

# THE WORK IN BETWEEN

A SELECTION OF HOSPITABLE REFLECTIONS ON  
THE WORK DONE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

CIVALAB

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“The Work In Between” is a commission for the CIVA 2015 conference theme *Between Two Worlds*. It began with eight artists from different subcultures who are experts in different media and interested in different ideas. Each artist worked out the theme of the conference in their studio, integrating the black hole or grey matter that exists *Between Two Worlds* into their art making process.

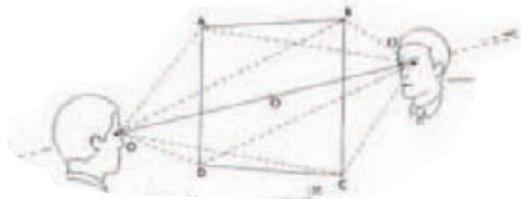
The conference theme presents two broad terms—*contemporary art* and *church*—that are easier to encode than to decode. It’s the dialogue that seems important. Not dialogue like hot air, but dialogue as action and journey. Artworks created for “now” are not made to sit still. Rather, our shared looking and living is part of the work. These artists are not just interested in how we work as a people, but also how we rest and play.

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The objects in this exhibition sponsor new action between two constructed and complicated worlds.

Many people worked together to produce this exhibition, including Bruce Herman and Kevin Hamilton who made sure the project got off the ground and Cameron Anderson who worked with the artists and production. Wayne Adams, Joyce Lee, David Taylor, and Brian Moss also provided significant input. I thank each of them for their generosity of time and thought.

*Karen Brummund*  
PROJECT CURATOR



CIVALLA3

READY-TO-HAND SERIES

Gala Bent, in collaboration with her three sons  
Ezra, Solomon, and Caspar  
Seattle, Washington  
Ink on beverage napkin  
Edition of 500  
2015

[www.galabent.com](http://www.galabent.com)

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I have three sons, ages six, eight, and nine-going-on-ten. We collaborated on these pieces. I asked one son to list everything white he could think of. I asked another to draw pictures from that list. I asked my youngest to draw a cube and write the Magritte-like play-phrase, “This is not a white napkin.” In the course of life, it is not unusual for us to be sitting somewhere where we have to wait. If we have a pen and something to draw on—a receipt? a notebook? a napkin?—we play games or draw pictures to pass the time. Often, these moments become sweetly restful, even if colored by the awareness of a pending flight or restaurant food that is slow in coming. I like to be reminded that unplanned time can become a sabbath—a cessation—that allows for other ways to think and be together.



## MIS-ACHIEVED

Karen Brummund

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Video of boxes on boxes lining up

Puzzle scrambler

Edition of 500

2015

[www.karenbrummund.com](http://www.karenbrummund.com)

I misperceived my achievement. I made a large stack of pure white perfect cubes. Then I projected onto them a video of that action—the work of stacking pure white perfect cubes. It never lines up. Well, there is one moment when a few of them line up, and that makes you either more confident in me or discontent with the boxes. I'm not sure what the right response is, but as you watch the pictures of pure white move across the statuesque boxes, it may strike you that the that boxes look other than white. So when you look at white-on-white, you no longer see white. Although it's a simple sculpture in a vacant building, it gives a perfect square that doesn't line up the chance to be beautiful.



## CHECKLIST

Jay Henderson

Dallas, Texas

8 x 10 inches, printed matter

Edition 500

2015

[www.jayhendersonart.com](http://www.jayhendersonart.com)

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A good picture is hard won. Going through a cycle of analysis, doubt, restarts, and moments of epiphany, the process of making a picture is a lot like sanctification. *Checklist* is a metaphor and a result of that process. Combining the often contradictory impulses of abstract picture making, the “function” of graphic design, and the reality of a printed object, *Checklist* is both a guide and an icon of contemplation. It is metaphorical sanctification, pointing to the change, correction, and transformation taking place inside battered clapboard churches where the end result is starkly (and beautifully) different from the beginning. Like a congregation that is pruned to draw closer together and closer to Jesus, the picture is still in a process of becoming.



## VIEWFINDER

Cherith Lundin

Chicago, Illinois

10 x 10 inches, printed matter

Edition 500

2015

[www.cherithlundin.com/work](http://www.cherithlundin.com/work)

As I interacted with the conference theme, I kept coming back to overarching similarities between the art world and the church. As institutions, both are invested in narrating their traditions to shape meaning; each has developed specialized languages; and both continually search for a normative way of doing things (e.g., the Protestant plethora of denominations or the continual relocation of the avant-garde and advanced artistic practices in modern and contemporary art). Both church and art-world insiders see themselves as gatekeepers, while those on the outskirts clamor for boundaries to be redrawn.

In wrestling with the boundary-drawing nature of the church and art world, I am confronted by a paradox: walls shape views. The frame defines the image. Artists often find themselves challenging institutional boundaries. But at a more mundane level and within individual practice, focusing vision and working within chosen patterns

and structures is often key to finding new meaning. The shape of our framework may limit our view even as it helps us see more clearly and attentively.

