

FULL BLEED

JUNE 2019

ISSUE NINE: THE CLEAVE

FREE



LAUREN QUIN



THE CLEAVE

Each issue of FULL BLEDE invites artists and writers to respond to a theme. For the ninth issue the broadsheet's contributors explore a contronym: a word which is its own opposite. Some chose to focus on that which comes together firmly and unwaveringly. Others chose to explore the separation of what was once whole. The contronym definitions of cleave are actually homographs: two distinct words that are spelled and pronounced the same, but have different meanings. Some contributors puzzle through a conflation of the two discrete definitions.

Enjoy this collection of poetry, essays, prose, and visual artworks. As always, thank you for your support and long looks.

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For more information about each of the featured works as well as the contributor's elaboration about it in relation to the theme, The Cleave, turn to pages 38-39.

Visit fullblede.com for free downloads of past issues.



FROM THE PUBLISHER

The first step for each issue of FULL BLEDE is figuring out the theme. This mostly involves scribbling out lists of words, skimming through books (especially older literature favorites), clicking around online dictionaries, and shouting out topics to my boyfriend and dog. Figuring it out is easy, and hard. It's painful, and pleasurable. It's literally the best, and the worst. I mean this in the literal sense, and the figurative one. Although I would never really use *literally* that way, because I think it should only have one meaning. Anyway, this is basically what Issue Nine: The Cleave is all about. *Cleave* is a contronym, a contradictory, reverse-meaning, context-dependent, confusing word that is actually two different words that are spelled exactly the same, said exactly the same, but with two opposite definitions.

I chose *cleave*, but I was really thinking of the word as a stand-in for the Janus, two-faced nature of all contronyms. I find the fact that they exist fascinating, funny, frustrating, wild. Here's a list of some favorites:
chuffed: pleased or annoyed
drop: delete or release
peruse: skim or read in detail
bolt: to secure or to flee
fix: to mend or to castrate
give out: provide or stop
minute: short or a long amount of time
overlook: inspect or fail to notice
transparent: invisible or obvious
weather: withstand or wear away
refrain: non-action or repetition

strike: hit or miss
garnish: enhance or curtail
custom: usual or special
ought: all or nothing
cool: lacking or very good
screen: show or hide
 And many, many more. Getting back to *literally*: it's the one that makes me roll my eyes because I want to refuse to accept it is a contronym. But, as Merriam-Webster lexicographers so elegant wrote: "a living language is a language that is always changing...we are in the business of defining it rather than judging it." Enjoy this issue's interpretations.

Sacha





I'll Consider Your Concern

Dear Charlie,

You don't have a clue what it's like to be me. So don't act all high and mighty, asking me why the "fuck" I got a tattoo on my neck. All I'm gonna say right now is, it's my fuckin' neck. And my fuckin' neck is in North Hollywood these days and what we do here is get tattoos on our necks, on our faces. I met a guy the other night who has a rose, petals and all, tattooed right on the end of his dick, and he is damn proud of it—shows it around whether anyone asks to see it or not. I am a sixteen year old white kid, now named Honey, who's been living on her own for two and a half years. I am alive, I haven't yet had to suck anyone's dick for dollar, I go to school at least two days a week and manage, in fact, to keep up with the work that takes the rest of those dolts five days a week to get. I spend some time each day in the library. I prove that to you in a lot of ways: formal letters, like this one, reports on books I read like last month I wrote to you all about *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, and don't forget my SAT scores. They even blew that old ass-hat Mr. Reynolds out of the water, him all stuttering behind his government issue desk, upset because some little homeless roust-about like me has some brains. And ever since then he's been saying "If you would ap-

ply yourself, Honey, you could _____," and you can fill in the blank because each time he catches me cutting out it's another cliché: make something of yourself, climb tall mountains, surprise the world. He has too many for me to remember. What you need to get through your thick head, weather permitting and all that, Charlie, is my future is going to be good. I threw the I-Ching last Tuesday and all the lines were nines, which translates into Ch'ien—the creative and the book says, "There appears a flight of dragons without heads. Good Fortune." I am telling you this, not because you're my sponsor, but because I want you to stop being judgmental, not because you shouldn't be such a square, but because there is a world out here that includes more than what you see through your tiny little periscope. If I go out someday down the line to an interview for some straight job with some straight person who grew up in the nineteen fifties and makes all sorts of assumptions about someone with tattoos, in other words, someone whose had their head in a place the sun doesn't shine for the last fifty years, then I'll be sure to wear a turtle neck or a scarf, or maybe you'd loan me one of those dickies you wear that you think are so suave but really make you look like what they are called.

I will supply you with a translation: diminutive of dick, as in sometimes you act like such a dickie, and this is one of those times. I try hard to please you. My feelers get hurt when you act like something I've done, only to myself, is gonna set off the San Andreas fault. Let's figure I have forty four square feet of skin covering my bod and now, as far as you know, four square inches of it has a beautiful meaningful decoration on it, and you're like Oh, you've ruined your life. You said it was "a disaster" which made me want to clarify just exactly how you see tattoos and it turns out that a disaster is a calamity, something that brings on the loss of life or creates great hardship and so I think you need to have a shot of tequila and drop a Klonopin, Charlie. You're light in the loafers, that's no secret, but I never took you for a hysterical queen until yesterday.

A hug and a love,
Honey.

Dear Honey-Bunny,

You trans-gendered, penis-envying freak should know better than to get a tattoo on your neck, especially one of a headless, fire breathing dragon sitting atop a cloud. Better to get it on your perfectly manufactured snatch, which, I might add, houses the real beast. I am your AA sponsor. And as your sponsor, it is my obligation to tell you the truth as it is your obligation to tell me the truth; the truth is tattoos 'classify' you out of certain social environments just like being a 'light in the loafers' faggot does, which is an aspect of my being that I try my best to hold at bay, thank you. The tattoo tags you; even if you ever wiggle your way into the straight world with your 1540 SAT score, you'll have the tag, the tag that gets you the office without the window, the tag that gets you the parking spot in the basement, the dragon-lady tag. You have enough baggage coming into the game, Honey, without adding more burden. Why do you want to make your life even harder? You're the smartest run-away to hit the LA basin since I slithered into town some thirty years ago. And I know how it feels (thirty years after the fact) to have fucked up a lot of potential, which is all I am trying to save you from. I know what you are thinking: cliché cliché

cliché, do as I say not as I do and all that silly, simpering shit. You were a woman stuck inside a man's body. You made mincemeat out of yourself, giving doctors no choice. Don't make mincemeat out of your girl-self today and end up boo-hooing ten years from now when doors start slamming. Stop with the ink, start going to school every day and learn more than anyone's ever learned at Taft High School and stop hanging out with ass-wads that tattoo their dicks.

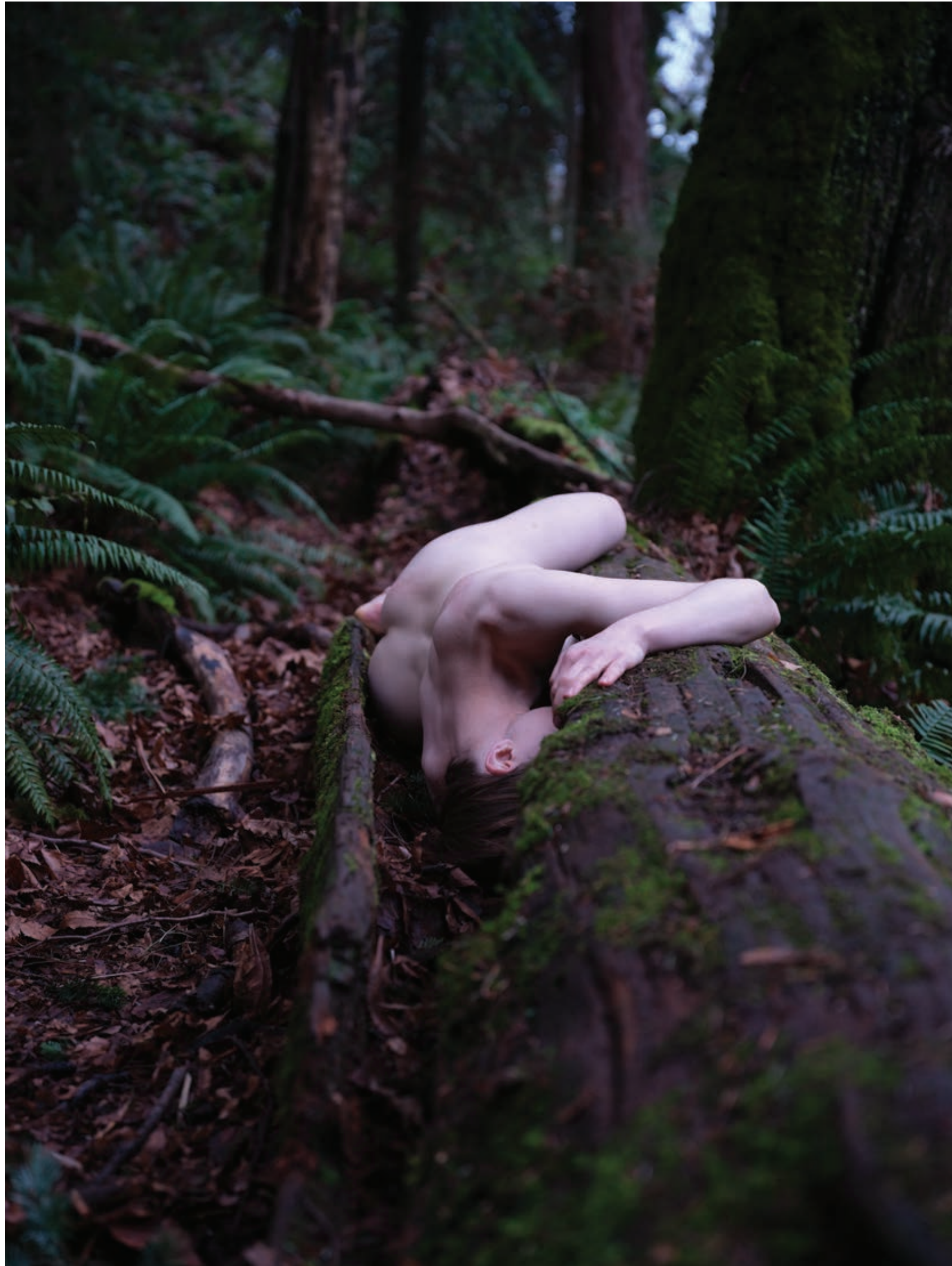
I am on your side, Honey-Bunny, and if you'll pardon another hackneyed phrase, I'll always have your back no matter what you do to your corporal self or do in the outside world, but I can't help wanting to help. It doesn't take visiting Freud to figure out that I lead teen meetings so that I can exercise the mother/father inside myself that never did get to mother/father, because the fact is, Honey, like a good parent, I love you and, believe it or not, I worry about you too. You've spent the last two years working hard at becoming a woman who can command respect, you've spent a lot of time learning the rules so that you can get your hands into the mix and make this fucked up planet work better. All I am suggesting here is that you not fuck it all up with stupid stuff—follow the easy rules, girlfriend—and, like the

