

## Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans—27 Works

KATE HENNESSY, FIONA P. McDONALD, TRUDI LYNN SMITH, AND  
STEPHANIE TAKARAGAWA

*The projects presented in Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans—27 Works contextualize each work within the 2010 exhibition installed in New Orleans at the Du Mois Gallery. The summary of each project in this article captures the methodology of research that informs the conversation between art and anthropology, as well as demonstrating the full scope of the exhibition that includes works from film to photography, material culture, installation, and participatory works. Artists' bios are coupled with their own commentary on the nuanced details of how the projects relate to the discourses of art and anthropology. This article is also used to situate the curatorial goals of the Ethnographic Terminalia collective to move beyond the exhibition catalog in order to archive the project in an alternative form. [art, film, installation, material culture, photography]*

The works (Figure 1) exhibited in *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* (2010) represent a diversity of material, conceptual, and creative engagements with art and anthropology. The projects described below capture the multiplicity of methodologies and mediums, from post-studio practice, to sound installation, drawing, sculpture, photography, and video works.

The two-dimensional works curated in *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* ranged from drawings including hand-notated architectural drafts, to digital prints of color fields, black-and-white graphic panels, and photographs. Photography had a prominent place in the exhibition, with different artists deploying the medium in varied manners. While one project presents black-and-white documentary photographs, another project is characterized by warm-toned black-and-white historical postcards. Several artists used large-scale color photographs that ranged in size from 18 to 36 inches. As an approach to ethnographic inquiry and the anthropological subject, these works record an observation, tell a story, act as performance, and reflect community engagement, as well as question photographic distance, probing the boundaries of truth and fiction, presence and absence. The engagement with photography as both a means of inquiry and as a mode of expression is represented in the diverse engagements with this medium, from works intended to be

viewed on the wall to those spilling onto a table to be sorted and handled by visitors.

Moving into three-dimensional space, several works explicitly dealt with materiality and material culture in tangible ways. *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* exhibited site-specific installations that coupled community participation through projects that were contextualized in the gallery space proper. Interactive works enabled visitor participation and subsequently played with a range of approaches, from technologically sophisticated media art, to low-tech found objects remixed into participatory sound works. The curators displayed interactive works alongside small- and large-scale archaeology projects as sculptural installations, which were contrasted against sound installations that were composed of traces that drew upon documentation and interpretation of the locality of New Orleans.

Works in video highlighted a range of creative engagements with the medium. While one project presented archival sound recordings with subtitles, another experimented with single silent video take. One eschewed translation, while another featured subtitled narrative in tension with revolving images. Visual and sound montage coupled with layers of digital artifacts of analog transmission contrast with the integration of found photographs and speculative reminiscences. Each reflects the purposing of video in the articulation of an anthropological theme or

reference; each speaks to the broader project of reconciling artistic practice, archival production, and ethnographic inquiry with rapidly evolving digital tools and aesthetic potentials. Several of the video works arrived at the Du Mois Gallery in their own portable media players, and were exhibited as they had been shipped: mobile, exploratory, prepared for an audience.

The following descriptions of the works presented in *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* are presented as they were curated in both the Du Mois gallery space and Barrister's Gallery. This approach to presenting the works maintains a link to the exhibition space and reproduces the spatial, and sometimes conceptual, relationships between works in the gallery context (Figure 2).

## Room One

*Patricia Tusa Fels and Don Fels*

### *Shotgun*

The Du Mois Gallery in the Freret district of New Orleans is a unique space that has become a stimulus of thought for the artist and architect team Patricia Tusa Fels and Don Fels. As an iconic shotgun house in this historic district of New Orleans, the Du Mois Gallery was transformed in January 2010 into an art gallery. The *Shotgun* project collages together images and architectural floor plans as a visual mind-map of Tusa Fels and Fels's critical thinking process about "the shotgun house as a living portrait of New Orleans" (*Ethnographic Terminalia 2010*).<sup>1</sup> This large-scale digital print is coupled with a historical summary that articulates the scope of their research project that will later appear in the New Orleans exhibition Prospect 2. *Shotgun* speaks directly to the Du Mois Gallery as a space and a historic site. Tusa Fels and Fels note that historically "[t]he shotgun house is an indigenous response to the hot humid climate of New Orleans. Despite the passage of many decades and a gauntlet of difficulties, tens of thousands of these houses remain standing in New Orleans. Built as homes to immigrants, former slaves and working class families, the shotguns have continued to provide affordable housing efficiently and gracefully in the city" (*ET 2010*). Tusa Fels and Fels use this project to capture the unique architectural history of New Orleans and their roots of its design in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean. The unique contribution of *Shotgun* by Tusa Fels and Fels to *Ethno-*

*graphic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* immediately makes one aware of the histories of space and place in which we inhabit and visit (Figure 2) (<http://www.artistthinker.com>).

*Candy Chang*

### *I Wish This Was*

Candy Chang's project, *I Wish This Was*, offers the opportunity for people in New Orleans to inscribe their hopes and dreams on stickers, suggestions for a city in recovery. Chang placed grids of blank red and white "I Wish This Was" stickers on abandoned buildings, storefronts, and broken sidewalks, along with black ink markers that invited contributions by passersby. The contributions of New Orleans residents were then photographed and posted to a Flickr photo-sharing site. Chang's initial image contributions have been added to by interested members of the community, resulting in a growing archive of wishes for New Orleans neighborhoods. She encourages the ongoing placement of stickers "on abandoned buildings and beyond" (*ET 2010*), their photo-documentation, and contribution to the Flickr archive.

Launched by *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans*, the Du Mois exhibit displayed a grid of six color photographs of the stickers. These photographs are situated next to a small table with free stickers and a black marker that are there for visitors to take and use. As an artist, designer, and urban planner, Chang's contribution to *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* offers an opportunity for residents to project their ideas of what could be onto spaces of significance and abandonment. The responsiveness to one's surroundings and local neighborhoods is captured in what Chang refers to as "civic input on-site" (*ET 2010*). Chang's project encourages active engagement with a variety of communities around New Orleans. She notes that her "project is about striking up a casual conversation in the city" (*ET 2010*). Within the context of the urban sprawl in a post-Katrina moment, Chang's project offers a starting point for *Ethnographic Terminalia* visitors to take an experiential piece of the exhibition beyond the well-articulated gallery space and publicly share their hopes for the revitalization of their community. Candy Chang is currently a 2011 TED Fellow (Figure 3) (<http://www.candychang.com>; <http://iwishthiswas.com/>).

