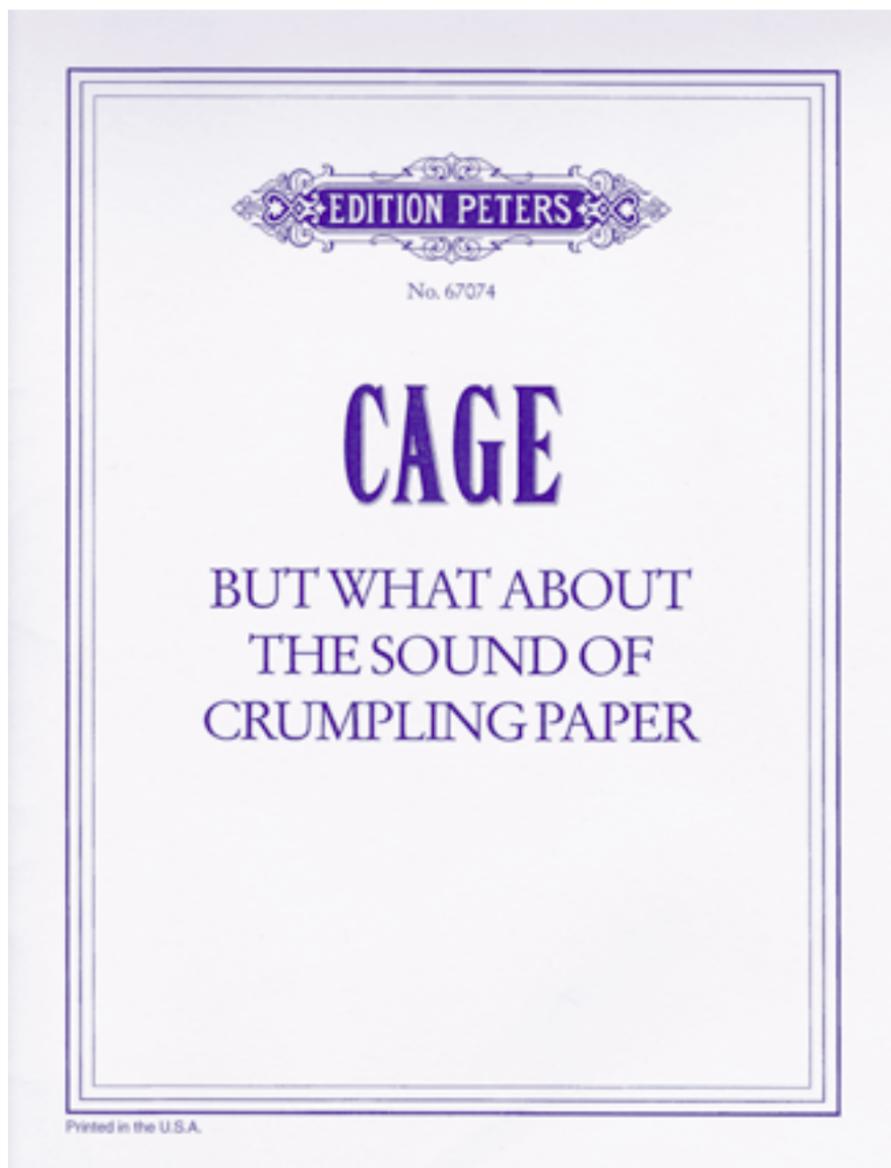


- I Joe Brittain**
- II John Cage**
- III Mia Goyette**
- IV Vladimír Havrilla**
- V Rachel Higgins**
- VI Music Animation Machine
(Stephen Malinowski)**
- VII Mamiko Otsubo**
- VIII Irgin Sena**
- IX Slobodan Stošić**
- X Alina Tenser**



The Removal of Pain, as Static Pleasure, Loop, 2013. Chromed aluminum pipe filled with moonshine and melatonin, 43 x 43 x 3 inches.



But What About The Sound of Crumpling Paper, 1985. Music score, 11 × 8-1/2 inches.

Several Circles By Marco Antonini

I heard a bell ringing. A small round object rolled right before my eyes ... my fingers sensed something rough like a rope ... then I experienced a taste of salt water ... and something white.

