

Syracuse University

SURFACE at Syracuse University

Theses - ALL

5-12-2024

Discarded and Forgotten

Declan J. Yert

Syracuse University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://surface.syr.edu/thesis>



Part of the [Fine Arts Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Yert, Declan J., "Discarded and Forgotten" (2024). *Theses - ALL*. 862.

<https://surface.syr.edu/thesis/862>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by SURFACE at Syracuse University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses - ALL by an authorized administrator of SURFACE at Syracuse University. For more information, please contact surface@syr.edu.

Abstract

This thesis serves as written documentation of the processes, outcomes, and the conceptual nature of my sculptural practice. I consider and question our set definitions towards the natural world and human-built environments. Using emerging lexicons that serve as a starting point for defining instances of synthetic materials merging with organic ecosystems, I draw from locations, scientific research, individual observations, and human-built environments that have produced or influenced the objects and materials I use in my everyday life and art practice. Vocabulary and language surrounding the excess of objects and materials in natural environments are interrogated and subverted to reflect acts of care, collection, repurposing, and assemblage.

Discarded And Forgotten

by

Declan Yert

B.F.A, Ohio University, 2021

Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Studio Arts.

Syracuse University

May 2024

Copyright ©

Declan Yert 2024

All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Title Page.....	ii
Copyright.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Discarded and Forgotten.....	1
Language and Meaning.....	2
Locations.....	10
Origin.....	12
Movement and Signal.....	17
Exactly the Same, but Completely Different.....	23
Care and Demise (Hope).....	26
Bibliography.....	28
Vita.....	29

1. Discarded and Forgotten

Nature has become a spectacle. The demystification of our world and the ever-expansive infrastructure of humankind has labeled nature as other. Terms such as green spaces, parks, or landscaping create a curated image of what nature is and how we operate in and against it. As conscious understanding and action towards humans' impact on the world increases, the hope for a solution begins to diminish. Hope can be hard to feel when I see a pile of garbage in the woods or hear about a tsunami on the other side of the world through a news outlet. There is a disconnect in understanding when the impacts are not seen or experienced firsthand. Even now, I sit in a privileged position in that the effects have not impacted my everyday life to the extent it has others. Because of this, in my work I utilize the objects that represent the impacts I see regularly - the detritus of quantity, products of overproduction and consumerism, and the colors I experience when walking in the woods or down the street.

I'm drawn to the discarded and forgotten. I think about abandoned industrial landscapes, equipment, and gestures intended for a specific purpose – now purposeless. I find myself remaking these objects and forms, fossilizing them with other materials. Ideas of damage and repair are inherent to my process, allowing for things to fall apart or fall into place. These identifiers signal a tension in the aesthetics, seemingly breaking apart or balancing on a thin structure that could stay standing indefinitely or collapse in an instant. This fascination with objects started in my childhood, spending my time 'hunting for treasure' in and around the environments I found myself in. I would form collections of odds and ends found on the street, in stores, and in natural landscapes- from flowers on nursery floors, to rope and rusted metal wedged into the rocks of my favorite beach. This treasure hunting mentality has become integral

to my practice, guiding my decision making when taking a walk, or working in the studio. A once useful object has now been discarded, leaving it in a gray area of use and useless. Reforming these objects allows me to interpret its previous actions, current actions, and the balance between them, myself, and the larger role they play in our created world.

As I stand in front of my sculptures I ask the question of if what I am looking at is a reflection of myself; of a figure. I follow its gestures towards the disguised found objects. I ask where the object(s) came from, what their past use was, whose hands and memories are tied to this object, if any. I ask myself where I sourced the materials I am using, and find solace in knowing they were found or collected. My own guilt is recognized and reflected on when using mass produced material or after saving what I can from the floor of my studio after sweeping. I ask these questions to myself and seek to understand these objects' and my own place in the world alongside the unpredictability of ever-expanding built environments, and the adaptability of the natural world.

2. Language and Meaning

In *Reveal*(fig. 1,2) I was thinking about the differing perceptions of, singular, and pairs of materials. Paper holds verbal and visual materials. I sourced the paper in *Reveal* from a recycling center in Long Beach California. It was shredded and collected in massive piles with no semblance of order; a subversion from the normal association of printed paper. As I collected the paper into bags, I thought of all the words that had previously been written. Legible words and phrases appeared and disappeared into the bag, creating a poetics of uncertainty and intrigue.

