



FLINT JAMISON

# FLINT JAMISON

Né à Billings, USA, 1979  
Vit et travaille à Portland

Flint Jamison was born in 1979 in Montana. He got an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2006. He quickly exhibited his works worldwide with solo exhibitions : **Veneer** at Air de Paris, Romainville, 2021 ; **Opportunity Zones** at Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen (2019) ; Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2017 and 2015) ; Galerie Max Mayer, Düsseldorf (2017) ; Pied-à-terre, Ottsville, PA (2016) ; Air de Paris, Paris (2015 and 2012) ; ETH Zürich, Zürich (2015) ; Artists Space, New York (2013) ; Cubitt, Londres (2013) ; Centre d'édition contemporaine, Geneva (2012) ; Artspeak, Vancouver (2012) ; castillo/corrales, Paris (2011) et Open Satellite, Bellevue, Washington (2010). He participated in Signal or Noise at S.M.A.K, Gand (2018), Other Mechanisms, cur. Anthony Huberman at Secession, Vienne (2018), 2017 Whitney Biennial, cur. Christopher Y. Lew and Mia Locks, 2014 Liverpool Biennial, cur. Anthony Huberman and Mai Abu ElDahab, and Incorporated! - Les Ateliers de Rennes in 2016, cur. François Piron.

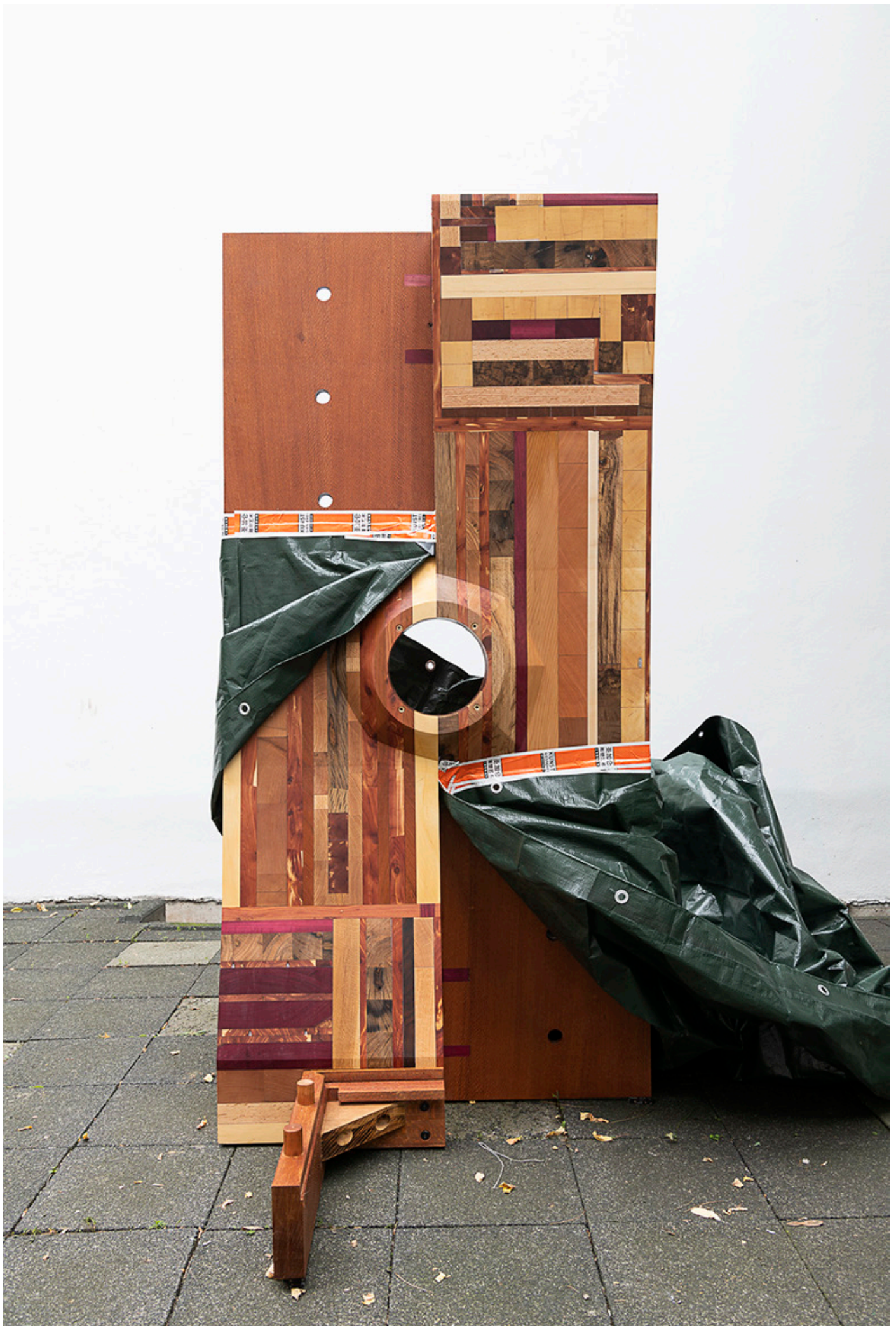
He co-founded the Yale Union, a contemporary art center in southeast Portland, Oregon, United States. The center was founded in 2008. In 2020, the organization announced it would transfer the rights of its building to the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

Flint Jamison is an editor-artist or an artist-editor. An artist who is engaged with multiple artistic projects and some projects linked with the community. Jamison's work comes as a wide range of reflections on the object: an assemblage, a piece of furniture, a poster or a publication which all push the link between representation, production, functionality, presentation and distribution to the edges of its simplicity, its obviousness and its impact. Each object merges technical and aesthetic potential and conceptual accuracy. Flint Jamison is between the artist and the technician, between the craftsman and the inventor.

Flint Jamison demonstrates that publishing can be intransitive –without an external purpose – without necessarily being self-reflexive. He does this not only with his splendid magazine Veneer (2007 - on going), but also in his works, which in some cases include his books (A Floating Brand, 2012). Like his publications, his works reflect a high level of conceptual and formal mastery. At once artisanal (in their making) and technological (in their workings), they combine the aesthetic with the functional and the autonomous with the indicial. The descriptions are implicitly oxymoronic.



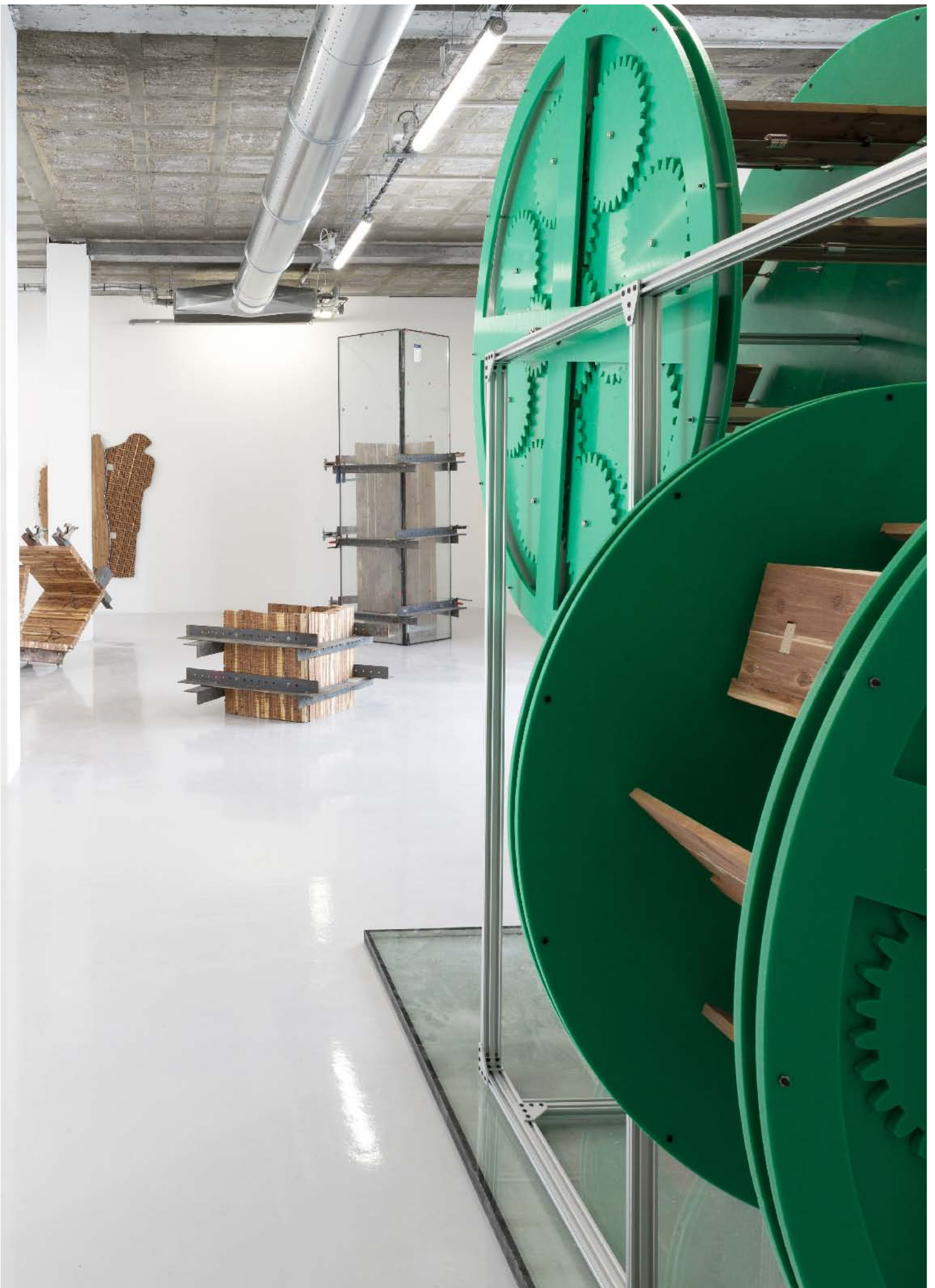
Generations Agitations Receptions, Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldörf, 2021



Generations Agitations Receptions, Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldorf, 2021



Generations Agitations Receptions, Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldörf, 2021



Veneer, Air de Paris, Romainville, 2021

## EQUAL SUFFERING FOR ALL

An artist devoted to materializing all aspects of production is often lonely, driven by questions familiar and unfamiliar to the art world. Flint Jamison's materialist approach goes as far as planning for its leftover materials. Like, did you know that the wood Jamison used to construct Opportunity Zone (2019) comes from the leftover cedar of Footer/Content Chassis/This Pull Request (2017), as does Opportunity Zone (In Neighboring Metals) (2021)? Jamison's archive carries what is unused into the proceeding project not simply out of a sense of environmental ethics, but out of concern for narrative clarity.

Jamison catalogues his archive according to the allotment of used material, rather than solely its aesthetic rationale. The material provenance of the cedar begins with Jamison's Footer/Content Chassis/This Pull Request (2017) for the Whitney Biennial, a sculpture and program that actualized the inner workings of the museums' surveillance and labor apparatus; from there it was carried into Opportunity Zone (2019), where in residence in Switzerland and then in his US studio, the artist created three sculptures using photogrammetry: first of Oakland's Ghost Ship warehouse, then Portland's Yale Union, and most recently Paris' Romainville. Each site served as a marker of gentrification and transition that formed and forms the artist and his community. In 2021, the last of the wood batch, in conjunction with aluminum, was utilized to construct Opportunity Zone (In Neighboring Metals), to be installed at Air de Paris.

In addition to this new piece, Jamison will be showing a work based on Marcel Duchamp's Glider, Containing a Water Mill In Adjacent (Neighboring) Metals, (1915), and a 1937 commission he received from Andre Breton, to create an doorway/aperture for Breton's gallery GraDiva. In this work, Jamison inverts the gallery's signage in cedar, carving "GraDiva" into an enclosed box, so that the sign becomes trapped and held together by concrete column forming clamps used in the construction of new buildings.

As the father of the readymade and credited as the author of the most important modern art of all time<sup>1</sup>, Duchamp is a useful adversary for historical materialists. Duchamp's works are most often mistakenly placed in a European, "color-blind" space<sup>2</sup>, even though the majority of his most well known readymades, from Fountain (1917) to Glider, Containing a Water Mill In Adjacent (Neighboring) Metals, 1915, were created in New York City, with the support and aid of his patrons Walter and Louise Arensberg<sup>3</sup>.

