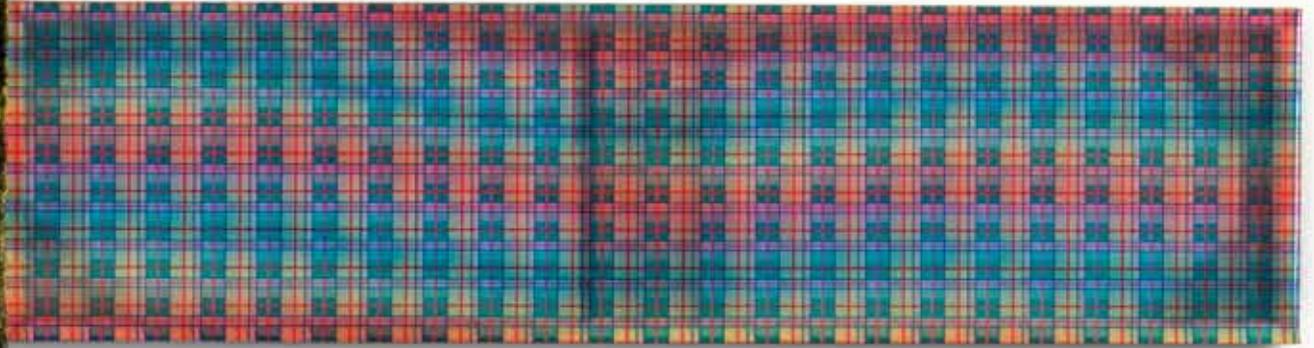
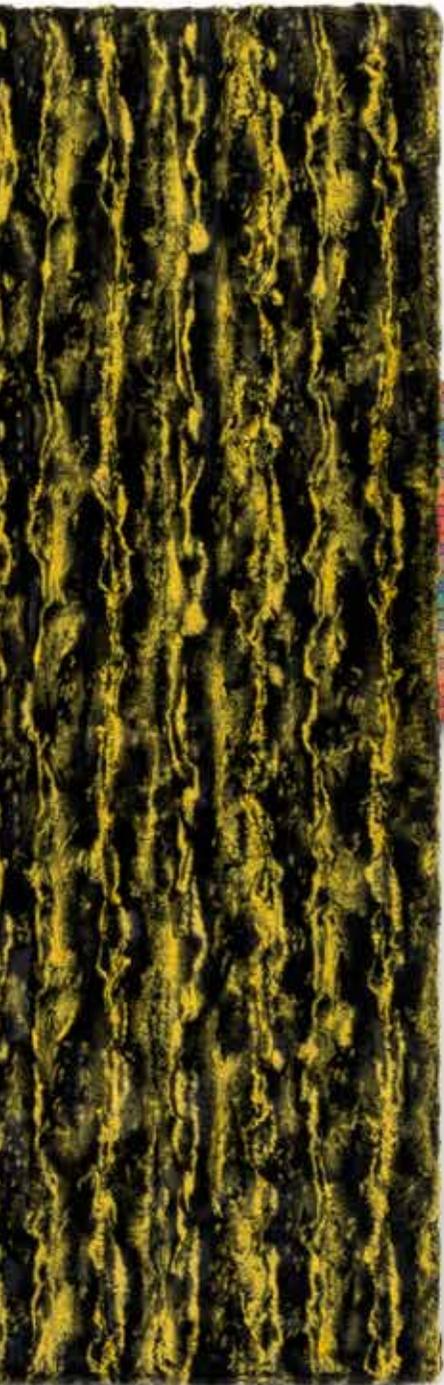


TRANSFORMERS

re-contextualizing our material culture



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Guest Curator China Marks

September 17th
through
December 17th, 2016

RUTH FUNK CENTER FOR TEXTILE ARTS
at Florida Institute of Technology



TRANSFORMERS

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Contemporary artists Julie Peppito, Gerry Trilling, Jodie Mack and Garry Noland regard material culture as raw material. They use it to create artwork of a high order, informed by its fraught, untidy, intimate origins—paintings, sculptures, films, and tapestries in which the ordinary stuff of our lives becomes splendid and strange.

