



SNAPLINE

2020.2 — WASTE EDITION
FEATURED ARTIST: JP KING

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I live in a suburb without back lanes and so we have weekly curbside waste removal. Once a week on my late evening or early morning dog walk I get to observe the quantity and type of household waste and “recycling” my neighbours put out for removal. The clear blue plastic bags allow for a telling view into our consumption habits and our naive hope that we might be diverting some small amount of plastic, paper, and cardboard from a landfill future. I’ve had the unique opportunity to spend time visiting and touring the Edmonton Waste Management Centre, which allows me to vividly imagine the journey of each individual yogurt container over the 24 hours following garbage collection day, and the mountain plastic bales they are destined to sit in.

But, what does this have to do with art? and further printmaking? I would contend that art and waste are inextricably tied together in ways painfully obvious and also in subtle, philosophical modes that deserve deeper consideration. Waste is everywhere and inescapable, but can it have value? And if it has value, is it waste? This publication of SNAPline offers a glimpse into these relationships and into rethinking waste from multiple perspectives, but this is just the tip of the garbage pile. Once we begin to see waste as a reflective surface, a process of deeper systems understanding, we’ll have a hard time unseeing ourselves in it. My deepest thanks to the artists, students, writers, and editors who took time to contribute and reflect on the ideas within the following 34 pages, which are produced from a single sheet of 25x38” paper stock, and which the offcuts, I am assured, are recycled.



April Dean
Executive Director, SNAP

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

I just finished season two of *Witches of Eastend*, Lifetime’s premiere witch-focused drama from 2013. If that isn’t embarrassing enough, this is the second time I have found myself in this situation. Looking at my reflection on my dusty laptop screen as I watch my Netflix recommendations take a dark turn, I realize these are 45-minute episodes, and at 12 episodes a season, I just sat through 18 hours of questionable plots and some of the worst CGI magic TV can offer. 18 hours I could have spent writing this, or working on the residency application open in the next tab. Especially in the Covid-19 quarantine I have felt my time slipping through my fingers faster than I would care to admit.

At this point, it would really be a waste of an opportunity not to introduce myself...

Anyway the theme of this issue is waste. Jokes aside, I have three working drafts of this document; I keep restarting and re-researching in hopes the next attempt will get better, somehow holding more of my ideas, yielding more eloquence and insight than my writing usually allows. It was during this final attempt that I realized waste is inevitable, it is a part of the process. There will always be unseen drafts, time spent procrastinating watching “bad” TV, and countless ripped-out pages of my journal.

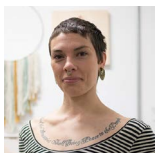
What I am trying to get at by pointing out the inevitability of waste is that as creators, maybe we should

embrace its obvious effect on our work and our processes. This piece exists because of waste, not in spite of it. In fact, creative work itself is in a binary relationship with so-called wasted time, energy, and brainpower. By not allowing the fear of waste to stop us from acting, I think we can leverage that same fear to teach us to be more mindful of the waste we make—and the beauty, honesty, and bad CGI that pours out of it.

I am so immensely proud and grateful for the opportunity to sit on SNAP’s Board of Directors. As a Board we are so excited to celebrate the product of our waste coming to life in our new Queen Mary Park space.

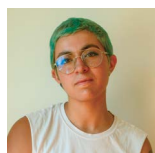


Nicholas Hertz
Board of Directors



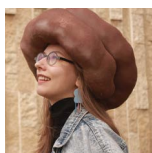
CAITLIN BODEWITZ is an Edmonton based artist, originally from northern British Columbia. She

pursued her passion and completed a Bachelors of Fine Arts with Honors in Printmaking from the University of Calgary in 2012. Bodewitz pushes the boundaries of traditional printmaking by incorporating silkscreening with drawing, photography, and woodworking. Her work is deeply rooted in celebrating, educating others, and protecting the natural world. A great deal of her current body of work depicts both flora and fauna species at risk within Canada— sea otters, caribou, mountain holly fern—with a goal of creating conversation around conservation.



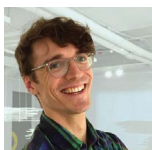
MEGAN GNANASIHAMANY is a gig economy worker, artist, writer, and curator. Their work

in video, performance, photography, and poetry examines systems of power and structures of meaning within language and visual media. Megan is currently working on a year long book project about authoritative images, and, this past spring, they began writing a weekly newsletter which you can read at https://tinyletter.com/Megan_G/archive



EMILY STORVOLD is an Edmonton based multidisciplinary artist and writer whose work deals with anxiety,

biology and space. She received a BA in English from MacEwan University in 2016 and graduated from MacEwan's Fine Art Diploma program in 2019. Storvold is interested in how humans relate to the world. She aims to make art that not only reveals the connections and disconnections that we encounter, but reimagines those paths we travel in an abstract language.



ALEX R.M. THOMPSON is a printmaker/artist pursuing his MFA at the University of Alberta. His work engages

with the built environment, reflecting on the timeliness/timelessness of architecture, how structures shape the individuals occupying them, and the compression of distances that technology enables. He has exhibited at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (Oshawa), Open Studio (Toronto), Megalo Print Studio + Gallery (Kingston, AU), and The Power Plant Gallery (Toronto), among others. He has participated in residencies at the Banff Centre, Centre[3] (Hamilton), and has worked at Open Studio and OCAD University. SNAPline is his first professionally published writing.

Featured Artist: JP King

JP King is an artist-designer-educator with a research-based multimedia practice focused on environmental wellbeing and waste as a world-shaping force. He is currently a PhD candidate at OISE, and teaches on the subjects of discard culture, sustainability, publishing, and printmaking at the University of Toronto. Nominated for a Governor General's Innovation Award in 2016, King's research has received support from SSHRC, The Banff Centre, OAC, and TAC. Alongside Sean Martindale, King helped pilot the City of Toronto's Solid Waste Management Artist-in-Residence program in 2018. He holds an MFA in Interdisciplinary Art, Media, and Design from OCAD U. With more than a decade of experience in independent publishing, design and illustration, JP is a pioneer in the field of Risograph printing. In 2010, he founded the experimental publishing lab, Paper Pusher. His award-winning personal print projects have been exhibited in various artist-run centres across Canada, and most notably at the MoMA. His client list includes Penguin Books, Oxford University Press, New Scientist magazine, and Fast Company. He was the former creative director of Papirmass, an art print subscription service that delivered more than 200,000 prints to people all over the world. JP King lives in Toronto with his wife, Kirsten McCrea.