Back in the studio, I continued the process of shredding the paper until it formed a moldable pulp then pressed it onto found scrap wood. Letters, words, and phrases appeared as my hand pressed the paper into the wood. I asked myself at what point does written language fail to encapsulate a feeling or a reality? Language, particularly definitions, can only go so far in describing the lived experience of an individual, community, or environment. When language is broken apart, re-assembled, and reconfigured to adapt to current experiences it is accomplishing its goal of connecting and understanding the world we live in.



*Figure 1, Reveal, Scrap Wood,
Found Vinyl Vertical Blinds,
Recycled Paper Pulp, Mica Powder,
Found Mirror, Steel, 2022*



Figure 2, Reveal, Scrap Wood, Found Vinyl Vertical Blinds, Recycled Paper Pulp, Mica Powder, Found Mirror, Steel, 2022

A question that I will always be asking myself in the studio is when we decide upon defining what is ‘natural’ and what is ‘synthetic’. The question appears straightforward, what is created by the earth is natural - anything that does not occur naturally or is altered by humans is considered synthetic. This becomes more complex when you argue that plastic or lithium batteries come from the earth, so what exactly are we trying to achieve with these separations?

As time progresses and the separation of these two ‘dominans’ has begun to crumble, there grows an aversion to what is natural. Complacency and comfortability in our society distracts us from the byproducts of destruction hidden in the soil. The answers are as complex as a tree growing into a chain.



Figure 3, *Log and Chain*, Found Log, Steel, 2022

Olivia Lang discusses author and playwright Deborah Levy in her book *Funny Weather*. Along with praise for Levy’s wit and resourcefulness, Lang describes Levy’s skill for symbolism and attentiveness. Lang says “she knows how small items - a parakeet, a stray bee, a bubble-gum lolly - generate an atmosphere.”¹ In my search to define natural and synthetic for myself, I utilize this generative atmosphere of objects. However, the objects I utilize are more general than a parakeet. The mundanity of a triangular piece of scrap metal is forgotten when the presence of

¹ Olivia Laing, *Funny Weather*, 285

time in rust and tool marks decorate the surface. These moments of happenstance on found objects, reminds me of my appreciation for the mundane and the common. Recognizing the importance of how we see and create meaning in this world through the objects we choose to cherish, and those we encounter for an instant.

Small moments come together to form the larger context of my sculptures. Working with negative spaces, light, and shadows- certain frames of the work begin to interact with one another and the environments they reside in. The environments are the spaces around the work, and the viewers, coming in and out of focus. Many moments come together to create the whole in *Walking* (fig. 4). Detailed moments have their own presence, sharing information about the whole. Shredded paper pulp creates a lichen effect, trailing up, in, and around found wood and rocky folds of plaster and fabric. The smaller details are defined with organic and highly processed colors. *Walking* stands figurative and confronting, roughly the size of a person and reflects a moment captured in time, or a moment of growth and decay paused in place.

Jutting from the legs exposed processed wood stands tall and structural, directly in conversation with a found log, twisting in and around the synthetic paper lichen. Figurative and gestural from afar, the closer you engage with the sculpture, the more information and material language are revealed.



Figure 4, Walking, Found Lumber, Steel, Found Log, Salvaged Paper, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, Plaster, Dyes 2023

The figure is constantly on my mind, whether conscious or not. Traditionally, sculpture looked to the figure as the ideal subject; marble busts, stone carvings, dirt and clay figurines, large scale architecture, it all sought to solidify the human form into and from the earth. Unconsciously, we assign human characteristics to inanimate objects and natural phenomena to make sense of what we are seeing, to relate it to the self, or as a form of protection. A study surrounding the effects on the brain when viewing objects with assigned meaning versus meaningless objects found “that repeated presentation of novel visual shapes that were interpreted as meaningful led to decreased fMRI responses for real objects. These results indicate that the interpretation of ambiguous stimuli depends upon processes similar to those elicited by known objects.”² What this study concluded is that finding meaning in ambiguity or the unknown is dependent on how our brains evaluate them conceptually, just as with known objects. Though some objects or forms may seem random or unfamiliar our brains treat them as though they have meaning. We find meaning and create meaning as we experience life. I am creating new meanings for the objects I use in my sculptures. Placed out of context, disguised, and assembled the objects take on new forms and definitions- becoming something other than a novel shape or a perceived meaning.

