

Proof 18

Steven Beckly

Linda-Marlena BucholtzRoss

Jenna Edwards

Tad Hozumi

Mike Andrew McLean

Elise Victoria Louise Windsor

JUNE 24 TO JULY 30 2011

Steven Beckly
Linda-Marlena BucholtzRoss
Jenna Edwards
Tad Hozumi
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Elise Victoria Louise Windsor
Proof 18
(mainspace)

Nathan Cyprys
(vitrines)

June 24 to July 30, 2011

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GALLERY HOURS
Tuesday to Saturday
11 am to 5 pm

GALLERY 44 CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY is a non-profit, artist-run centre committed to the advancement of contemporary Canadian photography. Our goal is to contribute to the dialogue on contemporary photography and to foster support, understanding and appreciation of diverse photographic practices.

GALLERY 44 acknowledges the Programming Committee: Alice Dixon, Christophe Jivraj, Alex Kisilevich, I.M. Martínez, Meryl McMaster.

Alice Dixon wishes to thank Sarah Burtscher, Kimon Kaketsis and Cynthia Muheardy for interning this season at Gallery 44.

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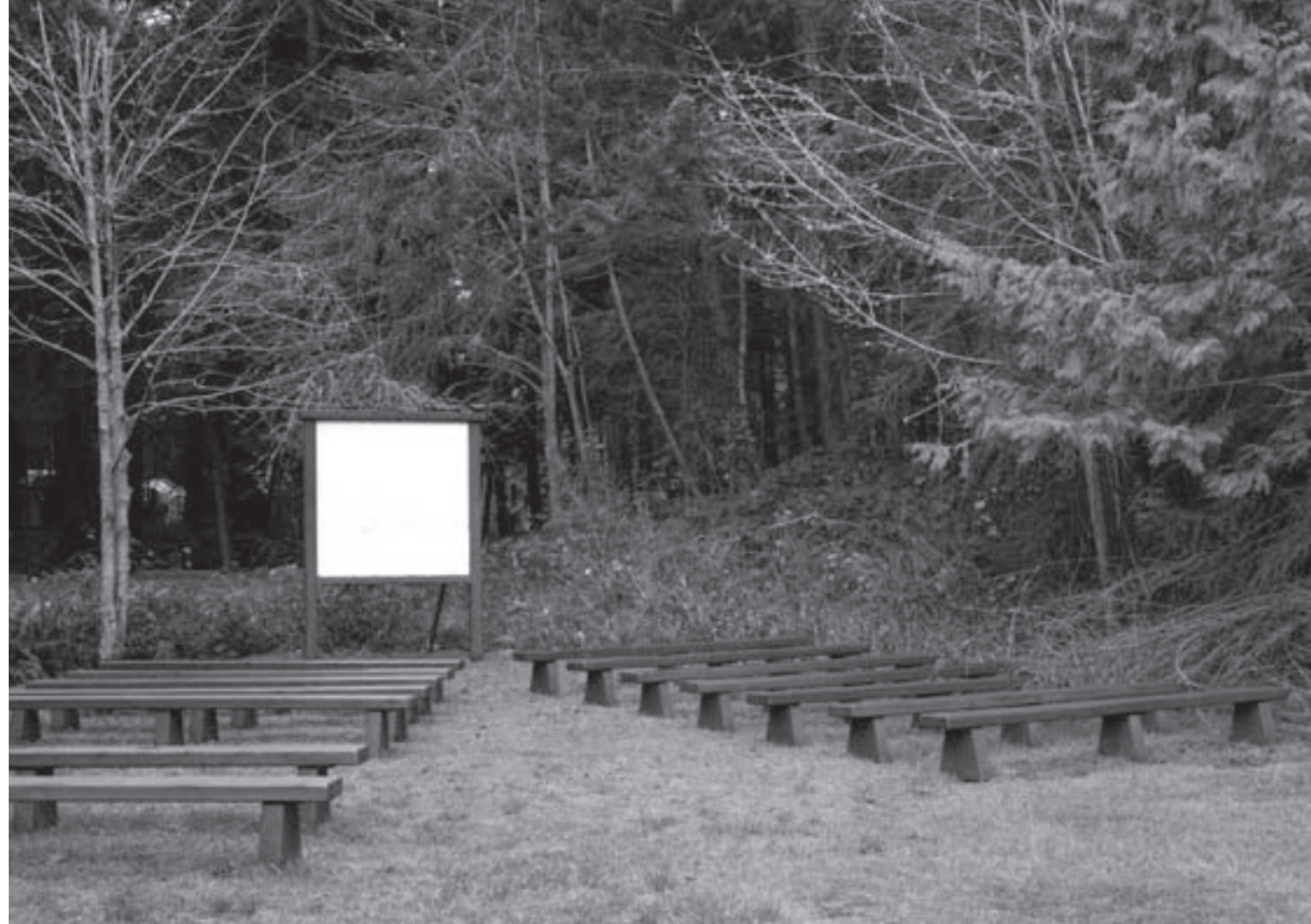
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ELISE VICTORIA LOUISE WINDSOR, *Bathroom*, from the series *Trompe l'œil; petite maison*, 50 cm x 50 cm chromogenic print, 2010

