

Crossover

Stephanie Dvareckas and George Fifield



Crossover

Curated by
Stephanie Dvareckas and George Fifield

Boston Cyberarts Gallery

Boston Cyberarts Gallery
141 Green Street
Jamaica Plain

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Director's Introduction

The exhibition *Crossover* represents something new for the Boston Cyberarts Gallery, or maybe something old, it's hard to say. We pride ourselves on exhibiting the most cutting edge new media available. Previous exhibitions have included iPad art apps, augmented reality presentation and rapid prototype sculpture. But in *Crossover*, works include hand-made sculpture and the painted rectangle. But the history of art and technology takes many ironic twists and turns. Today's technologically rich environment, it is not surprising that the artistic process may start with a complex digital data-set that transforms itself into a traditional art medium as the works in *Crossover* do.

While we are sharing curatorial credit for this show, I want to be clear that Boston Cyberarts Assistant Director Stephanie Dvareckas was the originator of the concept.

It is always pleasant to work with people who force you out of your comfort zone. And my curatorial comfort zone does not include traditional art making media. After having been a curator of video and then new media for twenty years, I was shocked in 2011 while hanging my exhibition *Drawing with Code: Works from the Anne and Michael Spalter Collection* at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum to realize I was actually hanging my first "works on paper" exhibition. So I especially appreciate Stephanie's contribution in defining this conceit that even the most seemingly traditional art forms can be born out of our digital data driven world.

George Fifield, Director, Boston Cyberarts

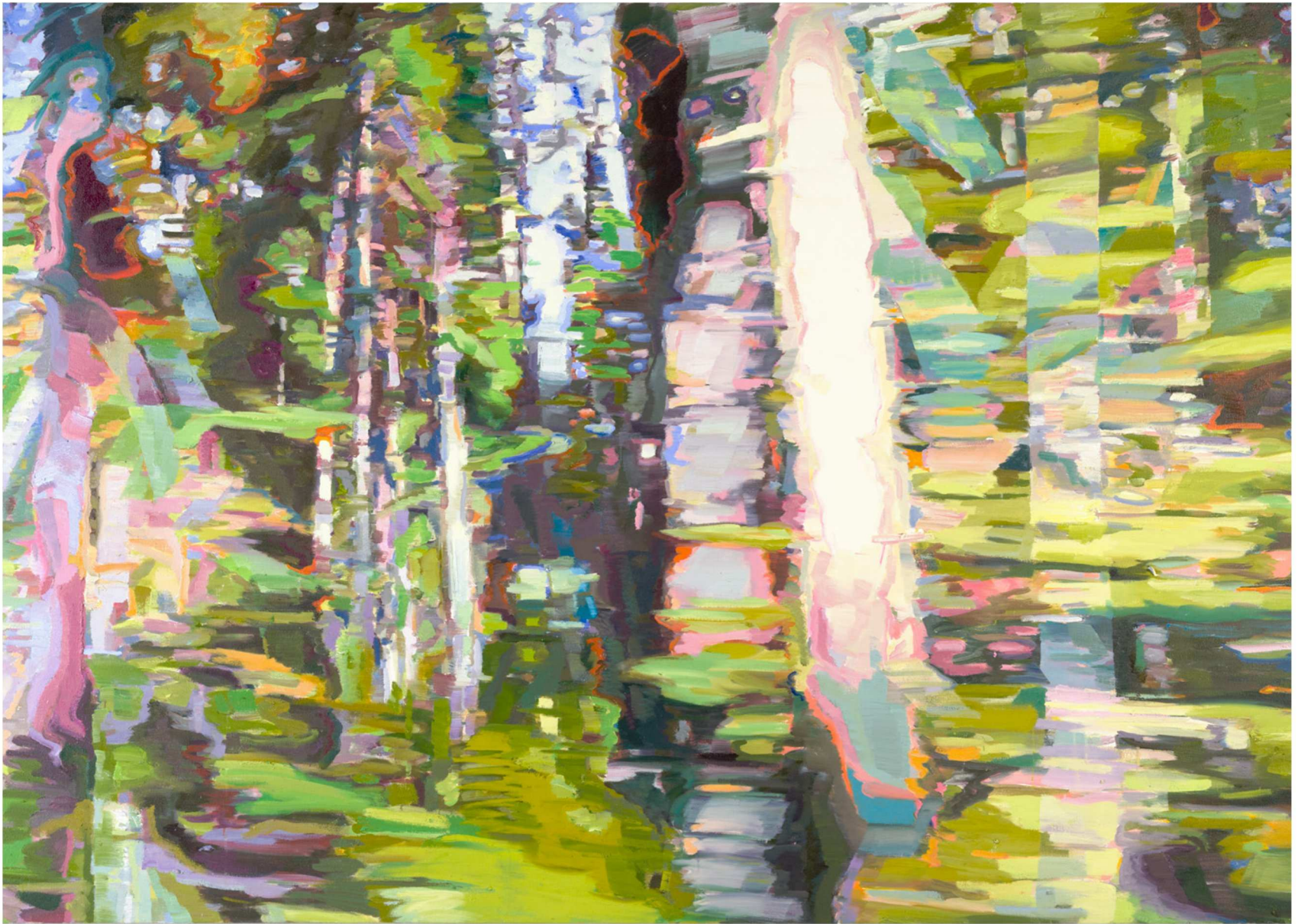
Nathalie Miebach
Evolution of a Star, 2000
reed and raffia, 3.5'x3.5'x2.5'