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*Kate Hennessy is an Assistant Professor specializing in Media at Simon Fraser University's School of Interactive Arts and Technology. Fiona P. McDonald is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Anthropology (Material Culture and Visual Anthropology) at University College London. Trudi Lynn Smith is an SSHRC Post Doctoral Fellow at York University in the Department of Humanities. Stephanie Takaragawa is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Chapman University.*

Stephanie Keith

*Vodou Brooklyn: Five Ceremonies with Mambo Marie Carmel*

Stephanie Keith's *Vodou Brooklyn: Five Ceremonies with Mambo Marie Carmel* is a photographic and book installation project. Two photographs of intimately framed scenes are hung side-by-side adjacent to the book on display for interactive use. These photographs represent one year of Keith's five-year ethnographic commitment to an American-based Vodou community in Brooklyn. As an anthropologist and photojournalist, Keith's book and photo documentary project epitomizes the intersection between art, anthropology, and her documentary practice. Together, the vibrant photographs of devotees closely assembled in a basement capture her investigation of "spiritual possession" (ET 2010). The images are a sample of photographs found in the book. The publication is carefully organized according to the Vodou religious calendar (ET 2010). The photographs when exhibited become the tangible traces of five major public ceremonies that were performed by her informant, Mambo Marie Carmel. Keith notes that

Vodou ceremonies are very complex calculus of interwoven relationships between the Spirits, varying references to Haitian history, and different manifestations of the Spirits themselves. All the textual information in the book is distilled from interviews with Marie Carmel or another Vodou participant. The text retains the flavor of the community and explains the meaning of Vodou worship through their words. [ET 2010]

For Keith, it is important to focus "on what happens in this single transformed basement hosted by the same Mambo" so that "the reader [or viewer] becomes personally involved with the people in the community through seeing them from ceremony to ceremony" (ET 2010). Displayed together, the book and the photographs capture a narrative of experience that Keith embodied in her anthropological fieldwork (Figure 4).

Travis Shaffer

*Sorority Skin Tones: A PANTONE® Color Guide*

Travis Shaffer presents *Sorority Skin Tones: A PANTONE® Color Guide* as a visual ethnography of American sorority circles via online media. This work consists of 20 large-scale PANTONE® color swatches arranged in a grid-like pattern. These color swatches capture Shaffer's methodical research in an artistically conveyed manner. As a methodological approach, Shaf-

fer carried out an exhaustive study using Facebook, where he "analyzed screen captures [and] isolate[d] the necks, faces, chests, arms, legs, foreheads, etc. of 10 popular American sororities via their Official Facebook pages. These screen captures were then averaged and matched to their nearest PANTONE® color. The 20 most frequent matches are illustrated in this work" (ET 2010).<sup>2</sup> According to Shaffer, this project was originally imagined as a limited edition, hand-bound book project. Shaffer's work demonstrates the emerging prominence of, and interest in, online fieldwork research for both artists and anthropologists. *Sorority Skin Tones* makes evident the role of new media forums as sites of and for cultural research (Figure 5) (<http://www.travisshaffer.com>).

Simon Rattigan

*The Skull Re-Construction Project 2006–08*

Simon Rattigan's *The Skull Re-Construction Project 2006–08* is a documentation of his artistic process whereby he investigates historical narratives through a creative process of collecting street debris and constructing new pastiche hominids. Small shards of glass, pottery, plastic, debris, stone, and concrete collected by Rattigan from the streets of London are placed on a glass shelf around a video installation of *The Skull Re-Construction Project 2006–08*. The video shows Rattigan at work assembling a skull so that edges of disparate materials meet to form a new object. These contemporary artifacts, aka waste materials, as found objects become the so-called "ready-made" materials used in his construction of a human-like skull over a three-month period. Rattigan notes that "[t]he process [of collection and construction] [is] at the heart of [his] work [. . .]" (ET 2010). Rattigan also notes that he "began to question the notion of searching for an identity based on geographical location" that, for him, was generated by the story of Piltdown man—a "faked fossil find in the south of England that attempted to place human origins firmly, but fraudulently, in Britain" (ET 2010). For Rattigan, "The Piltdown man became [. . .] an example of how racial and nationalist discourses [shape] science and in turn society generally" (ET 2010). Rattigan's artistic methodology is infused with a profound interest in anthropological inquiry that he mediates through a combination of collage, drawing, video, and sculpture (Figure 6).

Ian Kirkpatrick

*Transfer*

Ian Kirkpatrick takes the mundane and makes it precious through his series of plates entitled *Transfer (2010)*. At a first glance, Kirkpatrick presents what appear as the iconic Blue Willow or Wedgewood pottery plates in varied

sizes as artifacts one would find in collections such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in England. Upon closer examination, the plates reveal themselves as generic Royal Chinet™ paper plates that Kirkpatrick has bespoke with ink drawings of contemporary pop culture icons and symbols. Kirkpatrick notes that “[t]his project comprises a ‘set’ of three plates decorated with visuals derived from traditional blue and white ceramics—as well as imagery of Islamic, Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, French, British, and American origin. Together this fusion of imagery explores the intertwined and complex relationship underlying the past—and present—traffic of ideas between East and West” (*ET* 2010). Kirkpatrick’s research-based process further “examines the genealogy of motifs and fantasies [that are] incorporated into the history of blue-and-white ceramics” (*ET* 2010). What results from Kirkpatrick’s project is the crossover between how contemporary artists engage with material culture located in collections around the world and the bridging or disjuncture between art and artifact (Figure 7) (<http://www.iankirkpatrick.ca>).