old army slogan says, be all you can be. In some ways you have an obligation to our community too, which might make some solid social progress if you can penetrate the system, if you can get into the limelight and then tell the truth. You do that and we'll see you one day on TV at some fancy official banquet putting a big bite of Croque-Monsieur into that fabulous mouth of yours. Some fat-cat will stand up and introduce you to the crowd and the applause will bring down the house. I know this about you, and I have known it from the first day you came up to me at St. Vincent's and put your hand in mine and told me your name. You had that beautiful scarf tied just so around your long, sexy neck and you were wearing your pear oil, just enough to make anyone who walked by you a tiny bit hungry for a piece of fruit. I am not saying you have to be a poster child for the transgendered or agendered or third gendered community, but it might be a fallout.

I'll always love you,
Charlie.

Dear Charlie,
I get it; you get it too.





Mode

Hours, years, fifteen minutes
 Standby
 What are you waiting for?
 Time remaining:
 Mood swings
 (Less than a minute)
 INVALID VERB!
 Gimme the gun
 OK
 Swell!
 The scripts are huge today
 Please check again
 OK
 Submit crash report
 Absolutely not



Memento: an excerpt from a family memoir of Egypt

"They must all be shredded," said my aunt, ignoring the look on my face. Shredded? She had just finished telling me she had a suitcase full of letters, correspondence between my grandfather and his father written over the course of a decade. I wasn't sure if she meant she had a literal suitcase, or if it was just a word that conjured an amount. In any case, she said she had lots of letters from the early part of the last century, all of them in Arabic.

"Those are private letters," she snapped when I asked if I could see them. "My father would never want them published, they're mostly about all the nasty things his stepmother did to him."

We sat at the dining room table adjacent to her kitchen, she in her daffodil-yellow dress and I in my halter-top and shredded jeans. It was a hot summer day in Washington, and I had taken the train down from New York to stay with her for the weekend. I mentioned I wanted to write something about my grandfather, but the minute I sat down to face my aunt, I was no longer sure what to ask.

She tuned the radio to her favorite classical music station and turned it up loud. As she filled the kettle, I surveyed the apartment from where I sat. I could see into the little alcove where she kept her books and papers. There were three walls of floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and a low table covered with magazines and mail order catalogues. Was the suitcase of letters in there?

"My grandfather didn't write to my father himself," she said, sitting down. "He dictated letters to his secretary. Most of them mention my father's stepmother. She was very domineering. The letters are full of complaining: 'The Sitt wants this, and the Sitt wants that...'"

"The Sitt?" I asked.

"The Sitt. That's what we called her: al-Sitt," my aunt said. "It means grande dame or lady of the house. My father left all the letters to me, and I have to read them before I can destroy them. I want to see what that woman had been up to."

I breathed easier. But I didn't ask again to see the letters.

"I never met my step-grandmother," she continued. "I was told that when I was born, al-Sitt didn't want to see me. My father took my mother to meet her, and I'm surprised she agreed to go. Al-Sitt was a large woman, and my mother said she felt like a mouse walking behind an elephant. I think I may have sent your mother a picture."

I wondered where that picture might be.

"When my father was still very young, he wrote a lot of poetry. He published his first collection of poems when he was just a little boy. His father hosted literary salons and all kinds of people came. His mother—Amina, after whom you are named—was also a poet. She divorced his father when he took the fat one as his second wife. Al-Sitt had two daughters and a niece, young Zeinab. My poor father fell in love with Zeinab and wanted to marry her, but al-Sitt interfered and married the girl off to someone else. My father

was despondent. That's when he wrote what are now his most famous love poems. He was barely 20. His father told him he could not make a living out of poetry and he had to find a profession, so he chose medicine, and his father sent him to school in England. That's when they started corresponding."

My aunt got up and hobbled into the kitchen to return with a plate of bread and cheese. Gibna beida, the kind you get in Egypt.

"My father inherited land from his father near Alexandria. But on the day they buried his father, his stepmother ran to the courts to get a judgment that all the land should go to her. Al-Sitt, that horrible woman! And she got away with it. So my father didn't get anything, really."

Our conversation turned to my grandfather's second wife, an American named Constance. Snapshots show a pale, unsmiling woman with flowing strawberry blond hair.

"One day, the Saudi ambassador in New York said 'Congratulations!' and I said for what? And he said: 'I hear your father got married again.' And I said: What? Where? And he said: 'It's published here in al-Huda newspaper.' I was furious. I called my father and said 'I don't want to ever speak to you again, I'm not coming home!' I was livid! None of us was present for the wedding, none of us knew. If he had only said something! And no, she was not particularly nice. In fact, I think she had a boyfriend just before my father died. And my father said, 'If she has a boyfriend, I'm going to kill her!' and I said, 'No, no, no, Daddy, I'm just speculating!' Later on, a friend said our father was lonely and needed companionship, and that for us to deny him marriage with this lady he felt strongly about was pure selfishness. I thought, well, maybe she's right. We are selfish."

Constance had a child from her previous marriage to Khalil al-Rawaf, a Saudi camel trader and war correspondent. He was the first Arab to appear in a Hollywood film, a 1937 John Wayne movie called *Cover the War!*

"My father would hang around the Saudi delegation in New York and ask for money for whatever project he was publishing. Somehow he met Constance. One day, she came over to our house and said her husband was trying to murder her and that he threw an ashtray at her head, and could she come and stay with us. I was in Washington and I had no idea what was going on. She brought her baby with her, who was in diapers. My brother would carry him around. I would come home on holiday and find diapers hanging to dry on all the chairs. I'd have a fit. And then all my silver that had belonged to my mother was being used. Constance was using our best crystal for her pens and pencils. We kept telling my father we wanted her out. But my father said no, that would be cruel, she has nowhere else to go. Finally, the three of us made such a big fuss, my father rented a room in Manhattan for himself and Constance."

Constance was a serial divorcée. Her first husband was the American modernist painter John D. Graham, born Ivan Gratianovitch Dombrowsky in Kiev in 1886. They met in Paris when she was twenty and he was fifty,

and moved to Brooklyn Heights, around the corner from Adolph Gottlieb and David Smith. Graham had begun working for Hilla Rebay who co-founded the Guggenheim Museum. Eventually, they ran out of money and moved to Mexico. Graham's file in the Smithsonian Archive of American Art includes photographs of Constance in Paris. She is in a room filled with paintings and African masks. It reminds me of the famous photographs of André Derain's studio and Picasso at the Bateau-Lavoir.

One time, the story goes, my uncle came home from his tour in Lebanon and decided to drop in on his father at their house in Queens. But Constance was home alone. When she heard my uncle come in, she called up from the cellar. She said she was installing bookshelves and needed help. My uncle arrived at the bottom of the stairs in the semi-darkness to find Constance bent forward over a table, her skirt lifted up, bare from the waist down.

"Constance! She stole everything!" said my aunt. "She stole the jewelry that our mother left to us. She just helped herself to it. My father's will was not witnessed so it was considered intestate. The house was supposed to be divided between the three of us. Well, none of us got anything."

Constance lived into her nineties. She became quite senile. My uncle's kids, who had heard all the stories, would spot her roaming the aisles of Gristedes in an opera cape, her long grey hair billowing around her as she piled bottles of ginger ale and Entenmann's cheesecake into her shopping cart.

Late in life, my aunt would call me whenever she remembered something. People, places. Snatches of conversation. One night, she called to tell me a story about Zeinab—the Zeinab, whose name graced the pages of my grandfather's early love poems, the real reason he was sent to London (where he met my grandmother). My aunt was visiting Cairo when Uncle Hosni telephoned to ask her to visit Zeinab. "She's still around," he said. "She would love for you to pay her a call. She's getting old, you know, so do it soon."

"She was an old woman by then," said my aunt. "We sat in her living room and talked about my father, and I told her how we left Egypt. I told her about New York, and how he died. I noticed framed photos of her family on the wall..."

There was a pause. The phone line crackled. "Are you still there?" I asked.

My aunt's voice quavered. "Zeinab took down a photo and handed it to me. It was a portrait of my father when she first met him. She kept it all those years."

