

ART PAPERS



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016
US \$7 CAN \$9 UK £6 EU €8



ART PAPERS

November/December 2016

3 Letter from the Editor

10 Artist Statement: Simone Leigh with Ciara Moloney

The artist and activist behind a Brooklyn-based homeopathic health care service is inspired by the temples of Angkor Wat and vernacular architecture in Natchez, Mississippi.

12 Meaning Attribution: The Inflation of Personal Life An Interview with Péter Forgács Sonja Simonyi and Niels Van Tomme

When a family secret is revealed, a Hungarian artist processes a private past, and a public politics.

15 Looking for Black Art in Baltimore Conversations with Joyce J. Scott & Theresa Chromati Abdu Mongu Ali

Faced with limited support and resources in their city, artists discuss what it means to leave—and what it means to come home.

19 Special Dossier: Geopolitics on the Edge Stephanie Bailey

The Arctic archipelago of Svalbard is the new arena in a global sprint for power, influence, and resources—and an emerging site for artistic and interdisciplinary research.

Four Edges of Pyramiden: Ieva Epnere

A woman in a blue dress “symbolizes the Russian ‘dream’ of an ideal state or place on earth.”

Fieldwork: Cédric Maridet

On the territory of Svalbard as an archive for the idea of deep time, and a wasteland “where primordial and modern history can both be traced.”

The Good Soul: Michael John Whelan

Photographing the Global Seed Vault, an artist experiences “a sobering feeling of inescapability” at the juncture of geological past and humanity’s future physical fragility.

Flow Through: Bahar Yürükoğlu

Processing the politics of “a timeless, borderless place,” an artist proposes a new mythology.

Frost: Aggie Peterson and Petra Hermanová

“You could feel the presence of the people, but you could not see them”: archival photographs of Svalbard’s residents are reworked into portraits of a ghost town.

Synnøve Persen, *The Land Outside The Map*

A Sami poet, visual artist, and activist calls for us to “unsubscribe from the map of the colonizers.”

33 Artist Projects: The Last Mile

Four young Atlanta-area artists explore landscapes of transition.

Saige Rowe: Exterior Engagements (Parts I & II)

Steffen Sornpao: Eschatology for a Scrapper

Brandon English: Untitled (Naw ... but for real, fuck ‘em)

Ignacio Rivera: Lupita

48 Class Assignment: Mining The Museum

Spelman College curatorial students propose a thematic exhibition of works from Atlanta university collections.

Reviews

54 **Transitions: States of Being** Kennesaw, GA
Liz Flammig

55 **Turn the Page** Virginia Beach
Paul Ryan

56 **Southern Accent** Durham, NC
Risa Puleo

57 **Estamos contra el muro** San Francisco
Monica Westin

58 **Jacqueline Gordon** San Francisco
Eva Mak

59 **Duane Michals** Atlanta
Christina Price Washington

60 **UH-OH: Francis Stark 1991-2015** Boston
Emily B. Watlington

61 **Mika Rottenberg** Paris
Teresa Carlesimo

62 **Anna Imhof: Angst** Berlin
Christoph Chwatal

63 **Artist and Empire** Singapore
Jennifer Piejko

64 **Glossary: Ordinary**
Jennifer Bonner

on the cover

Santiago Sierra, *Black Flag (Part 2)*, 2015, North Pole
[photos: Lutz Henke; courtesy of the artist]

inside front + back covers

See page 64.

ART PAPERS is *the* independent critical voice covering contemporary art and culture in the world today. **ART PAPERS**, an Atlanta-based nonprofit organization, provides an accessible forum for examining, discussing, and documenting the full spectrum of contemporary art and culture, as well as the ways they affect and reflect our lives. We do so in print, online, and through public programming.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT	Jenny Williams	Adam B. Coker, Brian Holcombe, Rosalind Minkhorst,
VICE PRESIDENT	Alexandra Sachs	William Muller, Jenene Nagy, Susan Richmond,
SECRETARY	James A. Trigg	Teka Selman, Louise E. Shaw, Terry R. Weiss
TREASURER	Valerie O'Neal	

ART PAPERS + donate

ART PAPERS wishes to thank our grantors, sponsors, and donors for their generous support of this publication and our public programs.

