

*Amass*

*A MFA Exhibition by Debbie Elliott*

*(An ongoing exploration)*

*Submitted to the University of Saskatchewan,*

*Department of Art and Art History*

*Saskatoon, Canada,*

*August 2002.*

*available to anyone who, even remotely, finds themselves in the process of daydreaming.*

Ac(knowledge)ments

*I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the University of Saskatchewan for their generous scholarship, which allowed me to continue to express, contribute, and question.*

*Thanks to my fellow graduate students for their willing eyes and mouths.*

*One (huge) gratitude to my friends and family, for whom distance never mattered, and support always was.*

*"There are places to crawl into and hide; there are huts and havens, laces of refuge, retreats, sanctuaries, dens, caves, holes, and narrow passes to travel through. Every object assumes a meaning which best fits it and makes it a part of this landscape. Except for that familiar storage cupboard over there which we know as the 'apple keeper.' This cupboard is a stranger to the scene just because of its definite identity and significance. It shows an inscrutable and even disagreeable face. We don't want to bother with it because it obviously refuses to 'play along.' We don't expect anything from this cupboard. It will remain merely itself. Just look at it. How it stands there: heavy, dense, unmovable. And because of this immutable familiarity, it forfeits its worth and significance. It is precisely the fixed and 'everyday' character of this common cupboard which robs it of any possibilities of expression in a world where every object secures a voice of its own. Let us listen to the language spoken by these things. In listening to this language, we may gain a deeper understanding of the nature of their secret place in the world."*

*Jan Marinus Langeveld*

## **Amass: An Introduction**

“Amass” is a result of two years spent developing my art practice at the University of Saskatchewan in the Masters of Fine Arts program. “Amass” came to fruition through a process of combining forms, amassing objects and working from a process of intuitive inquiry with objects. I began to analyze the things I was making and collecting and I noticed a certain resistance to resolve and a repetition that kept occurring in my approach to sculpture and materials. I was not as concerned with the objects as I was with the process of experiencing materials and pushing my knowledge of the things I was making. While considering the objects, and the things I was collecting I recognized some consistencies. One salient observation I made was my attraction to smooth shiny, industrial surfaces as well as an affinity for white sculptural forms. The second observation I made was that a number of the objects I collected contained hollow depression or vessel like attributes, with definite interiors and exteriors. A third observation was that my own construction method resisted permanence or solidity but was sympathetic to assemblage, appreciative of things that came apart easily and to be able to re-combine parts of things to form a whole.

Although I was working toward a final exhibition, I was not working from any specific plan or preconceived idea, I was simply interacting with previous works and considering the objects I continued to amass. I found myself putting things together temporarily and forming work in relation to my studio space. I began to consider the temporary nature of what I was doing and recognized that my environment, the walls and the space of my studio, the architecture itself, was an integral part of my work. I also noticed how spaces, themselves, were increasingly informing my work.

During the second year of my investigation into objects, the studio next to mine became available. This new space offered me, and my growing collection a new space to explore. I started lugging materials from one room to another and began to produce work that investigated how things are categorized. I started ordering my collected objects and previous works by color. When considering the work that would comprise my MFA exhibit I decided to continue working with monochromatic arrangements and my interest

in space and took my collection of objects over to the Snelgrove Gallery in order to form some of the work in relation to that space.

While reflecting in written form about my process and this particular exhibition, I kept considering how difficult it is to try and explain what you do when you don't work from a plan or preconceived idea. I found my work increasingly informed by incidental happenings, by spaces, and by my growing collection of castoff materials. I started to become open to a multitude of influences rather than following a linear path of inquiry into my own practice and work. During my time here I sense some of my work has been influenced by situation, this institution, the town and the people. I sense some effect from Gaston Bachelard's book the Poetics of Space, some influence from Lygia Clark's investigations into the potential of objects, and some sway from my continued interest in the Theatre of the Absurd. I still find myself unraveling the aspect of these things which I believe influence my work. I find myself considering the Absurdist play-write Samuel Beckett's words, "*the time is not too green for the vile suggestion that art has nothing to do with clarity, does not dabble in the clear and does not make clear.*"<sup>1</sup> I don't think that Beckett's words are intended to make the viewing experience cryptic or unintelligible, nor to limit our ability to enter visual forms. I see Beckett's words as hopeful words, which insist that things can be experienced beyond our need to qualify or quantify them, even beyond our need to understand or categorize them.