After my aunt passed away, I discovered the suitcase full of letters. It was sitting on the floor in the alcove. Hundreds of letters written in Arabic. With them was a portrait of my grandfather as a young man. He is seated and holding a book. I searched his face. His gaze, luminous and expectant, looks towards the future. I wondered if he had already fallen in love, or if it was just about to happen.





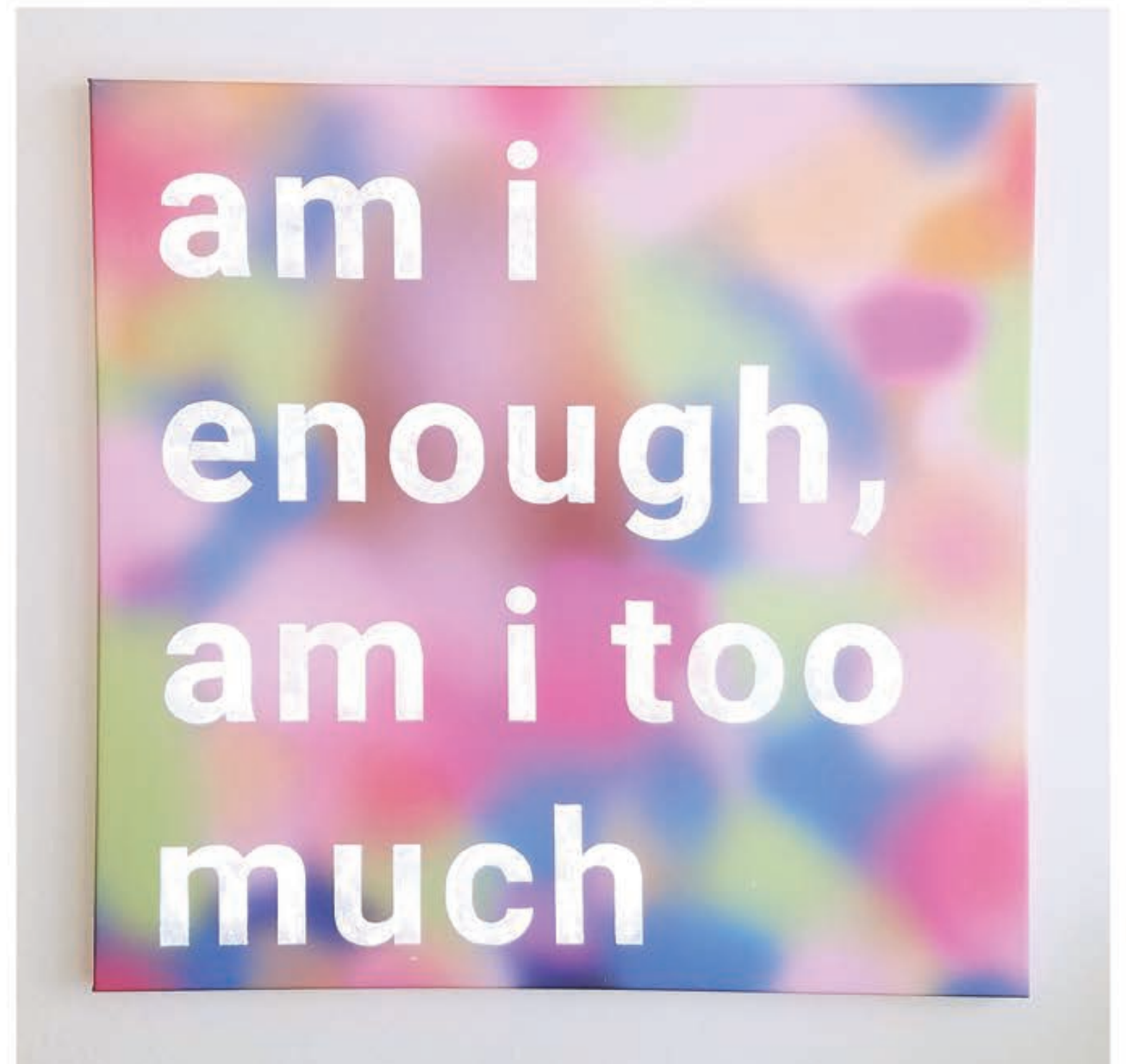
CLONING DUCHAMP IS MATHEMATICS
—for Brendan Constantine

or "pataphysics," is addition in the open playpen of gray matter & is giving up the ghost chessboard in the circles only garden, my head mending the straight lines of my body, that toy slinky down my ribs' stairs as I'm crying. I worry too much I've hurt someone's feelings, opened the umbrella inside the closet one too many times. Now it prefers to be full of hubris, upside down in a lost desert, a free-tumbling witch-way industry, lizard hammock, black boot-jaw-lock on the wind. After all, mother labored in fear all her life & sometimes it was funny. You're one girl outside in the unseasonably warm car about to be stolen, the first ever to lose all your blood in the wrong backyard, twelve ladders stacking themselves between neighbors' oil sweat & bonfire & you. Breach the split season with colds. Favor the evil ice cream man in his singing truck that slowly rocks down our street, its tinkering bells suffering on your behalf, bicycle wheels hung for trees. I make no sense to myself now in the mirror. Two of everything me there, in a roomless room, my adult rearview stalker, mother's face mine I never asked for.