Here are four shows in one, brimming with the kinetic energy of everyday products being repurposed. These shows-within-a-show variously examine our rituals of display and consumption, build monuments from trash, contemplate patterns of cultural and ethnic assimilation, and worry about the future of life on earth, collectively dazzling us as they do. Their works of art embody another essential narrative as well, that of facture; namely, how an assortment of utterly prosaic things of this world were transformed into art, taking shape over time. Stories always take time.

Spend a little time with this two-fisted, meditative, ecstatic, urgent art and you will be glad that you did.

Julie Peppito, *Nature, Fashion & War*, 2015/16, variable dimensions (22½ x 17½ x 8 inches)
canvas, cable, pencil, gouache, thread, acrylic, found objects, metal cable



From the Curator

At a time when artwork can be made out of anything from chocolate to fireworks to binary code, contemporary artists Julie Peppito, Gerry Trilling, Jodie Mack and Garry Noland are real-life Transformers. They make fine art out of prosaic, everyday stuff that we use without particularly noticing it and then discard: pieces of fabric, bits of lace, rolls of duct tape, loops and tangles of thread and string, old toys, socks, small souvenirs, stained placemats and the junk that accumulates in our top dresser drawer. Having spent so much time in our company, these things are simply part of our lives.

The artists transform such materials into compelling works of art. Garry Noland's monuments and banners, made of duct tape, polystyrene, and detritus, suggest the limits of power. Julie Peppito combines a great variety of

found objects into accretive tapestries that warn of our destructive ways. Gerry Trilling's constructed paintings, composed mostly of lengths of fabric, contemplate the slow process of cultural and ethnic assimilation. Jittering, glowing images of patterned fabric and lace animate Jodie Mack's films and remind us why we are drawn to color and pattern in the first place.

Even after being transformed into art, such ordinary materials continue to bear witness to our personal histories, testifying to what it means to be alive in these times. Many stories are told in the process, literally and by implication, and are an essential part of this remarkable group of artworks.

—China Marks

Garry Noland, *Failed Monument 2*, 2014
21 x 9 x 2 inches, polystyrene, tape



JULIE PEPPITO

Born Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1970

I create tapestries out of objects that were on their way to becoming trash. A child's shoe, an old rag, a Disney figurine, false teeth, an Ikea carpet—they all have stories to tell. I consider the people who designed and manufactured these things to be my collaborators, even though I don't know them personally. By smashing, wrapping, and sewing these objects into canvas and other pliable surfaces I combine their stories into larger topographical narratives. By adorning them with detailed drawings, gouache and oil paintings, decorative filigree and blobs of paint, I add my story to theirs. My stories are inspired by articles and books about the degradation of our planet—and by the panic and confusion it stirs in me. By putting the names of the authors and titles of their pieces in the titles of my tapestries, I honor the work they do.

Traditional tapestries are combinations of fine art and craft, object and image, "woman's work" and "man's work." They are narrative and they serve a function. Conceptually they connect things that have since been separated into a hierarchical value system. It is this same system that has confused what we want with what we need, so that often we can no longer tell the difference.

China Marks:

Julie Peppito makes art as if her life depends on it, everyone else's life, too, life on Earth as we presently know it. Accordingly, what she makes has an intensity that can be almost too much to bear. Just look at that enormous skirt, as if Mother Earth herself, outraged, ripped the poisoned garment from her own body and flung it up against the wall! It is beautiful nonetheless.

In a remarkably direct and effective way, Peppito fabricates her tapestries and assemblages almost entirely out of what she finds around the house she shares with her husband and her son, in order to express her deepest concerns and fears.

*Toxic Frock, (This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein), 2015/16, variable dimensions (84 x 156 x 10 inches)
canvas, trim, oil paint, gouache, thread, acrylic paint, found objects, dimensional fabric paint, fabric, grommets*

GERRY TRILLING

Born St. Louis, Missouri, 1945

My parents came to St. Louis from Vienna to escape the Holocaust. Our world consisted of immigrants like us. Jews from all over Europe, each with their own traditions, foods and sofas. As time went on, we assimilated into American culture. We moved out of apartments and bought houses. These new neighborhoods expanded our definition of identity, and we bought different sofas. Our assimilation wasn't about change, it was about belonging.

