

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

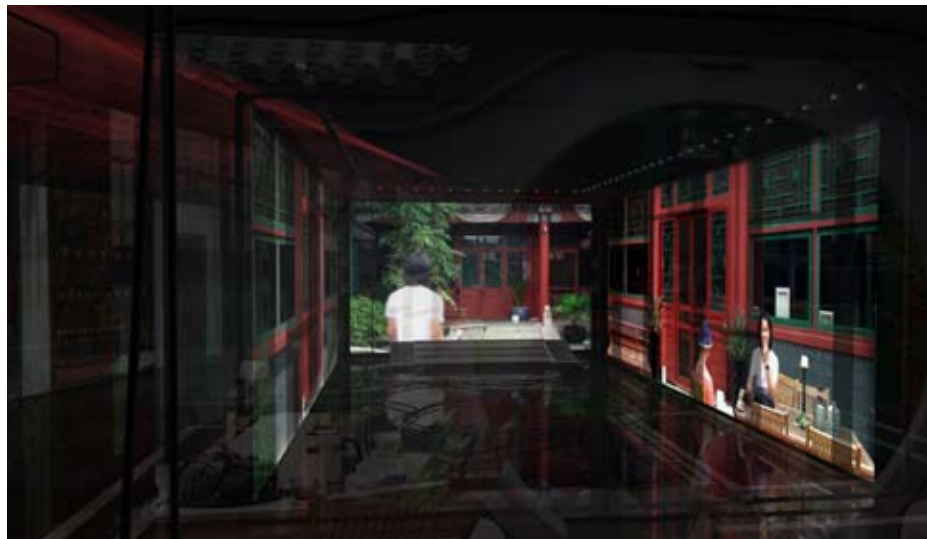
ADAD HANNAH

Adad Hannah has exhibited at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (2008), the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (2008), Zendai MoMA, Shanghai (2009), Ke Center for Contemporary Art (Shanghai 2008), the Vancouver Art Gallery (2007), the National Gallery of Canada (2006), Ikon Gallery (Birmingham 2006), the 4th Seoul International Media Art Biennale (2006), Casa Encendida (Madrid 2006) and Viper Basel (2004). In 2004 he won the Toronto Images Festival Installation/New Media Award and the Bogdanka Poznanovic Award at Videomedeja 8. He has produced works at museums including the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the National Gallery of Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Rodin Gallery (Seoul), and the Prado Museum (Madrid).



YAM LAU

The recipient of numerous awards from the Canada, Ontario and Toronto Arts Councils, Lau has exhibited widely across Canada, the US and Europe. He also publishes regularly on art and design. He is represented by Leo Kamen Gallery in Toronto. Lau has taught both fine art and digital art courses at a number of post-secondary institutions prior to joining York University's Visual Arts Department in 2005.



ALISON S. M. KOBAYASHI

Alison S. M. Kobayashi is a visual artist working in video, performance, installation and drawing. She was born and raised in Mississauga and is currently working between Toronto and Brooklyn. In 2006 she won the TSV Artistic Vision Award for Best Local Short Film at the Toronto Reel Asian Film Festival and in 2007 was awarded the Mississauga Arts Award for Best Emerging Artist. In 2008 she was a guest filmmaker at the Flaherty International Film Seminar. Her films have been screened in Canada, the U.S., Spain, the Netherlands and Hong Kong.



JOHANNA HOUSEHOLDER AND B.H. YAEL

b.h. Yael is a Toronto based filmmaker, video and installation artist. She is Professor of Integrated Media at the Ontario College of Art and Design and past Assistant Dean and past Chair of Integrated Media in the Faculty of Art. Yael is the recent recipient of a Chalmers Fellowship Award. Her most recent work, *Trading the Future* recently won the 'Audience Award' at the Ecofilms 2009 festival in Rhodes, Greece, and has also received the 'Best Humanitarian Observation—Media Matters' award at the Rivers Edge International Film Festival in Kentucky, USA.

Johanna Householder has been making performances, video and other artwork since the late 1970's. She was a member of the notorious feminist performance ensemble, The Clichettes in the 80's. A founder of the 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art, she has sought to create a forum for international exchange. She edited, with Tanya Mars, *Caught in the Act: an anthology of performance by Canadian women*, published by YYZ Books, Toronto in 2004. She is a Professor in the Integrated Media Program at OCAD University, where she is currently Chair of the Criticism and Curatorial Practice Program.