### *Piles*

*You are still determining a function, still honing a purpose.*

*Heaps of want to be's. That's how I'd describe my studio. A collection of materials, formed through a fascination with objects. While moving amongst temporary explorations and mass debris, I come across an announcement that reads, "the public is invited to bring one object to the (Dunlop) gallery for interpretation by Dr. Jeanne Randolph,<sup>1</sup> the gallery's critic-in-residence. Jeanne will read the hidden meaning of what the object might say through psychoanalytic free association-like fortune telling." I glance around my room and wonder which one object it is I should bring. I can't decide, can't choose one, because I have piles. The scenario plays over in my head. "Sorry Jeanne", I'd say, trying to hide my cart full of things behind me. I imagine Jeanne laughing or at the very least glancing hesitantly at my load. How would Jeanne assess my collection?*

### ***Five-minute apparitions***

*I begin a process where I make things quickly, an interaction with material with out much regard to result. I start with a five- minute deadline, but because I'm not fastidious, not a clock-watcher, the five minutes lapses and an intuitive sense of time and completion evolves. I find I'm more concerned with an intuitive tactile, or sensory way of coming to materials; more concerned with immediate interaction, my body and how things are placed. In this process I consider my body, it's physicality and the awkward pleasure I get out of engaging with materials. I'm considering how things are formed in relation to my surroundings. I find myself adjusting to the weight and size of things; adjusting to the corporeality of objects and space. I notice the forms I'm making are consistent in scale, like the size of my hands, or the distance from fingertips to elbows, the size of parts of the body. The size of these five-minute apparitions seems to be somehow dictated by my surroundings.*

*As my studio fills I take pictures of my creations and then take them apart. I recognize a need I have to reuse things, a need I have to take apart or deconstruct things.*

## *Resolve*

*While talking apart work I thought would remain solid, I find myself struggling with the notion of resolution, completeness, solidity, the object and the experience. For me they all lead into one another barely touch and rebound outward again. I'm wondering if there is such a state as resolve and the significance of this state, if any. (I write a short story about a man from resolution that is walking through the desert. He is following, another's foot prints left in the sand. These depressions lead in a straight path to the place he thinks he should go. A storm passes and dissolves the path that the man is following. During the storm he finds refuge in a cave. He remains in this cave for days, unable to move without a determined path. When he comes out of the cave he walks in a circle around the exterior of the cave and then returns into the entrance. Each day he comes out of the cave and walks around his own familiar depressions in the sand. The man from resolution is unable to find a new path, unable to reason his way to anything else but this familiar shelter.) I find myself re-considering the lack of resolution in much of the Theatre of the Absurd and their insistence on repetition over resolve.*

*Frustrated, I draw up some plans for new work and begin to work from the plan but am increasingly unsatisfied with the results. I find the work that results from a plan too self-conscious, or self-referential, more about some idea, some reason than it is about an immediate engagement. I don't see the point in making one object and retaining it when I can continually recombine. A lot of my work is temporary and formed through association. Once I put something together I can't resist the urge to take it apart. I'm engaged in temporary/tenuous combinations-unsolid results that resist permanency. I find myself considering the economy of creativity.*

