

Godine Family Gallery

Looking Back, Looking Forward





Godine Family Gallery: A Retrospective, May 2018

In the weeks leading up to the Godine Family Gallery Retrospective, I posed a number of questions regarding galleries, curatorial practice, and the Godine Gallery to the past curators of the space. In this publication, those responses have been compiled into one document.

Since the closing of the Godine Family Gallery was announced, Andrew, Felix and I felt it was imperative to archive the community and collective memory of this space in every way possible. This retrospective, this book, and the memories and words held in each have affected us deeply. While we are saddened that this Summer they will come to a close, and I know we've said this many times over but it has yet to cease being true, we are honored to be caring for this space in its final weeks, and honored to be solidifying its history with these platforms.

I cannot understate the wealth of knowledge and generosity found in the individuals featured in this book. It has been a joy to work with each of them over the past months while running the Godine Gallery with my collaborators, and to think together about the gallery, the future of galleries, and the potential for a curatorial practice. As artist curators, we look forward to future, new ideas for how we experience art and create spaces for viewing art. While we value the Godine Family Gallery, and galleries as a whole, we look forward to experimenting outside of this framework. We especially look forward to what the MassArt community will do to push art viewing once Godine Vintage Furniture becomes steward to this space.

We would like to extend our deepest thanks you to the following individuals for their support in this show, and their support over the last year of work:

Nita Sturiale	Rob Gainfort	Gabe Gill
Juan Obando	Sam Toabe	Grace Fernandes
Dana Moser	Matthew Serpico	Texas Manning
Tomashi Jackson	Ali Reid	Sam Russell
Elaine Buckholtz	Nico Bovat	Jasmine Oliver
Max Azanow	Tyler Murphy	Linnea Nugent
The Barron Family	Kevin Clancy	Gina Lindar
Harris Barron	Emma Lanctot	Gabe Goldfarb
Iman Louis-Jeune	Brooke Scibelli	Julian Cintron
Michaela Bocchino	Dyllan Nguyen	May Singleton-Kahn
Antonio Quintero	Jenny Proscia	Renee Silva
Steve Locke	Jamieson Edson	Clint Baclawski + the print lab staff
Laura Flynn	Jocelyn McElrath	Darlene Gillen
Nicky Enriquez	Guillermo Carreon	Meghan Cronin
President David Nelson	Claudia Leclair	Hillary Babick
Kelli Fox	Ash Wasilewski	All of our exhibited artists
Ryann Feldman	Sunny Chen	And so many more
Dylan Soulard	Jilliane Mortimer	<i>thank you</i>
Sopheak Sam	Haleigh Finnegan	

-Marissa Cote, Godine Family Gallery Co Curator and Director, 2017-2018



Featured in this publication are:

Ali Reid - Godine Family Gallery 2008-2009

Matthew Serpico - Godine Family Gallery 2009-2010

Samuel Toabe - Godine Family Gallery 2009-2012

Nico Bovat - Godine Family Gallery 2012-2013

Tyler Murphy - Godine Family Gallery 2012-2013

Emma Lanctot - Godine Family Gallery 2015-2016

MARISSA COTE (MC): *Where are you now? Are you still working in a creative field? Where has your work life*

EMMA LANCTOT: I live in Cambridge right now. Currently, I don't work in a creative field in the traditional sense, as I work as a software developer. But I do find a certain creative joy in solving puzzles of code. I also get passed the occasional web design project which I enjoy. I'm not sure I can answer where my work life has taken me because I've only just begun a work life, but I hope to take it in the direction of fueling my art practice and saving money for grad school.