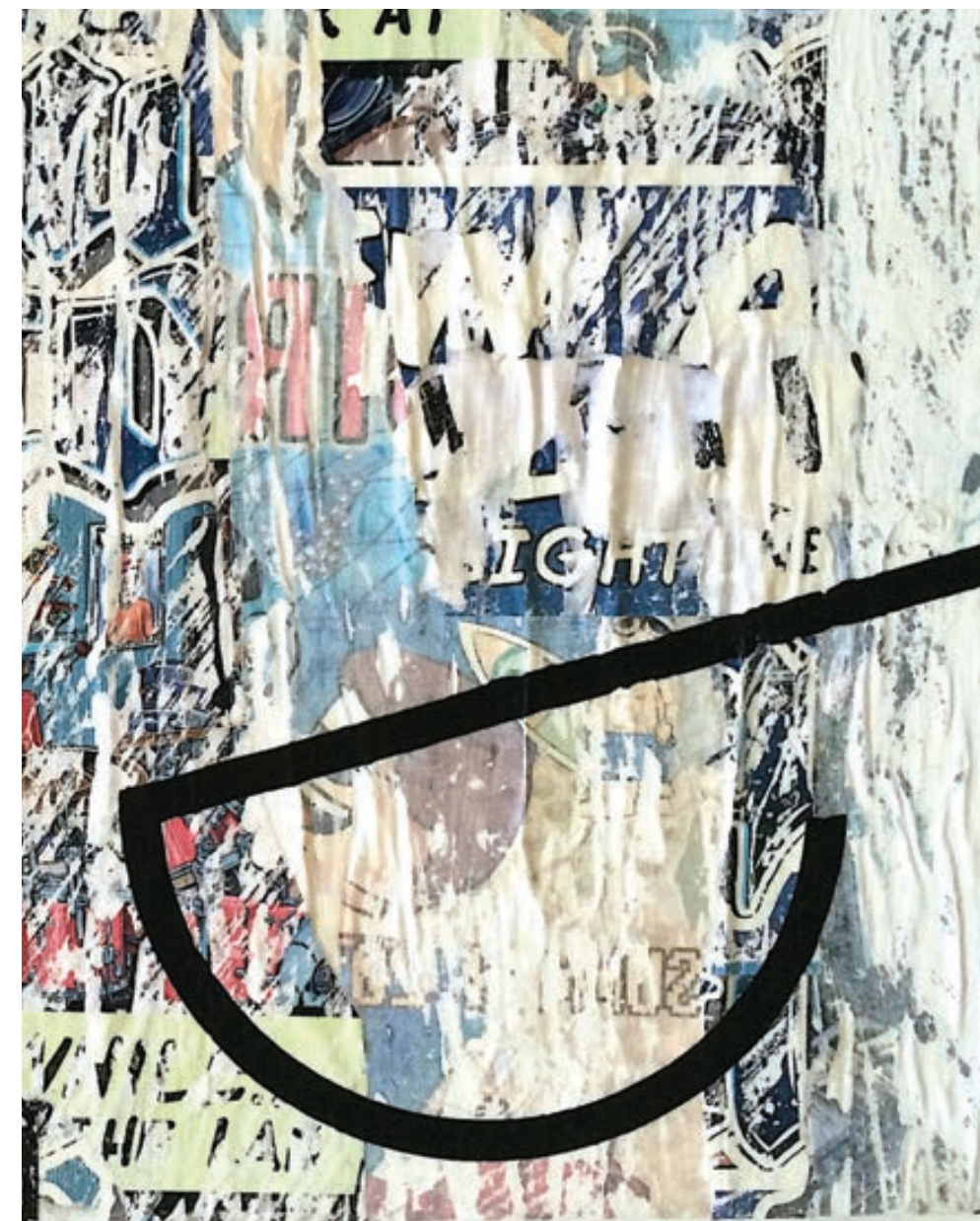


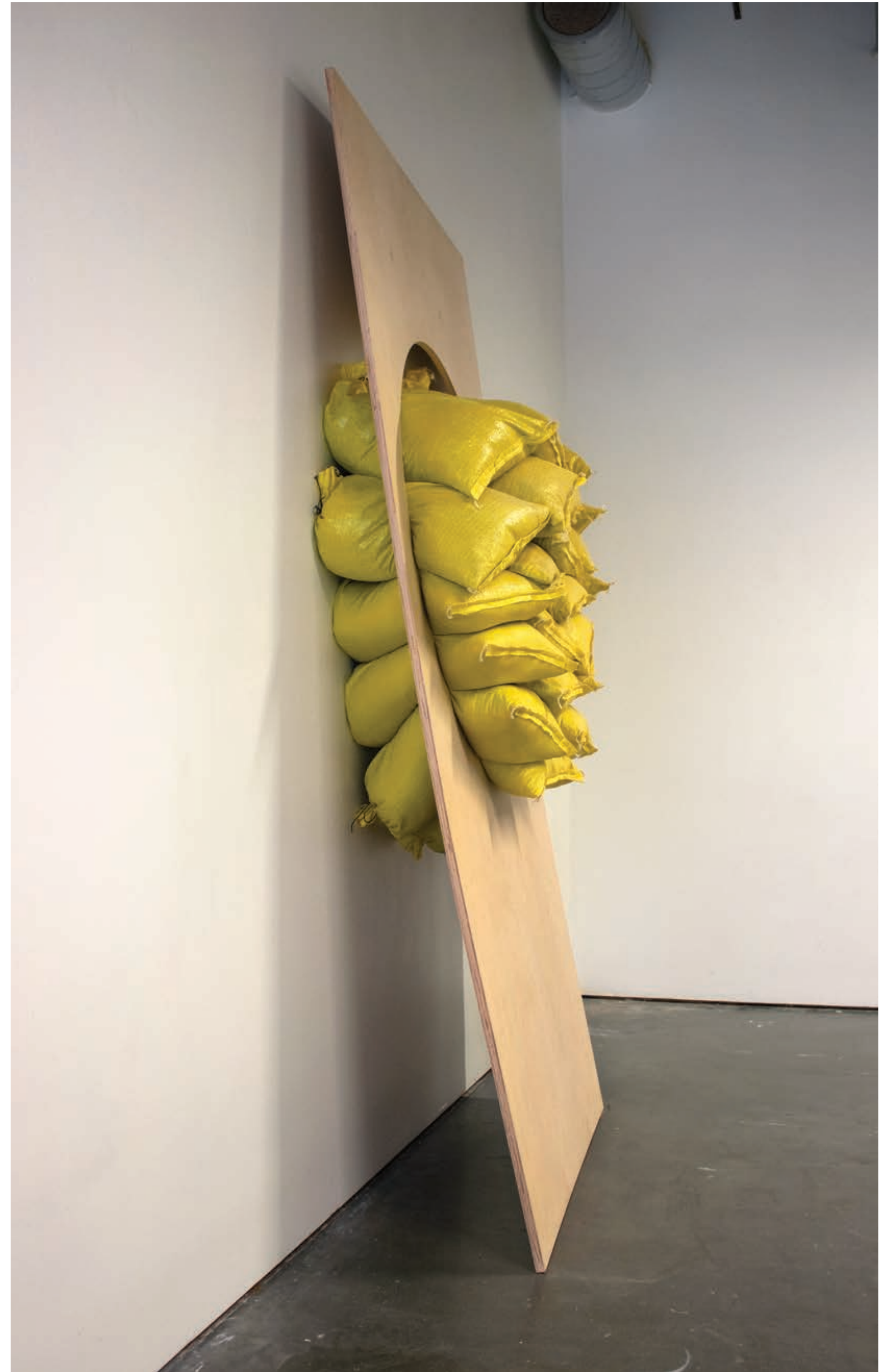




Untitled (clear)

When dreams are transcribed into language they are almost pathetic, birds plucked by torments, as words hop along in sentences trying to explain what it is to fly, how to stop the desert from spreading, whether a wall of trees could block it. But enough of this tangent. Back to the dreams where flying was the original subject.







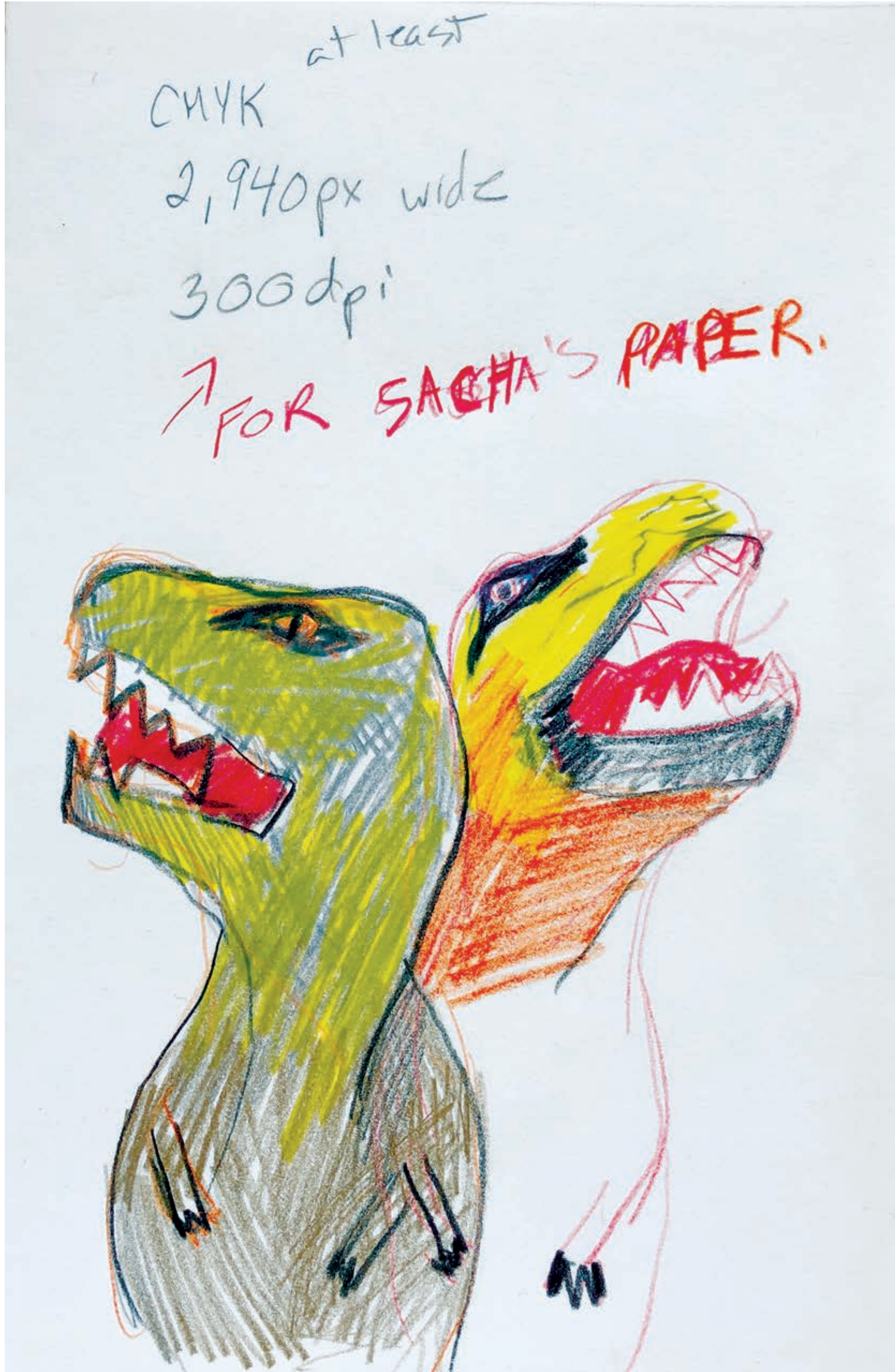
Chapter 10987... Lost Luggage

Today was not too busy, not so bad, kind of normal, part and parcel to another or two, three or thirty, more or less the same. Here across the familiar, the uncharted, the reflections, I carry a collection of special yesterdays like a suitcase clutched too hard, too long, not so difficult, held aloft, no letting go for fear of losing it to petty thieves or memories undone, squeezing the handle in palm until the two almost coalesce as one, my hand shaped as mother mold, the grip a casting, each accreting the genesis and outcome of the other, blood, cell and fixture fusing seamless were it not for the limits of skin and object, no time to release, no time for the luxury of re-examination, no time to sort, to peruse or linger, my job devoted to protect and persevere, I move on and on, bringing with me a past to inform an ever close to dawning nearby future but sometime, somehow, by lack of not letting go, the suitcase wicked away absorbed by an ebbing tide unseen, melting like ice rested too long in the cradle of warming rays, a doused flame in the rain, my cargo a cloud sponged by encompassing sky that prefers more uniform, spotless days, gyres light and grey pulling apart in frayed tendrils, silken threads dissolving traceless, cotton candy on tongue, floating billow swallowed. No precipitation, no shadow,

no silver lining, no cumulus roiling, the sun sets alone against an empty flawless expanse of fading blue without puffed exception or smudged interruption, warm colors held fast in a fiery disc, all spectacle of streak, stain and rainbows dispersed to somewhere else past the scope and limit of horizon. Swiveled eyes gazing down, there is no leather case, no brass guarded corners, no rectangular dimensions, no load or contents, just a handle and a vague recollection of weight and tribulation once attached and precious no longer in grasp, volumes erased, purpose and history gone save for the muscle memory with vagabond twitch that can't be transposed or transcribed by any other than myself. I no longer know, nor can I recreate or even sketch in picture or word that which I once carried so adamant and dear, so worth the sweated effort, time and love. I came equipped, clad for something akin to an ancestral war, taunt and hardened to battle in defense of the innate and fundamental only to find all enemies and allies, all cause long since gone, nothing to gain or lose enduring intact, the smoke of once raging fires not cleared so much as settled in a carpet of dust, pennants turned to ash. Perhaps in some not distant span of weeks, months or years even this clenching morphed hand, now reduced

to clasping appendage more hook than flesh, will reanimate to finer advance or simply wither. Either way there's no authentic means of preserving the past, each current palette of absence and fiction replacing the commandeered status and place of the prior and yet to be.

