

RECURRENCE

FRIDMAN GALLERY  
287 SPRING STREET NYC 10013

Edgar Arceneaux  
Lauren Fensterstock  
Colter Jacobsen  
Nick McPhail  
Ariana Papademetropoulos

**RECURRENCE** CURATED BY LUISA AGUILAR SOLIS AND GEORGIA HORN

## Down Came A Shower The Color Of Ashes And Rust

By Georgia Horn

In an art history class in college some years ago, we were asked to write wall texts for certain paintings on loan at the Cleveland Museum of Art. The challenge here was not in finding the salient facts, but in distilling them down to their most essential 150 characters. After much research, and too many words, I began asking friends: when you look at this painting, what do you most want to know about it? Their answers tended to center on the question of “who.” Privileging the “who” question, emphasizes context by using the history of an object to account for its identity.

In his 1968 text “Daughters of the Moon,” Italo Calvino fictionalizes a world not far from the one we now exist in— a world in which excessive consumption is slowly eroding the earth, and in which the unending desire for new products marginalizes the importance of any environmental consequence. Staged against the backdrop of an imaginary version of New York City, Calvino casts the urban landscape as a vast dumping ground that begins to resemble a lunar crater, writing an allegory about the infinite finitude of consumerist desires and the “deaths” for which they are responsible. The story also allows for the possibility of a kind of redemption through a return to the primitive and a turn away from the glittering technologies of the future. He ends with the suggestion that although imagination may be able to transcend the weight of consumption, it finally cannot supplant the degraded reality described in the story.

Consumerism is identity-crafting— we often define ourselves through what we buy. Calvino highlights the ways in which consumerism denies individuality, producing context-less, a-historical objects perceived as necessities for artificial rather than functional reasons. In the story, the moon is treated as we treat commodities, disposable and ultimately discarded. From here on earth, the moon, as our satellite in constant orbit around us, is a relational object and becomes an ethical metaphor that demonstrates the consequences of our parasitic actions.

*Recurrence* responds to and reacts against our compulsion for the new and quick discard of the old, and to the cyclical nature of the consumptive process. Each piece is an acknowledgment of personal histories and speaks directly to Calvino in one way or another. The following essay is an attempt to highlight the history of this show as human-driven rather than commodity-driven, and to therefore provide a context constituted by “who” and “how” rather than “what” (the primary obsession of the consumer).

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“I just learned that the etymology for both the words ‘consider’ and ‘desire’ contains stars,” **Colter Jacobsen** wrote when Luisa and I first reached out to him. Later, when we met in person, we were in San Francisco, climbing the red wooden stairs that lead to his house, which was full of dense light streaming in through old windows. Colter was immediately kind and warm, and it was with an unlikely familiar ease that we sat in his room, drinking tea and looking through delicate drawings, collages, and notebooks full of pictures rendered with near photographic precision, surrounded by piles upon piles of books. As an artist who works often with memory as his medium, Jacobsen’s subtle and intricate pencil-drawn pairings (the first made from an image, the second from the memory of that image) were the first of his works to catch our attention.

It was here, in San Francisco, during a conversation which meandered through Iceland, Julie Ault and the writings of Jane Bowles, that Colter first mentioned the idea of a window piece, and it is in *Recurrence* that the window piece becomes fully articulated. Developed out of his interest in the changing light reflected through windows —both light emanating from natural sources (the sun and moon) and non-natural ones (street lamps, cars)— *Light Mill/ Wind House* uses materials with particular transparent and ephemeral qualities —newspaper, trash, magazines and memorabilia— to make visible the temporal variability of light, and by proxy the ideas of instability and impermanence present in our lives. As light shines through double-sided newsprint, the transparency reveals new juxtapositions between text and images, suggesting alternate and otherwise unseen readings.



Top: Colter Jacobsen  
*W*, 2006  
graphite on found paper,  
7.5" x 9.5" each

Right: Lauren Fensterstock  
*Ha-ha*, 2013  
paper, wood, plexi  
10' x 10' x 4.5'

A few days after Colter emailed us, I looked up the etymologies of the words “consider” and “desire”: “From Latin *Considerare*’ ‘to look closely, observe,’ perhaps literally ‘to observe the stars,’ from *com*-‘with’ + *sidus* (genetive *sideris*) ‘constellation’.” “*Desiderare*<sup>2</sup> ‘long for, wish for; demand, expect,’ original sense perhaps ‘await what the stars will bring,’ from the phrase *desidere* ‘from the stars,’ from *sidus* (genetive *siderus*) ‘heavenly body, star, constellation’.”