MATTHEW SERPICO: I am based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. After graduation in the spring of 2010, I spent the summer working with one of my mentors and friends, Magnum photographer Costa Manos at his studio in Provincetown. I moved to San Francisco at the end of the summer, and started working on the creative side of marketing at a global brand experience agency, Jack Morton Worldwide, their global HQ is actually in Boston. I supported the execution of marketing campaigns across nearly every major city in America. I relocated with the company to Dubai to start up their middle east practice in 2012. I stayed with them for about two years, delivering great work across the Middle East, primarily the Gulf states, but also Europe and Asia, for brands like Toyota, P&G, Porsche, KPMG, Sky News, various federal governments across the region. Highlight was probably playing a part in the successful expo 2020 bid for Dubai. I left to start my own consulting business in 2014, but not before spending a year traveling around the world doing some fun projects in Doha, San Francisco, and Singapore, and various cities in Europe. I returned to Dubai and since then have produced work for brands all over the world. Recent highlights include producing the Middle East's first-ever Women's Economic Empowerment Global Summit in December 2017 for Nama Women Advancement Establishment in partnership with UN Women, FIFA Congress Bahrain 2017 for Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), and Dubai Photo 2016 for The Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum International Photography Award (HIPA).

TYLER MURPHY: Right now I am in Los Angeles, where I have been since right after school. I came here to intern (unpaid) for a gallery named Freedman Fitzpatrick, which turned into a job. My role at the gallery grew, and I travelled to art fairs to work in sales etc. I've been able to go to Switzerland, France, New York and Miami for work. Fortunately, I worked at a small enough gallery that I was still able to be creatively involved, and not burdened entirely by administrative, preparatory or sales oriented tasks. I curated an exhibition at the space about a year after working there, titled Dredgers on The Rail. From someone seeing that show I collaborated with a New York gallery called Off Vendome, to put on an exhibition in their space. I stopped working at Freedman Fitzpatrick and now work, still in Los Angeles, at a gallery called Reena Spaulings / House of GAGA which is a joint venture between two galleries, one based in New York and one in Mexico City.

I run an exhibition space in the summer in Provincetown called Commercial Street. I'm taking over a gallery in LA, called Jenny's this summer, where I will organize shows under the name Commercial Street. This will be my first independent venture in LA. I'll continue to work for Reena Spaulings / House of GAGA. I also work freelance for artists, as a studio assistant.

ALI REID: I started at the MFA as a work study student while at MassArt, and I'm still there eleven years later as an adjunct educator in gallery learning and as a description writer with the access department. I've been able to add in lots of different teaching gigs and seasonal work over the years to make everything work, much of it arts related.

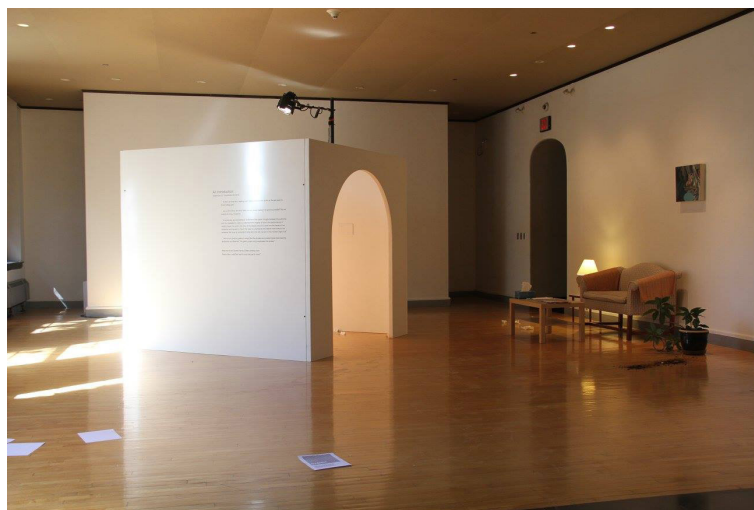
NICO BOVAT: I'm a documentary film editor in Brooklyn, NY. I am currently working on a pilot for a docu-series about Hip Hop in different cities.