To make a donation: www.artpapers.org/donate

\$20,000+

Administrivia
AEC Trust
The Andy Warhol Foundation
for the Visual Arts
Arpin Giving Fund
Dentons
Fizz
Fulton County Arts & Culture
MailChimp

\$10,000-\$19,999

National Endowment for the Arts
Shearman & Sterling LLP

\$5,000-\$9,999

City of Atlanta Mayor's Office
of Cultural Affairs
Graham Foundation for
Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts
Greenberg Traurig LLP
Jamestown Charitable Foundation
Kilpatrick Townsend LLP
LUBO Fund
Vernon & Valerie O'Neal
Seyfarth Shaw LLP
Johnathan Short
U.S. Trust, Bank of America
Private Wealth Management
Terry R. Weiss

\$2,500-\$4,999

Robert Brown
Cocke Finkelstein Inc.
Letitia McDonald & William Muller
Susman Godfrey LLP
Thompson Hine
James A. Trigg & Aruna Sharma
Jenny Williams & Al Dragone

\$1,000-\$2,499

Anonymous
John Chambliss
The John & Beverly Baker Fund
One Consulting Group, Inc.
PennHouse Productions
Primerica
Private Bank of Buckhead
John & Sara Shlesinger
Dawn & Eric Tresh
W Atlanta-Downtown

\$500-\$999

Anonymous
L. Courtenay Beebe MD
& Lindsay W. Marshall
Bill & SueSue Bounds
Jane & Roy Camblin
Adam B. & Elisa Coker
Cooper Carry, Inc.
Judy & Scott Lampert
May Architecture + Interiors
Rosalind & Robert Minkhorst
Blanche Nettles Powers
Susan Richmond
Alexandra Sachs
Teka Selman
Suzanne Shaw

\$25-\$499

A.C.D.A.C.
Anyone Can Do Art Catnet
Volkan Alkanoglu
Anonymous
Linda Armstrong
Robin Bernat
Jane Bickerton
Jennifer Bonner
Sarah & Alex Boone
Joe Camoosa
Lucas Carpenter
Louis Corrigan
Jaynie G. Crimmins

Susannah Darrow & Lloyd Benjamin
Craig Drennen
Sarah Emerson
Nancy Floyd
Ryan Gravel
Glenn Harper
Paul D. Harvill
Greg Head
Brian Holcombe
Katherine C. Jones
Elizabeth Lide & Paul Kayhart
Laura C. Lieberman
Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects
Birgit & David McQueen
Mildred Thompson Legacy Project
Katherine Mitchell
Jenene Nagy
Cathy Nash
Joe Peragine
Program e.V.
Susan Todd Raque
Zac Rose
Mark & Ann Rowles
Meyressa H. Schoonmaker
Neal Schott
David Schuster
Louise E. Shaw
Barbara & Brian Sherman
Jonathan R. Shils
Spencer Sloan
Elizabeth Morgan Spiegel
Esther & Jim Stokes
Thomas Swanston
Lisa Tuttle
Yvonne Williams Wass
Jessica S. White
Bean Worley
Xenia Z. Zed



THE ANDY WARHOL
FOUNDATION FOR THE
VISUAL ARTS

Graham
Foundation

ART PAPERS is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs for the City of Atlanta. Funding for this program is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners, Fulton County, GA. Funding and support has also been generously provided by AEC Trust, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Arpin Giving Fund, Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Jamestown Charitable Foundation, LUBO Fund, and MailChimp.

contact

Saskia Benjamin
Executive Director
tel 404.588.1837 x 18
director@artpapers.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Saskia Benjamin

