

Jerome Fellowship Exhibition 2021/22

KOBI, Sarah Sampedro,
Brooks Turner, and Shun Yong



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This catalog was published on the occasion of the exhibition for the 2021/22 MCAD-Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Early Career Artists.

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Essays by Tia-Simone Gardner

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KOBI



Displaced
2021
Analog photography
26 x 22 in.



Introspection
2021
Analog photography
26 x 22 in.

... as the very enfleshment of the un- or subrepresentable; by way of parts improperly rupturing the w/holes to which they will have never belonged or never have been fully relegated but by which they have been enveloped.

—Fred Moten, *Black and Blur*

We tend to think about the body as singular rather than plural. The surface of the skin is a dead end, a fixed and unannexable border.¹ But the body is not one indivisible thing; it is many parts, visible limbs, microscopic pores, and invisible anchorings to other matter. The porousness and the unindividuatedness of one body from another are the location of KOBİ's work. Like the quote above from Fred Moten, KOBİ's images begin in the middle of the story, in the break, breaking assumptions we hold about where one life, one body begins, and another ends. Through video, photography, and installation, he asks us to unlearn ideas about the single being, about agency, about consent to hold the pain of another. What if the pain, the injury done in your body, began before you could fully possess a self? How do you heal a wound that does not have evidence it is there, a wound without a scar?

In many cultures, the human does not start or cease at the flesh, nor does it begin or end at life or death. One word we use to describe this ontology is spirit, and because spirit is not attached to a flesh, it can live outside the body,

in objects, in ideas, in a name. At his birth KOBİ was named Harry Henry, namesake of his grandfather, chosen by his uncle. This same uncle and the grandfather from whom KOBİ inherited his name were both killed in the first Liberian civil war. The event of being given a name, then, is tied to the violence of war and to the heartbreak of loss. How does a name "survive this sort of thing in tact"?² It doesn't.

Drawing on the work of Black feminist philosopher M. Jacqui Alexander, Vanessa Agard-Jones describes trauma as palimpsestic, resistant to attempts at erasure, suspended in those bodies that have been subjected to pain but also "in the bodies of those descended from them."³ In a video sequence in which he washes his hands in blood, KOBİ reflects on the blood that connects him to his step-grandfather. Their connection is born not in the blood of birth but in the blood of war. Blood, sticky, red, hot, and liquid, is both a metaphor of kinship and a phobic object, associated with repulsion and excessive fears of contamination. The blood of these images that slips through the artist's fingers is a materialization of the



Introspection
 2021
 Analog photography
 28 x 23 in.



Introspection
 2021
 Analog photography
 26 x 22 in.

open wound of his family's story, a palimpsest that cannot come clean. The stained hands make "traumatic inheritances visible" in a way that a name alone may not.

A lingering theme in KOBİ's work is that the body does not always metabolize pain, at least not immediately. In part this is because, as discussed above, the site of injury is not always visible. Another reason we may not always experience pain in time with a traumatic injury is that violence is not necessarily spectacular; it can be as mundane as a morning meal. In another, forthcoming photo series, titled *Bullets for Breakfast*, KOBİ describes living through war, looking and listening through the eyes and ears of a child. The artist has memories of being in his childhood home and his kindergarten classroom, listening to the sounds of exploding grenades flash around him. What does endless war sound like? For KOBİ, the ballistic landscape was background noise and registered in his memory as ambient sound.

Just as it can take lifetimes for the events of terror to register in our psyche, it can take lifetimes for them to be exorcised. KOBİ's work presses into a past that he cannot fully know. His labor to make visible what is otherwise intangible provides what Toni Morrison terms "a site of memory," a place to retrieve that which was lost, a place to feel again. A place to heal.

Notes:

1. Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (Routledge, 2011).
2. Fred Moten, *Black and Blur*, vol. 1 of *Consent Not to Be a Single Being* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2017), 68.
3. Vanessa Agard-Jones, "Where Trauma Resides," *Caribbean Queer Visualities: A Small Axe Project*, <http://smallaxe.net/cqv/issue-01/#page/1>.



P.T.S.D.
2021
Analog photography
26 x 22 in.

Sarah Sampedro



Horseshoe Hill, Nobles County, MN
2020
Archival pigment print
28 x 42 in.

Note: One can still see where the land was marked by pioneer wagons zigzagging their way up the hill.

When does place begin? Allan Pred tell us that place is process. The physical, sentimental, and political structures that produce place, he writes, "cannot emerge fully formed out of nothingness." They cannot "stop, grow rigid, indelibly etched in the once-natural landscape."¹ Place. Not place as in the longitudinal data we gather from cartography but place as an always shifting set of intimate relationships and meaning.



Pizza Ranch, Luverne, MN
 2022
 Archival pigment print
 22 x 33 in.



Grandpa at 90
2020
Archival pigment print
22 x 33 in.

To describe a place, or inscribe a place, as Sarah Sampedro does in her work, we have to find ways to know it both within and beyond the boundaries of those indelible histories that are etched into the landscape. The photographs of place in her work are a part of a longing to know the unknowable, ultimately, the unphotographable, the duplicity of settler arrival stories that have insisted in their accounting as the beginning of place.

In a series and sequence of images, Sampedro shows us the beloved, the idyllic, the idealized, and profane landscapes of southwestern Minnesota, landscapes she has known for much of her life. Photographing in Nobles, Rock, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, Watonwan, Blue Earth, and Nicollet Counties, in her work

she uses the camera not only as a tool of evidence and witness but as a vehicle to unknow the familiar, or the familial, to allow herself to sense a metapast and question its mythography. In the United States, the violent space-time of settled and settler histories becomes the beginning of one place and the ending of another. We enter Sampedro's work slowly, cautiously, as witnesses to her witnessing, witnesses to a testimony of settlement. Through her lens, Sampedro images the present life world of a region born out of accumulation by dispossession.

