



curated by Kim Neudorf

balloon / portal / starres / fiends

DNA Artspace

October 09 - November 12 , 2014

Liza Eurich

Paolo Fortin

Mackenzie Ludlow

Jenine Marsh

Jennifer Martin

1. “Ideas of bloat and “float” were introduced, as well as concepts of dream and responsibility. Others engaged in remarkably detailed fantasies having to do with a wish either to lose themselves in the balloon, or to engorge it. The private character of these wishes, of their origins, deeply buried and unknown, was such that they were not much spoken of, yet there is evidence that they were widespread. It was also argued that what was important was what you felt when you stood under the balloon, some people claimed that they felt shattered, warmed, as never before, while enemies of the balloon felt, or reported feeling, constrained, a “heavy” feeling...” Donald Barthelme, *The Balloon*
2. 1634 J. BATE Myst. Nature & Art II. 83 Into this Balloone you may put Rockets, Serpents, Starres, Fiends, Petards.

Introduction

The works in *balloon / portal / starres / fiends* by artists Liza Eurich, Paolo Fortin, Mackenzie Ludlow, Jenine Marsh, and Jennifer Martin consider Donald Barthelme's short story 'The Balloon' as both material and inspiration. In the story, a giant air balloon mysteriously appears over Manhattan. Reactions to the balloon vary wildly, involving a continued search for the meaning of the balloon's existence. The text's narrator offers: "It was suggested that what was admired about the balloon was finally this: that it was not limited, or defined. Sometimes a bulge, blister, or sub-section would carry all the way east to the river on its own initiative...This ability of the balloon to shift its shape, to change, was very pleasing, especially to people whose lives were rather rigidly patterned, persons to whom change, although desired, was not available. The balloon, for the twenty-two days of its existence, offered the possibility, in its randomness, of mislocation of the self, in contradistinction to the grid of precise, rectangular pathways under our feet."

While Barthelme's story considers (via a certain rift of curious onlookers) possible use-conceptions of balloons, it also considers ideas of elevation, the discovery of a way to speak of something

without resorting to certain conventions. Something strange enough to work, to make sense as experienced in time. A revelation made into a base object. The elevation of a sudden idea. A “bulge, blister, or sub-section” which shifts its shape seemingly “on its own initiative”. A once-flat exclamation, or collapsed enthusiasm, now placed and pointed towards flight. The signal of trouble, culminating tension, or inevitable action. The articulation of an idea in which form or manifestation “is inherent in the conception and comes about through its own inner necessity.” Or perhaps, as in this list of exploding thing-creatures via 17th century fireworks “such as operate in the Ayer”: Rockets, Serpents, Starres, Fiends, Petards, and Raining Fier!