previous page

MIKE ANDREW MCLEAN, *Amphitheatre* from the series *The Whites*, 102 cm x 127 cm silver gelatin print, 2009

Now in its eighteenth year, *Proof* is Gallery 44's annual exhibition of work by emerging talent in photography from across the country. Every year we receive more and more submissions from artists who wish to exhibit in *Proof*. To choose the work for the exhibition, we collaborate with a selection committee comprised of members of the Exhibition Programming Committee and two artists who participated in Gallery 44's previous year's *Proof* exhibition. Thank you to Christophe Jivraj, Alex Kisilevich, Isabel M. Martínez and Meryl McMaster for reviewing over a hundred submissions to

program this year's *Proof* with us.

The work in *Proof* is chosen on the basis of artistic merit and originality within the medium, rather than an overriding theme. However, in reviewing submissions from a spectrum of emerging Canadian artists working in different regions at the same time, it is interesting to note that themes do arise. Thus, year by year, *Proof* is consistently in a position to present the zeitgeist of contemporary Canadian photography.

Proof 18 showcases the work of Steven Beckly, Linda-Marlena Bucholtz-Ross, Jenna Edwards, Tad Hozumi, Mike Andrew McLean and Elise Windsor. Sincere thanks to Isabel M. Martínez for her timely essay on image-making and viewing in an age of image saturation within our virtual image culture.

Proof is often one of the first exhibitions in a professional context for an emerging artist, as was the case for artists such as Karin Bubas, Janieta Eyre, Isabelle Hayeur, Germaine Koh, Nicholas Pye, Althea Thauberger, and Andrew Wright. Gallery 44 provides opportunities for emerging artists through this exhibition and also by engaging a new generation of artists in the gallery's

activities through internships, mentorships, residencies, awards and scholarships.

In the context of *Proof*, the Ontario College of Art and Design University annually presents the Verant Richards Photography Award in memory of Verant Richards, a founding member of Gallery 44. The award is given to a graduating student for experimental work that pushes beyond the confines of a self-limiting definition of photography. Nathan Cyprys is this year's recipient and he is exhibiting a new body of work, *Distances*, in the Gallery 44 vitrines during *Proof*.

Thank you to Tien Huang of Bau-Xi Photo for his support of *Proof 18*. Gallery 44 is also grateful for the support of the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council and The Canada Council for the Arts. We would also like to thank our supporters, members and volunteers. Finally a special thank you and congratulations to the artists in *Proof 18*; we look forward to following your contributions to Canadian contemporary art.