In search of definitions surrounding the presence of synthetic materials merging with natural growth cycles, I reference emerging definitions being used and sourced in fields from garbology and chemistry, to geology and ecology. A Plasticine Lexicon³ is an emerging list of definitions attributed to certain occurrences of natural and synthetic hybridization in the environment. Primarily, the lexicon addresses the plastic matrix or instances of plastic integrating

² Voss et al, The Potato Chip Really Does Look Like Elvis! Neural Hallmarks of Conceptual Processing Associated with Finding Novel Shapes Subjectively Meaningful"

³ Haram, et al. "A Plasticene Lexicon."

into organic systems. The primary areas of observation and definition are marine and aquatic ecosystems.

Compiled through research and observations of scientists, biologists, and naturalists the lexicon puts words to alchemic-esq combinations found in our environments, such as plastiglomerates. A plastiglomerate is a multi-composite material made hard by rock and molten plastic. These occurrences are often found by the waters edge, as time and natural forces act upon the materials. Synthetic materials of plastic derived from a natural source are now returning to nature and becoming a facet of our soil layer. I find myself in a space of disgust and hope with the understanding of these realities, knowing full well the irresponsible actions we have put forth to arrive at this place in time – yet understanding the earth and organic systems will continue on in the face of destruction, and redefine the very stuff that is destroying it.



Figure 5, Still Sprawl, Clay, Scrap Wood, Lathed Scrap Wood, Foam, Dye , Shellac, Hardware

3. Locations

In my practice and research, I look to locations where actions are happening on a human and natural level, or where past actions are seen in the objects or landscapes left behind. I reference the port of Los Angeles as choreography or an exchange of ideas and movements. The port itself sits at the edge of the Pacific Ocean and is one of the most populated cities in the world. It is a hub of movements and consequences, both beautiful and grotesque. The colors are industrial and weathered, displaced by brightly marked visual language of tapes and arrows, directing and defining action. I use color as a signifier of otherness and sameness. Rust, browns, reds, and yellows mimic natural formations of rock and soil – building blocks of the world around us. Rarer colors of purple, blue, and ruby found deep inside the earth coat the sculptures like a gemstone being unearthed. Vibrant and highly saturated colors denote the signs and taped lines in the port, or the markings of toxicity in the organic world - signifying an action or language in which to interpret. The colors in one moment are bright and enticing, drawing you closer and capturing attention from afar, in the next, the objects and forms that are disguised become more clear and question prior understanding.

I remember the woods behind my childhood home. A seemingly enormous space, filled with unknowns and potentials. In the woods, a fallen tree's roots rip the ground from underneath it, revealing a system and structure that once nourished and stabilized. The roots now point out in all directions revealing to me a hidden world of growth and decay. Pathways, crevices, and caves appeared in the once hidden structure, a world beyond what I thought I knew. Fungi and moss

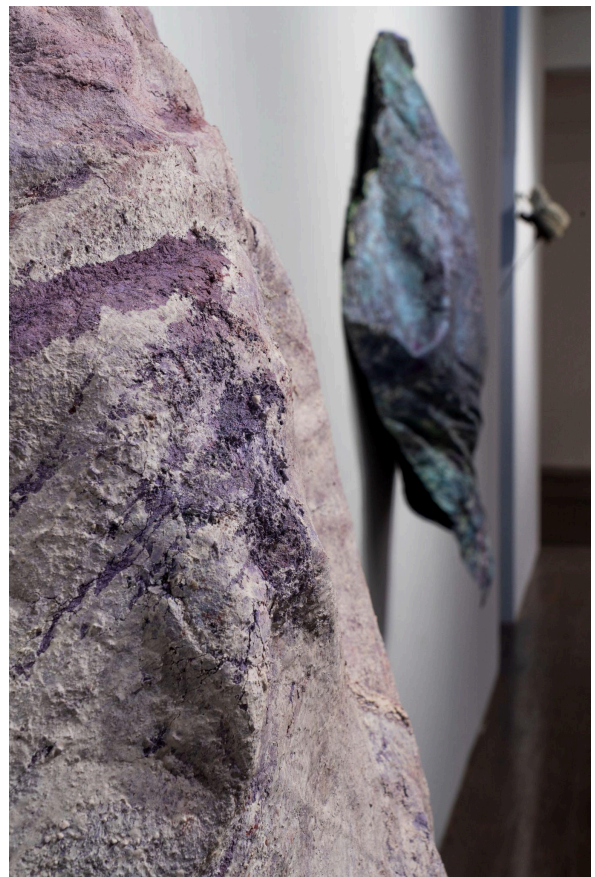
disguised the bark, while torn plastic bags and old tires peered through the muddy ground. This location serves as one of my earliest memories of cherishing nature. I would visit this fallen tree often, bringing friends or exploring alone. What sticks out in my mind is that this location felt so much larger than it actually was, my perception as a child magnified its presence. What remained the same in my memory is the presence of the plastic and tires, so commonplace in our environments they blend into memories of nature.