—Record of conversation with “S.,” February 1936, A.R.Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book about a Vast Memory.* [1]

Synesthesia (literally: “to perceive together”) is traditionally described as a neurological phenomenon in which stimulation in one sense leads to automatic, involuntary experiences and connections in other senses. Long considered a neurological condition, synesthesia remains a somewhat uncharted territory. Synesthetes must use language to describe their experiences, and their language reflects the common perception that we only have five senses, the ones we can easily associate to visible body parts. As a matter of fact, studies have proven the existence of many other senses.

In his excellent book *The Hidden Sense*, Cretien Van Campen acknowledges Dutch physician Albert Soesman’s studies and his identification of twelve “extra” senses, including self-movement, equilibrium, temperature, speech, imagination, life and self. [2] Other studies reported by Van Campen classify orgasm and even more complex cognitive associations among the “senses” activated by synesthetic experiences. For Van Campen, synesthetic experiences do not enter the body at one specific point, but affect it as a whole, operating in the area between senses. This point of view takes cues from both Gestalt theory, the idea that we do not compose our perception from distinct sensorial

inputs but rather take in impressions of our surroundings, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s studies.

In his book *The Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty states that common expressions such as “Loud Colors” or “Sharp Cheese” are possible remnants of universal, pre-conscious unified synesthetic experiences, essentially opening the door to the possibility of universal and trans-cultural synesthetic potential. [3] Furthermore, recent scientific evidence indicates that the word synesthesia has been incorrectly used to describe connections between stimuli that are in fact induced by semantic representations of what we think we “feel” through our senses. [4] If, then, synesthesia is an inadequate term, and simultaneous perception events are more about ideas and concepts to what extent would popular visual tropes, time, place, and other specific cultural references, or language itself, tend to be(come) associated with physical feelings? And how?

Cognitive material, including apparently instinctive behaviors and reactions, has an important characteristic: it can be taught and learned. That per se would imply the possibility that sensorial experiences can be translated and passed on to others simply by explaining them. Would such a virtually infinite network of transferable cognitive and sensorial intersections ever have the chance to come in full focus, to be studied, apart from the isolation, description and/or deconstruction of existing events? I personally doubt it, but I am no scientist, and all of this conjecturing has probably already gone too far.

■ ■ ■

Heavy percussion and bass sounds are dark brown—colored

circles on a black background to me. The circles are comparable to the ones you see in the water when you throw a stone in it, with one difference: each drum beat creates only one expanding circle. The heavier the sound, the bigger the circle, and the thicker the edge of the circle. Lighter percussion creates brighter little circles ...

—Record of conversation with “Patrick” (date unknown), Cretien Van Campen, *The Hidden Sense*. [5]

“Several Circles” presents a series of artworks that suggest an alignment with the expanded notion of *ideasthesia*. Ideasthesia, as opposed to synesthesia, is defined as a phenomenon in which activations of concepts evoke perception-like experiences. So, for example, letters of the alphabet are associated with vivid experiences of color. The name comes from the Greek *idea* and *aisthesis*, meaning “sensing concepts” or “sensing ideas” and was introduced by psychologist Danko Nikolić in 2009.

Dense with both meaning and actual sensorial stimuli, the works chosen for this exhibition connect not only sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell but reach out to a cosmos of other senses defined by the artists’ (and our own) understanding of reality, and ways to make meaning of it. Apart from their real or suggested ideasthetic qualities, the works are unified by the recurrent use of the circular form, a trait d’union suggesting the possibility of a networked reading of the whole exhibition. The title of the project is inspired by Vasily Kandinsky’s 1926 painting, *Several Circles*. Kandinsky’s talismanic work will appear in the exhibition in many different forms, serving as an ulterior connective tissue between the objects and images on display.

In a letter to his friend, German art historian Will Grohmann, Kandinsky described the circle as:

- 1 The most modest form, but [it] asserts itself unconditionally
- 2 A precise but inexhaustible variable
- 3 Simultaneously stable and unstable
- 4 Simultaneously loud and soft
- 5 A single tension that carries countless tensions within it. [6]

As a painting, *Several Circles* epitomizes Kandinsky’s co-optation of geometric form, a consequence of his exposure to Russian Constructivism and to the unfolding utopias that defined the cultural and social climate of the October Revolution. Geometry was for the author of *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* and *Point and Line to Plane* a way to reach and communicate universal truths and feelings, an Esperanto of the eye with synesthetic potential. This is evidenced in *Several Circles*, which is composed of a cosmic palette of blues and blacks, dotted with many colors, each circle propagating from an ideal center, coming forward or receding into infinity like telescopic streams of sound. Here, one sense, sight, complements another, sound, and concepts and sensations formed at different layers of our ever-growing conscience/knowledge complex recall each other as in a network.