In December of 2013, a friend and I drove to Portland, Maine, to meet **Lauren Fensterstock**. A few days prior, she had offered to play culinary diplomat, taking us first for some velvety ramen at a small restaurant near her house. We sat by the window, which was dusted with frost, and talked about Robert Smithson and Calvino. Before returning to her studio, we stopped at the Portland Art Museum to visit a large cubic sculpture of hers titled *Ha-Ha*. The surface of the sculpture was covered in a layer of black paper grasses, and a crack down its middle revealed a verdant floral landscape of quilled paper forms. This was my first experience with Lauren’s work in person, and I found myself deeply attracted to and increasingly lost in the world she had created. As I circled the cube, crouching down at the base of the fracture and standing tall on my toes to see across the top, I could hear the security guard describing the surprise and awe with which museum patrons regarded the piece.

It was a cold day late in the month, with a grey mix of sleet and snow, and we took off our heavy boots once we stepped inside her house, walking up to her studio with her cat Jolene to look at the sketches into which she had written me earlier that “Calvino’s moon had slipped.” The sketches shared the same delicacy, precision and saturation of color as the sculptures, and while some of her ideas extrapolated key moments in the text, others related more abstractly to it. The work included in *Recurrence* developed from the sketched suggestions she had prepared for us that day, eventually becoming not one but two black cubes, lined on their interior with her signature black floral forms.

The cold, grey menace of the Maine winter seemed somehow tempered by the liveliness of her studio and the synthetic organisms within it. As all the life outside the window lay buried beneath a blanket of snow, Lauren’s practice remained vital and flourishing. Nonetheless, as successfully as Lauren’s flowers seemed to preserve nature through the winter, they simultaneously pointed to their own construction. Their color (but little else) signals their artificiality, and as much life as we find in her forms, we are confronted also by the darkness of a certain kind of death, of an uneasy cohabitation of industry and nature. Over the subsequent months, we spoke about her relationship to Tony Smith and minimalist practice, and the way in which she intended to conceal the floral forms. Eventually, it was decided that they would go beneath a pane of glass, to enhance the illusory feel of the sculpture. From beneath the glass, the surface qualities of the sculpture are more difficult to access, seeming to change their appearance based on the viewer’s distance from or proximity to the piece itself.

When we first described the show to **Edgar Arceneaux** over dinner at a small Thai restaurant in Pasadena, he asked if we’d ever seen the “Century of the Self”, a film about

Edward Bernays, the nephew of Sigmund Freud who used his uncle’s studies of the subconscious to formulate the concept of advertising through propaganda.

From Thai food, Calvino and Bernays, to coffee, Charles Gaines, and the Detroit based band, Underground Resistance, our conversations with Edgar collected a strong narrative history, much like his work. In March, he loaned us a piece for a small benefit Luisa and I were hosting. As he was packing the drawing, titled *One Thousand Mistakes*, he described the story of its origin. Form south central LA, his grandfather told him, in the 1930’s you could see all the way to the Pacific. Although he’d never seen it himself, this memory stuck with him. Years later, standing on the roof of a foreclosed building on the verge of destruction, Edgar finally saw the ocean from the vantage point his grandfather had seen it, miles away from the heart of South LA, and a dream of the Rodia Watts Towers completed the idea that led to his vision for the painting. This same lyrical quality which intertwines the past with a vision for the present, underlies the piece selected for *Recurrence*, which comes from an investigation of industry and art history in the context of Detroit, a city whose industrial ruin seems to point directly at the kind of wide-scale consumptive destruction that inspired the concept of the show.

Once we had decided to include *Detroit Steel* Edgar wrote to us about the series, “The phrase Detroit Steel is in the background, it’s always there, our industrial past, our personal fragility...I use the wedge in each drawing, the phrase Detroit Steel and the text from Kimmelman [Michael Kimmelman, the architecture critic for the *New York Times*]. It implies that another configuration is possible. Another understanding could be made in thinking about the social history of America, the art that comes from it and the hope that something better is still very much possible.”

In September, before we had a location for the show, Calvino’s story suddenly returned to me from a distant memory, in one way or another drawing together each artist towards whom we had been gravitating. That day, **Nick McPhail** happened to send me images of three new paintings- a triangle on a yellow background, a blue textured rectangle, and the moon (we came to refer to these original three as “the moon series.”)