EDITOR + ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Victoria Camblin

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Jennifer Smith

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Sara Oelrich Church

FINANCE MANAGER

Zelda Harze

COPY EDITOR

Ed Hall

PROOFREADER

Jill Becker

FACT CHECKER

Kyra Baker

INTERNS

Harrison Farina

Liz Flamming

Brenden Flickinger

Bruce Lampros

CONTRIBUTING EDITORSStephanie Bailey, *Athens + London + Hong Kong*Nuit Banai, *Vienna*D. Eric Bookhardt, *New Orleans*Saim Demircan, *Munich*Michael Fallon, *Minneapolis/St. Paul*Cécile Bourne-Farell, *Paris*Ryan Gravel, *Atlanta*Becky Huff Hunter, *Philadelphia*Jennie Klein, *Athens, Ohio*Wendy Koenig, *Los Angeles*Pil and Galia Kollektiv, *London*Gean Moreno, *Miami*Cay Sophie Rabinowitz, *New York + Berlin*Dinah Ryan + Paul Ryan, *Staunton, Virginia*Monika Szewczyk, *Chicago*Niels Van Tomme, *Washington, DC + New York*Robert Wiesenberger, *Boston + New York***ART PAPERS**

PO Box 5748 Atlanta, GA 31107-5748

voice 404.588.1837 fax 678.999.7002

www.artpapers.org





#ArtPapers
artpapers.org/subscribe

Letter from the Editor

Writing in *The New Yorker* in 1962, James Baldwin asked readers to put themselves in the skin of a black American soldier fighting in segregated units during World War II—a man “who watches German prisoners of war being treated by Americans with more human dignity than he has ever received at their hands. And who, at the same time, as a human being, is far freer in a strange land than he has ever been at home. *Home!* The very word begins to have a despairing and diabolical ring.”

This winter issue of ART PAPERS considers what happens to the notion of “Home” when it is dislodged from the simplicity, comfort, and familiarity implied on all the novelty pillows embroidered with platitudes about how home is “sweet,” or “where the heart is.” In the United States, in 2016, “home” is a place you might be told to leave (or, to “go back to”). If you are in Michigan, or in North Dakota, you might be told you can’t drink the water at home, and if you are in almost any American city center, you’re likely to be told you can’t afford to live there anymore. Across the Atlantic, young British people have been told they’re not at home in Europe anymore; their immigrant compatriots have been told they’re not at home on British soil. From the Caribbean to the Carolinas, extreme weather has called for homes to be evacuated; war continues to send refugees in search of *any* alternative to the dangers of home, however perilous the journey, or however hostile the welcome.

In the pages that follow, radical performer Abdu Mongo Ali considers the disparities facing the black art community in his hometown, Baltimore—and speaks to other practicing artists there about why they have stayed, despite the divide (p. 15). Students participating in a new curatorial studies program at the historically black Spelman College—the first of its kind, aimed at directly addressing the nationwide lack of diversity in curatorial and museum leadership positions—have mined two Atlanta collections to create a hypothetical exhibition proposal (p. 48) of works that contend with representations of domesticity, family, gender roles in the home, and the home’s role in the formation and politics of identity. Four artist projects by young Atlanta photographers consider *The Last Mile*—an idea taken from transportation planning, where it refers to the distance between the end of the (train/bus) line, and the doorway to home, explored in these images as a landscape of uncertainty, and of change (p. 33–47).

If “home” is defined as a place to begin life and, to some, to wait out its end, then Svalbard, the Arctic archipelago explored in our cover dossier, “Geopolitics on the Edge” (p. 19–32), is home to none: its pregnant women go to the Norwegian mainland to give birth, and its “no death” policy mandates that bodies return to the mainland to be buried there, as well. That disorienting premise echoes a cliché taken from Thomas Wolfe’s title for his 1947 disquisition on the fragile illusion of American prosperity, and the parallel rise of European fascism: *You Can’t Go Home Again*.

