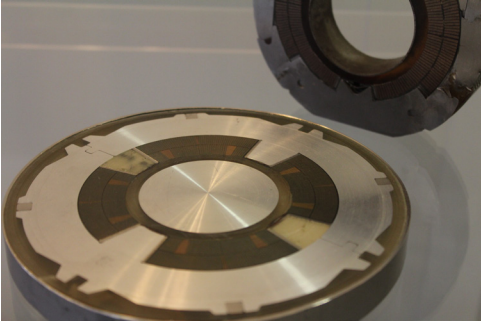
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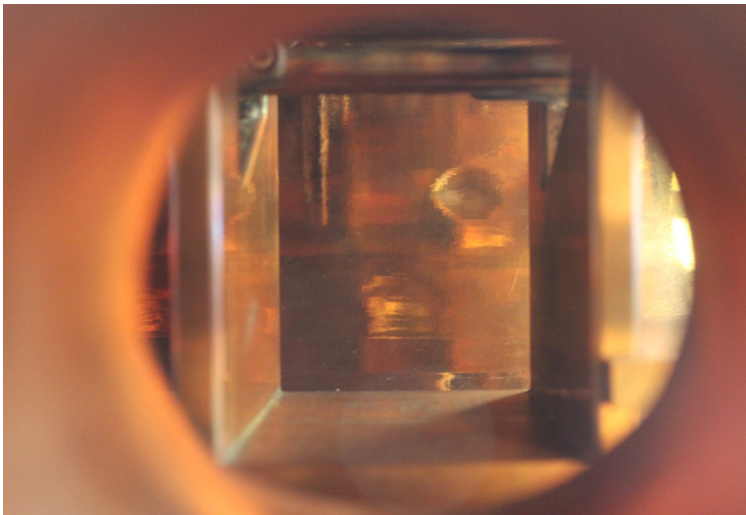
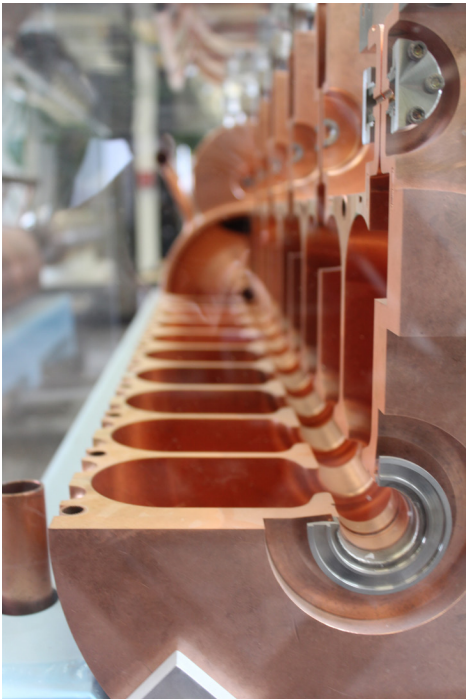
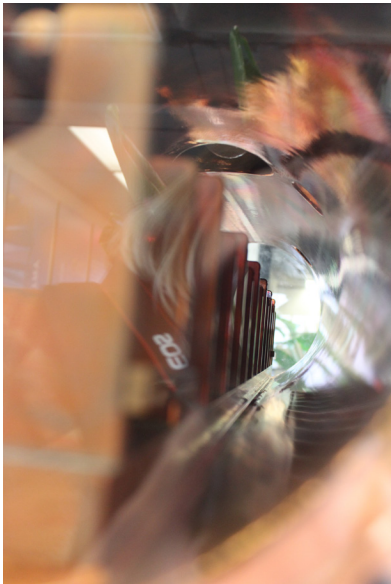
FERMILAB







Shared Ecologies



“The Earth is undergoing a period of intense techno-scientific transformations. If no remedy is found, the ecological disequilibrium this has generated will ultimately threaten the continuation of life on the planet’s surface. Alongside these upheavals, human modes of life, both individual and collective, are progressively deteriorating.”¹

Félix Guattari, The Three Ecologies (1989)

“The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive.”

**Donald J. Trump @therealDonaldTrump
Twitter, Nov 6, 2012**

“China loved Obama’s climate change speech yesterday. They laughed! It hastens their takeover of us as the leading economy.”