New York City in 1915, 1917 was far from racially integrated. Forty percent of New York City's residents were former slaveholders, and the United States was, as the United States is now, without neutral grounds. Segregation filled all public and private arenas. However, when the invention of the readymade is discussed, questions like: found where? Found how? In what context? In which neighborhood? Questions like: how does the segregation of public and private sanitation spaces,

such as water fountains and bathrooms, the segregation of the city, contextualize the politics of the found form? rarely enter the analysis. By transposing Duchamp's water wheel painting with the blueprints of forced gentrification, Jamison's Opportunity Zone (In Neighboring Metals) perforates the dematerialization of the readymade.

In the Duchampian lexicon of found and readymade, it has been normalized that the process of coming up with the idea is separated from the making of the work, which is removed from the process of installing the piece, all of which is subsumed under the name of the person who is credited as the artist. Production is outsourced, divided and individuated. In opposition to this ideology, Jamison's practice tends to the labor process, and to the materialization of what capital makes invisible. And in this, Jamison knows where his materials come from, how they are sourced, and is involved in every aspect of their making. . When things need to be glued, he glues, when things need to be coded, programmed, cut, he operates the machinery. The people who work the laser cutters, routers, those involved in the machine's operations are honored and credited with the making. His art strains against normative practices of artist as CEO, artist as the manager of others, towards the familiar and unfamiliar space of artist as alienated worker, artist in contradiction and community. Here, the artist rejects the modernist labor processes that divides, outsources then erases the materials and names of those involved in the making, and prompts us to do the same.

Devotees of the white avant-garde tradition may respond, stating that Jamison's practice partakes in an older tradition of art mythology that fetishizes the artist's hand. Protectors of neoliberal capitalism may even try to argue that it does not matter who makes what, and offer fragmented readings of Barthes and Foucault. These are predictable and underwhelming takes, expected responses by keepers of the status quo. I would respond that Jamison's dedication to the material is predicated upon something older and more sacred than adherence to the fandom of the artist genius. Jamison's materialist fixation is part of a tradition of heretics committed to visualizing the operations of power, whatever its shape and form. Sometimes it's called Capital or Empire. Sometimes it is called Home, Love, Beauty: Art. The artist's focus speaks to a deep and long history of committed materialists who refuse the aestheticization of violence, who labor to visualize how aestheticization works too often as the dematerialization of power. The stories that divide skilled from unskilled labor are the same ones that divide the artist from those unnamed, and those fictions become the untruths repeated about the lives deemed worthy and unworthy.

The stories currently afforded to the production of aesthetics parallel the naturalization of violence that becomes this world. In this space we break from the realm that dissociates thinking and dreaming from making and doing, where an exclusive election bask in safety and fantasy, where artists believe their function is the managerial ordering of others around: You either spend your life emulating this presence as victory or you uncover all the ways in which it lives so that it can die. We break from this narrative fallacy to tend to the rehearsal of interdependence, attachment: more. Here Jamison brings us to the composition of solicitude and the invitation for more.

- Eunsong Kim, July 2021.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Turner Prize, see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/4059997.stm>

<sup>2</sup> For an in-depth analysis on the problems of European colorblindness see Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Likewise, "Glider" (1915) currently resides in the Philadelphia Art Museum, as part of the Arensberg donation to the museum.



**Opportunity Zone, 2021**

photogrammetry of Romainville, CNC carved cedar, aluminium alloy (computer rack)

130 x 58 x 46 cm

Unique





**GraDiva, 2021**

Installation in 6 parts: cedar and CNC carved cedar, aluminium alloy, securit glass, 3D print, zinc hooks, variable dimensions



Laminations, 2021  
CNC carved paper  
30,5 x 45 x 6 cm  
Unique in a series of 4



100 Infrared Thermometer W/ Laser: Mastercool 52224-A, 2011, 2020

100 CMYK Letterpress Prints

30.5 cm x 46 cm x 6 cm

Unique in a series of 3



Opportunity Zones, Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen, October 26, 2019 - January 5, 2020



« .Signal or Noise I The Photographic II », S.M.A.K., Gent (2019)

This work is the producer. It uses marijuana growing equipment to produce prints that are free for audience or workers at the museum. There is also a security desk that has a concave monitor in it that is connected to the security camera in the room.



« .Signal or Noise I The Photographic II », S.M.A.K., Gent (2019)



« Mechanisms », Wattis Institute, San Francisco, (2017-2018)

«Greaser» is floating on wheels and rustles or jiggles around all show.  
During the show Administrators kinda have to dance with it in order to enter their offices.

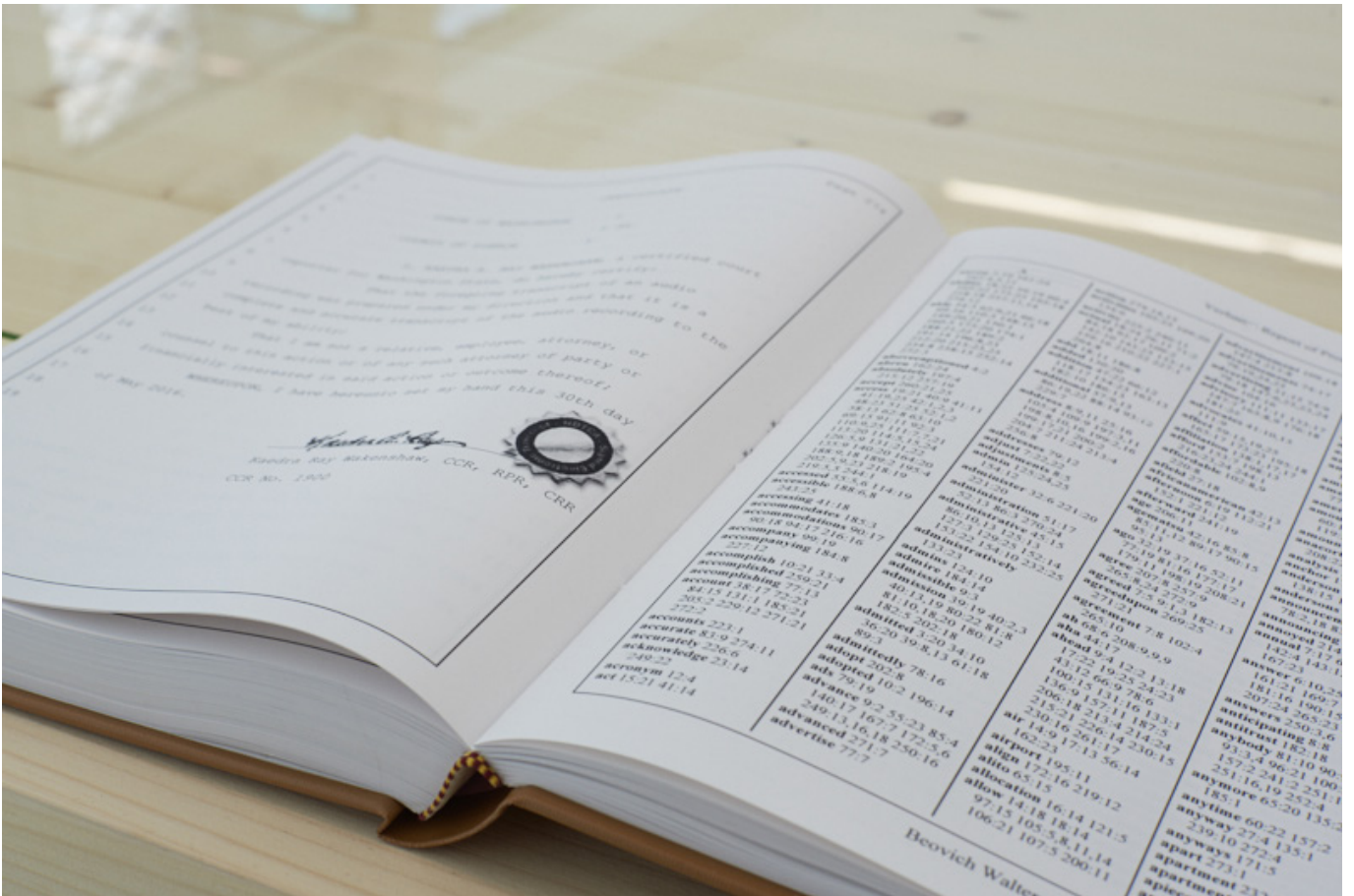


Whitney Biennial, New York, 2017

With his *Footer/Content Chassis/This Pull Request*, Flint Jamison invites Whitney visitors into a space reserved for employees: a conference room visible but usually inaccessible from the Museum's central staircase. In its unused utility closet, Jamison has installed a Dell computer (purchased on eBay) identical to one that he found in this location during a site visit. The first computer, which lacked a power cord, monitor, keyboard, and mouse, appealed to the artist as "a redundant institutional object."

In his installation, Jamison's own minitower runs a custom application written in a language called Python on the Ubuntu Server operating system. Throughout the Biennial, Whitney employees can opt to use the program, which will insert a "footer" into every email sent from participating users in the whitney.org domain. This footer makes visible information typically hidden in "headers," including the recipient's geographic location, every location in which an email has been opened in the past, and any times when emails have been read by someone other than the intended recipients.





Max Mayer, Düsseldorf, 2017

mmhmm 10:15 14:1,6 24:3 26:3 27:25 28:18 28:18 34:17 39:5 47:7 47:13,17 48:13,17 59:13 62:5  
67:20,23 80:15 83:7 84:20 86:11,18 89:14 91:20 92:4 93:2 95:5 96:12 97:9 99:18 100:11 107:4  
110:22 116:4 117:13 119:16 120:22 121:1,16 126:21 127:4 134:11 137:12 138:23 143:5 145:19  
146:22 148:16 155:12 157:20 165:16 168:8 173:9 180:1,18 184:21 195:25 198:22 199:19 204:9  
210:7 210:24 214:9 215:19 215:22 218:12,22 222:16 224:1 225:6,8 228:14 229:4 230:2 234:1  
235:19 238:25 248:10 255:21 260:4 262:13 263:25

Aaron Flint Jamison's *YU Contemporary vs. Dept. of Revenue Oregon & Mult. Co. Assessor* gathers all the official legal documents related to the eponymous 2016 court case. The case, brought by the Portland art center Yale Union, of which Aaron Flint Jamison is co-founder and Board Chair, contested a ruling by Multnomah County<sup>1</sup> that disregarded the institution's status as a non-profit "art museum" in the setting of property tax rates. In a section of *YU Contemporary vs. Dept. of Revenue Oregon & Mult. Co. Assessor* devoted to the transcription of the court hearing in which Jamison gave testimony (the "Verbatim Report of Proceedings"), a comprehensive index is provided, including the above entry. "mmhmm" is uttered ninety-four times in the course of the hearing, sixteen times by Jamison.

The index, the ledger, the inventory, and the spreadsheet: these are systems that organize information, record transactions, and codify exchanges in pursuit of administrative efficiency. This exhibition is comprised of a number of such mechanisms, both in familiar and unfamiliar forms. They uniformly take stock, however, of one particular relationship: that of Jamison with Yale Union. Jamison respects that—underneath and perhaps within all its social, material, affective, and intellectual aspects—this relationship is contingent on a particular set of property relations.

The non-profit art institution in the United States conspicuously operates under the pretense of disavowing property. Or, at least, it aspires to remove from the instance of presentation of artwork speculation over material ownership, maintaining it in its "uncontested" state of intellectual property. But of course this notion of detachment from the exertions of rights of possession and use is by and large delusional, particularly in the U.S. The value within a non-profit art institution, both that held by artworks and that which is formed through the circulation of ideas and knowledge, is put to work and possessed in many ways. If rights to physical or intellectual property determine who can use, alter, sell or capture the payoffs accruing to it, then the non-profit art institution constitutes a plethora of banked and uncontested rights claims – from artists, directors, curators, and board members. The non-profit art institution is a peculiar kind of battleground for conflicting modes of libertarianism. Jamison here captures this conflict as material.