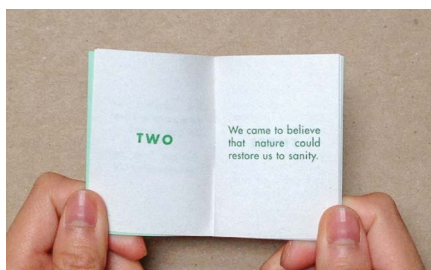
COVER IMAGE: JP King, *Tomorrow's Gold*, Split edition of 100, Risograph print, Aqua, Bubblegum, yellow ink, Vellum 80# Warm white, 2020.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Two passions drive my creative research: waste and print publishing. In 2010, I purchased and repaired a broken and near-obsolete Risograph printer from a Montreal copy shop. In a spare bedroom, I built my own little experimental publishing laboratory and called it Paper Pusher Printworks. I gathered old office equipment, furniture, and stocked old paper salvaged from a defunct mill. I collaborated with artists, writers, and designers to turn digital files into highly tactile publications, posters, and print editions. I worked until my elbows were covered in ink, and the rising sun filled my windows. Then, I went to sleep in the next room and rolled rainbows on my sheets.

Risograph is a delightfully quirky process. For those unfamiliar with Risography, the medium is best understood as a hybrid between screen printing and photocopying, though it is technically a descendant of the mimeograph and stencil duplication. In a high gloss world of virtual perfection, I fell in love with the irregularities and limitations of this method. The low cost and high speed allowed me to publish my “artwork” as freely circulating ephemera: pamphlets, cards, and posters. But believe me, the absurdity of giving away free prints on the subject waste is not lost on me.

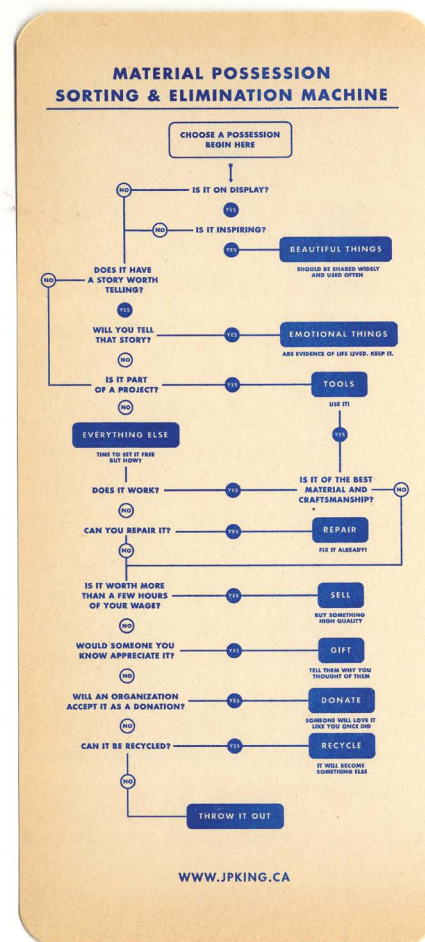
Waste, as we know it, is a capitalist magic trick which makes us believe that wasted-things have no value.



As an artist-designer-educator, I am concerned about the invisibility of waste-as-a-belief-system, actively shaping our relationship with the surrounding world. Disposable design strategies lay to waste extracted resources, toxic compounds, functional goods, natural landscapes, and every type of life on earth. Our society excels at turning resources into waste faster than it can turn waste back into resources. And so, ironically, as we waste more resources, we may soon discover that today's garbage will be tomorrow's gold.

The print, “Tomorrow's Gold”, playfully depicts a waterfall of colourful plastic containers, the kind of which fill recycling bins around the world. I created this image as a mid-century commercial illustrator would have. I digitally emulated Bourges sheets to overprint three spot colour separations, which produce a final palette of seven colours. I was drawn to turn this chaotic composition into a graphic print as I began to think about camouflage patterns, and how garbage, as a cultural designation, hides residual value. When I finished the drawing, the bottles, to me, looked like the kind of treasure hoard that a cartoon dragon would protectively sleep atop.

In 2018, China halted the import of dirty plastics and the global recycling system collapsed. The iconic recycling bin has become symbolic of a serious problem. Unwavering faith in recycling has validated a disposable way of life. The flaw in plastic packaging is that it is designed to outlive the shelf life of its contents by a few centuries. Said differently, the juice goes bad long before the jug. So, as microplastics show up in waterways, fruits, and even mother's milk, sadly, the monstrous hybrid that is today's garbage may not be gold after all.



LEFT: JP King, *Materialists Anonymous* (Selected pages), Risograph print, booklet, 2013.

ABOVE: JP King, *The Disposal Flow Chart*, Risograph print, Salvaged paper, 2014.

NEXT SPREAD: JP King and Sean Martindale, *Our Desires Fail Us* (Selected works), Digital photograph, 2018.



Wasting Away Together

Early this spring, when the closure of the border between the United States and Canada had just been announced, a friend video-called from Oregon. I threw out a pile of paper (notes, receipts, half-finished grocery lists) that was taking up space on my desk, and answered. The signal fluttered in and out, a side effect of the University of Oregon's free wifi network; as the video lurched frame to frame, Dana Buzzee and I abandoned our summer plans.

We spoke about collaboration and landed on a challenge: how to reproduce the physicality of working together, that side-by-side feeling, across nearly 5000 km of insurmountable distance.

alone, there is a specific intimacy to the work of collaboration: the physicality of sharing tools, space, and intention side-by-side in the process of making together. In the spring, when Dana called, we spoke about collaboration and landed on a challenge: how to reproduce the physicality of working together, that side-by-side feeling, across nearly 5000 km of insurmountable distance.

Vice Versa is an ongoing project designed in response; it is one attempt to translate the specificity of place, time, and effort that printing together in person encapsulates without denying the implications of space between us. Collaboration over long distance is only possible through multilinked pathways of technology and labour. The physical web of cable that allows us to coordinate through the internet is echoed in an interconnected network of workers whose work in fabrication, transport, and sanitation

Since meeting in Calgary in 2016,

Dana and I have written collaboratively, curated each other's work, and provided critique from afar, maintaining the sense of long term, creative vulnerability that characterizes friendship between artists.

We visit in person once a year during my annual return trip to Edmonton, and invariably our conversation follows the same, undiscussed route: we catch up—"what are you working on" becomes "remember when..." – and the track ends where it always does: on collaboration. For all the poetic potential within notions of collective effort and a loss of ego, creating beyond the scope of what one could do

Written by
MEGAN GNANASIHAMANY

enable our collaborations to continue. We have a responsibility to the network, and *Vice Versa* is an endeavor to meet it. I was already working from home when isolating became a public health necessity. A week later, Dana was teaching their

Collaboration over long distance is only possible through multilinked pathways of technology and labour.

undergraduate students through Zoom and grading at a folding t.v. tray table. In discussing our ad-hoc apartment studios, we looped back over the logistics of printed work and long distance collaboration. Without the anonymity of a

collective garbage bin in the corner of a shared studio, the potential volume of each of our individual waste outputs during the course of the project grew threatening. Printmaking has byproducts; offcuts, misprints, and test proofs join paper towels, saturated rags, and hollowed out plastic tubs in the incidental waste of working. Working digitally would appear to address the issue of excess material waste, but even digital consumption has an environmental cost.