AOIFE COLLINS

Collins received a BA from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin, followed by an MA from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London. Selected residencies include Location One, New York; Skowhegan, USA, and Scottish Sculpture Workshop, Scotland. Selected exhibitions include *There is No Release My Darling*, The Process Room at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; *With Words Like Smoke*, Chelsea Space, London; *Altered Sequence*, E:vent, London; *Lost in your eyes*, Form Content, London; *Wet eye*, Location One, New York; *Culture clash*, Working Rooms, London; *Comfort burn*, Artspace, Buffalo; *Phoenix park*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin; *ev+a*, Limerick; *Prelapsarian/here-and-now/postlapsarian*, Goethe Institute, Dublin; *Perspective*, Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast, and *Permaculture*, Project Gallery, Dublin.



JEANNE JU

Jeanne Ju received a B.F.A. (Double Major in Photography and Media Arts) from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. She has exhibited in group shows both Nationally and Internationally notably at the Argyle Fine Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia (2004), Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, the Parsons School of Design, New York (2004), 111-1st Street Jersey City Community Gallery, Jersey City, New Jersey, The Cooper Union Annual End of Year Show (2004) and is published in the book, *Image and Inscription: An Anthology of Contemporary Canadian Photography*, Gallery 44/YYZ Books (2005).



In 2010, the Centre for Art Tapes piloted its first Local Curatorial Residency for local emerging curators specializing in media arts. In this program the Centre's directs and supports curators as they uncover the intricacies of building a media arts exhibition. In addition to residencies and commissioning projects, CFAT also supports writers, curators and artists who propose programming events or critical research. The Centre strives to provide mentorship and support to emerging curators, encourage intellectual production, and contribute to the field of curatorial studies.

LIES THAT TELL THE truth: Reenactment as Artistic Strategy

In 1915, Charlie Chaplin entered a Charlie Chaplin look-alike contest and came in third.

Over the course of time, some events are viewed as significant enough to be memorialized. These moments in history are often re-enacted by actors who deliberately endeavor to be loyal to the minutest details of the events they perform. This loyalty is seen as synonymous with the idea of authenticity, the quest to create a copy that is virtually undistinguishable from the original. By striving to use historically accurate period costumes, accessories and behavior, it's as though historical re-enactors want to get closer to the event they feel compelled to recreate over and over again.

Artists working with reenactments often have a very different perspective on the notion of authenticity, one that is not necessarily predicated on the imperative of trying to reproduce the original as accurately as possible. Rather, these artists constantly negotiate how closely aligned to the original their work will be. They must decide what they keep from the original, what they reject and what new material they introduce. Making these choices, the artist becomes a curator of sorts, a curator of their own reenactment. The question remains, what is the relationship between the artistic gesture and the original upon which it is based? Even if an artist chooses not to include an aspect of the original, is it still there? Is it necessary for a visible trace to remain in order for its presence to be felt?

Artworks have a multiplicity of truths found in the subtle shifts of meaning that emerge when the works are re-contextualized. With each new instance of the piece, a layer is peeled and new nuances are uncovered. Each copy becomes a palimpsest, carrying within it all the previous meanings that have been created including the idea of the copy itself.

Artists will often use material such as a line from a movie or a found audiotape as the source of their reenactments echoing the Duchampian ready-mades. As artists re-enact, re-interpret, re-produce, re-exhibit and recycle cultural artifacts, they also explore the ability of the readymade to take on new identities. Using these found sources, artists pay homage to the original and create a space for possible and as yet unthinkable performances. At the same time, reenactments serve as a map, a guide to these imaginary and intangible places.

Using a variety of re-enactment strategies, the works included in *Lies That Tell The truth* explore the dynamic space between the original and the copy.

Adad Hannah's installation functions as an homage that reorients the original towards the present and in so doing breathes new life into the past. *All is Vanity (Mirrorless Version) (2009)*, is based on Charles Allen Gilbert's *All is Vanity (1892)* well known for its optical illusion. Hannah not only recreates the illustration but also updates the illusions. In his version there is no mirror: what appears to be the woman's reflection is actually her identical twin sister—dressed exactly the same. Likewise, what seems to be a photographic still slowly reveals itself to be a video. Although nothing seems to happen in this work, it is charged with action as we watch for tiny movements as if these actresses are trapped in a picture and are trying to come to life. Using modern technology he encapsulates our contemporary relationship with illusions and the computerized tools that produce them. Hannah's work highlights both the differences and similarities between yesterday and today's viewers and their relationship with the same cultural artifact.