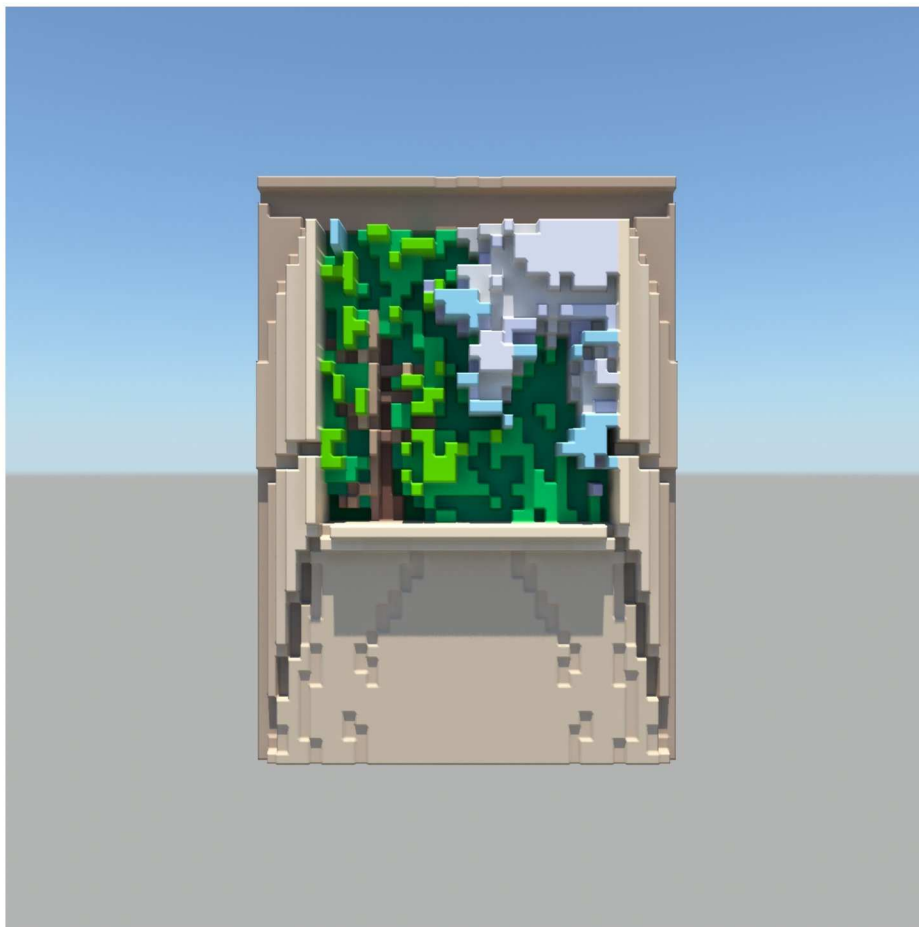
Crossover

Where is the line between fine art and technology? Historically, art and technology have continually intersected--from the accused Old Masters who are rumored to have used the technology of their time in the production of their masterpieces, to contemporary artists who often straddle the line between the cyber and the palpable. Art is a vehicle for intersecting interests and media, and the use of technology in the creation of fine art further demonstrates this notion.

With artistic movements such as "The New Aesthetic", we are experiencing the influence of technology on art even through more traditional processes. "Crossover" exhibits examples of ostensibly traditional work that are heavily influenced