The capturing of materials is a possessive act, a point of articulation of that entity as discursively operative within a secured and governed field. Yale Union is a form of property management

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<sup>1</sup> Multnomah County, an administrative subdivision of the state of Oregon with some governmental authority, was named in 1854 after the Multnomah people, a Chinookan tribe largely wiped out by 1834 by malaria and smallpox brought to the American continent by European settlers.

system in the capacity of cultural producer. This exhibition constitutes a prosthetic extension of this system, one in which Jamison implicates the global art market through the redirection of funds accrued through the sale of property.<sup>2</sup> These are not discrete pockets of property, but tracteries of individual and institutional intellectual, physical and affective labor, social and cultural capital, presented in full awareness of these complications and complicities. We see a bag of paint scrapings, taken from Lutz Bacher's floor painting *The Secret Garden*, exhibited at YU in late 2016, and removed over a number of weeks by YU staff and laborers; a series of display solutions that are assumed directly from YU designer Scott Ponik's presentational tables for the institution's 2013 Susan Howe exhibition; and, more obliquely but no less significantly, a new iteration of R.H. Quaytman's *Orchard Spreadsheet 2016*, 2016, printed by Jamison and published in tandem with its salvaged and re-coded website, hosted on YU's server, for Orchard Gallery, the influential collective artist-run gallery that existed in New York's Lower East Side between 2005 and 2008. Hovering above all this, *YU Contemporary vs. Dept. of Revenue Oregon & Mult. Co. Assessor* serves as a document of Yale Union's layered sovereignties in its exhaustive and "verbatim" survey of YU's historical constitution and programming, all in service of establishing the value of its productive relations to "civil society," as opposed to private gain.

Richard Birkett

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<sup>2</sup> Jamison's proceeds of the provisional sale of these works returns directly to the non-profit Yale Union to support forthcoming capital improvements.



BRITAIN AWAKE  
MARGARET THATCHER

## AARON FLINT JAMISON Galerie Max Mayer, Düsseldorf, Germany

It is likely that, if you are reading this, you are an artist or art student, work in the arts, follow art out of cultural curiosity or for professional gain. In other words: you probably fall on one side of what writer Janet Malcolm once icily characterized as the 'gap' between the 'tiny group of people who consider themselves the professional art public' and the 'ordinary *literate*' person. What determines this gap and its width? Questions as to whether what we do, make, curate and critique has any value, also nag, privately, at many of us. Rarely, though, are we forced to account for them as directly as Aaron Flint Jamison did last year, when he appeared in court to defend the public value of contemporary art space Yale Union (YU).

Jamison co-founded YU in Portland, Oregon, in 2013, in what a court dossier from this year describes as 'a century-old former industrial laundry', gifted by an anonymous benefactor. YU applied for tax-exempt, not-for-profit status in October 2013 but received a rejection in September of the following year: a fact that would be anodyne were this building's size (a city block) and history (protected) not cause for a (massive) property tax liability. Jamison's exhibition at Galerie Max Mayer, 'YU Contemporary, Inc. vs. Dept. of Revenue and Multnomah County Assessor', contains a book that reproduces the court deposition which followed this rejection, bagged remnants of a Lutz Bacher floor piece (*The Secret Garden*, 2016), once shown at YU, and an R.H. Quaytman edition published by Jamison (*Orchard Spreadsheet*, 2016) with YU designer Scott Ponik's presentation tables. 'Britain Awake' (2017) is a plastic display stand containing letterpress folios, one of which reprints Margaret Thatcher's

1976 inaugural speech (*Iron Lady*, 2017). Such inclusions reference past shows at YU and the strain between private gain and public interest, while also prodding at the contradictory notions of portability, exchange and site-specificity.

Rarely has accounting been so thrilling. Denied not-for-profit status, YU was declared of 'only incidental benefit to the public at large, if at all'. There's a haziness to what conceptual art looks like – when and why dead time, diffuse labour and the hard-to-explain can become 'art'. A tax assessor observes that, 'much of the time', the 'primary exhibit space sat empty and was not utilized at all, let alone for artistic purposes'. He questions: 'How is Yale Union any different than slightly older art-school graduates getting together and partying in a building?'

Why did people appear to be sleeping in this building? Why were animals allowed in? What is the meaning of 'residency'? Is *Veneer*, Jamison's magazine, printed on letterpress machines installed at YU, a commercial entity? In short: how does an art space contribute to the public good? In the 448-page dossier at the heart of Jamison's exhibition, we read an earnest untangling of the couched implicits about showing art and why it's done. The protagonist of the story becomes its adjudicator, Honourable Henry C. Breithaupt, who listens with responsiveness, curiosity and humour. ('Is that a picture of decapitated chickens?') His reasonable semantic yield signs – 'What do you refer to as a time-based performance?' – meet with defensive, revealing answers: 'Sorry, some of my rhetoric is – it's stuck in – art language.'

Breithaupt admonishes the tax assessors' creaky reasoning and cranky word-twisting. For Breithaupt, the trial was 'very interesting in terms of a view on a world of art that goes beyond my Janson's art-history text, which I had in the 1960s'. In his closing statement, he suggests printing the deposition by letterpress. In the old days, he expands, 'people were much more careful about their briefing' because 'it was literally sent out and printed'. A surprisingly entertaining courtroom drama about art's broader significance has ensued, in the form of Jamison's exquisite, testimonial exhibition. Exemption was granted – on letterpress, to boot.

Pablo Larios



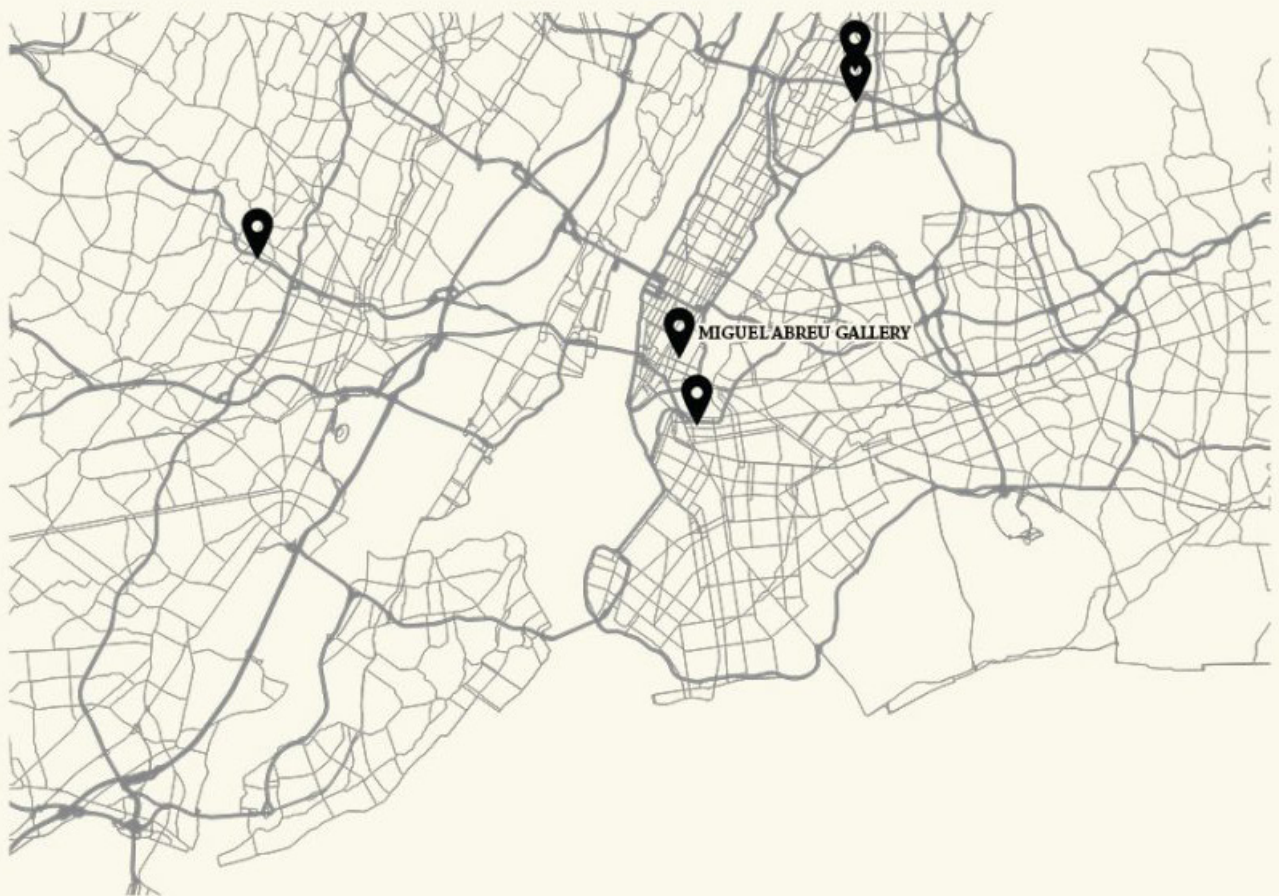
Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York «The stored works», 2017

**Exhibition:** Aaron Flint Jamison, *The Stored Work*

**Dates:** September 10 – October 15, 2017

For my second exhibition at Miguel Abreu Gallery,<sup>1</sup> I have proposed a multi-part project. The first aspect brings into the exhibition spaces all available works by gallery artists that are currently housed in offsite storage facilities leased by the gallery. I have secured the terms for inclusion of stored works from the following artists: Yuji Agematsu, Liz Deschenes, (myself), Sam Lewitt, Scott Lyall, Jean-Luc Moulène, Florian Pumhösl, R. H. Quaytman, Raha Raissnia, Jimmy Raskin, Blake Rayne, and Pamela Rosenkranz. These artists' works will remain in their packaging in the galleries at the 88 Eldridge Street location, while works of scale will be brought to the 36 Orchard Street location and remain in their respective crates or bins. The differentiation between offsite storage and onsite storage is crucial. The gallery's current offsite facilities are:

- American Self Storage, Brooklyn: five units
- SOS/Flexible Warehousing, New Jersey: three units
- DAD Trucking Inc., Bronx: one unit
- Boone Ave., Bronx: one unit



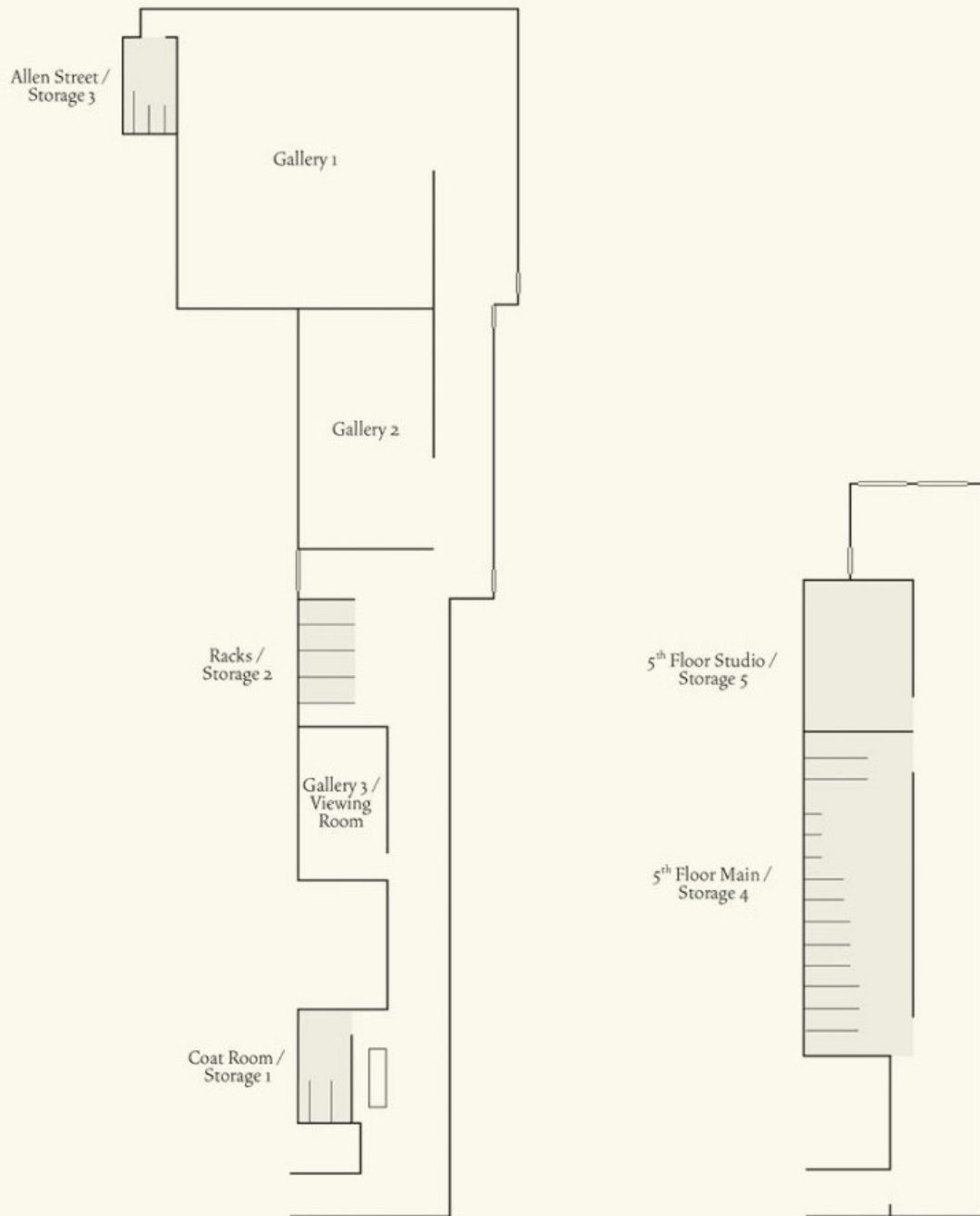
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Locations of storage facilities leased by Miguel Abreu Gallery