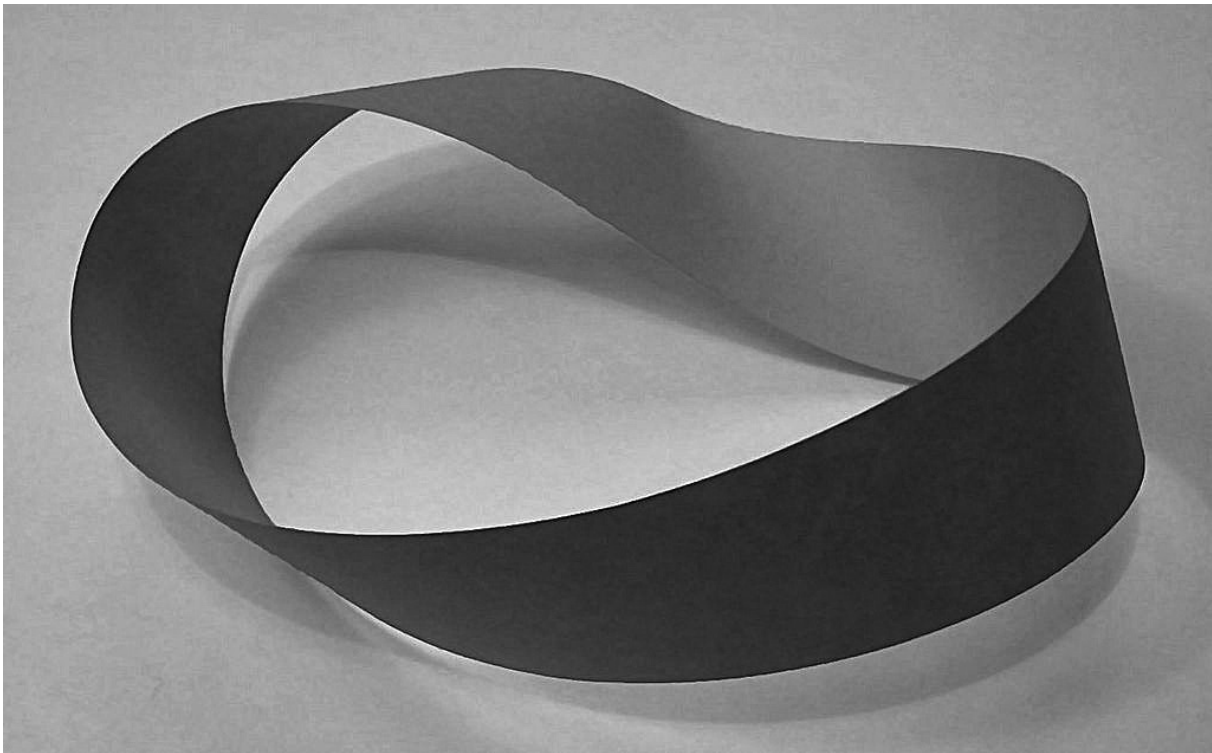
balloon / portal / starres / fiends points to the idea of an elevation and portal (or “portal of entry or exit”), as well as the above-mentioned starres and fiends (friend or foe?) or manifestation of these ideas. Based on studio visits and conversations earlier this year, the exhibited artworks will not only speak of these coordinates, movements, and material presences, but emerge in relation to each other through the construction and life of the exhibition.

In this accompanying text, conversations with the exhibiting

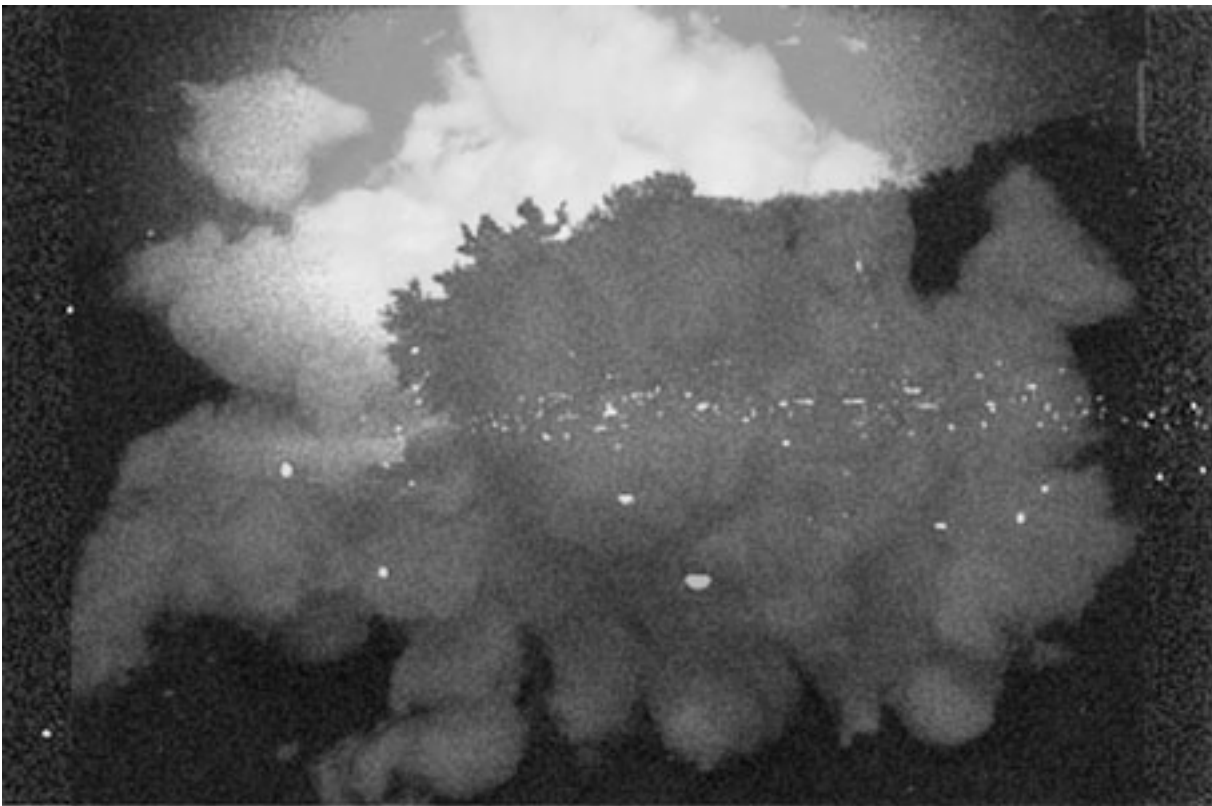
artists have accumulated into a game of writing: notes/findings/associations in excess of the exhibited work have been collected from each artist and used as material for an exhibition text.