Without voice to speak, without receptive ears to listen, mauled by inadequate language, the closest stories, most intimate, fragile, specific and sustaining cannot be delivered, passed or acquired, every life old and new, an opaque wind. Universal precisely due to their singular private nature, these most needed things become voided by that left unsaid. So I suppose much like everyone else, in wisps of evaporation stealing vital connections and deepest aspirations, I'm mostly killing time, virtue of significance and consequence lost in transit. Looking further down the road, a road without signal, sign or turn off, a road without direction, the road of disappearance, someday my children's children will state with bold conviction there never was a suitcase and elusive indifferent freedom being what it is, they'll be factually right but oh so wrong for choosing to believe it.



My Chiron

When I moved to the country, and was finally able to keep a horse, I bought a spirited roan and named him Chiron, after the best and wisest of the Centaurs. Like his namesake, Chiron not only dashed and snorted handsomely in the clover, but also revealed to me, in his way, some of the finer points of life. The mythological Chiron, as is well known, taught Achilles to play the lyre, gave Patroclus lessons in the art of horseback riding, and even tutored Asclepius in the veterinary arts.

While my Chiron was not quite so talented a teacher as that, he did in time display some remarkable gifts, and whether this came as a result of the ennobling

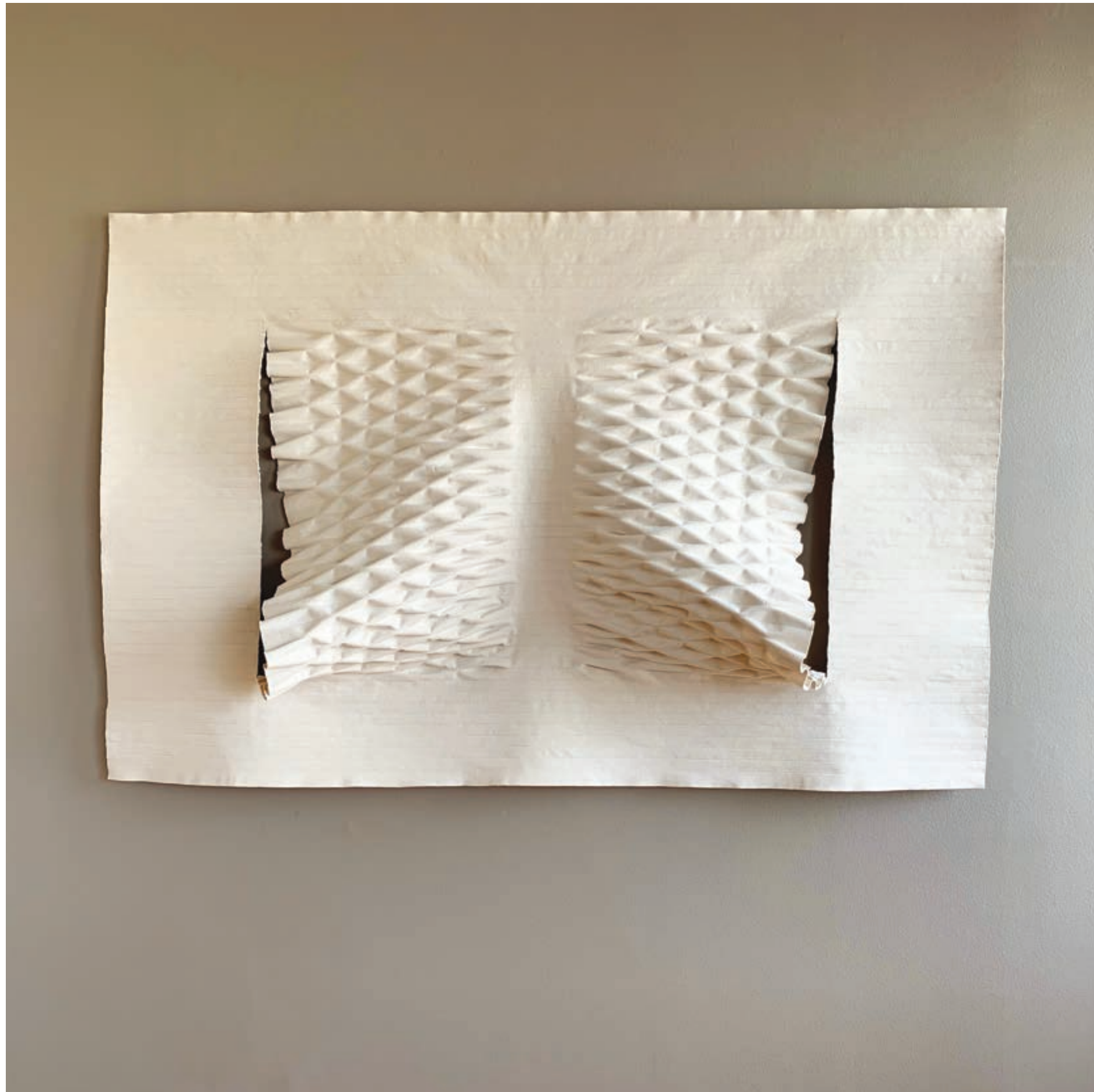
name I gave him, or simply grew out of the genial love we shared over the years, I cannot say. It is indisputable that he came to be a great prodigy among horses. Like Clever Hans, he understood mathematical queries, and would promptly scrape the correct solution on the ground. Later, like Mr. Ed, he mastered the English language, and, like Gulliver's Houyhnhnms, proved himself an ethical creature, one who expressed a rational compassion in every circumstance of life.

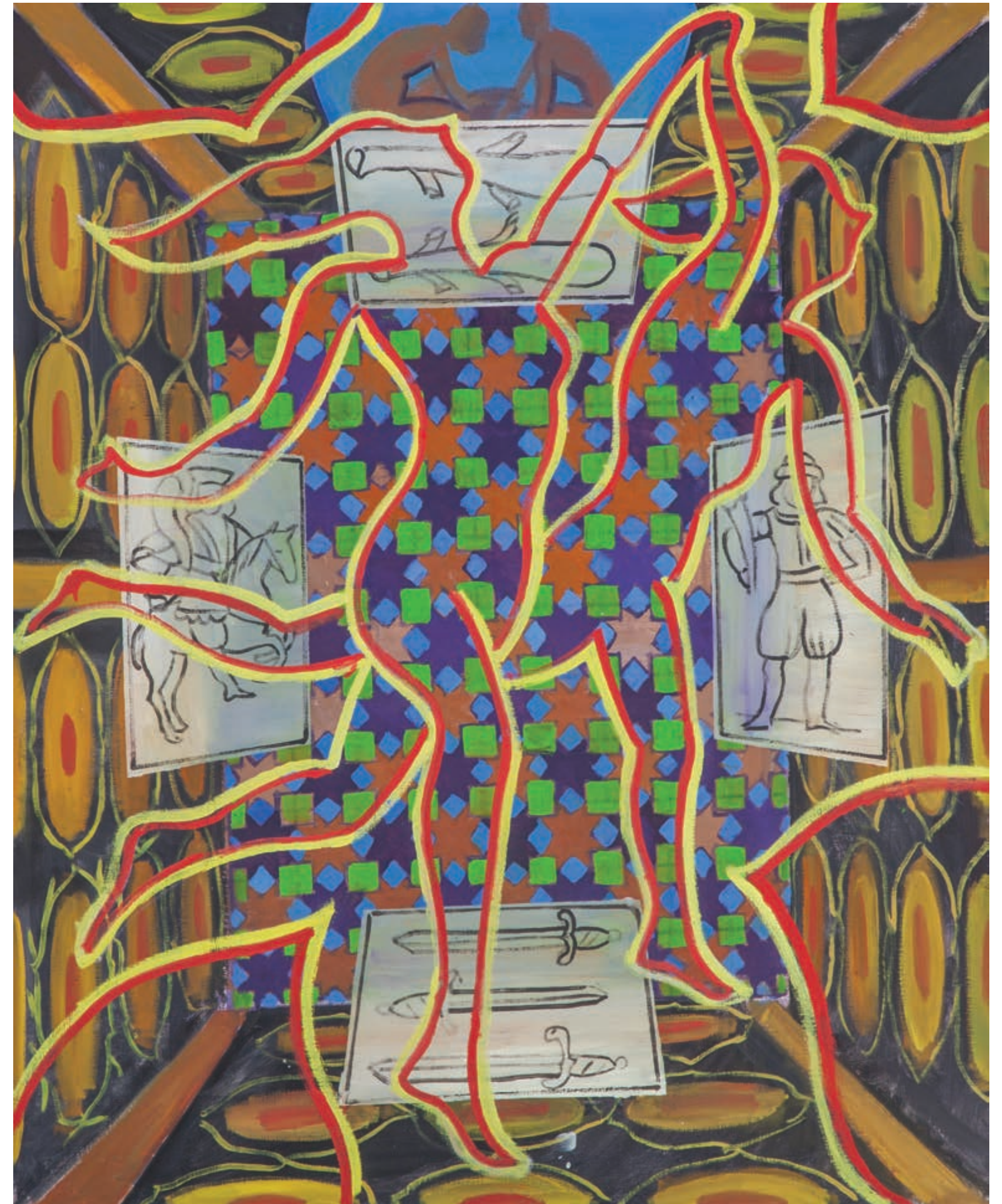
Alas, he grew old and swaybacked, and I yearned to yield his place to a sprightlier creature: a Flicka in lieu of a Rocinante. In the end there was no one but myself

to take the long, bitter walk to the stable, my steps ever slower as I neared Chiron's stall.