by technology. Even though these pieces do not overtly demonstrate the utilization of technology, they do exemplify the novel way in which technology and fine art are interrelated.



Monica Tap
Six Ways from Sunday: Thursday, 2012
Oil on canvas, 60 x 60"



Sophia Brueckner
Rendering from *Windows* series, 2014

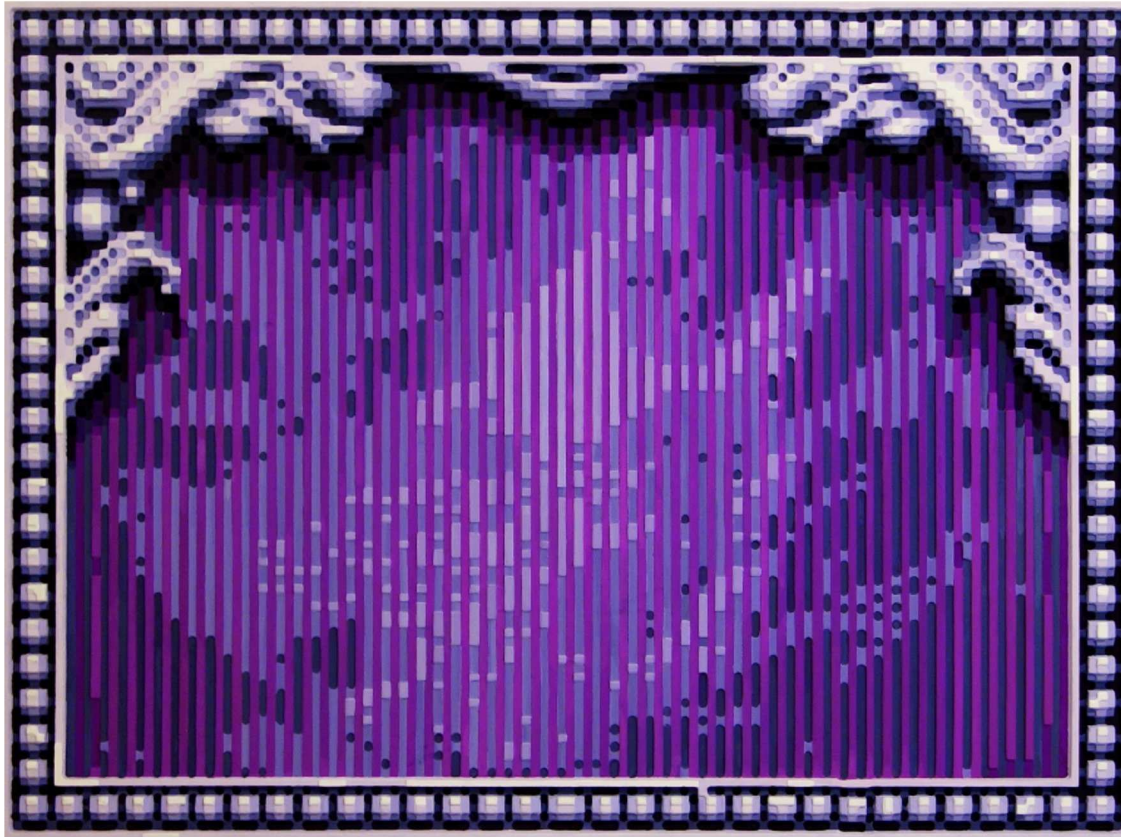
Sophia Brueckner

Sophia Brueckner is an artist and an engineer. Previously a software engineer at Google, she worked on the front-end development and interface design of products as well as experimental projects with Google Research. Her unique approach to thinking about art and its relationship to technology has led her to several pieces that critique our current culture and its relationship to the past.