LISE BEAUDRY, *Director*

ALICE DIXON, *Exhibition Coordinator*

Amblyopia*: Image Quality and Image Viewing in the Digital Era

by ISABEL M. MARTÍNEZ

6

Given the abundance of blogs and online galleries, there is a growing trend of creating images destined for the virtual world (computer screen) rather than the physical world (gallery space). As a result, the *websight* aesthetic and screen resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels at 72 dpi sets to a great extent the parameters of today's visual culture and its consumption. This new canon has become the standard by which we judge an image: at a glance, quickly, superficially, not paying attention to details. Dare I say it appears as though our observation skills have fallen victim to the insidious ocular

laziness prevalent in the status quo? The majority of people see, some look but very few observe.

Under the imperative low-resolution aesthetic of flickr and YouTube, have we inadvertently become the last generation of the quality aesthetic? This appeal to the Internet surfer rather than the art gallery goer has its pros and cons. Dissemination is great, but quality and content tend to suffer for the sake of first impression and “wow” factor. What may be a great piece of art in person might not always work online as pivotal subtleties and nuances are often lost in translation. Colour accuracy in the art book and the gallery catalogue is of the highest concern, only to be accentuated to the nth degree when a monitor is used in lieu of printed matter (downloadable digital versions of catalogues, magazines and other publications are commonplace). Consistency is non-existent in the jump from screen to screen; hence the perception of and response to an artwork, particularly a photographic work, can differ greatly in spite of standardized colour profiles. Amid the overwhelming and overgrowing horde of photographic images swarming the visual



MIKE ANDREW
MCLEAN, *Pigeon* from
the series *The Whites*,
42 cm x 37 cm silver
gelatin print, 2009

> LINDA-MARLENA
BUCHOLTZROSS,
Roadwork from the
series *An Unintended
Aesthetic: The
Impromptu Stage*,
89 cm x 133 cm inkjet
print, 2010

landscape, how do artists in photography set themselves, and their work, apart?

As a photo-based artist, I often think about the ubiquitous historical baggage regarding photography's validity as an art form, its place among other media and its identity in an increasingly digital era. Has photography finally collapsed under the weight of its own accessibility, arrived at some sort of end-state, and inbred itself

through the Internet? I might lean towards saying "yes." But in my mind, this landmark in the history of the medium may also be taken as a challenge to go further in experimentation with the form, reflect on the act of looking, make visible that which exists only in theory, and venture playfully, but with intention.

The artists in *Proof 18* create works that reflect on photography's inherent faculties, and versatility. They examine the phenomena of light, utilize the still image to fabricate illusions, recontextualize the found or unintended, and bring together

endangered and new technologies in interesting ways.

Jenna Edwards and Mike Andrew McLean explore the very building block of photography: the phenomenon of light. Edwards directs our attention to fine chromatic subtleties we might not otherwise notice in her series *Camera Obscured*. By recording natural light as it is reflected off exterior scenes and faintly projected on interior walls, she seeks to highlight the viewer's perceptual process and examine notions of subjectivity and content in photographic imagery.¹ Meanwhile, McLean considers light as it "reveals our surrounding and obscures our sight."² Focusing particularly on whiteness, his series *The Whites* is a study on how objects and light may translate as white on film. Depicting disappearing objects such as a bar of soap, a bird's skeleton, and the flickering flame of a candle, McLean's toned silver gelatin prints are, somewhat ironically, a reflection on the approaching obsolescence of analogue photography.

Recontextualization of the found has been an artistic strategy for approximately a century now (Duchamp's first known





ready-made, *Bicycle Wheel*, was conceived in 1913)³ and serves as a launching pad for Linda-Marlena Bucholtz-Ross's encounter with the "accidental mise-en-scènes" of construction sites, which, as her series title suggests, she regards as "unplanned installations" or "impromptu stages" with their own "unintended aesthetic."⁴ Her work exercises the curious observation and selective perception necessary to find the exceptional in the mundane, the remarkable in the seemingly irrelevant, and the visually alluring in what others may consider an eyesore.

