



UNBOUND

Unbound

Sawtooth Artist Run Initiative
October 2 - 24, 2015

Parramatta Artists Studios
October 6 - 17, 2015

Unbound

Artists: Ella Condon (SYD/NY), Matt Whitman (NY), Mark John Smith (UK/NY), Magali Duzant (NY)

Catalogue essays: Jacqueline Millner, Kelly McDonald

We see photography as a method for tracing, recording, and illuminating shifts within time and citing the body in contemporary notions of experience. The traditions of photography, including the space of the darkroom, the materiality of tradition, are not negated but complemented by newer technologies embraced in the work.

At its core, the photograph – in its myriad of forms, be it analogue, digital, still, or cine – remains the index of a choice, one that we repeat every time we pick up a camera and continue the trajectory of our discipline. Even as the media that inform this process continue to evolve, become ubiquitous, become precious, become scarce – what we carry forward as artists is this core: the continuation of a dialogue-through-making of what and how a moment is constituted as worthy of sublimation via the photographic process.

I have had an experience which was both timeless and spaceless¹

KELLY MCDONALD

Unbound brings together the work of four artists working across the broad spectrum of photographic process, whose work, though taking disparate approaches and focusing on a range of thematic concerns, is woven together through an engagement with the materiality and theoretical basis of photography, and the possibilities these open up.

Ella Condon poetically captures the movement of dust particles through light in her work *Trace of Light* (2014), and through this self-reflexive act shows the viewer the beauty in small moments. Accompanied by a soundtrack that evokes the sound of TV static, which can be seen as the afterglow of the big bang or cosmic background radiation, this moment has echoes of the celestial, conjuring imagery of asteroids moving in space. Combining the minute with the epic, Condon uses the medium to connect us to that which is bigger than ourselves.

Magali Duzant's *Live Stream Sunset* (2014-15) similarly engages the cosmic and universal. Live Stream Sunset is a projection of footage of the setting sun, but before the sun is able to set, the image shifts to a new sunset scene in a new location. This perennially setting sun results in a never ending day and a night that will never come. This work embodies hope and longing; the hope of eternity and a magical day that will last forever. It also alludes to a feeling we've never actually experienced in real life, only through science fiction – that of being in space and having an otherworldly experience of earth – that from being outside of the world.

Duzant's work moves the viewer through space and time; crossing time zones and geography. Matt Whitman's work also puts the viewer through a temporal drag through the use of outmoded film technologies. Whitman's use of VHS, 8mm and 16mm film is produced contemporaneously and invites a feeling of nostalgia and both conflates and stretches time. Whitman's work *Last fourteen voicemails from my father (or Newark - Genval - Pier 45)* (2013) is a modern memento mori, referencing the nineteenth century proctographic genre. In an age when film and photography is so ubiquitous, Whitman has produced a poignant work using the last of the voicemails from his father. These everyday messages that form part of the minutiae of life are given added weight through the titling. It is an elegy to the passing of time.

Mark John Smith's work embraces the digital, while also evoking the truly cinematic. *Smoke* (2015) shrugs off the greyscale aesthetic of analogue and its associated nostalgia and re-presents an image iconic of cinema in a new way. Reflecting on this new work Smith states that 'As communication is digitized we are persuaded to offer our micro-expressions to the cloud. This cloud is imagined as the smoke in this work, releasing data and ideas into the ether; thoughts and ideas being set free into the universe²'

Conceptually rigorous and process-driven, these artists reveal the beauty in photo making, and moreover, the beauty in the cosmos that surrounds us.