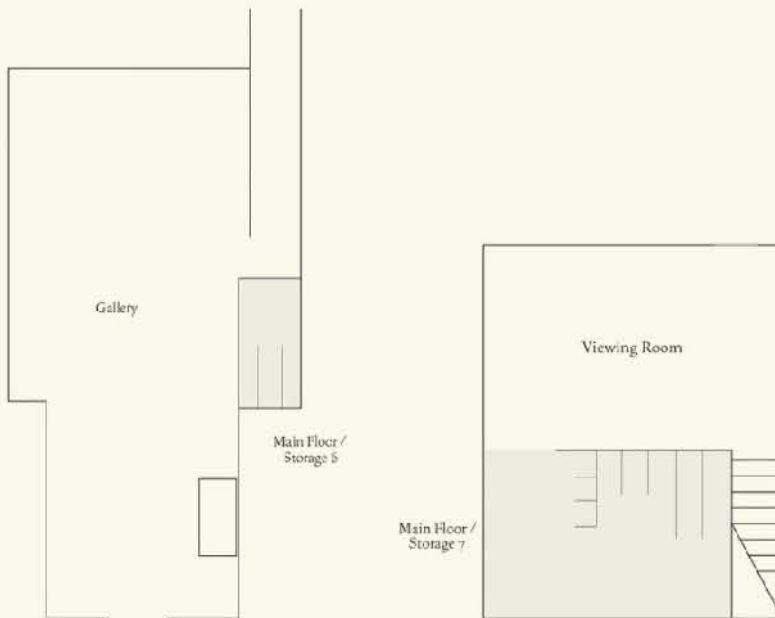
Miguel Abreu Gallery also maintains multiple storage rooms at 88 Eldridge Street and 36 Orchard Street in downtown Manhattan. The second part of the exhibition makes accessible the works stored in the gallery's onsite facilities, which is where the majority of the gallery's inventory is kept. Each of these onsite storage areas will be open and available to audiences for viewing stored work during the run of the exhibition.

Three hundred and seventy-three works, wrapped for storage, by the aforementioned artists will be on view. Moreover, if an audience member would like to see any particular work unpacked during the course of the exhibition, because of convenient location, any work is viewable upon request. Audience members are encouraged to speak to one of the gallery's directors to make arrangements for such viewings.

The floorplans below highlight the seven rooms of storage as well as the exhibition spaces.



4th and 5th floors of 88 Eldridge Street location



Ground floor and basement of 36 Orchard Street location

Additionally, I have written a piece of software for cataloging and tracking the locations of the gallery's stored works. During the course of this exhibition, each of these works will be tagged with a location-tracking device, and the collected data will populate a database. The system will generate regular reports about the locations of each work, their inevitable movements, and assist the registrar and other gallery staff members in managing the inventory. The gallery currently uses the database management software ArtBase to account for its consigned assets. This proprietary program is a graphic user interface on top of the popular FileMaker Pro database program for the Macintosh platform. Instead of storing information on offsite cloud-based servers, the gallery chooses to store its data locally on an array of redundant disks.

The screenshot shows the 'ArtBase - Inventory' application window. It displays a table with columns for 'FIND FLAGGED', 'INV#', 'Status', 'Active', 'Artist', 'Title', and 'Date'. The table contains 10 rows of data, each representing an artwork by 'Jamison' titled 'List of Works'. The status of each artwork varies, including 'SOLD', 'Loaned Out', and 'NFS'. The date for all entries is '2015'. The interface includes a search bar, a 'Browse' button, and various menu options like 'PRINT', 'REPORTS', and 'HIDE IMAGES'.

FIND FLAGGED	INV#	Status	Active	Artist	Title	Date
+	AJ1007.15.1 1	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15.1 2	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15.1 3	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15.1 4	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15.1 5	Loaned Out		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		active				
+	AJ1007.15.1 6	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15.1 7	SOLD		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15. AP1	NFS		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				
+	AJ1007.15. AP2	NFS		Jamison	Aaron Flint List of Works	2015
		Inactive				

ArtBase list view





ArtBase inventory and location view

Moreover, during the run of the show, a conservator will unpack the stored works one-by-one to produce condition reports and update the gallery's records accordingly. The enterprise of Miguel Abreu Gallery currently employs 11 full-time and three part-time individuals. It hired its first full-time registrar in 2015.

In conjunction with the above components of the show, I have made a new body of work which will be on view alongside work by other artists represented by the gallery at Frieze Art Fair, London, October 5–8, 2017.

Finally, I have worked with the gallery to secure a single lease to store its inventory at a more centralized site that would be expandable for its future needs. With gallery staff, I have begun designing the architecture, climate control, and storage systems for this new location.



Location of new storage facility leased by Miguel Abreu Gallery

[1] Founded in 2006, the gallery has produced a total of 88 exhibitions at its two current locations. To date, it has participated in 30 art fairs. Miguel Abreu Gallery has hosted numerous events in conjunction with these exhibitions. The inaugural roster of the gallery included a number of artists who have relationships with the gallerist that date to graduate school in the 1990s at the California Institute of the Arts. Since its onset, the gallery has not used consignment contracts nor asked artists to sign their respective certificates of authenticity of works transacted.



Editathon Art+Feminism 2017 - Monnaie de Paris, Paris, 2017

On Wikipedia, less than 15% of contributors identify themselves as women. This disparity reflects the inequalities that pervade not only the largest knowledge platform, but also the internet as a whole, and real life in general. Art+Feminism is an international campaign to improve the presence of women and the arts on Wikipedia. Flint Jamison produced the work and discussion environment in such a way that it allows contents and conversations to circulate fluidly. He also worked on some of the project's nodes, intensifying them through artistic creations.



Editathon Art+Feminism 2017 - Monnaie de Paris, Paris, 2017



Frac Bretagne for Incorporated! Les Ateliers de Rennes - contemporary art biennale, 2016.



Air de Paris «2x Script Huffer», 2015

The work is a busy machine, a litany of nodes.



Air de Paris «2x Script Huffer», 2015



Air de Paris «2x Script Huffer», 2015



Liverpool Biennial, «2x Scrypt Huffer», 2014



## Aaron Flint Jamison

The spaces between  
rumour, information  
and circulation

—  
by Jonathan P. Watts

'... So Flint gets on stage wearing an Arnold Schwarzenegger mask with a flashing strobe light inside and begins reading a puritan sermon. He's switching between registers: first-person singular and plural. It's quite beautiful...' This is one of many stories Jamie Stevens, curator at Cubitt Gallery, London, has told me about. Aaron Flint Jamison – known to his friends as Flint. The Schwarzenegger performance occurred on one leg of a toilet-venue tour Stevens booked for Flint and artist Steven Kado in 2007. Passing through Brighton, Bristol, Glasgow, Leeds and Nottingham, it concluded in London where he opened for his friends, Dirty Projectors.

Recently, in the Zürich-based *Du* magazine, Hans-Ulrich Obrist nominated Flint as one of the 27 most important living artists today. Asked by the magazine for a publicity shot, Flint supplied a caricature portrait of Liam Gillick rendered in the hand of a street artist – the kind hawked to tourists the world over. Or so Stevens said. He also told me that, in 2008, Flint organized a yoga class on the Large Hadron Collider as an art work. In fact, there's about as much chance of understanding dark matter as there is of processing information about Flint.

There is intense conscientiousness in these ludic manoeuvres, a punk bellicosity sharpened by more than a decade's involvement in non-profit gallery spaces, studios, and print and record publishing initiatives. In 2002, Flint founded the Department of Safety (DOS) in Washington, a non-profit live music venue, gallery and studios, with a 'zine library and artist residency programme, in a former police and fire station. When DOS closed, Flint and Curtis Knapp co-founded Yale Union (YU), a contemporary art centre in Portland, Oregon, with a gallery, artists' studios and printing press. At YU, Flint has overseen the development of one of the leading independent print workshops in the US.

In 2007, Flint began producing *Veneer Magazine*, intended as a series of 18 issues, currently at issue number

nine, with its own idiosyncratic pricing system. *Veneer* is distributed through a combination of subscriptions as well as bookshops, museums, libraries and galleries. For each issue of *Veneer*, a thousand copies – in two different versions – are lavishly produced, combining different paper stocks, and analogue and digital print techniques. Subscribers receive all 18 of an edition of 300 copies. Those issues stocked in regular outlets are part of an edition of 700 copies. Flint has an algebraic formula that inflates subscriber price as new issues are released. Unless you understand algebra, it's hard to know the price of a subscription at issue 18. One of the many benefits of subscribing is that, according to *Veneer's* website, Flint has offered to build bookshelves to house the issues. Inserted between the leaves can be found postcards and useless implements in specimen bags. Sometimes the pages have been perfumed; once, or so we are told, they were ritually whipped. Perhaps in homage to Marcel Broodthaers's *Pense-Bête* (1964), Flint sealed an issue closed by edging it in expanding foam. For issue three, he attempted to fund an issue entirely by 'reverse-advertising' – running companies' ads without their permission and invoicing them afterwards. Stevens told me that *Veneer's* liberal libel, plagiarism and copyright infringement has meant Flint has needed to work with a lawyer to write a 'shield' to protect him from legal notices.

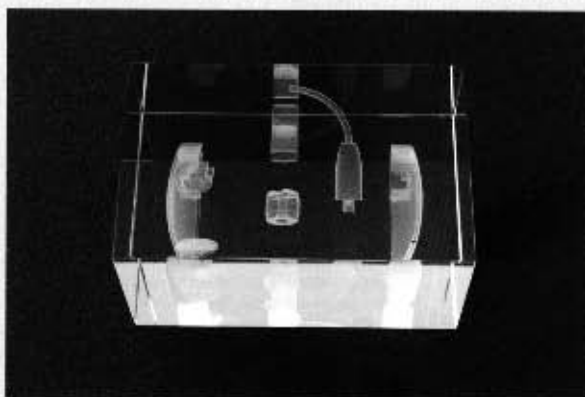
Although artists such as Adrian Piper, George Kuchar and Sturtevant have contributed to past issues, much of the content has the appearance of trade journals, promotional material and textbook literature. In *The Century of Artists Books* (2004), Johanna Drucker characterizes a kind of artists' book 'structured around the presentation of information as information'. 'Which is to say,' she continues, 'they are composed of material which is purely denotative.' No sooner have you read *Veneer*, than you have forgotten what it is you have read. Yet the seemingly limitless intricacies between *Veneer's* printed matter, its anarchic website and Flint's art practice transcend lumpen denotation. Flint has designs on the noisy surface of information aesthetics.

Flint has a gallery-based practice that incorporates lavish printed matter, and made and readymade objects. Among the latter, purple heartwood, 3D printing and other hi-tech materials are motifs familiar across works. *Frank/Canary Book!* (2012) is a cloth-bound letterpress book presented on a portable laptop table. For *Big Buddy* (2012), Flint studied sports rucksack manufacturing and produced his own curtain from georgette, polyurethane and zippers. *Stretched to Place* (2011) is a 'Mastercool' infrared

thermometer presented as found in its plastic case on a white plinth.