Nick McPhail  
*Frame #17*, 2014  
Oil on canvas  
16” x 20”



Six months later, in early March, Nick and I sat down for a beer at a bar near his house in Silverlake to talk about his work, which I have seen develop from painterly landscapes to austere monochromes, then to its present point, somewhere in between the two. He had decided to give himself a single dimension to work in- 16 x 20” and over many months, these three paintings developed from a line of three, to a grid of nine and eventually into a mosaic of 21. That evening, we spoke about Etel Adnan, Suzanne Caporael, Franz West and Blinky Palermo- about his compulsion to work and re-work every painting, about his layering of paint and other materials and the sequence of time this embeds within each paintings. We spoke about his reference to semiotics, about incorporating “trash” into his paintings and repurposing it as a material. We spoke about color, about how his use of it can be said to involve artifice- that the seeming “joy” connoted by the bright hues could actually be the surface of something darker, or more complex beneath the layers. We spoke about why he had abandoned his formal landscapes, and the concept of simulacra. But, and this was perhaps the most important thing I took from our conversation, Nick’s work is not consciously driven by a narrative impulse— rather, his inspiration derives from an intuitive source, and it is an abstract instinct that is responsible for his selection of color and geometry. In *Series of 21 Frames*, the work he includes in the present show, he invites the viewers to relate individually to the piece, and form associations from their personal histories, without any preconceived definitions. In this way, he emphasizes the dialogues formed between, and within, the compositions and the infinite possibilities for their interpretation.

I first met **Ariana Papamedetropoulos** on a cool night at the end of September at her house in Echo Park. We began in her studio, looking at the photorealistic paintings

characteristic of her oeuvre. At the time, she was working on an image from a *Snow White* porno. She had painted a thin white veil over the risque background, softening it in spite of the precision with which she had depicted the scene.

Upstairs, in a cozy house beautifully decorated with dark wood, red velvet, taxidermy and books on topics ranging from fine art, to interior design to the occult, we spoke about what it meant to be an artist working in Los Angeles in 2013. We talked about the Besant Lodge in Beachwood Canyon and CalArts and Venice beach, and the things that in our mind differentiated Los Angeles from New York. Over the months, Ariana transitioned into her water-mark series, an example of which hangs in the present show. The series began with a diptych of still-lives titled *Greek Easter*. A circular water-mark stained the soft pastel-colored surface of both paintings. After the pieces sold, Ariana brought them to FedEx to ship them, where the woman at the shipping desk proclaimed dismayed: “oh no! the picture is ruined.” For Ariana this was the mark of her achievement- to simulate accidental ruin when in fact it was the desire for a ruin that generated the work. Hers is a mimicry of destruction, where success is measured by how accurately she achieves its appearance. *Ancestor* comes from an image of a bedroom in a book on interior decoration from the 1970s- the tamest of the various design ideas included in the text, Ariana notes. There is a haunting, feminine quality to the finished work, a nostalgic image “carelessly” destroyed over time.

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I want it. I miss it. I need it. I'll use it. I'm tired of it. It's broken. It's new. I love it. I hate it. Have you seen it? Do you have it? Do you want it? Will you use it? Can you afford it? Is it necessary? Is it frivolous? Is it cheap? Is it durable? Is it big? Is it small? Can I wear it out? How long will it take

to get here? When does the next model come out? What are the new features? Is it better? Is it worse? Is it organic? Is it fair-trade? Is it local? Is it foreign? Is it leather? Is it vegan? Is it eco-friendly? Was it made in China? Where did you get that? How much was it? Do you have it yet? I think the old one was better. Can I exchange this? The quality is poor. I don't buy processed foods. Actually, we're gluten-free.

We are all consumers in one way or another, and this is our vocabulary. The lexicon of commodities, their cyclicity, their tendency towards excess, inevitable decay and the ever encroaching onslaught of obsolescence. Although each artist reacts against consumerism in different ways, they are united in their self-consciousness about the cultural and art historical legacies that impact them. Each defends the inherent humanity of the art object and its specificity from commodification by incorporating narrative, dialogue and history into its identity and presence. And, like Calvino, we are using stories to expose some truth about the relationship between produced and producer.