Baldwin asked his readers to imagine the impossibility of a WWII soldier’s return home to America—to “consider what happens to this citizen, after all he has endured, when he returns—home: search, in his shoes, for a job, for a place to live; ride, in his skin, on segregated buses.... And all this is happening in the richest and freest country in the world, and in the middle of the twentieth century.” It has been three days since the results of the 2016 US presidential election were announced. Some might say the unsavory home to which America might now return is that described by Baldwin above; the chilling fact we must confront, however, is that we never left that place of hate behind at all.

—Victoria Camblin
 editor@artpapers.org

This issue concludes ART PAPERS’ 40th year in print, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported us leading up to this anniversary, and who feted it with us this fall. As we move into 2017, we will be expanding our platform to provide a dynamic and welcoming discursive home to the diverse work of the artists, writers, and thinkers who make up our community. You will see exciting changes to our web presence at artpapers.org, new developments in our print publication, and opportunities to have in-person dialogues through new public and educational programming and events.

ART PAPERS Magazine, November/December 2016. Vol 40, No 6. ART PAPERS Magazine [ISSN 1524-9581, Publication no. 017-703] is published bimonthly by Art Papers, Inc. ART PAPERS Magazine is indexed in The Art Index and Art Bibliographies Modern. The full text of ART PAPERS Magazine is available in the electronic versions of The Art Index and in microform from University Microfilms International. Contents may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the prior written permission of Art Papers, Inc. The opinions expressed in ART PAPERS Magazine are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of Art Papers, Inc. ART PAPERS Magazine will not be responsible for the return of any unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. © 2016 Art Papers, Inc. Periodicals Postage Paid at Atlanta GA and at additional mailing offices: 1083 Austin Ave NE #206, Atlanta, Ga 30307. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to ART PAPERS Magazine, PO Box 5748, Atlanta, GA 31107-5748

DISTRIBUTION: N. America: Ingram Periodicals, Inc.; Armadillo & Co.; Media Solutions; and Ubiquity. International: Central Books; Levant.

ARTPAPERS.ORG 3

FIELD WORK

Cédric Maridet

What drew you to Svalbard, and how did you feel once you were there?

It all started from previous experiences of quite remote areas on earth, like the Brazilian rainforest or around the Limpopo River in South Africa, where I did field work during various residencies. The possibility to work in a different context was attractive, and the residency organized by the Arctic Circle focused on art and science, which I felt very compelled by, given some of my previous work.

The anticipation of the wild is always something quite powerful for me. In this particular context, I believe the harsh weather was one of the main elements that contributed heavily to my preconceptions about the region, as was the possibility of an encounter with an *Ursus maritimus*, or polar bear. These preconceptions of the Arctic as a potentially dangerous site were reinforced by the warnings I received prior to traveling there, including information about a law on Svalbard that stipulates that one cannot go outside the secured area of Longyearbyen without being armed.

This all contributed to a light form of anxiety prior to my arrival, which lasted for some time after landing, although the feeling dissipated quickly once I realized there was actually a friendliness to the environment. After a few days in town, I was feeling very at home, and it was time to embark on the sailing journey into no man's land. Safety rules and precautions were repeated on board, underlining the possibility of dangerous encounters. The second day of sailing came as a reminder that we were in the wilderness: there was a snowstorm and swell; chairs were swinging from one side to the other, glasses shattering. Soon after, intensive field work took over, and the sublime nature of the site operated again. Yet sometimes the line between the possible danger of the wilderness and the feeling of being in a certain comfort zone is thin.

How would you say your work reflects your own personal relationship with Svalbard in general, both as a site and a situation?

Svalbard is a landscape, in all aspects of the term. There are in my view five possible definitions of a "landscape": a cultural representation informed by an aesthetic model; a historical territory produced by society (through archaeology, etc.); a purely geographic notion; a sensory experience as described

by a phenomenological approach; and finally, a site or context for a project (landscape designer, researcher, artist, or other). Aspects of these definitions are woven into my works, particularly the phenomenological experience of the place and the situation, through which Svalbard is defined as a territory with particular global, political, historical, and geological contexts.