In *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future*, James Bridle examines the impact of waste, heat, and carbon emissions from large-scale data storage sites. Physical infrastructure that upholds the cables, towers, and data centres which grant us access to high speed video and file sharing produce "about the same



carbon footprint as the airline industry," expanding the number of people affected by our project to include anyone who works on the upkeep and damage control that our internet reliance necessitates.¹

It was with this sense of gravity that we determined the "rules" for our collaboration: nothing bought, nothing wasted, and nothing sourced from

¹ James Bridle, *New Dark Age*, Apple Books, 2018, 122.



the infinite, digital database that forms our immediate environment when sharing space is not possible.

These three rules of *Vice Versa* stem from our understanding of collaboration as a relationship of ownership and responsibility. Collaborators, as equal players in the work of art making, gain a sense of ownership over the work

that's produced; in doing so, we also gain a sense of responsibility to each other, committing to uphold each person's contribution as integral to the whole of the project. In part, limiting the concomitant factors of consumption and waste through these rules is a means of controlling the collaborative network. In 1967, Charlotte Posenenske posited that artistic collaboration is not limited to artists with her work, *Square Tube Series*. "Collectors, promoters, steel workers, transporters, installers, and 'spiritual and financial supporters'" were credited as "co-authors" in her steel and corrugated pasteboard sculptures, expanding the scope of who had ownership over the final pieces to anyone whose labour, in part, contributed to its exhibition.²

To extend Posenenske's logic of co-authorship to contemporary printmaking, the list of unnamed collaborators must include not only paper makers, ink producers, and creators of digital image sources, but also sanitation workers, whose work is integral in actualizing the object of a print, and who, therefore, have ownership over it. In every purchase of paper and partnership with printers, waste is produced. Even an effort to "shop local" can't account for the fact that the more we buy, the more labour

If we are not responsible to our collaborators, the project fails.

is required of essential workers in fabrication and sanitation. Supply-chain economics and outsourced fabrication confuses the effort to consider every worker whose labour contributed to the final piece as a collaborator, and the

geographic scope of Canadian garbage is far reaching. When the network of collaborators extends all the way to people who may interact with our offcuts and printing rags in Philippines, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Indonesia, the project of listing co-authors becomes too expansive to fully realize. If we are not responsible to our collaborators, the project fails. The more waste we produce, both physical and digital, the harder it is to ethically consider our work a true collaboration.

With any set of rules comes the possibility of breakage. While I don't delude myself in thinking that we will manage to produce zero waste and purchase-free prints, the context of our isolation reveals the stakes of attempting to meet our own expectations. Arundhati Roy has described the pandemic as a "portal, a gateway between one world and the next"³ in which the former world is the current one, where violent, racial capitalism has determined that the populations most often targeted by structural inequality would also be the those most likely to be affected by the virus.

The same systemic oppressions that determine the unequal spread of COVID-19 also impact who feels the weight of the waste we produce. By expanding ownership or authorship to anyone whose work plays a part in creating the materials, tools, and systems that enable long-distance collaboration, Dana and I become responsible for the division of work, complicit in a system that places the burden of waste on people for whom isolating from a viral pandemic was never an option.

The word "collaborator" carries a second meaning: politically, to be a collaborator is to occupy a role of complicity. Collaborators are aides to the enemy, double-crossing obligations of solidarity. The fiction is that in colluding with the powerful you, at least, will be let out alive. Within the reality of ongoing health, human rights, and environmental crises, to get out and leave anyone behind is not an option. Collaboration grants us a framework to reconsider our responsibilities, and to own that which we produce. If we are going to reduce our complicity with structures of injustice, where we draw the line on how much waste is acceptable has to shift closer and closer towards zero. For Dana and me, *Vice Versa* is a means of continuing to collaborate within this future.

The rules of *Vice Versa* are a refusal to settle for half measures like recycled paper, "green" inks, and local production. For now, it is a chain of emails and a drawing of my home studio, sketched on the back of a notice from the city about wearing masks. Once I mail the drawing to Dana, our network will expand to include letter carriers and drivers, and every move we make in collaboration will expand it further. We are aiming to consume nothing and waste nothing; in our imperfect execution is the beginning of a collaborative practice that radically limits our complicity within racial capitalism and environmental damage. The stakes are no less than working towards the second world that Roy interpellates, the one on the other side of the portal.

LEFT: Megan Gnanasiamany, *Home Studio*, Drawing and digital image, Process image for *Vice Versa* to be mailed to Dana Buzzee

PREVIOUS SPREAD: Charlotte Posenenske, *Square Tube Series D*, Configuration by Rirkrit Tiravanija, Photographed by Daniel Pérez, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/10/arts/design/10charlotte.html>.

² Martin Herbert. *Tell Them I Said No*, Sternberg Press, 2016, 41.

³ Arundhati Roy, *The Pandemic is a Portal*, *Financial Times*, Published April 3, 2020.

MY PROCESS

Elisabeth Belliveau



BORN: Antigonish, Nova Scotia

EDUCATION: Alberta College of Art and Design, Sculpture (BFA) and Concordia University in Montréal, Fibres (MFA)

CURRENTLY LOOKING AT: Anne Truitt, Carol Bove, Jennifer Packer, Clara Peeters, Kablusiak

INSPIRING ARTISTS: Eva Hesse, Fischli and Weiss, Giorgio Morandi

ALWAYS READING: Anne Carson and Clarice Lispector

FAVOURITE ANIMATORS: Nathalie Djurberg, Suzan Pitt, Allison Schulnik, Wael Shawky

Written by
EMILY STORVOLD

After not running into Elisabeth Belliveau at art openings and talks for months, I was excited to hear about her quarantine experience. Seeing Belliveau's mobiles appear on Instagram over the past months made me curious about the evolution of her materials and how these recent works might relate to her practice. The mobiles consist of items found around the artist's home, such as sanded takeout containers and chocolate bar wrappers. Belliveau repurposes dried orange slices and toilet paper rolls and delicately arranges them to strike a balance.

Beginning with reading, material exploration, and observation, she gives objects another life and a new meaning.