In her piece with The Institute for Infinitely Small Things, *iSky TV* (2013), there is a direct historical comparison with Yoko Ono's *Sky TV* (1966). In *Sky TV*, the sky outside of the gallery was filmed and simultaneously shown on a small monitor within the gallery. This brought the outside world indoors, in real time allowing gallery patrons to experience the changing sky while within the gallery space. Conversely, *iSky TV* manifests itself as several monitors displaying images taken from Google Street View of locations surrounding the gallery thus forming an example of modern thinking as influenced by technology. This interest in the past and the present as well as in technology and art continues throughout Brueckner's work.

In *Phases*, a collaborative generative art installation with Catherine D'Ignazio at the Harbor Islands Welcome Center in downtown Boston, Brueckner works with real-time data to create an evolving animation. In the press release, the artists state that "it is purposefully reminiscent of the condensed landscapes in early computer games where the complexity of nature is distilled into such a small number of pixels, analogous to modern difficulties in reducing complex real-world environments and situations into simple metrics computers can understand."

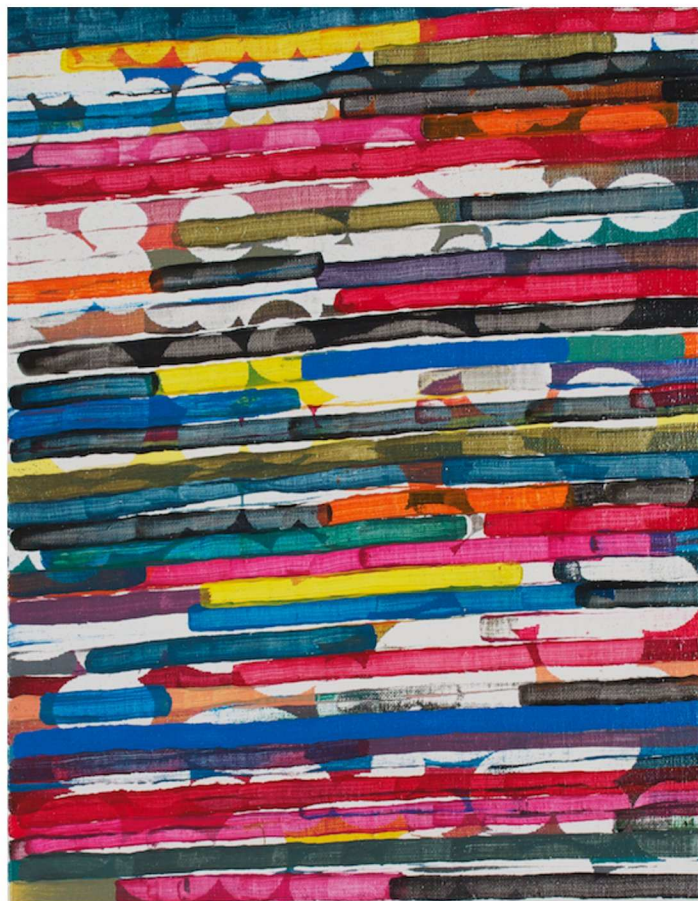
This interest in pixels and early computer games leads us to her painted bas-relief series, *Windows*. *Windows* is derived from the 1993 DOS computer game, *Lands of Lore: The Throne of Chaos*. Brueckner translates condensed landscapes seen from tiny windows within the game to 3D models using computer code. These forms are then fabricated on a CNC milling machine and hand-painted, becoming real-life 3-D replicas of the game imagery.