### *An aside to the object*

*I can't make you. You exist. You almost combine yourself with other forms.*

*You secretly know your own relationship to other things in the world. I've simply lessened the distance between. Bridged a gap. You practically form yourself. The function of me is placer, or proximeter. I need you to remain unsolid so that I might experience your parts again. Next time, tell me if I should pull you? sit you? chase you? throw you? smash you? or tend you? Must I place you in my mouth, under my arm, lift you, sit you, hold onto you with both hands or place you beside another. Lygia<sup>2</sup> knew your potential. She honed the therapeutics of placement. Will my improvised placement, my approximation of you tell me something about myself, about the world? Will you whisper in my eyes before the click of the camera and I separate you, return you to where you came from and start all over again.*

### ***Implying Presence/Acknowledging Absence***

*Is it possible for 'things' to inform my relationship to them beyond who I think I am? Can the object be the subject? It is less an idea and more an immediate response, unfettered by intention. I keep trying to let things inform me. It appears my "goal is to find the preconditions within sensibility itself, within the subject (as well as the world), that make the subject open up, to, be completed by, the world, things, others, objects, qualities, interrelations." <sup>3</sup> I'm considering the presence of things? "Just as there is an I-John Doe, there is also an I-red, an I-water, and an I-star."<sup>4</sup> Ortigas' words make me daydream of a place where objects have the potential to be subjects, a place where things have presence.*

*I ask myself what's the point of solid, fixed or permanent. Things need to come apart easily to be reinvented, re-approached, or remembered. That's the point of the transitory. It's not what is formed but the potential of combining. The purpose of movement. An impermanent body needs more tending than a permanent one. I find myself becoming more sensitive to instability, to the fragile nature of things as I adjust myself to them. I'm aware of a potential to expand and a resistance to grow, aware of some resistance to purpose and to function and the capacity for both.*

### *Monochromatic collections*

*What about these collections, these things that remain and pretend to hide in my corners. What about the ones I've taken apart, old souls whispering. I find my space too chaotic. I begin to reorder, to open up my studio by drilling a hole through to the adjacent studio. I start to interact with this second space and make works that progress into emptiness. I find myself continually peeking through this peephole and examining the space itself.*

*I decide to move in.*

*While moving and reordering, I notice that my collection of objects and previous works consist of three colors. Silver, white and amber. There is a hint of pale yellow, some black and some transparent things, but these three colors predominate. I find I'm forming connections through these piles of color. I find myself arranging. I'm perplexed by my monochromatic collections, other than to say it may have something to do with light and the potential of white and silver to reflect it. I'm examining the surface of the objects themselves. I don't think about alchemy, or the alchemist use of color until someone reminds me of it. I'm pleasantly confused. Is there something interior about my collections? Something exterior? Early spring, and I'm walking through the campus, I notice these three colors in the snow, the ice and the golden grass.*

## **White**

*Is it because you are like space, or because you are like silence?*

*White in light is the mixture of all colors. White is cynical, sterile, absence, pure; white makes things more about shape, about curves, about ones own peculiarity. White comforts and disturbs. White holds the potential of calmness and discomfort. A white sports coat, a white wedding. White light, I'm white, white-washed... Tom Sawyer back and forth. This blank page. White chapel. White under your nose. White rabbit. "The cell of myself fills with wonder. The white- washed wall of my secret."<sup>5</sup>*

*I consider my attraction to white, to minimalism and to artists who use white as space in their work. You are all intimately connected to space-primarily empty space- and to white. I've always been attracted to your work – James Turrell,<sup>6</sup> your use of white through light, a continuous almost spiritual space. Kasimir Malevich<sup>7</sup> your (white on white paintings -I see you asking the painting equivalent of Duchamp's question as to "what constitutes art?" John Baldassari,<sup>8</sup> your outlining, in white, a solitary circle in the center of a hoard, like some potential lay there, and Micheal Asher,<sup>9</sup> your insistence on the gallery as a space pointing to space as the object..*

### **A recipe for white:**

Lots of rope, ample string, one role of toilet paper, two plaster hands and several fingers, a plaster tongue and ear, A Speedo bathing cap, two squares casts of marbles, one roll of thread, a Styrofoam head, a wig, a serviette with stitching, one castoff introduction plaster sculpture, a light bulb, a collapsible container for holding water, two plaster hallways, a first aid kit, ten slide holders, one glove, one sock, three sets of plaster teeth, one pair of vampire fangs, one stick of glow in the dark calk, one fold out decorative bone.