**Donald J. Trump @therealDonaldTrump
Twitter, June 26, 2013**

Shared Ecologies

Hanne Graversen

LEISURE: THE LAST ECOLOGY

On October 1, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a report outlining dire consequences of a projected 2.7 degree rise in temperature by already 2040. While the I.P.C.C. panel of experts stresses that the world does have 12 years to reverse this ecological devastation, it also cautions that political priorities might make it impossible to do so.² The U.S. President's response to the report: "I can give you reports that are fabulous, and I can give you reports that aren't so good."³ While I find Trump's choice of words beyond jarring, the incredible disconnect from the reality that his remark signals in fact goes to the heart of our complicated relationship to ecology today.

Of the series of field trips undertaken as part of the 2017–18 Field Trip | Field Notes | Field Guide fellowship, two trips have come to define the Shared Ecologies theme this past year: the first trip and an unrealized trip. The first one set the tone and theme perfectly: crossing paths with other ecologically minded day-trippers, we explored a nature sanctuary created on a Chicago Superfund site: Big Marsh. Marveling over the layers of artifice at the site, a chewed up tennis ball discovered atop the practically rubberized soil in the "nature" preserve, the encounters with amateur filmmakers and college students on this first trip made me wonder, what exactly is the relationship of leisure to ecology? [fig. 1] The unrealized trip offered up the answer: leisure is an ecology. The unrealized trip acutely demonstrates the dynamics of the connections we were trying to trace and make legible through our fields trips. Indeed, the very issue that prevented its realization cemented leisure as the most dominant aspect of the shared ecologies we investigated on our series of field trips.

When corresponding with a public relations representative for the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, the enmeshment of social and environmental ecologies with the economic dynamics, became clear. The tribe's Four Winds casino grand opening

in South Bend was imminent at the time and we reached out to arrange a trip intended to explore the economic impact of the first tribe-owned casino in the state of Indiana. For, as the representative informed us, the tribe which had finally been successful in its claim to a vast area of land in the South Bend region, had a much more holistic plan in place than the casino. The first tribe casino in Indiana, it was projected to create hundreds, even thousands of much needed employment opportunities. Competing for the casino business in Indiana, the casino is projected to significantly eat into competing casinos' profit margins and as a result is anticipated to reduce the state tax reaped from such businesses by the millions, since any profits from the casino situated on sovereign land is not subject to state taxes. Recognizing the economic impact the casino would have in the state of Indiana, the tribe voluntarily committed to make significant monetary contributions to infrastructure development the local area with 2 percent of its revenues going to the city of South Bend.⁴ What's more, to proactively appease the negative influence of the casino feared from the local community, the tribe funds and operates a small police substation. But the tribe's interest and investment in the land goes far beyond its momentous socio-economic impact: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi is working on restoring the land it has recovered for the tribe to the thriving wetland ecology that it once was, making this Four Winds casino the perfect case study of the enmeshment of shared ecologies that we were exploring.

However, when it came to the scheduling of our field trip to the casino and its lands to coincide with its inauguration at the beginning of 2018, to fully experience the intersecting social, economic, and environmental ecologies and to fit within our Fellows' schedule, the perfect case study became an impossible case study, when the tribe's Department of Natural Resources unwavering insisted that it "recommends holding off on this visit until June, when the wildflowers will be in bloom and walking and even driving conditions will be much more pleasant." The notion that the trip should be pleasant, "fabulous" even with the wildflowers in bloom, in order for it to take place, was bewildering to me at the time. The tribe seemed not to appreciate our appreciation for the less spectacular, even barely visible, aspects of their project: the economic transformation of a region, the slow process of restoring its wetland areas, and the construction of infrastructures to support the tribe in their reclamation

Shared Ecologies

Hanne Graversen

of the land. While it was exactly such interconnecting processes that had me interested in the tribe's new casino, the tribe operated on a much more common assumption, namely that ecology must be something nice, something pleasant to experience and ponder. It seemed to equate it with a by now quaint and outdated notion of "Nature," as something separate to and offering a counterpoint to the manmade, built environment and its physical and social infrastructures.