Do you feel like quarantine could be a type of residency? I imagined it would be. It's totally not like that at all. Because of my teaching job, and adapting to on-line instruction, planning for fall and rescheduling my exhibitions, the work I had already been planning to do ramped up. There's also been so much powerful online content and community, and we need to think about what's valuable right now. It is a good time to reflect on how to direct that energy. I'm paying more attention to cooking, food, and to the materials I have accumulated in my studio, as it's complicated to gather or shop right now. I have to be really conscientious and critical with every purchase, order

or engagement with the outside world. So, I'm thinking about materials even more. I'm thinking about the networks of trade and exchange, labor, and consumerism--there is a heightened sense of risk and responsibility due to the pandemic and social consciousness raising.

LEFT: Elisabeth Belliveau, *Still life Tokyo*, Installation, neighborhood flowers and herbs (Zenpukuji), jesmonite cast containers, copper, found objects, Youkobo Art Space Japan, 2019.

Can you describe your creative process?

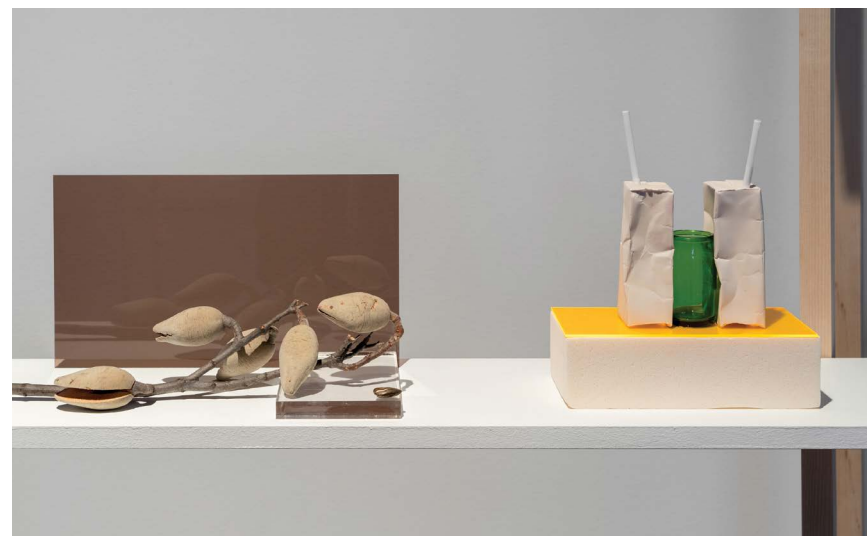
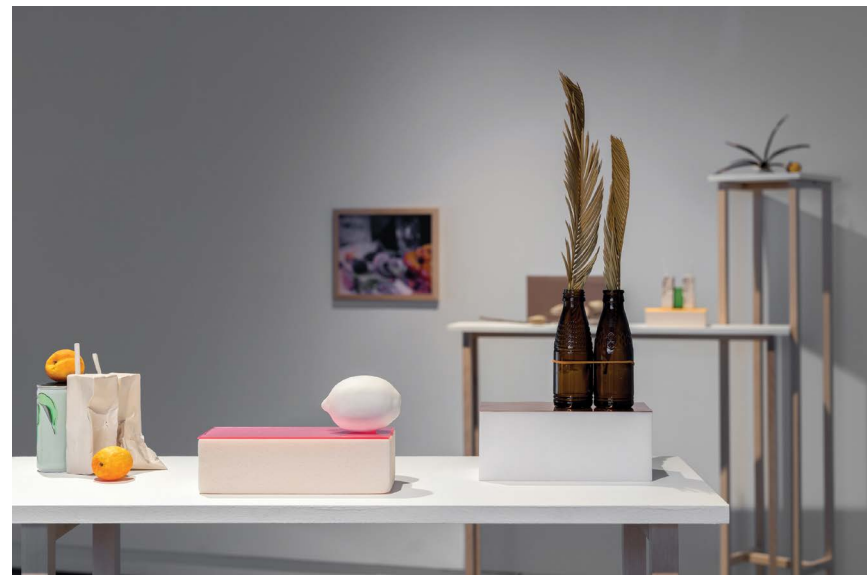
At this point in my career, I have a sense of the cycles of my studio practice. Generally I am always reading a range of books and genres and try to intuitively follow links. I take notes when I'm reading and compile quotes or reflections. I collect a lot of objects or materials that tend to also resonate with what I'm reading and the way I'm thinking. Suddenly there will be a build up of energy, or questions. And then I need to make something to answer those questions or to tie those ends together. Right now on my desk I have rotten potatoes, dried figs, plaster casts of hands, and all these random objects. But I'm reading Leonora Carrington, and if you think about it for 10 seconds, broken objects, rot, it's all there. You want to see what will happen if you set this potato on fire and film it. It's like you're putting things in relation to each other and seeing what kind of energy that holds. Sometimes it resonates, like striking a bell. And for me, that usually comes out in an animation.

When did you start creating contemporary still lifes?

I went to the residency at Banff Centre about five years ago. Mark Clintberg was the mentor for an artist residency called Still Alive. He brought artists together who were thinking about still life. And I was thinking about it through a feminist lens. For example, how women were able to participate in painting still life historically and how they were excluded from painting things like war scenes or grand portraits. But still lifes in the home were acceptable. So I was thinking about how women embedded their stories and subverted this genre (ex. Clara Peeters tiny self portraits painted

in the reflective surfaces of metal vessels). I was interested in the still life as an access point to understand a little bit more about women's lives in the past. I've always been interested in women's stories preserved through diaries, journals, and letters. Through that residency I started thinking about the still life painting.

LEFT BOTTOM/TOP:
Elisabeth Belliveau, *Still Life with Fallen Fruit* (after *A Breath of Life*, Clarice Lispector), vue d'exposition, VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine, Montréal, 2019. © MOMENTA | Biennale de l'image et VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine. Crédit photo : Jean-Michael Seminaro



How does the concept of “waste” influence your work?

For me it's about thinking about my responsibility to the things I bring into my life and that nothing ever really goes away. In still life painting there is the subgenre of 'breakfast still life': depictions of the abundance and decadence and all the wasted food, after the party. People wanted to have that painted to show their wealth. I get hung up thinking also, about the waste created on the journey of the thing to the table, which illuminates socioeconomics and access. And I have to acknowledge that participating in art exhibitions and travel is fraught with environmental consequences. With the mobiles I'm making right now, I'm considering all the packaging and everything that's coming into my home. As a single person it's easy to be aware of your garbage and recycling and to take stock of that. So regarding waste, I am learning to closely observe materials and what they do, how they behave. For instance in my work right now I am focusing on one potato for three months (through time lapse and animation) and you really have to think about that potato. When you slow down and look at one thing, you realize the implications around each object that you bring into your life.

Decay is so prevalent in your work. Maybe you could tell me a bit about that?