The American landscape is full of stories, travel stories, horror stories, ghost stories. As we move through the landscape through Sampedro's images, we find ourselves in tension with the



Restroom, Fort Pipestone
2021
Archival pigment print
22 x 33 in.

Notes: Restroom at Fort Pipestone, a full-sized fort replica (and gift shop) from the US-Dakota War of 1862. Located outside Pipestone National Monument, land sacred to the Ojibwe Šakówinj for the soft rock used to carve ceremonial pipes. Décor inspired by *The Song of Hiawatha* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

idea of home in a place. We are made aware of the incompleteness of the story, and we become audience to and participants in its mythography, the writing of its fictions and truths. Origin stories in the settler landscape are never complete; they are riddled with (w)holes, wounds, and unaccounted transactions. Landscape photography has been an important part of making origins of places, making myths. Seeing the vast landscapes in these images of the American West void of human presence fed the fervor for expansion and conquer. In Sampedro's work, the still images invite us to see again, aware now of how seeing can leave us wounded, questioning, and speechless. We are haunted by images that implicate us in the past.

In her photographs, Sampedro's images trace her family stories of origin in Nobles County, and the human, the earth, and everything in-between hold stories. The images of rolling green pastures live beside images of amber waves of grain, a literalism of a lyric from the song "America the Beautiful." Sampedro's personal genealogy is merged in her photos with other histories, particularly the passage of the Homestead Act, a policy signed into law by Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The Homestead Act gave settlers rights to more than 270 million acres of land that were federalized after decades of signed and broken treaties. The sandy, unpaved paths that slice through the green plains are a part of a visual narrative that Sampedro tethers together through her sequencing of images, turning our attention back to the Homestead Act. Over a series of images we become spectators to a long process that transformed indigenous land into federal possessable property, and then into the private possessed property of settlers.

As images, Sampedro's photographs allow us to understand Nobles County through her eyes. The objects, the events, the people tell us something about what this place means to her. They tell us something about how she wants to remember this place. She presents us with a way of seeing the Minnesota landscape that locates both her pleasures and grievances alongside her joy and shame within these scenes. With a critical sensibility, she attempts to hold on to her attachment to

this place. She holds on to a task, to represent the unrepresentable, how this place came to be. She is haunted by it, as we are too. Avery Gordon writes, "To be haunted in the name of a will to heal is to allow the ghost to help you imagine what was lost that never even existed, really."² In images without a fixed sequence, Sampedro leans into the many ways that she is haunted by the spoken and unspoken stories of these places. The photographs she makes are a part of a challenging practice of speaking with ghosts, picking up their traces, and asking with reverence for their stories of how a place came to be.

Notes

1. Allan Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74, no. 2 (1984): 279–97.
2. Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 57.



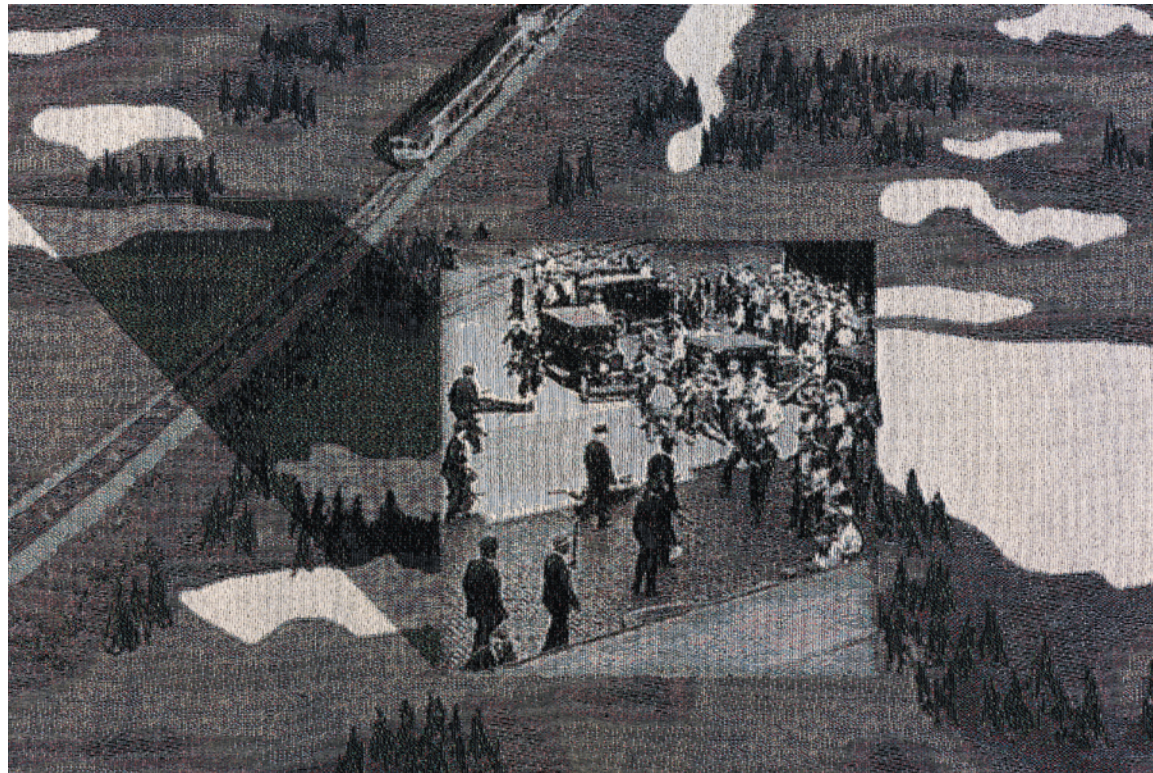
Slaughter's Slough, Murray County, MN
2021
Archival pigment print
42 x 28 in.

Note: Location of the Lake Shetek Massacre, an early conflict of the US-Dakota War of 1862. At least fifteen people died.

Brooks Turner



A Convergence
2022
Tapestry
79 x 102 in.



A Convergence (detail)
2022
Tapestry
79 x 102 in.