1 Magali Duzant, Artist's website, 3 September 2015.

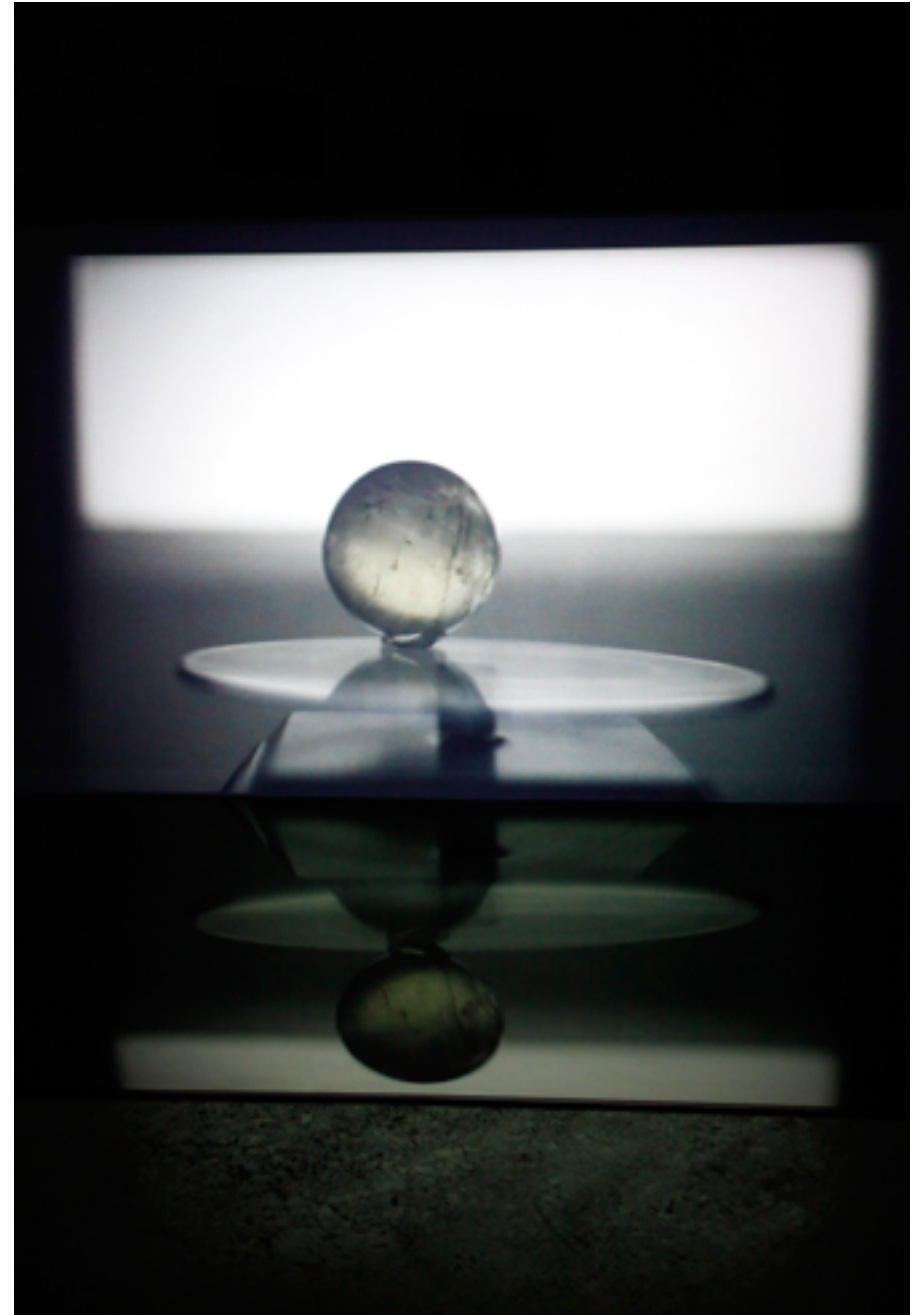
2 Artist statement, 3 September 2015.

ELLA CONDON

Ella Condon is an Australian visual artist working between Sydney and New York City within photography, video and installation. Condon holds a MFA (Research), Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney and Parsons School of Design, New York. She is currently a studio resident at Parramatta Artist Studios. Her practice is engaged with light, extending upon notions of light and time within the photographic. The works reflect on the evolution, degradation, and reformation of light though still, moving image and sound media. Her meditative, experiential works consider the perpetually transforming light trace within the photographic.

