

Related Events:

All events are free and open to the public.

**Christopher Meerdo's video screenings
on The Jackman Goldwasser Catwalk Gallery:**

July 17 to September 14, 7 - 10 pm

September 15 to October 16, 4-10 pm

Exhibition Reception:

Sunday July 17, 3 - 5 pm

Panel Discussion: *Virtually Physically Speaking*

Wednesday, September 21, 5 pm

A discussion of physicality in conventional practices alongside virtual realities and technology media.

Curator's Talk with the Artists:

Sunday, October 2, 3 - 5 pm

Kaczynski will tour the show and talk with the artists Cameron Crawford, David Gracie, Julia Klein, Dani Levanthal, Todd Mattei, Christopher Meerdo, and Steve Reinke.

About the curator:

Kelly Kaczynski is a sculptor and installation artist residing in Chicago. She is Assistant Professor in the Department of Art Theory and Practice at Northwestern University and has served as a member of the Hyde Park Art Center's Exhibition Committee since 2008.

Mouthing (the Sentient Limb) is Kaczynski's first curatorial project.

The Hyde Park Art Center Exhibition Committee is comprised of 7 Chicago -based artists, writers, and curators who are invited by the Art Center to contribute to the program based on their knowledge of and outstanding activity in the creative community at large. In addition to assessing artists' submissions to the Art Center, committee members are asked to propose curatorial projects and recommend artists for solo exhibitions.

Hyde Park ARTCENTER

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The Hyde Park Art Center is at once an exhibition space, learning annex, community resource, and social hub for the art curious and professional artists alike — carrying out its mission to stimulate and sustain the visual arts in Chicago. The Art Center is funded in part by the: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; Chicago Community Trust; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; David C. and Sarajejan Ruttenberg Arts Foundation; Field Foundation of Illinois; Harper Court Arts Council; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Irving Harris Foundation; Joyce Foundation; Leo S. Guthman Fund; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; National Endowment for the Arts; Polk Bros. Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of its members and people like you. The Hyde Park Art Center does not discriminate against any person for reason of race, gender, age, place of national origin, handicap, religious conviction, marital status, veteran status or sexual preference.

Gallery 1 &
The Jackman Goldwasser Catwalk Gallery

Mouthing (The Sentient Limb)

Curated by Kelly Kaczynski

July 17 - October 16, 2011

Featuring Artists:

Cameron Crawford

David Gracie

Rachel Herman

YunJeong Hong

Julia Klein

Dani Levanthal

Todd Mattei

Christopher Meerdo

Chris Naka

Erin O'Brien

Steve Reinke

Melanie Schiff

Amy Sillman



Cameron Crawford, *Babies. Babies. No Babies. (armpit)*, 2010, Southern long fir pine needles bound together with silver chain and mint floss of the following varieties: Satin, Ribbon, Glide, Extra Comfort Tape, grey paint, oil on canvas on hard wood, wing nuts, nuts, bolts, rubber washers, pearls, mother of pearl, shell buttons, linen thread, 9 x 12 x 7 feet

Statement from the curator:

The term “mouthing” is used as a symbolic gesture of a silent proclamation. As a title, it represents language that is unspoken through the mouth, which is also used as a site for sensing. When language is felt, it is understood as powerful and undeniable.

The mirror box is a box with two mirrors running vertically in the center and a space on either side for an arm or hand or leg to rest. It is used for patients that have lost a limb and are experiencing pain or lag from the phantom appendage. The hypothesis is that every time the patient attempts to move the amputated limb, he or she receives sensory feedback that tells the brain over and over that the limb is paralyzed, even though the limb is not there at all. Invented by Dr. Vilayanur S. Ramachandran, the mirror box is used by positioning the body such that the limb still present is placed on one side of the box and the phantom limb is positioned on the other. The patient will then slowly move the remaining limb while looking into the mirror and “trick” the brain into thinking that the parallel movement reflected in the mirror is that of the phantom limb resting just opposite.

Like the space between the limb and the brain, the artists in this exhibition are constructing a body that is either professed or circumscribed. There is no actual body except in the one assembled, or the one remembered and desired, by synapses of the somatosensory cortex, the part of the brain that receives input from our extremities. I am taking license here to suggest that the language in this exhibition is akin to the

sensory feedback of a phantom limb in which we are aware of corporeal sensation through a cognitive state.

I feel because I know.

Julia Klein’s objects are aware of themselves: they are transmutable, transferable, handle-able, passive and aggressive. They act as a limb that owns itself, only perhaps a little sentimental for the body it fesses up to. These objects are not quite objects, not quite props, not quite appendages, not quite yours and not quite by themselves. In each case the gesture is that of attachment and desire. Their material state acts as the intermediary between the hand that made it and the hand that desires it.

In Dani Levanthal’s work, sensation is palpable and evidenced. Her drawing, *Beaver*, is quite literally an experience of skinning a beaver on paper. As with the footage from *Picnic*, our empathy assumes a position within the field. Our bodies become the figure to her ground and primal curiosity becomes our desire.

I know because I remember.

In the paintings of Amy Sillman and Erin O’Brien, an intimate space is occupied through the fragmented figure. This fracture is not one of disassembly but rather of re-forming. Each mark is tending to the formation of the figure as it remembers itself, collects itself into a new whole while remaining an agent of change. O’Brien remarks

that her images “evoke psychological or emotional locations” as she reveals and obscures the spaces of memory.

Yun Jeong Hong’s work is also in a state of becoming. Using the process of “over and over, again and again,” Jeong Hong constructs a platform that is simultaneously ongoing and eternal while denying that same duration through a recognition of the human scale of making. *Anti-Oedipus* is a platform for no body but one that marks compulsive facility within us all.

Cameron Crawford talks about his work as “the separateness of objects not taking part.” In

Babies. Babies. No babies (armpit) and In, blinds, stand, there is a sense that presence is just aside from the object itself. The work is as Crawford states, “visible but never quite visual: abundant and promiscuous in detail, fronts and back without sides, undersides without tops. There are also smells, water, heat, and clothes, but no touching. The action is always in the facing-away.” It is precisely in this facing away that we become aware of the assumed body.

I feel the body because of distance.

Melanie Schiff’s photograph, *Ghost*, posits this distance through our perceptions of depth and kinetic energy. The image of the wind chime sways to an assumed breeze but in an unreachable shallow space that compresses any sound. Perhaps in a more direct manner, we experience this tension of distance with *Ice Cube*, David Gracie’s palpable image of the frozen ice cube so simply resting on the melamine countertop just within reach but ultimately inaccessible. “There is problem with being here when everything is out there,” Gracie states when speaking to the push and pull while traversing daily life.

Deb’s Glowing Teeth is a body to be filled in. In this work by Rachel Herman, we are compelled by the shadow that consumes us. The glow of the teeth, just visible in the void under the hood, draws closer and assumes not distance, but nearness.

I am the body.

Christopher Meerdo’s projection, *Memento Mori* 1996, uses the vertiginous sensation of a dizzying near-and-far as the body continuously falls toward the landscape while in the position of the camera. Here, we assume the journeying body as we move into awareness through imbalance akin to fear.

In the video screening sequence, works by Todd Mattei, Chris Naka, Steve Rienke and Dani Levanthal, touch on each of the above notions in turn. Sentience is reached in part through recognition of the body and questions of existence. We attempt to construct ourselves.

Kelly Kaczynski



David Gracie, *Ice Cube*, 2011, Oil on plywood, 7x6 inches



Erin O’Brien, *Mountain Head*, 2010, Acrylic on paper, 19 x 15 inches