FreshKills Park in Staten Island, NY was once the largest landfill in the country. Today it exists as an outdoor park with green grass and healthy plants. In the early 2000's, the landfill was buried, existing today in the soil layer of our era. Rubble and debris, damage and disrepair all collected under the freshly laid sod and newly planted saplings. Infrastructure has been established to combat runoff pollutants, while staff and researchers are actively observing the space to ensure individual, community, and environmental health. But why did any of this need to happen to begin with? How can an unregulated dumping ground operate for over fifty years without being checked or questioned? It is up to individuals to establish an understanding of locations such as this, and to begin dialogue surrounding unchecked or green-washing of environmental catastrophes that span generations. It is up to corporations and entities with far reaching power to address their histories of mispractice and ensure individuals are aware of how and why ecological malpractices are encouraged and buried in history.

4. Origin

As we have progressed and developed new modes of constructing our built environments, quantity has favored quality - resulting in low cost production, labor, and dispersal of materials. This same principle is found in our store bought products, why pay more for quality when it can be replaced? This movement of impulse purchases and obsolescence has desensitized individuals to the realities of what goes into making these products, and the subsequent discardment of them. For some, these products may be the only option - and that is where the divide begins to be revealed. Products made to last, ethically sourced, organic, recycled all carry with them a larger price tag. A cycle is formed when consumers' only option is to buy, replace, buy and continue the cycle of demand, use, discard, demand. This creates a relationship with materials and objects that promotes disposability and immediacy, and strengthens the false notion of humans as separate from the natural world.

Husk and Skin (fig. 6-8) are created by a natural being, the materials derived from nature, yet were mass produced and synthetically altered. They resemble what their title implies, remnants of a process, or debris left to navigate their demise. I advocate for the understanding of lineage, the importance of knowing where something was sourced from and how its meaning, usage, and set definitions have changed with time. In his book 'Material' Nick



Kary begins the discussion by defining material “Latin *mater*, meaning ‘mother’ or ‘origin.’” He continues on to say “Material is understood today to represent a physical form, not spiritual or supernatural but rather ‘real, ordinary, earthly drawn’. As such it is seen as separate to humans, something which does not have an effect on us, but something we can have power over. This is quite different to its origin from mother.”⁴ There is a commonly held, yet flawed, premise of superiority regarding humans over other ecological beings and spaces. There are times I do not recognize myself, my own humanity, or even my own presence as a natural being when I find myself content in how we have developed against nature. Viewing the materials I bring into the studio under the definition supplied by Kary, I find reverence and preservation to be the answer to my questions on how to deal with what is discarded and forgotten.



