



2015

# Postcession

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POSTCESSION

A Postcession submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Craft  
and Material Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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Virginia Commonwealth University  
Richmond, Virginia  
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# Abstract

## POSTCESSION

By Evan David Edgar Pomerantz, MFA

A Postcession submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2015

Major Director: Andréa Keys Connell  
Associate Professor

This is a series of daily writings. Each day consists of a new topic and is closed at the end of the day. The ideas presented are philosophical, humorous, rambling, lamentations, incantations, doubt-ridden, aesthetic pep talks which combine into an affective representation of my studio practice's becoming. There will be little congruency, some stories, and a lot of parallels because that is who I am.



## February

**2/9/2015**

I seem to always get the best ideas right when I'm entering into the shower. The farthest point away from my pen. Or maybe this is just when I am most poetic, or angsty, or bloated as I transition into my day. It's always right when I am schluffing off all the stuff my body excreted since the morning before. I never know if I should stop, dry off, go get my pen, and write it down or if I should let it flow down the drain with the rest of my dirt and dead skin cells. I never go get my pen. I don't want to put language to these ideas. They seem to come to me when I am not paying attention to them. They come from the same place as the grim I wash off. I wonder how much of me is runoff. How much do I leave behind there every day? And is it still me? Sometimes it does in fact stay with me. It stays a part of me, and I end up writing it down, but by no concerted effort by me at that moment. They just come to me right when I'm ready to jettison the unwanted. This is an odd act of self-negation with an ironic potential for growth. Removing a miniscule part of me as per a daily ritual so something new can take its place. I still have no control over this. But I might if I were to never take another shower again. Prehistoric humans never had to shower. They had a thin layer of oils and bacteria that protected them against many things external. I wonder how they took showers then. Maybe with that layer it was a sort

of constant shower without water. The body simply doing its thing there too. No control, no concept, just body doing what it needs to survive. Or maybe the first human to step under a waterfall, said to themselves, “Damn! I need to take more showers. This is amazing!” I bet it happened that way around. Eventually I get done and dressed and go onto the rest of my day. I used to think my day didn’t start until I had coffee. That changed. I know my day doesn’t start now until I, stretch, and shower. I wish I could say that time doesn’t matter when I do this, but it does. Immensely. There is no doubt in my mind then that it was now then and I won’t ever get back to now then. But that’s ok because it is a new day.

**2/10/2015**

Good thing this is called a studio practice. I forgot about that. At some point the studio transitioned over to the real thing; the big game, winning and losing, life and death. This happened about the time that I associated money with happiness and success. It has been an easy pill to swallow when I have been prescribed that from a very early age. But applying that to art became a thing in and of itself and in the pseudo vacuum of grad school it was the perfect condition to grow this contradiction of money equaling happiness and success to absurd proportions. I know I came in here thinking practice makes perfect. I said this to myself over and over again and it sunk deep. It wedged itself in there so far down it was upside-down again! Perfect makes practice. The fight against this ideology in the studio is ongoing. The best strategy is a negation of the ego and remembrance that the

product is the excrement of action. George Carlin had good ideas about practices which remind me to keep moving and keep acting<sup>1</sup>.

When I think of the rain dance the American Indians used to do, I often wonder if they had practice first. Wouldn't you want to have a rain dance practice just to go over it again? To make sure everyone was doing the correct steps in the correct order? Maybe there were some new guys; maybe the dance master had some new thins he wanted to try out. There are all sorts of reasons why the Indians might want to play it safe and practice first.

My question is; if they did hold a practice and the rain didn't come immediately, how would they know they had done it right? If the dance is done correctly, shouldn't it rain? Or did the Indians figure the rain god knew it was only practice and was waiting for the real thing?

Then again if it did rain right after practice, why not just cancel the dance and figure the next time you need rain all you have to do is call a practice?

These are the kinds of thoughts that made it necessary to separate me from the other kids at school.

2/11/2015

Dear Reader,

We most likely have met. If not what are you doing here? If my sentences don't resonate with you enough after you apply the exclamation point test, then you should probably be out in the park dancing. For those unfamiliar, the exclamation point test is when you read a sentence in a book as if it had an exclamation point. If it still seems valuable and pertinent to your life, keep reading; if not, put the book down. Great! We have made it this far and good to see you again. As far as I'm concerned that means I am not dead and neither are you. I'm serious about me not being dead, even when I happen to die at some point, still not dead. I say this because there have been some who think I have died already<sup>2</sup>. Not the case. But all this doom and gloom aside, I wanted to invite you to a conversation. This may seem like I am asking you to be Glaucon<sup>3</sup>, though this too is not the case. Or it may seem that you have stumbled upon a lost Horcrux<sup>4</sup> of mine...sadly also not the case. Well maybe in a metaphorical sense I have left parts of me behind with which you can have conversations. If you really need to, you can just have conversations with yourself. I've indulged myself in many a conversation with only me and will probably continue to from time to time. I think I might have let this internal conversation get a little far away from me throughout this experience at VCU. Can I say I learned that? No, but I am aware of it now. For instance take *Affect* (Figure 1) as an example.



**Figure 1** *Affect Ink on Panel, 72" x 72"*

I wrote the word *affect* in red ink by hand around that circle for almost a quarter mile. I bled that for that piece. In conceiving it I thought about relating meaning and language to the smallest bits of existence, like an atom or quantum mechanics and our constant confusion between affects and effects. But now the guy who owns the piece likes it because it looks like a rug on the wall. Se la vie. I guess what I'm saying is that sometimes I'll have elaborate metaphors and other times I'll be speaking directly. Read into it as much as you wish because in this game it doesn't matter if I am lying. I wish you

could lie to me too, and then we could have an amazing conversation! In the end though if you really want, this can just be a picture book. I'm good with that too.

## **2/12/2015**

When I first got here I was at a crossroads of what to do in the studio. I had come to the realization that the ideas I had, the language that I was using and the work I was producing were all pointing in different directions. This was very concerning to me as I left my post bachelors position at Illinois State University and spent the summer of 2013 in Phoenix with my family. I had lamented on my first graduate level critique offered by the faculty at ISU and advice given to me by a close friend. They all were frank and said my studio practice was in dire need of change. They asked, "What is it you want to say?" On top of that I was offered the advice to make from my heart. I didn't know what that meant at the time but I feel as though the Craft faculty and my peers have since assisted in my quest to answer that deeply personal question. The connection I have is from a TED talk, which mind you I do not appreciate citing in any context let alone this one, but it did illustrate an(other) idea effectively. Simon Sinek<sup>5</sup> discussed the lacking in effective marketing communication when it pertained to the ideas and their respective order of how, what, and why. As Simon claimed these are typically presented in that order. Simon's talk said that we should consider a different ordering of this communication pattern because people care about why but not so much about what. He also corresponds this to the different layers of the brain i.e. neocortex or thinking brain and the limbic or feeling brain. Brain stuff aside, this simple change in direction beginning with why and ending with what, especially in

relation to the industrial revolution, Marxism, and now late capitalism, makes perfect sense. So I came to VCU with this greater “why” in my subconscious. This led much the first year revolving around why questions directed at my studio practice. Why am I making Art? What makes art Art? Why can art be a part of capitalism? Why do aestheticians like Nietzsche or Heidegger so interested in repeat business!? Or were they just Anestiticians? These questions were provoked further by the Contemporary Aesthetics taught by Sarah Cunningham. Initially it was the most challenging academic course I had ever taken and one that continued the quest for answers and more questions; all be it through very theoretical means and not through *Übermensch*<sup>6</sup> (isch) or *Being*<sup>7</sup> means. Yes the allure of an ‘armchair philosopher’ was and still remains to be very enticing. All of this resulted in me attempting to answer questions about myself personally and professionally as an artist in order to get to the root of why I decided to make art instead of become a philanthropist or work in the non-profit humanitarian sector. These ideas caused the first pieces to come out of my studio to be derivative iterations of pervious work (figure 2).



**Figure 2** *Untitled Newspaper*, 65" x 75"

I will add I picked up on my familiar use of multiples in a prearranged pattern quickly. I decided to finish them in order to learn the lesson fully; I don't want to make this work anymore. This might have been the inner puritan in me punishing myself for a sin, but I didn't make repetitious work again (Figure 1) Opps.. These ideas have made me consider my own work in radically different ways compared to what I was thinking about when I came to Richmond. I don't think it is necessarily the best lens to look as other's work but



it provides me with a platform of critical self-evaluation. The opportunity to be a part of a program like VCU Craft gave me the opportunity to consider these things with a safety net to grapple and jiu jitsu these questions. I know now that this criticality applied to myself under the terms of basic questions, “why am I making this?” will help me be a better person when the day is over, or for that matter when my life is over. My hope is that outside of the umbrella of VCU Craft and my professors that I still have the courage and conviction to ask myself these questions. I think I will, because if you haven’t noticed I love myself. But I am ever learning to love you too.

**2/13/2015**

I hiked Old Rag Mountain near Sperryville, VA today. At 20 degrees Fahrenheit it was the coldest hike I have ever done. I made the decision to leave the warm comforts of my studio because it scared me. Over the last several years complacency has grown within me. The routine of walking my path to the studio was something I did not think about in any depth; a daily chore which bread satisfaction. I have often criticized younger people for not having enough life experience to make good art with the additional point that I too am very young. So I accepted the idea that I just wait get my hours of studio time in and eventually the work I make will get better. I believe now this is a fallacy. I think I made the body of work at the end of undergrad (Figure 3-5) only because by the time I was 22 I had lived in Berlin, biked across the Alps and the West Coast, protested the G8 Summit,

and lived on a Doomsday Buddhist Farm near Geneva, Italy. Granted those experiences took a couple years to fully marinate into my being before I could make work in the studio the way I did.



**Figure 3** *Mandal*

But I contribute those experiences directly to my growth as a person and thus as an artist. So on the mountain today, it was windy and cold, my chest started hurting again, I was alone, I was scared, but I kept going. I often have said the only philosophy worth considering is done on a mountain. I've been long overdue to enact this philosophy. So

instead of moving my hands in the studio, I choose to move my body on a mountain. It did hurt a little inside knowing how much work still has to be done for thesis, but this was a different kind of work.



**Figure 4** *Quantifiable Conundrum*

My body will move my hands later and I needed to trust it. Now granite, I did justify this trip so that I could take images with my pinhole camera and GoPro camera; one of which I lacked all dexterity on the cold windy summit to load. It was no guarantee that this would result in anything worth using for thesis, but in the long run, days like today will help me be a better person. I thanked myself for this small gift as I came down the mountain thinking “...it’s impossible to fall off mountains you fool...”<sup>8</sup>.



**Figure 5** *Aggregate Awareness*

**2/14/2015**

Around the end of the first semester I was very depressed. We had gone on a class trip to New York at the beginning of November and I returned to Richmond with a sickness from coming into contact with the New York art world. I had learned while I was there that in Chelsea alone there were 1500 galleries. The staggering amounts of money being spent on art made my head spin. I had originally chosen to make art with blue eyes<sup>9</sup>. I did not know that capitalism had infiltrated even the sacred halls of art long since I had come onto this planet. My first time in New York was one that shocked me. I have encountered many articles on capitalism and art but seeing is nothing close to experiencing the real. So this disturbance within me came from self-contradiction extrapolated to many parts of my

identity but my decision to be an artist specifically. I came back to the studio only after three days of travel and felt utterly confused with my choice to be an artist. It was easier to read than it was to make. I really don't know how I came out of this rut but I was reading a lot of Nietzsche at the time. His particular brand of existentialism was of particular concern for me at this moment. As I do with many analogies I had imaged a spacial metaphor of a *Bridge to and from Nihilism* (Figure 6).