'Initially,' Stevens explained to me, 'Flint needed approximately £20,000 to make his latest show at Cubitt – four times the budget.' Told that it wouldn't be possible, Flint decided to do the research and make the thing himself. At the Cubitt opening, I could hear what a quarter of £20,000 sounded like before I could see it. A false wall bisected the space; embedded inside it was a luxury domestic jacuzzi. Its elevation, from horizontality to verticality, precluded any use whatsoever, and the dry pumps were working overtime in the absence of resistant flow. Facing it, two small sculptural works stood on a plinth and a shelf. On the plinth, atop a silver holographic sheet, was a 3D print, a rapid prototype of what could be a machine component isolated from its ensemble. Embedded at the centre of a block of purple heartwood, equal in size to the shelf, was what appeared to be vacuum-formed carbon fibre. A door led through a utility cupboard into the rear portion of the gallery where the botched innards of the jacuzzi were plumbed into a conveyor belt also constructed of purple heartwood. In the corner, filed away in a plastic form-moulded case and mounted on a camera tripod, were five identical handmade books. In one, set in letterpress text on thick paper, I read emblematic questions Flint routinely asks of systems, information and circulation in his work: 'OUTPUT What? To where? To what end?'

*Aaron Flint Jamison is an artist based in Portland, Oregon, USA. Recent solo exhibitions include Air de Paris, France; Centre d'édition contemporaine, Geneva, Switzerland; Artspeak, Vancouver, Canada (all 2012); and Cubitt, London, UK (2013). He is the co-founder of Yale Union, Portland, and the publisher of Veneer Magazine.*



1

1  
He is risen / Plastikman's  
Sternum, 2012, crystal,  
6 × 12 × 8 cm

2  
Planser, 2013, purple heartwood,  
carbon fibre,  
installation view at Cubitt  
Gallery, London

3  
Turbine, 57L7, 2013,  
mixed media, installation view  
at Cubitt Gallery, London

4  
A Floating Brand, 2012,  
book, LED Technostrobe lamp,  
purple heartwood, and five copies  
of the book A Floating Brand,  
dimensions variable



Miguel Abreu, 2015



Miguel Abreu, 2015



Miguel Abreu, 2015

## Aaron Flint Jamison

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

Aaron Flint Jamison's first exhibition at Miguel Abreu opened in July—an off time in the art world—and much else about the exhibition was also “wrong.” There was no opening, for example; in fact, when I visited the show, which was located at the gallery's Orchard Street space, I had difficulty even opening the door because there was a motion sensor controlling the lock that I managed, unintentionally, not to trip. Inside, conventions were similarly askew: There was no checklist, and though a press release appeared online, the gallery website had an intentional glitch in it, making this document virtually impossible to find. (Needless to say, images were similarly suppressed.) The space itself was largely empty, the lights dimmed, the gallery's signature bookcases emptied, and the office desk notably absent. The only thing on display (besides the emptiness of the gallery itself) was a single sculpture affixed to the center of the ceiling. Crafted out of purple heartwood and cedar and kitted out with hydraulic arms—the type one might affix to the inside of cabinet doors—the work maintained a profoundly strange and inscrutable air. I wanted to push it and pull it but thought better of it. The thing refused virtually all games of visual association. The next day I described it to someone as looking like an enlarged model of a Peugeot pepper grinder with a cutaway view. That was the best I could do.

I might not have seen anything else had someone at the gallery not casually tipped me off to the fact that there was more downstairs, in



Aaron Flint Jamison,  
*Breathers*, 2015,  
multiple sheets of  
black paper, each  
40½ × 26½".

the space typically used as the gallery's private viewing room. There, one found a desk fashioned out of materials similar to those used in the sculpture upstairs, except that it integrated computer parts and a screen delivering a live feed from the internet of the gallery above—providing surveillance that substituted for the gallery attendant's usual view from the absconded desk. (I had missed the heat-sensitive camera hiding in the upper corner of that room.) There was also a massive apparatus, a doppelgänger of sorts of the ceiling sculpture, again made of similar woods. This was one part of a closed, self-regulating system comprising grow lights, fans, and exhaust tubes painted a fantastic, gummy black. Each day as the gallery closed at 6:15, an attendant placed a sheet of black paper in the machine, where it spent the night exposed to the glare of the grow lights. If the machine got too hot, a heat sensor inside cooled things off. It is an art machine in the tradition of Jean Tinguely's Meta-matic drawing sculptures, perhaps, but the feel of the thing is different: Customized, luxurious, artisanal yet technical, it is something like the best, most stylish home-alarm system money can buy. Moreover, the results produced by the machine, titled *Breathers*, 2015, lack all mark of spontaneity, bearing only faint traces of their lightening, like the fabric of an old couch exposed to the sun. Given out for free at the end of the show, these ejected sheets function more like eerie souvenirs than like works of art.

If this work presented itself as a self-enclosed system, that was also true of the show as a whole—this is an art that really doesn't need you. And yet you are somehow implicated within it: caught on its cameras, trying (somewhat comically) to open its doors. Whereas artists such as Daniel Buren and Michael Asher have investigated the ideological and economic realities governing the gallery and museum, Jamison focuses on the various gadgets and monitors that regulate one's experience in these spaces while relating them, more broadly, to our society of control. Everything is painfully encrypted here and yet at the same time prone to leaks and malfunction. What parts are working? What is connected? Where is the information? How will it get out? Is the whole thing a decoy to distract you from seeing something else?

In her 2014 book *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*, architectural theorist Keller Easterling compares the infrastructure of today's world—from our airports to our credit cards, and the way all of this is standardized—to one large operating system. This, too, seems an apt description of Jamison's curious art. While too mysterious to align itself with any kind of programmatic position, his work is nevertheless deeply invested in ideas of program, which is to say, how things run. While there are suggestions of cracks and fissures, jams and dislocations, they mingle with—or run up against—an obdurate opacity. One wonders about the day when these competing forces will come to a head.

—Alex Kitnick



Cubitt Gallery, London, 2013

«A narrow slit in the wall at the end of this passageway led to a room dominated by the underbelly of the Jacuzzi, its abundance of plastic pipes surrounding a curiously liver-shaped foot basin. Alongside this object, with its insistent and surprisingly organic materiality, was a system of large transparent tubes that linked the Jacuzzi to a cylindrical wall-mounted machine, as well as to a conveyor belt on a wooden pedestal, which was running independently from a small motor: a detourned symbol of empty Fordist labor.

Irregularly but approximately once every hour, the larger machine sucked air from inside the conveyor belt, expelling it into the other gallery through the drain hole of the Jacuzzi.» (Alexander Scrimgeour, Art Forum)

## LONDON

# Aaron Flint Jamison

CUBITT

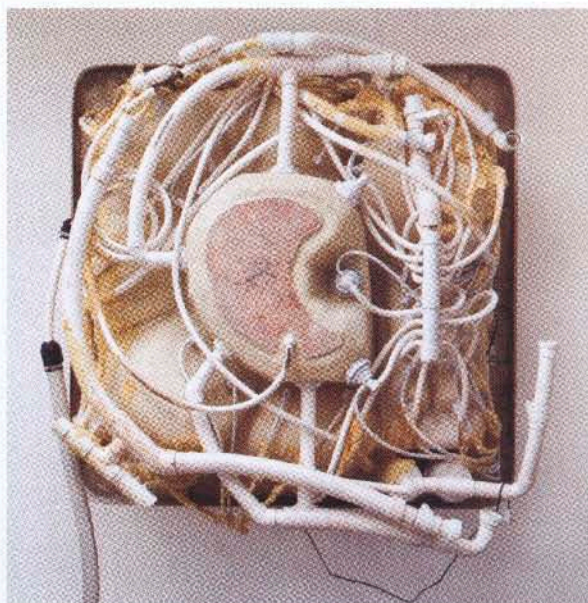
In the second issue of the Dada journal *The Blind Man*, an anonymous editorial on Duchamp's *Fountain*, 1917, famously proclaimed: "The only works of art America has given are her plumbing and her bridges." Aaron Flint Jamison's recent exhibition couldn't but bring to mind Duchamp's urinal, since, upon entering, viewers confronted a luxury Jacuzzi, mounted on the wall like a three-dimensional painting. With this updating of Duchamp's gesture, the Portland, Oregon-based artist managed to forcefully reformulate the contradiction between its assertive (this, too, is art) and negative (this is just some plumbing) power.

Yet this work was only the introduction to a far more complex and elusive project, as became explicit in the next gallery, which could be reached only through a corridor housing files, boxes, spare electrics, and the like. A narrow slit in the wall at the end of this passageway led to a room dominated by the underbelly of the Jacuzzi, its abundance of plastic pipes surrounding a curiously liver-shaped foot basin. Alongside this object, with its insistent and surprisingly organic materiality, was a system of large transparent tubes that linked the Jacuzzi to a cylindrical wall-mounted machine, as well as to a conveyor belt on a wooden pedestal, which was running independently from a small motor: a détourned symbol of empty Fordist labor.

Irregularly but approximately once every hour, the larger machine sucked air from inside the conveyor belt, expelling it into the other gallery through the drain hole of the Jacuzzi. This enterprise, also, was dramatically twofold: In the rear, the sucking air disrupted the smooth motion of the conveyor belt, while in the front, in near silence, a gentle breeze blew right into the viewer's face. Again, an allegory of transmission and permeability was at work, though one that was hard to decipher, even if the change it induced in the Jacuzzi-as-artwork was undeniable.

Other pieces in the rear gallery compounded the impression of a kind of artistic alchemy, one premised on a vacuum, an absence. The conveyor belt was paired with other, more intimate objects that one could take in hand and examine closely: a stack of prints, a tripod supporting a foam-lined box containing five books, a wooden bowl, and four small, enigmatic white forms fitted with lenses at each end. The books, hand-printed with repeating phrases and motifs, offered some words to describe what was happening in the exhibition, as well as images of the works on view. Their spines read MIND WIND/MENTAL RAY; inside were phrases such as PUSH WOOSH, FUNNEL LOGIC! The word AIRLOCK appeared repeatedly, as if a kind of chapter heading—perhaps appropriately, for it seemed to be the most fertile term via which to think about the exhibition. The site of production, poetic/technical research, and gut spilling in the rear gallery may have been complementary to the more traditional modes of perception required in the front gallery, yet they were linked by a cryptic zone of transition, analogous to but not identical with the progression of the viewer through the cupboard, or the passage of air

Aaron Flint Jamison, *Funnel Horn*, 2013, acrylic, fiberglass, plastic hoses, spray foam, jets, 82% x 82% x 39%".



from conveyor belt to Jacuzzi, itself created through an imbalance of (atmospheric) pressure.

The enigmatic generosity of Jamison's exhibition, presented without a checklist or press release, was made piquant by his use of a vacuum to multiply its interpretive possibilities. A kind of mysticism was at the heart of this process, as the materiality of the Jacuzzi, as a visual object, was accompanied by its negation, in the current of air moved from one space to another: a poetic and critical interweaving of ideas of matter and its absence.