Art is, by definition, a way of expanding our own reality, establishing connections with others and their own “other” realities. Artistic practice is a bridge built on the ground of an unfamiliar shore, stretching towards the tangible infinity of a foggy sea. The meeting points in which the bridge builders, on the opposite edges of such a necessarily tentative construction,



Antifreeze (Fortified Flower Vases), 2012-2014. Fresh flowers, food color, water, bottles, dimensions variable.



But The Second Site Of The Record, 1982. Black & white photograph, 12 × 18 inches.

finally get to see each other and shake hands (or pick a fight) are multiple and uncertain. Wherever one connection forms, an idea is communicated, translated, exchanged, assimilated, or ignored. Working towards that moment, art must carry within itself a multiplicity of signs, codes and languages, raw and cooked sensations; as many as possible. This is not only to meet with the unexpected sensitivity of its future hosts, but also to assert itself as a unique cultural product, reflecting the identity of its creator or facilitator. There is no real artistic exchange without an understanding of different positions; and it doesn't really matter if such positions are taken in or rejected, if they inspire or infuriate.

The artworks and objects in this exhibition have been chosen because they affirm this radically expanded, totalizing notion of artistic practice as all-encompassing ideasthetic construction. I still smile when I think about the reaction of a dear friend (an artist and critic himself) who scolded me about my exhibition premise for "Several Circles", claiming that it was "about everything and nothing." He was and is right. This exhibition is about all that there is in a work of art, or whatever we think a work of art could or should be, and all that it is not. The things we don't sense are simply missed connections, waiting to happen.

Notes

- [1] **A.R. Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book about a Vast Memory*, trans. Lynn Solotaroff (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 81.**
- [2] **Cretien Van Campen, *The Hidden Sense: Synesthesia in Art and Science* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 12.**

- [3] **Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2002).**
- [4] **U.M. Jürgens, and D. Nikolić, "Synaesthesia as an Ideasthesia—Cognitive Implications," *Synesthesia—Learning and Creativity*, ed. J. Sinha. (Proceedings from the conference "Synesthesia and Children," Learning and Creativity, Ulm, Sweden, May 2012). Van Campen, 12.**
- [5] **Vanessa Kovalski, "Several Circles," *Kandinsky exhibition catalogue for the Guggenheim Museum of New York, September 18, 2009 - January 13, 2010* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 240.**
- [6] **Vanessa Kovalski, "Several Circles," *Kandinsky exhibition catalogue for the Guggenheim Museum of New York, September 18, 2009 - January 13, 2010* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 240.**

Marco Antonini is Executive Director and Curator at NURTUREart, a non-profit gallery providing opportunities and resources for emerging artists, curators, and public school students. His independent projects have been produced in New York by Japan Society, LMCC, the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, ISE Foundation, ISCP, The Italian Cultural Institute, The Czech Center, and internationally by Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation (Venice), FUTURA Center for Contemporary Art (Prague), CCEG (Guatemala City), among many others. His articles, essays, interviews, short stories and poetry have been published extensively in international magazines, journals, catalogs and other exhibition-related publications.



Jacuzzi, 2013. Inflatable baby pools, expandable spray foam, polystyrene, plywood, fiberglass, cement, cerastone, water, mugwort, garden hose, and shop-vac, 24 × 48 × 24 inches.



Deposit, 2013. Polystyrene, fiberglass, cement, cerastone, aluminum, and unknown items deposited by viewers, 12 × 12 × 12 inches.



Frédéric Chopin's "Nocturne in E-flat Major, Opus 9, No. 2", 2013. Digital color animation with sound, 3:57 minutes.

I Joe Brittain

Untitled, 2012.
Clock motor and mirror
pendulum.
3-inch diameter hole and
pendulum.

**The Removal of Pain, as
Static Pleasure, Loop, 2013.**
Chromed aluminum pipe
filled with moonshine and
melatonin.
43 × 43 × 3 inches.

Circles and spheres are recurrent forms in Joe Brittain's work. In his *The Removal of Pain, as Static Pleasure, Loop*, a ring of chromed aluminum pipe floats almost magically on the wall. The metal ring is filled with a liquid mixture of moonshine and melatonin. Hard liquor and melatonin are substances that affect our physical and psychological states, and the work (although its contents are not meant to be ingested) could be described as a symbolic device. Brittain's final touch, a tiny red cork soaking up the liquid core of the piece, is there to allow the visitor to further experience the artwork by smelling its contents. It also, importantly, contributes to its slow evaporation in the surrounding environment, activating the work to a process of continuous development and transformation.