Martin Heidegger was a Nazi. Readers of Heideggerian philosophy will know that this is not a euphemism. Heidegger joined the Nazi party in the 1930s and remained a member of the party until its dissolve at the end of World War II. Heidegger remains a seminal figure in continental philosophy, having written and influenced canonical writings on metaphysics, existentialism, and phenomenology. When talking with Brooks Turner about the foundations of his practice, it is apparent that Heidegger is a turning point. How, Turner asks, do you ingest the intellectual contributions that one makes, separate from the life that one lives? He found his way through this problematic via the archive, building a body of work grounded in the biographic, aesthetic, and intellectual records left behind that describe a life or lives.

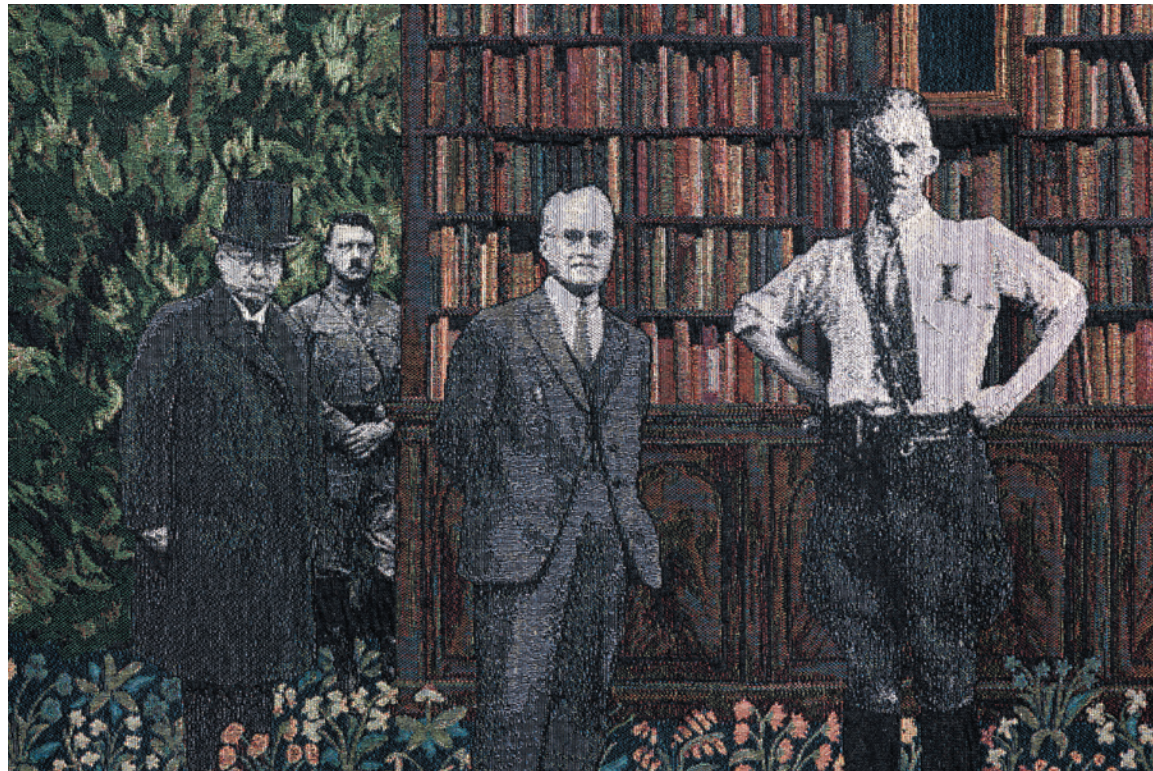
History finds its meaning in our debt to the unliving. Paul Ricoeur writes in *Time and*

Narrative, "As soon as the idea of a debt to the dead, to people of flesh and blood to whom something really happened in the past, stops giving documentary research its highest end, history loses its meaning."¹ The document, the proof that history has happened, is part of a system of evidence we sometimes call the archive. To enter Turner's drawings, collages, tapestries, and installations is to enter a dialogue with documents, with the archive as an unresolved set of questions. Charles Merewether writes, "Created as much by state organizations and institutions as by individuals and groups, the archive, as distinct from a collection or library, constitutes a repository or ordered system of documents and records, both verbal and visual, that is the foundation from which history is written."²

Turner has spent many years combing through archives, examining political histories, and



Untitled (Diptych with Car and Silvershirts)
2021
Dye sublimation print on satin
Dimensions variable



Pantheon (detail)
2021
Tapestry
79 x 102 in.

their philosophical underpinnings. Heidegger led him to think about the ways the American Fascist movement has storied and placed itself throughout the United States. Turner has grounded his work in the archive because it not only gives reminders of the physical and social spaces within the nation space that fascism occupied and continues to occupy, but also shows how it has remembered itself. Fascism, through the archive, has both memorialized and disguised its traces. Following fragments of the past, Turner's work orients itself toward the public. Making use of the formal aesthetics of everyday knowledgesharing like the newspaper, the tapestry, and film, Turner turns objects into moments of contact with the past—moments that make legible how entangled fascism is with and delimited by "whiteness, imperialism, and the machine of industry."³ In his essay, "American Fascism as Aesthetic Experience," Turner writes:

Fascism is notoriously difficult to define. Some believe it is mostly meaningless because of its overuse as a casual slur.

Others believe that it should only be used to refer to early twentieth-century Fascist movements. A more recent contingent of theorists have offered more encompassing definitions, but defining is inherently limiting: it draws borders around things and concepts for ease of understanding, directing our attention away from processes and subtleties, from social and political interstices that might transcend ideology or policy.⁴

A part of Turner's work has been to think about political structures as aesthetic practices. He writes, "If it is fascism that brings aesthetics into politics, then aesthetic analysis becomes a tool for identifying fascism."⁵ His work both indexes and borrows from the visual vocabulary of political movements, the ways they style themselves, the way they perform themselves in public, the ways they form and use rhetoric. And this is what art allows, a way to engage the visual and the symbolic as a means to make sense of ourselves and the world around us.