Many phenomenological qualities of the place influenced me without my being necessarily aware of it: the ever-changing hues of light, the silence, the absence of obvious forms of living, the ice—all of these fueled an imaginary sense of an out-of-earth experience. This was reinforced one night when everyone on the boat happened to be looking up at the sky at the particular moment of re-entry into the atmosphere of a Russian Electronic and Signals Intelligence junk satellite that had been launched in 1980. The object burst into flames at around 8 kilometers away, and only 80 to 90 kilometers above the ground. This random moment inspired the drawing *Last Image of Kosmos 1154*, which also draws from the history of spatial exploration of Mars by NASA. We actually only found out what we had had the chance to witness a few days later, once we reached the northernmost human settlement on the planet, Ny Alesund: a scientific base where around 10 countries are represented in the form of research centers, and in which a certain form of international collaboration operates on [a] day-to-day basis. This village was started by a mining company, as most towns in Svalbard were. Geological history is making Svalbard a global place, not only in the sense that it is a place of scientific research, but in that it is a strategic place, part of a larger territory where natural resources are potentially abundant. Svalbard is therefore also a territory for exploration and conquest.

In the dramatic story of Salomon August Andrée's journey to the North Pole from Svalbard, Andrée, blindfolded by his faith in [the] technology of the hydrogen balloon and drag-rope system, ignored early signs of failure and embarked with his companion upon an excursion that would result in their death in the Arctic winter on Kvitøya (the White Island), only a few days after landing in no man's land. These stories of polar exploration also inspired my works such as the four acrylic tanks that make up *Rise, Fall*, which takes on the history of weather forecasting as a way to explore the notion of a confirmation bias, or the tendency to interpret information according to one's preconceptions about a given occurrence. *Last*

Words, the series of print on paper with crystallized sodium tetraborate also evokes a possible journal of long-lost journeys.

In many ways, Svalbard concentrates a world history through scientific and exploratory conquests: its histories go beyond the sole history of Russia and Norway. This could relate to what Trevor Paglen calls vertical geography, defined as a way to go beyond the traditional planar approach of geography that ... focuses [only] on the earth's surface, toward new topologies of space that account for usually hidden infrastructures, such as those of the deep sea, or those encountered in mining, in orbital space, and beyond. The Global Seed Vault itself is an international project that is not so visible on the surface; the former mining town of Pyramiden is another example. These two places inspired a series of interventions in which I projected text onto the landscape, addressing a collective consciousness: "we thought it would not matter," projected on the entryway of the seed vault, directly questions the site as a "doomsday vault," yet equally interrogates the notion of a collective body of individuals; similarly, the words "we were drifting all along," projected onto the empty swimming pool in Pyramiden, linked various stories connected to the site, including the failures of the USSR's move toward a market-driven economy, the arrival of ice-drifting stations that conduct scientific research, and the geological history of the archipelago, which was once covered by tropical swamps.

I believe that the territory of Svalbard is highly relevant as an archive for the idea of deep time, and as a wasteland where primordial and modern history can both be traced. Svalbard contains elements of a global history of our civilization, as well as a history of Earth that goes beyond the geopolitical aspects of the place.

Cédric Maridet is an award-winning artist based in Hong Kong. He studied literature and sociolinguistics at Paris VII University, and holds a PhD in media arts (City University of Hong Kong). His practice uses intensive field work and research to create video, installation, photography, sound composition, and works on paper. Maridet has participated in residencies, and solo and group exhibitions, internationally, at such venues as the Tate Modern in London, as well as Para Site, Asia Art Archive, and Blindspot Gallery in Hong Kong.

OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM: Cédric Maridet, *We thought it would not matter*, 2014, from the series *Interventions*, Lambda print, 40 x 60 centimeters; Cédric Maridet, *We were drifting all along*, 2014, from the series *Interventions*, Lambda print, 40 x 60 centimeters [images courtesy of the artist]