Joe Brittain was born and raised in Arcade, New York. He studied Art History at SUNY University at Buffalo and graduated in 2003 with an Honors BA. Since moving to New York City, he has concentrated on his studio practice while also project managing for various artists and institutes. He has had solo exhibitions at Ramiken Crucible and Toomer Labzda Gallery, attended several residencies, and in 2011 was awarded a NYFA Fellowship in sculpture. Brittain lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

II John Cage

**But What About The Sound
Of Crumpling Paper, 1985.**
Music score.
11 × 8-1/2 inches.

III Mia Goyette

**Antifreeze (Fortified Flower
Vases), 2012–2014.**
Fresh flowers, food color,
water, bottles.
Dimensions variable.

Antifreeze (Fortified Flower Vases), is a series of clear bottles of various sizes and dimensions filled with colored water and white flowers. The liquids offer a full spectrum of bright, artificial-looking hues. Contrasting with the natural hues and fragrance of the fresh flowers, the liquids are completely out of place, color-saturated idealizations of taste and smell contained in mismatched bottles: packaging conceived to market products ranging from pure mineral water to soda to alcoholic beverages and energy drinks. The work stems from the memory of a small domestic accident: the artist's aunt mistaking a bottle of antifreeze for a soft drink and taking a dangerous sip of it. The flower stems are dipped into what amounts to deadly poison for the hopelessly condemned plant, which absorbs the beautiful but toxic dyes that will eventually kill it.

Mia Goyette (b. 1989) is based in Berlin, Germany, where she has lived and worked since receiving her BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art in 2010. Goyette's sculptures, installations, and videos examine subject matter including mortality, consumer objects and their relationship to the body, and youth. Her work has been presented internationally including a recent solo exhibition at Vitrine Gallery, London.

IV Vladimír Havrilla

But The Second Site Of The Record, 1982.
Black & white photograph.
12 x 18 inches.

Slovak artist Vladimír Havrilla embraced photo and video in the early seventies, when he was creating and documenting situations and scripts that strived to defy cultural and psychological isolation via performance, formal composition, narration and context. But the other side of the record balances harmonically contrasting elements. Surrounded by identically dressed young girls apparently engaged in a ritual that involves a levitating vinyl record (thereby evoking both sound and movement), Havrilla achieves a moment of pure stillness and possibility.

Vladimír Havrilla (b. 1943) is a sculptor, writer, animator, and filmmaker living and working in Bratislava. In 1968, he graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Bratislava at which time he worked as a sculptor. In the early '80s, Havrilla became active in performance art with a close group of friends, and continued creating animated works and video. Havrilla's artwork has been exhibited in Bratislava, Prague, and New York; he's received various awards and nominations for his writing, sculpture, and films including the Qu Art Competition (Brussels, 2010), Anasoft Litera (Slovak Republic, 2008), Edmonton Print International (Canada, 2008), International Print Triennial (Kraków, 2000), among others.

V Rachel Higgins

Jacuzzi, 2013.
Inflatable baby pools,
expandable spray foam,
polystyrene, plywood, fiber-
glass, cement, cerastone,
water, mugwort, garden
hose, and shop-vac.
24 x 48 x 24 inches.

Deposit, 2013.
Polystyrene, fiberglass,
cement, cerastone, alumi-
num, and unknown items
deposited by viewers.
12 x 12 x 12 inches.

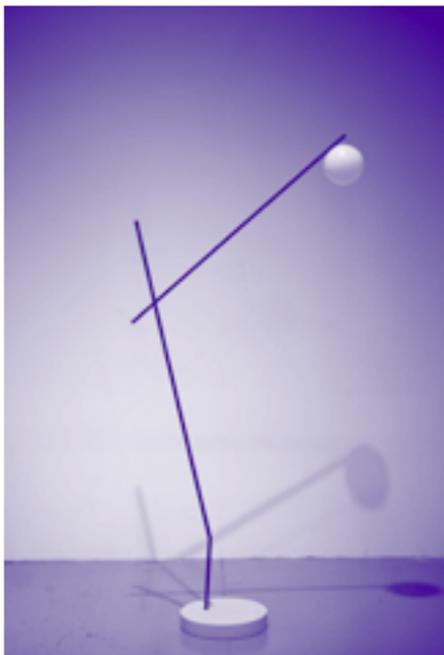
Higgins's sculptures isolate the ubiquitous forms, patterns, and materials of postmodern architectural details and urban furniture, repurposing them to, often, hilarious results. Contesting the original form and function (or lack thereof) of her source materials, Higgins imbues her creations with unexpectedly fresh, subversive potential, freeing them from the burden of their own formal awkwardness as well as from Postmodernism's questionable legacy.