This is also why art is so dangerous. The symbols that we attach our identities to have histories that precede and extend beyond us. Power expands its reach by learning how to appropriate the symbolic. Turner's work traces and travels in understanding the mobility of symbolic meaning.



Pantheon
2021
Tapestry
79 x 102 in.

His current work, which he is developing as a three-channel film, examines how the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," a song of Union patriotism written by abolitionist Julia Ward Howe in the 1860s, was appropriated into a melody for a march anthem by the Silver Legion, an American fascist organization formed in the 1930s.⁶

In her essay "Places and Their Pasts," geographer Doreen Massey describes the relationship between the past and present as a contest of ideas about historical continuity. She writes, "what are at issue are competing histories of the present, wielded as arguments over what should be the future." Massey is arguing that neither the present or future are settled, nor is the past. Turner's work illuminates the ways that "conflicting interpretations of the past" serve to "legitimate a particular understanding of the present," and how both "are put to use in a battle over what is to come."⁷ Turner, as archivist, historian, and artist, stands in between these locations. His indebtedness to that which has been is not to fascist regimes of power but to the counterhistories that run adjacent to, oppose, and continue to unmake them.

Notes:

1. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
2. Charles Merewether, ed., *The Archive* (London: Whitechapel; Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006), 10.
3. Brooks Turner, interview by author, August 2022. We discussed this in our interview, but it is condensed here. In his "exhibition-in-print" *Legends and Myths of Ancient Minnesota* (2020), he writes, "This fetid mixture of race hatred, nationalism, masculinity, and militancy—a governing structure at the intersection of whiteness, Imperialism, and the machine of industry—haunts the Twin Cities." <https://wam.umn.edu/brooks-turner-legends-and-myths-of-ancient-minnesota/>.
4. Brooks Turner, "American Fascism as Aesthetic Experience," MN Artists (blog), January 21, 2021, <https://mnartists.walkerart.org/american-fascism-as-aesthetic-experience>.
5. Turner, "American Fascism as Aesthetic Experience."
6. In correspondence, Turner notes that while the entire song was appropriated by the Silver Legion, the melody itself was utilized by Ralph Chaplin for "Solidarity Forever," a labor union anthem. A part of Turner's interests lie in the ways that a fascist and anti-fascist organization "could have been marching to war with each other to the same melody." Brooks Turner to Melanie Pankau and Keisha Williams, September 29, 2022.
7. Doreen Massey, "Places and Their Pasts," *History Workshop Journal* 39 (spring 1995): 182–92.

Shun Yong



Kit from the *Occupations* series
2017
Archival inkjet print
48 x 60 in.



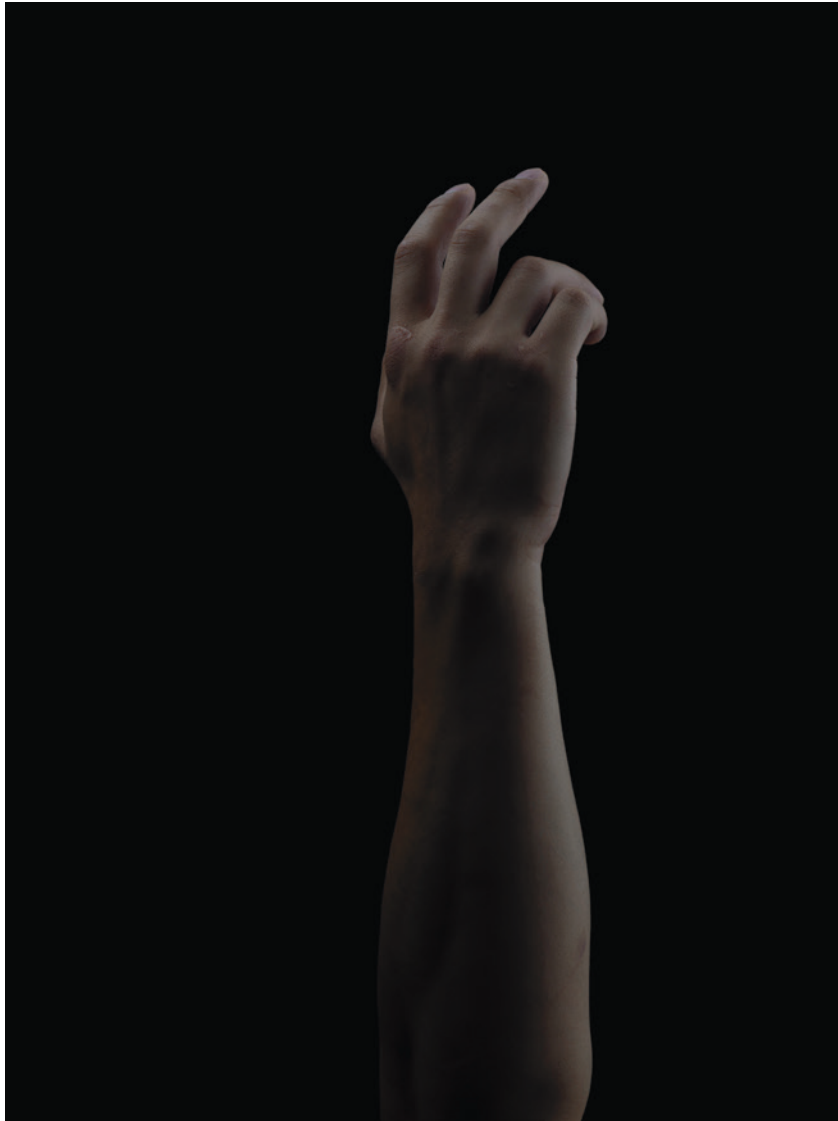
Untitled from the *Occupations* series
2022
Digital photography

At a moment when the Internet has made photographic portraits a ubiquitous form, crafting a good picture, a human picture, feels somehow more urgent. We make images every day, but the ritual of having a portrait taken is a rare gift, largely left to moments where we encounter authority—for school, for work, for state. The attention to subtlety, the scene, the choreography of poses demand slowness that our everyday lives move too quickly to wait for. At first glance Shun Yong's work appears as well-thought-out portraits, and they are, but Yong distinguishes the images he makes by situating them at the confluence of multiple genres of photography: the studio photograph, the snapshot, the still life, the film still, and, finally, interestingly, body art.