<sup>1</sup>. Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. “Consider,” accessed last June 27, 2014, <http://www.etymonline.com>

<sup>2</sup>. Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. “Desire,” accessed last June 27, 2014, <http://www.etymonline.com>

## The Moon Is Dancing In The Courtyard Of Consumption

By Luisa Aguilar Solis



In many ways *Recurrence* had been in process before there was even a possibility of a location - it began organically as a series of conversations with Georgia Horn. We were becoming acquainted with one another and we quickly realized that we prioritized similar thematic interests, and those priorities were to become the early steppingstones of this exhibition. We knew that we were radically engaged in preserving the artist's viewpoint- particularly artists with whom we could identify; artists we viewed as having taken on the responsibility of tackling the global realities that Italo Calvino illustrates in his story “Daughter's of the Moon:” issues of obsolescence, industrial decay, environmental and cultural discard. Originally published in 1968, these issues seem just as prescient today as they did in his fictionalized story.

Edgar Arceneaux  
*A Four Dimensional City Casts a Two Thousand Mile Shadow. Three Wedges and Two Long Shadows*, 2014  
Acrylic, chalk pastel, vinyl and enamel  
on paper  
29.50” x 23.50”



As we live in an age of branding and identity, where corporations, institutions and individuals all want to have their distinct personae, we felt that our responsibility as curators was to talk about what we truly knew. The show would be semi-autobiographical in the sense that we would take on difficult themes that our generation has come to know so well and present the ideas and conversations that these artists were having, revealing parallels between their works and Calvino's "Daughters of the Moon".

Calvino first introduces the moon when he describes it as "pitted with holes, worn out. Rolling naked through the skies it erodes and loses its flesh like a bone that's been gnawed." What struck me was the similarity to the way Edgar Arceneaux described his piece *Detroit Steel*. Of the thematics, Edgar says "after the Detroit uprising of 1967, folks saw his (Michael Heizer's) work as just another scar on a city full of holes left over from the riots. Burned out buildings from that era are still there to this day. They found it so offensive that [his] *Dragged Mass* was later detonated with dynamite and blown to bits by a city representative". It was clear to me that the same ideologies of abandonment existed here, the same representation of neglect and alienation. Arceneaux's participation in *Recurrence* is a series of intersections that highlight the notion of the increasingly complicated idea of individual identity in a group. Of the Wedge drawings he says, "Another understanding could be made in thinking about the social history of America, the art that comes from it and the hope that something better is possible," prompting existing notions of perpetual progress in America and how these major cultural phenomena affect the artistic field.

*Ancestor* is a piece that Ariana Papademetropoulos describes as a journey of attraction. Ariana starts by scouting source imagery that she feels drawn to; she then photographs the image and begins. She introduces the watermark process at this point when water, without any other additives, is poured over the piece of paper in moderation. This allows the ink of the print to run and unearth colors that would have been concealed under the printer's systematic application - a moment in time when the hidden layers are revealed. This abstract watermark becomes a visual disturbance that highlights the seductive quality of destruction. "The act of painting" she says, "has dimensional limitations, and as I'm interested in creating environments it is important for me to try and



Ariana Papademetropoulos  
*Greek Easter I & II*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
23" x 36"



transcend these limitations."

By creating anthropomorphic imagery in her paintings, she depicts her visualizations of memory, its elusiveness and unreliability. When further describing *Ancestor* she says, "my goal is to have a painting that haunts you over time, or that can change, and evolve. When it becomes more than an image, it becomes an understanding of your subconscious." The ongoing theme of attraction echoes throughout the painting the same way the nude women referred to as the Dianas in "Daughters of the Moon" are being magnetized by the gravitational pull of the moon. The painting possesses representations of quintessential femininity of the 70s with the saturation of pinks, magentas, frills and flowers, and the viewers gravitate to the center as they cannot help but impose a projection of images and memories in an attempt to decipher the abstraction.

When Lauren Fensterstock sent a small flower piece for the Los Angeles preview of *Recurrence* it was clear that her flowers transcended the lifetime of re-appropriated organic material (in this case paper). It spoke to me in the way the modern industrial world simulates alternate realities, materials and experiences - they all are valid and very real. Her attempt to contain an elaborate arrangement of flowers in a minimal bound box created a platform that delicately balanced life and simulated death.

Nick McPhail's *Series of 21 Frames* is a conversation piece that has been in process for a little over one year, but as his technique of reworking has proved, will continue to transform as long as it exists or until he feels the instinct to stop. One of the incredible experiences that occurred in the months of studio visits with Nick was that the configuration remained constantly in flux. Due to his compulsive obsession with recycling imagery, we experienced the illusion of seeing hundreds of images even though in reality they only amounted to the present 21. Witnessing these transformations I found myself comparing the repetition of change and formal appearance of these paintings to the way people simulate multiple identities through objects. Clothes, shoes, haircuts, homes, cars - just a few examples of material culture that symbolize personality and self. These objects, however, are not meant to transcend time but are objects of basic designed obsolescence.