I think that decay and expiration express a lot of energy that is overlooked because there's this draw to or celebration of the new thing or the flower in bloom. There's this idea of the peak of use, beauty, or value. Maybe we can reconsider that and appreciate the beauty of transformation. I guess that could be a metaphor for many things. Right now I'm looking at the way a potato

transforms. And it's urgent and weird. When you watch it, it's reaching and grasping and rotting and it's trying to thrive and connect to something else. It's very alive.

RIGHT: Elisabeth Belliveau,
Still life with fallen fruit,
Video still image, 2019.

Videos:
vimeo.com/user2619506



Written and Illustrated by
ALEX R.M. THOMPSON

I'd like to briefly venture back to 1997 – the year that the original Star Wars trilogy was re-released on VHS, with added visual effects and classy new packaging. The event received mixed reviews from fans of the franchise, but my six-year-old self was swept up by enthusiasm - my first introduction to science fiction was tremendously influential, and impressively ubiquitous.

The marketing push ran the gamut, including a partnership with a certain pseudo-Italian culinary establishment. Yes, our story begins with Pizza Hut(t)'s promotion, and a tiny plastic Han Solo encased in carbonite.

The toy took the form of a tray, with the image of the iconic frozen Harrison Ford divided into a three-by-three grid. Eight of the spaces contained parts of the likeness, while the ninth was a void, allowing the other pieces to slide along the grid and swap places with the empty rectangle. Unbeknownst to me, I had just been introduced to the “15 Puzzle,” a mathematical game in which a would-be solver starts with a jumbled layout of tiles, and must move them up, down, left, and right, navigating the blank tile around the board to reach a predetermined goal state (perhaps a passing representation of Han Solo).

There is considerable value in the small-scale puzzle as an approach to devising responses to larger issues confronting the human population.

The simplest form is a straightforward sequence of numbered tiles, but versions where images must be re-assembled exist, appealing to aesthetic sensibilities.

The Star Wars puzzle leads me into thinking about the specific characteristics of games more generally; Han Solo's jumbled form provides tools for internalizing problem-solving strategies and instincts.¹ There is considerable value in the small-scale puzzle as an approach to devising responses to larger issues confronting the human population. Confronted with the myriad challenges that contemporary societies face, climate change looms large and urgent. The goal-oriented nature of the puzzle, however, allows me to simplify the problem, making it

¹ Thanks George. And Pizza Hut(t), I guess.



more approachable. I consider the scale of the 15 Puzzle in a flexible way with consistent rules; my initial encounter with the toy was a three by three grid, but it could hypothetically be a grid of any size – think of the complexity of a fifty by fifty grid, with 2,499 squares being gradually shuffled around by a single free space. By imagining the squares as pixels in an image, a greater number of them yields a higher resolution image, but vastly increases the number of moves (and therefore amount of time) that must be invested to reach a “goal state.”

The puzzle surfaced in the late 19th century, experiencing a sort of craze in the United States during the 1870s through the 1880s² when at least two people (Sam Lloyd, false claimant to the 15 Puzzle's invention, and Dr. Charles Pevey, a dentist) offered a cash reward to the individual who could rearrange the puzzle into a particular configuration.³ This proved a cunning publicity stunt and an unfair ruse: in order to reach a given configuration of tiles, not all potential starting layouts will allow the puzzler to achieve that particular solution.⁴ No amount of shuffling the squares around will change that.

² “The “15” puzzle for the last few weeks has been prominently before the American public, and may safely be said to have engaged the attention of nine out of ten persons of both sexes and of all ages and conditions of the community,” says the editor of the 1879 December volume of the *American Journal of Mathematics*. Johnson, Wm. Woolsey and William E. Story. “Notes on the “15” Puzzle”. *American Journal of Mathematics*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Dec. 1879) pp. 397-404. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

³ Slocum, Jerry, and Dic Sonneveld. *The 15 Puzzle Book: How it Drove the World Crazy*. Beverly Hills, CA: Slocum Puzzle Foundation, 2006..³

⁴ For detail on the densely mathematical side of this, Archer's article is a good one: Archer, Aaron F. “A Modern Treatment of the 15 Puzzle.” *The American Mathematical Monthly*, vol. 106, no. 9, 1999, pp. 793–799. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2589612. Accessed 9 June 2020.

Math comes to the rescue when we consider whether or not we should take the time to confront the puzzle. Based on a current set of tile placements and a predetermined board state constituting victory, you can predict whether or not that victory can be achieved.⁵ Investigated purely as a toy intended to challenge a user, the 15 Puzzle is a gauge of cleverness. The essential concept of the object, however, provides a metaphorical avenue to broach more critical discussions in our approaches to problem-solving. I start viewing the puzzle as a microcosmic simulation of some macrocosmic challenges.

At its core, the 15 Puzzle is a closed system where a problem solver has a fixed set of components that, when arranged in a particular way, give them a configuration that forms a coherent sequence or picture. By determining what that desired end state will be, the would-be solver can move the pieces around to attempt to achieve it. I think (as I often do) of cityscapes, where the different components, systems, and infrastructure are shifted around one another, chasing after an efficient, livable state. In my art practice, urban elements orbit one another before descending into some final configuration: an imagined city that reflects an individual's internal process of ongoing development. I have the advantage of creating immaterial city spaces, and I'm not limited to working within the constraints of what is plausible. Even so, setting out with an objective, and looking at the complete image is crucial – and in this respect creatives of all stripes shine. Imagining a resilient configuration of existing resources, both natural and intellectual, is necessarily collaborative between many disciplines. Without treating the problem in a broad, solution-focused way, it's possible to get absorbed by the potentially endless shifting

of components in a tiny part of the “puzzle,” forgetting how these interact with the entire structure.

By shifting the scope, I start to see ways that game theory can be applied beyond the limitations of what is typically thought of as a “game”. Ian Bogost, in his talk about his 2016 book *Play Anything*, cleverly reframes an understanding of “play” to enable it to surface in areas we would not

Play is detached from idle and unproductive pastimes, becoming a way of manipulating the limited components of an environment, and therefore present in professional paths not typically associated with games.

associate with “games,” or even “fun.” Bogost examines play as a process of acting within a certain set of constraints, using the materials available within them to find new potential configurations.⁶ Play is detached from idle and unproductive pastimes, becoming a way of manipulating the limited components of an environment, and therefore present in professional paths not typically associated with games. Play in art research is an easy leap for me to make (how often have I heard of someone “playing around” in the studio?), but Bogost’s argument enables me to associate disciplines like architecture, urban planning, economics, and climate science with the overlapping realm of play.