"I cannot say," he stated, as I stood before him, pistol in hand, "that I mistake your intention, nor puzzle over it much, as it is you yourself who have often recounted to me the appalling barbarities of mankind. Still I entreat you not to shoot, but to send me to some distant pasture, there to relish what precious days of life remain to me."

"Forgive me," I said, aiming the gun, "but I am not one of those who can transcend the character of his species."







Future Husband

"But man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated."
— Ernest Hemingway.

I read Hemingway the other day. I thought it was appropriate, considering the fact that sentences these days are death in the mouth of the American citizen, speeding along towards active passivity. Maybe I just need a vacation. Hemingway seemed to understand vacation as an extension of his personality. But also he was a white man, and I tried to like him, or to be somewhere aware of his feelings. But I just learned to resent him and the longstanding tradition of manliness he tried to represent. Wide, empty, with their long fat ass cars, and their working hours taking away the experiences of friendly spirits. For it is not a performance. Their gestures are languid, dull and at the risk of sanity. I thought about my right to resent him, about being ignorant of his good sense of direction, but better to know the names of how I often get lost or names of flowers in Latin that I can spell out.

I often get lost. And on this particular day, I found myself thinking about what would Hemingway do, considering that his best novel *The Sun Also Rises* tells the story of an impotent man. I will explain.

I was walking from my studio to a museum nearby and I found a woman, a small woman with a big head and short arms and a voice which is part mother, part grandmother. She was sitting on a wheelchair trying to cross the bridge I was on, and as I come closer I saw that she had her legs amputated. As she was managing to manipulate her wheelchair, which got stuck on the steep and crooked sidewalk, I caught her about to fall over the road. I guided her chair to a safe ground on the sidewalk of the bridge. I knew when I first approached her that she was lost, not in a directional way, in a much more complicated, deeper, existential way. Love is immolation of the self, I thought. I asked where she wanted to go. She said she was going to a market that I knew didn't exist. She also talked to her invisible daughter and son. Apparently, they were right behind me, lamenting their existence and contemplating

mine. We made eye contact. I asked if I could push her on the wheelchair across the long bridge. I told her to let go of the wheels. She did. As if in an exhaustive act of deliverance. I asked about her daughter. She said her name was Amy. She screamed for Amy as if trying to introduce her to me, to wake her up, to make her say something at me. I told her nobody was there. She said, "Oh they must have stayed behind", I nod and decide to go along with her imaginary world. A man walks by. She says Hi, I say Hi. He says Hi. Cordial seconds on the fourth bridge. I ask her if she knew him. She says ... "That's my husband." We both laugh. I laugh harder than I have in days. We arrive at the end of the bridge walk, but the steps going down are steep again, I can't possibly carry her down, it's too heavy, so I wait for someone to walk by to help us. A man does. He stays with us for a few seconds, just enough to help us out, and then he walks away. I say thank you. I feel protective of her, the man thought so too.

It's not his responsibility, I thought. Neither is it mine. But I can't let go of her. I was already too involved, I knew that she was from Mexico, that her daughter had brain cancer, and that her husband cheated on her with a younger woman, and that her twelve year old grandson helped her around the house, and that she smoked. It didn't matter if all of that was true or not. I didn't care. Neither did she. I pushed her under the shade of a building, because it was very hot. Now what? I had to walk the opposite direction to go where I was going. I decided to wait longer before we said our goodbyes because I just couldn't let her go. We smoked a cigarette together. She said it had been a while since her last smoke. I gave her another one, but also thinking what am I doing facilitating the ill with more illness, but at this point we were both enjoying this vicious moment. I saw that her amputated leg was bleeding, maybe she had already fallen out of her chair before I caught her, I ask her if she had any number to call. She said her daughter was right there. I insisted nobody was there, but me. I left

her imaginary world on the bridge. I was worried for her but I knew this was going to have to end. I ask if I can call the paramedics. She doesn't say no. So, I call 911. They arrive within minutes. This country really works that way, I thought. Where I'm from, I'd be waiting for days. Well, maybe hours. Anyways, they arrive. She hears the sirens and looks at me, puzzled. I said I got her help. They see us and pull up. One paramedic asks me about what happened, I tell him where I found her, and as I describe what happened I pinch myself to make sure it was not all but a dream. He is not moved and I think how cold of him to look at me that way, what does he know? He waves me goodbye and say, we'll take care of this now, you can go. He also says this happens all the time in Los Angeles. I know. It's not my first time either.

In moments like this I saw this woman's curtain pulled shut. The system had failed her. She could hear people talking on the other side of the curtain but she couldn't get to it. And in a way, maybe would have been better to have not left her there with the system. That thing that was more than loss or emptiness or need, she would die right there, because she would remember it was her life, and that made it even worse. But then I finally understood, in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* I felt whispers of chilly despair appearing with alternate endings and the line that struck through—"I mistrust all frank and simple people, especially when their stories hold together." That line, which belongs to the narrator, and to the author, was there from the beginning. I resented him because of that line, ever since.

As I make my way back across the same bridge to where I was going I decide to make peace with the fact that I couldn't help her any longer. I walk by the man she said was her husband, and I ask him if he knew her.

He says ... "That's my wife."

CONTRIBUTORS

Here Contributors elaborate on their work in relation to the theme: *The Cleave*.

LIV AANRUUD *The Well of Grief*, 2019, flannel, burlap, acrylic, 96 x 90 x 12 inches. My first name has two meanings. Liv, like "get out of here." And Liv is the word for "life" in Norwegian. A name is both a punchline and a solo meditation: have I done enough to earn such a name? Life is so much bigger than a Liv. For this issue, I wanted to consider the word "hitch." A weaver's hitch is a kind of knot; a hitch is also a problem. For me, it is the necessary trouble in making art—a serpentine scrap of fabric can escort a mind away from any plan. In a world where images often move too quickly to fully comprehend, weaving is analog...decidedly so. Then there is the hitch that is living and making art "on the desperate edge of now." It requires daily resistance to despair, a willed optimism as we find foothold on a threadbare tightrope and hope the knots hold. **MARK ACETELLI** *Infinity Bliss*, 2019, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches. The dialog between the conscious and unconscious, form and formless. These two states reside in one body that is absent but still very present. In letting go of the tangible and being open to the unknown we can transcend our awareness of the physical form. May we capture this essence of a memory and have it cling to us like a shadow at dawn. **AMANDA ANTUNES** *Future Husband*, 2019, essay, I wrote this essay after an encounter on the 4th bridge in Los Angeles. It was a hot and miserable day. The theme in this issue immediately made me think about this piece, as a composed example of the lives we as a society entrust to the orbits of other people we live life with. **NADEGE MONCHERA BAER** *Women Destined*, 2019, colored pencil, acrylic on Dura-Lar, 39 x 24 inches. collision of opposing momentum leading to orgasmic breakdowns / spontaneous choreography impossible to predict, / freehand, severed from arm, from mind, from conditional acceptance / submit to being overwhelmed, to getting lost inside incident, trivial matters and precious life piled and piled / one upon the other, shattered and layered, frayed, compacted, buried, snapped and hanging / energies released, seethings cooled, sway arrested, imbalances crushed to something less dimensional, less towering, less precious. **STELLA BARAKLIANOU** *Buttercup on silver table*, 2018-19, black laser-cut paper on photocopy of English Chippendale furniture, 9.8 x 8.25 inches. This is a work in progress of still-life and domestic interiors, based on the motif of the buttercup flower. To cleave is to cling and adhere to. Mirroring the cut, to cleave means to separate at the same time. In my work I am drawn to reflective surfaces and mirroring. Working with photography, installation and cut-outs I create sets of reversibles. A cut-out buttercup is an ideal motif to explore the cleave. **BRANDON BARR** *am i enough*, 2019, digital print and reflective paint on canvas, 30 x 30 inches. This work from my "Flash Painting" series uses fragments from various social media captions I have found online. Whether it is scrolling through Instagram or Twitter, the text often implies a personal opinion from that user, but the sections I have taken out can also be interpreted within a much broader context. The caption *am i enough* combines two contrasting ideas and also refers to the way in which many of us interact on social media. We present ourselves to potentially millions of people while physically hiding behind the screens of our devices in solitude. The work itself also needs to exist in two places. You have to use the camera flash of your phone to view the reflective paint. Once this happens, the piece lives on as a physical painting and digital file, both needing each other in order to complete the artwork. **CODY BAYNE** *Factum III* & *Factum IV* (diptych), 2017, mixed-media, paper, acrylic, dirt on stretched canvas, 20 x 16 inches each. "Cleave, a verb, has two very different meanings. It can describe cutting or splitting something apart with a sharp instrument, or — oddly enough — it can describe sticking to something like glue. To cleave or not to cleave, that is the question." *Factum III* & *Factum IV* are conceptually cleaved from Rauschenberg's *Factum I* & *Factum II*. They cut from the same cloth in relationship to each other connected and split simultaneously to each other and the forerunners from 1957. **JEFFREY BERTOLLINI** *Son of the Wolf*, 2018, graphite & charcoal, 12 x 16 inches. Human experience tears down to build UP. We must try new things. We must test our abilities to persevere. We must fail, it's healthy, it proves endurance, it builds character. We go in torn and tattered and come out the other side.... stronger, more comfortable in our own skin. Sometimes the experience breaks past our limit, causes a sort of instability that teeters upon giving up, fear that limits our ability to bounce back and build a better version of ourselves. That's the game, those are the odds we are up against. There is no choice, we must find out. There is no conclusion without the ability to test our comfort in any given situation and push past the point we thought we couldn't handle. The phoenix can not rise from ash without breaking down Ultimately and Completely. In the end... If we make it through test after test... We find, we made it all up, the fear was ours and ours alone. The Cleave. **NEVENA BINNEY** *Untitled I*, 2019, oil on canvas, 42 x 36 inches. In this painting there are two female figures, expressing two opposite actions. A push and pull, which represent two different components of emotion - aggression and affection. These two figures are one. Dualities contained in a single person. In their motion, they twirl around the canvas, intertwined bodies, free floating limbs, in a zero gravity state, making it hard to distinguish who's legs or arms belongs to whom. They, together, form a new entity. **RACHID BOUHAMIDI** *The Night Run Ronda*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches. This series of paintings contain vestigial elements of Moroccan culture and identity which are then transformed by the presence of phantom figures depicted as contour lines that carve into particular sorts of spaces, both abstract and literal. Patterns derived from old berber rugs and playing cards are re-contextualized by the interaction of fighting, smoking, and frolicking figures. This work is an attempt to visualize the differences between my Moroccan and American heritage and reconcile the notion of an ideal with the realities of everyday life. **ELENA KARINA BYRNE** *Cloning Duchamp's Mathematics*, 2019, poem. The poem addresses the theme The Cleave as an ongoing identity passage through a conscious-

