forcibly evicted under the Group Areas Act, one of the pillar legislations of the apartheid regime, and taken from their homes minutes from the center of town and plonked down in this barren area, 20 miles away, with no consideration of distance from jobs, previous social ties or neighborhoods. (See Figure 3.) Nobody chose to move to Manenberg for "a new way of life." And if that were not enough, in the 1970s, after some sense of community had grown, new blocks of houses were interspersed among existing ones, taking up precious garden space and disrupting life once more. So we are looking at a place with a history of dislocation and despair, not just any low-income, overcrowded housing project.

Less important but also missing is the context for the fuss made over Warren's upcoming 21st birthday. Traditionally in South Africa, this is the occasion of a major party at which the celebrant is handed the key to his or her parents' front door, symbolizing a new freedom to come and go as they please. Without knowing this the pathos of Warren receiving his "key" just at the time when he is finally rejected by his mother and locked out of her house, is lost.

There's also an intimation that the most dramatic confrontation in the film was staged for the cameras. The cameraman follows Warren as he bangs on his mother's door, cursing her for keeping it locked. Then the scene cuts to inside the apartment, with his mother and visiting father reacting to the blows on the door. There is no other part of the film that suggests a second camera. Maybe that's acceptable, but I'd like to have it acknowledged.

I was really moved by this film, and I can see it being used to flesh out what is discussed in a classroom, but by itself it is not anthropology.

Exhibition Review Essay

Ethnographic Terminalia: 2009–10–11.

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> "*Ethnographic Terminalia* is an exploration of what it might mean to *exhibit* anthropology—particularly in some of its less traditional forms—in proximity to and conversation with contemporary art practices." Ethnographic Terminalia Prospectus.

Forty or 50 years ago, any anthology or book with the words "anthropology" and "art" prominent in its title was almost certainly devoted to anthropological theorizing about the works of formerly colonized peoples. No more, and not for a while.

Lately, anthropologists have been experimenting in new nontextual visual, aural, and plastic forms, and in digital pieces combining text, sound, and images (moving and still). Either alone or by collaborating with artists, they have been producing work that acts on the world, uses it, explores it, collaborates with it—in ways that may be evocative and thought provoking, sometimes politically charged, sometimes educational, and sometimes quite

FIGURE 1. *Ethnographic Terminalia. Philadelphia, 2009. Crane Arts, Icebox Gallery. Artists' works pictured (from left to right): Roderick Coover, Craig Campbell, Jayasinhji Jhala, Trudi Lynn Smith, and Marko and Gordana Zivkovic. (Photo by Fiona P. McDonald courtesy Ethnographic Terminalia.)*

FIGURE 2. *Chantal Gibson, "Historical In(ter)ventions: Altered Texts & Border Stories." Ethnographic Terminalia: Field, Studio, Lab. Montréal, 2011. (Photo by Rachel Topham courtesy of Ethnographic Terminalia.)*

beautiful and intriguing to see or hear. Artists, for their part, have since the 1970s adopted materials and practices that may be reminiscent of participant-observation and ethnographic methods (and are often called that), or which may overlap with other anthropological preoccupations or subject matter. (On encounters between art and anthropology, see Schneider and Wright 2006, 2010.)

The Curatorial Collective of "Ethnographic Terminalia," an exhibition of Art and Anthropology, seeks to promote and encourage crossover works and experiments. ET has taken place as a temporary exhibit in conjunction with the annual AAA meetings in 2009, 2010, and 2011, and will take place again in 2012 in venues outside the convention hall but coordinated in the program through the Society for Visual Anthropology (see Figure 1). After the first exhibit, ET had local affiliates—Art Spill in New Orleans (2010) and CEREV (Centre for Ethnographic Research in the Aftermath of Violence) in Montreal (2011); the Curatorial Collective also invited known artists to "anchor" the exhibits prior to the call for submissions. And as of the third, the exhibits have themes: "Field, Studio, Lab" in 2011, "Audible Observatories" in 2012. Artist biographies and commentary can be seen on ET's well-designed and informative website (http://ethnographicterminalia.org).