—*Alexander Scrimgeour*





Artist Space, NYC, 2013



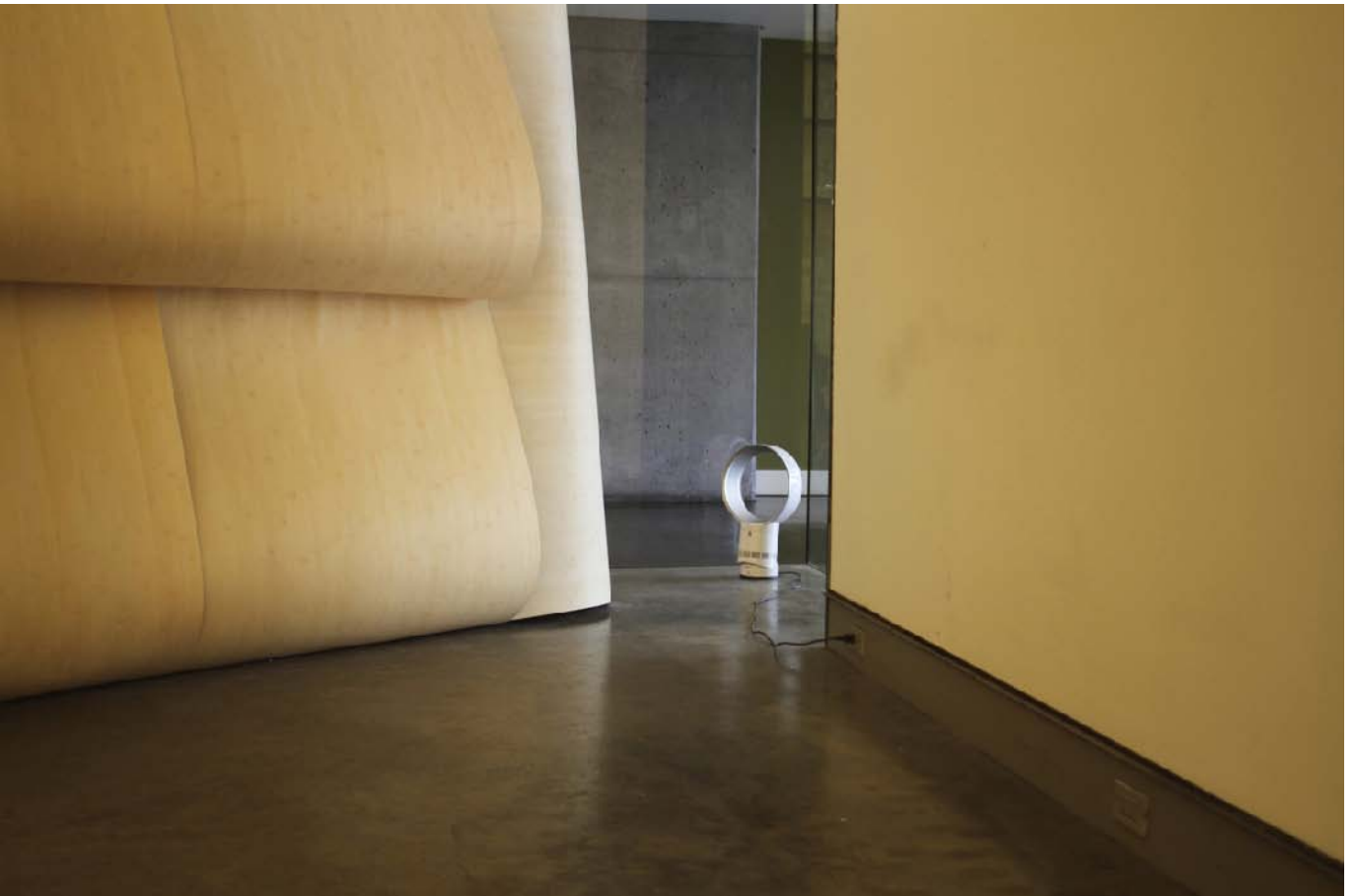
Artist Space, NYC, 2013



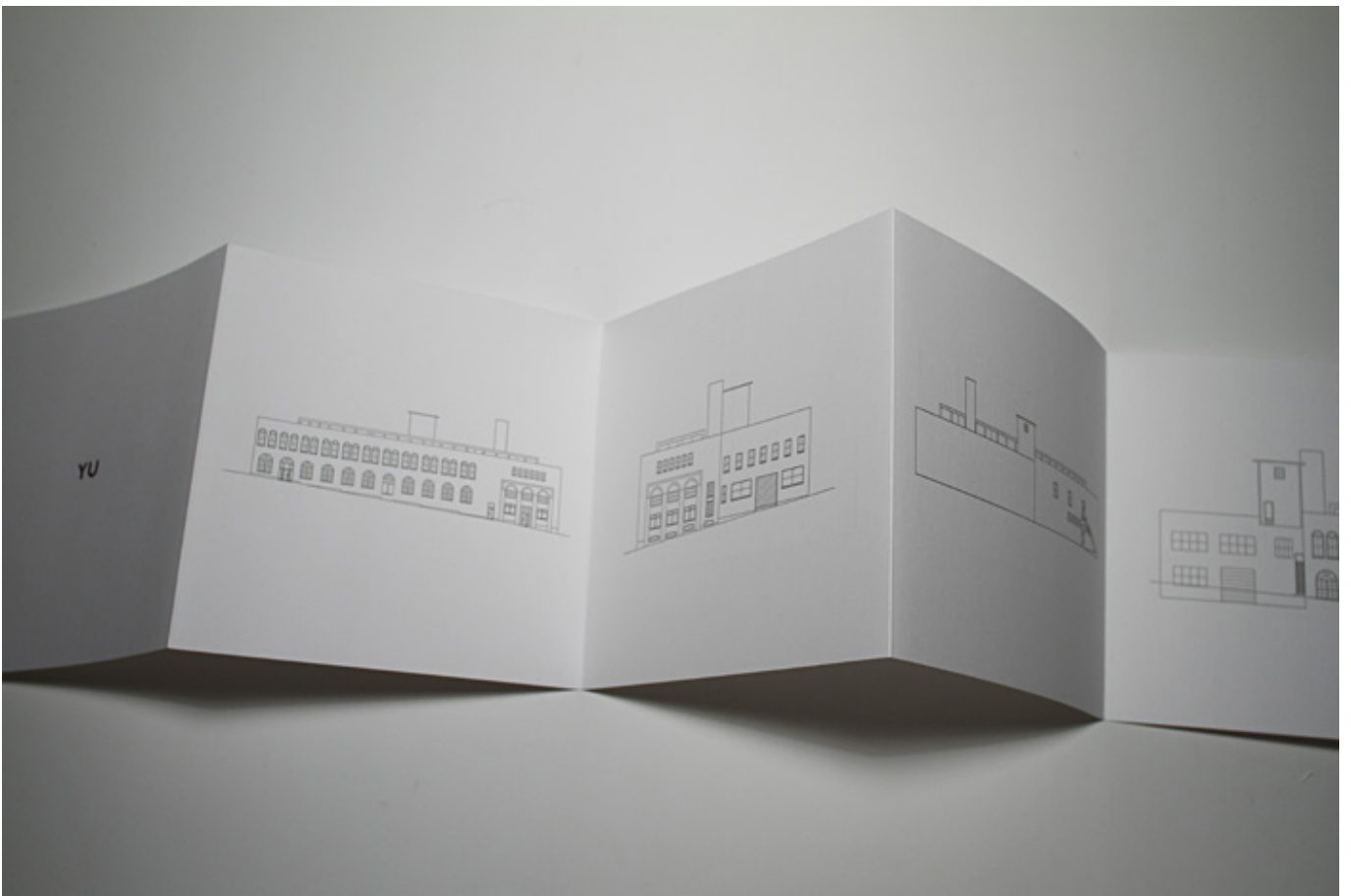
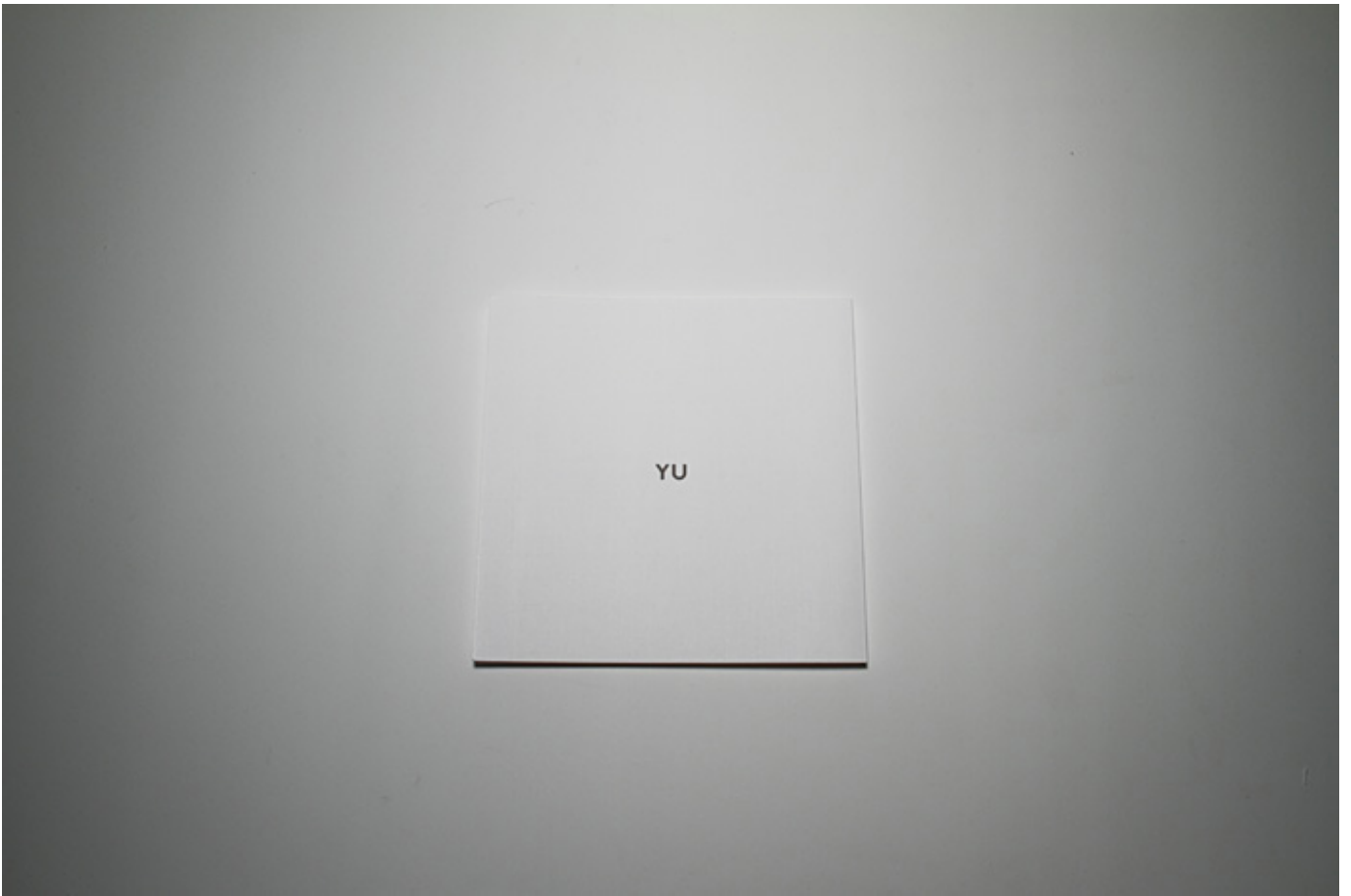
Air de Paris, 2012



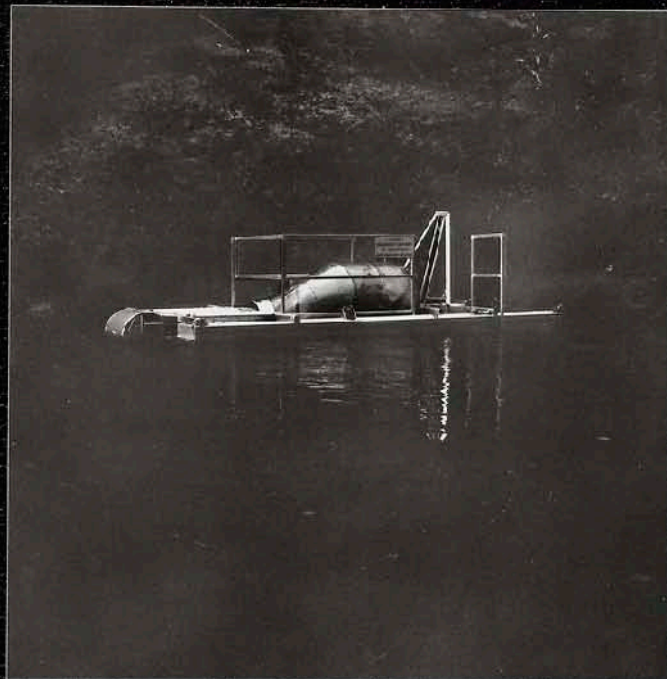
Air de Paris, 2012



Peeling Layers Yields Brief Openmouthed “Oh!”, Open Satellite, Bellevue, 2010



Yu Accordion Map  
15.25cm x 15.25cm 5-panel accordion print  
letterpressed on linen  
printed with emily johnson  
two inks  
questionably cross-branded, but beautiful scored, folded, pressed and numbered  
edition: 500