Sophia Brueckner
Eye of the Beholder, 2014
28x21", wood, acrylic



Sophia Brueckner
Rendering from *Windows* series, 2014



Nicholas Irzyk, *Abstract Painting #9*, 2013
laser engraved acrylic on linen, 11x14"

Nicholas Irzyk

Nicholas Irzyk is a printmaker turned painter who connects the traditional methods of printmaking with modern processes. In works such as *Untitled VIII* and *Classical Painting*, Irzyk uses oil-based ink, stretched linen, and acrylic and silkscreen to produce a work of art that has a printed-by-a-computer-printer feel. This meshing of traditional processes which mimic modern ones (or, perhaps, it is the other way around) is something that can be seen throughout Irzyk's work. For example, *8 Abbreviated Pieces* is an aquatint etching of a Quick Response (QR) Code -- a scannable, matrix barcode that is printed by a computer printer for quick access to information. This particular hand-printed QR code is linked to a YouTube documentation video of the artist performing, bringing the technological and traditional full circle.

In his more recent series, Irzyk continues to tamper with the artist's hand and the technological tools available. Using a variety of techniques that include painting, silk-screening, and industrial printing, he considers each medium a tool that offers a certain artistic effect. Irzyk states that "it is within this

approach that the paintings become suspicious of themselves and contradictions start to form. There is an emphasis on the flatness of the work; they start to become images until you reach the edge where the paintings meet the wall. Their painterliness is set in motion on the periphery by the exposing of the support material and the ooze of the gesso. Here the works announce themselves as originals. The paintings simultaneously camouflage and reveal themselves."

The paintings included in *Crossover* are produced by laser engraving acrylic on a linen canvas; a process that Irzyk perfected through accidents and experimentation. He says "the paintings start with the layering of acrylic applied in stripes or cubes. The laser cutter acting as a drawing tool engraves a grid of ovals, made by preset drawing tools on basic imaging software. In the printing process the acrylic marks are seemingly corrected by the laser, excavating into the paint a quantied gesture. Both moves are imperfect as the ovals break down into pixels over the slack painted shapes. This process creates a space within the canvas as new shapes and colors begin to recede and come forth."



Nicholas Irzyk, *Abstract Painting #6*, 2013
laser engraved acrylic on linen, 11x14"



Nicholas Irzyk, Detail of *Untitled 1*, 2013
laser engraved acrylic on linen, 11x14"



Carlos Jiménez Cahua
Untitled #39.1, 2012
chromogenic color print, 20 x 16"