Recent projects for 2015 include Light Year projected on the Manhattan Bridge, Street Screen: Australian Centre for Photography, Island Salon: Underbelly Arts Festival. In 2014 she exhibited at Chasm Gallery Brooklyn, Manhattan Movement and Arts Centre New York, American Australian Alliance Dame Joan Sutherland Showcase New York, The Freedman Foundation Travelling Artist Scholarship Sydney, Casula Powerhouse Sydney, The Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Award Brisbane. In 2014 she was awarded the position of Visiting Artist at Parsons, New York and was the recipient of Australia Council for the Arts ArtStart Grant, National Association of Visual Artists Freedman Foundation Travelling Scholarship and American Australian Association Dame Joan Sutherland Fund.

The Light Loop, Video Installation (still), 2013
Trace (III), Lightbox, 2014
Trace of Light, Video Installation (still), 2014







MATT WHITMAN

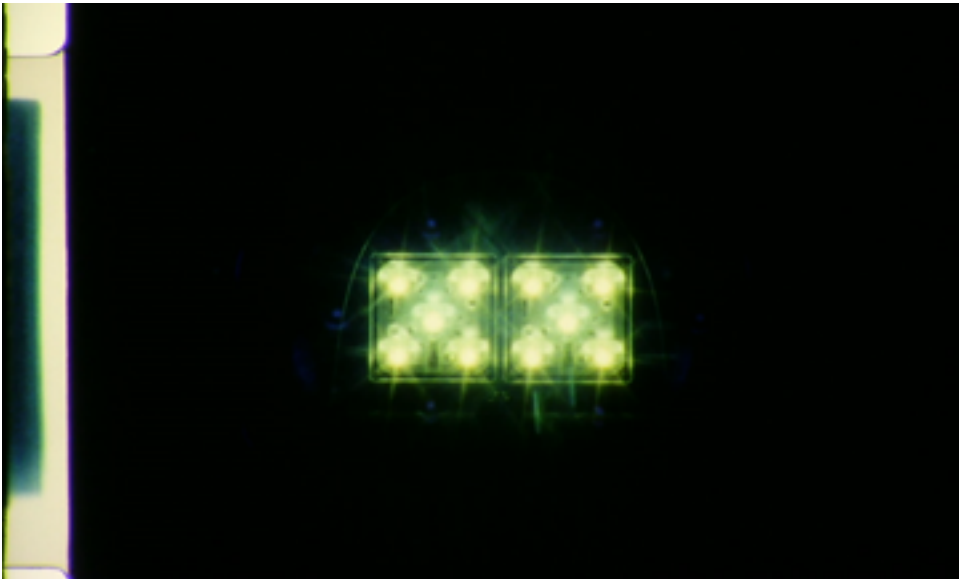
Matt Whitman is an American film and video artist based in New York City. He is currently part-time faculty at Parsons School of Design. Whitman holds an MFA in Fine Arts from Parsons The New School for Design and a Master of Arts degree in Media Studies from The New School for Public Engagement.

His time-based work confounds the past and the present, memory and dream, history and fantasy in the investigation of moments and spaces of uncertainty and anxiety within the urban landscape. Through acts of witnessing, he locates ideations of imagined histories using such anachronistic means of image capture as Super-8mm film and VHS tape. The camera is treated as an instrument of meditation across time - a way of seeing and imagining an extended present which is constantly vibrating and collapsing out onto itself and impossibly yet inevitably containing the multiplicity of histories that preceded it as well as the potentiality of all those that might ever proceed it.

In 2015 his work *Late light* was presented by LIVELIVE Project and Standard Practice at 2 Rivington in New York. Recent screenings and exhibitions have taken place at Ethan Choen Gallery, The Kitchen, the London Analogue Festival at Bargehouse, Oxo Tower Wharf; Trace Bodies at Skybridge Art Space, Light Assembly at Verge Art Fair in Miami Beach.



Last fourteen voicemails from my father (or Newark Genval Pier 45), 2013,
VHS transferred to digital video with sound, 9 minutes, looped



die ode retro fit 72.1.250000, 2014, 35mm color negative film transferred to graphics interchange format (GIF) file

Downtown collection, Here as it was, 2015
Digital video, 4 CRT monitors, media players (color, silent),
5 minutes, looped

WTC (still images), 2013, Super8mm film transferred to HD video,
12 minutes, looped (following spread)





MARK JOHN SMITH

Mark John Smith is a British artist based in Brooklyn, New York City. He holds an MFA in Fine Arts from Parsons The New School for Design and BA Hons Degrees in Fine Art and Art History from The University for the Creative Arts, in the United Kingdom.