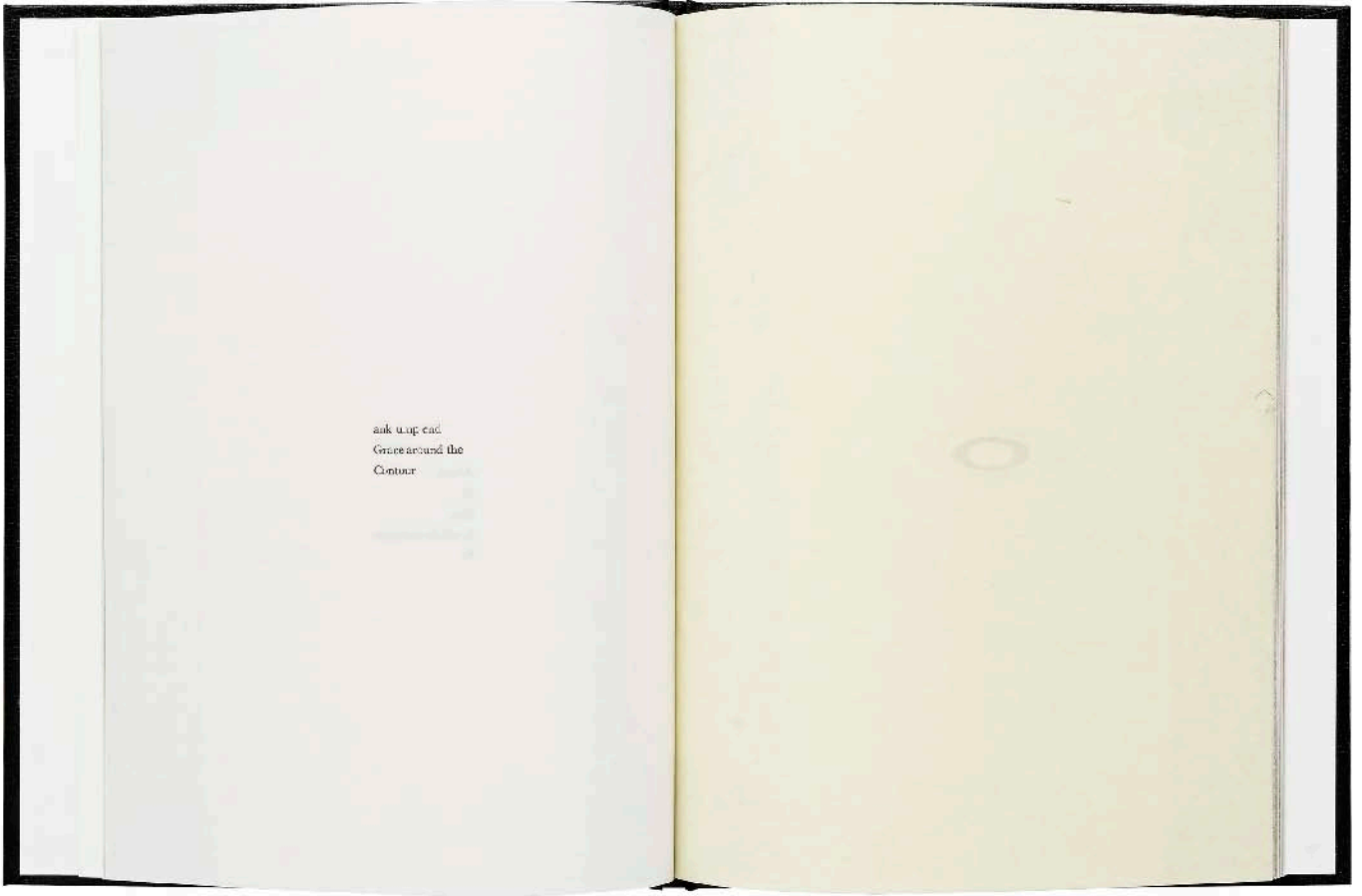


Flint Jamison

A Floating Brand, 2012

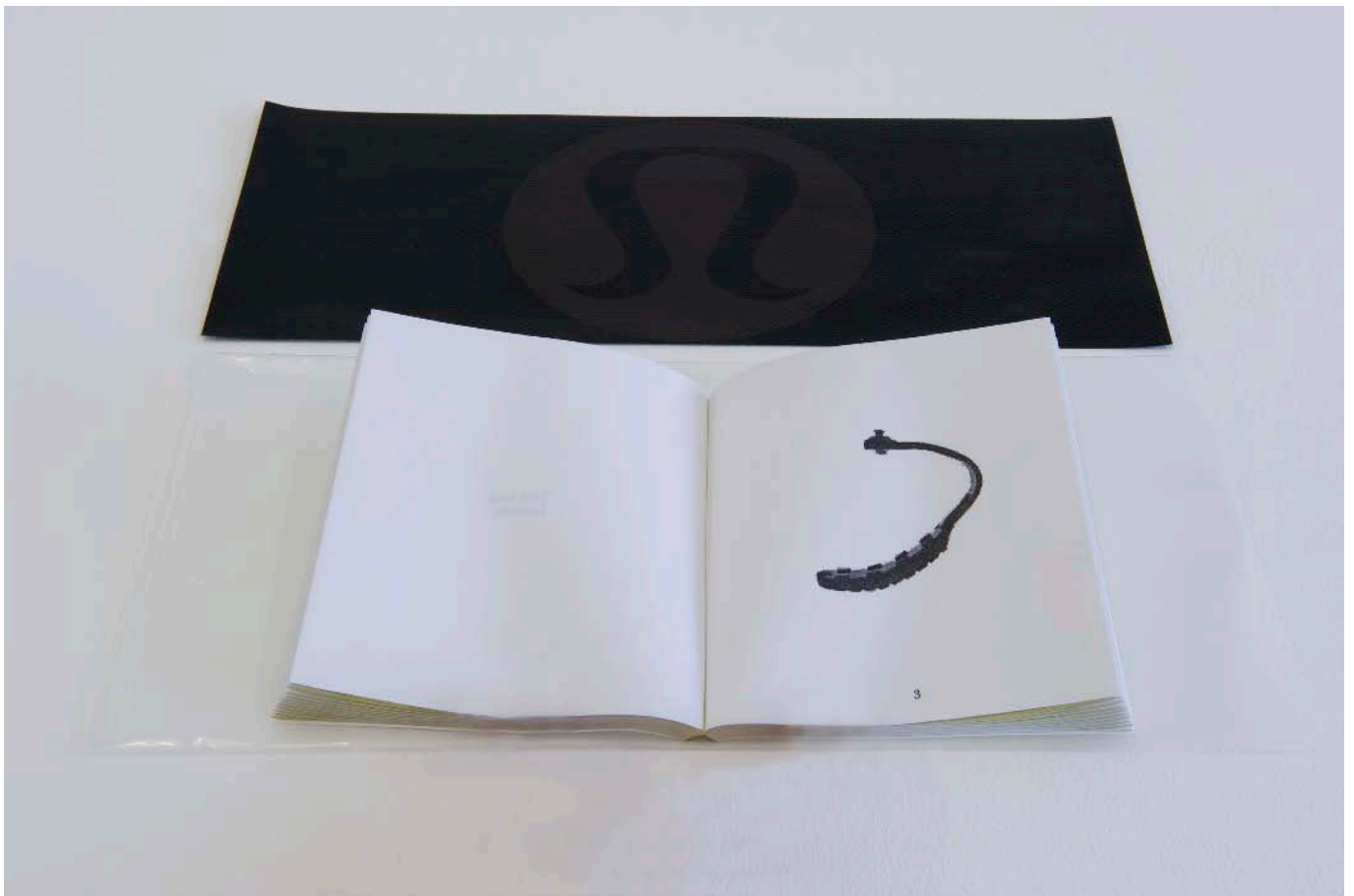
book, hardcover with embossing and argentic print on the cover, 64 pages, letterpress on NCR Carbonless 2-part 77gsm paper, endsheets : Agfa Synaps Water-resistant paper, sewn and bound at Oregon Bookbindery in Silverton, OR

Edition: 20



Flint Jamison  
A Floating Brand, 2012 (det.)





Flint Jamison  
Loolomoon book / Javascript Towel / Shammy / Litany for Two Choirs, 2012  
book, plastic bag, polyurethane, coded vinyl, letterpress  
31 x 15,3 x 1,8 cm / book: 11 x 13,2 x 1cm / carpet: 30,3 x 13cm  
Edition: 20



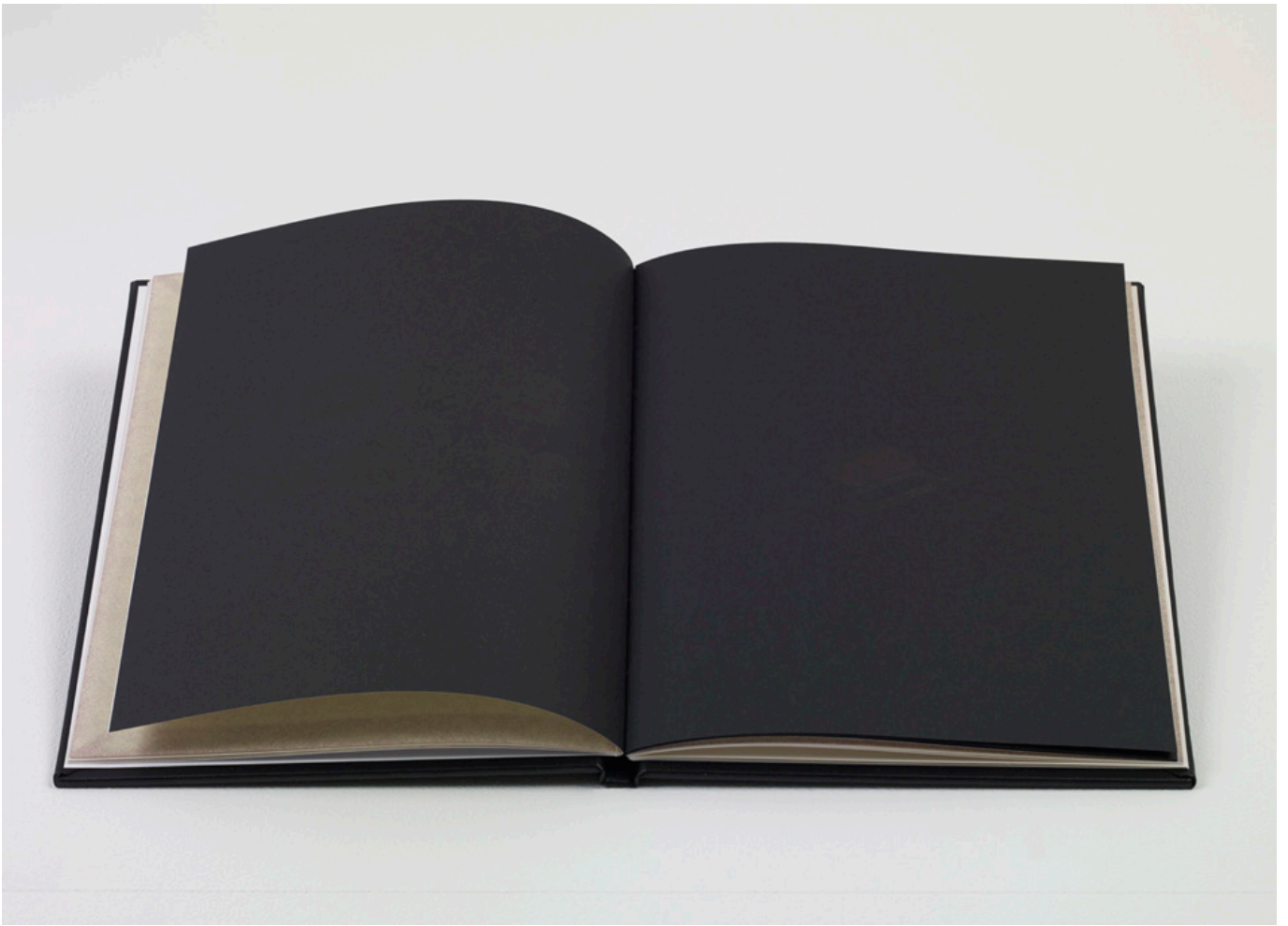
Flint Jamison

CHECKSUM/DIGEST, 2014

Slipcase with two books. Letterpress and inkjet, sewn, hard-bound in black pleather with slip case and foil stamped. signed

18 x 23,5 x 3,5 cm

Edition: 32



Flint Jamison  
CHECKSUM/DIGEST, 2014 (det.)



Flint Jamison is the founder and editor of the ongoing serial publication Veneer Magazine, an 18-book publishing project established in 2007. To date, 11 books in the series exist.