Rachel Higgins (b.1981) is a Brooklyn-based artist from Birmingham, Alabama. She is a current resident in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's 2013-2014 Workspace Program. Her work has been exhibited at Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, NY; the Flint Public Art Project's Free City Festival, MI; Franklin Street Works in Stamford, CT; Babel Kunst in Trondheim, Norway; the Crane Arts Center in Philadelphia, PA; and the Artisphere in Washington, DC. She was a recipient of the 2011 Socrates Sculpture Park Emerging Artist Fellowship and has also been awarded residencies with the Build-It-Green salvage yard in Astoria, Queens, and Real Time & Space in Oakland, CA. She received an MFA from Hunter College in 2010.

VI Music Animation Machine (Stephen Malinowski)

Frédéric Chopin's "Nocturne in E-flat Major, Opus 9, No. 2", 2013.
Digital color animation
with sound.
3:57 minutes.

"Forming an analogical association between two experiences is not a rare occurrence; we (and, it would seem, other creatures) do it all the time; it's the basis of what we do to make



Untitled (with Yellow Ball), 2008. Blackened steel, vinyl juggling ball, cast concrete, 51 × 24 × 9 inches.



Untitled (1 burger), 2013. Glazed ceramic, 12-3/8 × 9-5/8 × 3 inches.



Use It For What It Is Not, 2013. Black & white photograph, 32-1/2 × 43-1/3 inches.



Drawing 4 (detail), 2013. Pencil on paper, wood, photograph, 62 × 23-5/8 × 8-1/3 inches.

sense of our environment. (Douglas Hofstadter goes so far as to suggest that analogical thinking is the very core of cognition.) The most obvious kind of association is between two experiences of the same kind; for example, when you see something you've seen before, you think, 'it's the same thing,' or, 'it's that thing'. But associations between two different kinds of experience are also common; when you see and hear a lion roar, you know that what you're seeing and what you're hearing are both manifestations of the same event, and when you subsequently think about a lion's roar, you will likely bring to mind both the image and the sound." —Stephen Malinowski

Stephen Malinowski (b. 1953 in Santa Monica, California) is a pianist, composer, software engineer, lecturer, and the creator of Music Animation Machine. In the last 26 years, he has collaborated with various individuals and organizations including Edward Tufte, The Getty Center for Education in the Arts, Textile Museum of Canada, Del Sol String Quartet, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, American Baroque, Pandora Records/Al Goldstein Archive, among many, many others to produce video, software, documentaries, iPad apps, and animations. Malinowski currently works for Audience, Inc. based in California.

VII Mamiko Otsubo

Untitled, 2008.
Concrete, blackened steel, rubber, and vinyl balls.
62-1/8 x 7 x 4-1/2 inches.

Untitled (Burger Polka Dots), 2013.
Glazed ceramic.
12-1/2 x 9-1/2 x 3-1/2 inches.

Untitled (Polka Dots VII), 2013.
Concrete, mirror polished stainless steel.
14 x 14 x 5/8 inches.

Otsubo's works incorporate natural forms and archetypal concepts into

sculptures that evoke modernist art and design, critiquing modernism's degeneration into palatable, market-friendly simplifications. Circular shapes, referencing such disparate elements as astral bodies and fast food sandwiches, are a leitmotif in her work. The circle's status as a supposedly "perfect" shape and cosmic symbol is undermined by the artist's choice to use everyday materials; indeed, her work is defined by such juxtapositions, constantly pushing backgrounds into foregrounds, simple forms into complicated concepts, and vice versa.

Mamiko Otsubo, born in Nishinomiya City, Japan, in 1974, lives and works in Brooklyn, NYC. Mamiko studied art, after having accomplished a BA in Economics at the University of California in San Diego. She then completed a BFA in Pasadena and an MFA at Yale University. Her work has been shown in many group and solo exhibitions in the US and in Europe.