The expectation underpinning the wildflower requisite, then, is that exploring ecology ultimately should be a form of leisure. In his unorthodox study, Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies from 1971, British architectural historian Reyner Banham proposes that the form of Los Angeles was defined by four interlinked so-called "ecologies" that were historically, geographically, and culturally defined, rather than by any traditional architectural or urban planning model. By embracing the "Autopia" ecology of L.A. in particular, Banham proposes a surprising and to many unpalatable take on what an "ecology" might be. Upsetting the sensibilities of architects, urban planners, and environmentalists at the time, Banham's expanded notion of "ecology" has leisure at its core. For "Autopia," in Banham's analysis, is an ecology composed as much by culture of car pimping as by the historically defined physical structures of the pervasive Los Angeles freeway network. He conceived of the LA freeways as a "single comprehensible place, a coherent state of mind," a place where the people of Los Angeles "spend the two calmest and most rewarding hours of their daily lives." Providing a novel model for reconfiguring how we perceive of our cities more generally, Banham thus invites us to consider leisure as a driving factor in any urbanized environment. Leisure, then, would be the fifth ecology.

The Horseshoe casino that we ultimately visited instead, gave us an insight into the underbelly of that fifth ecology. The American model of leisure has long been one of consumption, the mall being the predominant site of leisure in American society since the 1950s and inextricably bound to its car culture. Boarding the free casino shuttle from a Chinatown location right beneath the expressway, the human consequences of a society pushing a notion of leisure as one of constant consumption — eat, drink, travel, buy — became apparent. As we boarded the shuttle, we encountered a number of people slumped over in their seat, practically drained of life. Again, my initial reaction was one of bewilderment. Why

would these people be so exhausted already by late morning? Then it dawned on me that they were not on their way to the casino the way that we were, but that they were returning, passed out, possibly having missed their stop, since they had spent the entire night and early hours at the casino. What a party! Except, the exhaustion weighing so heavily on these individuals that they barely moved in their seats was not one of joy expended, but of capital carelessly consumed, and the concrete consequences of such excesses drained them of their desire to exist. Lifeless is how they appeared. This is an extreme version of the sort of passivity that Guy Debord cautioned us against, when already in 1967 he deplored the sad state of The Society of the Spectacle. The party to be had at a casino is one reveling in the spectacle of the precarity of the individual in a society caught in an endless cycle of consumption. Is it farfetched to forge a comparison of its appeal to that of the spectacle of public executions?

That a distorted notion of leisure permeates most aspects of contemporary life, making it an ecology, was once again brought into relief with our field trip to a workers-owned and -run factory, the New Era Windows Cooperative. After a series of busts and no booms, due to a suffering bottom-line in the wake of the Financial Crisis, workers at the factory grew increasingly frustrated with the management's inability to secure the future of its workforce and in 2012 made the bold and admirable move to unite forces to buy the factory and run it as a workers' cooperative. But the workers' struggle to secure the factory's future, now their own, continues. Deeply invested in the future of the factory, the cooperative members work longer hours and assume more responsibilities, making it their lives' project to turn around the fortunes of the factory. Such personal investment in the fate of a company takes its toll on the lives of these individuals. Their workplace is no longer just a place of work. When there is no time for time off, any remnant of leisure takes place within the workplace, as the children's shoes draped on a defunct machine and the bowl of kibble for the resident cat testify to. [fig. 2] Granted, what remains of leisure at New Era is hardly of the spectacularized variant, but it too is a strand of leisure that signals how there is no such thing as "pure" leisure today. Indeed, it is always already caught up in the structure of capital.

As William Cronon's seminal study Nature's Metropolis tracing the intertwining of economic, urban, technological, and

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fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3

agricultural history, shows us: ecology and economy are inextricably linked. In the context of Cronon's analysis of Chicago in the nineteenth century, Cronon posits that "the human economy" is a "second, constructed nature of which the city itself was the most visible expression."⁵ In second nature, Cronon argues, "[e]cology and economy had converged" to create "a landscape in which the logic of capital had remade first nature and bound together far-flung places to produce a profound new integration of biological space and market time."⁶ [fig. 3] The nature preserve at Big Marsh, then, a wasteland of second nature industry turned over to first nature to create a site of leisure for city-dwellers, emerges as a third nature. It can merely disguise the irreversible consequences of second nature. It can spectacularize it and make it more palatable — enjoyable even. For at Big Marsh and other Superfund-sites alike, first nature cannot undo what second nature has wrought. The Calumet Cluster, of which Big Marsh forms part, remains an active Superfund site today, since its official designation as such in September 2005.⁷ Superfund sites have been identified since 1980, when Congress set aside the funds to clean up the nation's most polluted areas. But the Calumet cluster and many other Superfund sites alike, such as Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Illinois, are beyond "clean up."⁸ At Big Marsh, removing the polluted soil was deemed financially unfeasible and a decision to instead put a cap on the land was made, a cap thick enough that it should be safe for people to walk and bike through the area still surrounded