Under the cool synthetic glow of studio light, Yong composes images of vulnerability and stillness. In his series *Occupations*, the artist works as many photographers do, using images to slice time into fragments of moments, creating opportunities for an extended pause, fixing time and space. The images are portraits of workers at work. The artist has shifted the

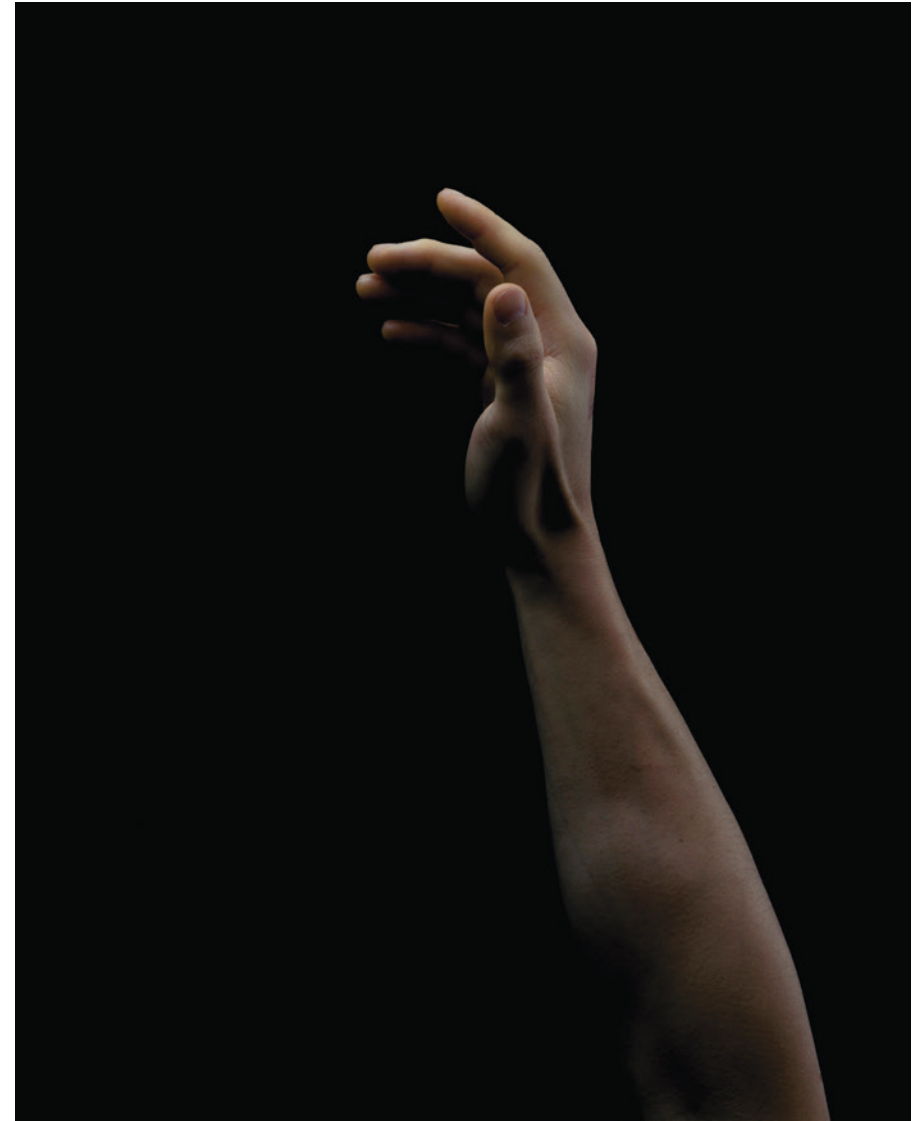
encounter with the authority of the employer, the moment of having a portrait taken for identification at work, into a studio portrait. The intervals of a single moment are returned to us, outside of what would otherwise be a faster pace of paid labor. The extended duration of Yong's photographs allows us to see his subjects be still in their work. They are actively not in motion, but their settings tell us that this is a choreographed moment before they return to a task. On a bright and warm day, a man stands posed holding a large coil of wire mesh. The scene behind him is a job site, under construction. The dusty concrete, the rebar, stained orange with rust, the industrial landscape become a part of an intimate setting, a slow portrait in a fast place. In other images from the series, Yong makes use of the artifice of studio lighting, less present in this image. Again, the artifice of the studio is present in the photographs, but the studio itself, the place of study and contemplation, is unmade. Artifice, here, refers to the constructedness of the images. The photographer's studio in particular is a place where the sitter and time can be more fully under the artist's control.

The studio, often a white-walled space of practice where the artist is



From the *C-H-F* series
2022
Archival inkjet print
36 x 27 in.

safe to make work, becomes for Yong the subject's home or place of work.



From the *C-H-F* series
2022
Archival inkjet print
36 x 27 in.

This process of meeting the subject, photographing them in the comfort of their possessions, allows subject and the artist to change places. Outside of the studio, the domicile, a place where one exercises dominion, is no longer the exclusive territorial right of the photographer; it is given over to the sitter. Yong has to think through this transfer of power from himself to his subjects as he constructs images. He is interested in the meticulously composed photo and has brought the camera close to the body. Shown against a rich black background, the compositions are choreographed. An arm reaches into the frame. Warm in the tones of the skin, warm but not brown. The race of the figure is allowed to be read in the easy ways we have been taught to racialize the body, from the depth of or hue of skin tone, hair, eyes, mouths, a knowing glance. All we have are the excesses of warm flesh. Fleshy, uninterrupted images, save for one where the dark cuff of a sleeve peeks above the edge. The warm stillness of the limbs lands, stop-motion, in front of or onto the blackness of the pictures' backgrounds, giving them a theatricality and reinforcing the bareness of the skin. The deep darkness of the background contrasts dramatically with the creamy foregrounded limbs, resembling the chiaroscuro rendering of the object of study in Dutch still-life paintings.