Like Hannah's work, Yam Lau's source material has historical resonance but becomes contemporary when re-contextualized through digital media. Attempting to narrow the distance between past and present Lau's *Hutong House (2009)* provides an opportunity to experience the 'reality' of the past. Combining video and computer-generated animation, Lau reconstructs the architectural layout of a traditional courtyard house in Beijing rendered in the meeting place between analog and digital. The projected images are constantly rotating, alternating between interior and exterior views, destabilizing perspective and

time. His use of digital media blurs our distinction between the imaginary and the real as his geographical spaces take on a mirage-like quality. Lau says of his work: "the unfolding of the "house" somehow manages, I think, to project the illusion of volumes, and of certain values too, that perhaps can be glimpsed [in this illusion]..." Lau de-familiarizes the past in order to reframe the present hinting at what he admires most in an "ideal China".

Similarly, Aoife Collins's Recreation for *Town Folk in the Study and Imitation of Nature* (2010) straddles that uneasy space between the natural and the unnatural, the real and the make-belief. Unlike Lau's process, Collins' artistic practice is invested in the materiality of her flower recreations. She explores synthetic materials by unraveling artificial flowers thread by thread and painstakingly reconstructing them in new floral sculptures. Effectively nothing is added or taken away: all of the materials from the original fake flowers are incorporated in the final piece. However having undergone this deconstructive process they do not retain the original representational quality they once had. Still her floral renditions seem more authentic reaffirming the tangibility of the handmade over the machine-manufactured. Her reconfigured floral arrangements are then featured into a series of super 8 films in which the artificial flowers are framed within an external environment alongside their natural counterparts. Her work is like a box within a box within a box, constantly questioning our perception of what we perceive as more 'real'. Her filmed sculptures have a contradictory approach to the macabre, bringing to question whether it is worse to want something that will die or something that will never die, leaving the artificial flowers to act as an almost vampiric motif of eternal life.

Reenactment entails a form of creative role-playing as objects and images migrate from one state to another. Both Aoife Collins and Allison S. M. Kobayashi elevate common, everyday objects to the status of a precious artwork. This time, the source materials are answering machine tapes found in a second-hand store. The tapes originally belonged to a man called Dan Carter. "It seemed that all of these different layers of his life were unraveling as the tape progressed," Kobayashi explains. These recorded life clips seemed like a readymade script waiting to be performed. Kobayashi interprets all of the disembodied voices in Dan Carter's life, from his divorce lawyer to his new fiancée trying to visually imagine their lives and personalities. Her newly created characters breath new life in the original found object reclaiming what once was lost. Transferring a personal narrative to a public space awkwardly positions her remakes between sincere homage and self-referential narcissism.

Whereas Kobayashi draws her inspiration from a real life script, Johanna Householder and B.H. Yael rely on a different form of role playing reenacting legendary film scenes from a variety of Hollywood films. Re-contextualizing culturally important phenomena, Yael and Householder critically examine representations of gender, subverting mainstream cinematic language. Their videos also serve as an examination of iconic film characters and Hollywood stardom. *December 31, 2000 (2001)* entails two different forms of re-enactment: what takes place behind the lens and what happens in the spotlight. This video is a shot by shot recreation of the iconic scene in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* when Dave the astronaut dismantles HAL, the computer. Householder's performance as Dave suggests a gendered variation on a possible future converting the hard-edged masculinity of the iconic space station to a domestic setting of washing machine and cd towers. The use of commonplace items like the corkscrew and butter knife as stand-ins for futuristic technology also add an ironic perspective. Householder and Yael say of their reenactments: "They are about, in a sense, almost the minimum that it takes to convince us of the fact that we are in those scenes again."

Jeanne Ju is also invested in the transfer of personal narratives but in her case, the original is located only in our minds. *Constructed Families (2003)* is a series of photographs bringing together people who share similar facial and physical attributes but are actually genetically unrelated. Each manufactured family is dressed in matching clothes and photographed in a typical family portrait style. Her photographic stagings compel the viewer to make assumptions about the relationships between the actors. However, these relationships are entirely fabricated inviting the viewer to question the role of the family as a normative social unit and how it influences our notion of identity within a broader social structure.

We live in a world of sampling, collage, remix, pastiche, where copies are made of copies in an endless chain of re-interpretation. If an artwork can be repeated once, it can be repeated infinitely thereby making every version exist in a state of perpetual flux, of becoming. Similarly, the exhibition can be viewed not as an end point to the work produced but a node in the ongoing cycle of the artistic process.

by Suzanne Caines and Claire Hodge



LIES THAT TELL THE truth

Centre for Art Tapes presents the inaugural exhibition for the CFAT Local Curatorial Residency

Curated by Claire Hodge and Suzanne Caines

Adad Hannah | Yam Lau | Alison S. M. Kobayashi

Johanna Householder and b.h. Yael | Aoife Collins | Jeanne Ju

7 pm Friday, July 15, 2011

Exhibition runs from

July 15 to August 14, 2011

Khyber Ballroom (1588 Barrington St.)

For more information please contact

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