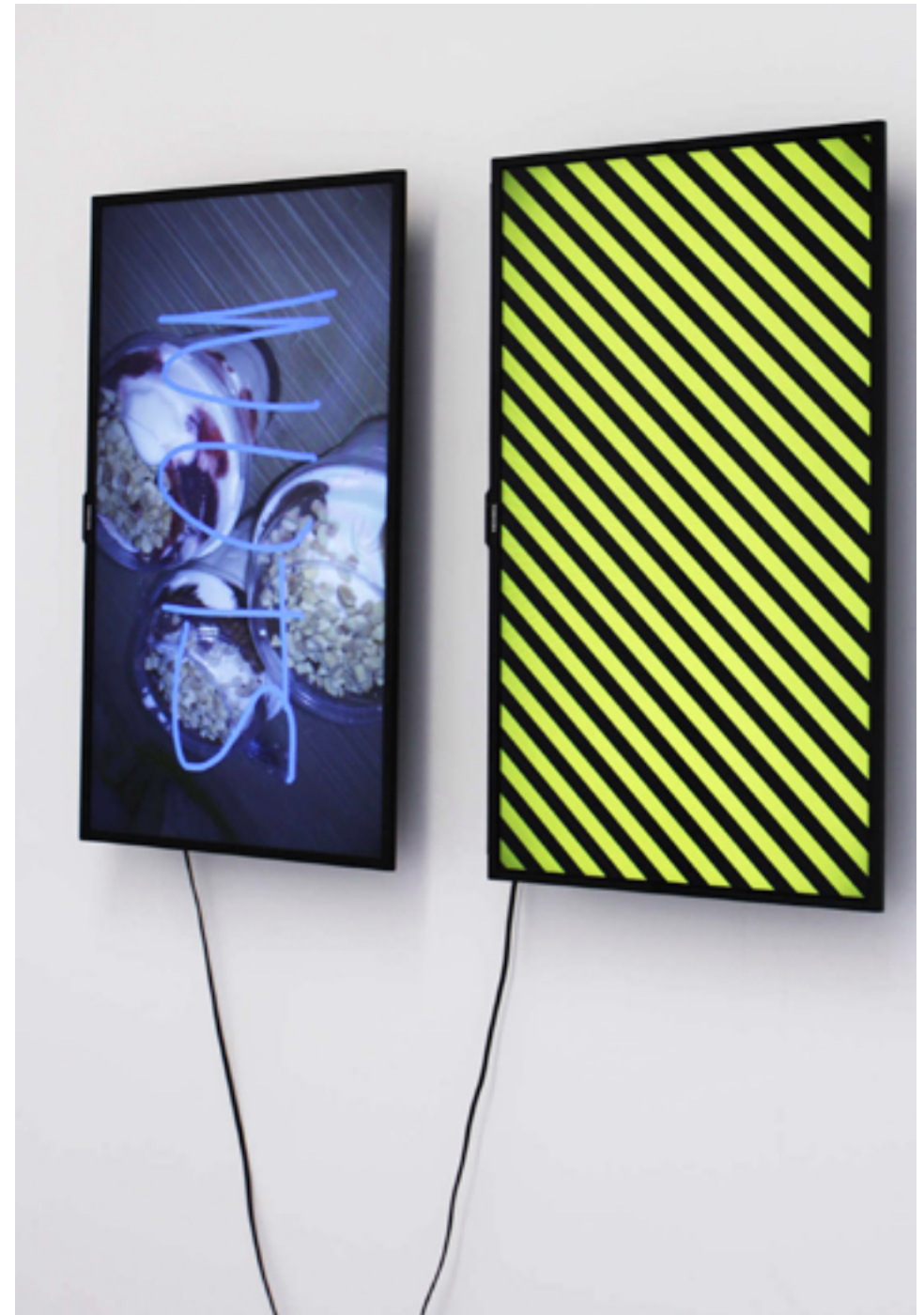
Known for his use of language and spray painted soft sculptures, John Smith's work exists in both public and private spaces, museums and galleries. In 2011 he launched the LIVELIVE Project - a world first critically acclaimed interactive digital art project. Attracting an audience of 100,000 daily participants, the LIVELIVE Project re-engages communities with their collective cultural heritage. Investigating the removal of a bodily presence in the contemporary notion of experience, John Smith's work explores political and autobiographical implementations of the facade, prejudice and self.