## Room Two

*Trudi Lynn Smith*

### *Finding Aid: The Pleasure in a Good View*

A mixture of photographs, text, drawings, and ephemera, the installation *Finding Aid: The Pleasure in a Good View* is the outcome of artist–anthropologist Trudi Lynn Smith’s attempt to precisely relocate the setting of a historical postcard of iconic Banff National Park in Canada. According to Smith, this work is created through highlighting the body in photographic art practice, by “taking archival photographs on a walk to attempt to repeat them as ethnographic investigation and visual art inquiry,” and this is an act fueled by the play between the attempt to replicate the photographic act as closely as possible (e.g., through spatial location, time of day, season, camera type, darkroom procedures) and the revelation that the more the attempt is refined, or the closer one gets, the more distance is felt (*ET* 2010).

In this current installation of *Finding Aid*, a historical photograph and a present-day “repeat” photograph are framed on the wall just above a table that holds an assortment of files. Inside the files, a narrative about the artist and historical photographer is organized on typed index cards and clipped to other photographs she made while trying to repeat the historical postcard. Visitors are invited to sit at the table, and become performers, as Smith writes, “in the subtle act of browsing and shuffling files, sitting and looking, as well as sorting and reading” (*ET* 2010) (Figure 8) ([trudilynnsmith.blogspot.com](http://trudilynnsmith.blogspot.com)).

*Nicola Levell and Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas*

### *SEDUCTION 2010—Into Haida Manga: Raven Kept on Walking*

*Seduction 2010—Into Haida Manga: Raven Kept on Walking* is a creation of Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas, a Haida artist, and was presented at *Ethnographic Terminalia* by Yahgulanaas and Nicola Levell, an assistant professor in the Anthropology Department at the University of British Columbia. Ten black-and-white graphic panels are tiled on the gallery wall in two columns to depict the story of Raven. This narrative is described by Levell and Yahgulanaas as “the inveterate trickster of North Pacific Coast indigenous mythology” (*ET* 2010). In series of panels, Raven twice seduces and tricks a band of fishermen. In their artist statement, Levell and Yahgulanaas write about how the unique style that Yahgulanaas created, known as Haida Manga, “refigures and fuses traditional Haida formlines and iconography with Japanese-inspired Manga to create a contemporary idiom for circulating Haida oral narratives and cautionary tales within and beyond indigenous, local and generational spheres of exchange” (*ET* 2010). The panels were accompanied and contextualized by a short film, *RED* (2009) that showed on a small DVD player with headphones. The collaborative film, directed by Jon Ritchie, presents Yahgulanaas and documents a five-meter-long mural that Yahgulanaas produced for his 2009 graphic novel, *Red: A Haida Manga* (Figure 9) (<http://www.mny.ca>).

*Robert Willim and Anders Weberg*

### *Elsewhereness: New Orleans*

*Elsewhereness: New Orleans* is the most recent work in a series that brings together a video by Anders Weberg in collaboration with sound by Robert Willim to produce an audiovisual work dealing with questions of site specificity both in art and in anthropology. As the gallery visitor enters the space, an audiovisual loop shows on a large flat screen monitor as the sound plays into the gallery space. The work explores the artists’ absence from the locale where the images were made. Rather than reporting back their experience of place, the work is based entirely upon audio and video material that the artists glean from the Internet about the place under examination—New Orleans. Willim and Weberg note that “the audiovisual pieces are manipulated and composed into a surreal journey through an estranged landscape, based entirely on the culturally bound and stereotypical preconceptions of the artists about the actual location” (*ET* 2010). Images come into focus and just as they become identifiable they slide away into bands of color and abstract forms. Likewise, just as the audio representations of

New Orleans become discernible they lift away into a sound track all its own. *Elsewhereness: New Orleans* forms part of a larger series of work that includes *Elsewhereness: Utrecht*, *Elsewhereness: Manchester*, and *Elsewhereness: Yokohama* (Figure 10) (<http://www.elsewhereness.com>).

*Juan Orrantia*

*See Ports (Work in Progress)*

Six black-and-white photographs hang on the gallery wall in a grid structure. This body of work, by photographer and anthropologist Juan Orrantia, documents the space and place of ports. Orrantia writes, “*See Ports* begins after the thrill and romance of ocean travel halts at the pier, when the sounds of waves are shunned by the noises of drills, engines and cranks. It is an evocation of lives caught in a strip of land fenced between the sea and the city, defined by circulation and the frictions of trade” (*ET* 2010). From the photographs, it is impossible to know or contextualize the location of the port as the ocean itself is almost invisible in the images. Instead, these photographs resonate with what is left behind in the movement of goods and caught in Orrantia’s camera gaze—vast tracts of sandy land with shipping containers, industrial remnants, tire tracks, bird tracks, fences, piles, pipes leading into the ground, clothes hanging on fences, and workers with protective gear who look startled (Figure 11).

*Ahmad Hosni*

*Go Down, Moses: A Book on South Sinai*

A blank book on a stand accompanies a set of three large color photographs with text that hang on the gallery wall. The photographs, by Ahmad Hosni, are a selection of works that were produced over the course of fieldwork carried out during a period of two years in South Sinai. The text plan that is paired with the photographs contains excerpts of writing by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Faulkner, and the Book of Hosea. Together the text and the blank book form a relationship with the photographs. Within the images, one scene captures a single figure holding a suitcase and looking back at the photographer in the space of what appears to be a tourist mall, while another is situated in an industrial development in the desert, and a third has the wistful gaze of a girl behind a car window. These photographs are taken from Hosni’s book project, designed to be a “reflection on the status of a region in the process of becoming a ‘tourist enclave’” (*ET* 2010). Hosni’s color photographs are atypical tourist photographs in that they focus upon place making and the lived realities of what the photographer calls “tourism on the edge” (*ET* 2010). Yet the project never came to fruition as intended. Hosni explains that the

book remains blank as it was “de facto censored” by a combination of local and EU organizations that objected to the content and title of the book (Figure 12) (<http://www.thewhiteboard.info/page/go-down-moses>).