**Figure 6** *Bridge to and from Nihilism* watercolor

One could walk across the bridge and nothing had any meaning at all, pure unadulterated uncut Nihilism. Or one could walk back across the bridge where things had meaning. If one could get a special crowbar or mallet you could imagine cracking or smashing a Thing open Gallagher style and find a hunk of meaning inside. I had devised a performance for

myself where I might build this bridge and covered in motor oil and attempt to walk back and forth across it for an extended period of time. This amused me and somehow signified a chance for me to pull out of my momentary lapse in happiness. I still have my bridge in my head and I don't care one side over the other. I enjoy being on it though, often dancing back and forth and laughing to myself. This preserves my meaning as personal.

**2/15/2015**

I am too privileged. I am male, white, middle class, and because of these things I have had the opportunity to become an artist. There are other intangible things that attribute to this as well including my choice to be vegan, left leaning political views, educated, and chances to travel internationally. This is also not a complete list of things that my place in society has afforded me or the causes of this privilege. My time in grad school has made me even more aware of this privilege as it applies to both the art world, my place in society, and how I make decisions in the studio. Because of this I am skeptical of my complacency in this system which I so deeply disagree with. If I am going to accept my place of privilege, then I feel as though I should do something to mirror my own beliefs rather than the system's. I should also briefly say that I use the term system loosely, knowing that pinning down a definition brings me into the realm of politics and economics that as an artist I only have an intuitive sense of but the citations escape me to describe the intricacies of said system at work. If you don't have a sense for it yourself, then you can stop reading now and go play in the park. Unfortunately though, I am a product of post 9/11 and pre 2008 financial collapse and I use product intentionally. Nearing the end of

my graduate education I am very concerned that my work has a distinct masculine edge that through the system in place will placate it rather than encounter it with a critical edge. Edges can also be masculine. I prefer the term jiu jitsu-ing which uses the momentum and inertia of a system to turn it inside out in a sort of Deleuzian gesture. I don't exactly know how I can accomplish this. I look to history and educate myself of what has come before to be able to compare that against what I make. I'm still not good at this. At VCU I began to have these conversations with my peers. There was a push in my own practice that has emphasized the poetic and I don't think that is an end all be all for negating my masculinity but I think it has a way of embracing my x chromosome in order to balance out my practice. Unfortunately, even my attempts at humor have historically been a Y dominated pursuit.

**2/18/2015**

In order to build art communities we should cut out the excess and just serve cookie-hummus. All the hummus needs is a vehicle to deliver its garlic breath. And all the cookie needs is something that is considered "healthy" so one doesn't feel so bad about eating half the tray. We'll just cut out the cucumbers slices and crackers. Those are just disguises for water and sugar respectively and any hummus and cookie will take care of that anyways. To change we don't have to do much either. We keep buying the store bought hummus and the variety cookie trays, and then put them all into a blender and viola, Cookie-Hummus. I would say to a gallery owner to maybe phase this recipe in at their receptions. But to be frank you can't just stick your toe in; one has to dive head first. Now with food

this streamlined there will be no reason to loiter around the food table, or eat so we don't have to talk. No this will encourage the community to come together. If they talk what they think about the food the first time, the next time they come and are not surprised by the efficient fusion recipe of Cookie-Hummus; then they definitely came back for the art and or the people. As my history has shown however, I have not prescribed to the Cookie-Hummus Theory, though a Derridean look might discover their parallels. For example at the beginning of the fall semester of my second year at VCU, my roommates, neighbors, and I hosted *Pig Roast 2014* where we roasted a whole hog in our back yard. I was a newly christened vegan, and the pork tasted delicious alongside the other dishes brought by fellow grad students and faculty. Between dinner nights with peers, cooking for my studio mates, planning the *Kimchi in the Gallery* project, potlucks, and participating in the Graduate Artists Association, I have tried many different ways to create a strong community of artists while here at VCU. I refuse to pass out cigarettes and shots, so what's left is food. Now I have to consider new ways of keeping those connections going outside of the institution. I want to do this by reconfiguring the old institution for the new one; Cookie-Hummus.

**2/20/2015**

I have moved further away from clay than expected. The last year of my undergraduate education I was primarily tutored by Susan Beiner. Her emphasis on new media in the ceramics field is what pushed me to begin using auto paints on glazed ceramic surfaces and



ever further into incorporating other mediums into my work. This exploration continued while in Illinois to a lesser extent because of a change in tool access but was still present.



**Figure 7** Affective vest with ink

It was at VCU where I finally stumbled upon the idea that exploration of media was not dependent on tool but process. A simple unhinging of that door made it possible to see the materiality of clay. In addition, new materials could be processed through my hands in in what I consider to be the *Caveman Genius Aesthetic*. This is not my

term, but Sam Chung's, who also teaches at Arizona State University. This is something that I certainly attribute to my ceramics heritage, which I started applying to other materials. Caveman Genius is a way to simplify an overlooked step in a process, often by means of ultra-low tech solutions. Examples would be a makeshift chamois cloth out of a garbage bag draw string, the ink vest I made for *Affect* (figure 7), or a coin and drill to make plaster mold keys; tricks that work really well but offer no illusion at all. They are dirty, dumb, and effective. Most importantly one can see the human interacting with the

environment. Often but not always the hand is involved. Watch the monkey get a bigger stick to fish out more ants from the ant hill.

## **2/21/2015**

I see ceramics differently now. I love using clay. I still enjoy making things in clay. In fact in every identity crisis I have gone through at VCU I always return to making clay objects as a way to calm myself and forget my ego until I renegotiate my relationship to the studio and art. I have chosen to not use clay because I recognize some realities now that I do not wish to deal with once I leave my institutional life. I have always known of the costs associated with starting a ceramics studio and being able to fire clay and glaze it, but I never fully realized that if I was to continue I would have to face those problems directly. This would also mean to settle down and institutionalize myself. I'm not ready to do that just yet and the freedom in other materials mirrored that sentiment. This is me going through a pseudo commitment phobia phase, but only because I never realized I had committed without knowing what I was doing. I was wooed by clay when I was so young. It's not that I don't love it anymore; I just need to keep exploring and open myself up to a larger world. Does this sound familiar?

## **2/22/2015**

A thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (ATP) by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari<sup>10</sup> was a book loaned to me by Tyler Lotz at Illinois State University. I read this over the course of the spring semester and it confused the hell out of me. I think it was my

first conscious confrontations with philosophy. This book had resonated with me because it had put language to ideas and more importantly feelings I had for several years. It revolved around their concept of the Rhizome. The four basic principles of the Rhizome as stated by Wikipedia<sup>11</sup> and the first chapter of ATP are as follows:

1 and 2: Principles of connection and heterogeneity: "...any point of a rhizome can be connected to any other, and must be,"

3. Principle of multiplicity: only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive, "multiplicity" that it ceases to have any relation to the One

4. Principle of asignifying rupture: a rhizome may be broken, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines

5 and 6: Principle of cartography and decalcomania: a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model; it is a "map and not a tracing"

I saw this as a metaphor for the interconnectivity of our emergent digital world as well as the increase in entropy due to increase of information. I was overall very confused by ATP because Deleuze and Guattari had deliberately obfuscated the opportunity for direct meaning through language. During the contemporary aesthetics course I was interested in understanding Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy in more depth by asking the question, "What is a rhizomatic aesthetic?" As an oversimplified explanation I came to understand the rhizome aesthetic as one that mimicked free association of the subconscious, one that mirrored the schizophrenic, and had an unresolved cyclical element to it, a la Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* of 1968<sup>12</sup>. I would later be able to question this rhizome

aesthetic in relation to the creation and sustainment of meaning. I now find it rather problematic in keeping meaning as a floating effervescent or transient thing. But I now come to consider the rhizome more in how it plays a part in the emergent behavior of humans in a collective and how an individual's consciousness and free will is affected by the complex rhizomatic connections within the human brain.

**2/24/2015**

Even rocks breathe. I learned this while doing yoga today. Triangle pose is a tough one for my tight hamstrings so it is an opportunity for working on my breath and in my moment of strained attempt at focusing on my breath I realized that even rocks breathe. Bill Hicks said in a standup comedy routine;

“Today a young man on acid realized that all matter is merely energy condensed to a slow vibration, that we are all one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively, there is no such thing as death, life is only a dream, and we are the imagination of ourselves. Here's Tom with the Weather.”<sup>13</sup>

I felt I had one of these moments. Now I know why the pet rock phenomenon was so powerful. They really were breathing. Except however, there should be no argument that odd rocks do not breathe.

**2/25/2015**

A note on the lie of art and particularly sculpture. I realized after some conversations and an reading an article in the book *Part Object Part Sculpture*<sup>14</sup> edited by Helen Molesworth,

where Rosalind Krauss discusses in her contribution *Object (petite) A how modern sculpture originated from a lacking*.<sup>15</sup> She claimed that our understanding of early Greek Sculpture was consistently missing parts, which may have included appendages, genitalia, objects etc. This lack gets altered through time in my opinion as a lie; The (W)hole. I also consider something said during a critique class, where I need to paraphrase, “to consider what the work needs more of, is a very capitalistic idea. It is better to consider what is enough with what is available but also what ideas are present and available.” For another moment I saw another whole in my thinking, but was not willing to consider the other applications of how this fit into my studio practice. Now I consider this missing truth a white lie as a way to actively keep mystery going in my work. Mystery not derived from subjectivity’s lies, but a kind of mystery that stars, wind, adventure, and love offer. A mystery which can carry a conversation for a night, a year, or a lifetime. That is what I hope art does. This is one reason why I have felt it so necessary to get back out into nature and bring my studio with me. In a society and culture that cannot produce meaning, besides meaning through value, I decided to look where aeons of humans have been confronted with paradoxes of this existence. The mystery of existence is in knowing that omnipotence is hell. Something that was explored in *The Joke is on the Inside* (figure 8).



**Figure 8** *The Joke is on the Inside* Ceramic, Sledgehammer, Safety Glasses

The urge to know something is coupled with the anticipation of knowing it. But the anticipation is always better than the end result. Knowing that I don't know is what I really want to strive towards. If my work can speak to this known unknown (Dick Cheney's weak links aside), or possibly the unknown knowns then I will not be speaking directly. Ventriloquism will be my language! And I will throw away my voice and lie.