In the wider world, physical constraints determine what potential configurations of structures are possible. I think there is merit to the simplified shorthand of the 15 Puzzle in complex settings; the core mechanical principles of the game can be extrapolated to look at the limitations that are present in the way cities are constructed, while the essential goal state that is established should guide the moves that the player (or city councillor, politician, urban planner, CEO) makes. The long term is essential in these cases – Toronto’s ongoing Port Lands Flood Protection Project is a good example.⁷ The project is a hefty investment (\$1.25 billion, and projected to be completed by late 2023), but bears in mind the increasing prevalence of extreme weather events that threaten populations and crucial infrastructure.⁸ By the same token, policy decisions that reverse existing protections or protocols need to be interrogated – are they steps towards the long-term goal, or reactions to immediate pressures?⁹

Simulating possible outcomes to scenarios with a finite set of inputs is a broadly-used approach to modelling data, particularly with regards to climate science.

⁵ For a more detailed investigation of the mathematics that guide the solution, Numberphile’s video is a highly accessible reference. Numberphile. “Why is This Puzzle Impossible?” Youtube, Stephen Bradlow, Pete McPartlan, and Brady Haran, April 21, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YH1WqYKH178>.

⁶ Chicago Humanities Festival. “Play Anything.” *YouTube*, interview with Ian Bogost. July 24, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRx8X8nMlo0>.

⁷ Wallace, Kenyon. “How do you build an island in Toronto.” *The Star*. Sat. Jan. 4, 2020.

⁸ IPCC, 2019: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems* [P.R. Shukla, J. Skea, E. Calvo Buendia, V. Masson-Delmotte, H.-O. Pörtner, D. C. Roberts, P. Zhai, R. Slade, S. Connors, R. van Diemen, M. Ferrat, E. Haughey, S. Luz, S. Neogi, M. Pathak, J. Petzold, J. Portugal Pereira, P. Vyas, E. Huntley, K. Kissick, M. Belkacemi, J. Malley, (eds.)]. In press.

⁹ Fletcher, Robson and Jordan Omstead. “Alberta rescinds decades-old policy that banned open-pit coal mines in Rockies and Foothills.” *CBC News*. May 22, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-coal-policy-rescinded-mine-development-environmental-concern-1.5578902>.

Simulating possible outcomes to scenarios with a finite set of inputs is a broadly-used approach to modeling data, particularly with regards to climate science. Video games like *The Fate of the World* and social games like *Clout & Climate Change* see players working with sets of existing data to attempt to mitigate the impacts of increasing greenhouse gas emissions and global temperature levels through strategic policies and collective efforts to manage resources.^{10 11} The player directs responses to the effects of climate change, their actions feeding into the data streams to adjust the model's projections. These games resemble large-scale predictions, but principles of gaming can also act as motivators for more individual-scale approaches to addressing the climate. Khanna Sanjay's article "Game Changer" highlights the value of games in incentivizing positive climate-consciousness, creating a competitive reward mechanism that can guide behaviour.¹² For both scales of game, the established goal state is the locus that activity should be centred upon; the useful blank tile in our 15 Puzzle allows us to reorganize the resources that are available in our ecological systems. I'm thinking of it as a representation of climate science, and the potential that it has to guide the development of our environments.

The metaphor is imperfect, of course; with the 15 Puzzle, once you've determined that a goal state cannot be reached from the board state you have, you can put it down, absolved of labour by mathematical impossibility. We exist inside the puzzle of climate change, and so discovering an impossible result instead forces us to change the image we are striving for. The role of the empty square, scientific exploration, allows for the necessary reconfiguration to develop resiliency into our cities and practices. We cannot decide not to make a move, or to constantly undo the moves that we are making. There seems to be a spectrum of increasingly granular detail as you move from pure game into pure model simulation, and my Han Solo puzzle certainly sits far to the "game" end of that continuum. The underlying principle of the small grid of tiles, however, applies far beyond the limits of completing the puzzle – an objective-focused approach to problem-solving serves you well no matter what field is your focus. Some just happen to have a greater imperative placed upon success. We've only got one planet to explore, unlike the *Millennium Falcon's* intrepid pilot.

We exist inside the puzzle of climate change, and so discovering an impossible result instead forces us to change the image we are striving for.

¹⁰ O'Connor, Rory. "Lessons from Strategy Game Modelling Climate Change." *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, vol. 343, no. 7832, 2011, pp. 1046–1046. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41333309. Accessed 9 June 2020.

¹¹ Burke, Sharon, and Christine Parthemore, editors. *Game Overview. Center for a New American Security*, 2008, pp. 16–21, *Clout and Climate Change War Game: Participant Briefing Book*, www.jstor.org/stable/resrep06337.4. Accessed 9 June 2020.

¹² Khanna, Sanjay. "Game Changer." *Corporate Knights*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2013, pp. 24–26. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/43242736. Accessed 9 June 2020.



Recreate Waste

Written by
CAITLIN BODEWITZ

Globally, humans produce 2.12 billion tons of waste per year.¹ At the exact moment I am writing this, it is estimated that we currently need 1.76130284460 Earth's to provide resources, cope with our waste, and support life as we know it (yes, that is already more than the 1 and only Earth we have available).² The positive news is that there are many ways in which small actions from individuals can create big change! Reducing our waste is one of these ways, and that requires us to rethink how we live, how we create, and fundamentally what we value.

My personal passion for reducing waste easily extends from the focus

of my artwork, which is deeply rooted in an unequivocal desire to celebrate, protect, and educate others about the natural world. In my household we actively aspire to a zero-waste lifestyle, from plastic-free groceries, walnut-shell dish scrubbers, second-hand wardrobes, composting kitchen scraps. Even our cat Walter contributes by using the package-free

¹ "A World Of Waste." *The World Counts*. Accessed June 15, 2020. <https://www.theworldcounts.com/challenges/planet-earth/state-of-the-planet/world-waste-facts>

² "We Are Consuming The Future." *The World Counts*. Accessed June 15, 2020. <https://www.theworldcounts.com/challenges/planet-earth/state-of-the-planet/overuse-of-resources-on-earth>

kitty litter we buy in bulk.

We are mindful to have our reusable cups, cutlery, cloth produce bags, and containers for restaurant takeaway on hand. When waste cannot be avoided we still try to implement methods to reduce our landfill contributions. Reusable or recyclable glass, metal, and paper packaging always trump plastic (even recyclable plastic, which commonly does not enter the recycling stream) and we simply refuse all single-use plastic or paper.

My approach in the studio focuses on being mindful of the total life cycle of my materials: where my materials come from, how they are packaged, how I use them, and how I dispose of them. I primarily silkscreen on birch wood panels. These were initially sourced from local art stores, but unfortunately they came individually wrapped in plastic film. A solution I found was to directly contact the Canadian-based companies manufacturing them and request bulk orders of panels without the packaging, which they happily agreed to! When I'm not printing on wood, I print on salvaged vinyl records or reclaimed wood from flooring and old barns, diverting these beautiful materials from the landfill and giving them a second life.