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fig. 4

by active industry. [fig. 4] As Ben Schulman writes in his celebratory article on the success of the reclaimed site: “The Big Marsh was once home to nine steel mills. Now it’s where bikes and rare birds roam.”⁹ However, only the irrevocable pollution of the site has persuaded economic stakeholders that it could serve no other purpose than a place of leisure. To them, the leisure site of a nature preserve is the last resort. Third nature only takes place when no other options for revenue are present. As the active sites of heavy-industry encircling Big Marsh form testimony to: leisure is not only the last resort, it is the last ecology.

Fittingly, the last field trip was a potluck by a Chicago inner-city expressway, affording the dining Fellows an intimate view of the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) in a culinary event that would have made Banham proud. Much like the ASCO artists in late 1970s Los Angeles for their last supper event in a traffic island, the Field Fellows enjoyed a meal in traffic, inserting themselves into the quintessential twentieth-century ecology and making its intertwinement with leisure manifest. For the 2017-18 Field Fellows, too, leisure is the last ecology.

NOTES

1 Félix Guattari, The Three Ecologies, translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton, first published in France 1989 (London and New Brunswick, NJ: The Athlone Press, 2000): p. 27.

2 Coral Davenport, "Major Climate Report Describes a Strong Risk of Crisis as Early as 2040," The New York Times, October 7, 2018. www.nytimes.com/2018/10/07/climate/ipcc-climate-report-2040.html

3 Sinéad Baker, "Trump suggests the climate may actually be 'fabulous' after an ominous UN report on looming disaster," Oct. 10, 2018. www.businessinsider.com/trump-doubt-un-climate-change-report-2018-10

4 Caleb Bauer, "Four Winds South Bend Opening Will Shake Up the Gambling Industry in Michiana," South Bend Tribune, published on the Indiana Economic Digest, January 14, 2018.

5 William Cronon, Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992): p. 264

6 Ibid: pp. 155 and 224.

7 "How close are you to a Superfund site?," National Geographic. Accessed Sept 11, 2018. www.nationalgeographic.com/superfund/

8 "Superfund Record of Decision: U.S. DOI Sangamo/Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, IL," National Service Center for Environmental Publications, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Accessed Sept 11, 2018. www.epa.gov/nscep

9 Ben Schulman. "How Chicago Turned an Industrial Waste Site Into a Nature Lovers' and Cyclists' Paradise," CityLab, Jul 27, 2016. www.citylab.com/design/2016/07/how-chicago-turned-an-industrial-waste-site-into-a-nature-lovers-and-cyclists-paradise/492665/

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BIOS

Andrew Bearnot (UChicago MFA '17) is a materialist: he thinks with and through the substance of things. Informed by a background in material science (BS, Brown University) and glass (BFA, Rhode Island School of Design), Bearnot explores moments of transcendence in the everyday. After completing his undergraduate degrees, Bearnot helped establish and coordinate the Brown/RISD Dual-Degree Program. He was awarded fellowships from Fulbright and the American-Scandinavian Foundation for research on glass-making traditions in Sweden and Denmark. While completing his MFA at UChicago, Bearnot received a Graduate Collaboration Grant from the Arts, Science, & Culture Initiative for his ongoing project Molecular Movement.

Taykhoom Biviji (SAIC MA '17, Arts Administration and Policy) is originally from Mumbai, India, and now lives and works in Chicago. Currently, he is the Research Associate for Oaks of North Lawndale: Enduring Promises, an initiative by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago along with community members to reforest the North Lawndale neighborhood. Taykhoom is driven by justice, empowerment, and change. He has a background in film and television and has worked with a television channel, museum, and a travel outfit. In 2015 he earned a Masters in Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology from St. Xavier's University-Mumbai.