**2/27/2015**

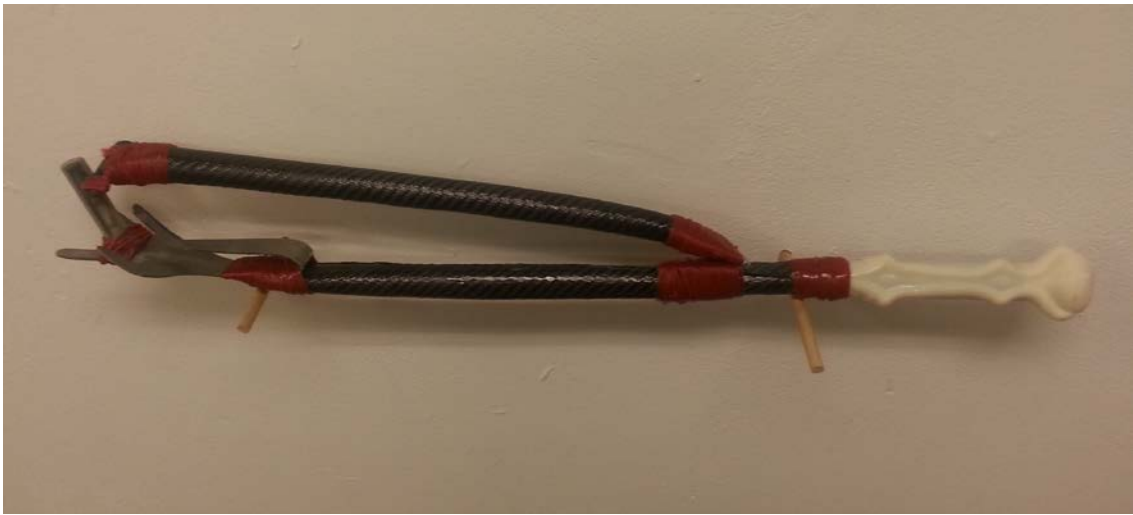
I think I might have been visited by aliens once. It took place summer of 2007 while in Berlin. I was sleeping in the living room of my host parent's apartment with the window open on the seventh floor. I was dreaming that I was in my home back in phoenix. A man with large eyes was sitting on the couch with me with the light shining in through the window. He was asking me questions while staring deeply into my eyes. I remember him having a smirk that was reassuring more than anything. But before long I recognized that it was a test of sorts. I had the distinct feeling that I should not know that I was being tested since the questions were not very conspicuous. I remember becoming aware of the "test" when I was shown a picture of a mountain side, ascending from left to right, covered in red flowers with a small house. Ok maybe this was a scene from Sound of Music or something but it was weird. Anyways this man with large eyes kept trying to ask me questions and once he knew I recognized the test, he left and the dream ended. I mentioned this dream to a friend and he had apparently been reading a lot of books on alien encounters and explained the similarities between my dream and other assumed alien encounters. I mean the question of validity and authenticity of said dream doesn't really matter to me. I was always interested in discussing the possibilities of aliens in the universe and a follow up question of whether or not they have been able to travel to Earth. I am personally believe that intelligent aliens exist somewhere in our universe but my jury is still out for earth bound contact. I always considered that the vast amount of unexplored, unknown, depths of our brain chemistry and psychological states of mind might be able to explain the consistency between these experiences. Same things that

happens with DMT; where everyone has vaguely similar trips as they experience this greater oneness and interconnectivity. But either those people are experiencing aliens or tapping into the greater oneness of the universe, or our brain makes believable. But in either case it is a subject of feelings. Though we want to try and apply the scientific method to these things, we don't know enough to disregard feelings. But if we do get to a point where we can explain these things through the scientific method, then please don't tell me. I would much rather believe that I had contact with aliens and that if I ever take hallucinogens then I too will experience the greater Oneness of the Universe without having to meditate for the rest of my life.



**2/28/2015**

The past two years I have chosen to learn a lot of new skills. I have mentioned already that changing up the practice was an important point in learning while in a graduate program. However here I have been offered the opportunities to expand my knowledge and skill set in a variety of new techniques.

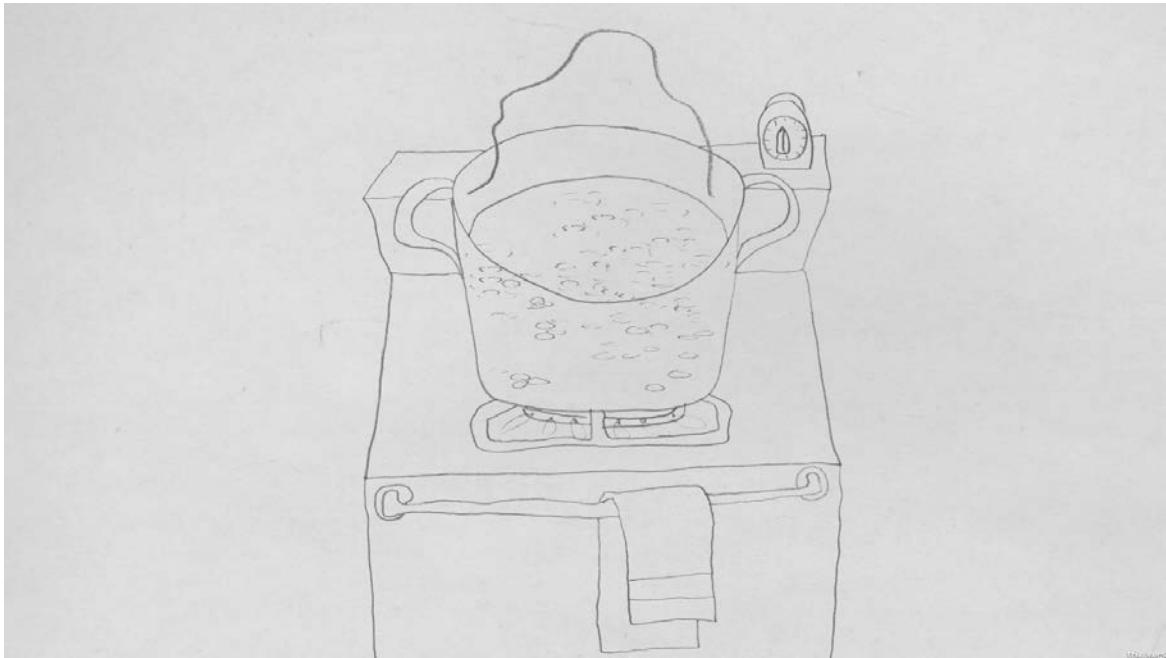


**Figure 9** *Firestarter*

In the spring semester I took a CNC (Computer Numerical Control) course through sculpture to make several pieces that were planned for my candidacy show. I had the *Affect* panel cut on the CNC router (Figure 1). And then I created a manual jig for *The Joke is on the Inside* (Figure 8). I also learned how to fire large scale ceramics with that piece. In order to make models and integrate them into the CNC software, I used Rhino 3D Modeling software. I took the time to learn this during spring 2014 which later helped me make *Fire Starter*, and the yet to be made *Cloud Center* (Figures 9, 10).

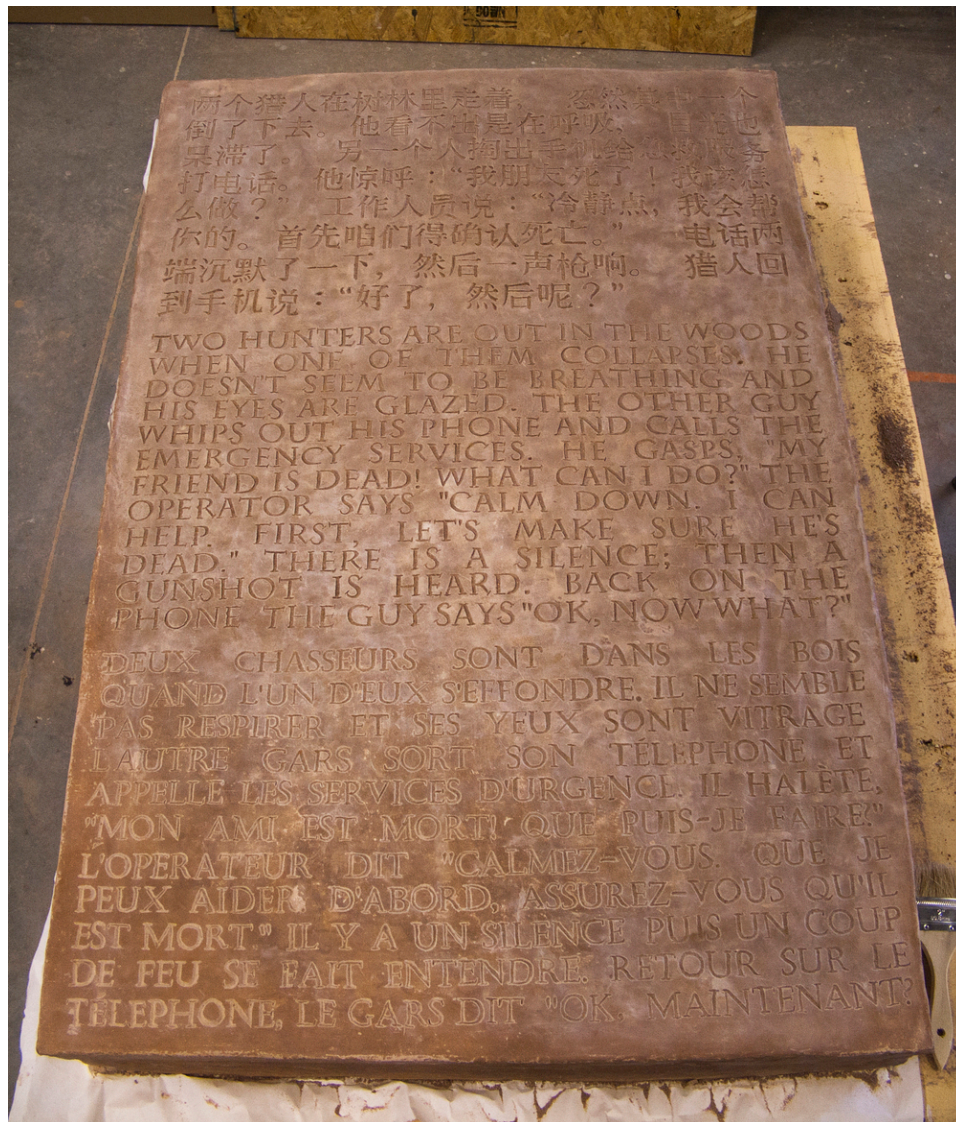


**Figure 10** *Cloud Center*



**Figure 91** *Still Life*

For *Still Life* (Figure 11), I learned how to use Unity, a game development software, and do C# coding to integrate a Kinect video sensor to an animation that I made by hand. For candidacy, I wanted to try something that scared me. I had never painted before, and I wanted to be a part of the Anxiety Club. So I figured why not try to do the impossible and paint an image of deep space on a gessoed panel with water color going from dark to light: essentially I was doing everything wrong. It didn't "work" for candidacy once *Sorry Taxes are just not Funny* blew up in the kiln (Figure 12). I had to later learn how to fire a 7 inch thick slab of clay the following winter break. The trick to that would be let the piece dry for about six months and fire slowly between 150 degrees and 600 degrees.



**Figure 102** *Sorry, Taxes are just not Funny*

Then in the fall of 2014, I did a pencil drawing, which was another technique that I had never tried before. That was another opportunity to learn something new both about myself and my studio practice. And then I learned about photography, Photoshop, the physics of a pinhole camera, and some basic film chemistry. These new tasks excite me, bore me to death, and infuriate me from start to finish. But I find those things fascinating.



## March

**3/1/2015**

Today I hiked to the top of Picket Post Peak in the Sonoran Desert. It is about an hour east of Phoenix off of US-60 near the town of Superior, AZ. I was driving my folks car and it was not suited for off road excursions and this peak offered beautiful views of the desert with accessibility. With the series of photographs I am creating under the project title of *Zero Panorama* (Figure 13),



**Figure 13** *Zero Panorama*

I am hiking mountains which have good 360 degree views from the summit of the surrounding areas, and Picket Post was able to deliver. I got onto the trail at 2pm for a

planned four hour hike up and down. I made a slight detour off the trail when it forked and met two other hikers staring back at the mountain. They had heard a bloodcurdling scream come from near the summit shortly before and were looking for signs of a family they had encountered on their way down. They said the climb was too difficult for them and had turned back before meeting the family. Concerned this hike was above my skill level as well, I chose to continue up in case the family needed assistance. It was a half an hour before I met the father, son and two daughters on the trail. They had encountered bees and one of them screamed, that was all. Ease was not granted because they briefly spoke to me about the difficulty of some of the bouldering and scrambling sections of the hike. With all the camera gear on my back and knowledge that I will be the only one on the mountain once this family reaches their car, I was unnerved. I proceeded anyways to the ever more spectacular views of looking up between the buttes of the mountain and back to the valley below stretching the horizon further away from me the higher I climbed. I eventually got to the short bouldering section going twenty feet up, with a drop off at both edges down the steep slope. It was here that I had to begin a mantra of saying “One” to calm myself because one slip and I would have tumbled at least 20 feet or more. One hand at a time, one foothold at a time, one movement at a time, one step at a time all turned into me just repeating “one”. This lasted from halfway up, until almost the summit. I had never done this before and was scared. But I pressed onwards; knowing that going up is easier. That turned out to be not exactly true. At the top, I gathered myself while I ate a small snack and began preparing my cameras, three in all. It took an hour of photographing the

horizon, waiting patiently for light that would never come, and fiddling with my pinhole/GoPro camera (Figure 14).