FIGURE 3. *Luc Messinezis, "Eavesdropping Greece." Ethnographic Terminalia: Field, Studio, Lab. Montréal, 2011. (Photo by Rachel Topham courtesy of Ethnographic Terminalia.)*

Confronted with installations, multipaneled videos, mobiles, sculptures, photographs, listening stations, and more, under the rubric of "terminalia," some anthropologists will think of the end of anthropology as we know it, as in "terminal illness." The root of the word is actually Terminus, a boundary stone and the name of its associated minor Roman god. Ethnographic Terminalia is not about guarding boundaries, however: quite the contrary. From the ET website: "The terminus is the end, the boundary, and the border; of course the terminus is also a beginning as well as its own place, its own site of experience and encounter." The terminus stone here marks the place, the site, where the practices of art and anthropology cross, overlap, inform each other.

This sort of exhibit and others with compatible spirits but unlike subject matter (like the Multispecies Salon of 2010) are quite recent, at least in the context of the AAA meetings, and many anthropologists may not know it exists or may find it less intriguing than puzzling, or at best marginal (how appropriate that Terminus was a minor god, not one of the Pantheon!). It is certainly unusual in our profession and discipline, where most practitioners have historically aspired to achieve naturalistic representation and documentation. The forms may be unfamiliar, and not all the exhibited pieces were equally successful, in my opinion, as either "art" or as crossover ethnography or art (but then, how could they be?); but the themes of many of the pieces resonate with anthropological topics and concerns.

For instance, Susan Hiller, an installation artist who has studied archeology and linguistics, was one of the artistic "anchors" in 2010. She produced "The Last Silent Movie," which "opens the unvisited, silent archives of extinct and endangered languages to create a composition of voices that are not silent" (from the ET website). Ryan Burns, another "anchor" (2010) showed "Profane Relics: an ossuary of the Congolese mineral wars," a ten foot square block of red soil from which plaster casts (same color) of the detritus of an archeological matrix might emerge, including skeletons, cell phones, and laptops. In a more playful vein, the well-established artist Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas presented "Seduction," ten graphic panels showing a tale about Raven, and the short film *Red* (2009), about his graphic novel *Red: Haida Manga*, which tells Haida stories in (Japanese) Manga style.

Others reflected anthropological theorizing or topics even more directly. In the first year (2009) Trudi Lynn Smith's installation "Portable Camera Obscura" was fully within the purview of anthropological concerns: she deals with what she calls "iconic landscapes" in Canadian national parks and the ways they form the subject of different kinds of images, whether postcards, tourist snapshots, or government documents. Likewise, Craig Campbell's installation (2009) "Mobile Agitational Cinema: Iteration no. 1" (in spite of its frighteningly arty-sounding name) was a purpose-built mobile cinema that represents those made in the 1920s by communist agitators in Siberia, with footage that invites the visitor to reflect on the situation. Less dramatic but completely comprehensible to anthropologists was Chantal Gibson's "The Braided Book," a mixed media sculpture based

on a 1935 textbook on Canadian history; Gibson cut out the text and replaced it with a picture of a young black schoolgirl (her mother, she tells us) as a comment on what's left out of conventional history (see Figure 2).

Video art, websites, and soundscapes presented nonfiction with innovative twists or with breaks with naturalism and with our narrative presuppositions in ways that intrigued and attracted (see Figure 3). Stephanie Spray offered footage of a child in Nepal performing repetitive household chores and, another year, tea pickers going about their work—all without beginnings, climaxes, or endings. A video of a Holocaust survivor (by a group from CEREV) who educates by giving public lectures shocks by the routinization of his speech. An experimental video (by Florencia Marchetti) of the Argentinian disappeared explored place and memory. A video piece on garbage (by Barbara Rosenthal) juxtaposed simultaneous video of four cities' garbage disposal in four quadrants of the screen. "Elsewhereness," by anchor artists Robert Willim and Anders Weberg, by contrast, played on sonic and visual stereotypes and riffed critically on site-specific sound art by assembling material about New Orleans from the web. La Cosa Preziosa's "Pasa la Banda?," a soundscape of a Southern Italian town's religious event, was presented starkly without context in ET 2011 but is delightful on ET's website presented with a picture and a clickable audiofile.

The greatest outburst of art was in New Orleans, where Hurricane Katrina (2005) and the BP oil spill in the Gulf (2010) provoked a lot of art production, on view at both ET and Art Spill, the local partner that year. I was especially taken with the performance art–political protest and environmental art that year. I was heartened to read about the newly formed Krewe of Dead Pelicans, which puts on protest parades. (Krewes are the social clubs that put on Mardi Gras parades, and pelican is the state bird.) Maria Brodine (2011) provides an excellent theoretical exposition about Art Spill.