Kim Neudorf

Liza Eurich



Overheard. Sandy words are packed into temporary shapes of leverage. Sleepy words are caught, snarled, drizzling corners of obsessive detail. A calcified Y-shape balanced in the bowl of a spoon. A field of footprints up to the shins. A knuckle sandwich. Interior heat. Wilting moth wings. A hill covered in old, rusted signs. A wall of inverted eyes, lids dug up and out. The vowel of grey, like that which eats clothes and hangings, is non-biting. A startled nerve has the appearance of life in a raw state. Obscure rays unequally spaced restore, enliven, and reinstate. Greenish pale, by the number of stripes it contains. The internal surface of pudding stone. Graven mass. False couch grass. A slow walk. Finely toothed, inert bodies. A potted leg. A belief which formerly conferred invisibility. Hugging, moss lungs. Other uses. KN



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Paolo Fortin



A slab slips. The large piece [of wall] slips, still retains the name; the smaller is technically called a slab. The wall is melted and mixed, glossy, of a bright pink colour, stripped and mottled, and emits small pieces pressed together or of irregular masses called 'slabs or 'loaf' walls. Blooms or small slabs. Cogs and puddle slabs. Blocks, units, interlocked, erected, ceilings raised. A slab affair. Underemphasized to make it thinner. Out-side. The waste of 'slabs' and edgings. Rudely planed by a hatchet. It is a low whare. Adzed. A passage of slab as in a house. Colours ground in basement rooms. Little has been said by way of containing fire. A dainty thatching round his muzzle. A lonely fever tent. A slab-car. A large circular furnace or "hell". A slice of bright. KN

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7woVTuN8k3c>

Mackenzie Ludlow



Voices shouting, leaping. Alive and flailing. Shouting to stay alive. Diving head first with slaps and frozen grinning. Fearless characters. Mad fit on the heath. Casting pearls. All form is analogy, bones and hot air. Shaving pajamas. That's a house, yard, arm, hat, shoe, haircut. Get out and stay out. Sit right down. I said nothing happened. You look terrible. I'm dreamin'. Fanciful blaze. Easy on the eyes. A car door slams. Washed up and smiling broadly. Crack up. Golden gloves. Wind up and knock some blocks off. Those thunderstruck two timers. Wilting, staring, keeling over. Garnished arms. Grabbing for glory. Throwing flowers. Dive and rip. Flesh with teeth. Blocked by the door. Curtains crashing. Slack. Reading off instructions in the blue of the night. A line forms. Sitting and whistling. There's no fire, the music is gone. With a flighty, mighty wimper. Pearl-encrusted broad-side. Seat of the world. The light grows very bright and strange. KN