**Figure 114** *Ecco* Stereoscopic GoPro and Panoramic Pinhole Camera

I had yet to get the pinhole to work so I was ready to be patient and try to get it to spool correctly. Upon realizing that an hour had passed and I was now looking at the beginning of a sun set, the decision to get off the mountain was made for me. I began the descent, only to realize that I had missed a trail marker on the way up and took to the rock slide section for most of the ascent. This had made it far more difficult and dangerous that it needed to be. But on the way down the trail was lost again. My tired feet and legs paced for ten minutes only a few hundred feet down. I saw a blue trail marker roughly 60 feet below me, and slid



down water smoothed rock to find the trail again. It was there I realized that there were many ways to get down a mountain, but only a few that would allow one to do it again. I

stopped several times on the way down to take some stereoscopic images with the Pinhole-Pro which led me to seeing the sun set behind the hill. The last hour of my hike I moved swiftly back to the car. It took me only five hours in total from start to finish. I was more tired than I expected only to find later in the evening that the hike had a 2200 foot elevation gain, which was double what I had in my mind. Thankfully the mistakes and young judgment will have a chance to be helpful in the future and in my studio.

### **3/5/2015**

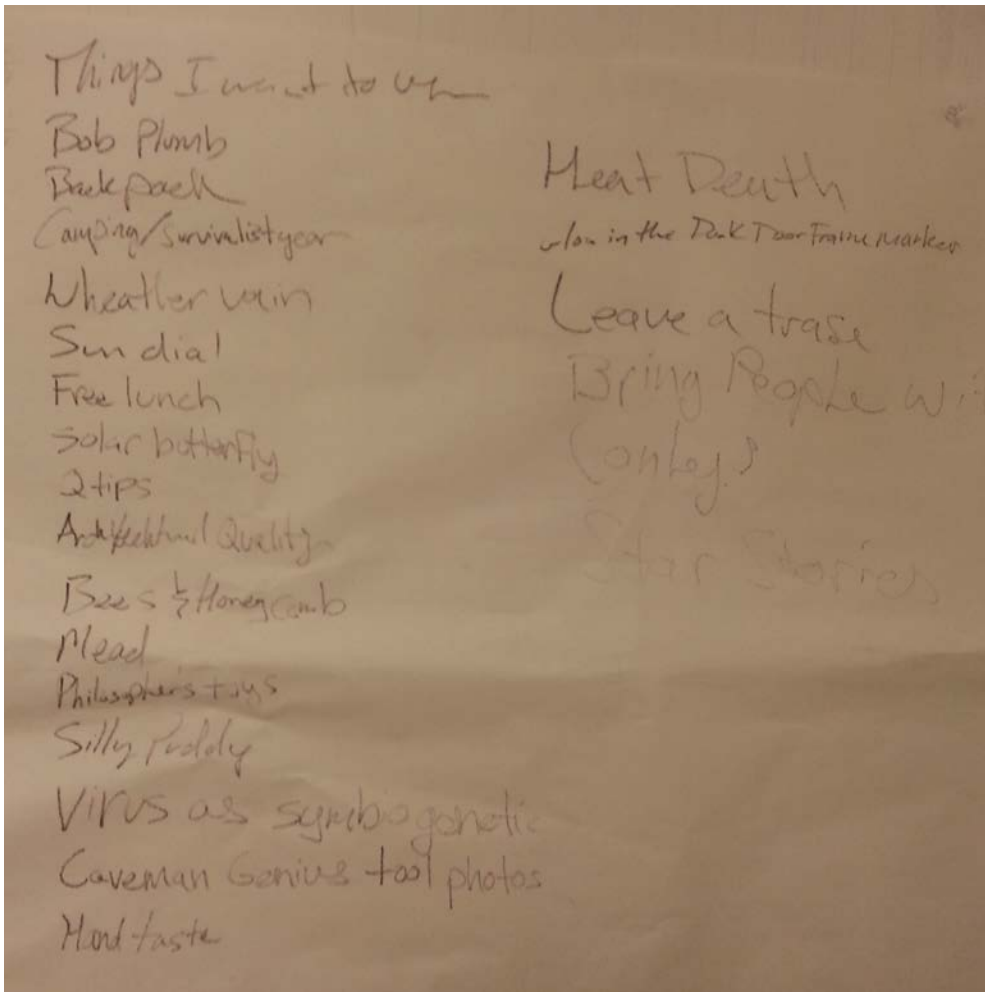
At the beginning of this year I realized the importance of compassion in my practice. Up until then my practice as a whole focused on my own state of being that was very inwardly centered and didn't consider my fellow humans. I had always considered my art to be the way that I would interact with the world as a sole conduit for my good intentions. I see this as lacking and come to identify other activities such as teaching to be something I should pursue. This is emphasized now because I am spending time with my cousin and her two children. I still don't consider making a child to be a difficult feat, but raising a human being to be another positive influence in the world is an immense task that in essence is being a teacher. As I continue to exist, I want to enact my philosophies by helping other people directly through teaching and collaboration. Direct Action over passive assistance is a difficult thing to learn when one grows up in this western culture where it is easier to throw money at problems and think you are doing "good". This is the same problem in the studio of spending money on a piece rather than considering what is available and within my means. Additionally I chose not to be a teacher because I would



have to spend a considerable amount of time working at the bottom of a system which is set up to allow teachers to exist in monetary poverty. There are many other people dealing with the problem of adjunct teaching at the university level and primary education. However, I mistakenly equated poverty with unhappiness and dismissed an opportunity for compassion in my life. This is the same place that makes me want to deal with topics that relate to more than me, or at least I intend that they do. Passing everything through my ego filter has a jumbling of the feeling or intent, one that came from the good intentions of compassion for my fellow human beings. I hope I carry this feeling of compassion with me out into the real world. I hope it helps find a path to teaching at some point. I hope I can find the strength to stay on that path.

**3/6/2015**

In thinking about what work I still wish to make in preparation for my thesis exhibition, I have created a list of things and materials that I wish to utilize. This list was on my wall for my third semester and I added to it for its duration (Figure 15). The reason I was attracted to these ideas or materials was because of a potential for humor, a je ne se qua of stupid-ness, and something that I had not seen in another artist's work yet. It also often hinged on a linguistic pivot, very much a remnant of my father's humor which he imparted on me. Today I was thinking through that list in my head and considered "silly putty" while playing with my cousin's dog, Uncus, outside. It had snowed prior to my arrival and was a particularly warm day in Aurora, Co.



**Figure 125** Desired List of Materials

The snow had turned to puddles of mud in the yard that their puppy was satisfied rolling around it while I tried to get Uncus to play fetch. There might have been a double trigger since earlier that day I hiked Horsetooth Mountain near Fort Collins, Co. There it was muddy as well. The image of a large amount of colored silly putty on the floor flashed in my head and took me by surprise. I was wary about it despite giggling to myself. It needs something thing else still, maybe a good title, the after birth left on the floor of another piece, or an image transferred onto it. I also see this as a way to tempt people into getting a

little dirty before looking at my art. Place a silly mud puddle at the entrance to my room and make people pass through it into the space. No one gets to enter without metaphorical mud on themselves. Its function as a welcome mat emphasizes the threshold, a liminal space that mirrors its own liminal state of liquid and solid. I wonder what the color should be and consider how tinting it with clay might be a nod to my past and fondness to clay as it requires one to get dirty. But placing dirt or a dye found in nature would play a nature/synthesized conceptual tension that might work well. The resolve that is forming here is a problem I face when I write about art like this. Now I know that this is the stopping point for fear of completeness and allow the rest to happen in the studio.

**3/7/2015**

To the prospect of Hope for Humanity. Cheers! At the beginning of my third semester I drew my hand with an extra thumb on the other side and titled it *Hope* (Figure 16). I like to think of myself as educated, self-aware, compassionate human being, but I know that if I was in charge, then we would all be screwed. Probably more screwed than we already are. I often wonder what humanity will need in order for it to overcome the problems it faces now. These problems are numerous but global climate change, capitalism's debt, finite resources, over population, polluted earth, pharmaceuticals, gene manipulation in food, global conflicts, and diminishing fresh water are the ones I am speaking to here. We are a species that has adapted to react to a lion that is right in front of us but we do not have the



**Figure 136** *Hope* Graphite on paper

evolutionary hardwiring to react when the lion sends us a post card saying I'll be coming by in a month or two for dinner and I'm bringing my wives and kids. So when it comes to problems that pose a threat to us or our offspring in the distant future there is no biological program to kick in and assist in action. So there I sat wondering; what evolutionary change might have given us this heightened awareness of future problems? I do not have an answer for that directly so I considered something that might make us extra human, a super human, an Ubermensch<sup>16</sup>. My idea was that it should be an extra thumb, which I later learned is a real possibility and is called Post-polydactyl. I don't know what the actual solutions are, I have my personal ones to get me through each day, but this might be a way to start that conversation. I considered the way this piece would relate to art as a whole as well. The fact that I chose to render it photo realistic with graphite was to point at the long history of artists rendering hands, its difficulty, and the de-skilling which has taken place in recent history of the art world. All of these things combined create tension with the actual image by pushing into the past while the title pulls into the future. I think this image has potential in being reproduced as a hand print. I also believe I should go paint this on a cave wall somewhere.

**3/8/2015**

I like to think of myself as an overgrown monkey playing around in the mud. This was more precise when I was using predominantly clay, but works just the same. I do know that we are descended from apes and not monkeys, but I have more an affinity with monkeys. And right now I am a monkey sitting in front of a fancy typewriter. Note that I

am not at a park on the jungle gym or monkey bars, but in the studio attempting to enact a different kind of spontaneity through play or a play of ideas. I don't think of myself as special in this way, different from others with their mud and their primate acts. No I think we are all just throwing stuff at the wall and hoping something sticks. This is a very proverbial feeling of mine which I want to express in my thesis work: hence the nature and survival themes. When we are put into a survival situation we are more primate than human. We don't get down on all fours to book it, but we might if we didn't have to carry anything. Out in nature we bring things with us. These objects remind us that we are not overgrown primates. They separate and order the world around us. We are not just overgrown apes, standing upright on two limbs, furless, and afraid: no there we become (hu)man. The Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey<sup>17</sup> moment of the apes beginning to stand up around the monolith should go along with my description, just include coffee cups and smart phones and you'll pick up what I'm trying to put down. I don't like to think of this as regressive but rather digestive. I always want that to be in the gut of my work, not on the tip of the tongue. I'm looking for that something that resonates and vibrates through the frontal cortex back into the mammalian and reptilian brains, down to the place that murmurs breath. Now that is contradictory since I am in a place that is trying to teach me the kinesiology of my Arm and the Body movement through space in the proper manner to achieve optimum trajectory for articulated target with my chosen lump of mud. But I'm just an overgrown monkey so I'm sure I'll just forget it and keep throwing mud out of appreciation for mud throwing.

**3/9/2015**

Today begins the Duchamp expedition which is an eight day excursion up the eastern seaboard beginning in Washington, DC at the National Gallery of Art, followed by the Hirshhorn Museum a block away, and two private collections. The next morning we feel the initial gravitational pull towards New York City as we arrive at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Marcel Duchamp collection housed there. On Thursday, the slingshot effect takes us up to the Yale University Galleries to see Duchamp works from storage as well as early Avant Gard art. Because we failed to reach an escape velocity, our rounding takes us to the Brant Foundation in Greenwich, CT before the acceleration towards the singularity of New York City drops us off at Alice Aycock's studio. Finally the trip will culminate in my first trip to both the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum. Needless to say the excitement and anxiety faced with the demands of this schedule has offered me little sleep and a cold. Not to mention but my presentation on *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (Figure 17) is not coming along as smoothly as anticipated. The more of Marcel's notes I read the more confusingly interesting this piece becomes. The more interesting aspect of the today's itinerary has been the visit to Robert Lehrman's house in Washington, DC. There we saw four Damien Hirst's pieces, an Ai Wei Wei, a stunning Gerhard Richter landscape photo/painting, a massive Jean-Michel Basquiat, *16 Jackies* by Andy Warhol, and work by his small children which everyone attributed to a cheeky contemporary artist.