The use of a bare visual field here allows us to think about the space between the body and the nothingness it gathers. The objectlessness of the body is held in place by the nothingness of the scene. It also disorients us. Power in these images does not come from the flexed hardness of muscles, or the relaxed soft spaces between fingers, or the potential motion that is always pronouncing itself in the contours of the skin. Power moves from the darkness. Like a dark magnet, it holds the kinetic possibility of the moving limb in place. The fragments

change in the darkness of the frames as we watch. Their gestures are frozen in time, and somehow from the blackness of the confinement we want them to move, we want to be lost in their movement, and we get lost in our wonder. Is the figure reaching? Is it in repose? Was it caught in the activated forearm and the bent and twisted fingers? The importance of time. The Limbs, the climbers' limbs, defy the Jimi Hendrix command, "Go stand next to the mountain." They instead lie in wait in the studio, waiting on their activation, waiting on their verb.



Untitled from the Occupations series
2022
Digital photography

KOBI



KOBI is a conceptual Liberian/Ghanian photographer and filmmaker. He believes that the art we make is an extension of who we were, who we are, and who we want to become. KOBI's artistry has evolved from one about reparation and become more about the preservation and restoration of his self-identity and how it relates to the diaspora of Blackness. KOBI uses filmmaking and analog photography as a tool to display his trauma and create a space for healing through conversations about acceptance and accountability. He obtained his BFA in integrated media and film production from St. Cloud State University and is a 2021/22 alum of Public Functionary Studios.

Sarah Sampedro



Sarah Sampedro is a Minneapolis-based photographer and educator. Her artwork examines the correlation between interpersonal space and social contracts as they relate to relationship, community, and belonging. Her art considers the histories, both personal and collective, that shape our perceptions of Self and Other, and the binary of "mine" and "yours." Her work is an attempt to understand the psychological and constructed space that exists between all of us. Recent artwork themes include the 1862 Homestead Act, gentrification in her Minneapolis neighborhood, racially restrictive real estate contracts in Hennepin County, and the connection between power and agency. Sampedro was a 2011/12 recipient of a Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant, an artist in residence at the Milchhof Atelier (Berlin, Germany) in 2018, and a 2019

recipient of the Picture Berlin Artist Residency (Germany). She also chaired the Minneapolis Arts Commission and sat on the Minneapolis Public Art Advisory Panel. Sampedro holds an MFA in photography and moving images from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and teaches at the University of Minnesota.

Brooks Turner



Brooks Turner is an artist, writer, and educator based in Minneapolis. Through diverse methodologies that include archival research, collage, digital drawing, film, and installation, Turner engages the history of fascism in Minnesota as a synecdoche for understanding and challenging the aesthetics of US history and the imperialist ideologies it enshrines. Recent solo exhibitions include *Legends and Myths of Ancient Minnesota* at the Weisman Art Museum, *Uncanny Familiarities of Scenes and People* at St. Cloud State University, and *Order and Discipline* at Ridgewater College in Willmar, Minnesota. His work has been supported by the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Minnesota Humanities Center, Rimon: The Minnesota Jewish Arts Council, the Minnesota State Inter-Faculty Organization, and the Jerome Foundation. He is the author

of *A Guide to Charles Ray: Sleeping Mime* as well as numerous essays published by HAIRandNAILS, Art Papers, and Mn Artists. Turner received a BA from Amherst College and an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is currently Chair of Visual Art at St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists and a lecturer at both St. Cloud State University and the University of Minnesota.

Shun Yong



Shun Yong is a fine art photographer and multidisciplinary artist. A fear of loss, generational trauma, and curiosity motivate him to make photographs. Yong's *Occupation* series investigates his identity as a second-generation Chinese immigrant in Malaysia as well as a new immigrant to the United States. Producing the *Occupation* series has not only helped him achieve a sense of belonging in both places but also allows him to connect with family and strangers alike. Yong's *C-H-F* investigates what motivates Asian climbers to take part in what is considered a "white" sport. He is the cofounder of CarryOn Homes, a collaborative dedicated to telling the stories of immigrants and refugees in the United States through art. By engaging the public in cross-cultural dialogue, CarryOn Homes creates spaces for immigrants and marginalized communities to feel a sense of belonging and empowerment.

Yong holds an MFA in visual studies from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and a BS in physics from St. Cloud State University. Yong's work has been shown at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts; Minneapolis College of Art and Design; Art at 801 Gallery, Minneapolis; and Soo Visuals Art Center, Minneapolis. His work as a collective has been exhibited in numerous venues across Minnesota, including the Minneapolis Institute of Art and Walker Art Center. Yong is the recipient of a 2019 MCBA/Jerome Foundation Book Arts Fellowship XV, Forecast Public Art 2022 Early-Career Research + Development Grant, a 2022 Metropolitan Regional Arts Council Arts Impact for Individuals Grant, and a 2022 Minnesota State Arts Board Creative Support for Individuals Grant.

Acknowledgments

More than two years on from the COVID-19 outbreak, society (for better or worse) seems to be stepping into a new reality. With this has come a desired return to “normalcy” but also a deeper understanding of how interconnected we are as a global society, and perhaps how vulnerable we can be. Complex global issues such as an ever-growing political divide, global health and climate crises, and reckoning with systemic racism have tested society—and in many ways have found us wanting. While resiliency, defined as the ability to recover quickly from difficulty, is often lauded in describing this moment, what has also emerged is a greater need for societal self-awareness, criticality, and creativity to move us through difficult times.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed the arts in a liminal space. In many ways, it was a moment of contradiction: one that shut down the arts and culture community, but one that also shone a new spotlight on the need for artistic intervention. This societal need for art and artists to speak to our times, connect us to the human condition, and help us process our unfolding new reality then perhaps brings to the forefront something beyond resiliency. I would counter the veneration of “resiliency” with the embracing of creativity, consciousness, criticality, and deep consideration as more meaningful traits that we must strive to embody in this moment. For these attributes we must look to artists. As playwright Jonathan Larson said, “The opposite of war isn’t peace; it’s creation.”