**Room Three**

*Fiamma Montezemolo*

*Bio-Cartography of Tijuana’s Cultural-Artistic Scene: The Uterus as Limit and/or Possibility; One Thing and Another; Belonging Machine: Color by Chance*

The three works by Fiamma Montezemolo in *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* interrogate the notion of border zones, both in terms of the cartographer’s geographic and political borders as some of her ethnographic work documents, but also at the disciplinary borders—those immaterial, epistemic frames of reference. *In situ* these three works articulate the transgression of physical and ideological borders. On first viewing the installation arrangement, these seemingly disparate works may appear to belong to different artists. Montezemolo’s work engages with a phenomenological approach, thus inviting the physical insertion of the audience themselves in a participatory role of collaboration in the creation and revealing options of action and agency. This begins with the engagement of the trope where the biological and the mechanistic collide in both *One Thing and Another* and *Belonging Machine: Color by Chance*. In *One Thing and Another* (2010), a rhizomatic constellation of music boxes are perched on adjacent walls, requiring multiple participants to activate via hand-crank, creating infinite possibilities of sounds. Montezemolo notes that this work in particular sits “in dialogue with Donald Judd’s minimalist sculptures/installations and its attendant concept of ‘One Thing After Another’” (*ET* 2010). In *Belonging Machine: Color by Chance* (2010), a modified slot machine articulates and exposes

the classificatory categories we are all trapped in. A symbol of gaming, gambling, chance, illusionism, combinatorial mechanisms, and the arbitrariness of luck, the slot machine represents for [Montezemolo] the best way to play with the concept of racial membership within the rigid and convenient principles (economically and politically) of the American Census Bureau. [*ET* 2006]

The third part of this installation is captured in *Bio-cartography of Tijuana’s Cultural-Artistic Scene: The Uterus as Limit and/or Possibility* (2010), which unfurls the boundaries of the “curator’s medical gaze” (*ET* 2010). The imagery of the ultrasound is accompanied by

the sterility and impersonality of the manila envelope and diagnostic text mounted on the wall next to it, completing the narrative of the “imaginary gynecologist diagnosing her patient Tijuana” (ET 2010). Situated together in one gallery space, these three works draw attention to those “borders” that desire to be transgressed to create new ways of understanding, communication, and knowing, while questioning the conceptualizations we have for articulating the phenomenon of experience (Figure 13) (<http://www.FiammaMontezemolo.com>).

*Anthony Callaway*

#### *Art(i)fact*

Two small-scale framed works by Anthony Callaway hang as a vertical diptych and are two distinct elements from his larger project entitled *Art(i)fact*. Callaway is an enrolled member of the Karuk Tribe of California, whose artistic practice represents his experience of “[w]orking directly with Karuk objects and information [that has] sparked a [personal] desire [for Callaway] to further explore the various design patterns that embellished baskets and other objects such as bone purses and dance regalia” (ET 2010). Callaway’s practice is not about mimicking or tracing the patterns that he finds on material culture in museum collections, but rather his artistic goal is to “explore and reinterpret these designs as a contemporary artist of Karuk and Euro-American ancestry” (ET 2010). Each piece is meticulously drawn with vibrant red, blue, and green colors that are contrasted against monochromatic shading in a rhythmic pattern that is decontextualized from its original referent. Using his artistic practice to trace out traditional indigenous knowledge stored in objects found in museums, Callaway blurs what he sees as “[...] an artificial boundary between traditional and contemporary Native art” (ET 2010) (Figure 14) (<http://www.anthonycallaway.com>).

*Dada Docot*

#### *The Un/Natural State of Things*

*The Un/Natural State of Things* by Dada Docot comprises five photographs that are installed in a vertical arrangement in an intimate space as you enter into Room Three. All but one image is a closely framed, monochromatic visual memory of old books from Docot’s family’s collection. Dada Docot notes that

*Un/Natural State of Things* is a series of photographs of decomposing books, which were once owned by my family members. I focus my lens/attention on

old, neglected possessions—objects that provide glimpses of my family’s history. Now bug-infested and severely damaged by frequent flooding, these books are among our souvenirs from a long time ago, from before we all got caught in this complex world of international migration. [ET 2010]

Currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Canada, Docot’s global migration with her family and her unique personal experience informs this project as a model of autoethnography. According to Docot, she is “[l]ooking at migration as an arena where citizenships and identities are performed, re/defined and re/asserted, her photography and film works focus on the intricate and the intimate” (ET 2010) (Figure 15) (<http://www.dadadocot.kulturavolunteers.org>).

#### **Room Four. Video Salon**

*Roderick Coover*

#### *Det siste utbruddet/The Last Volcano*

Created after the eruption of Iceland’s Eyjafjallajökull volcano in early 2010, Roderick Coover’s video work *Det siste utbruddet/The Last Volcano* is set in Bergen, Norway. The project places subtitled audio narratives of Norwegian folktales evoking memory of disaster alongside slowly revolving video images of the Norwegian landscape—fishing boats, apartment blocks, evocations of everyday work, and domestic life. Coover notes that these narratives “return as fragments in light of the ongoing volcanic eruptions” (ET 2010). Coover also notes that, the video is “the first of a series of works recorded in Norway that juxtapose folk histories and contemporary events to explore narrative and associative characteristics of cultural anxieties and collective memory” (ET 2010). *Det siste utbruddet/The Last Volcano* was produced in collaboration with Scott Rettberg (writer), Gro Jørstad Nilsen (voice), and Jan Arild Breistein (voice) (Figure 16) (<http://www.roderickcoover.com>).

*Kate Hennessy and Richard Wilson*

#### *Active Pass to IR9*

*Active Pass to IR9* is a video-based ethnographic collaboration between Kate Hennessy and Richard Wilson, who grew up together on Galiano Island, in British Columbia, Canada. The silent video projection depicts the full length of a road that runs from the ferry terminal at the south end of the island to the Penelekut Indian Reserve #9 at the road’s northern terminus. A single unedited shot traces the weaving yellow line

that divides the road through a verdant, rain-soaked landscape. Two fields of scrolling text running parallel on either side of the screen represent memories and associations that Kate and Richard each have with this physical space and their individual understandings of place as they move through it together for the first time. The texts are generated from transcripts of their conversation while driving. The content of this conversation spans the scope of raising the question of Aboriginal rights, and the role of fishing in the recognition of rights, and knowledge of family histories. Hennessy and Wilson mobilize video as a tool for experimenting with ethnographic methods, and as a medium for communicating the results (Figure 17) (<http://www.activepasstoir9.wordpress.com>).