Some reviewers, and certainly some visitors, complained gently or loudly about the "lack of context" of the pieces. In fact, these highly theorized pieces are (sometimes) made comprehensible if one reads about them beforehand on the website. The greater obstacle to comprehension, however, is that theories are sometimes embodied within the artwork themselves, something anthropologists are usually not tuned into. In an interview, the anthropologist Steve Feld (2010:124) talked about the work itself as a form of theory: "The more I work with art, and with artists, and try to migrate the sensuous materiality of sound and image and object into zones of anthropological knowing, the more I encounter this kind of academic fundamentalism, like when people say, 'that was very poetic, but you didn't theorize the material.' What is to be done about anthropologists reducing theory to the literal, anthropologists refusing the possibility that theory gets done in all media and in multiple ways, including artistic assemblage, performance, exhibition?"

At this point I want to speculate on what strands in both art and anthropology resonate with ET or have made this type

of exhibit intellectually, technologically, and imaginatively available, therefore enabling it to come into being.

First, "Art." For several centuries, while the so-called Renaissance Canon was indeed the canon and then for a century or more afterward, collectors and curators favored the acquisition and exhibition of framed, silent, durable, autonomous, commodifiable objects. To count as art, objects had to be stripped of ritual and of audience interaction, and were, above all, serious. Such objects continue to be the purview of what the art historian James Elkins (2002) calls "Normal Art History," whose moves are periodization, categorization, and authentication. If your idea of "art" accommodates only with the kinds of objects that are on display at major museum blockbusters featuring either treasures or masterpieces, then the works in ET will be as incomprehensible as "art" as they are as "anthropology," even at the borderlands.

In contrast to those silent and durable art works of yore, "Contemporary Art" dates from around 1960, when it exploded into the landscape of Art with Happenings, Installations, Conceptual Art, Maintenance Art, Fluxus, ... By now, in the 21st century, the rubric can cover a vast territory: Environmental Art, Social Architecture, Interventionist Art, New Genre Public Art, Site-Specific Public Art, Community Art, Participatory Art, and more. Several of those genres were on view at the ET exhibits. A nice sentence that points toward a very big strand of recent (this century) contemporary art practices was written by the French art critic Nicolas Bourriaud, who defines "Relational Aesthetics" as "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space" (Bourriaud 2002:113). That gestures toward a lot of heterogeneous events and practices.

The practices are heterogeneous, *but,* to state some of the basics: contemporary arts tend to collapse a distinction between "high" and "low" art (unless they are subverting it, in which case the separation is maintained but is inverted or turned inside-out). Likewise, the distance between subject (viewer) and object (artifact) is collapsed, as the art piece may require embodied participation. They allow multiple points of view or ways into the art object–process–performance. They may build or promote socially useful projects or make interventions to expose injustice or power relations. They may try to provoke and problematize. The artist may relinquish the role of auteur, becoming a facilitator, organizer, or enabler. The concept may be more important than the final object, if indeed there is one; hence, they are often highly theorized. Likewise, the "work" may be the *process*, hence temporary, performative, or ephemeral. That can make commodification and display in a gallery difficult. To be recuperated as *objects* and therefore be available to galleries, curators, and art historians, they may be filmed or photographed, or presented as a blueprint or model, or even as a record of what the artist did: hence, the displayed "object" in the gallery is not the work of art: it asserts, rather, it is a record of what happened or is a model for what could

happen again. Some may be parodies or commentaries on conventions and art movements, and some, although apparently playful and good spirited, are made with extremely serious intent. A lot of artists are doing a lot of things in lots of places; they may resonate with each other, but it is difficult to imagine them as happening in the line of art–historical time or as a march of great artists and influences going in one direction. The world, in these kinds of arts, is less "represented" than it is engaged, exposed, and worked on.

Anthropology's ancestral heritage has more in common, metaphorically, with the Renaissance Canon than with Contemporary Art; it has historically favored the style of optical naturalism in visual imagery, the voice of the sober objective narrator in texts removed from the observed world, the construction of the reading or viewing subject as passively receptive and disembodied. And, just as historically most museum art has been in a frame or on a pedestal, rendering it an autonomous and movable object outside the world it depicts, our ethnographies in the form of texts stand as autonomous objects, enclosed physically with front and back covers and delimited as narratives by beginnings and conclusions.