### *Silver: Arguere*

“Interestingly, the term 'argue' derives from arguere which means 'to make as clear as silver.

However, the quality of rational argument or scientific proof is subservient to the phenomenological intent of 'showing' and having us 'see' something.”<sup>10a</sup>

*You're reflective, cold yet seductive. I like how your surface gives me a broken reflection of myself. As if I live in your form. Shiny things remind me of illusion, of magicians and 'tricks of the eye' done with mirrors. I find myself becoming more sensitive to the colors of my environment, like sensitivity has developed out of my ordering of my materials. I'm considering the visual impact of the multiple, not through form this time but through color and mass. I find myself contemplating the necessity of the new and arranging some receptacle for the used.*

*One day while sitting on a white porcelain toilet in the Murray building my eyes fix on the silver toilet paper holder. I'm fixed on its elegant shape and reflective surface. Outside the receptacle my eyes probe the soft curve of the hand-dryer nozzle. I find myself lingering longer and contemplating these objects, discovering them for the first time. I have a strange desire to deconstruct this entire institution, to reconstitute the function of all its things, all the hinges, door handles and toilet paper holders. To find other potentials for these objects relegated to function; new homes for all things consigned to structure. I find myself daydreaming in the colors of this place while walking through the buildings, daydreaming of white, amber and silver.*

#### **Recipe for silver:**

One Pulley, one frame for a globe, a wok, a pewter bowl, two sign holder, five springs, one fish hook, two rear view mirror, one oar handle, one three foot length of conduit, one chrome-plated table stand, one discarded chair stand, one round ball, two meat-ball makers, one grater, one melon-ball maker, one ladle, one pasta press, a metal ice tray, one sauce pan, one glove, several unclassified objects, one horn, one square funhouse mirror.

## **Gold**

*I can't begin to think why? I recall a scene of a man (Joseph Beuys) talking to a dead hare, his face covered in gold. Was I amassing some treasure, or thinking of Christmas. Maybe it's the warmth of gold. That translucency.*

### **Recipe of gold:**

One shoe stretcher, one air filter, two wax plunger heads, one price tag, one frame, a rubber mask, one pillow, two halves of a dried avocado seed, one pacifier.

### *Scavenge*

*I'm using whatever is at hand to make the work. There is a lot at hand right here. Materials I've scavenged over time, found in thrift stores, garage sales, salvage yards and dumpsters on or around campus. Things collected in the pursuit of travel. It's strange and confusing to me how we live amongst objects. I find myself considering the things I collect and my attraction to surface, my attraction to awkward almost pathetic forms. I recognize an awkward elegance in these things. A pathos and humour.*

Gibson describes, Rubin "as working with these discarded things without acknowledging them as his defined palate of materials. He doesn't refer to them as junk, or found objects. They are simply his medium, the air he breathes, and the tides in which he's always swam. The materials are the common, the base, and the unimportant. They were once raw materials, turned useful as technology, discarded as trash, to be rediscovered by the eye(s)..."<sup>10</sup>

*I'm collecting while walking through people's memories, while walking through refuse. I'm amazed at excess and in awe of waste. I find myself thinking of Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades.<sup>11</sup> The simplicity of his urinal, or the gesture of his bottle rack. I'm still considering his use of ordinary objects and how this gesture asked, not only 'what constitutes art', it questioned the authority of the artist. Duchamp considered the common object, objects manufactured. I'm thinking less about making things and more about how I can utilize the already, the collections, the discarded. I'm deconstructing the things I've made. I'm wondering how I can make work through combination and placement.*