Colter Jacobsen's piece *Light Mill / Wind House*, is a site-specific installation

that will take place at Fridman Gallery for the duration of the *Recurrence*. Jacobsen, who has often used natural and synthetic materials that surround his subjects, will use the gallery’s windows to emphasize the natural lights of the sun and moon. He will use New York and its traffic lights, car lights and any other lights in the city to transform the installation on hand. For these installations, Jacobsen has “incorporated types of invisible ink (lemon juice, milk) to be ‘cooked’ by the sun so as to become gradually visible while other mediums (ball-point pen ink) might slowly disappear for the duration of the exhibition.” The way Jacobsen builds up the vulnerability of change for the installation brings to mind a quote from ethnobotanist Wade Davis: “It’s not change or technology that threatens the integrity of the ethnosphere. It is power, the crude face of domination. Wherever you look around the world, you discover that these are not cultures destined to fade away; these are dynamic living peoples being driven out of existence by identifiable forces that are beyond their capacity to adapt to.” Davis and Jacobsen both create a premise of roles. One of the roles is a powerful entity that has the momentum of destruction, the other is gentle and adaptable. The awareness of the latter gives it the permission to adapt and flourish in the right conditions.

*Recurrence* aims to bring forth the awareness of roles we play in day to day life; this way, we might have the option to select and maneuver around the gravitational pull to a place of our choosing: a reality we can and want to live with.



Colter Jacobsen  
*Take a Deep Breath...Hold It...*,  
The Vancouver Sun) (detail), 2011  
Newspaper, tape in window

# RECURRENCE

JULY 17 - AUGUST 15



## Edgar Arceneaux

### A Four Dimensional City Casts a Two Thousand Mile Shadow Two Wedges and Two Long Shadows

2014

Acrylic, chalk pastel, vinyl and enamel on paper  
29.50" x 23.50"



## Edgar Arceneaux

### Blind Pig #8

2011  
Charcoal graphite on paper,  
61.4" x 35.4"

Courtesy the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects  
Photo credit: Bill Orcutt