On the other hand, Steven Beckly goes on his search for meaning with a preconceived idea. For his series *Hush* and *Uncivil Unions*, Beckly collects old black-and-white photographs from vintage stores and antique dealers then digitally manipulates them to alter our reading of the relationships between the sitters, and

< STEVEN BECKLY, *Untitled #11* from the series *Uncivil Unions*, 81 cm x 107 cm inkjet print on newsprint, 2010

> Tad Hozumi, *I Feel Good (Howl)* and *I Feel Good (Shake)*, each 25.4 cm x 33 cm lenticular print, 2009-2010





ELISE VICTORIA
LOUISE WINDSOR,
Fireplace from the series
*Trompe l'oeil; petite
maison*, 50 cm x 50 cm
chromogenic print, 2010

constructs a visual history of same sex couples. Paying great attention to detail, Beckly's selection and manipulation of the images is precise and takes into account not only the demeanor of the subjects but also the proportion, definition and lighting within the photograph itself, and its potential for ambiguity. This recycling

of vintage photographic images also informs his choice to use newsprint paper, made from recycled documents, as support for his prints.

Another artist with a sociological approach is Tad Hozumi. He regards dance as a model for consumption whose possibilities could be explored within the context of a contemporary art practice.⁵ To Hozumi, dance is an interaction between art and audience because it engages with and responds to other art forms (e.g., choreography and music) in a manner that is expressive and creative in its own right (more dance). Similarly, the lenticular prints that comprise his series *I Feel Good* are interactive

to an extent (the viewer has to swing from side to side in order to perceive movement within the picture) and reintroduce us to this photographic technique of the 1940s.⁶ Trapped somewhere between stillness and time-lapse, its effect is somewhat evocative of Eadweard Muybridge's motion studies.⁷

Working along these lines of optical artifice is Elise Windsor's series *Trompe l'œil; petite maison*. The floating origami cubes within the domestic spaces she presents us with create a sense of non-linear space. Her method of building sculptures out of photographs and rephotographing them to create visual illusions, allows for the captured objects to appear physically tangible. This feature of her work intrigues the eye and engages our sense of wonder, thus we are drawn to look deeper into the image. By articulating another dimension within the visual arrangement, Windsor's fabrications stress the fundamental two-dimensionality inherent to photography.

The photography in *Proof 18* considers the intuitive nuances of seeing due to the artists' approaches to the act of looking as a process of perception worthy of aesthetic and artistic investigation. To observe, we

must be willing to invest (not spend, but invest) the necessary time. Faced with the proliferation of image data and eye candy fluttering all around us, it appears as though we might drown under the sheer volume of images on the triple-double-u. This leaves artists to ponder and reevaluate their role in photography, to challenge the medium, to review and repropose rather than regurgitate, and to create visually eloquent works we can exercise our eyes on.

Photography as a discipline might be undergoing the digital/web growing pains, but as other media before it (e.g., typography and graphic design⁸) we should hope it too will curve upwards again via experimentation and the mixing together of what was, what is, and what could be.

*Amblyopia, otherwise known as lazy eye, is a disorder of the visual system that is characterized by poor or indistinct vision in an eye that is otherwise physically normal, or out of proportion to associated structural abnormalities. Amblyopia, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, last modified January 18, 2011 at 12:33, accessed January 18, 2011, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amblyopia>.

1 Jenna Edwards, artist statement for *Camera Obscured*.

2 Mike Andrew McLean, artist statement for *The Whites*.

3 Janis Mink, *Duchamp*, (Köln: Taschen, 1996), 50.

4 Linda-Marlena BucholtzRoss, artist statement for *An Unintended Aesthetic: The Impromptu Stage*.

5 "... street dances illustrate the possibility of interactions between art and audience that are not biased on a static consumption model but one where the artworks becomes a place for the audience to create new meaning within themselves and their communities." Tad Hozumi, artist statement, 2010.