My deconstructed paintings represent this sense of belonging. Patterning systems are a mainframe to which I attach experiences that are narratives of my work. They hold the ground formally so I can interrupt it by constructing objects that are open-ended. I scout flea markets and upscale fabric stores, shopping and constructing a narrative that honors those sofa signposts of assimilation.

The stuff of material culture is noisy and messy and describes human lives; its wants and desires, daily life from time before and to come.

China Marks:

Gerry Trilling's constructed paintings are products of a highly developed artistic intuition working within a system of visual analysis developed over the last nine years. You can enjoy Trilling's paintings as ravishing abstractions without worrying about what they mean. But since the civic structures and cultural shifts that comprise the subject matter of her artworks take years to evolve, it follows that her paintings reward your sustained attention. Notice Trilling's juxtapositions of textures and patterns as well as changes in scale within a single painting, what happens when one painting is hung above another or when a pattern in one painting shows up as part of another painting, re-contextualized and refreshed. Then ask yourself what these things signify.



Gerry Trilling, *E115 Hard & Shiny Soft & Shiny Blue Zip III*, 2015
36 x 90 inches, constructed painting, mixed media (3 panels)



JODIE MACK

Born London, UK, 1983

Combining the formal techniques and structures of abstract/absolute animation with those of cinematic genres, these handmade films use collage to explore the relationship between graphic cinema and storytelling, the tension between form and meaning. Musical documentary or stroboscopic archive: these films study domestic and recycled materials to illuminate the elements shared between fine-art abstraction and mass-produced graphic design. The works unleash the kinetic energy of overlooked and wasted objects and question the role of decoration in daily life.

China Marks:

Jodie Mack makes non-sequential animated films, one frame following the next in a more-or-less arbitrary manner. Our brains must make sense of her films on the fly, as each is being projected, which is exactly how we make sense of the rest of life streaming past us. Except, of course, given our differences, everyone has a somewhat different life, sees a slightly different film, and gives one's own account of it.

But on another level, Mack's films supersede reasoned commentaries with ecstatic passages showing patterned imagery in a light-stuttering dance that bypasses the rational and transports the viewer to a visionary realm.

GARRY NOLAND

Born Rapid City, South Dakota, 1953

My studio practice is multi-disciplinary. The one constant is an openness to rough patches, glitches or mistakes. The presence of edges or boundaries between mistakes establishes immediate contextual and formal relationships. Those abutments mime our interactions with art and with each other.

What goes with what? What happens on either side of the line? What's good and who decides? Sometimes I am the boss of the material but just as often the material, by virtue of a chance arrangement, for example, will tell me what needs to be done.

These particular works are made of found and reclaimed materials from alleys, side streets and urban dumps. Base materials such as PVC pipe or dock foam are combined with new materials, such as bubble wrap, marbles, paint and tape. The resulting combination sets up the inevitable dialogue between the new/old, purposeful/accidental, and play/toil.

I am at ease with the natural marks and debris left in the foam, for example, in *Failed Monuments*. The opposing sheen and luxurious suggestions of the gold tape against

the foam examines just those combinations of new and old, planned and not.

Art puns and mimes the systems and appearances we experience in both the non-human and human parts of nature. The oft-quoted role of the free press is "to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted." Art's first-cousin role then is to find the mundane in the grand and the grand in the mundane.

China Marks:

Garry Noland has an inordinate affection for humble things that other people ignore, like beat-up bubblewrap, old PVC pipe, old issues of National Geographic, and hunks of polystyrene. He seems to have a particular affinity for duct tape. Over the years, Noland has turned those things into many different kinds of art. You can read his artist's statement to learn more about his materials and their sources, as well as how the art he makes fits within the parameters of contemporary art practices.