## Ariana Papademetropulos

### Ancestor

2014  
Oil on canvas  
5' x 7'

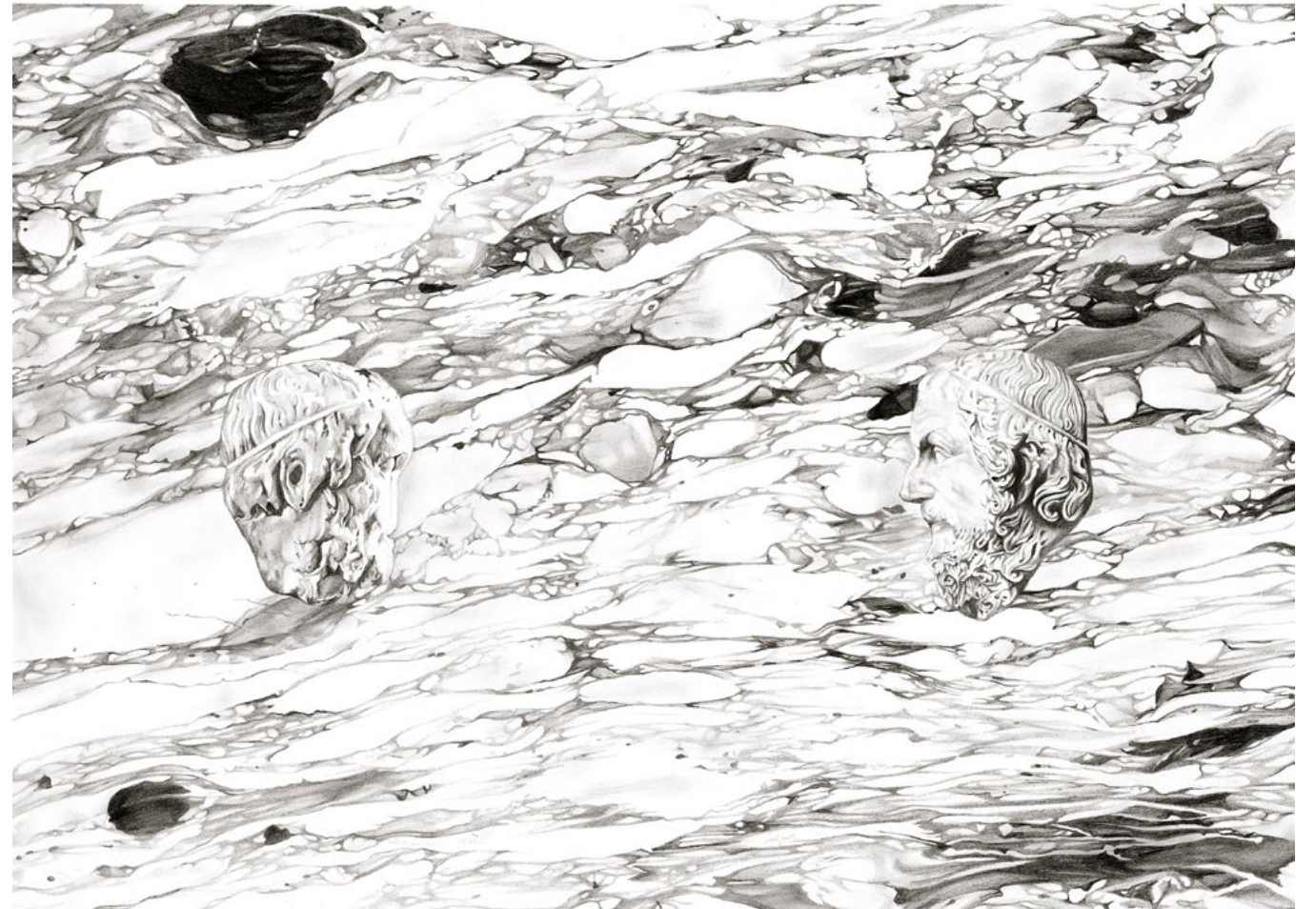




## Ariana Papademetropulos

### Faces of Homer

2013  
Pencil on paper  
30" x 24"



## Colter Jacobsen

### Light Mill / Wind House

2014  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable





## Colter Jacobsen

### Light Mill / Wind House

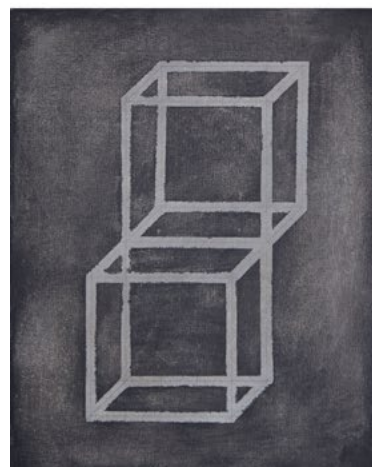
2014  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable



## Nick McPhail

### Series of 21 Frames

2014  
Untitled Installation  
Oil, acrylic, cardboard on canvas  
16" x 20" each



**Nick McPhail**

**Frame #21**

2014  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
16" x 20"



## Lauren Fensterstock

### Claude Glass Cube 1 & 2

2014  
Mixed media  
39" x 39" x 39" each





## Lauren Fensterstock

### Claude Glass Cube 1, [detail]

2014  
Mixed media  
39" x 39" x 39"





Over the years I have gathered interviews from people of various capacities in the contemporary art world. These interviews have been a ongoing personal project of mine and I wanted to take the opportunity to converse with Georgia Horn, co-curator of Recurrence. She is someone who I admire, have continuous respect for, and look forward to curating many shows with in the future.

## Q&A

**Luisa: If you had to simplify in the most basic definitions the themes of Recurrence how would express those ideas?**

**Georgia:** Over the past few months I've had to develop a very succinct way of describing the show. Most often, I find myself saying something like: it deals with consumerism and obsolescence, using Italo Calvino's text as the framework through which to structure this investigation. Of equal importance, I think, is our interest in issues related to nature and industry, which arise not only out of the text but also from more topical discussions of climate change and our increasingly deleterious impact on our environment. So, I guess I would simplify it all by talking about the ways in which the impulse to structure a show around these themes came from Calvino's fiction, but also from more contemporary observations of the world, and the acknowledgement of the relationship between these two paradigms.