6 "The first images to be described as "lenticular" were produced in the 1930s by Victor Anderson. By the late 1940s, Mr. Anderson's company was producing millions of simple lenticular images a year for everything from postcards of women winking at the viewer to Cracker Jack prizes, political campaign buttons and magazine

inserts." Jerry Giuseffi, *The History of Lenticular*, accessed January 24, 2011, <http://www.extremevision.com/content/education/lenticularhistory.html>.

7 "[In 1882], Muybridge conceived the project of extending his photographic research to human beings, horses, dogs, cattle, and other domestic and wild animals, making different movements at different speeds... Among [his images] we find the typical movements for walking, running, taking part in sports and other physical acts... Isadora Duncan appears to have discovered the liberated world of modern dance in them..." Michael Frizot, ed., *The New History of Photography* (Köln: Könemann, 1998), 246.

8 Kathleen Tinkel, "Print Clearly: Is graphic design dead? Maybe it's just on hiatus," *MacWeek*, July 20, 1998, accessed January 10, 2011, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_moMWW/is.n27-v12/ai_20924552.



NATHAN CYPYRS, *Distances* from the series *Preludes to Distances*, 76 cm x 102 cm chromogenic print, 2010

THE VERANT RICHARDS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The Verant Richards Scholarship Award was created posthumously in honour of Verant Richards, a founding member of Gallery 44. The award is presented annually to a graduating student of the Ontario College of Art & Design.

Nathan Cyprys

is the 2010 recipient of the Verant Richards Scholarship Award

NATHAN CYPYRS is an emerging interdisciplinary artist working primarily in lens-based media. He is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and Design University's photography program and currently bases his practice in Toronto.

In *Distances*, Cyprys studies the duality of his subjects and the push/pull of their relationship, which seems to provide space for both comfort and discomfort, simultaneously attracting and repelling his viewer. In his collection of images he is interested in exploring specifically the play between opposites and the (potentially) undesired decisions which could have led to this interaction as Cyprys allows the camera lens facing his subjects to act as a mirror to his own self. He often utilizes haptic imagery with simplistic objects and surroundings in an aesthetic that seems to merge the vernacular with the ethereal. The looping of these films regularly remains representational of a performance of endurance, both of subject and audience, as time (and occasionally space) become almost instantaneously ambiguous

— N.C.

STEVEN BECKLY is a photo-based artist living and working in Toronto. His work predominantly explores the complexities of identity, relationships, intimacy, and sexuality. His images have been exhibited nationally and internationally.

LINDA-MARLENA BUCHOLTZROSS

is a photo-based artist and is currently portraying the impromptu theatrical stage-settings hidden within our perpetual urban construction sites. Born in British Columbia, she is based in Montreal where she recently graduated from Concordia University with a BFA in photography. She has exhibited in the United States, Canada and France.

JENNA EDWARDS was born in Regina, Saskatchewan and grew up in Mississauga, Ontario. She holds an MFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Her artwork has been exhibited in Canada, the United States and Australia. Edwards presently lives and works in the Toronto area.

TAD HOZUMI is an emerging new media artist based in Toronto. He is currently working on a body of work utilizing photography, installation, social intervention, and performance that explores the history of struggle coded into the subversive vocabulary of street style dances.

MIKE ANDREW MCLEAN, originally from Lethbridge, Alberta, lives and works in Victoria, British Columbia. His projects revolve around the historical and contemporary usages of photography. He holds a BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and an MFA from the University of Victoria.

ELISE VICTORIA LOUISE

WINDSOR is an emerging visual artist currently working in Toronto. She recently graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design University's BFA program focusing in photography, printmaking, and sculpture. Her work focuses on the use of illusions created by fantasy, mystery, and the duplication of reality.

ISABEL M. MARTÍNEZ holds a BFA from The Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and an MFA from the University of Guelph. Her work has been exhibited in Chile, England and Canada, and published in Magenta's Flash Forward, FotoAmérica Bienal de Fotografía, Bank on Art, Frameworks, Ojo Zurdo, Chilenización de la Fotografía, and Wegway Magazine among others.