My approach in the studio focuses on being mindful of the total life cycle of my materials

I use reusable and recyclable containers for ink, and I find the key to making this easy and effective is to take the time to wash out the ink soon after use (dirty recyclables do not get recycled in Edmonton, so making sure our containers are clean is a small but important step). For blocking out my screens and other temporary uses, I was able to replace standard plastic packing tape with biodegradable plant-based cello tape. When I need to dispose of hazardous materials, like aerosols or old inks, I make sure to take them to the Edmonton EcoStation or search for a business that will dispose of them in a responsible way. And as we all know it's hard to be creative on an empty stomach, so when I bring lunch or snacks to the studio I also bring home my food waste to be composted. There are always areas in my studio practice that I am motivated to find better alternatives to, like acetate stencils, and still processes I would like to make more environmentally friendly.

When it comes to sharing my artwork with the world through art markets, gallery submissions, or print exchanges I consciously choose my packaging and shipping supplies. I use paper bags and cardboard boxes that are made from 100 % recycled fibers. I use biodegradable plant-based and water-activated tape to seal up parcels. I save studio scraps, like old

newsprint, for protective packing. And lastly I try to use creative alternatives to business cards like encouraging clients to take a picture of a silkscreen with all my information on it. For the more professional networking though there are still options for recycled materials with plant-based inks.

Reducing your waste requires an all-encompassing and mindful approach – being a conscious consumer, a thoughtful user, and a responsible disposer. Plastic takes up to 1000 years to decompose, ancient forests are still being logged for toilet paper, and emissions due to production and transportation of goods are a major contributor to climate change. We all have to be aware that we are not removed from the consequences of our decisions and actions once we casually toss something in the garbage bin. There is always something to learn and ways to improve, and I invite you all to embark on your own waste reduction journey!

Reducing your waste requires an all-encompassing and mindful approach – being a conscious consumer, a thoughtful user, and a responsible disposer.

To help along this journey, please use this list of various resources and suggestions for all areas of life and your practice.



HOUSEHOLD

Plastic free groceries: Farmer's Markets, Earth's General Store, Bulk Barn (everything from maple syrup to perogies!)

Refillable cleaning/bath and body/laundry supplies: Earth's General Store, Carbon Environmental, Re:Plenish (items including refillable dental floss, bamboo toothbrushes, walnut-shell dish scrubbers, menstrual products, and biodegradable-packaged deodorant can also be found at these stores)

Closet: Thrift second-hand cloths or partake in awesome local clothing swaps/wardrobe exchanges (like the events run by Life Preloved) or invest in Canadian-made clothes made from natural fibers. Buy quality items and take care of them so they last a long time, instead of consuming and disposing often.



PRODUCTS

Biodegradable cello tape:
Online via EcoEnclose: ecoenclose.com

Masking tape made from post-consumer recycled fibers:
3M Scotch found at Paint Spot in Edmonton

Waste-free canvas and wood panels: West Coast Canvas based in Calgary, ordered through Delta Art in Edmonton

Refillable mechanical eraser:
"General's" Brand purchased at Delta Art in Edmonton

100% Recycled Paper Artist Quality Sketchbook:
purchased at Delta Art in Edmonton



DONATIONS & DISPOSAL

Check what your city or town offers for reuse and safe materials disposal

EcoStation in Edmonton:
Accepts paint, ink, aerosols, batteries, electronics, scrap metal, and much more...Also accepts donations to the ReUse Center!

ReUse Center in Edmonton:
Accepts a huge variety of art and craft supplies including the general paper scraps, paint, and pencil crayons, but you should get familiar with the full list...Here I'll list some of my random favorites you may not know: corks, bread bag tags, pine cones, paint swatches, Christmas cards, milk jug lids, and egg cartons!

London Drugs in Edmonton:
They have a program to recycle Styrofoam packaging that comes with their products...so take it to the customer service desk, tell them it's from something you purchased, and smile!

PACKAGING & SHIPPING

Eddie's Hang Up Display in Edmonton, Toronto & Vancouver: Paper bags made from 100% recycled materials

EcoEnclose: 100% recycled packaging, plant based inks, biodegradable tapes, zero-waste stickers and labels, and more! P.S. this company is based in the US but is in the works of having a Canada branch and in the meantime have carbon offset options for shipping.

STUDIO PRACTICE

Wash containers so they can be reused or recycled

Wash cleaning rags, and reuse over and over! Also source second hand material to cut up rather than buy new

Take care of tools, both yours and communal tools so new items do not need to be purchased

Use freezer paper to block screens

Coat emulsion on 1 side of your screen

Restretch screens at Stanleys rather than buying new

Choose/request less packaging in art stores, businesses listen to their customers more than you might think!

Use only what you need: tape, newsprint, water... be mindful!

Rethink your waste: turn scrap paper into bookmarks, wood shavings into kindling, inked newsprint into wrapping paper, or donate items to be reused

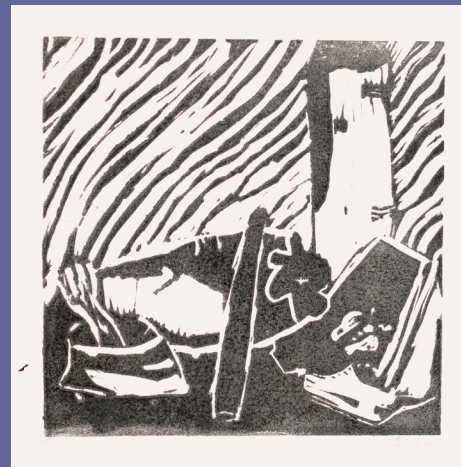
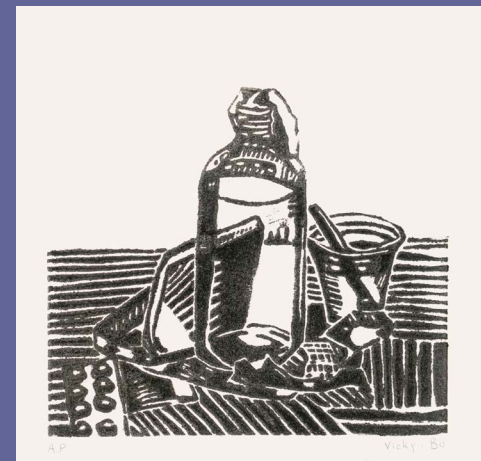
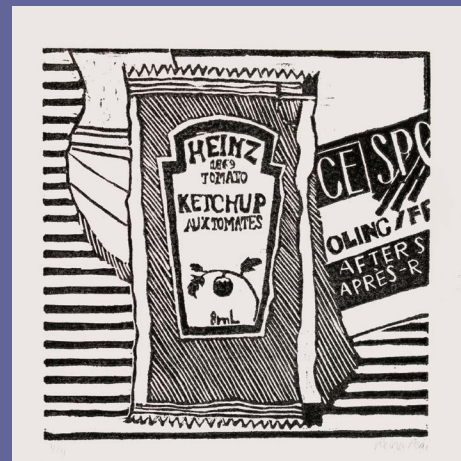
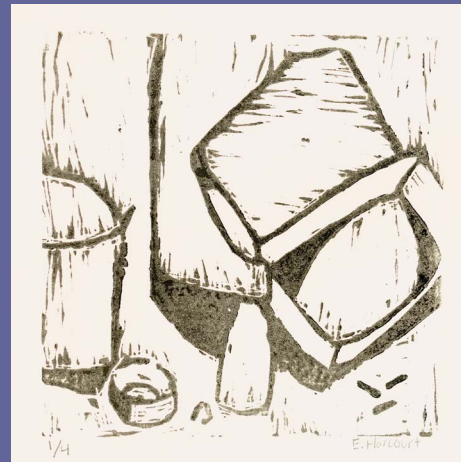
DRAWING GARBAGE