In 2015, Mark John Smith has shown at the Ivy Brown Gallery, Chelsea, NYC; the Ethan Cohen Gallery, Chelsea, NYC; 2 Rivington Street, LES, NYC; The Window at 125, Midtown, NYC; the Sawtooth Gallery, Tasmania; and the PAS Gallery, Sydney, followed by the unveiling of a new commissioned public work for the Jefferson Market Library, New York. His work is in the permanent collections of Art Below, London; the Beane Museum, Canterbury; the British Broadcasting Corporation, London; the British Library, London; the International Olympic Committee, Lausanne; and the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, London.

Flattened 001 with Also Flattened 001 2014

Digital files (*NUTS* 2014 and *TEABAG* 2014 with black and yellow diagonal lines jpeg animation)

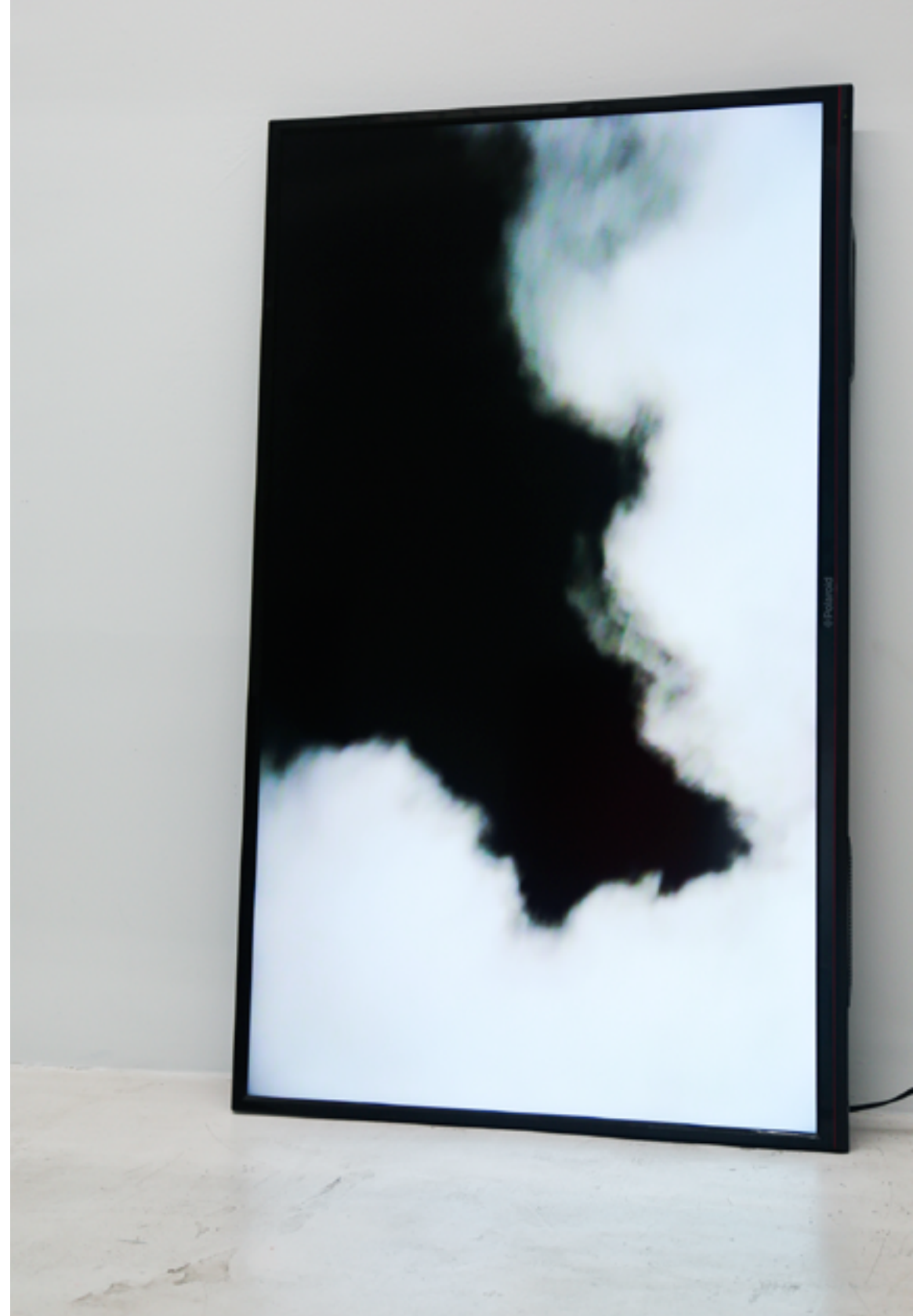
2 x 39" parallel 1080p flat panel monitors tilted 90 degrees, on wall