## *Space*

*Is it a need to fill space? Do I need to acknowledge that there are more questions than answers, more gaps than things? "Finding the meaning of things acknowledging the gaps."<sup>12</sup>*

*While listening to John Cage's 4'33"<sup>13</sup> I find myself giggling at the sounds of discomfort made by the crowd, giggling at our anticipation of being entertained.*

*Space is relevant when you're allocated a box. I don't want to be kept inside walls. I draw a circle on the wall of my studio and smash it with a hammer. I'm diligent to stay within the lines of my physical gesture. I enter the space of your lungs, then the space of mine. Do you reciprocate? I visit the empty space of an art gallery, I consider the corners, the cracks, consider how the architecture, how space can inform my work.*

### ***Empty or Full***

*I notice as I'm working in the Snelgrove gallery elements of empty and the full in my work. I notice empty containers, vessel without limits. I notice containers and contents put on display. Containers and containees. I notice how these forms embody a sense of time or engagement, sometimes a brief encounter, like large elegant brush strokes; or at times a longer engagement like scribbling. I notice the potential for movement in most of my work. A shiny metal chaotic corner waiting to fall, a jumbled cart of white waiting to be pushed. I notice the fragile nature of placing, while balancing objects around a video camera that sits suspended from the ceiling. I watch as these objects come unbalanced and fall to the floor. Full to empty and empty to full. I notice a balancing act, something formed through mass. I remember days spent collecting dust.*

## *Order*

“Order is a prerequisite of survival; therefore the impulse to produce orderly arrangements is inbred by evolution. The social organizations of animals, the spatial formations of traveling birds or fishes, the webs of spiders and beehives are examples. A pervasive striving for order seems to be inherent also in the human mind—an inclination that applies mostly for good practical reasons.”<sup>14</sup>

*Aside to myself: I'm skipping amongst the pages of real randomness  
Those things less assured, those hopeful places.*

*I gleaned the power and the seduction of order on a cold Friday evening. The material was provided in the activity of doing dishes. First the forks, then the spoons and knives. An outlined sketch of them dictates their place; a plastic casing kept inside a drawer. These categories, these containers somehow give the activity purpose beyond cleanliness, beyond function. Does order make activity purposeful? Ordering captures my mind, gives it an activity, and calms it from questioning. I consider how categorization contains and orders things.*

*I'm considering offshoots of arrangement and order. I see in bricolage,<sup>15</sup> a continuous adding, an accumulation. In Feng Shui<sup>16</sup> a sensibility to site, the movement of the body and objects. In minimalism,<sup>17</sup> a sensitive consideration of how the body is fused with space. I come across “gomi” while thinking about waste.<sup>18</sup>*

### ***Containers and Containment***

*Been packing, moving, living in and out of boxes. So many boxes, I forgot what's in them. It's been so long since I've checked them. While daydreaming I remember I have a box, a cardboard box somewhere, marked "containers." Inside the box is an empty red purse, an empty camera box and several other empty containers. I start thinking of how walls affect our sense of space, our sense of self, our sense of your own container and our understanding of our environment. "When did we stop needing a cave?" <sup>19</sup> I start containing my collection. I take the pieces, the bits and parts in and out of their containers, then reorder or replace them back into another container. I allow for randomness. Collecting is a leisurely activity. Containing your collection is a preparation.*

## **Chapter on Repetition**

**“Evidence of activity that suggests leisure, promotes leisure,  
rest, screaming rest, necessary space this is not  
an assembly line, my heart will not let my hands.”<sup>20</sup>**

*I'm moving from one room to the other lugging materials, placing, arranging, and ordering them and then lugging them back. One continuous thing is the movement of my own body. The meditative quality of back and forth. Once I've tended it, juttled back and forth, had a physical relationship with the parts the whole may come. I'm reading Beckett's, Stirring Still,<sup>21</sup> aloud over and over again. I'm recognizing a pattern, a cadence in the words that resembles my own pacing back and forth.*

