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HAUNT Journal of Art

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Editor's Note

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0qj66829>

Journal

HAUNT Journal of Art, 3(1)

Author

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Publication Date

2016

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Volume three

2016

Editor's Note

In our third volume, we set out to find works that move fluidly across thinking textually and thinking in images while treating neither as an adjunct to the other. This theme is not only specific to this issue of *Haunt Journal of Art* but to our overarching ambitions, specifically, advancing critical discussions about what it means to take up art in writing in ways that do not foreclose upon or further marginalize alternative worldviews and knowledge(s). And, most importantly, as artists and educators, how do we promote and facilitate such discussions within arts education? This question may sound strange to those who might point out that our present moment enjoys a great deal of freedom in the kinds of ideas that are welcome within the university. However, a plurality of interests does not necessarily entail a plurality of voices. Speculating on whether a university is possible in the way it was historically conceived, poet Fred Moten poignantly observes in our prior issue, that present crises within the institution extend well beyond routine panic over the decline of the humanities and directly into the heart of the profession of teaching itself.

The “voraciousness” of the university, Moten points out, is accelerating academia’s decline, and this dispiriting state of affairs is further compounded by the sobering recognition that we all, as educators, are merely taking refuge in a body whose decay we can neither halt nor accelerate.¹ Moved by this unsettling corporeal analogy, in which both faculty and students are ensnared, our specific interest in fluidity in volume three stems from an anti-authoritarian spirit that seeks to dislodge the all too often vertical relationship between art and criticism. Serendipitously, what

1 See Amanda McGough and Fred Moten, “In Conversation with Fred Moten,” *Haunt Journal of Art* 2:1 (2015): 74-80, accessed October 15, 2016, http://scholarship.org/uc/search?entity=uciart_hauntjournal;volume=2;issue=1.

we did not anticipate, was the relative frequency with which submissions accomplished this aim by interweaving text and image with notions of the body and the condition of entanglement. There is, then, lurking within the pages of this issue a working through—perhaps unconsciously—and pushing out of the current conditions that our bodies are enmeshed in.

Mary Burge and Gerald Maa’s contribution, for example, “Dress, Score, Tether,” draws out the knotty and adversarial tensions between writing as an act and performance as a kind of writing. Similarly, the manner in which our experience of certain spaces is determined by our socially entangled bodies is drawn into focus (quite literally), in Katherine Hubbard’s “Cyclops and Slashes.” Just as our bodies are ensnared and divided by the inscription of language(s), Molly Larkey’s defiant “bill of rights for bodies when they are born on planet earth” reminds us that to give voice to words can also be an assertion of solidarity and hope. Likewise, the authority of various kinds of rhetoric are teased out in Alan Longino’s playful “Painting is a whale,” as well as Isaac Pool’s absurdist play “40 Volume.” Entanglement and play also undergirds Hanna Wildow’s “And You Are the Wound” with its crisscrossing and absurdist formal experiments. Eryka Fiedler’s “Dear Camilla (On 54 Bones Gleaning the Storm)” ties together text, image, and the body most directly in her handwritten contribution, which is reproduced here as a pseudo-index as much as a text. Last, but certainly not least, poet Alan Gilbert takes up many of the issues above, and redirects them to the street, specifically, the notion of the public sphere as rhetoric and bodies as symbols. Enjoy.

—Andrew McNeely

Haunt Journal of Art

Volume 3

2016

ISSN 2334-1165 (PRINT)

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Haunt Journal of Art is a graduate student run, peer-reviewed, open access journal from the University of California, Irvine, published online through eScholarship and in print for this special edition. We believe speculative and innovative art writing practices are paramount to the development of radical thinking and imagination.

Funding provided by the Department of Art and the Claire Trevor School of the Arts at the University of California Irvine.

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