Figures 6,7, Skin - Husk, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, Found Plastic, Plaster, Used House Paint, Mica Powder, Acrylic, 2022



Figure 8, Skin - Husk, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, Found Plastic, Plaster, Used House Paint, Mica Powder, Acrylic, 2022

In *Beside Proximity* (fig. 9,10), I affixed a found table leg to a broken ironing board. Peering from underneath a corroded skin the object's previous use has vanished. Melding with the textured exterior the objects start to read as a whole, rather than individual parts. Questions of definition begin to arise as previous notions behind these objects have been concealed, leaving only enough information to ponder a previous action. What remains is an ambiguous figure with no true discernable origin, found near a home or in the densely packed forest adjacent to a landfill. By discernible origin, I mean to say that this object's exact destination path to arrive at my feet is incomprehensibly more complex than is believed. When reflecting on these locations specifically or broadly, I imagine the chain of movements. The time and the hands present in moving that object, or the processes it took to exist in the first place. It's hard to feel like you are not doing enough, there are times when I feel guilty for throwing away unrecyclable plastic, or hopelessness in the fact that the country I live in sees profit in undereducation surrounding our use of things and their impact on the entire world. I become overwhelmed when thinking about how I as an individual have little to no power in systems that have been developed and in use for me (us), not by me (us).



Figure 9, *Beside Proximity*, 2023



Figure 10, Beside Proximity, Found Ironing board, Found Table Leg, Salvaged Shower Curtain, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, 2023

5. *Movement and Signal*

I am interested in the lifespan of objects. Our interactions with objects shape and create meaning, I question what happens to those meanings once the object has been discarded or abandoned. I imagine the narratives of these objects, their intention and use, and what or where they ended up. Time is a surface on these objects that can be seen in the rusts, chipped paints, or bent extremities that appear on objects as they traverse the discarded.

In *Pierced and Protruding* (fig. 11,12) a found log is covered in a unidentifiable gooey red skin, concealing the total view of the log. From the front and back a table leg or banister rail is breaking the surface of the log and coming out the other end. The metal legs have a patina of wear and use, with one prong detached and hovering above the floor. The log can be seen in a state of becoming, or unbecoming - static with the potential for change. The surfaces suggest an alternative growth system forming a skin and concealing the recognizable. Both the table leg and the log are materially wood, in different forms, their purposes are completely different. Once the table leg is not structural or serving its purpose has it become something else, just as the log was once a tree and now just a part of what was once a whole? It becomes something else entirely. The table legs past uses are tied to it, but placed in a new context, and assembled as part of a new system, its potential to subvert its intended use becomes greater. It breaks beyond its set definitions and becomes a visual question mark asking myself and viewers what it is, why it is, and how it ends up here.



*Figure 11,12, Pierced and Protruded, Found Stool Legs,
Found Log, Salvaged Cord, Concrete, Plaster, Salvaged
Upholstery Fabric, Dyes, Gum Arabic, 2022*



Working with discarded and altered materials, I am able to view and encounter them in a new way, a direct confrontation with the unknown, the beautiful, the grotesque, and the uncomfortable. I think about the paths viewers may take when approaching my work, the choreography of their presence alongside the static form. The kinesphere, or as Anne B Parsons describes it, “a bubble of tiny actions”⁵, is enacted once a viewer is in front of a piece.

There are two modes within the kinesphere, the small and the large. Viewers take on a small kinesphere, freely moving around the object and space, but limited by the presence of gestural protrusions and precarity in the work. The work has a large kinesphere, directing the movements and investigations of those who explore it. During the creation and installation process of the work, the kinesphere is on my mind, not as a way of controlling viewers but as a way to engage viewers and make apparent the relation of self to object(s) and materiality, to other(s), and to the environment. The kinesphere is not an expected function, rather a way to predict how a viewer may encounter and experience a sculpture.

The kinesphere can also be related to how we take in and receive information regarding the climate crisis. Individuals take on a small kinesphere, existing within a developed system that has been ingrained into our culture. Corporations, governments, and those with wide spread power take on a large kinesphere directing and creating the circumstances individuals must accept or stand up against. The kinesphere does not denote ‘power’, the large is not greater than the small. Rather, it is used to describe instances of limited individual control due to external forces. In this case individuals' power in combating the climate crisis is far less reaching than an international corporation or government entity.

⁵ Annie-B Parson, *The Choreography of Everyday Life*, 6

While reflecting on the definitions we place on the human-made and the naturally occurring, I can't help but think of my own being within those definitions. At times, being human can feel entirely separate from what we define as natural. The structure of being human can be isolating from the organic world around us. Systems developed for us, such as capitalism, perpetuate the notion that we are separated from the natural world. This is seen physically in the built infrastructure of our created habitats, and temporally in the changing conditions of our world. While addressing these changes through the discourse on climate catastrophe we ignore the structural causes described by T.J. Demos as “capitalism in nature” and “nature-in-capitalism”⁶. Nature in capitalism can be seen in the manicured lawns of the suburbs or allocated green spaces in dense cities creating a facade of nature in built-environments. Demos goes on to say “It is not these events we must look to, “but rather the world historical system that has produced them”.