BUOY 2015
Spray paint, rope on canvas, 48" x 60"

SMOKE 2015
Digital video, 55" 4K Polaroid LED flat panel monitor on floor,
media player (color, silent), 1 minute, looped





Duvet (YOU MAKE ME FUCK UP) 2013

*Spray paint on 90% goose down twin duvet, brass grommets
68" x 90" Floor formation*

Duvet (MAN MANY MEN) 2013

*Spray paint on 90% goose down twin duvet, brass grommets,
68" x 90"*



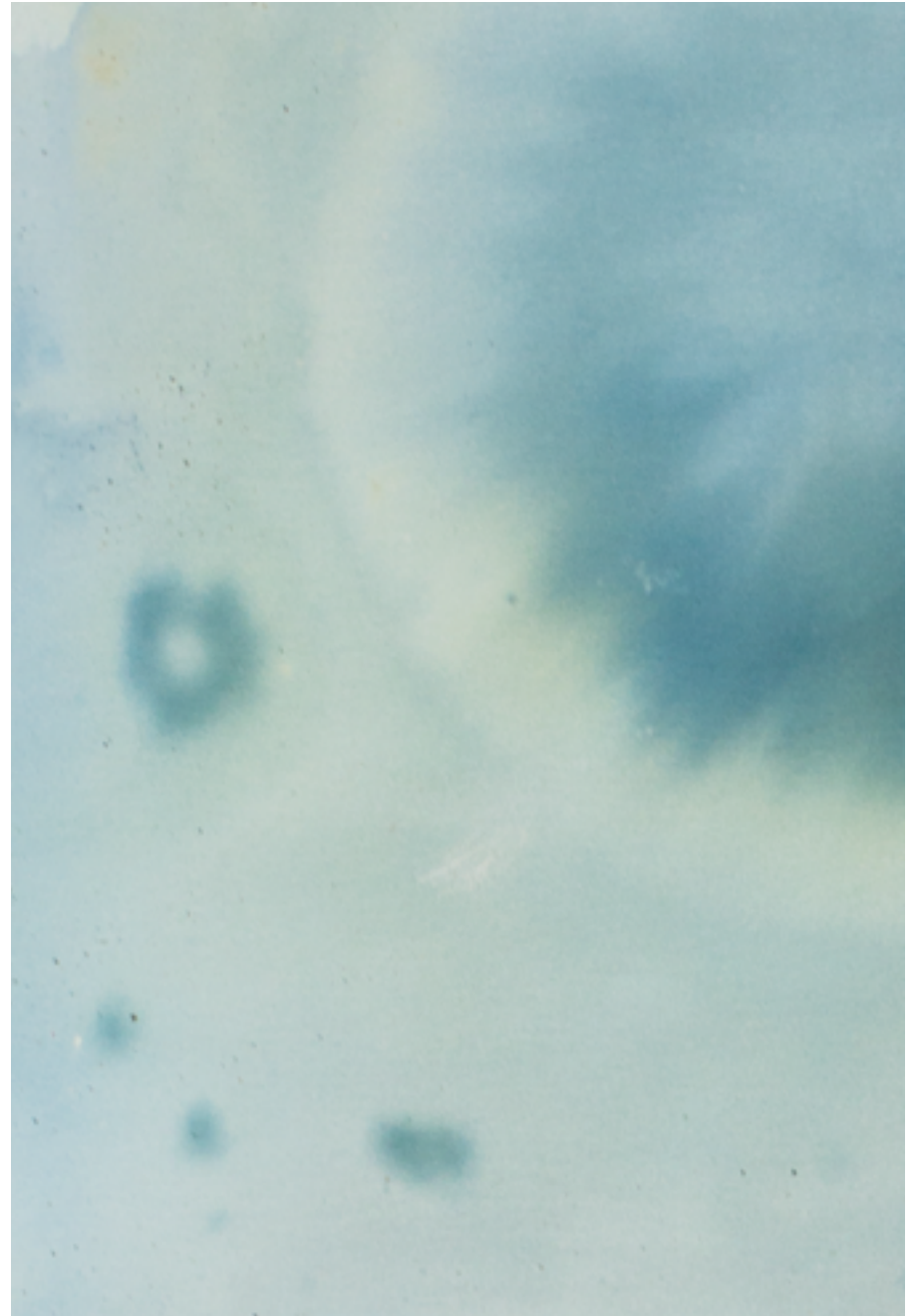
MAGALI DUZANT

Magali Duzant is a NY based artist and photographer. She holds a BHA in Visual Culture from Carnegie Mellon University and an MFA in Photography from Parsons The New School for Design.

Working with time-based processes she incorporates photography, video, and text to examine the roles of technology and translation as mediators of our experiences as well as our desires to track, record, and analyze our daily lives. Using collaborative and durational structures to frame projects she has had her aura photographed every two weeks for a year, collected the scattered impressions of a full moon during a hurricane, made cyanotype exposure units out of slide projectors, and is gathering 24 live streamed sunsets via wifi surveillance cameras from 24 time zones to morph into one perpetually setting sun. Projects are based in time and are often site-responsive, taking the course of the day to unfold as the passage of light across an object illuminates the room in infinite variations or an image takes hours to expose in front of the viewer. Through the process of continual collection personal experiences are archived and made collective, presenting themselves as catalogues of the everyday. In working within a process-based practice romantic gestures emerge from the data as answers to a rapidly changing, digitized world.