**“work(ing) without predetermined direction,  
piling, lifting, hanging, sweeping materials  
in what (is) called an 'activity of disorientation  
and shift, of violent discontinuity and mutability,  
of the willingness for confusion even in the service  
of discovering new perceptual modes.”<sup>22</sup>**

### *Passageways, cracks, and corners*

*For need of vessels, I made passageways. I dreamt of what I could not see, what lay beyond my vision. When I strapped my own body to a passageway I had a moment of clarity. A fracture through; a wound in the body. I'm swinging from too much to emptiness and back again. How much is too much? How little is too little, cutting into surfaces barriers, beneath the surface space. While reading the Poetics of Space, Bachelard's words transport me into corners, into nooks and crannies. To places to transgress and traverse. I'm searching the vast and the miniscule. I'm transported inside a tiny shell while walking through a vast desert. From small to immense and back again. I'm reading about containment and fall asleep, when I awake Bachelard asks, "Is it possible for a creature to remain alive inside stone, inside this piece of stone?"<sup>23</sup> I've been dreaming of archeology, of uncovering lost things, things long held in stone that come to life.*

### ***Opposites***

*It's funny and unreasonable to me that I continue to think about space while amassing materials. I'm contemplating my attraction to opposites. According to Wollfflin, "the baroque introduced an entirely new feeling of space-tending toward infinity."<sup>24</sup> Opposites, trying to converge, working to pull each other together to find meaning. I'm considering order and disorder.<sup>25</sup> I recognize a need I have to order the disorderly, and disorder the orderly. To go from one extreme to the other, and back again. A need to find some balance.*

## Amass is

As I come to the end of this two year exploration into my own practice I find myself still in awe of the language of forms, of the potential that the objects themselves have to communicate something to us, apart from language.

I'm looking at this installation I call 'Amass', titled for the way it was formed. I'm looking at how some of the work is formed in relation to the space, looking for consistencies and complexities in the forms themselves. I'm awaiting some language of vessels. Awaiting reason. Awaiting a purpose for silver, white and gold. I'm still looking at the exterior of the things themselves and still forming meaning. I'm considering Gaston Bachelard and how his words sent me daydreaming into empty spaces and made me close the gap between exterior and interior. I find myself considering why Lygia Clark would place everyday castoff objects beside people. Was this gesture her attempt to heal some fracture between things and people. I'm considering the role of the spectator and the dissonance offered by the Theatre of the Absurd. I find myself recalling Beckett's suggestion that art has nothing to do with clarity.

I'm wondering if a hard study of 'things' themselves can provide a meaning, an understanding, and a way into the visual. I'm considering the things in front of me, the jumble of forms, and a quite confusion that requires engagement. I'm considering how these reflective silver surfaces occupy the spectator, how these surfaces fuse themselves to us. I'm considering chaos and order and the potential of vessels to be entered. In 'amass' I see elements of order and disorder, a tending of surface and color. I see elements of full and empty and sense something to do with silence. I find myself trusting that the things themselves will speak an explanation over time. That the 'things' themselves will communicate some intention.

I'm hopeful the body of this paper, these glimpses into my process and work help you, the reader and the viewer to see something in the work that resonates for yourself. It is not my intention to qualify or explain the exhibition but to give you a mere glimpse into my two-year investigation of the things I make. At the end of two-years I find myself more determinately cryptic about explaining these objects. I want us as viewers to engage with the forms themselves again and again, to construct meaning for ourselves and to listen to the language of things. I want us to leave Catacoma.

## Endnotes

<sup>4</sup> Jan Matinus Langeveld is a researcher in phenomenological pedagogy. He considers how children come to know the world by exploring the outward structure of things, how meaning is communicated by helping people to see rather than explaining.