The genre of still life imagery is one that makes the commonplace objects that surround our everyday lives immortally captured in an image.

In the past still life was closely linked with concepts of memento mori, inevitable death, and fleeting beauty. Unlike any other time period in history we are surrounded by stuff that is quickly thrown away and it has a fleeting beauty. But what happens to all the things that one day is so precious and the next day is thrown away without a second thought? Do our objects of fleeting beauty deGrade as fruit and insects do? Or are our disposable objects going to haunt us as they pollute our world? In this series a grade 8 class at Langley Fine Arts School looked closely at the objects that they normally disposed of and made portraits of their garbage as a reminder that these objects might never fully degrade. We began

Intro by
**ALEXANDRA
FISCHER**

by collecting disposed objects from our surroundings that are delicately beautiful but are quickly disposed of. Then we drew these objects with a ballpoint pen focusing on composition, balance and texture. As a final step in our process we carved linoleum and printed our images using a printing press. My deep hope for this unit was that we will look at disposable objects with a critical eye and come up with creative ways to reuse objects or find ways to avoid one time use.



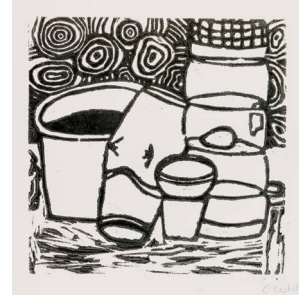
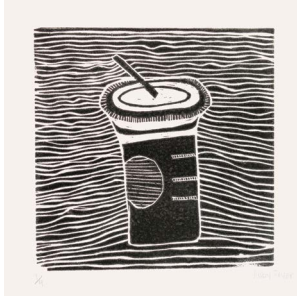
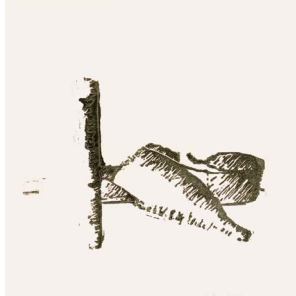
STUDENT REFLECTIONS



LEONARDO JUNG:

Through the process of collecting, drawing and carving a print based on garbage, I was able to learn how anything can turn into a piece of art. Also, carving the print was a fabulous opportunity to

try a unique type of art which is a bit tough but at the end, it visualized all the hard process we went through. This project had a high completeness when it transpired. Hope we could have this opportunity again later on.



NATHANIEL HOEDEMAEKER-PURVIS:

When assigned a project that involves collecting and refurbishing garbage tastefully arranging it in an appealing jumble, then carving a still life out of it, it is obvious that the only class involved is Visual Art. After Ms. Fisher told us of the project, I assumed I would have to find the most sophisticated pop can ever, but the truth was much simpler. All it had to be was, for example, a washed-out plastic spoon, maybe a piece of plastic wrap, or in my case a ripped wrapper from a granola bar that I ate that morning. My group cobbled together an assortment of

different objects; a fork, a crushed pop can, a squished water bottle, the granola bar wrapper, and a few other objects. For something made of such disgusting things, it didn't look bad. When Ms. Fisher had us practise our still life drawings, it wasn't easy for me. As we repeatedly drew the objects in our sketchbooks, I slowly got better and better. When it came time to carve, I felt I was ready and prepared to do it. I was wrong. I got frustrated as the carver constantly slipped and turned as I tried hard to make my design. After cutting myself accidentally, I realized that I wasn't focusing. I worked harder and focused more

until the carve was finished. I started to print-press my design. This was surprisingly harder than the carving because I had to line up the paper, apply the perfect amount of ink, and roll the print-press with the right pressure. I finished the four final prints after almost thirty tries and ended my project.



REINA ASAI: *I think it was cool and interesting how we used garbage as inspiration for art because it can help us learn that even if you think something is trash, it can still be used for another use. If the object was crumpled or broken, it made the drawing part even more challenging*

and that was really fun to draw. I enjoyed the carving part too, because even if it takes a long period of time and patience to complete carving it when you ink your lino and print it for the first time and you see your original drawing printed on paper, everything becomes totally worth it!





Daniel Evans. *Pauca Sed Matura*.
Electrochemical Etching &
Powdered Copper, 20" x 15".

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY

(one per contestant) with the subject "Flash Fiction 2020" to snapline@snapartists.com before **October 1, 2020**.

There is no entry fee.

Find Daniel's print and the work of other artists at snapartists.com/buy-art

SNAPLINE FLASH FICTION CONTEST

Where do we go from here?

SNAPline invites you to submit a story of **500 words (or less)** to our **2020 Flash Fiction Contest**, with the winner and runner-up to be published in our last issue of the year. We want encapsulated narratives that give us a vivid dose of the unexpected with words that are few yet ripe.

Your entry must:

- 1) take Daniel Evan's print *Pauca Sed Matura* (the image on the left) as a starting point
- 2) address the question, "Where do we go from here?"

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1st place:

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Shortlist: publication online at snapartists.com/snapline/

Every contestant (who gives us their address): a free copy of SNAPline 2020.3 in the mail

SNAPline 2020.2 – Waste

FEATURED ARTIST: JP KING

IN THIS ISSUE

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Drawing Garbage.....intro by Alexandra Fischer with contributions by Reina Asai, Nathaniel Hoedemaker-Purvis, and Leonardo Jung

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