More info: <http://www.veneer.com>

# PAPER LOVE

BY JAMES HOFF

**Aaron Flint Jamison is an artist from Portland, Oregon, but he is also the editor of a particular publication that in terms of form and concept blurs the boundaries between the artist's book and the magazine. James Hoff, an avid reader of *Veneer*, met with the artist to talk about the extraordinary handmade quality of the magazine, and the irresistible qualities of purple-heart wood.**



**James Hoff:** It's nice to finally meet you (kind of), perhaps contact is a better way of saying it. I feel as though I've been receiving dispatches from you through friends and various bookstores now for years, (not to sound too cold war about it). Much of your work does involve a degree of undermining and employing bureaucratic channels and I'm curious to what extent this is a conscious exploration by you as an artist and/or the by-product of your role as a publisher, if you even distinguish between these two roles.

**Aaron Flint Jamison:** Thank you, I'm unapologetic about the work having a hard life in traditional economies or bureaucracies. That defines things automatically. Amongst other objects and performances I do indeed make books, but am I a traditional publisher? The work that I make has been dropped and rejected by distributors and I'm quite sure that most bookstores and sellers consider it to be a headache.

**JH:** I've always liked how you dismantle the role of editor/publisher with *Veneer*, formally and conceptually blurring the lines between an artist book and the magazine platform. There is, of course, a tradition to this critical approach—*Semina* and *Landslide* quickly come to mind. Can you talk a little bit about the genesis of *Veneer* Magazine and how it developed?

**AJF:** Perhaps a good way to answer this question would be to speak about the project's early material selections and how those and the specific process forced a rubric for the remaining books. I would hope that someone could look at the first issue that we started building in 2006 and witness a romance with the medium itself. Parts of the book are letterpressed, other sections are printed on offset press. The trim size is tall and narrow and the paper stocks are heavy and exaggerated. It is typeset in the technical but delicate Baskerville. The spine is excessively glued with a stiff hot melt perfect binding. Many inserts fall out of the pages when flipping through it. Producing in multiple these objects with

such tools and humble materials has been exciting to me since the beginning. This frank eagerness is important to what we are doing.

**JH:** I think they are great to explore and I always liked how you negotiated formal complications through craft and material.

This brings me to a particular work of yours that has been stuck in my head for a long time. It's a work I've never seen in person—it is *Unzipped Bulb* (2007). Part of me wants to ask you how you came up with the idea to build museum grade light bulbs from scratch and part of me wants to ask how on earth you convinced SFMoMA to allow you to use them (I mean how many waivers did you have to sign for that one?). I guess the obvious question is whether or not they worked, but the question I'm most interested in is what they illuminated?

**AJF:** A precise definition about where pieces begin and end is rare. It's like the fuzziness in pinpointing exactly where the culture begins and ends in Kumbacha. This implies that often tangible aspects of what I'm doing exists outside of this type of documentation, of course. Occasionally and as Joseph Grigely has wisely labeled these things exhibition prosthesis come about as appendages of performances, publications, shows, or bigger ideas. How wonderful. More traditional gallery environments stunting this energy is a concern, but also I love the formal platforms such places provide. I hope that it goes without saying that formal questions are also very interesting to me! I'm lucky to have found a few places and individuals who are willing to take these risks with me and communicate them in ways that respect the work. So, actually, I'm unaware of the piece that you are talking about.

What's interesting here is how your work often seems to involve unfolding and mine the opposite. Among others, both have central concerns of economy and like, authenticity. I remember opaquely texting you after watching a stream of you broadcasting your mobile number during a talk at the Walker Art Center years ago. I enjoy being confused by the role that justice plays in your editing. Thank you, 2012. Do you think that the treatment of material is overshadowed by concerns of accessibility? I'd hate for this conversation to digress into one of access, but maybe you could briefly talk about transparency before we move on.

**JH:** It's a good question, but I'd say that in my editorial work, at least with Primary Information, treatments are mostly driven by source material. That said, the only creative role for the editors of Primary Information is in the artists who choose in carrying out this role we try to maintain a non-influence, though this attempt is usually somewhat cracked by reality. Miriam Kazzeff and I essentially began the press when we were working at Printed Matter in 2001, where we were completely taken by the Guerrilla Art Action Group archive and wanted to see it (and material like it) out in the world. It was here that our romance for the archive met the institutional dogma of access, likely with a heightened sense of justice given the subject of our focus.

It seems your work with Yale Union (now) and (formerly) with Department of Safety has some altruistic roots. Was this part of the motivation or a by-product of a larger mission/concern? Contemporary (and now historical) thinking about artists' books requires the viewer to see the book as a spatial and conceptual alternative to the exhibition space, though little sensitivity is given to the qualitatively differences of spaces in formulating this concept. It is clear that you have a vast interest in the materiality of the page, but do you see a difference in the types of spaces that your work inhabits, whether it is at Yale Union, a gallery you are working with, or in *Veneer*. Your movement between these spaces appears seamless, but is it?

**AJF:** That's generous of you to call it seamless. I'm aware of it being cava-ther, but thinking about the audience in relation to these centers is something that I rarely afford myself. It's important, but these questions are not part of my particular job here and I work with some great individuals who can process in this way. My availability at YU—and at DoS for that matter—is focused around production these days.

The second part of your question is a very interesting one, of course. Nothing is easy. I often think of the Yale Union building itself as a red herring because of its responsibility historic and fetishized architecture seems to mandate. It's a struggle to resist this and attempt to think around exhibition and production responsibly. I'm not alone here. This is why we built the kitchen first. I have little to do with programming, but I can tell you that this is why we are having the Finlay exhibition in a room that is 70 sq/ft instead of an adjacent space that is empty and 10,000 sq/ft. This is why the Kuchar exhibition has been happening for three years and will last another five years. This is why we built the print shop in the basement—because it's always producing and that energy is crucial to the activity of the rest of the project.

I read the Xerox Book for the first time while sitting on a sweaty subway. It was circumstantial, but I found some tears in my eyes. I'm a deep believer, but

I don't subscribe to there being any formula for making these books or exhibitions. They are very different.

**JH:** I'd been meaning to ask you about Finlay—I see a parallel in your work and his, particularly in the way his work was constantly expanding through traditional and non-traditional partnerships and methodologies, some more stable than others, but never relying on them wholesale. Can you discuss your interest in Finlay? and perhaps talk a little more about the exhibition(s) devoted to him that you and YU are working on?

**AJF:** What a complicated artist! I'll be the last to say that I'm an expert on Finlay or that my work should be entered in the same sentence as his. I was introduced to his practice during the second Bush regime and then a few years ago, Tim Johnson and Caitlin Murray of Marfa, TX, asked me to make an anthology about him. This little book that they subsequently edited and produced, *The Present Order: Writings on the Work of Ian Hamilton Finlay*, was the outcome. It was a very confusing project for me because I was asked to interface indirectly with the work and then present it and produce it for some abstract interested audience that might actually purchase such a textbook. What is my roll, then a designer? What does that mean? More recently at Yale Union we have partnered with Reed College to make a few small exhibitions of his work over the next year. The college owns many hundreds of Finlay's pieces and are generously loaning them to us. The way that these exhibitions will happen is that we've asked aficionados who are more seasoned in responding to his work to make selections as individual, humble Finlay shows. Because the body is so diverse these Finlay experts all direct their attention to different aspects of the work. This model allows for different, complicated, and even contradictory edits to be presented from the exact same collection.

**JH:** I am curious about a re-occurring medium in your work from the past few years: purple-heart wood. It is such a specific surface and material. How'd you come to it? Are you still working with it?

**AJF:** It's true that my interest in this stuff is determined and that I love it! I don't think that I need to go into the particular reasons for returning to its use. I would say that it's a particularly unpleasant material to render, to my workshop is covered often in purple dust, how is this natural? I'm admittedly capricious and wide-eyed and have used plenty of materials that are more sincerely sustainable over the years but I have never found a suitable replacement for the characteristics I love about the purple wood.

**JH:** It sits in my mind perhaps because of *Snuggle Kit* which was the last work I saw of yours (at the "Freaks and Geeks" exhibition at Air de Paris last summer). You have an exhibition coming up shortly at Air de Paris in finishing up here can you tell me a little bit about it or give me a few hints about what your working on now? Likewise, when I can expect the next installment of *Veneer*?

**AJF:** The realistic plan is that the next *Veneer*, 09/18, will be on bookshelves everywhere by the end of the year. I'm quite excited about this, it's shipping up nicely. I generally enjoy working light on my feet, but I don't rush the process. Do you know about the story of the previous issue, 08/18? This is a conclusion: The offset printing facility and bindery that I was contracting with in Canada went into receivership and *Veneer* was the last book that it produced. However, the technicians were less concerned with quality control at that point as the bankers were kicking them out of the warehouse. The result of this was that the covers of *Veneer* were bound upside down and then accidentally they shipped me all the improperly bound books even though I retained payment. No one cared because the press was already bankrupt. We used that money we were going to spend on the issue instead on a plumbing project at Yale Union. Then we ripped off all of the covers of the magazine and considered 08/18 ransomed, free for anyone who wanted it. There is not one issue of that magazine that has a cover on it in the entire world. It was catastrophic and a failure at the time because there were entire signatures typeset in lead that were misbound and could not be salvaged, but in retrospect I'm also very proud of the new sinks in the basement of Yale Union.

Opposite — *Veneer* Magazine, no. 01/18-08/18, 2007-2012.  
Courtesy: the artist

*The Portland-based artist Aaron Flint Jamison is editor of the publication Veneer. When its run concludes in six years, the series will comprise eighteen issues, including a bookshelf to house the complete set for subscribers. Past contributors to Veneer include Sturtevant, George Kuchar, Kevin Kelly, and Ray Kurzweil. Jamison's work will be featured in a solo exhibition next February at castillo/corrales in Paris.*

**VENEER** comes out of my love for long-term projects and anything that seems to be in progress and slowly unfolding. Books have always been very important to me, but it wasn't until art school that I started to understand how to complicate the medium through using disparate materials and content. When I began, I was focused on the limitations of materiality, but it was also important to do it in a way that I had never seen done before. *Veneer* was published twice a year in 2007, 2008, and 2009. I'm currently finishing the eighth issue. After the eighteenth is produced, the project will be over. It could be said that there is a master rubric for the series, but that is an oversimplification, because I think about the ideas behind each issue on a micro and macro level.

Anyone who subscribes will receive all the back and all future issues, including ephemera that I send out between issues, such as little books that I'm working on, prints, a bookcase, and other surprises. The materials of each issue change in response to the content—different paper stocks, offset and letterpress printing techniques, bindings, and various inserts. It's important to me that bodies interface with production, so as much of the work as possible is done by hand with friends and colleagues—for instance, actions like embedding cubic zirconium gems into the pages of issue three, or rubbing Brut deodorant onto page 127 of issue four. There aren't any names of artists (or editors) on the spine, and the issues are not that wide, so they can be pushed to the back of the bookshelf pretty nicely. They aren't easy to display, present, or even sell. Sort of like a lot of art that is important to me.

For issue five, I spray-foamed the edges of every edition so that the book is very difficult to open. Untouched, it is reminiscent of sea foam, but it actually makes a melodramatic flaky mess when you try to rip it off. The most beautiful thing is that once you actually get it off the sides, you have to individually pull the pages apart, kind of like peeling away a sunburn. And that process relates to the issue, which for me was about *feeling* the edges of the ocean, waves coming in and out. Adrian Piper's article, for instance, talks about these rhythms, pacing, and repetition in yoga and philosophy.

Issue three was filled with stolen advertisements from other magazines—mostly French, but also some Turkish and English. After it was printed, I letter-pressed these really boring invoices and sent them with a copy of the issue to the companies that had inadvertently advertised with us. I received quite a few cease-and-desist letters because I was reverse-advertising, invoicing for contracted monies that were never agreed upon. Subsequently, I worked with a lawyer in San Francisco to write a document to protect me from getting sued. The document became a significant part of that entire issue for me.

The economy surrounding this publication is minimal. There are a few galleries and shops out there that engage with the books and their audience in a way that makes it possible for *Veneer* to be sold. But I've developed relationships with various retailers all over, and bless their hearts if they never pay me and if you still see copies of those early issues around on dusty bookshelves. I think I'm too invested in the process to be any help on a distribution level. But I recently saw a copy in a glass library vitrine and that was really nice.

— *As told to Lauren O'Neill-Butler*