These very characteristics are what stood out to the jurors of the 2021/22 Jerome fellowship applications: Paolo Arao (Brooklyn-based artist), Pavel Pyś (Curator of Visual Arts at the Walker Art Center), and Stephanie Sparling Williams (Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art, Brooklyn Art Museum). Compelling, interesting, relevant, dynamic, and important were the descriptors they regularly used when reviewing the work of KOBI, Sarah Sampedro, Brooks Turner, and Shun Yong. While perhaps not intentional in so many ways,

our jurors selected a group of fellows perfectly primed to identify, speak to, and uplift the qualities that we as a society are in dire need of.

Each fellow has a practice that pushes them to embody and affirm creativity, consciousness, criticality, and self-awareness, which society as a whole struggles to grasp. In many ways their work is in response to the world today. They question what it means to heal, to spotlight societal structures of existence and place, to unpack history and its impact on contemporary life, and illustrate the experiences afforded—or not afforded—to certain members of society. Their work, while not overtly centered on a scrutiny of society, acts as a sign of hope and affirmation—an affirmation that creative minds still have a vital role to play in the building of worlds, the repairing of past trauma, the interrogation of belonging. Their art speaks for itself, but it also has the transformative potential to speak to society. That gives me faith in the future, one led and supported by artists who use their lens to communicate in creative ways.

This year the fellows invited interdisciplinary artist, educator, and Black feminist scholar Tia-Simone Gardner to visit them in their studios, discuss work, and write short essays about their practices. Tia’s writing makes clear the relational power their work has to build meaningful connection.

The Minneapolis College of Art and Design has administered the MCAD–Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Early Career Artists for over forty years. In that time, we have seen early career artists refine, expand, and focus their practices and emerge with new levels of grounding and confidence.

As I mark the start of my tenure as Program Director, I would like to extend my gratitude to the large community that has supported this fellowship. I must first and foremost thank Jerome Foundation staff and board of trustees for their continued support of this program. They have helped make MCAD the true home of early career artists. Without them this work

would not be possible. On behalf of this year’s fellows, I would like to thank Jerome President Ben Cameron and Program Director Eleanor Savage for their support and leadership. I would also like to thank MCAD’s President Sanjit Sethi, Vice-President of Academic Affairs Robert Ransick, and Associate Vice-President Melissa Rands for their dedication to ensuring MCAD remains a central space for fostering creative growth in our surrounding communities.

Much behind-the-scenes work goes into supporting the fellowship, and many of the college departments are involved. I would like to take a moment to thank each of them for their continued stewardship of the fellowship program. Most of the behind-the-scenes work is supported by Melanie Pankau, Associate Fellowship and Gallery Coordinator. Not only is Melanie thoughtful, organized, and deeply considered in the work she does, but as an artist herself, her commitment to early career artists is profound.

This fellowship is meant to create a lasting and deeply impactful experience for early career artists. One tangible way their time with us is captured is the catalog. This is in large part supported by the continued and long-standing partnership with Rik Sferra. Rik’s dedication to photographing both the fellows and their work is a vital element of the fellowship that lasts well beyond the program year at MCAD. Mary Keirstead (catalog copy editor) also ensures we are presenting our fellows in thoughtful and considered ways.

Throughout the year we work with our colleagues in Communications and Marketing and DesignWorks who help us conduct the fellowship program, from the application open call to production of the catalog, at the best level of professionalism and creativity. These teams include Anh Tran, who designed this year’s identity, with additional support from Creative Director Kayla Campbell, design fellow Nathan Riebel, and Annie Gillette–Cleveland, Steven Candy, Mara Rosen, and Brandie Zaspel, who ensure the fellowship program reaches

larger audiences.

Directors and managers across MCAD have also provided invaluable support over the years to our fellows through access to special facilities. I would like to thank Diana Eicher (Print Shop), Don Myhre (3-D Shop), Amy Naughton Becker (Library), Tyler Page (Service Bureau), Todd Jones (Campus Safety), and Lauren Zimitsch (Media Center).

The MCAD Gallery Team, composed of work-study students, graduate students, and exhibition technicians, ensure our fellows’ work is effectively presented. This team includes Michaela Chorn, Maggie Coleman, Molly Froman, Kendall Dickinson, Jamie Kubat, Joy Li, Sara Suppan, and Aurora Wolfe. We are also lucky to have the support and assistance of Alicia Kuri Alamillo, Exhibition and Studio Services Manager; Jeff Jones, Exhibition Services Coordinator; Madeline Garcia, Exhibition Technician; and Jordyn Brennan, Studio and Office Coordinator.

Lastly, I would like to thank my predecessor, Kerry Morgan, who served as the fellowship director at MCAD for thirteen years. Her dedication to supporting early career artists is in many ways incalculable. Serving over sixty fellows during her time at MCAD, Kerry grew the program with careful stewardship to what it is today, and her impact will be felt by artists long past her tenure.

To all of those who have played a role in developing this fellowship into the impactful and excellence-driven program it is today, I wish to thank you.