Jan Brugger (UChicago MFA '17) She received her BFA and Certificate in Dance from the University of Wisconsin in 2009. She was also educated by the cities of San Francisco and Richmond, Virginia. Her recent work considers the screen's influence on the human body and mind, and how we cope with the divide between our physical and digital selves. Through sculptural installations and digital video content, she turns the viewer into a static object, reversing the subjective roles of human and object. A viewer frozen by the work becomes objectified, while the physical and digital objects are elevated to a lifelike status in the mind of the viewer. In this way, she emphasizes how humans bring objects and screens to life, often at the expense of the human.

Hanne Graversen (UChicago PhD student, Department of Art History) An advertising strategist turned art historian, Hanne

Graversen's research focuses on the relationship between postwar art and its built environment. Her dissertation project explores the ways in which artists engaged with the construction of the US Interstate Highway System across a range of media and sites. She holds a BA in French and an MA in Film Studies from University College London, as well as an MA in Contemporary Art from Sotheby's Institute of Art, London. She is the recipient of the 2016 Schiff Foundation Fellowship for Critical Architectural Writing and the 2017/18 Mellon Sawyer Seminar "Urban Art and Urban Form" Graduate Fellowship.

James Pepper Kelly (SAIC MAVCS '17) is a transdisciplinary artist who makes social spaces, video projections, and text pieces. He researches in archives and with publics, with the goal of exploring the social intersection between text and lived history. Kelly recently completed a residency through the Springfield Art Association that explored the city's political imaginaries by way of the fake news of Abraham Lincoln & the utopian visions of "the singing poet" Vachel Lindsay. As an arts writer, Kelly has written for ArtSlant and the Bad at Sports Blog, edited for Chicago Artists Writers, and been commissioned by the Hyde Park Art Center. As an arts organizer, he has worked with Chicago nonprofits Filter Photo (as Co-Founder & Managing Director), Latitude Chicago (as Executive Director & Treasurer), and Chicago Artists Coalition (as Interim Professional Development Director). In the fall of 2017 he looks forward to taking part in the Terrain Biennial. Kelly has a Bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University and is originally from rural Virginia.

Nellie Kluz (UIC MFA '17, Moving Image) Working in video and using curiosity, observation and analysis, Kluz records and interprets various locations and communities—focusing on social interactions and aesthetics, belief systems and material realities. Her movies have screened at places like the Full Frame Film Festival, Festival de Popoli, the Chicago Underground Film Festival, Camden International Film Festival, the Maryland Film Festival and Rooftop Films. Originally from upstate New York, she graduated with a BA from Boston University and just completed an MFA degree at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Liz McCarthy (UIC MFA '17) combines photography, sculpture, and performance to explore themes around the materiality of

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Bios

human bodies and their complicated physical and psychological relationship to a material world. Through research and studio intervention, she explores how different materials develop meaning through use and origin, and how physical performance can be used as an agent to re-inscribe meaning. Her work has been included various group and solo exhibitions nationally at galleries such as ACRE Projects, Heaven Gallery, Calvin College Gallery, Roots and Culture, Mana Contemporary, Gallery 400, and Threewalls. She has visited as a resident artist at Atlantic Center for the Arts, ACRE, High Concept Laboratories, and Banff Centre.

Robyn Mericle (UIC PhD candidate, art history) is an artist and art historian based in Chicago. She received an MFA in Electronic Intermedia from the University of Florida, where her thesis show investigated the relationship between animals, visual culture, and the nature of scientific knowledge. Her current research interests explore how issues of gender, race, and ecology are presented and distilled in early twentieth century cinema and photography. Underlying all these activities is a deep concern with how humans view other animals and the natural world, and how these views have led to current ecological crises, including climate change. Mericle is an Instructor of Art History in the Fine and Performing Arts department at Loyola University, and she is also the co-founder of a local artisanal pickling company, Central Pickling.

Dan Miller (Northwestern MFA '16) is an Australian artist living in Chicago. In recent years he has produced—always within a context of collaboration or co-conspiracy—installations, sound works, performative interventions in public space, experimental writing, and an evolving art space and archive in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood known as The Back Room at Kim's Corner Food. The essential problems that motivate his work are the institution of art and the institution of the artist.