<sup>1</sup> Acheson, James, Samuel Beckett's Artistic Theory and Practice: Criticism, Drama and Early Fiction, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997, p82

<sup>1</sup> Kiendl, Anthony At the Dunlop, January to April 2002, Critic in Residence Jeanne Randolph, 2002.

"Jeanne Randolph is an assistant professor at the University of Toronto, and an associate staff psychiatrist at the Toronto General Hospital. She is currently writing a book titled, *The Ethics of Luxury: Conscience and Material Abundance*. Randolph says, "Object Relations Theory," is the study of interactions and, as such, would not separate fact from preconceptions, inferences and conclusions." What this means for the interpretation of art is that individual subjectivity (the person who is interacting with the art) is relevant, and in fact unavoidably a part of the interpretation of the work."

\*Jeanne Randolph spoke at the University of Saskatchewan and I found her talk influential, I especially liked her improvised, gestural way of communicating. She spoke outside of a linear progression which allowed the audience to gauge meaning from her actions.

<sup>2</sup> Lygia Clark (1920-1988) In *Lygia Clark's practice*, I saw the importance of engaging with materials, that the engagement could be a form of therapy and a way for us to understand the world. Lygia used common found objects and discarded materials in her art practice. She placed these things near the body of a person to achieve a 'physical' healing between body and objects. Essentially if we look at objects in the world, the space of our world, as connected to our well-being and allow things to transcend our own physical barriers we may become healthier, socially and psychologically. I'm thinking a bit about our relation to objects as commodities and also thinking of the physical engagement one has with objects in art and how this categorization of objects may be problematic.

<sup>3</sup> Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World, (Dorothea Olkowski and James Morley Editors), Albany : State University of New York Press, 1999. p58.

<sup>4</sup> Ortega y Gasset, José. Phenomenology and Art. (Translated and Introduction by Philip W. Silver), Norton: New York, 1975. p134.

<sup>5</sup> Bachelard, Gaston. The Poetics of Space. (Translated from the French by Maria Jolas, foreword by John R. Stilgoe), Boston : Beacon Press, 1964. p 132.

<sup>6</sup> Adcock, James. "Light and Space at the Mendata Hotel: The Early Works of James Turrell", *Arts Magazine*, v 61, March 1987, p 48-55.

<sup>7</sup> Birringer, Johannes H. "Constructions of the Spirit: The Struggle for Transfiguration in Modern Art", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, V 42, Winter 1983, p 137-50.

<sup>8</sup> Van Bruggen, Coosji. "Two Crowds (With Shape of Reason Missing)", John Baldassari. New York: Rizzoli, 1990. p182. (visual)

<sup>9</sup> Asher, Micheal. Writing 1973-1983 on Works 1969-1979. (Benjamin H.D. Buchloh collaborator/editor), Los Angeles: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983.

<sup>10</sup> Gibson William. "The Winter Market" Burning Chrome and Other Stories. London: Harper Collins, 1995. p 203.

<sup>10a</sup> Van Manen Max. "Phenomenological Pedagogy and the Question of Meaning", Donald Vandenberg (editor) Phenomenology and Educational Discourse. Durban: Heinemann Higher and Further Education, 1993. p 52.

<sup>11</sup> Ades, Cox (et al). "The Ready-mades and 'Life on Credit'" Marcel Duchamp. London :Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1999. p. 146-171.

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<sup>13</sup> Stiles, Kristine and Peter Selz Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists', Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996 p. 664.