SAM TOABE: I am the Gallery Director at the University Hall Gallery at UMass Boston. I had previously worked in the commercial art world at Samsøen for a few years, as a Graduate Curatorial Research Fellow at the ICA Boston, and an Artist Assistant with Tim Knowles through a commission from the Bakalar & Paine Galleries.

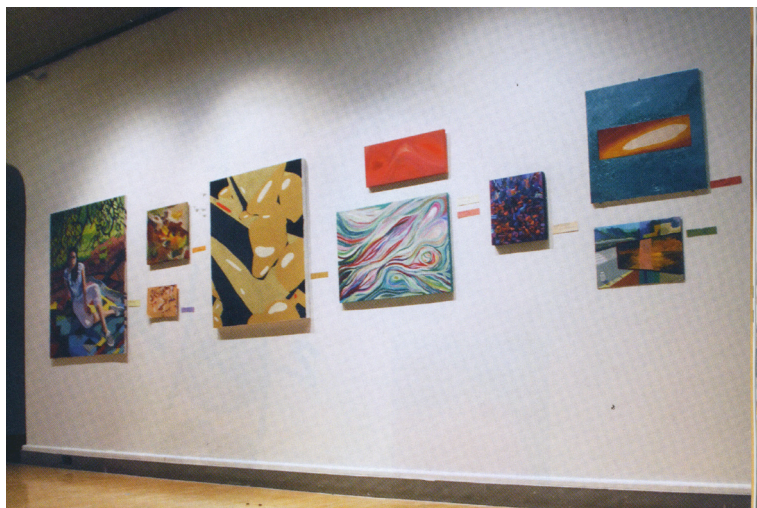
MC: *What was your favorite project to work on during your tenure as a Godine Family Gallery manager? Why?*

LANCTOT: That's a hard question, because looking back each show I worked on felt so unique and precious during the period of its exhibition. However, the two shows that stand out to me the most were one of our first shows and final shows *An Introduction*, and *Tombstones: In case you never knew me*. I think I enjoy the memories of these shows the most because of the growth that happened between. *An Introduction* was our second show and was conceptualized the week leading up to its installation. Whereas, *Tombstones* was a concept that we had fleshed out months in advance, and was one of our least stressful and cleanest installs. Looking back at these two shows it reminds me of both the anxiety and confidence that Godine gave me.

REID: The context of Stacy Scibelli's show *Oddy-Knocky* was special: she got her BFA at MassArt and came back to have a show here as she was finishing her MFA at SVA, en route to some impressive residencies. Her work is pretty extraordinary, but for me it was also valuable to work with someone who's at an important pivot point in their career.



An Introduction, Fall 2015



pigment pantry, Fall 2012

MURPHY: We invited the artist collective called The Jogging to do a show. This was my favorite not because it was the most pleasant experience but because it gave me a lot of perspective. The artists in The Jogging were at times quite difficult, but this experience allowed me to understand what it's like to work really directly with artists. A huge part of my job now is liaising between artist and gallery, dealing with logistics, production, and offering creative support, all difficult personalities included.

BOVAT: I loved *pigment pantry* because the name is fun and I loved seeing the walls covered in color. At the opening, Liz Perry danced around in her ravishing Loofa costume which made it extra special.

MC: *Why do you think developing a curatorial practice as a student is valuable? What about running the Godine Gallery was valuable to you?*

LANCOT: I think it's important to teach curatorial practices to students, I think the context in which art is viewed is one of the most important art practices.

SERPICO: I think it's important to learn how to lead a project, how to fail, how to succeed, how to collaborate, how to work within an institution to get things done. How to make allies, how to make friends, how to negotiate, how raise funds and set a budget, how to ask for what you want. All good things I gained valuable experience in at Godine which have directly impacted what I do every day of my life as a Producer.

TOABE: Developing a curatorial practice as a student helped me to discover the confluence of all my practices: research, writing, installation, design and event production. It taught me the impact that display has on an artwork's meaning and significance as a cultural object. The viewer can help create the meaning of the work by consuming it, by responding to its presence in a public or private space, shifting its existence as it leaves the hand of the artist and into the care and consideration of the viewer.