ness threshold, whether that be in the split form of an unwell "other" self, as the doppelganger, or as a severed, mutated and transformed disembodied self through death. **ANDREW PHILIP CORTES** *NSE&W*, 2019, cement, tile, glass, metal, beads, boat paint, native grass, sand, stones on wood panels, installation view, size variable. There are beliefs that when the body, the mind, and the soul are in perfect union...a person can reach a heightened state. A kind of nirvana maybe. We have all felt moments of blissful experience in life and our relationship with other people and the natural world highlights these experiences...it is a wonderful thing. Fracturing the spiritual, the mental, and the physical and reconfiguring them as a fallible being is a thread that runs through my work. It is a fluctuating existence that I feel the most alive in and I hope that my work reflects that sort of energy to those willing to partake. **ALEC EGAN** *Room*, 2018, oil, flashe paint, and colored pencil on canvas, 84 x 60 inches. I do a lot of repetition of patterns in my work. A crocheted throw pillow against a flower wallpaper, with a flower-patterned lampshade. Or actual flowers in the vase against the flowery background. It's patterns on patterns—the point is that it becomes bizarre and psychological. I suppose it's also autobiographical in a sense. The inception of these patterns comes from real life and real memories, but what I'm trying to do with them is simultaneously perform a construction and deconstruction. I want the pictures to become so frenzied that they also break free. **LAUREN FEJARANG** *Rollin' Switches*, 2018, concrete and pigment, 27 x 27 x 6 inches. Lip of the Vase: The lip of the vase is an invitation where we can bend from ourselves. Its inside and outside, rollin' down and up. It's starting and ending. It's a place to go far away and not look back for a while, to be gone and gone good. It's a space of perfume and warm air, an in-between of pleasure and object. It's heavy hitting and unapologetic in the mundane everyday of non-being. **JOY AMINA GARNETT** *Memento*, excerpt from a forthcoming family memoir of Egypt, 2019, with a photographic portrait of A.Z. Abushady as a young man, date unknown. *Memento* is the story of two evil stepmothers. A generation apart and coming from different cultures, they are nevertheless linked by traits made famous in fairy tales. The stepmothers divide families, separate people from their loved ones, their futures, their money and belongings. They leave a trail of woe and dark humor handed down from generation to generation. Their longevity is matched only by witches. **NATHAN GULICK** *Column*, 2018, prefabricated column architectural decoration, 3M automotive graphic wrap (Palm trunk photograph), 78 x 21 inches This work conflates two imported, non-native species: The palm tree, emblematic of Los Angeles, and the column, iconic of the classical ruin. The prefabricated, decorative column (here inverted and cleaved, and clad with 3M automotive graphic wrap) reminds me (especially when applied to a strip mall or McMansion) that LA is a city designed to leave no physical ruins. It is only the fantasy that will endure. Even when, as the LA times reported in 2017, the most desirable palms are succumbing to pests and disease, the icon will remain on every souvenir mug and t-shirt, and preserved artificially in the most tourist travelled neighborhoods. Similarly, when the earth finally decides to shake this town flat, it would not surprise me to see the malls and mansions rebuilt with the very same faux classical adornments. A readymade memento mori. **JOSHUA HART** *Building an Artist Heart*, 2019, acrylic on wood, 11.5 x 9.75 inches. It sometimes feels like, as an artist, your heart is constantly breaking and reassembling itself on each project. Sometimes it drives you to continue and break through or just let the pain go and just stop. **PETER HESS** *Shavasana*, 2019, linocut with digital additions, 14 x 11 inches. Having completed a vigorous routine and gratefully entered Shavasana, I fixate on the exit sign above the door for a time before closing my eyes. The vivid green invitation is burned onto my inner eyelids, and it floats in my interior vision, upside down and color-reversed. In the restorative recumbent posture, I entertain the notion that an exit of the final variety is not without it's appeal — a thought I never seem to be able to banish entirely. The halves of my brain argue the merits of cleaving from life versus cleaving to it. As the instructor coaxes us out of our "Corpse Pose" and prepares to send us into the evening, I note that the ancient yogis were not without a sense of humor. **MONA HOUGHTON** *I'll Consider Your Concern*, 2018, prose. Just as 'to cleave' is a conronym so is 'to screen': To protect or conceal. To show or broadcast. Is the transgendered body (or is person a better word?) a combination of cleavings and screenings? **DENAE HOWARD** *Own their Tomorrow*, 2016, 9 in x 9 inches, mixed media collage on canvas. Splits/Severs/Rips and crack open Splice or divide...To re-appropriate is to Cleave. To sever understanding of tradition, to remove context of what was and to split and tear apart - from the context of the origins natural grain. IE: Anthropology, Kim Kardashian and Boxer Braids, Bud Light's Michelada, Pablo Picasso Cubist movement and GENTRIFICATION! These works serve as testimonials of The Cleave. **PHUNG HUYNH** *Tea Party*, 2017, oil and enamel on canvas, 60 x 60 inches. Cleave suggests the impulse to split, and yet it can also mean to hang on. This duality of destruction and the desire to hold on to something is a complicated idea that is demonstrated in the way we see beauty standards. In my work, ideas about "cleave" manifest in images of the Asian female body vis-à-vis plastic surgery. I reference Chinese feet-binding as one of the earliest forms of cosmetic surgery to contrast the antiquated canon of Asian feminine beauty (small feet, small eyes, and small breasts) with the current trends of body image influenced by western canons that call for larger eyes, a taller nose, and bigger breasts. I am interested in how contemporary plastic surgery on Asian women have informed decisions about what to discard and what to preserve. **INKWELDER** *Chapter 10987...Lost Luggage*, image and narrative, date completed: perpetually now. According to unidentified but knowledgeable sources, Inkwelder, aka Ink or I, writes almost exclusively about true events experienced firsthand, bypassing anything he does not see, think, touch or smell for himself. Avoiding revisions of imposed coherence, orderly sequence and construed conclusions the results often reflect the jumble, inconsistencies, false starts and leaps of events and understanding that occur subjectively pre-edit. Arbitrary bifurcations such as prose vs. poetry, fiction vs. nonfiction, etc. remain irrelevant. Personal and cosmological, with no