But it is the ghostly, elegiac beauty and battered, lunatic dignity of Noland's art itself that moves me to stand before it and meditate on the fate of dying empires.

Garry Noland, *Parade*, 2012, 55 x 149 inches, tape, graphite, floor debris on tape



Exhibition Checklist

Gerry Trilling, *Was.Is.Will.*, 2015



JULIE PEPPITO

Gallery One

1. *Toxic Frock*, (*This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein), 2015/16
variable dimensions (84 x 156 x 10 inches)
canvas, trim, oil paint, gouache, thread, acrylic paint, found objects, dimensional fabric paint, fabric, grommets
2. *Crawling on Cancer* 2015/16
(The Teflon Toxin by Sharon Lerner)
variable dimensions (52 x 55 x 6 inches)
carpet, trim, photo, thread, found objects, fabric paint, fabric, grommets
3. *It's in the Water*, 2015/16
(Toxic "Reform" Law Will Gut States Rules on Dangerous Chemicals by Sharon Lerner)
variable dimensions (96 x 84 x 12 inches)
canvas, trim, oil paint, gouache, thread, acrylic paint, found objects, dimensional fabric paint, fabric, grommets



Julie Peppito, *Hybrid*, 2015/16

4. *Hybrid*, 2015/16
(After Nature by Jedediah Purdy)
variable dimensions (22 ½ x 17 ½ x 5 inches)
canvas, metal cable, pencil, gouache, thread, acrylic, found objects, grommets
5. *Begin Again*, 2015/16
(Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. —Arundhati Roy)
variable dimensions (23 x 18 x 1 inches)
canvas, trim, pencil, gouache, thread, acrylic, Chinese purse, Native American baby shoe, embroidered patch

6. *Nature, Fashion & War*, 2015/16
variable dimensions (22½ x 17½ x 8 inches)
canvas, cable, pencil, gouache, thread, acrylic, found objects, metal cable
7. *Hidden in Plain Sight*, 2015/16
variable dimensions (23 ¼ x 18 ½ x ½ inches)
canvas, trim, pencil, gouache, thread, acrylic, found objects

GERRY TRILLING

Gallery Two

1. *C115 What the Crazy Rabbits Saw*, 2015
72 x 72 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (5 panels)
2. *E213 Hard & Shiny Soft & Shiny II*, 2013
36 x 84 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (2 panels)
3. *E115 Hard & Shiny Soft & Shiny Blue Zip III*, 2015
36 x 90 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (3 panels)
4. *C215 Narrative Atlas of an Evolving Neighborhood*, 2015
48 x 132 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (6 panels)
5. *red.pink*, 2015
72 x 36 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (2 panels)

6. *Tooled Ochre*, 2015
59 x 48 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (2 panels)
7. *Was.Is.Will.*, 2015
60 x 24 inches
constructed painting, mixed media (3 panels)

JODIE MACK

Gallery Three



Jodie Mack, *Posthaste Perennial Pattern*, 2010

1. *Point de Gaze*, 2012, 5 min., 16 mm, color, silent
2. *Posthaste Perennial Pattern*, 2010, 3 min., 16 mm, color, sound

GARRY NOLAND

Gallery Three

1. *The Enormous Radio*, 2012
13 x 7 inches
tape, floor debris on tape

2. *Lowrise*, 2012
17 x 9 inches
tape, floor debris on tape
3. *Armature*, 2013
21.5 x 16 inches
foil, tape, transfer printing, debris on foil
4. *Billet*, 2012
89 x 55 inches
tape, graphite, floor debris on tape
5. *Ticket*, 2012
103 x 89 inches
tape, found debris on tape
6. *Parade*, 2012
55 x 149 inches
tape, graphite, floor debris on tape
7. *Banner*, 2013
32 x 66 inches
tape, monoprint, collage on tape
Private Collection:
E. G. Schempf, Merriam, KS
8. *Failed Monument 2*, 2014
21 x 9 x 2 inches
polystyrene, tape
9. *Failed Monument 3*, 2014
8 x 10 x 19 inches
polystyrene, tape
10. *Failed Monument 5*, 2014
22 x 10 x 21 inches
polystyrene, tape