She is a recipient of a 2015 Queens Council on the Arts grant for her project *Live Streaming Sunset*. Recent exhibitions include *Lift Off* curated by Elisabeth Biondi at Fridman Gallery in NYC, Salon at NY based (harbor), and *Ein Prozess* in Augsburg, Germany. Her artist book, *I Looked & Looked*, was published in 2015 by Conveyor Editions.

Anna / Blue, 2 week exposure, 2015
Cyanotype on Rives BFK, 35 mm slide, slide projector
(installation view, following page)







Live Streaming Sunset, 2014
 American Edition: New York, Chicago, Denver, Berkeley, 4 hours

Wifi-enabled surveillance cameras, live video,
 security vinyl on window



Perhaps a sign of the maturity of an art medium is the ongoing declarations of its 'death'. For much of the 20th century, repeated assertions were made about the purported death of painting, emerging with arguments that saw photography usurping painting's role in capturing reality. Yet painting has, as we know, survived, through ebbs and flows in practice, criticism and market and institutional favour. The currency of photography as a critical art was questioned from its inception: how could it be fine art when it was produced by a machine that could be operated by 'amateurs' and artists alike? And once that battle had been won (in part by photography's appeal to the aesthetics of painting), photography's artistic purchase was challenged on account of its indexical relationship to reality: photography was associated with 'truth telling' in an age when the very possibility of such a thing came to be doubted. With the rise of digital image making since the 1990s, critics and curators have repeatedly declared that photography was dead for the reverse reason, that its very nature as an indexical image meant it would undergo an existential crisis now photos could be created without any contact with 'the real world'. And yet...