interest in finding outward unanimity of meaning and consent, these are tiny tales of no consequence celebrating the wonder and mystery of insignificance. Ink says, "after decades of stories, I have yet to write one that does not employ cleaving as a central thesis of what it means to narrate and build perspective, each word and sentence, less creative than destructive, erasing every valid alternative expression unremarked and buried." **NOVA JIANG** *Recluse*, 2019, glazed ceramic, engobe, 13-1/8 x 5-3/4 x 4-1/2 inches. errors, lapses, erasures, deletions, omissions, exclusions, eradications, dissolutions, mutilations I recap, repeat, replay, recite, recount, rehearse, reiterate, recapitulate, renew **RACHEL JONES** *A woman cleaved*, 2019, salt dough, glass candle holders, wind-up toys, plastic Easter grass, miniature clamps, wire, shell trim, thread, 16.5 x 12 x 5 inches. "Cleave is a promise: not sight, but on the verge of sight..." — Wayne Koestenbaum. A woman cleaved is a new machine connecting eyes (plastic wind-up ones with feet, made in China) and tits (suggested by bell jar-like glass lighting components and clamps repurposed to look like nipple clamps). Gleaned from a New York Times article about late artist Ree Morton, "a woman cleaved" refers to the separation of a woman's selves — one supposedly defined by her biology (tits) and the other by her mind/soul/eyes). **KIM KEI HER** *Splintered Thoughts*, 2016, ink on paper, 22 x 30 inches. In the stillness that is a fixed moment of captured movement, it is difficult to tell. Are these forms coming together or splitting apart? **FORREST KIRK** *Mugshot*, 2018, acrylic, spray paint, and glue 30 x 24 inches, photo credit: Robert Wedemeyer. My work cleaves splitting the line between reality, emotion, and mental states and blurring that line to be representing each in a work. **HEIDI LANINO** *Folded Females [sculptures]*, 2018, charcoal, acrylic paint on paper, 72 x 36 inches. My most recent series of work *Folded Females* focuses on the body, oscillating between abstraction and figuration; exploring the body, expressing feelings that come to the surface — a way of seeing, the way a poem passes through us. I use mixed media to portray the fragmented body, folded, and turned in on itself. Drawn to using and re-using materials to mend, repair, and reconstruct a new composition, one that is both physical and emotional. By portraying the figure as a vessel to be drawn, cut, folded, unfolded, and put back together again, I'm able to find its form; a universal portrait of the female, and the beauty in vulnerability. **MARY LITTLE** *Killyvolgan*, 2019, cotton canvas, 54 x 85 x 15 inches. *Killyvolgan* suggests the female torso. Viewing it for the first time, and within the context of *The Cleave*, your eye may be drawn to the parallel slits that separate the flat surround from the tumbling inner textured. But, instead, examine the center of the work. Run your eye up and down the flat central band; consider this cleave that both separates and unites. **LIZ MARKUS** *Untitled [Double T Rex]*, 2019, colored pencil and graphite on paper, 8.25 x 5.5 inches. The two dinosaurs facing different direction occurred to me as soon as I saw the relationship between the word cleave and the two-faced god Janus. Though I usually use simple descriptive titles I almost called this drawing INTOMEUC, after the self help world's play on the word intimacy, Into Me You See, which I've always found hilariously awful, yet accurate. **NICK MCPHAIL** *Window*, 2018, oil on canvas, 47 x 32 inches. I'm focusing on the multiple definitions of the word cleave; to join, and to separate. I was toying with the idea of separating the viewer from the landscape, and creating a distinction between inside and outside. I commonly use visual tricks in my paintings where something that should be in the foreground actually falls into the background by use of color and layering. I like that confusion, and I don't like to have these details clearly defined my work. It's important to me to allow multiple interpretations in my work. I had never knew what the word conronym meant before, but I think it relates perfectly to these paintings. I'm constantly looking for ways to separate and join with the viewer in each painting. **ROD VAL MOORE** *My Chiron*, 2016, flash fiction. In this story there are two unpleasant cleavings, one for each side of a twisted Janus face. The first is acquisition that arises out of idle attachment, the second is de-acquisition arising out of ego. I explore the theme out of awareness of my own tendencies in such directions. In my protagonist's violence I am probably trying to extenuate, through contrast, my own baseness. **PETER MORIARTY** *Light and Paper*, cameraless gelatin-silver prints, 16 X 20 inches each. In the 19th century when Lord W.H.F.Talbot created a photographic system, it described what was before his lens, but in reverse tonality. His friend, Sir John Herschel suggested the term negative for the result. Thus, there was a cleave between what our eyes perceived and one early photographic system. Talbot thought to sensitize a second piece of paper and to invert the tones a second time. In France J.L.M. Daguerre solved the problem without an intermediary cleave and produced a direct positive on silver plated copper. In the juggle of Braiz Hercules Florence achieved a similar result using paper. In 1973 Lotte Jacobi whose great grandfather met Daguerre in Paris asked Peter Moriarty what the most fundamental elements of photography are? He replied, the lens and film. She countered, light and paper. When hearing this story in 2018, Anni Mackay at BigTown Gallery in Rochester, Vermont said that's the title of your new series. **B. NEIMETH** *Viscerality 6*, 2013, archival pigment print, 24 x 30 inches. The soft abstractions of flesh in the *Viscerality* series is itself a conronym, mimicking the definition of cleave. Is she splitting the flesh? Is she pushing it back together? The figure treats the body as a material, like clay or dough. However, the desire of the gesture is unclear. Is she trying to recede the flesh or expand it? Does it matter? The hands and rope push inwards causing sensual abstractions that unnaturally enlarge other areas while utilizing the tropes of fetish and bondage. The attempt to control the flesh, to control the body's expansion, the body's circumference becomes a sisyphean gesture which ultimately goes nowhere as every movement causes another. **CAROLIE PARKER** *Untitled [clear]*, 2016, poem. This poem addresses the cleave between waking and the sleep state. Through an alchemy no science has managed to unravel, dreams transform the poorest lived material to valuable metal. In this poem, birds plucked of their feathers and desertification invert from the ecstatic state of flying. Reprinted courtesy of the Denver Quarterly and What Books Press. **LAURA H. PARKER** *Mode*, 2014, poem, and *Lips*, 2011, unique type

C-print, 15 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches. My "pictures" and my writing branch into an area where my curiosity about things, and my interest in the mind come together. Things occupy space. They have presence. When the "order" of things is disturbed (by disaster, or another intense experience), things, the physical stuff of life, occupy our minds. Objects that have failed, or even vanished in the "every-day" take on metaphorical possibility. When the "order" of the mind is disturbed, it tends to occupy itself with itself. There can be a free-fall into rumination and doubt. There can also be an opening for transformation. In both cases we contemplate the foreign in what was once familiar; a new space where things un-cleave and re-cleave into occasionally poetic precision in the ever-so-constant exchange of sacred and mundane. **JAKLIN ROMINE** *Why give me flowers when I'm dead? when you have the time to do it when I was alive/ Living with SCI*, 2019, digital sublimation on synthetic fabric, resin, iridescent fabric, colored foam, size variable, installation view at Public Storage Los Angeles.. The basis of my work is about splitting and contrasting photographic imagery beyond its conventional applications. By printing photography on fabric I separate distinct parts and divert views by hanging, drooping, and stretching the image in ways that don't allow you to see the entire picture. Which allows your brain to understand what your experiencing without seeing it fully stretched out. The abstracted image is then draped over resin fabric sculptures and brightly colored foam to further abstract the imagery and push it off the wall and up from the floor into the 3rd dimension. Creating something that unifies the medium of photography and sculpture but distinctly diverts the power of the 2d photograph into something greater. **ELSPETH SCHULZE** *Just before*, 2018, plywood, sandbags, sand, 96 x 48 inches. I grew up near the marsh, at the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico. Here, there was more water than land. The marsh was intersected by intracoastal canals, cut for the transport of oil. Standing on the sponged earth, I felt the pull between land, water and industry. My work reflects this tension, combining manufactured petroleum products, like sandbags and tarps, with earth-based materials, like plywood and sand. A recent series explores the interrupted plane. Slots are cut in plywood panels and sandbags slump through the slots, overhanging the front and back in equal measure. The sandbags cling to both sides, uniting a space that is broken in two. From one angle, the plywood face is stable and imposing; from another, the panel is a thin profile, overwhelmed by the weight of the sandbags. No single vantage point offers full understanding, calling into question the limits of our perspectives. **MOLLY SEGAL** *She's A Really Cool Girl*, 2011, watercolor on paper, 20 x 26 inches. This painting came from one of those precious, fleeting artistic periods where the work is just puking out of you faster than you can process what you are making or why. I had been dealing with a lot of predatory creatures, specifically hyenas in my work. I'd been operating under the impression that these were sort of one to one stand-ins for men, and my fears and insecurities around men. It was right around this painting that I realized that the hyenas were much more nuanced and intimate than that. That this Ugly lived inside me. That these predators represented my own internalized misogyny and personal darkness as much as any reaction to an outside force. **DAVID SUTHERLAND** *Feelings*, 2019, oil on canvas, 62 x 48 inches. In attempting to articulate visual works through words, the potential scope of understanding can easily become limited, so for me it is important, the words provide a platform from which the viewer can dive into a more liberated experience. These three pieces begin as rigid forms clearly separated by shape and color, the first two, through the process of fluid manipulation using gravity and a series of sequential pours, the last, a simulated result of said actions on a painted figure, the forms move in unison around and across the canvas. This results in an image where all fields and forms are clearly defined and separated, but appear as though they were frozen in a state of synchronized movement. For me this is a quintessential example of the word cleave, the paintings mimic life, the interaction of opposing / contrasting forces defining the essence of any experience as a whole. **HAYLEY QUENTIN** *Drive Ornamental*, 2019, oil on canvas 24 x 18 inches. My work rests on the threshold between illusion and believability, perpetually on the cusp of breaking the spell. I depict the boundaries of this illusion through overly saturated colors, through flatness juxtaposed against painstaking realism, and through changes in thickness and application of the paint. The work is itself a Gemini, a Janus painting of opposites. Taken on their own, each element could be believable, if only for a moment, like a star in the dark before it disappears. Simply, I like to look at men, then recreate the pleasure of looking with the pleasure of painting, perhaps conflate the two, and then multiply this yet again when the viewer takes pleasure in looking at the paintings. I bring together process and subject to form a vision balanced on a knife-edge that is itself both razor-sharp and enticingly sweet. **LAUREN QUIN** *Induced Weaving*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches. With a drag of a dull knife or the tip of a fingernail, fine lined drawings are carved into wet paint on the surface. They are sharp marks that pull themselves up and away from the whole of the painting. Creating a more shallow focal plane in order to discover them, these incisions ask for a different intimacy. **LISA WAHLANDER** *Schizophyllium Commune*, 2019, digital photograph, size variable. We are simultaneously divided and united all at once. On the microscopic level, cells divide in order to create new life. If we zoom out, we can see our planet breathing as a whole, the seasons coming and going, migrations of animals and weather storms swirling around as one. We are undoubtedly interdependent, yet we cling to arbitrary distinctions, ideologies, and constructs that obscure our perception of the larger whole. There is no "us" and "them." There is only "us." We are not dissimilar, just at different states along our cosmic journey. **COPYRIGHT NOTICE** All copyrights for images and text represented on the website fullblede.com and in print are owned by each individual contributor. Sharing is permitted with attribution. Permission to reproduce works, whether in print media or any electronic media, or any technologies not in current use, must be obtained by the artists through FULL BLEDE or directly from artist. 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