**Figure 17** *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*  
Marcel Duchamp 1923

At first I encountered Mr. Lehrman's in his pristine Nike exercise outfit standing in front of his Basquiat, ancient Buddhist artifacts, and grand piano. He spoke on par with Robert Hobbs which took the class by surprise. His attitude remained undesirable until he took us into his office where he housed a large collection of Joseph Cornell Boxes. It was clear Mr. Lehrman felt deeply about the art he brought into his abode. He explained this feeling as knowing when one is in the presence of Cornell's white magic. I know now we were.

### **3/10/2015**

The last 48 hours have been dedicated to the Large Glass. I kept researching different authors and feel as though I am simply treading water. The task of giving a 30 minute presentation on an artwork that was conceived of and executed over the eleven years seems to be an impossible task. So I considered what it meant for this man to think about one thing for eleven years. Something powerful in his life must have happened to create such a fixation on this subject. Then it dawned on me that Duchamp was not a closeted peeping tom but one who loved and lost. In 1912, he took a two month trip to Munich, Germany



from Paris. During this time he hardly talked to anyone, except when he traveled several hours by train to see Gabrielle Buffet, or who was married with Francis Picabia. They spent several hours together before she had to get on a train and leave. This rejection from his friend's spouse was in my opinion what sparked *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*. In order to understand this piece and present it I realized I had to present his risking for love and failure. His art still doesn't read out in a linear manner, but I do understand the shift from ontological to epistemological interrogation of art which Duchamp continued throughout his career. It was the same sort of oscillation that occurs when in love. Not just the lust that is often contributed to his work, but an unknowability

of what to say or do during a promising first date. The uncertainty of a look from a lover can be terrifying and liberating. This in my opinion is the same look that might have seized Duchamp's attention for a later work *L.H.O.O.Q.* (Figure 18).



Figure 18 *L.H.O.O.Q.O* Marcel Duchamp 1919

Being of warm blood and a beating heart, I could relate to Duchamp's works on levels I would not have deemed previously possible. Now his dialectical mind played a great game of chess with everyone while simultaneously engaging a primal instinct of attraction for him and his work. For me Duchamp doesn't invoke a ceramic jealousy, only found elsewhere in

Ghost<sup>18</sup>, any more. No for me he is another broken heart who needed to find solace and meaning after a love of his did not accept him. And in this state of mind he chose to make art.

### **3/14/2015**

I despise some of the writing that I have done for this thesis already. A representation of what I am capable of, this is not. Thanks Yoda. Writing every day is a chore that gets delayed until the last moment of my “flex” time then I push myself to write. It doesn’t help that I live my day until the last possible moment with the hope that one instance provides insight into a topic of my studio practice that provokes me to write well. This, by the bell curve or law of averages, cannot happen every day. Some days I just have to look at myself in the mirror of my studio practice, because an artist can only make with a mirror, and smile. Smiling until I believe it and the writing is good enough for me to call it a day. But on days that I have to convince myself, I harbor doubt. Not that this is anything new to the “practice”, but I need to remind myself that I cannot produce my best every day; though I should be able to enact my best daily. Just like a photograph, I need my hot spots and cold spots with a big gray or grey area in between the two. Which reminds me; I still haven’t developed the pinhole film from last week’s hiking and photographs. I hope they turn out well and can function as stereoscopic images for thesis. My writing I think has a better batting average than my jokes. Though I do have more jokes per day than pages written, so I should be considering the amount of practice that goes into each. I wouldn’t be considering writing this much had it not been for the advice of a close friend of mine

from undergrad. He described it as a skill just like throwing, public speaking, or glazing; one has to practice to get better. And until I gain experience both in life and writing, my writing will suffer the inevitable fate of life, gravity. I wish this not to be an excuse. My exit is an allowance.

**3/15/2015**

I wonder if I am using beautiful objects to justify the type of intellectual work that I am doing in my studio. During the summer my work needed a change. Things didn't seem right after the *Joke is on the Inside* was cracked open and explained in a sense. I wanted to rectify this digression in some manner. The only way I could do that was with a attractive aesthetic. In other words, my work became more beautiful. I experienced an extreme low with that work. I had attempted to consider all aspects of it, and consider the importance of the statement, which still remains true; *the joke is on the inside*. It hurt a lot and it was not funny at all. It still isn't funny. But I need to justify my work in a different way besides embodying an emotional intelligence. Aide: Hey maybe that is the next variation; Emotional Conceptualism. But I concern myself with the beauty of my work as a way to justify the amount of work I place into it conception rather than working through it the way a crafts person might. Yes this is a matter of beautiful craft versus the whole continuum of art, from abject to neutral to beautiful. Kurt Weiser quoted Barnett Newman, "Aesthetics is to art as ornithology is to birds." When I heard this I thought to myself, birds don't give a fuck about ornithology. This was me preempting an interest in object oriented ontology. But, I conceived the art world that did not place importance on aesthetics. I still think this,

however I want to look at something beautiful. So many people want to engage with the intellectual, in a similar way that Duchamp did. But in the defense on Duchamp's importance, not every artist working in the Duchampian shadow is smart enough to do so and not every artist dealing with parallel Duchampian pivots also have the benefit of parallel context of their work. Just because there is something other than the ocular appreciation of an art object, doesn't mean that there is no content included. The only worry that I have is that it looks too much like an aestheticized object of recent history or once of canonized past. Then the beauty doesn't serve my purpose of getting people to stare and think.

**3/16/2015**

Two rocks cannot be funny unless you anthropomorphize them. Well, maybe if you gave one a guitar or filmed a major motion picture of just the two rocks and then make a bunch of sequels. You can title it Rockness. No that's a bad idea, throw that into the lake. No it's not funny unless they relate to something other than their being rocks. The Judd-ites used their powers to talk about the space in between the two rocks, moving them with their mind until that was not funny for them. No they are only funny to us when something human is transposed on the rocks. I like my work to be funny. I think it is a hook to get people to look. To laugh is to think, and I want people to do both. Laughter is also bodily. It can take us over. It can be involuntary. Laughter makes us feel pleasure despite what is causing the laughter. We can laugh almost any time, when were aroused, scared, happy, and blue, but not so much when we are lonely. Humans have been laughing for aeons as

well. It hasn't always been in style and until recently considered taboo even. People thought it was the body overcoming the mind. Ahead, standing resolute is Plato again condemning laughter. Fortunately it is now in favor again, but somehow not in art so much. I have been told comedy and humor in the context of art is hard and after not getting many laughs myself I tend to agree. Many pieces of mine are conceived through a chuckle. With the piece *Sorry, Taxes are just not Funny* (Figure 12), I was using an English joke translated into Chinese and French then carved into a slab of clay roughly the size of the Rosetta stone. I personally just wanted to share a joke with someone in the future. Hoping, if they can translate the joke, then they might laugh as well. No guarantee of this scenario, but I wanted to try. Further aesthetic decisions, I made were mostly based on art historical precedent, so it could be more or do more for a viewer. But that is not what the piece is about for me. I wanted to make something with my hands so that someone in the distance future might dig up parts or this entire slab and realize the knee slapping quality of this joke. I mean I plan on being dead longer than I'll be alive so I want to make sure I at least leave some laughter in my wake.

**3/17/2015**

I enjoy playing video games. I have played them for much of my life. During graduate school I did not have the opportunity to play many video games, though there were a few opportunities. There was one game that I played a couple hours a week during my first year called Dark Souls<sup>19</sup>. The game is known for being one of the hardest games on the market. You are a character that you create and make decisions on how you grow and become stronger.



**Figure 149** *Staff*

But the main mechanic of the game is that you die, and you die a lot. The penalty is not too harsh but the tension added makes for very suspenseful gameplay. The story is revealed through what might account to research. Bits of the story are given as you pick up items scattered and hidden throughout the game. You have to piece it together yourself and all the characters lie to you. Even with one of the possible two endings, your choices are never fully

understood and there is no resolution. Then when you think the game is complete and after the credits roll, you get dropped back at the beginning to play it all over again, with added

difficulty of course. I would normally not consider video games as an influence on my studio practice, but this game seems to have made a place for itself. I consider how much I had thought about death my first year, both in and out of the studio. *Joke Bomb* has yet to be completed, but I did finish *Staff*, my opportunistic water color of dark matter, and *The Artist* (Figure 19-21). All of these ideas stemmed from my questioning of death and my decision to make art. The potential irreverence towards it comes from George Carlin and my family's coping mechanisms, but my reasons for thinking about it so much probably did come from this game. I won't say the indecisive story is why I committed to wavering, but I do know that too help give a framework to it.



**Figure 2015** This lived above my head the last year of grad school

I think Duchamp has offered better framework now. His work's irony does a better job of keeping me entertained, but humans have mirror neurons for a reason and I am still entertained by a video game to relax from a difficult day in the studio. It is possible too that the interactivity of video games

and the push towards offering experiences in the marketplace has had an impact on some of my work as well.



**Figure 21** *The Artist* Clay and Polyethylene Plastic



**3/19/2015**

I think my work has a sub dialog about what is art. The first semester was dedicated to asking that question over and over again in my studio and it carried over into the spring as well. I dropped that language as I moved into the summer and fall, but the process just moved underground. I still make choices with my work that relate to epistemological questions about art. With the *Polar Bear Series 1-10* (Figure 22), I really wanted to question my place as an artist and viewer or consumer of art especially in relation to the petroleum industry. It is easy to point out the fact that oil is in everything we encounter on a daily basis. For me the realization that my “natural material” was in a sense polluted by oil and gas in mining, refinement, transportation, distribution, and even in the last step of transformation within my studio took me by surprise. I had wanted to sculpt and starving meditating polar bear during my undergraduate education. The image wasn’t compelling enough to me, but the idea of a polar bear was. This sentiment eventually transformed into the opportunity to try photography. With my thesis exhibition underway, I am loosely working towards ideas of naturalism, ancient humanism, and survival, but I also seem to be considering the artist’s practice in relation to those ideas. For me *Golden Apples* (Figure 23) can relate directly to painting and the artistic expression as a whole. I wonder what will happen to painting when peak oil is thirty years in the past and minerals used in making vibrant colors in oils and acrylics.



**Figure 22** *Polar Bear Series*

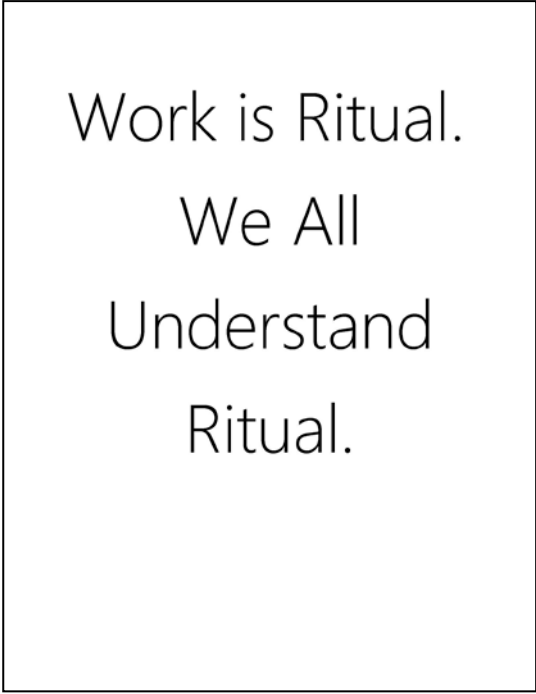


**Figure 23** *Golden Apples*

Like I said I think this is sub content of this piece in particular. Working with ideas of survival in the western context often revolves around convenience over actual survival needs.