This facade, while apparent in a perfectly trimmed public park, is commonly disguised in the products we purchase and consume. Greenwashing is a form of advertisement and marketing that utilizes the color green and sustainability vocabulary to claim the product is environmentally friendly, ethically sourced, or organic. The sculpture *Green Sheen* (fig. 13) visually and conceptually evokes greenwashing. Scrap wood, found logs, mass produced objects, and fabric are coated in a sheen of highly saturated green. The objects have been disguised and now resemble nature as it is marketed and reduced to. Figurative, the sculpture confronts viewers in direct and indirect dialogue.

⁶T.J. Demos, *Against the Anthropocene*, 96



Figure 13, Green Sheen, Scrap Wood, Found Decorative Metal, Found Log and Sticks, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, Plaster,

Dyes, 2024

Greenwashing practices can be tied directly to the perception and usage of plastic in our society. Plastic as a material has been incredibly beneficial to our current world. Its use in fields such as medicine or manufacturing has increased our lives and provided safety and comfort. What is unfathomable is that plastic can be found in the deepest depths of the ocean or inside my bloodstream right now. Its ability to move through its environments, maintaining its form, and remaining static or being repurposed led to its advertisement as a safe and miraculous product⁷; but as Roland Barthes reminds us “A miracle is always a sudden conversion of nature.”

In his book ‘Mythologies’ Barthes delves deeper into the multifaceted nature of plastics saying “plastic is essentially an alchemical substance”⁸. Alchemy, as we know it, was the predecessor to the scientific movements of today. What started as curious experimentation, quickly evolved into the academic and fact based field studied today. Alchemy was formed through material investigations that sought to alter and reform elements, commonly metals. For some, this investigation led to beliefs in a philosopher's stone, capable of transforming common metals into gold or more precious metals. This group of alchemists hunt for the sublime, the ideal, the perfect, inherently uncovered failure. Alchemy stands as a testament to humans' drive for understanding, even in failure.

While rooted in science, alchemy is prevalent today in almost all sectors of production, using one or more materials to create a new material through some form of extraction, heating, and cooling. This core model can be traced back through the production of a plastic food wrapper or the very computer I am using to write. All of these definable ‘things’ were once something else, something that formed organically on the planet. Tracking the lineage of an

7 Kane, et al, Plastic Shine, 2015

8 Roland Barthes, Mythologies, 193, 194

object relays the alchemic undertaking that it took to arrive in the hands of an individual. A plastic bottle is not just shipped to my nearest corner store: it is extracted from the earth, processed in hundreds of different ways in hundreds of different locations, passing through tens or hundreds of hands, shipped and transported from location to location, finally arriving in my hands, the contents into my body, and the receptacle into the recycling bin. Countless variables can be added to this equation and each would be correct. The supply chain is concrete, or has the facade of stability. Developed ideas of production and consumerism are ingrained into our society and being. By taking an alchemic approach, a shift in understanding and innovation surrounding the human-made altering nature can arise. I believe a more human and thoughtful connection can be attributed to the discourse surrounding plastics and other waste objects in our environments.

6. Exactly the Same, but Completely Different

I see a narrative of repurpose or redefining, one in which the materials we so commonly utilize and discard are recontextualized in a manner that forces: confrontation, investigation, beauty in disgust (vice-versa), uncomfortable truths, and our interactions with what we define as the natural or material world. I look to artists such as Eva Hesse and Joseph Beuys who defined their work through material usage, gesture, and unconventional modes of making and exhibiting. Hesse, along with many early feminist artists, broadened the range for what a ‘shapeable material’ could be considered and blurred the space between the shaping of form, externally and internally within ourselves and what we create. The post minimalist movement was a time of reworking what materials meant to the overall voice of the artist and their interactions with them.