REID: The Godine is special because the stakes and standards are real, and a certain amount of professionalism is expected, but it is also so self-determined. Whether or not a Godine manager goes on to curatorial pursuits, running the gallery requires developing and defending one's taste and sharpens critical skills as far as talking and writing about art.

MURPHY: A curatorial practice, especially as an artist, is valuable because it's important to understand how exhibitions function. I think a major problem with making art in a vacuum of art school is having no scope or understanding of the history of exhibitions and what it takes to produce an exhibition of quality. There is so much focus on individualized practice that it's rare to have the opportunity to make exhibitions and work out ideas over the course of many exhibitions, which was by far the most valuable opportunity. This can be done with the amazing opportunity like Godine, but also can be a self started venture!

BOVAT: A really valuable thing I learned is how to make connections between art and ideas. You may have two completely different styles, mediums of work but figuring out how they can live in a space and tell a story together is a really valuable lesson I learned and something I carry with me as an editor.



*Oddy-Knocky, Stacy Scibelli
Spring 2009*



MC: *Where do you see galleries and the display of art going in the next ten years? Do you think that the way we look at public (independent and institutional) art display is changing?*

SERPICO: One of the great advantages of where I live, is that I have the privilege of traveling to a lot of the developed world, but also much of the developing world as well. The developed world is changing, and the art institutions that support the cultural fabric of those societies are changing too. In those societies, people are demanding much more of their art institutions than in previous years. The era of accountability has descended upon us, and the art world has become very much internally politicised. The developing world is catching up fast, I recall being in Nairobi a few years back when they had their first major auction, ever. The gulf states are launching powerhouse institutions (Louvre Abu Dhabi, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, The Museum of Islamic Art in Doha) and are setting the pace, and the market price, for artworks all over the world. The Great Powers of the West and the Oils Powers of the East are locked in a symbiotic struggle. Art Institutions are soft power tools in the great game of Nation States. We will see much more of this in the next ten years. Galleries and the role of the gallerist/curator will continue on as the great incubator and trend setter of the art world. I am so curious to see how the developing world can add to this, for example how China has emerged as a global art hub across the past two decades. Who will be next?

TOABE: I believe artists are more often at the forefront of creating new systems of display well before curators at larger institutions can catch on. Systems of display are always changing, and as they always have, artist run exhibition spaces and programs are where you should look for new techniques in presenting, contextualizing, and experiencing art. I am very curious how Laurie Anderson has and will treat her residency at Mass MoCA over the next decade plus, and expect artists collectives like HOWDOYOUSAYYAMINAFRICAN? and individuals like Hito Steyerl and Ankia Yi to continue to dictate new trends in how art is create, distributed, and observed.

MURPHY: This is tough. I think people are seeing less and less exhibitions in person. But I'm still a huge believer in the importance of artworks in context. I think there will continue to be less traditional models of representation of artists by galleries, and more spaces that are less commercially oriented, less formal. There is also less money at the bottom of the market, in terms of supporting young spaces, so I think things will get scrappier. Which is a good thing. I think people are also starting to have multiple locations of different character, and internationally, which affords a lot of creativity and options for the artists, to keep it interesting. As the global attention span decreases people will get creative to find ways to keep the physicality of art important and interesting.

REID: Hopefully forward with greater and greater emphasis on work by underrepresented and marginalized artists, amplifying urgent issues. That said, the whole system could fold if we don't figure out how to pay artists and arts workers (understanding that many are both).