*Susan Hiller*

#### *The Last Silent Movie*

Susan Hiller's work, *The Last Silent Movie*, employs video in the powerful service of sound and text rather than image. According to Hiller, the work

opens the unvisited, silent archives of extinct and endangered languages to create a composition of voices that are not silent. They are not silent because someone is listening. The work sets free some of the ghosts and specters haunting the unacknowledged "unheimlich" of sound recording which allows us to hear the words and voices of people mostly now dead. In *The Last Silent Movie*, some of the participants sing, some tell stories, some recite vocabulary lists and some of them, directly or indirectly, accuse us, the listeners, of injustice. [ET 2010]

The work presents archival recordings of extinct or endangered languages that are enlivened in an act of remediation. The viewer-listener is implicated as witness, and is asked to consider what kind of obligation such implications may create (Figure 18).

*Thomas Ross Miller*

#### *Radio Iqaluit*

*Radio Iqaluit* by Thomas Ross Miller is composed of video sequences of melting ice sheets and glaciers, of flocks of birds disappearing against a pixelated horizon, and of telephone wires and snowy rooftops that suggest ongoing human habitation, and dynamic moments of contact and change in the northern environment. These images are accompanied by a sound track drawn from short-wave radio transmissions that are reworked by

Miller into an ambient stream of remixed communication, compression, and distortion. Miller's juxtaposition of sound and image grab hold of and articulate the movement of these "invisible energies" (ET 2010). This video piece represents the mining of an atmospheric archive of signal, noise, and image. Miller positions himself as one cultural producer of many in the colonial history of relationship making in the north:

The flight paths of birds, airplanes, radio waves, and global warming currents cycling in continuous interplay transect the isolation and interconnectedness of the Arctic region. *Radio Iqaluit* is an oblique reference to a location in space and time that is geographically real yet fictitious: an imagined point of articulation traversed by opaque and encoded airborne signals, human and avian migration, and the winds of climate change. The work highlights the geographical dimensions of historical intercultural contact and image distortion that have long marked the far north itself as an ethnographic terminus. [ET 2010] (Figure 19)

*Trish Scott*

#### *That Holiday*

Performance, video, and installation artist Trish Scott brings her intention to "intervene in and transform experiences of everyday life" (ET 2010) to her video work *That Holiday*. Scott explores the common act of viewing holiday photographs and reminiscing about shared experience; however, rather than reviewing images from personal albums, she presents photographs drawn from "found" photo albums of three different British couples, who imagine that they themselves are the holidaying couple in the photographs, and construct improvised narratives of their imagined holiday. These three audio narratives are woven together with the found images of the couple in Turkish ruins, eating a meal, shopping in a market, resting in the shade, and visiting a zoo, and become almost indistinguishable as the three couples convey similar responses and use comparable language. According to Scott, "[t]his piece constitutes part of an ongoing research project into the cultural constructedness of personal memory objects. Despite the infinite recodeability of photographs the narratives in this piece diverge. Whilst each couple draw on their individual experience their comments and inferences are remarkably similar. This serves to focus attention on both the ritualistic aspects of holidaying and the specific linguistic script underpinning the performative recall of holidays via photographic triggers" (ET 2010) (Figure 20) (<http://www.trishscott.org>).

Stephanie Spray

### Untitled

Stephanie Spray's video documentation, *Untitled*, captures a 14-minute conversation of a Nepali couple that deliberately upsets viewer expectations of linguistic translation in ethnographic media. Spray's camera records an intimate interaction between two "restless" people, who argue, listen, light cigarettes, and obliquely watch a small child, presumably their own; however, the content of their conversation is left open to viewer speculation, and the effect is unsettling. Spray writes that

[p]henomenological appreciation is not, however, the end point; rather it is a place from which to consider aesthetic decisions, namely the willful [sic] determinacy of the frame for what it highlights and organizes spatially—as well as for what it dismisses or conceals. The 16:9 field of vision seemingly confines the two primary subjects, as it does the viewers, an effect that is further engendered by the shot's tenacious duration. The obstinacy of the frame is suggestive of the filmmaker's investment in the camera's potential to conjure a visual trick, to reveal an unfolding drama from prosaic events. While watching playful banter of the restless couple escalate—and the young imp who meanders in and out of the frame to harass them—viewers are encouraged to ponder ethical questions regarding the presence of the camera, for what it shares and withholds, as well as that of the filmmaker as she hangs around, delving into the lives of her 'subjects.' [ET 2010]

Spray contends that the viewer becomes a "loiterer" along with the video's subjects, and is asked to consider the value and purpose of such a work (Figure 21) (<http://www.der.org/films/filmmakers/stephanie-spray.html>).

### Room Five. The Kitchen

The fifth room of this shotgun house turned art gallery retains the most distinctive aura of its architectural inception—the kitchen. The pieces deployed in this room dialogue with the original structure of the "house," ensnaring vestiges of notions of interior/exterior, public/private, and family/community.

Dona Schwartz

### In the Kitchen

Appropriately placed, Dona Schwartz's series from *In the Kitchen* feature her own ethnographic study of her fam-

ily as their actions and interactions with their environment and each other are revealed in these deeply personal portraits. For Schwartz, these images, which she first began shooting in 2003, reflect "[...] a range of activities, interactions, and emotions that provide [...] a wellspring for reflecting on the meanings of family, interconnection and individuation. Seen over a range of time, the kitchen offers a view of life's continuities and changes" (ET 2010). The photographs provide insight into the difficulties of reflexive ethnographic studies invoking the discussion of the "writing culture" moment. Schwartz's images reverberate with its placement here, thus drawing the viewer into careful consideration of both the context of ethnographic investigation and ethnographic display (Figure 22).

Jan Lemitz

### Fields of Supply

Jan Lemitz's *Fields of Supply* investigates the production of space into place in the Seoul region, focusing on complexity of territoriality, agency, and aesthetics in the form of vacant lots and their transformation into garden spaces. According to Lemitz, these photographs prioritize the use of space since "by turning non-spaces into purpose-made, meaningful and efficient microcosms, they contribute to a micro process of cultural and social progression" (ET 2010). Lemitz articulates a challenge in this series as the fabrications of the working class that operates "horizontally" in opposition to the "vertical high-rise" by reframing the landscape through this visual rhetoric (ET 2010). These images provide a counter aesthetic through both individual agency and the use-value of the space. Within *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans*, the photographs by Lemitz further challenge the boundaries of the delineation of the public/private and interior/exterior understandings of the socially produced environment (Figure 23) (<http://www.janlemitz.com>).