Keisha Williams
Director and Curator of MCAD Galleries
and Exhibitions
Program Director, MCAD–Jerome Foundation
Fellowships for Early Career Artists

Past Recipients

2020	Katayoun Amjadi Kehayr Brown-Ransaw Nooshin Hakim Javadi, Dej Txiaj Ntsim, Kuab Maiv Yaj, Koua Mai Yang	2013	Kjellgren Alkire Pao Houa Her GraceMarie Keaton Robin Schwartzman Nate Young
2019	Sarah Abdel-Jelil Zachary Betts Sophia Chai Kaamil A. Haider	2012	Susannah Bielak Amanda Hankerson Michael Hoyt Melissa Loop Lauren Roche
2018	Mara Duvra Marjorie Fedyszyn Tucker Hollingsworth Boone Nguyen	2011	Richard Barlow Gregory Euclide Lauren Herzak- Bauman Alison Hiltner Jehra Patrick
2017	Alyssa Baguss Josette Ghiseline Sarah Kusa Joshua McGarvey Lela Pierce	2010	Greg Carideo Teri Fullerton Julia Kouneski Brett Smith Jonathan Bruce Williams
2016	Nikki J. McComb Kelsey Olson Edie Overturf Jovan C. Speller Amanda Wirig	2009	Steven Accola Caroline Kent Tynan Kerr/ Andrew Mazorol Tony Sunder
2015	Star Wallowing Bull Emmett Ramstad Holly Streekstra Lindsay Rhyner Samual Weinberg	2008	Evan Baden Barbara Claussen Kirsten Peterson Benjamin Reed Lindsay Smith
2014	Miranda Brandon Regan Golden- McNerney Jess Hirsch Sieng Lee Jason Ramey	2007	Matthew Bakkom Monica Haller Colin Kopp Liz Miller Rosemary Williams

2006	Ernest A. Bryant III Brian Lesteberg Cherith Lundin Monica Sheets Marcus Young
2005	Janet Lobberecht Megan Rye Angela Strassheim Dan Tesene Megan Vossler
2004	Michael Gaughan Kirk McCall Abinadi Meza Lisa Nankivil
2003	Tamara Brantmeier Lucas DeGiulio Jesse Petersen, Matthew Wacker Troy Williams
2002	Joseph del Pesco Helena Keeffe Charles Matson Lume Justin Newhall Grace Park
2001	Jay Heikes Markus Lunkenheimer Alec Soth Peter Haakon Thompson John Vogt
2000	Santiago Cucullu Alexa Horochowski John Largaespada Gene Pittman Cristi Rinklin

1999	Amelia Biewald-Low Jason S. Brown James Holmberg Anne Sugnet Inna Valin
1998	Amelie Collins Brad Geiken Rollin Marquette Don Myhre Thor Eric Paul
1997	Jean Humke Carolyn Swiszc Amy Toscani Cate Vermeland Sara Woster
1996	Therese Buchmiller Todd Deutsch Celeste Nelms Mara Pelecis Mike Rathbun
1995	Robert Fischer Anne George Stephanie Molstre -Kotz Todd Norsten Carl Scholz
1994	Terence Accola Mary Jo Donahue Jonathan Mason Karen Platt Elliot Warren
1993	Mary Esch Damian Garner Shannon Kennedy Linda Louise Rother James Whitney Tuthill

1992	Angela Dufresne Tim Jones Chris Larson Andrea McCormack Shawn Smith
1991	Hans Accola Sara Belleau Franciska Rosenthal Louw Colette Gaiter Annette Walby
1990	Andy Baird Mark Barlow Keri Pickett Ann Wood Christopher Wunderlich
1989	Lynn Hambrick Vince Leo Stuart Mead David Pelto Alyn Silberstein
1988	Phil Barber JonMarc Edwards Jil Evans Dave Rathman George Rebollos
1987	Michelle Charles Leslie Hawk Paul Shambroom Viet Ngo Diana Watters
1986	Gary DeCosse Christopher Dashke Jennifer Hecker Michael Mercil Randy Reeves

1985	Betina Judy Kepes Peter Latner James May Lynn Wadsworth
1984	Doug Argue Remo Campopiano Timothy Darr Audrey Glassman Robert Murphy
1983	Jana Freiband Janet Loftquist David Madzo Jeff Millikan Steven Woodward
1982	Jane Bassuk Frank Big Bear Jr. Laura Blaw Matt Brown Kevin Mangan
1981	Ricardo Bloch Bruce Charlesworth Alison Ruttan T.L. Solien Scott Stack

About the Jerome Foundation

The Jerome Foundation, founded in 1964 by artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905–1972), honors his legacy through multiyear grants to support the creation, development, and presentation of new works by early career artists.

The Foundation makes grants to vocational early career artists, and those nonprofit arts organizations that serve them, in all disciplines in the state of Minnesota and the five boroughs of New York City.

Values

The Foundation’s core values, which we strive to model in our practice as grantmakers and to support in our grantees, are:

Diversity: We consciously embrace diversity in the broadest sense. We support a diverse range of artists and organizations, including but not limited to those of diverse cultures, races, sexual identities, genders, generations, aesthetics, points of view, physical abilities, and missions. We support a diverse range of artistic disciplines and forms, created in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.

Innovation/Risk: We applaud unconventional approaches to solving problems and support artists and organizations that challenge and engage the traditional aesthetic and/or social dimensions of their respective disciplines.

Humility: We work for artists (rather than the reverse) and believe that artists and organizations are the best authorities to define their needs and challenges—an essential humility reflective of Jerome Hill, our founder. The artists and arts organizations we support embrace their roles as part of a larger community of artists and citizens, and consciously work with a sense of purpose, whether aesthetic, social or both.

jeromefdn.org

Minneapolis College of Art and Design

Since 1886, Minneapolis College of Art and Design—a private, nonprofit undergraduate and postgraduate college—has been the preeminent art and design educator in the region. Today MCAD is a national leader in fine arts, design, entrepreneurship, and sustainability education. Through degree programs, continuing education courses, exhibitions, and other community programs and events, MCAD cultivates the next generation of creative, cultural leaders.

Mission Statement

Minneapolis College of Art and Design provides a transformative education within a community of support for creative students of all backgrounds to work, collaborate, and lead with confidence in a dynamic, interconnected world.

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Minneapolis College
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