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MC: *What is the value of a gallery? What do you think could change or be improved about the way galleries are used today?*

SERPICO: Galleries are competing with smart phones and tablets. Why go to a gallery when you can see every work you could ever want right on your phone or tablet? A crude example, but it illustrates a point. People's attention has moved onwards, and it's increasingly difficult to grab it. Galleries have a massive challenge ahead of them. How do you retain attention, show the most captivating and important content, while maintaining financial viability? Also the internet and our global society has caught up. Speaking from an American perspective, why purchase in New York, when you can go to London and get the VAT back? Or, head to China where your Dollars or Euro's have more impact, or better yet, head to the developing art centers across Asia and Africa where your investment can yield great value. The art market has become seriously global, galleries that want to compete need to truly understand this and act accordingly. I am interested to see how technology will impact the gallery experience, which for the

most part hasn't changed in some time, as in, you walk into a room, with artworks on display. I wonder how AI, and VR/AR will impact the art world, we are just at the beginning of this change.

TOABE: Galleries act as both physical and conceptual site for creating and reflecting on the cultural and social capital of art. They ought to teach art history, social history, politics, artistic methods and forms of expression to foster a better educated audience in the appreciation, consumption, and understanding of art. Galleries certainly deserve more financial support for the work they do, and to improve upon that we must create value for our audiences, artists, our writers, ... really all of our stakeholders. We must serve them with better leadership that allows better access to the gallery to better represent the true diversity of what cultural artifacts have been made in the past and are being made today to tell a more accurate story of our global, intersectional cultures and histories.

MC: *What is the value of a gallery? What do you think could change or be improved about the way galleries are used today? (continued)*

MURPHY: The role of a gallery is to remain open at all times to the unknown, and to create the conditions in which others can share this opportunity. That is to say, clear a space for the emergence of something new. Nothing else matters.

REID: Viewing work in a focused context is valuable - particularly for the participating artists, although I'm less and less drawn to white-cube experiences. I think a lot about how museums could be more like libraries, and I'm curious about how galleries could fit into this as well. What would it take for a gallery to feel like a public archive for a community, to be a meeting place and a site for work and research?



Tight, Spring 2016

MC: *Do you have any favorite galleries, museums, or art collectives using spaces as a part of their practice in Boston, and beyond?*

TOABE: I always enjoy the List Visual Art Center's exhibitions at MIT, lead by Chief Curator Henriette Huldich and Director Paul Ha. I anticipate that whomever offers and attracts Helen Molesworth to their program will be doing some important work. I hope it's a university museum or gallery. The Jack Shainman Gallery has a great program for a commercial gallery, doing some good historical revisioning and showing some of the best work being made today, but their outpost exhibition space, The School, in Kinderhook, NY is Shainman's pet project that I anticipate will make some serious waves long term in the history of exhibition programs/design. I am also a huge

fan of the Tang Teaching Gallery at Skidmore. And any of you students at MassArt reading this should get over to the Bakalar & Paine Galleries and try to get a job with Lisa Tung or Rob Gainfort to learn about the work they do over there at the college's professional exhibition program. Their team changed the course of my work, and made me want to become a professional curator.

HELP!HEAP, an exhibition organized as a drive to help collect goods for the victims of the 2010 HEAP House fire, Fall 2010



MC: *Do you have any favorite galleries, museums, or art collectives using spaces as a part of their practice in Boston, and beyond? (continued)*

MURPHY: There is a great history in Europe of using domestic spaces as galleries/exhibition spaces, which has been slowly making its way into the US & elsewhere. The spaces that do it the best utilize the domestic space without eliminating the possibility for a neutral space. There's also an intimacy and a personality to these spaces that I like.

A few spaces I would look at and consider that have been a big influence, both abroad and local are:

Alex Zachary	Peter Currie	The Duck
Isabella Bortolozzi / Eden Eden		MD72
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum		Musee Gustave Moreau
Bed Stuy Love Affair		New Jersey
Studiolo /GTA Exhibitions		Feature Inc
Reena Spaulings (the artist & gallery)		Real Fine Arts
Galerie Bucholz		Dispatch Bureau
		Fort Thunder

Many many more!