**Georgia: Going into this, what was most important to you to articulate through the exhibition? what were your goals?**

**Luisa:** Curating forced me to think about the artwork, a variation of artworks in space and in a context where they are in relation to one another. This whole process was new to me as I am not a curator by nature. As an artist I can think about my own work, my perception of it and the expectations I have for it, but doing this on a group scale with a semi difficult theme seemed daunting. I think, in a way I was compartmentalizing the roles of artist and curator. It was a total misconception, of course, that the two are so different from one another. As a curator, I'm very interested in how people perceive an artist and the history of the theme or group. Also, in the best sense, I wanted to allow the artists to see their work in a new light, in a way that they not only are comfortable with but, more importantly, that they find inspiring in terms of their own development and growth. As an artist, my goal was to create a platform for all of these artworks. I want all of these pieces to create a language and communicate with the viewer in a way we could not.

**Luisa: What difficulties or risks, if any, do you find when there is an attempt to talk about these large issues that in many parts are consequences of globalization? Especially for someone who is in their early 20s, do you think that our peers find it difficult to be taken seriously?**

**Georgia:** I think the greatest danger in dealing with large-scale issues is over generalizing. That is- assuming that my individual experience represents a larger generational or multi-generational one, or to mistake a specific or circumstantial encounter with a broad condition. It's not uncommon for people to equate being young with having unjustified confidence in a what is perceived or assumed to be a myopic world view. Being aware of this was perhaps something that attracted me to Calvino, because the existence of his text and what he articulates (almost 40 years ago) seemed to signal and justify my perception of the existence of these issues on a more personal, experiential level today.

Another challenge became figuring out whether or not the moon had any organic relationship to these concepts outside of Calvino's imagination. In other words, if the moon could be seen as the enemy of consumerism without the framework of Calvino's narrative. It had become such an important symbol to us, and it was easy to get lost in its romance, but I was very cautious of trying to remain grounded in the substance of the artist's work, and our motivations for the original conception of the show. Calvino gave us the moon, and in the moon we found the idea of recurrence, which is intimately connected to both obsolescence and consumerism. We were always very cautious about generalizing, and although Calvino provided a sturdier structure upon which to begin working with these broad, global topics, we were always aware of how and why each component related to the next.

**Luisa:** To quickly follow up with what you just said, I also feel that there is a lack of self reflection and acknowledgement in this ongoing consumer driven destruction. It's become almost like this extension of our quotidian reality, which to me, is completely masochistic and insane. Interestingly enough our definition of destruction has also changed over time.

Nature is a perfect example of this- when Chaparral regions (the ones in California, in particular) are destroyed by wildfires it is the same ecosystem that depends on this cycle of destruction- it is the native plant life that formulates these necessary systems that are for the regeneration of ecology in the area. Or when we think about destruction in social systems like with the Hippie Counter Culture Movement of the 60's, or the social collapse of the 70s post-Vietnam and the origins of the Punk movement. Youth had an attitude of not giving a fuck and a big FUCK YOU to these pre-existing social structures that in many ways alienated them and asked of them to conform.

And then there is now. This system that welcomes endless destruction and waste, even to those things that are irreplaceable like clean water and food systems that have not been genetically modified. The age of "ignorant waste" is what I have been referring to it as over the past few years. I mean, during the development of this show it was announced that the melting of the West Antarctic Glacier was unstoppable, to quote Eric Rignot of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California: "This sector will be a major contributor to sea level rise in the decades and centuries to come." How exactly is it that we are immune or desensitized to the gravity of this information? This oblivion, to me, is such a brutal/interesting thing to see.

**Georgia: What attracted you to these artists in the realization of this theme? How did the relationship between artist and curator play out in this case? What were you most surprised by along the way?**

**Luisa:** I think what attracted me to the selection of art and art practice within our group of artists was the realization that I deeply connected with the work that was presented when we were in the early stages of studio visits. Edgar’s work has always had a deep lyrical quality to it, it might be because he’s been my mentor or because i’ve assisted his studio in the past and therefore have developed a personal instinct with the way I interact with the work. I relish in those personal relationships with artwork. I can also describe Ariana’s paintings in a similar way. I think her painting style is so seductive in her mannerisms with color and photo-realism, I’ve always felt that there is a subconscious awareness that she brings out in the viewer. As a young artist it’s such a captivating quality to have. Another great memory was first opening the package that Lauren sent us for our Los Angeles preview of this show. What really made that experience interesting and memorable was how delicately her sculpture was wedged between the cardboard box that it was mailed in, and how the delicate paper flowers were carefully nested in the box. I thought it was a metaphor how the cardboard paper was protecting the sculpture that was made of paper, and how we as a society created distinctions between the same material that physically functions in the same way in the natural world. The journey of all these connections that were made are special to me and it grew beyond a thematic interest. Some really great relationships came out of the long dinners, conversations and late night studio visits. I treasure those moments just as much as the pouring support we got from everyone who helped us along the way.