**3/20/2015**

I took a ritual symbol and myth class during undergraduate degree. It was the most demanding course as well as the most rewarding. It was the first class that really required me to carefully read several books and come prepared to discuss ideas presented in the readings. Not only was the professor, Don Benjamin, very charismatic and a good speaker, but I did find the material fascinating. The course was structured around the idea that humans had two time structures. On one hand there is profane time, which is structured in a linear manner. We are born. We grow up. We go to work. We eat three meals. We procreate. We die. During that time, we wonder as well. On the other hand, we have sacred time. This time is cyclical and is based on the world spinning away. With the world's seasons changing, the sacred cycle mimics the profane time of birth, growth, life, death, and rebirth. Humans have created rituals in every culture throughout aeons that allowed people to transcend the barrier between profane time into sacred time. This rhythm is engrained in us and our cultures. I made *Work becomes Ritual* (Figure 24) with this in mind.



Work is Ritual.  
We All  
Understand  
Ritual.

**Figure 164** *Work Becomes Ritual*

Now I was also encountering some of the basics of conceptual art, including Sol Lewitt's paragraphs on conceptual art. I worked on the text in a word document and then took it to the printers where I paid five dollars for ten copies. I wanted to consider the desire and enjoyment one gets from working. My training in ceramics, initially as a potter then later working more sculpturally, gives me immense pleasure in working with a material. To even consider the idea of farming out art, or not even making it, was inconceivable. It was to take something away from the human experience that didn't feel right. For me the action of printing this, couple with the romantic ideas of artist transforming materials into gold holds a lot of tension. This is the most fascistic pieces of art I have ever made and also the most woo woo piece that I have ever made too.

**3/22/2015**

When I first asked myself what I really want to do for thesis or what would be fun to do for thesis and keep my spirits high instead of downward spirals of anxiety and doubt, I choose something that I thought I knew. I wanted to go back out into nature, to experience the danger and love that one can feel unmediated in the presence of nature's sublime beauty. I don't think that was a mistake entirely, but it wasn't what I really needed. I thought that by going back out there I would find new meaning for myself and art. This is something one can do, but what I really needed was my sense of adventure back. I remember the kid who traveled through Europe by himself and went on crazy adventures with friends and loved ones and asked where that kid went? I feel like I had retreated into a safe mental space where I started to grow a garden of thought surrounded by fortifications which kept

getting stronger over the years. Of course it took a loved one to come in and trample on my garden for me to be willing to venture outside of myself again. I was finally done living in that past that I had created for myself, the narrative I kept on repeating, all the sub plots of sub plots which further entrenched my garden. I don't think that these things had an impact on the quality of my work, but the direction is of course what I want in my heart of hearts. There is too much world out there for me to sit idly making away in my studio. If anything there is enough world in one city or one mountain, I just need to go out there. Then when I can barely stand it anymore, when my legs are tired, stomach growling, and my focus clear as ever, then I should go back into the studio to make art. That is when I will know my cup is full and I can go empty it into another transient vessel. I think I will go for a long walk today just to remind myself of this person I want to be. Maybe I will call and thank my loved one for their act of destruction. Maybe I'll make some art today as well. But all I know now is that I want to greet the sun once more today.

**3/24/2015**

I love beer. My father allowed me to drink my first beer when I traveled with him to Germany when I was thirteen years old. That was the drinking age there, but his logic was that he wanted me to appreciate good beer rather than drinking American swill. I hated it when I was thirteen but the notion stuck until I grew of age, never drinking throughout high school. But when it came time to consider a career to study in college I considered several avenues including a beer brewing program in Berlin, Germany. When it came down to it, art got me hooked faster than brewing did but it remained a pastime to share

with my father. I read a dozen or so books over the years and consumed my homebrews merrily as I did. Some of these books began with a brief history of brewing alcoholic beverages which dated back to ancient Egypt and possibly further. Speculation of why and how were the majority of the historic accounts. It could have been a reason why humans moved from a hunter gatherer structure to an agrarian society because grain and thus alcohol would be in greater abundance. Now that need not be true, but what is known is that the art of brewing has had a long and close history with humans across many cultures. Personally I like to think we wanted to rest our nomadic feet for a refreshing beer. I would only assume that with any luxury good once alcohol became an excess then problems soon followed. Like those early humans enjoying their beer, I too have traveled out into the wilderness on many occasions with friends with the intent on consuming this tasty mind altering beverage. This is also a very old activity humans have partaken in with a wide variety of substances. I know others do this because of stories, but also the careless remnants from those who might pack it in but not pack it out. Beer cans strewn about a campsite are a clear sign of the human animal. This is where my beer *Hovel* (Figure 25) comes from; one part makeshift shelter, one part protective shelter for a kiln. Now what kind of kiln and what went into the kiln are other questions for another day.





**Figure 175** *Hovel* Beer Cans and Pop Rivets



**3/29/2015**

The best work I have made is when I have been dancing in my studio. I say this because when I move my body through space I can think differently than when I am sedentary. This reiterates how I feel about play in my work. Thesis has been a series of dances for me, playful and carefree. When I was thinking so hard and trying to force things, the work was lacking with its forcefulness. It comes across to the viewer and as I have seen at times disregarded as being shallow or didactic. At the beginning of the second year, some of my peers committed to a stress free final year at VCU. Now these plans were overly ambitions but as a group we have been there to support each other when the stress level rose. I took that charge as seriously as one could with my own odd emphasis on planned spontaneity, play, and joy while in my studio. I couldn't complete this task without having been down again during my third semester. The work I made came from a place of despair for the world and longing for the betterment of this planet. In response, thesis was going to be about play and the enjoyment of making art. Now many pieces thus far have not included so much enjoyment through their making process from start to finish, but overall I have sincerely enjoyed myself. Many of the ideas have come from moments of peace with myself, a still mind and moving hands, where all of a sudden I burst out laughing to some odd idea which popped into thought. It makes me feel good and a spider sense kicks off that there is something there. I have been cataloging these things as time goes on and pull them out as needed. But every so often a piece feels fully manifested shortly after it sprouts out of my subconscious. *The World is Flat* (Figure 26) is one of these.

**Figure 186** *The World is not Flat*

It felt right that it should come into being and just be stubborn about its completeness. I let it happen since I initially chuckled about the small amount of impotent movement that the piece implies. I wish I could say the piece had to grow on me, but really it was done the moment I thought about it. I just needed to place everything together the way that it told me. However through



actual making of this piece it revealed more of the content that I was interested in for thesis. I thought a great deal about progress and how that is measured. What is the cost of our taking of resources from nature? Do the ends really justify the means?

**3/30/2015**

Free association comes in handy when I am thinking about my work. I also think of other peoples work that way too. It is how I dissect my ideas and afford them wiggle room to blossom into larger concepts or hone in on titles. My biggest concern with this approach is that if I free associate too much then I alienate my viewer. That means my freedom to

make connections is dependent on how agreeable or harmonic those ideas are in the minds of my viewers. Humor functions in a very similar way. As a child I grew up on The Simpsons and as a young adult: Family Guy, Robot Chicken on Adult Swim, and Frasier on NBC. With that last one I was watching it somewhere between thirteen and sixteen. When I stopped watching the show, it was because I was preempting the punchlines with laughter. I had already gotten the joke and understood how the writers free associated. This bored me enough to find something else to do with that extra hour or so before mandatory bedtime. This makes me wonder now about how I free associate in order to create work. If in an ideal world, my viewers did understand how I jumped from one idea to the next within my work, then would they get bored of me as well? If then the relationship between the ideas can be interchangeable and still get a similar result then shouldn't it be about flow and harmony between works of different sets of connection? Or for that matter should a discord be allowed precedence. If this is to be a long career or at least an attempt at one, then I want to start considering the direction and velocity of these jumps. I need to find my stride as I run around in the corn field of my studio practice making intricate crop circles which I get paid for by the local corn cartel. Maybe this is too much subtext but I get the feeling that things like this will come out if I just trust myself. The relationships that I am forming are based on specific ideas that have been downloaded over the years. They just require a key, or an allegory that explains my free association. Wait that is another convention and way of organizing the world, despite being "free".

## **April**

**4/1/2015**

There are many, many small and tedious moments that we must endure in this life. These difficult and yet banal moments, the way that we handle them, and the way we remember them, all end up defining who we are. In my work, I use humor to reflect upon and shrug off the inevitable less-than-perfectness in our everyday lives. Issues large and small are poked fun at so that we might begin to realize that it's all so much lighter than we think. (In fact, it'll float away if we don't tie it down.) Despite our best attempts to understand each other, our lines are often crossed as we attempt to reach one another. We human beings are completely dwarfed by our meager attempts at grappling with even the smallest of moments. With the daily enormity of climate change, and our society's future as a whole in jeopardy, there lies before us all of the vast mysteries of the universe. My work bears the weight of these contemplations with a heavy dollop of situational irony and a sometimes-dark smirk. It at times is cloaked in a sometimes-sweet sense of humor, which reassures the viewer that nobody in this game has got it figured out. Perhaps it's in our moments of quiet futility that we are proven to be our most hilarious.

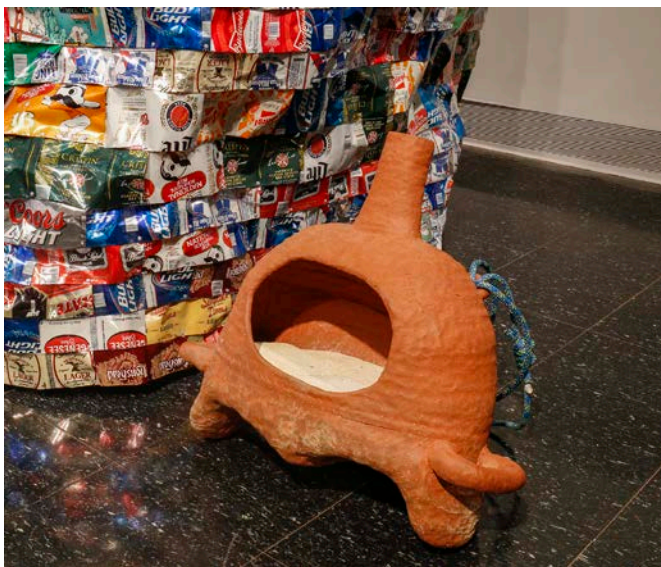
**4/3/2015**

This is a religion. Right now I am in a monastery or cloister or rabbinical school. Head down, I am quietly focusing on my meditations and scripture. Art is a very secular religion, but a religion none the less. Nietzsche proclaimed God is dead<sup>20</sup>. In God's absence there is a void of power which will inevitably get filled by another power. Humans can take this power for themselves and declare themselves Gods on Earth. This has been done. Or one can give themselves over to another external power like another religion or Scientology: your call. It is more likely a mix of the two and is for me personally. We have recognized that as individuals we do have an amount of power in shaping our life. The ability to enact this can be debated but I won't here. It is still an emergent property of how this power is actually wielded. Like an ant colony, just more disorganized and with higher entropy all multiplied by several factors of ten. Taking on all of this power for an individual is too much responsibility to bare, we are not evolutionarily made to be a God. Thus taking only a small portion of this power has its benefits, while the rest of the power is taken up by the community with an amount of faith that everyone else is also using their power, in good faith. Without a banner of sorts, an umbrella, or sun shade depending on your typical climate, it is difficult to believe that everyone else is not abusing their power. This is where the secular part of art as a religion comes into play. I think we all *believe* in a greater idea of what art is. It is vague because it is secular, but we all believe in art somehow with a personal or communal aspect of this belief. We believe in art. It is not a traditional religion because we don't kill each other over art. Yet at least. This isn't a monotheistic religion. I would guess it is polytheistic. I think people will

disagree with this because they don't want to accept the responsibility of being a god or taking part in an unorganized religion. So that is why MFA's are part and parcel of this religion. Soon I will get to break my vow of silence and go be a missionary.