Artists have a long history of devising tools for seeing—from a simple viewfinder or camera obscura, to complex perspectival systems. With my “make-your-own-viewfinder” for the CIVA conference, I juxtapose



the whimsical activity of punching out, assembling, and finding views with depictions of modern and ancient viewing devices that map epistemic anxiety and the desire to see accurately. The viewfinder invites the participant to engage in the sober, exhilarating game of perception.

STILL WATERS:  
STUDIES FROM GOOGLE STREET VIEW

Janna Luttrell

Brooklyn, New York

9 x 12 inches, drawing printed on translucent paper

Edition of 500

2015

[www.jannaluttrell.com](http://www.jannaluttrell.com)

I am interested in how we use written and spoken language to define physical environments and solidify personal and collective memories within these places. Through books, photo documentary projects, and site-specific installations of text applied to walls, I investigate both how the spatial qualities of thought and the context of the physical environment impact meaning, and how language shapes the experience of a place. *Still Waters* is a photo documentary project of houses of worship Brooklyn, New York that aims to record how different faith groups in a locale locate and name themselves, and how these languages shape the urban landscape.



## SHADE

Lex Thompson

Minneapolis, Minnesota

4 x 6 inches, unfixed photograph in a black bag

Edition of 500

2015

[www.lexthompson.com](http://www.lexthompson.com)

The camera's flash illuminates the white vapor of phantom breath under the canopy of a tree. The exhaled spirit's visibility is gone in 1/125 of a second, except within the black box of the camera. The resulting image is printed on the photographic paper and sealed within a black plastic bag. The image is unstable. By excising portions of the chemical process, the image is made impermanent. If removed from the black bag and exposed to light, the photograph will slowly darken. To preserve the image made by the camera one must not look at it—keep it covered. Alternatively, one may remove the print from its protective sheath and welcome the transient apparition of the image, allowing it to fade into eventual darkness.



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PLAN FOR LIGHT AND DARK.

Josh Welker  
Upland, Indiana  
iPhone decals  
Edition of 500  
2015

[www.joshuagrantswelker.com](http://www.joshuagrantswelker.com)

I was talking with my friend on the phone—I, walking in Indiana and he, driving around the Texas Hill Country. I was telling him about the promptings Karen Brummund gave our group: to make a work of art that deals thematically, conceptually, or formally with “the quintessential white painted church,” “the white painted cubed gallery space,” and/or “monochrome.” He said, “just a second, a fortuitous thing here: I’ll call you back.” A few seconds later he sent me an image that had to be the quintessential white painted church that Karen had in mind. I told my friend, “I guess I’ll start with that one.” And so, I did.

I won’t completely disclose the process used to generate the image on this sticker, but I will come forward with the fact that I used an imaging loop that attempts to subvert the photographic process; it’s a series of successive negations. Since the image is photographic before it’s anything else, it owes its existence to reception, light,

and reflection. I strove to alter, manipulate, trick, and deflect these elements and occurrences. My main means of knowledge is through sculpture. Because of this, the successive negations used to derive this image function like a removal of material. It’s an attempt to work sculpturally in a medium that, Jean-Luc Mouléne wrote, is “starting to accept and construct the collective illusion.”



Due to a conversation with Kevin Hamilton, this image found its way on to an object that fits on the back of your phone. The image is a hole or a void, a hyper-thin veneer composed with mechanisms and material all housed within our phone. This sticker is an attempt to call into question the mechanism and means by which we know and navigate, the way that we orient ourselves and face the world.

A WAY TO THINK ABOUT MY WHITENESS

Adam Wolpa

Grand Rapids, Michigan

1-1/8 x 2-3/8 x 1/2 inches, eliminator eraser

Edition of 500

2015

[www.adamwolpa.com](http://www.adamwolpa.com)

*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

Responding to a call for institutional critique, riffing off of the images of the white church on the hill and the white walls of the gallery, and quoting the genre of minimalism and the monochrome.

*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

Black men are being killed or mutilated by cops, and I am a safe, white, male intellectual. I abhor the condition of institutional racism, as well as all other institutional oppressions, but I continue to participate in them.

*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

The spectacle of race riots, as signifying ruptures of the web of distrust and illusion, is rewritten and represented in real time via social media. All along, we continuously reinscribe the narrative of patriarchy. Who is telling the story? I relate to Brown or Garner or Gray or Rice or Martin or King, not because I am white and male, but because the schema is white and male. #BlackLivesMatter really means #BlackMensLivesMatter. Black

women killed or mutilated by police are ignored by the media and by our corporate imagination.

*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

My children have access to healthy food, good schools, safe neighborhoods, books, and healthy toys. My children have low levels of exposure to hazards and toxins, like lead bullets or lead paint.



*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

Vict: To conquer

*A way to think about my whiteness . . .*

The eraser is a corrective device. It makes things better by eliminating errors, but it also removes, hides, and disappears dark marks. What disappears from our collective memory, our art, or our faith practice? As a functional object, the eraser has enormous transformative potential. As an art object, the eraser has enormous transformative potential. As either, it's also quite possibly impotent and ineffectual.

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