Garry Noland, *The Enormous Radio*, 2012

BIOGRAPHIES

CHINA MARKS *Guest curator*

China Marks was born and educated in Kansas City, MO, earning a BFA in Sculpture from the Kansas City Art Institute. A Fulbright-Hayes fellowship took her Katmandu, Nepal, where she spent sixteen months constructing a major installation out of local materials. On her return to the United States, she was awarded a graduate fellowship by the Danforth Foundation. In 1976, having received an MFA in Sculpture from Washington University in St. Louis, China moved east to make art. She has received numerous grants and awards, including three fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a Mid-Atlantic Arts fellowship, two George Sugarman Foundation grants, two New York Foundation for the Arts fellowships, most recently in 2011, when she was also named a Gregory Millard Fellow, and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant in 2013. Since 1999 China Marks has lived and worked in Long Island City, a block and a half from the East River. Her work is shown in galleries and museums in the United States and Europe. *Radiant Messenger*, a major exhibition of her recent drawings, will be on view at the Foosaner Art Museum at the Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, FL, from Oct. 22, 2016, through January 7, 2017.

JULIE PEPPITO

Julie Peppito received a BFA in 1992 from The Cooper Union in New York City, and an MFA from Alfred University in Alfred, NY in 2004. In 2001 she received a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Fellowship for sculpture. Her work has been the subject of six one woman shows, and she has shown her work extensively, primarily in New York City. She lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, with her husband (artist, illustrator, graphic novelist, and musician) Gideon Kendall and son Milo. You can see her playground art at J.J. Byrne Playground and Underhill Playground both in Brooklyn. Julie is currently represented by Heskin Contemporary in New York City.

GERRY TRILLING

Gerry Trilling was born and educated in St. Louis, MO, earning a BFA in Painting from the Kansas City Art Institute. She has studied weaving, dyeing and paper making, and traveled extensively collecting materials and conducting independent studies in Asia, South America,

Australia and Europe with an emphasis on how patterns fit into the larger visual landscape. A summer in New York City engendered a profound awareness of infrastructure, its constant fragmentation and integration relative to memory, fear, anxiety and societal impact.

JODIE MACK

Jodie Mack is an experimental animator who received her MFA in film, video, and new media from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2007. Combining the formal techniques and structures of abstract/absolute animation with those of cinematic genres, her handmade films use collage to explore the relationship between graphic cinema and storytelling, the tension between form and meaning. The works unleash the kinetic energy of overlooked and wasted objects and question the role of decoration in daily life.

Mack's 16mm films have screened at a variety of venues including the *Ann Arbor Film Festival*, *Edinburgh International Film Festival*, *Images Festival*, *Projections* at the *New York Film Festival*, and the *Viennale*. She has presented solo programs at the *25FPS Festival*, *Anthology Film Archives*, *BFI London Film Festival*, *Harvard Film Archive*, *National Gallery of Art*, *REDCAT*, *International Film Festival Rotterdam*, *Shenzhen Independent Animation Biennale*, and *Wexner Center for the Arts* among others. Her work has been featured in publications including *Artforum*, *Cinema Scope*, *The New York Times*, and *Senses of Cinema*. She currently works as an Associate Professor of Animation at Dartmouth College, where she co-organizes an experimental media series, *EYEWASH*, and serves as the 2015-16 Sony Music Fellow.

GARRY NOLAND

Garry Noland earned a degree in History of Art from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and has been a studio artist since 1980. He has received fellowship awards from the NEA/Mid-America Arts Alliance and the Charlotte Street Foundation. Recent exhibits have been at the *Daum Museum of Contemporary Art* (Sedalia, MO) and University of Northern Iowa. Noland has been based in the Mid-west and recently moved to Los Angeles.

Cover: Gerry Trilling, *C215 Narrative Atlas of an Evolving Neighborhood*, 48 x 132 inches, constructed painting, mixed media, (6 panels)

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Guest curated by China Marks

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