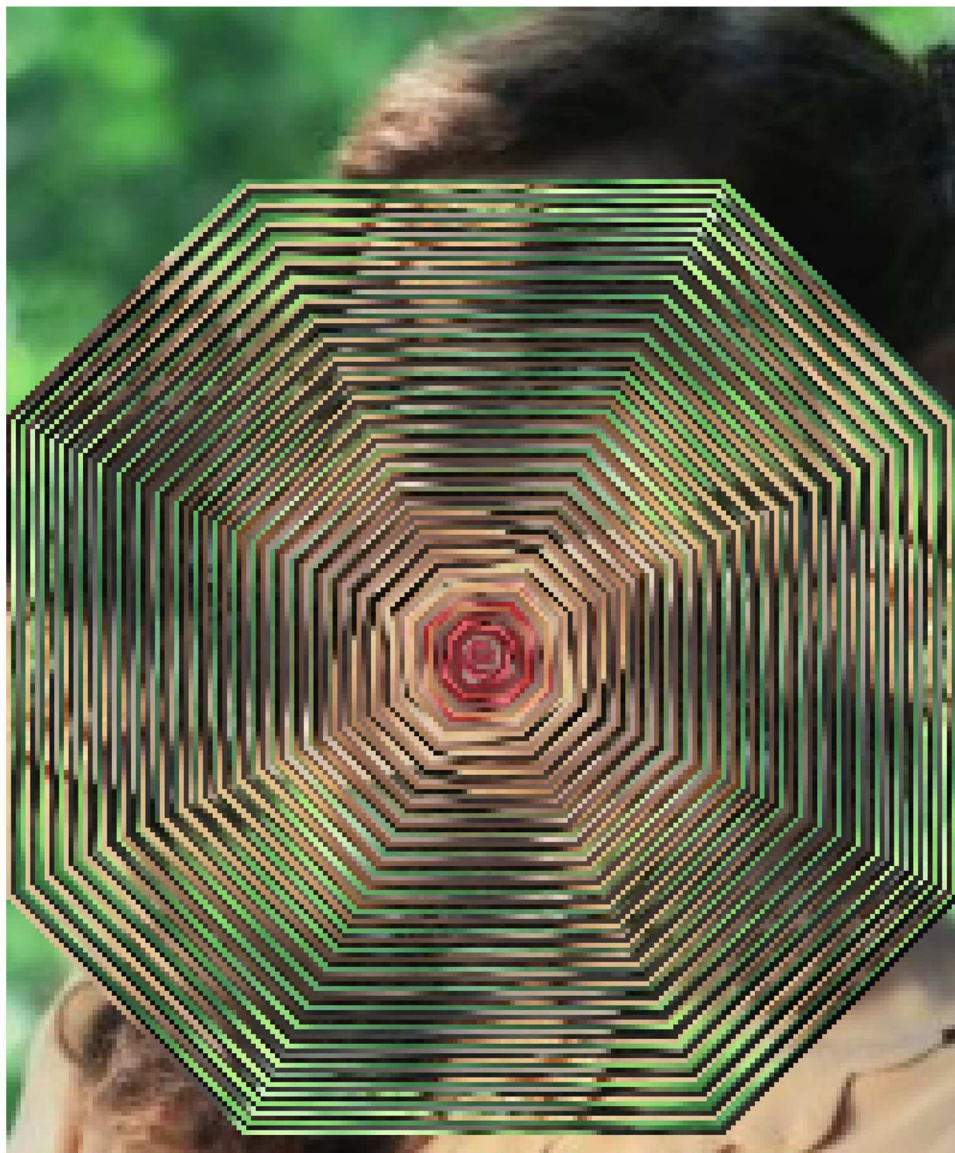
Carlos Jiménez Cahua

Carlos Jiménez Cahua was originally trained as a traditional photographer. While at Princeton University, Jiménez Cahua produced a series of works entitled *Ciudad de los Reyes*, which consists of landscape photography in and around Lima, Peru. Though relatively diverse, the majority of these photographs are hazy and surreal. The absence of humans only escalate their dreamlike quality. This series foreshadowing works to come is exemplary of Jiménez Cahua's technical photographic command and eye for composition.

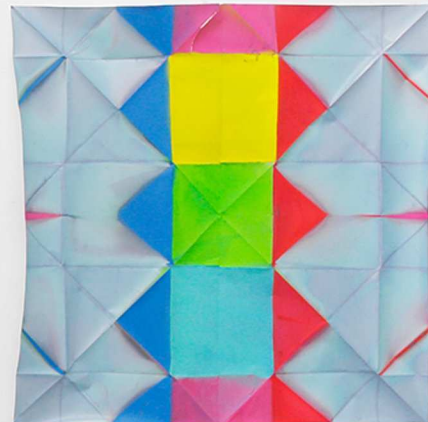
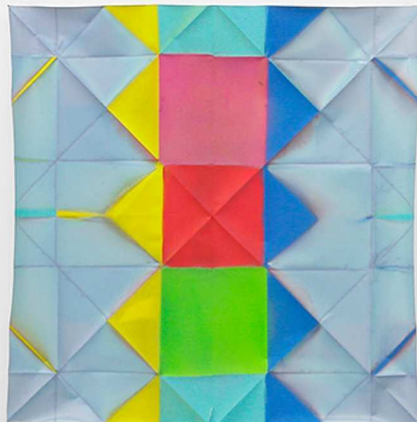
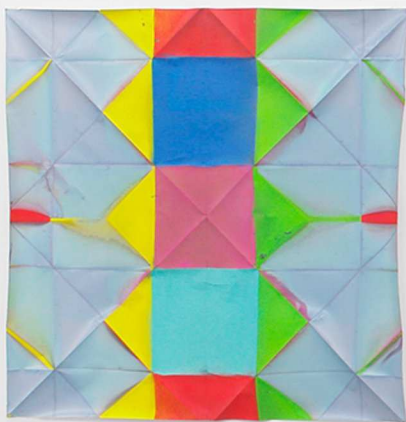
This implementation of various photographic processes to produce non-representational imagery seems inevitable now, looking back at the nebulous landscapes of *Ciudad de los Reyes*. At this point, Carlos took his photography in a direction relating his strong interest in art theory and art history. He continued making less representational photography and more conceptual art. He managed to hold on to some of the more traditional processes of photography by creating photograms and developing chromogenic prints.