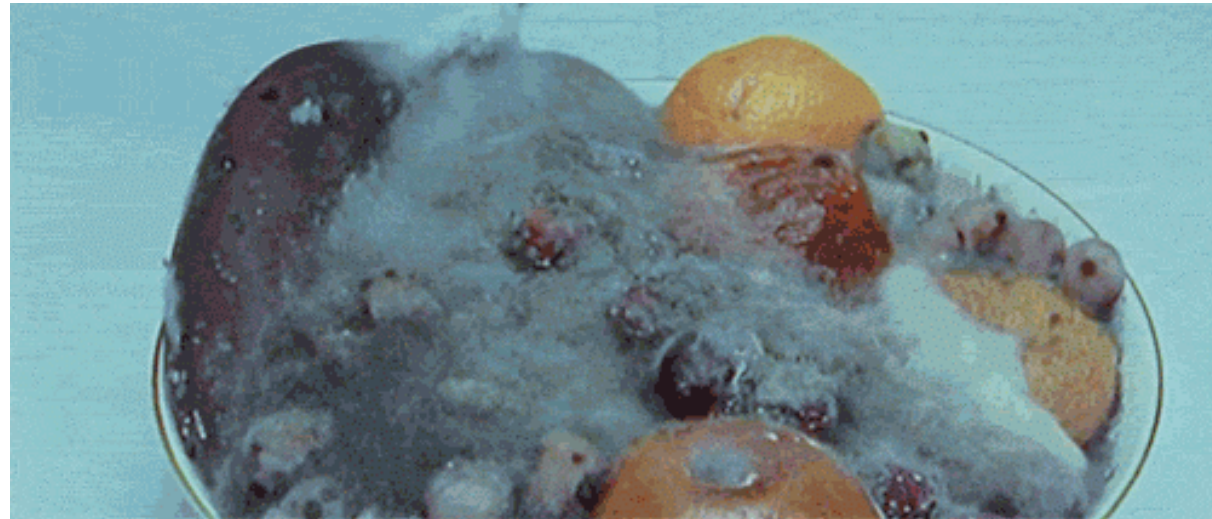


LINDA: ...You've got to get it into your head now that one day you'll knock on this door and there'll be strange people here...