**Luisa: Tell me about your experience, Georgia. Did you have similar attractions?**

**Georgia:** Initially, this began with an attraction to all the artists and their work, an inclination I was first aware of on an aesthetic level — although the aesthetics of each artist were very distinct, which I liked. It was clear from early on that the reason we had gravitated towards this group in particular was because they represented ways of thinking that were very much in dialogue not only with yours and mine, but also with each other. In a lot of ways Calvino’s text allowed me to see the connections that were already there, but that I hadn’t quite been able to articulate before. The studio visits have been a very meaningful part of this process for me. They allowed us to interact with art and artist in a whole new way, and I learned so much from them. Having the opportunity to develop relationships on this level with people I admire and respect added a dimension of richness and texture to the whole experience of curating. Although I have spent the past six years of my life in the art world in one way or another, this is the first time that I’ve gotten to devote such a long time to a project, which allowed for a depth I haven’t been able to reach before.

I think there can be tension between the artist and the curator, but I never felt that in this show — the dialogues were very open and productive, and it was a pleasure and privilege to get to know each one of these artists and their work. The support of all of our friends and family in making this show possible was totally overwhelming, we couldn’t have done it without them, and their belief in us made this whole experience even more special.

**Georgia: How did the show change over time?**

**Luisa:** You know, one of the things that really made me

proud about how we structured this exhibition is how we had the confidence to allow the work and the artists to lead us into the final theme. In many ways the selection of the artist group was based on their representation of the themes that are relevant to both of us from the beginnings of Recurrence, and with this mutual trust of artist and curator we allowed for structure to fall organically. With the exception of a few artists we had no preconceived ideas of what the work was going be. I think it was such an exciting process to experiment with because the quality of the work that we ended up with is far beyond what I first imagined. You can see the continuation and evidence of this process in how we brought Colter Jacobsen to install a piece that we only were familiar with in conversation, the climax of this piece, for me, is seeing it installed for the first time in the space and the evolution that it will have gone through by the time the show goes down. What I love about having that flexibility in the show is that we are allowing the audience to have the opportunity of capturing a moment where they are witnessing the metamorphosis of the work on a personal level.

**Luisa: How has this show influenced you and your method of composing a group show? Are there certain aspects that you think should be prioritized in contemporary curating?**

**Georgia:** Well I think the priority of curating should always be to maintain the integrity of the artist and their work. At the risk of sounding cliché, it’s important not to be heavy-handed, to have confidence in your artists, and in yourself. It seems to me that when you try and give too much direction in the artistic process it becomes contrived- a product of your vision and not your artist’s, which undermines the very reason you chose them in the first place. Knowing that this was going to be a group show, an early concern of mine before we began curating or knew any of our artists, was that the strength of a single work on its own

doesn’t automatically correlate to a strong unity between works in a group context. This may sound very obvious, but it was something I remained conscious of as we were developing the show. It was a big factor in our initial attraction to this group of people because we recognized a similar ethos in all of their work, so the selection was very deliberate from the beginning.

Once we had gotten the ball rolling, it was great to see the different ways in which each artist responded to our prompt, where they instinctually went with it. There’s a very delicate balance between giving advice and giving instruction, the former being productive and the latter generally counter-productive and didactic. In the case of this show though, it never felt like there was any need for instruction. I think the reason for this is that it wasn’t just that we were interested in the work of all of these people, but that they were also interested in the concept we had proposed, and in each other. From my standpoint, the project was approached with a great deal of self-consciousness from both sides, which was very fulfilling!

**Georgia: What do you see as the next step for the show?**

**Luisa:** Well, as you know, taking the show to New York was our first achievement in this ongoing project we have going on with our curatorial project, Aguilar Horn. In many ways we valued the show taking place in a city that Calvino used as a parallel for his fictional city in “Daughter’s of the Moon.” Building upon this theme and bringing artists, hopefully a larger roster of them too, to Los Angeles in a larger space is what I visualize our next step being. Once we get to LA, again, we will allow it build up and gravitate to themes that are personal and relevant to both of us.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the incredible friends and family that surrounded us during the development of Recurrence. It is through their generosity and advice that this concept came to life. And of course to Ariana, Colter, Edgar, Lauren and Nick in whose work we found the inspiration for our show.

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