He then began applying technical cultural relevance to his projects; incorporating standard image files and riffing off of Sol LeWitt, Jiménez Cahua has produced a series with an interpretable set of instructions involving .tiff files rather than paint. He states that "taking influence from the relative laxness video artists use in showing their work; e.g., a video may be shown projected, on a monitor, as a web link, etc., all pointing (usually not directly nor principally) at the fact that the real piece here is information rather than material, which by the way is a pretty revolutionary step that no one seems to have written too much about, I present these pieces as purely information (also akin to, say, literature), where the materialization is ancillary but not primary."

In his other series *My Aesthetic Vocabulary Did This To Her/Him/Me*, Jiménez Cahua borrows images of former bosses (including himself) found online. He then "downgrades its dimensions by two pixels on each side step by step until the picture effectively becomes just one pixel; however, the "canvas" or physical size of the image is kept constant, so you see the image slowly degrade in quality, manifested by the person seen trembling into one pixel or color."



Carlos Jiménez Cahua, *Untitled #80 (M[A]VDTH)*, 2013,
Tiff file, dimensions variable



Carlos Jiménez Cahua, *Untitled #71.p* (Square piece of unprocessed, black and white photographic paper folded into cube [according to origami instructions] and each face thereof spray painted with a primary color)



Nathalie Miebach

Basket weaving is a craft that has been in existence for ages. In fact, the oldest known baskets have been dated as being between 10,000 and 12,000 years old. Although these baskets sometimes bear cultural ritualistic purposes, they all serve some primary function be it decoration or to simply hold something, or both. Though this antiquated craft is not typically associated with technology, Nathalie Miebach has discovered a way to incorporate her interest in data to this age-old medium by creating woven sculptures indicative of various data patterns. Interwoven strands of natural reed, an inflexible material that is difficult to manipulate, are the material of choice. This intractable material allows the numbers within the data to fully control the outcome of the sculpture.

The Jet Star of the Future, 2013

Reed, wood, rope, paper, data, 21"(h)x16"x14"

Miebach has created a visual, three-dimensional way in which to interpret data. Beginning with an astronomy class at Harvard University Extension, Miebach implemented basket weaving as a three dimensional way to elucidate the insoluble questions of time and spatial dimension relating to the infinite quality of space. As a result, the visual processing of information has become an intrinsic part of Miebach's work.

In an interview with Whitney Dail, Meibach states: "On a surface level, my work is about translating science data. But on a deeper level, this work is also about thinking. To me my sculptures reveal less about science, but provide a window into human thought and the way one constructs meaning and understanding about something."