Jenn Karson

### Scoring the Streets of New Orleans

Located outside of the Du Mois Gallery in an exterior corridor as a sound installation work, Jenn Karson's *Scoring the Streets of New Orleans* foregrounds the auditory experience of place. Created specifically for the *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* exhibition, Karson emphasizes the labyrinthine nature of sound as discrete, ephemeral, and mutable. According to Karson,

[f]ragments of song float from street corners and weave throughout the open-air bars and restaurants

that line Bourbon Street. For the passerby, pieces of numerous songs are threaded into one melody. Time signature is determined by the walker's gate, notes by the chance encounters with the sound events of the place, points on a map. [ET 2010]

Freed from its context, the sounds of Bourbon Street are projected through speakers luring the audience from their own acoustic environment in New Orleans, thus suggesting a new place through the displacement of site-specific sounds that coalesce with the ambient sounds of their actual environment outside of the Du Mois Gallery. As the sounds move out of the directional speakers, they are transported from different spaces on Bourbon Street as the recordings move throughout its environment. Through this piece sound is privileged as a way of "knowing" a site as visual cues are removed. This work underscores a fleeting time and constant change as the viewer is drawn into the recording as they glimpse, so to speak, snippets of the ephemeral qualities of an auditory cityscape (Figure 24) (<http://www.studiojuju.com>).

### Barrister's Gallery

Barrister's Gallery in New Orleans has been called "a Shaman's Attic," a "twilight zone," and "living museum," by local visitors and the *New York Times*. Its location has changed over its 35-plus years to various locations to accommodate its rich and varied vision for ethnographic, outsider, and experimental works. Now, in the St. Claude Arts District, this space also provided homes for the expanding exhibition of *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010*.

Ryan Burns

#### *Profane Relics*

Ryan Burns's *Profane Relics* is an installation that explores the relationship between people and possession, use and disuse. Towering over the viewer, this sculptural presence entices the viewer to visually excavate those objects deployed by Burns to "tell the story of the past twenty years of war and mineral exploitation in the Democratic Republic of Congo [...] embedded in the ten foot by ten foot matrix of red soil (ET 2010). Burns states that his work "examines the traces left behind by time-based processes of growth and history [...] explor[ing] the nature of objects both organic and discarded, revealing the implicit stratification of meaning and its myriad interpretations" (ET 2010). This installation reminisces about the archaeological process of excavation, in coalescing multiple pasts into the present, not as trace, but as evidence. This evidence narrates a story

through the objects embedded in the work, thus operating as a footprint of what has been left behind and revealing bits and pieces in a tumultuous history. When installed, this immense piece overwhelms the viewer as a harbinger of the consequences of a consumer-oriented society (Figure 25) (<http://www.profanerelics.wordpress.com>).

Lina Dib

#### *Recantorium*

Lina Dib's interactive video entitled, *Recantorium*, installed at Barrister's Gallery, takes as its subject the accumulation of objects that reflect the personal nature of material culture as it evolves into a collection. Dib notes that "[l]iterally, a heap of objects belonging to local Houstonians—items that people value and keep for various reasons—accumulates or vanishes" (ET 2010). Her work allows the viewer to explore the transient nature of these collections through their own physical movements in the gallery space as the video enters. With the viewers' movement around this space, the objects on the screen retreat or remain still in its presence. The interaction of the viewer reveals or reverses the flow of time, as the collection slowly amasses or slowly disappears as they move throughout the space. Dib foregrounds the individuality of meaning and value that these objects are afforded by their owners through an accompanying audio of the personal narratives of the owners. This piece draws attention to the highly individual experience of imbuing objects with significance and meaning and the inextricable nature between memory, meaning, and things. Finally, *Recantorium* foregrounds the collaborative nature of the collusion of layered meaning, the impermanence, and of the transitory nature of material culture (Figure 26) (<http://www.linadib.com>).

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> All quotes are from artists published in the *Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans* exhibition catalog, hereafter *ET*.
- <sup>2</sup> Travis Shaffer also "makes no guarantee regarding the accuracy of the illustrated Pantone swatches and does not recommend this guide as a tool for color management. This enclosed information is in no way affiliated or associated with X-Rite Inc. and/or its respective companies. PANTONE is a registered trademark of X-Rite Inc., Grand Rapids, MI" (ET 2010).

### Reference

*Ethnographic Terminalia 2010: New Orleans*  
2010 Exhibition Catalog. New Orleans: The Du Mois Gallery.

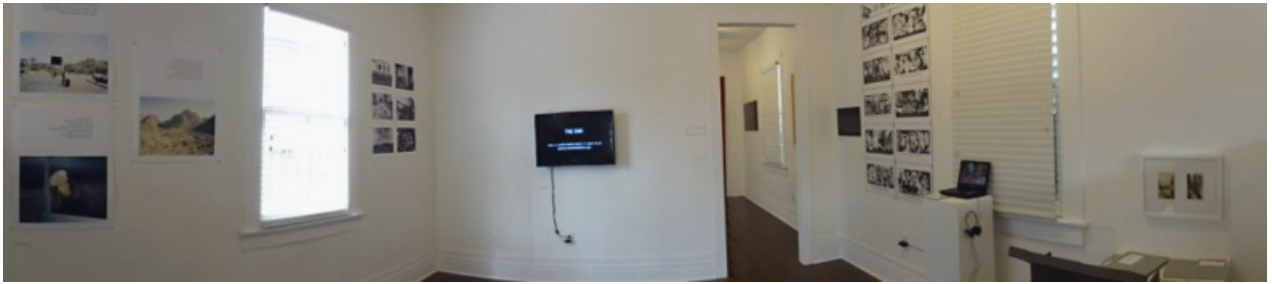


FIGURE 1. Installation view of *Ethnographic Terminalia* at Du Moiss Gallery, New Orleans 2010. Photo by Fiona P. McDonald.