Photography in contemporary art has turned its existential threats — including its 'amateur' access and ubiquity, its mechanical nature, its indexical appearance — into virtues. It has the language and the historical self-reflexivity to intervene in countless spaces of contemporary experience and to urge us to question our relationships with, and uses of, images. Take the artists in *Unbound*, whose practices are critical engagements with photography but also invitations to the viewer to read everyday environments otherwise.

Photography has in some sense always been a struggle against disappearance, from Henry Fox Talbot's 'fairy pictures' at the cusp of the technology, to photography's invocation to document 'dying' civilisations, to the uses of photography as memorial. In *Unbound*, the artists engage with this historical thread in photography, but tie it in to viewers' specific contexts and experiences. In Magali Duzant's *Live Streaming Sunset*, the sun never disappears beyond the horizon: using wifi-enabled surveillance cameras to track the setting sun from timezone to timezone, Duzant creates a perpetual sunset and broadcasts it to the world. Through photo-media, Matt Whitman imagines an extended present where nothing disappears, a present that visibly embodies all the histories that comprise it.

Mark John Smith's work challenges conventional notions of bodily presence and explores how we might, through inventive use of photographic technologies, 'appear' — be present — even when absent (reminding us of Roland Barthes' classic description of photography as both 'here and now', and 'then and there'). And Ella Condon experiments three-dimensionally with light, the *sine qua non* of photography that we assume is the condition of vision and appearance.

Photography is positively generative in the work of these artists. It is self-aware of its many natures: a mirror with a memory; an image and a trace; a time exposure and a snapshot. But it mobilises these medium-specific issues to engage with the familiar experiences of every day life in an image-saturated world.

JACQUELINE MILLNER
1 September 2015

Bios

Dr Jacqueline Millner is Associate Dean Research at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, where she also lectures on contemporary art theory and history. She has published widely on contemporary Australian and international art in key anthologies, journal and international institutions. Her books include *Conceptual Beauty: Perspectives on Australian Contemporary Art* (2010, Sydney: Artspace), *Australian Artists in the Contemporary Museum* (with Jennifer Barrett, London: Ashgate, 2014) and *Fashionable Art* (with Adam Geczy, London: Bloomsbury, 2015). She co-convenes the research group Contemporary Art and Feminism at the University of Sydney.

Kelly McDonald is a Sydney based curator and writer. Kelly is an assistant curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia and has previously held positions at the Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, White Cube, London, The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice and newspace, Sydney. Her research focus encompasses photography and performance.

ELLA CONDON

www.ellacondon.com

MATT WHITMAN

www.mawhitman.com

MARK JOHN SMITH

www.markjohnsmith.co.uk

MAGALI DUZANT

www.magaliduzant.com

A partnership between Parramatta Artists Studios (NSW) and Sawtooth Artist Run Initiative (TAS)

Exhibition Coordinator: Ella Condon
PAS Project Coordinator: Sophia Kouyoumdjian
Sawtooth Project Coordinator: Patrick Sutczak
Catalogue Design: Magali Duzant

Project Residencies:

Magali Duzant, Parramatta Artists Studios, Invited Artist Residency Program (2015)

Ella Condon, Parsons The New School for Design, Visiting Artist Residency (2014)

Residency supported by Australia Council for the Arts, National Association of Visual Artists Freedman Foundation Travelling Scholarship, American Australian Association Dame Joan Sutherland Fund.

The artists would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their support:

Sophia Kouyoumdjian, Coordinator Parramatta Artists Studios

Dr. Jacqueline Millner, Associate Dean Research Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney

Kelly McDonald, Assistant Curator Museum of Contemporary Art Australia

Simone Douglas, Director of Fine Arts Parsons The New School for Design

James Ramer, Director of MFA Photography Parsons The New School for Design

Parramatta Artists Studios

A partnership between Parramatta Artists Studios (NSW) and Sawtooth Artist Run Initiative (TAS)

Presented in Parramatta as part of Parramatta Lanes 2015.

ISBN: 978-0-9923562-2-4

2015 © Parramatta Artists Studios

Parramatta Artists Studios is an initiative of Parramatta City Council and is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW

All images and texts reproduced with permission, courtesy of the participating artists and writers.

Generous support provided by