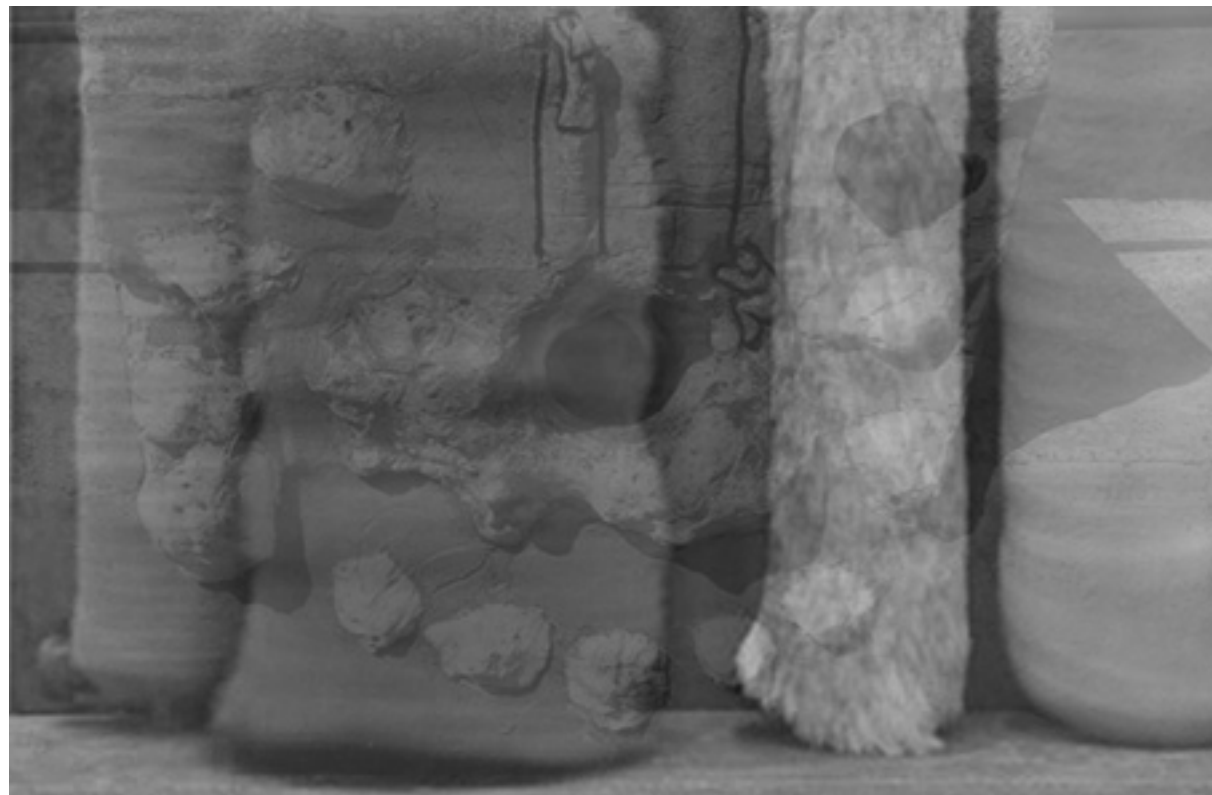
WILLY (*looking straight up*): Gotta break your neck to see a star in this yard.

Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

Jenine Marsh



The face pulled forward, a slack line and slope of snouty sniffing. Sharp tones bite and chew up lines. Glazed over and stony, turning its face to the world. Lots of pinching and sagging and bulging chins at the insidious snap of cameras. The face turned to lumpen potato shapes, flattening with decay. A story of brainy matter: an object moving across the floor on its own; mold amasses its intellect and crawls, morphing with others of its kind; a snail's residue regenerates in water; face cards given overcoats carve rooms into the brain. Leathery lines, pale and bland, with terrible teeth. Squared, a yard long. Withstood. Copper, fiery, moon and kit. Cheek and dare. Optic tubes. The bottom of a hole turned flat. KN



This face is a dog's snout sniffing for garbage,
Snakes nest in that mouth, I hear the sibilant threat.
This face is a haze more chill than the arctic sea,
Its sleepy and wobbling icebergs crunch as they go.
This is a face of bitter herbs, this an emetic, they need no label

Walt Whitman, *Faces*

Jennifer Martin



The oval. Moving over the words, old and out, things that break, snag. An unshapely piece. Ovals dropped, ovals that bounce, rolling towards the side pocket, tunneled into the earth. A repository lies there. Luminous discs, clouds, and haloes are glorious and golden, heads crowned. A gleaming extra digit. Armour. Rattling somewhere at the bottom or lost between the seats. Round, then sharper at the tip. O (the pinball rattling). Starting to wander, but the curve is bottom-heavy and bowls. The oval shaped and transcribed, twisted, pulled (holding), snapping back (round and round), shuddering back into shape (surveying the scene). Two loops pulled again and again, always a knot. The oval is a line of sight suspended. Broken apart, pieces deflate and curl up, floating around as hair and dust. Sections repeat as in a breathable air of clues. On contact, crescent paths leave bite marks, blueprints for repeated means. KN