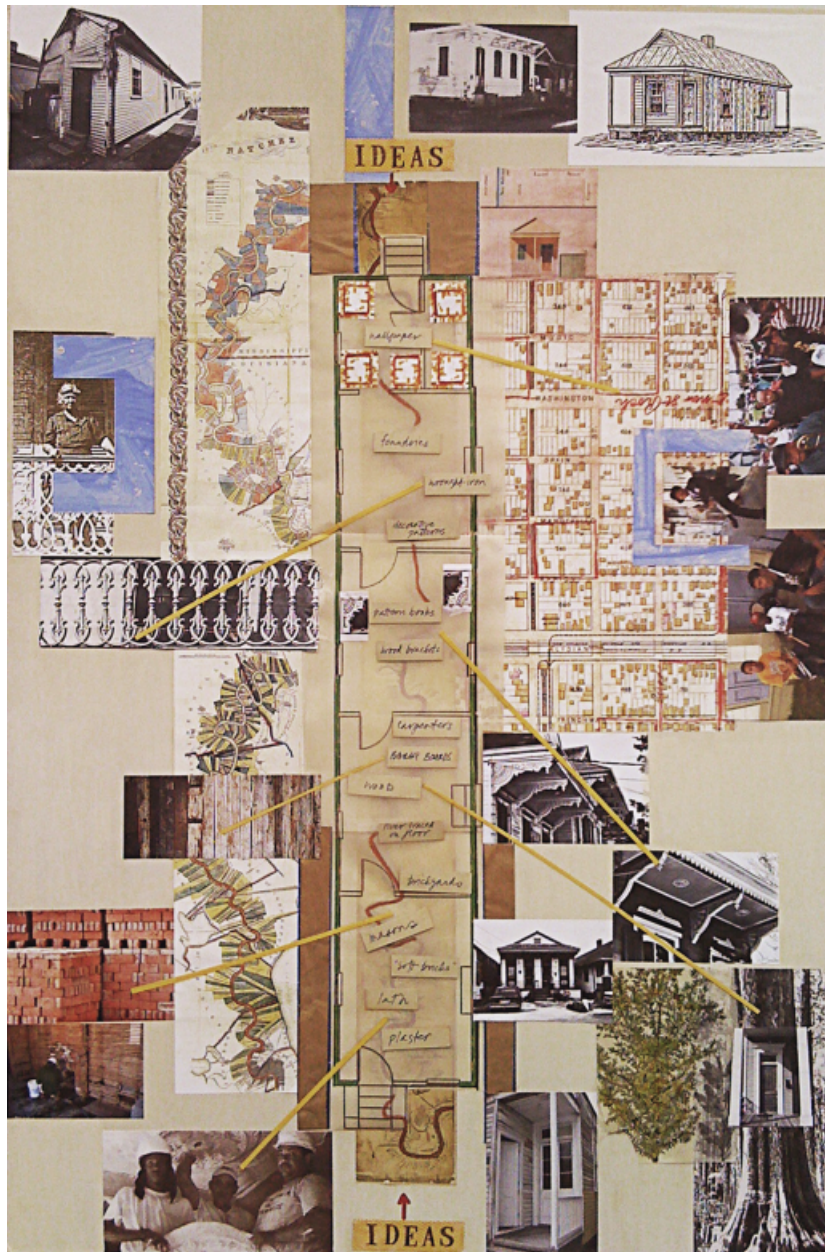


FIGURE 2. *Shotgun* by Tusa Fels and Fels. Photo courtesy Fels & Fels © 2010.



FIGURE 3. *I Wish This Was* by Candy Chang. Photo courtesy Candy Chang © 2010.



FIGURE 4. *Religion Ogou* by Stephanie Keith. Photo courtesy Stephanie Keith © 2009.



FIGURE 5. *Sorority Skin Tones* by Travis Shaffer. Photo courtesy Travis Shaffer © 2009.



FIGURE 6. *Skull Re-Construction* by Simon Rattigan. Photo courtesy Simon Rattigan © 2007.



FIGURE 7. *Transfer* by Ian Kirkpatrick. Photo courtesy Ian Kirkpatrick © 2010.



FIGURE 8. *The Pleasure in a Good View (detail Lake Agnes and the Beehive)* by Trudi Lynn Smith. Photo courtesy Trudi Lynn Smith © 2010.



FIGURE 9. *Raven Kept on Walking* by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas. Photo courtesy Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas © 2006.



FIGURE 10. *Elsewhereness: New Orleans* by Robert Willim and Anders Weberg. Photo courtesy Willim and Weberg © 2010.



FIGURE 11. From *See Ports* by Juan Orrantia. Photo courtesy Juan Orrantia © 2010.

To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,  
Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth!  
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,  
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,  
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,  
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun  
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.



FIGURE 12. *Go Down Moses* by Ahmad Hosni. Photo courtesy Ahmad Hosni © 2010.