**4/6/2015**

Now that I am a few weeks out from thesis I question some of the decisions I have made to drop a lot of the work I have made this semester in favor for something different. I am not questioning it because I doubt that choice, but rather if I have missed something in the absurdist survival objects that sing a different tune to the greater nebulous idea of this show.



**Figure 27** *Single Serving Chiminea*

Don't ask me, because I'm still trying to figure out what that is exactly. No I am drawn to many of these pieces and wonder if some need to be finalized and put into the show. For instance, the unfinished *Mobile Cell Tower*, *Single Serving Chiminea*, or

*Navigation for the lost* (Figures 27, 28) are objects that I have grown attached to as I live with them in my studio. But I want to consider if these objects still have a purpose amongst the other work in this fictive camp scene that is developing subconsciously. I am

particularly very interested in the combination Go Pro and Pinhole camera combination that I made just as an object in and of itself. The images that it produces have yet to come to fruition but the idea of using this as a stereoscopic image is what still has potential for thesis.



**Figure 28** *Navigation for the Lost*

The initial idea of photographing me with *Cloud Center* (Figure 10) around my waist near a van down by the river just makes sense again; however still not enough to put it in the show. I think my ideas make too much sense, subconsciously speaking in my head. Maybe I should be looking for a piece that throws that balance off, a wild card if you will. I think I am missing one of the more obvious things about this setup. It could be missing the human animal. In fact I think it is missing the self-portrait that I was considering, just not a direct image. I think it should be something somewhat dumb looking, but endearing. Relatively hairless of course. Maybe I should reconsider this pinhole GoPro combo that speaks to a lot of these things. It can't be on a tripod, it should be a bipod because we have binocular vision. Yeah that sounds like a good idea. Thank you for your help on this one. I was starting to feel off in relation to this show. Just jitters I guess. Nothing like a good talk can't sort out and revisiting older ideas and work.



**4/7/2015**

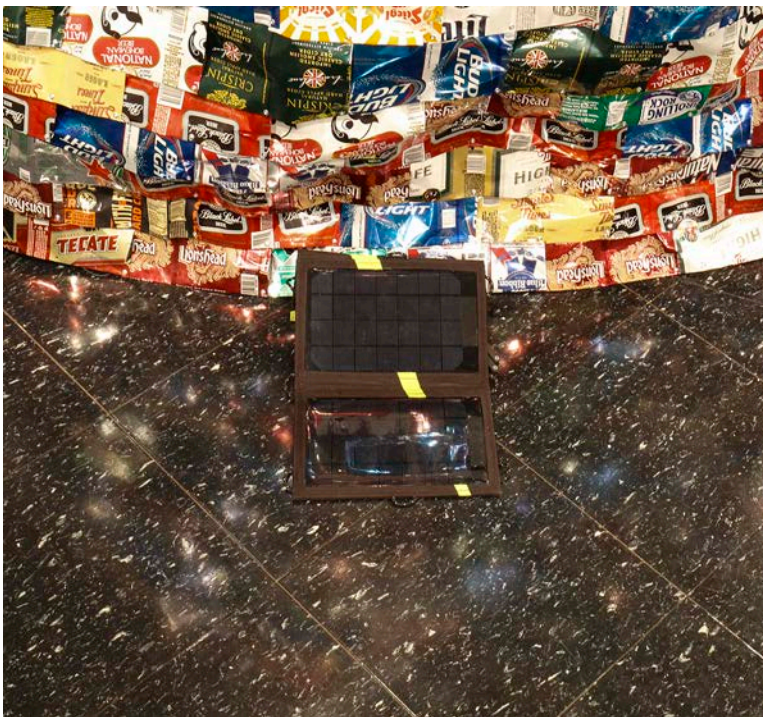
I think this semester's work oscillates between, the divine, the sacred, and the mundane. I want to think that I am transgressing these boundaries with my work. I try to take things that are divine and through sacrilege make it profane or vice versa when the profane is brought up through a transformation into the divine. With the thesis show I feel one of the themes emerging is a mixing of these processes. *Golden Apples* (figure 23) and *Pour Silly Putty* (Figure 29) are good examples of this both of which deal with different types of divine. Golden Apples can be read through the historical lens of golden apples and their association with immortality, but also the idea that we have defined ourselves immortal through use of a seemingly infinite energy source. We cannot comprehend the amount of life that went into small amounts of gasoline let alone the aeons of life that we burn



**Figure 199** *Pour Silly Putty*



through in one day on this planet. We are just recycling life. For the silly putty puddle, it can be a disgusting mess of undesirable mud or worse Neapolitan ice cream with its color. But it can also become the ever expanding universe channeling entropic forces of stretching light into redder places of the spectrum, getting darker and colder at the edges as we contemplate the species as dying alone on this planet, separated from any potential life elsewhere in the universe because of physics. I think the other piece that offers this sort of transition between these planes is *Sneeze Offering* (Figure 30). The religious connotations and associations with health from “God bless you” and “Gesundheit” are of course the initial connections.



**Figure 30** *Sneeze Offering*, Sound and Solar Panel

However the placement within the beer can fort (Figure 25) and offering of what would be considered involuntary or a sign of bad health makes it monstrous and an abomination: a drunken horror! Additionally the human

animal was very well adapted to being out in the natural environment all day long. Now we have lost that ability or symbiosis and have allergic reactions. This is the sound of a

person revering the power of nature, so I turned it into a Gregorian or Buddhist chant of sorts. Now, I have conceived of these works for this reason, but I have tried to place them visually throughout the spectrum, often teetering into the mundane as well: the last part of this triangle. This is contradictory to what I have written before. This is my own critique and point of contention for me. I am still resolving this.

**4/13/2015**

I'm tired of writing every day. I feel like I have been scraping the bottom of the clay bin for things to write about on the daily. This project is well past the point of no return, just like thesis. There is no more time for guilt, doubt or quibbling about silly things like money. I must push forward. It has been even harder to push forward with my writing since all I want to do is go forward with my work. There is a lot to do yet. Collecting empty beer cans is a chore and processing them even more so. I have yet to begin constructing this beer can fort. I have to think about the strategies I am using ahead of time to make sure I can make it under the wire on this one. So much has yet to happen and I need to be honest with my time. The Duchamp paper is due the day my show opens and it makes me feel fucked. One of my old mantras is making a big comeback. All that I know is that I know nothing. The more I say that to myself during the day the calmer I become. The swearing doesn't stop when in the studio, but it rolls off my back more like a softball rather than a basketball. I feel like this problem is exaggerated by my bicycle accident the other day. My chain snapped while riding over Broad St. on Lombardy. I took a spill and my left wrist, hip, shoulder, and head hit the ground in the order. I'm so

glad I was wearing a helmet because it would have been bad again. I felt mildly concussed for the rest of the night and didn't take part in celebrating everyone who went in the first round of thesis exhibitions. Since then my wrist has been in pain and weak. I will have a several week recovery with this one. The only good news is it is not broken. Heidegger was right when he said we only recognize a tool for what it is when it breaks. I need my hands and feel very weird when I am not using them. And when I am honest I want to use my hands and not my brain right now. My brain has gotten me a long way so far but it puts up unnecessary road blocks on a whim. I simply want to shut it off and let my body think for a change. That will be great. This writing is preventing that from happening, but today is over. Back to work, I go.

**4/14/2015**

Think of it like a child, but think about it like an adult. Now this phrasing is problematic but it cuts to the point of how I try to see the becoming of my work. I was drinking a beer with a friend once, surprise, when she scribbled a few lines on a piece of paper and asked me what it looked like. I barely got out a response when she made a buzzer noise. I failed. Her kids she taught had been able to chime in with many possibilities in that short period of time she explained. My problem was thinking too much. I was advised to think like a child and try looking at the scribble again. All of a sudden I had six responses to what these few marks could be. I had forgotten one of the most important things of growing up; just be a larger version of your child self. I feel like I have been channeling this sentiment all throughout the two years here but only during the last semester enacted it intentionally

in my studio. It has also come in handy during critiques when looking at work that is not mine. I wonder if this is offensive to some people. What would they think if I was just considering their work like a child? This brings me to the second half of that statement. Think about it like an adult. I don't wish to put an outdated hierarchy on child and adult because understanding the contemporary understanding of child development is far beyond my understanding. No the seeing what something is *of*, but thinking what it is *about* takes knowledge. Making this way is easy. Foucault said, "Knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting" <sup>21</sup>. I think wisdom is made for leaving whole. Making with wisdom is harder. I do not wish to negate what Foucault was saying but rather include that leaving something whole is not a matter of knowing, but one of feeling the presence of a whole and allowing that to be enough for ones ego. As soon as I think I know one thing, I am leaving something else out. So then I am trying to sense a whole when in my studio. Once it is there I try not to mess with it anymore for I will start confusing my *of's* and *about's*, child and adult thinkings. It will come to me, I just need to trust myself in the studio. Though I am now being redundant and repetitive. Sorry, all this seems like a no brainer after I write it.

4/15/2015



**Figure 31** *Whirled Earth* still

My two roommates came to VCU having done a lot of performances. It became a common topic of conversation and during the first semester here. To say the least it eventually rubbed off on me and nearing the end of the semester I got an idea for a performance as I called it, but it is probably better defined as a video at this point because I didn't perform for anyone. I filmed myself and has since been shown as a film. The piece was titled *Whirled Earth* (Figure 31-32). I was beginning to ask the distinct question of why I was using clay and to what end. The video consisted of two segments. In the first part, I inflated a sphere roughly 6 feet tall with compressed air and in the second part, I began attempting to cover the sphere with soft clay until it was totally covered.



**Figure 32** *Whirled Earth* still

During this, the inflated sphere was losing air and beginning to deflate while I struggled to smear the clay onto it. It had a very Sisyphian sense to it. This piece became an outlet for me to ask that question with nods to Martin

Heidegger's *Origin of the Work of Art*<sup>22</sup>. In this cyclical piece of philosophy, Heidegger describes the work of art as creating its own *world* in order to make it art. This *world* struggles with the *earth* which is the language Heidegger uses to define the material of the artwork. This paralleled how I was questioning the importance of the ideas I use to make the work and thus legitimize the work at the same time all the while comparing this to my choice of material, clay. At the end of the video, the sphere completely deflated and it was completely covered in clay. It transformed from its translation from an idea into clay. When I look back on that the deflated, two dimensionless might have been a sign of my movement away from clay as a primary material for my studio practice. In any sense the idea that I could use my own body in my work was liberating in many ways. In fact, the idea that art can be actualized as a performance was important because it broke a boundary of what the objects I make can do.

**4/17/2015**

I have been processing beer cans for several days now and have begun to assemble them. In doing so I have discovered more content to the piece that I had yet to consider. This is often the case with how I work and how a piece evolves in the studio. But I realized that the cast off beer cans represent a very democratic beverage and mind altering substance. It is everywhere right now. China is producing outrageous amounts of beer to keep up with its growing middle class. We drink a lot of beer per capita and our country was founded by a bunch of brewers and drunks. One only has to do a quick google search to reveal the recorded inventory of alcoholic beverages lagered away by the founding fathers. The disposed of can are forgotten about as soon as they are empty and discarded. However there is a substantial population in the United States that collect cans as a source of income. I have had the opportunity to meet some of these people while out collecting myself. I can't comment on how it might be to have to collect cans for income, but it does point directly to the fact that we are wasteful and have an addiction to alcohol. Additionally, this piece is going to be rather beautiful when complete, if it gets "complete" in the time I have left. I say that because an unfinished Star Wars Death Star look is my backup plan. The piece might be too beautiful for the dull context of the white box. With this in mind I am beginning to think that an image of this placed on an idyllic mountain side with spring flowers and mountain vistas in the background might play into the hyperreality of our relationship to nature and its image. This places the wastefulness of our society and cultural norms in direct confrontation with the sublime of nature and its empty shell as an image. Not to mention that this can be considered a makeshift shelter for

the less fortunate, not an uncommon practice of fashioning a house out of discarded materials. This might be life after grad school because I still need to get this thing finished. I am going to finish it, because success comes in cans and failure comes in can'ts.