John Cage speaks about being an artist and the artistic process, "art comes, states Cage, from a kind of experimental condition in which one experiments with the living." To create art, then, one identifies with life and to exist takes on the meaning of re-inventing at every moment a new fantasy, pattern of behavior, aestheticism, etc. of one's own life. What is important is not to justify it or to reflect it in the work or in the product, but to live it as work, to be surprised in knowing the world, to be available to all of the facts of life (death, illogic, madness, casualness, nature, infinite, real, unreal, symbiosis). In fact, accepting the ideology of life one can exalt both its infiniteness and its contingency, one can live and kill life, reason about madness and go mad from reasoning. To think and to perceive, to fix figures and to present, to feel and to exhaust the sensation of an event, in a fact, an idea, an action- everything can then become language and being, with its gestures, its actions, its body, its territory, its memory, its daily and fantastic reality. To communicate with persons and things means then to be in aesthetic and participating communion with the world, without posing the problem if the communication of values, of art, is a cosmic living."

\*John Cage (Composer) 1952 so-called "silent piece". First performed at Woodstock 1952, David Tudor sat at a piano and signified the beginning of the piece by closing the keyboard. This action was repeated three times on the third attempt sounds of uneasiness from the audience marks the close of the sound recording. I'm attracted to Cage's attempt to broaden what constitutes music and his pointing to the audience as passive observer. I'm also intrigued by Cage's move to silence as a complete turn on the 'essence' of his medium.

<sup>14</sup> Arnheim, Rudolf. Entropy and Art: An Essay on Disorder and Order. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971. p 8.

<sup>15</sup> Delahunt, Micheal R. ArtLex. "Bricolage". 2001. 06. JUN. 2002. <<http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/Bp.html>> Bricolage is defined as "something made from whatever materials happen to be available. From the French bricole, meaning a trifle, and which the French used even earlier to mean catapult."

<sup>16</sup> Moore, Sadie, Fusion Anomaly. "Feng Shui". 2002. 15 AUG 2002. <<http://www.fusionanomaly.net/fengshui.html>>. Feng Shui defined: "The name Feng Shui is literally translated as Wind and Water and the practice studies the science of energy flow, harmonics and placement. All around us energy moves in spirals, this flow is never constant, we are aware of this movement instinctively through our own bodies' unique harmonic pattern. However, often, just because we can't see it, we go against this basic instinct and ignore the natural cause and effect this energy has upon us. In doing this we set up a cycle of stress which manifests itself in many ways, the most common of which being illness, emotional imbalance and external - chaos."

<sup>17</sup> Suderburg, Erika., ed Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000. p 26.

<sup>18</sup> Branwyn, Gareth More Street Noise, "gomi" 2002. 08 AUG 2002. <<http://www.streettech.com/bcp/BCPgraf/Glossary/gloss2.html>> gomi defined: "In Japanese, the word gomi means rubbish, junk, dirt. Gomi is extremely undesirable. Second-hand clothes and other belongings are frowned upon. "New" is fashionable in Japan. But, this constantly generated old tech offers many possibilities for use on the bottom rungs of the socio-economic ladder."

<sup>19</sup> Bachelard. p118.

<sup>20</sup> De Certeau, Michel. The Practice of Everyday Life: Cultural Theory and Popular Culture. (Edited and introduced by John Storey), Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998. p 3.

<sup>21</sup> Beckett, Samuel Stirrings Still, [illustrated by Louis le Brocquy], New York : North Star Line, 1991.

\*There is something in the aural reading of this work that I see as connected to rhythm, or the repetition of me moving things into collections-a back a forth, a cadence that is familiar. The repetition is soothing, a constant. I'm also interested in Beckett's stage design and his sensibility to space. The way he poises the body or 'actor' as an object is both disturbing and hopeful. I'm also interested in the Theatre of Absurd and the lack of resolution in these works.

<sup>22</sup> Causey, Andrew. "Anti-Form" Sculpture Since 1945. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. p134.

<sup>23</sup> Bachelard. p 107.

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<sup>24</sup> Cheetham, Marka., ed The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives. Cambridge England: Cambridge Press, 1998. p. 293.

<sup>25</sup> Arnheim. p 2. "entropy is defined as the quantitative measure of the degree of disorder in a system."

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