SERPICO: I love the Stedelijk in Amsterdam, the V&A in London, the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, and the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

REID: I'm not based in Boston now, and I've been more focused on opportunities in smaller cities and in rural areas. As far as established orgs go, I think Umbrella Center for the Arts is offering thoughtful shows, classes, and programming, particularly with a STEAM focus. As far as new spaces, I'm following Lupine-wood Collective's work and the Dirt Palace's renovation of the Wedding Cake house.

*Brujas Board Auction,
Spring 2017*



MC: *If you could offer one piece of advice to students and artists developing a curatorial practice, who may or may not have physical gallery spaces to work in, what would you say?*

LANCTOT: I think more artists should be creating their own gallery spaces. I think art that's viewed in a gallery space often removes it from its meaning, it's most interesting when the artwork is installed in a space that suits its context. I guess my advice is to create a space for your art that is better than a gallery.

SERPICO: Get simple, get direct. Focus on a simple idea. I feel strongly that art has become overly intellectual, and it isolates many people. As artists and curators, we need to learn how to share our ideas in simple, easy to understand language, but still relay a powerful message. All people resonate and feel compelled

BOVAT: Use your apartment, your car, or pop up venues as a gallery space! Also, the internet!

TOABE: Organize exhibitions. Do it in public and private spaces, in artists studios, in music venues, in your friends garage, a field, or on the internet. It really can be as simple as putting a single art object or experience or two in front of a single viewer and mediating it in a way that helps to contextualize the work. And, take some art history classes. There's a few dozen thousand years of art history out there. You should learn some of it before you start making some yourself. It will help inform you on what's being made now whether you're looking at art, exhibitions, texts, performances or social practices.

REID: Talk about work critically as much and as often as you can. Visit people's studios, go to shows, look for connections between people's work and keep an eye on those threads. Write as much as possible, too - talking and writing are a feedback loop and are best exercised together. It's a choice to do this kind of work and maintain these skills, so don't slouch if it matters to you.