A question might well arise, then, as to how anthropology could possibly intersect with contemporary art practices. My thought is that the ground was prepared by the late 20th century crisis in the humanities about representation but that developments in visual anthropology allowed an epistemological break.

The general crisis of humanities and social sciences in the 1980s and 1990s shook up and transformed many of our naturalized assumptions about what ethnographic narrative and structure should or could be, opening up professional practices to experimentation in writing, to new categories of subject matter, and therefore to different thinking practices. The crisis problematized representation, signification, vision, reflexivity, the body, the politics of interaction, space and place, and almost anything else, and the rethinking continues.

Visual anthropology, a subfield, was of course affected. During most of the 19th and 20th century, photographs had been used in the profession as proofs, as examples, as demonstrations, as research tools, and as documents. In the last 20 years, though, photographs have moved from being used as research tools to being topics of study in their own right, launched with the 1992 publication of Elizabeth Edwards's edited *Anthropology and Photography: 1860–1920*. Firmly within the spirit of Colonial Discourse studies, it had the galvanizing effect of problematizing the transparency and "documentary" attributes of anthropological photographs and even "vision." Close to the same time, Paul Stoller (1989) argued, and Steven Feld's (1991) CD exemplified, an emerging professional urge to put embodiment and a sensorium broader than "vision" into ethnography (whether textual or filmic), and both came out at the cusp of the switch to digitizable media. Soundscapes and interactive media linked or linkable to the web could thenceforth be theorized as form of anthropological endeavor. (See also Feld and Brenneis 2004.) A few years later, visual anthropologist

Peter Biella (1997) and filmmaker and ethnographer Roderick Coover (2003) produced CD-ROMs very different from each other in intent and genre but exploring the capacity of digital media to create densely informative and interactive ethnographic experiences.

Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab, founded in 2006, exemplifies all these trends; its purpose "is to support innovative combinations of aesthetics and ethnography, with original nonfiction media practices that explore the bodily praxis and affective fabric of human existence. As such, it encourages attention to the many dimensions of social experience and subjectivity that may only with difficulty be rendered with words alone" (from the website). Canada (where several of the core ET curators have roots) has many such centers and schools, with names featuring phrases like, for example, Simon Fraser's School of Interactive Arts + Technology. In short, digital media allows and encourages potentially far more than "visual" matter or methods.

Crossover works of anthropology and art like some on display at ET and many other current experiments have their roots in what Sarah Pink (2011) calls "Digital Visual Anthropology." It is, Pink writes in 2011, "still in its infancy," but she points to many of the possibilities opened by digital media. Although the roots are in DVA, I think I'd call these ET and related works something like "Digital/Intermedia Anthropology." They need not actually use digital technology, but the confluence of three developments makes DIA technologically possible. Those, in turn, make DIA imaginatively possible and prompt exploration of new forms of representation, intervention, and subjectivity.

The three key developments are the availability of digital media, of small affordable e-devices, and the Web. This confluence did not simply allow people to do what they had been doing before, but more easily: rather, it enabled a different attitude comprising an imaginative and even epistemological break. It is probably no accident that many of the Curatorial Collective and a number of the exhibitors in the ETs come out of or have connections to Digital Intermedia Anthropology in the largest sense—nonfiction experimental film and website constructions, collaborations via the web with artists and with First Peoples and other communities, or public art projects that use e-devices to educate the public that contain audio files of ambient sound, narrative, and images. Many of the exhibitors are interested in spaces and how bodies move through them and the kinds of subjectivities that are constructed as the *user* (I use that word, rather than "viewer" or "audience") moves in and out of the works and the spaces and places they occupy or gesture toward. These works may be "interactive" but not necessarily digitized. They all strive to be nonfictional. Many are playful, intentionally provocative, or evocative. None tries to "represent" in a naturalistic way; they are seldom about making truth claims, although they may try to provoke the user into thinking about truths.

The works in ET will probably never replace textual ethnographies. But the exhibit is a fascinating multidimensional portal through which we can enter and learn about experiments in thought and technology that intrigue, amuse, and may even inspire us to attempt new forms for our own nonfictional works.

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