My practice navigates a similar approach to materiality as those of the post-minimalist movement, broadening the potential impact of material culturally, economically, sustainably, and individually. Hesse used emerging industrial materials of her time: fiberglass, resin, industrial



Figure 14, Mingle, Scrap Wood, Found Log, Salvaged Plastic, Salvaged Upholstery Fabric, Plaster, Dyes, Mica Powder

fabrics and fastenings, rubber and latex. Her use of material at the time was not received well, long standing traditions and norms set before her time, narrowed the audiences that saw her work. I relate to Hesse's fascination with the materials that make the world run. Common materials like rubber are rarely thought about by contemporary beings, unless their car tire runs flat. Bringing new life, new meaning, new realities to the materials by assembling them together and presenting them in a new context is the same relationship I share with found and collected objects, and the materials I use to create surfaces on my sculptures. I look to Hesse often, her words and visual language continue to inspire and provoke questions.

It is not only I who sees beauty in disgust, it is not a new feeling nor is it delegated to the areas in which I choose to discuss it. Artist Doreen Garner sees beauty in disgust, or rather a beautiful reclamation of narrative and identity, through the lens of systematic disgust and grotesque mistreatment. Garner presents truths ignored in history and in the present. Voicing these narratives through material and form provides a physical presence to the ideas and histories. Just as Garner, I form and manipulate materials to animate the ideas, narratives, and realities I experience and research. I feel a kinship towards Garner, although our work is completely different, it is exactly the same. A process to guide ourselves, and those around us, out of the unknown gray areas that surround and consume us and to better understand and see the beauty in the discarded, forgotten, and mistreated.

Phyllida Barlow was an artist and educator who utilized materials commonly discarded, and referenced an action passed, in progress, or waiting to happen. In her studio Barlow was prepared for things to fall over and fall apart. She anticipated these moments and even embodied

them in her work. From static sculptural forms interacting with each other in the corner of a gallery, or an entire space consumed with her material language. I think about Barlow's amassing of industrial materials, what her studio may have looked like, or how she felt when collecting these materials. Just as Barlow, I am interested in the precarity of a sculpture or artwork. In moments of precarity, I am hyper aware of mine and others bodies in the space surrounding a sculpture. While precarity can cause collapse or anxiety, these moments when you feel the impacts of yourself and others in a space, carries with it a self-reflective quality that I seek in my practice. Just as Barlow, I seek moments of failure, of collapse, and of uncertainty in my studio. As an artist having the agency to accept something falling apart or falling into place is a practice in permanence. A practice that fuels movements and decision making that cannot be taught.

7. Care and Demise (Hope)

I care greatly about this world and the conditions it is under. I sit in a privileged position in that I am able to create artwork surrounding the feelings, realities, and imagined lineages of this ongoing catastrophe, without much risk to my life or well-being. I advocate for those with the power to, to radically change the ways in which production and manufacturing is developed and conditioned into culture. I believe it is up to individuals to operate under a sustainable lifestyle, while not limiting their access and experience of being an active member of society. Objects discarded and forgotten are inherently tied to humanity, to individuals. It is up to the individual to form a sustainable relationship towards what has been developed for them, and to recognize when we have lost our care for the world around us.

Care is something that fluctuates, it's felt, and pursued, until interest is lost or another cause to care about receives attention. Operating under care from a capitalist consumer point of view yields contradictions, controlled or uncontrollable. As a being under these developed systems, I stand as my sculptures, contradictions trying to make sense of themselves and the spaces developed around them. What I hope for is a new dispensation of language, a language that addresses nature and humans as one, rather than separate. My practice provides a space for me to explore and experience the world in a new way; my perspective and the work's impact have a place in contemporary dialogue and the ever-expanding categorization of humans' impact on the natural world.



Figure 15, Installation View, Discarded and Forgotten, 2024,

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Cote, Emily. "Hydrology and Pollution Management at Freshkills." *ArcGIS StoryMaps*, Esri, 9 Nov. 2020, storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e51a625fcf9848b7a3a3ed0e380b0602.

Demos, T. J. *Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and Environment Today*. Sternberg Press, 2017. p. 96

Freshkills Park, freshkillspark.org/. Accessed 2 May 2024.

François-Denève, Corinne. *Roland Barthes, "Mythologies."* Bréal, 2022. P.193,194

Haram, Linsey E, et al. "A Plasticene Lexicon." *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, Pergamon, 18 Nov. 2019, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X19308707.