VIII Irgin Sena

Use It For What It Is Not, 2013.
Black & white photograph.
32-1/2 x 43-1/3 inches.

Drawing 4, 2013.
Pencil on paper, wood, photograph.
62 x 23-5/8 x 8-1/3 inches.

Part of a series of photographic works that Sena realized during a road trip through his native Albania, the black-and-white image shows a mysterious construction, casting an ominous, dark shadow in the mid-day sun and partly concealing (or protecting) a solitary seated figure. The high contrast of the image compresses the surrounding rural setting into a mere abstraction, effectively transforming the shadows cast by the circular floors and pillars into a freestanding time/space void. The title suggests a collaboration between the anonymous figure and

the photographer in redefining this seemingly abandoned construction site, creating a new meaning, purpose, and image of it.

Irgin Sena was born in Albania and lives and works in New York. He has an MFA from Hunter College. In 2008 and 2012-13 he was an artist in residency at International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York. In 2012 he was awarded the MARIAN NETTER Award, in 2007 the ARDHJE Award for Contemporary Art. Irgin has participated at Qui Vive, International Moscow Biennial for Young Art in Moscow, Tirana Bienale 3, in collaboration with Andrea Kuluncic in Tirana, Albania, and New Insight, curated by Susanne Ghez in Chicago. His work has been shown at the National Art Gallery in Tirana, Futura- Center For contemporary Art in Prague, Art Chicago in Chicago, Boots Contemporary Art Space in St. Louis, MO, Vanessa Quang Galerie in Paris, House am Lutzowplatz in Berlin, the National Gallery in Prishtina, Miza Gallery in Tirana, FAP Gallery in Tirana, Lothringer 13/Spiegel in Munich and Badischer-Kunstverein in Karlsruhe, Germany.

IX Slobodan Stošić

Hidden Mirrors,
2011-ongoing.
Photo documentation of
performance.
Dimensions variable.

"A mirror is a confirmation and multiplication of presence, which in itself is both a delusion and a form of decay. Reflections of self and space are just traces of visible. An act of burying and hiding mirrors, as a reflecting surface, is an attempt of negation and rejection of reflection, reality, image. Mirrors are hidden, buried, sealed up, covered. Everything there is removed, it now exists out of sight. Nonexistence is a form of acceptance. At any given moment, somewhere, something or somebody is hiding in a mirror."

—Slobodan Stošić

Slobodan Stošić, born in 1989, still alive.

X Alina Tenser

FruitNut, 2011.
Cantaloupe skin, foam,
wood, aluminum, aqua
resin, wood putty.
10 × 30 × 32 inches.

FruitNut presents us with an uncanny offering. Projecting from the wall, a square frame holds an impossibly large peanut shell. On closer inspection, the object is revealed to be composed of two cantaloupe skins, stitched and pinned around a peanut shape. Affected by an almost otherworldly gravity, this tactile form sinks into the infrastructure just so. *FruitNut* is as much about words and meaning as it is about decay. As the days go by, the cantaloupe skins contract, harden, wrinkle, and begin to smell, while their solid interior retains its integrity, inspiring thoughts about touch, scent, form, and (real or perceived) elapsing time.

Alina Tenser is a Ukrainian born sculptor and video artist currently living and working in Brooklyn. She holds a BFA from the School of Visual Arts and an MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2012 she was awarded the Dedalus MFA Fellowship from the Robert Motherwell Foundation. In January 2013, she completed a Recess Sessions residency culminating in a solo show, "Holistic Approach". Tenser has exhibited her work nationwide including at The Suburban in Chicago, Laurel Gitlen Gallery in New York, and Jancar Jones in Los Angeles.



Hidden Mirrors, 2011-ongoing. Photo documentation of performance, dimensions variable.



FruitNut, 2011. Cantaloupe skin, foam, wood, aluminum, aqua resin, wood putty, 10 × 30 × 32 inches.

Artists:

Joe Brittain
John Cage
Mia Goyette
Vladimír Havrilla
Rachel Higgins
Music Animation Machine
(Stephen Malinowski)
Mamiko Otsubo
Irgin Sena
Slobodan Stošić
Alina Tenser

Events by:

Johnathan Holmok
Georgia Krantz

Curated by:

Marco Antonini

Designed by:

Kloepfer-Ramsey-Kwon

efa project space

Michelle Levy, Director
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EFA Project Space, a program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, is a collaborative cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it, the communities that arise because of it, and to everyday life, and that by providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

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The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