**4/18/2015**

I think a lot about the end of the world. In fact it is on my mind quite often. I think about the future and what might happen when the planet starts becoming unpredictable. The seasons start changing, oceans turn acidic and die, topsoil erosion accelerates, crops die, fresh water becomes scarce, global famine, resources disappear, and the human animal will do what it does. We will try to survive. Though this will probably not be a communal we and definitely not a royal we. Now that scenario starts with uncontrollable forces of the earth, but I bet that will still come to pass when the world fails to transition fast enough to renewable energy sources. If there is going to be an energy war over the convenience of oil then this place is going to get ugly for a long time. I wonder what position art will be in then. Will painters still be able to paint? Will sculpture still be possible or will the traditional crafts have more a role in such a world? We might be too busy surviving by farming what little soil is left. These are all hypotheticals, but none the less possible outcomes to the decades of industrialization. And here I am selfishly worrying about what art I'm going to make to "survive". I wonder if my work would ever have a capacity to help someone survive. My *Firestarter* (Figure 9) would not be of much help until it was disassembled just like the rest of my other work. Is my work only about laughing at our



own shortsightedness and pointing out our own tomfoolery? Should it serve another purpose and if so is that art? I want to make art that might be able to help people survive both now and in the future. I think right now it is a coping mechanism. This whole thesis show is a coping mechanism. If I had my way I would live out in the country side in a self-sustaining house with a small farm. I would probably hate it because it wouldn't have all the modern convenience that I am accustomed to. So part of me says why not stick around, enjoy the show, and burn all the oil I can as quickly as I can so that maybe, just maybe, we get to the part where real decisions for survival of this species, well this planet and all its population, can be made. Hey I can dream can't I?

**4/19/2015**

Deep Time is a sexy idea right now. It is sexy enough to just say it in conversation without any explanation and everyone nods their head. I like to think this is because it is the beginning of a cultural awareness of our inability to comprehend the amount of time that has come to pass in this universe and on this planet. Deep time does not apply to human time, but something that comes close is the great precession or as astronomers call it, the axial precession. This is the slow wobble of the planet's axis around its center of gravity which takes 25,800 years to complete one cycle. A lot of new age philosophies like to talk about the precession because it is how the Age of Aquarius is defined. I like to think of it as the planet being a little tipsy. I mean if I were spinning that much I would be wobbling too. I also in part see the Nietzschean eternal return<sup>23</sup> as part of the great precession. It all becomes a trend cycle, just on the long count. 20 years? No I mean 26,000 year trend

cycle. Our perspective on things as a species seems to take a long time to come back around. On evolutionary terms we haven't changed much in this last cycle, but our context is sure different. Many cultures have also calculated these amounts of time with their mythologies. The fact that humans have concerned themselves with this type of time means we have some engrained imagination or concern with what comes after us on larger time scales. This has manifested through the interest in the heavens and continues to do so as we peer into deep space. The slow collection of light by ultra-refined sensors from billions of light years into the past connects us with so many cultures and humans before us. I think it could be one of the only true religions on this planet. Looking up at the stars and soaking in the old rays of imagination like a cold blooded reptile in the sun. No symbolism is attached to that. I'm not throwing sand in any eyes claiming you can see clearer. But I would bet if there was only firelight in the evenings people would opt more often for the starlight and their imagination. Then again I already said if people listened to me we would all be fucked, but I would still put money on it.

## Postcession

The work has been made. The show is up. Several days later my body is beginning to return to normal rhythms. It no longer questions me. However don't worry; I am still questioning myself. The install came down to the wire and I barely made it through the opening reception by depleting the last of my adrenaline. The work was well received from what I could tell. People kept me talking all night and I essentially used it as elevator speech practice. Well an elevator speech in the tallest building in the world at times. I encountered many people laughing at the show. This was a particular highlight for me. *Pour Silly Putty* (Figure 29) was the crowd favorite. Someone even walked straight across it shortly after the show opened. I was standing right there as the undergraduate student traversed the length of the puddle. He enjoyed the experience thoroughly. The silly putty left no stable ground below his feet as it was suspended in the liminal state of both a solid and a liquid. The viscoelastic property of silly putty, a solid when agitated and liquid flowing properties when at rest, is the opposite to casting slip and its thixotropic quality. I see this as a fitting beginning to my show. It marks the liminal threshold for the space while harking back to both childhood memories of playing in puddles and my own previous use of slip casting in my studio practice. As for how this piece fit thematically in my decision making process, I enjoyed thinking about it as a body of water and one of the

primal elements to survival. However the silly putty is composed of glue and the art historical references to Robert Smithson should not be overlooked. The puddle helped me control the majority of people's movement through the space. Most people veered right and not left as they encountered the orange ooze. Their journey further into the show took them to *Golden Apples* and *The World is not Flat* (Figures 23, 26). The first contradictions emerge as viewers are faced with impotent movement and progress ill defined. I have such a narrative for these works. I can no longer see them with blue eyes. The mystery that drove me to make them and accept them as they were is dwindling right now for me personally. I regret my propensities to catalog and explain away these two pieces. On a surface level I like them as a tree finally bearing fruit. *Single Serving Chiminea* (Figure 27) is not the only clay I have in the show since I used Newman Red, an earthenware clay, as a colorant in the silly putty. It is my only source of fire. My intention was to singe the inside of *Hovel* (Figure 25), a soot painting, but running out of time this was what I could manage. It still captivates me in its absurdity and background history. I love stoking my own fire, but at this point you know this already. The beer cans became another crowd favorite. The texture and oddity, coupled with a faint smell of old beer enticed many a visitor. Its shininess took hold and wouldn't give up. Turns out this makeshift shelter was just as ultralight as some backpacking tents. But with *Sneeze Offering* inside of it, the space was primed for a ritual to take place. A mind altering substance combined with an offered involuntary chant of slow sneezes is an absurd extreme of many a camping trip in the woods. Some did hear motor sounds as the ascension of voices paused before sneezing. This did not take me by surprise as the industrial aspect to producing beer in that

quality was a driving force behind that piece. Additionally my narrative for the wood log and jerry cans have their own associations to vehicles and industry. The combination of what the sound is and what it sounds like makes it a monstrosity of sorts. I think that is a good home for this monster. The last of the profane objects in the show is *Ecco* (Figure 14). My fictive campsite or hyperreal sublime landscape needed a human surrogate. The binocular vision made sense, but the real discovery is in the title for me. Ecco is Italian for here, but pronounced as echo. The homophone becomes incredibly important as the piece shifts between its own vision, the echo between the images it would create, hearing the sound of the sneeze, proclaiming itself as present in the space, and signifying the location from which one can see *Cloud Center* (Figure 10). It is intentionally outside of our space, just beyond our reach. I like to keep it on that level which is similar to George Carlin's idea about God:

People have different names for God all around the world. They call him Allah, Jehovah, Yahweh. I call him, "The Man Who Lives in the Clouds". Kinda keeps him on my mental level that way. I have an understanding with God. I don't understand him; He doesn't understand me.<sup>24</sup>



**Figure 203** *Survival Map*

Now that the journey is complete one can and many did linger a little longer before leaving the show. Some offered praise and other just wanted a laugh with me or a hug. On the way out because very few people noticed on the way in they found my *Survival Map* (Figure 33). I needed a way to have all of my titles on the wall, but thought it would be good to incorporate it into a piece. Navigation happens no longer with a compass and map. No we have GPS in all of our touchpad devices and cell phones. But nature is dirty and one risks having these things break. So to account for this need to navigate I offered them a crude survival map on a glass form in the shape of a tablet tucked away in a waterproof pouch filled halfway with water. It had all of the titles and crude drawing of

each piece in the layout of the show. The image embedded in between the two layers of glass is a map of Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped bare by her Bachelors, Even* with the *Green Box* notes super imposed on it. What can I say? I couldn't help myself. I had to make a few jokes before I give up this space I have created.

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## APPENDIX A

This appendix houses the remains of bad writing as a form of inoculation. The words are stripped away and the essence of its bacterial incidence is retained.

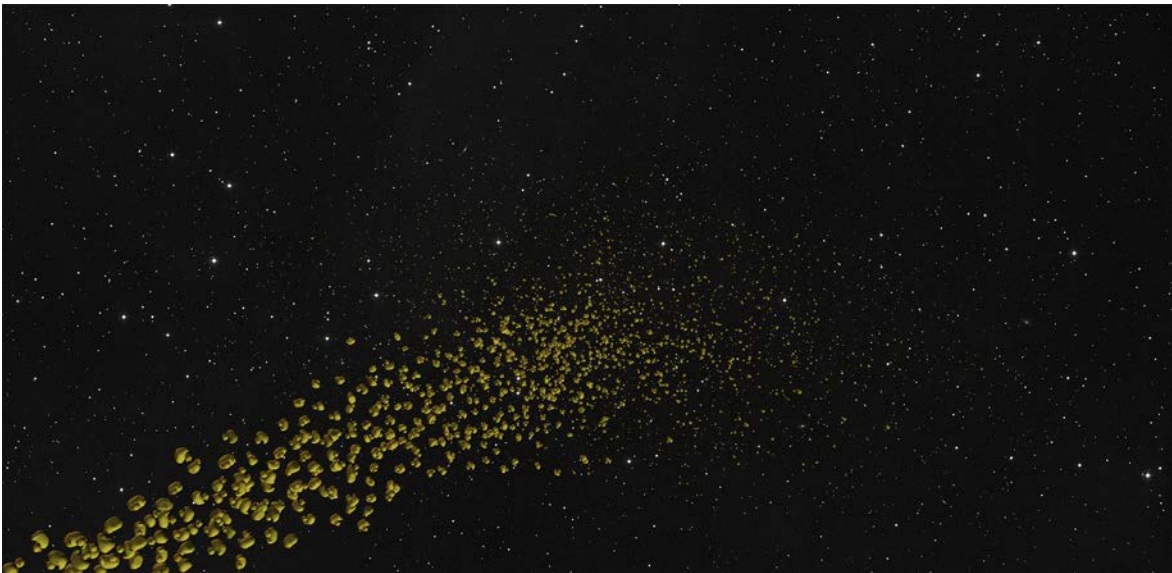
February: Spacial metaphor skepticism, on leaving graduate school, bean counting, bourgeois documentaries, metadata is old.

March: Doubtism, emptiness, practicing the controlled fall, Brant and Barnes Foundation, two sculpture students and one craft kid walk into a bar, artist talks out the wazoo, ancient Mayan Atlantian misfortunes, the state of clay, NCECA biennial, post-graduation woes, the benefits of good preparation, problems with beauty and the mundane.

April: Dave Hickey, rock climbing with fear of heights, Star Trek adventures, Documentation: the final frontier, value in conflict, nowhere to go but backwards, riding waves, everything is curated, open toed walking, entropy: it ain't what it used to be, the ever presence of coil building, the Illiterati induction ceremony was surprisingly wordy.

## VITA

Evan David Edgar Pomerantz was born in Minnesota in 1987 to Kathy Pomerantz and Evan Philip Pomerantz. He lived in the Sonoran Desert. He comes from Berlin, Germany. He received his Bachelors of Fine Art from Arizona State University and his Masters of Fine Art from Virginia Commonwealth University. This experiment is ongoing. The findings will be published and peer reviewed upon the end of this experiment.



**Figure 3421** *Duck Fountain*