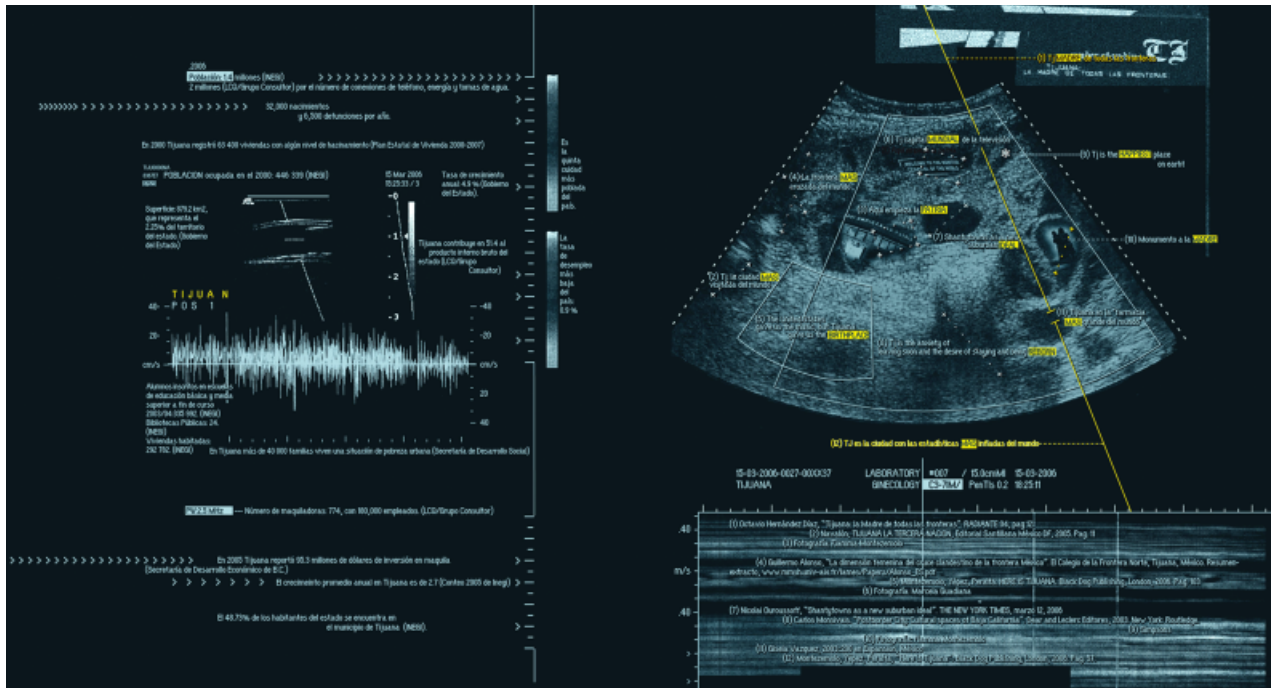


FIGURE 13. *Bio-cartography of Tijuana's Cultural-Artistic Scene: The Uterus as Limit and/or Possibility* by Fiamma Montezemolo. Photo courtesy Fiamma Montezemolo © 2006.

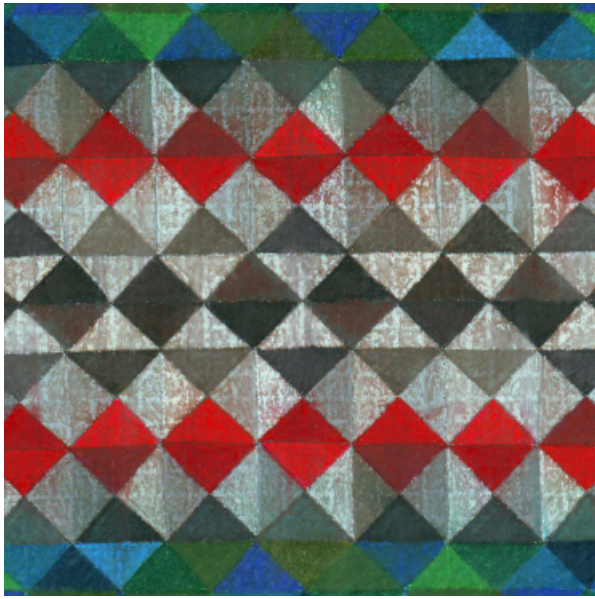


FIGURE 14. *Acorn Harvest* by Anthony Callaway. Photo courtesy Anthony Callaway © 2010.



FIGURE 15. *The Un/Natural State of Things* by Dada Docot. Photo courtesy Dada Docot © 2010.



FIGURE 16. *The Last Volcano* by Roderick Coover. Photo courtesy Roderick Coover © 2010.



FIGURE 17. *Active Pass to IR9* by Kate Hennessy and Richard Wilson. Photo courtesy Hennessy and Wilson © 2008.

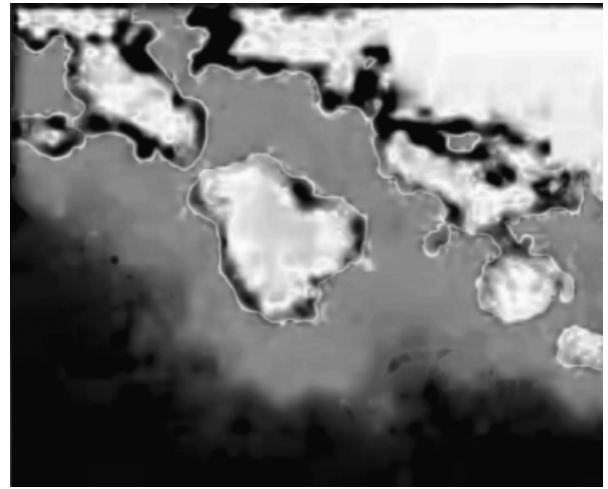


FIGURE 19. *Radio Iqaluit* (detail) by Thomas Ross Miller. Photo courtesy Miller © 2008.



FIGURE 18. *The Last Silent Movie* (installation view) by Susan Hiller. Photo courtesy Susan Hiller © 2010.



FIGURE 20. *That Holiday* (detail) by Trish Scott. Photo courtesy Scott © 2009.



FIGURE 21. *Untitled* (still #2) by Stephanie Spray. Photo courtesy Spray © 2009.



FIGURE 22. *Cherry Coke* by Dona Schwartz. Photo courtesy Schwartz © 2004.



FIGURE 23. *Fields of Supply* by Jan Lemitz. Photo courtesy Lemitz © 2010.

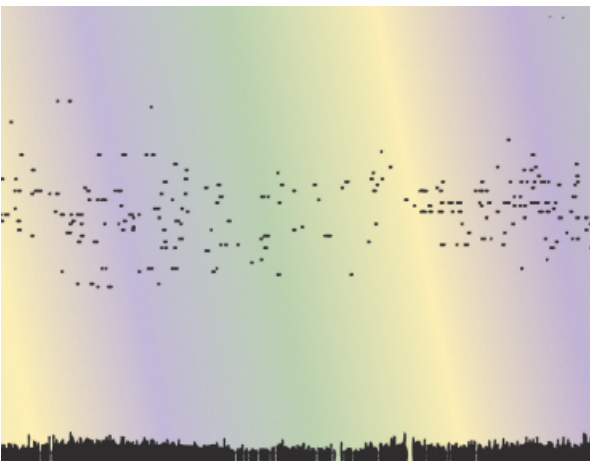


FIGURE 24. *Scoring the Streets of New Orleans* (graphic) by Jenn Karson. Photo courtesy Karson © 2010.



FIGURE 25. *Profane Relics* by Ryan Burns. Photo courtesy Burns © 2010.



FIGURE 26. *Recantorium* by Lina Dib. Photo courtesy Dib © 2010.