Kane, Carolyn L. "Plastic Shine: From Prosaic Miracle to Retrograde Sublime." *Journal #65*, www.e-flux.com/journal/65/336456/plastic-shine-from-prosaic-miracle-to-retrograde-sublime/. Accessed 2 May 2024.

Kary, Nick. *Material: Making and the Art of Transformation*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2020. p.7,8

Laing, Olivia. *Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2021. p.285

Parson, Annie-B. *The Choreography of Everyday Life*. Verso, 2022. P.6

"Phyllida Barlow: An Age of Fallen Monuments." *Hauser & Wirth*, www.hauserwirth.com/news/13506-phyllida-barlow-age-fallen-monuments/. Accessed 1 May 2024.

Times Editorial Board. "Editorial: Port Pollution Is a Crisis. It's Going to Take More than a \$20 Container Fee to Fix." *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 26 Oct. 2022, www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2022-10-26/port-pollution-surge-pandemic

Voss, J. L.; Federmeier, K. D.; Paller, K. A. (2012). "The Potato Chip Really Does Look Like Elvis! Neural Hallmarks of Conceptual Processing Associated with Finding Novel Shapes Subjectively Meaningful". *Cerebral Cortex*. 22 (10): 2354–64.

"Kingcobra." *KINGCOBRA*, www.doreengarner.com/. Accessed 1 May 2024.

VITA

Group Exhibitions

- 2024 Requisite Acts, Thesis Exhibition, Novado Gallery, Jersey City, NJ
- 2023 Diverging Paths, Governors Island, New York, NY
- 2023 Outsiders, Governors Island, New York, NY
- 2022 Folding the Maze, The Lofts Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2022 Transitions, The Holy Art Gallery, Virtual Exhibition, Shaklewell, London
- 2021 Off The Wall, Random Access Gallery, Syracuse, NY
- 2021 The World Is Big And I Want A Good Look At It Before It Gets Dark, Siegfried Art Gallery, Athens, OH
- 2021 Diversia: Earth 2021, Virtual Exhibition
- 2020 UJE Exhibition, Juried by Haylee Ebersole and John Burt Sanders, Siegfried Art Gallery, Athens, OH
- 2019 UJE Exhibition, Juried by Imin Yeh, Siegfried Art Gallery, Athens, OH

Residencies

- 2023 Governors Island Artist in Residence, Governors Island, New York, NY
- 2022 Los Angeles Turner Residency Program, Los Angeles, CA - San Pedro, CA

Presentations

- 2023 West Virginia Governor's Honors Academy Visiting Artist Lecture, Fairmont, WV
- 2022 Visiting Artist Lecture Series, Sheiman Auditorium, Syracuse, NY
- 2022 Avenues: Alumni Talks, Sculpture and Expanded Practice, Athens OH

Education

- 2024 Master of Fine Arts, Studio Arts, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York
- 2021 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Sculpture and Expanded Practices, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio

Awards and Honors

- 2022-23 Creative Opportunity Grant recipient, Syracuse University
- 2021 Graduate Tuition Scholarship, Syracuse University, Syracuse NY
- 2020 Tuition scholarship, Opposites Attract , Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass Village, CO
- 2020 President's Award for the Arts, Presented by President of Ohio University Dr. Duane Nellis and First Lady Ruth Nellis
- 2020 Provost Undergraduate Research Fund, Full Funding Recipient, Ohio University
- 2019-20 Dean's List, Ohio University

Bibliography

- 2020 Erb, Lily, et al., The Phonebook Collective. Vol. 1, Independent Publish 2020, p. 83,84

Professional Experience

- 2022-23 Instructor of Record, Sculpture I, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
- 2022 Artist Intern, Studio Assistant: Edgar Arceneaux, Pasadena, CA
- 2022 Production Assistant, Boney Manilli Performance, Exhibition, and Film by Edgar Arceneaux, Los Angeles, CA
- 2021 Instructional Associate, Shop Technician: Syracuse University Wood and Metal Shops, Syracuse, NY
- 2020 Paper Arts Intern, Paper Circle, Nelsonville, OH
- 2017 Work Study, Glass Bubble Project and Art Center, Cleveland, OH