Melody Williams (SAIC) is an artist, educator, and researcher in art-based and community research, and collaborative events and projects. Williams draws from her practice in writing, printmedia, and fiber arts to build arts programming for young people and adults based on community input. After receiving her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2007), she worked as Studio Director with Project Onward, a study and gallery for Chicagoland artists living with developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses. Recently,

while in the Masters of Arts in Art Education program (SAIC), she worked as Graduate Research Fellow for Continuing Studies Youth Programs, developing administrative practices, and teaching for youth audiences at SAIC's satellite location in Homan Square. Williams continues to research teacher practices, engagement programming, and arts administration from a holistic perspective.

ABOUT FIELD TRIP / FIELD NOTES / FIELD GUIDE

Field Trip / Field Notes / Field Guide is a trans-disciplinary consortium of Fellows from the University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Northwestern University. The program builds an interdisciplinary community that engages Chicago's vibrant urban environment, providing a unique platform for exchange and connection across disciplinary and institutional boundaries.

The consortium provides an open framework for graduate students and recent alumni to explore and digest their local environment as a collective body, while drawing on the unique perspectives and methodologies of their disciplinary studies—whether that be art, architecture, art history, the humanities, social science, or science. The consortium augments the institutional support offered to MFA alumni and PhD candidates as they pursue their research “in the field,” asking that they consider sharing, communicating, and formulating their work within the context of an interdisciplinary community.

Beginning in the fall and meeting on a monthly basis over the course of an academic year, graduate students from the participating institutions partake in and self-initiate a series of seminars, expeditions, lectures, readings, and discussions. A series of field trips, initiated by the consortium Fellows, explores the proximities and intersections of the Fellows' distinctive approaches to research and practice. The consortiums activities provoke unexpected exchanges, build collegial relationships, and allow for unique encounters that do not typically occur within a university setting.

A “field guide” produced each spring will collect and present the Fellows' research over the course of the year, highlighting and examining their distinctive approaches to research and practice while on site and working “in the field.”

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The Arts, Science + Culture Initiative cultivates collaboration, active exchange, and sustained dialogue among those engaged in artistic and scientific inquiry within the University and beyond. The Initiative provides opportunities for scholars, students, and arts practitioners, in multiple domains, to pursue original investigations and explore new modes of artistic production and scientific inquiry. Breaking intellectual ground requires transcending disciplinary boundaries and venturing into unfamiliar territory. To that effect, the Initiative's programs are designed to spark conversations and critically engage faculty, students and the public across a broad spectrum of areas including art history, astronomy and astrophysics, biology, chemistry, cinema and media studies, computer and information science, creative writing, literature, mathematics, medicine, music, molecular engineering, physics, theater, and visual arts. arts.uchicago.edu/artsscience

Julie Marie Lemon
Program Director and Curator, Arts, Science + Culture
Initiative

Naomi Blumberg
Assistant Director, Arts, Science + Culture Initiative

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Art, Theory, Practice,

“Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another, and theory is a relay from one practice to another. No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall.”

—Gilles Deleuze

ART, THEORY, PRACTICE, is the department of art at Northwestern University. Our acclaimed faculty of practicing artists and critics closely work with students at undergraduate and graduate levels. We are committed to helping students develop into active, independent, and critical contributors to their chosen fields. Undergraduate classes are small, hands-on studios and seminars that foster creative thinking for both majors and non-majors. Our graduate program is an intense critique-based experience that is fully funded for every student. art.northwestern.edu

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The School of Art & Art History was founded on the principle that history, theory, and practice are intimately entwined endeavors. The School's programs ignite intellectual curiosity and creative innovation and empower students to expand the boundaries of what is possible, making an impact on the world. Art students are encouraged to work across the media-specific disciplines of studio arts, photography, moving image, and new media and actively engage departments across the university as well as the larger cosmopolitan city of Chicago. Faculty are equally committed to their research, practice and teaching, and foster an intense intellectual and creative environment where individual research and studio work are complemented by collaborative efforts and socially relevant public projects and civic engagement. The Department offers a BA, MA (Art History or Museum Studies), and PhD. artandarthistory.uic.edu

Beate Geissler
Associate Professor, Department of Art

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The Earl & Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration connects the SAIC community to civic, academic, and industry organizations from the local to the global. This is a SAIC-wide initiative aimed at increasing the range of research opportunities and broadening the impact of research outcomes for faculty, and investing in our students as 21st-century creative leaders. saic.edu/academics/shapirocenter

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