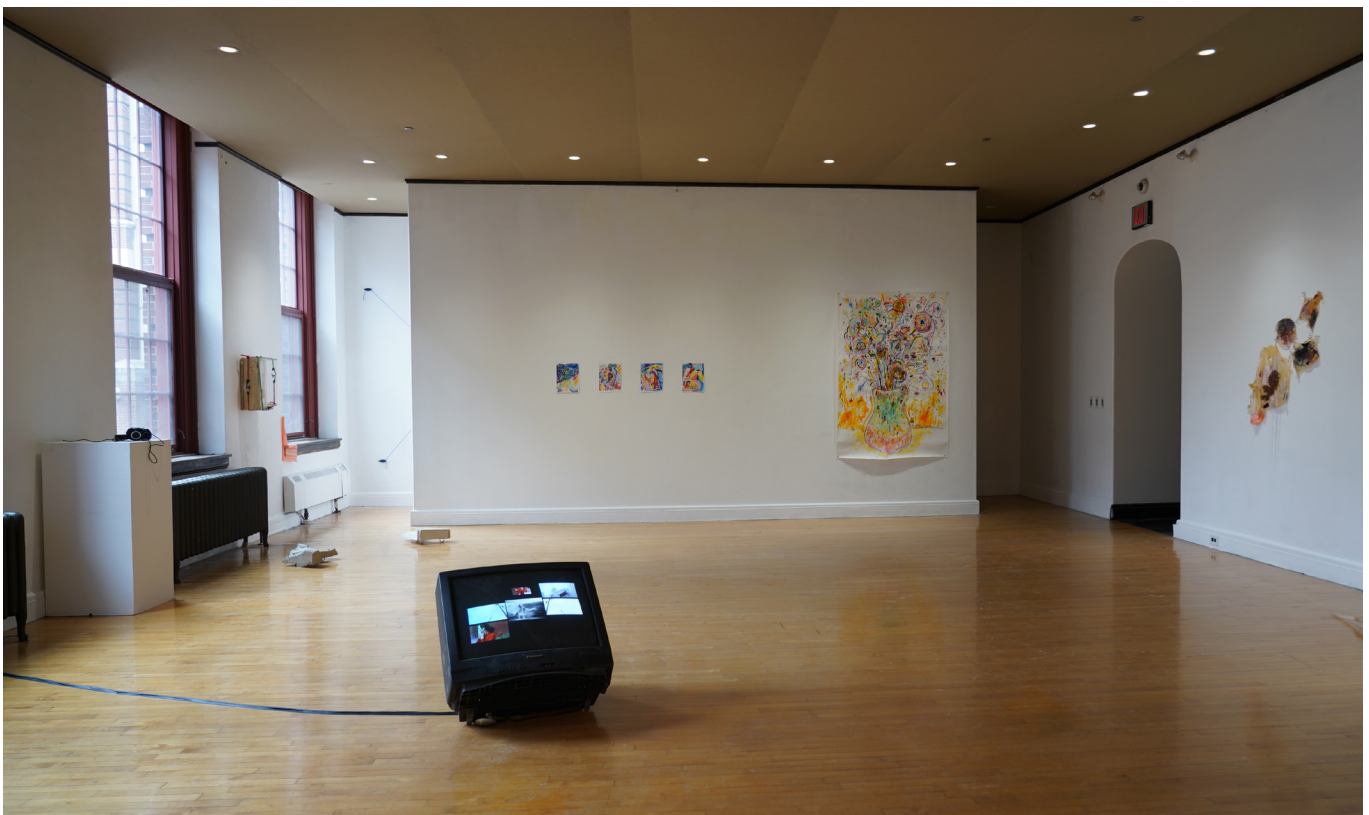
From *Folds*, Michelle Batho, Fall 2015

**“Get simple, get direct.
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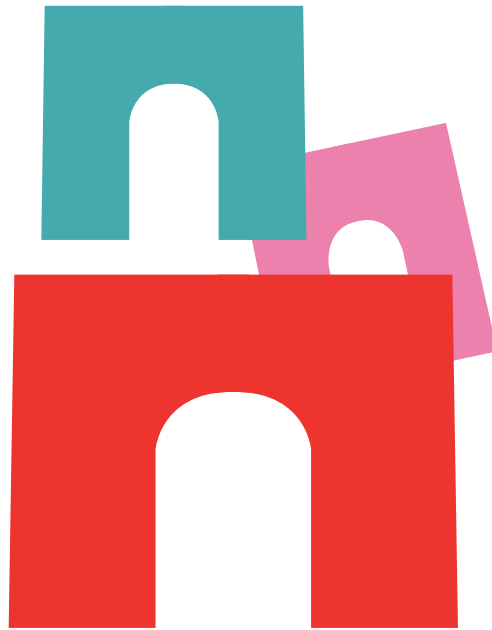


MC: *If you could offer one piece of advice to students and artists developing a curatorial practice, who may or may not have physical gallery spaces to work in, what would you say? (continued)*

MURPHY: As shitty as it is, don't be afraid to go for broke, especially in your early twenties. There are things you can only do that, even if you go completely broke, you can't do with the ease of recovery that you can as you get older. It's almost always possible to get a lame job somewhere to make up for a financial loss, but the benefit of doing something risky and irregular is priceless. Forget any idea of what you do being judged or looked at in a way that restricts you. Context is not permanent, so you can do things early on that later you will think are horrible, without ruining your future. The important thing is to take action and not be afraid of being uncomfortable. Take as many risks as you can, and stay as uncomfortable as you can for as long as possible. Don't be afraid to email someone that you look up to, find intimidating, or want to work for out of the blue. Every opportunity I've gotten has basically been from sending an email without any introduction, where I was extremely nervous to hit send. Read as much as possible, and see as many shows as possible!



Perpetual Collapse, Spring 2018



2018