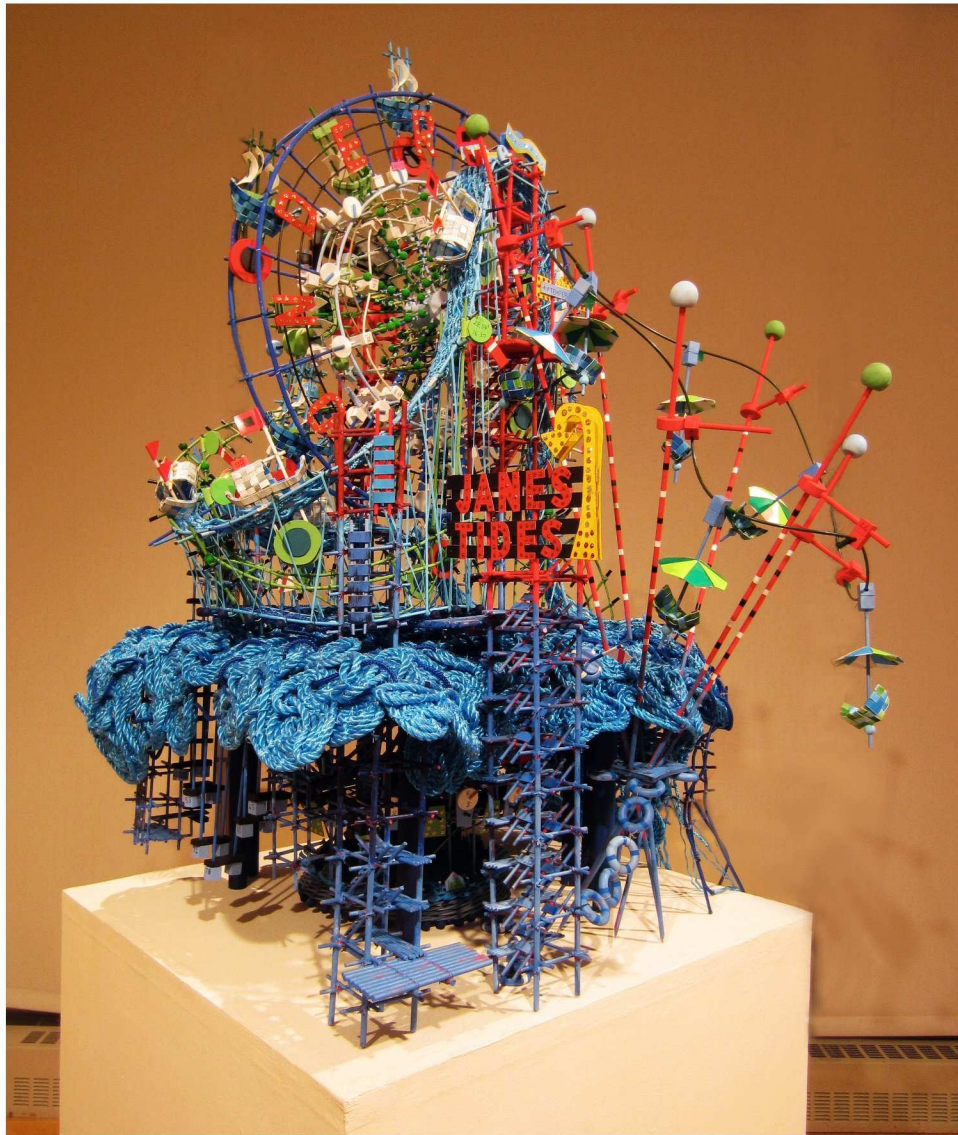
Later on, Miebach implemented her visual learning process to collect and interpret data pertaining to weather and climate. Similarly to astronomy, weather data is often interpreted in a flat, two-dimensional way. Additionally, weather itself is largely an invisible concept of pressure and temperature calculated by tools relaying numbers. In creating these visual weather interpretations, Miebach takes the imperceptible nature of weather and makes it both visual and tactile.

Using simplistic tools, ones that can easily be obtained by visiting ones local hardware store, she gathers weather data and compared that information to data available online. A basket is made of interwoven horizontal and vertical points that create a three-dimensional object. By assigning values to those points and using the changes of those data points over time, a form is created. Various objects are added to represent other bits of information to heighten the complexity of the information being interpreted. Using this collection of set variables, a three dimensional translation of weather data is born.

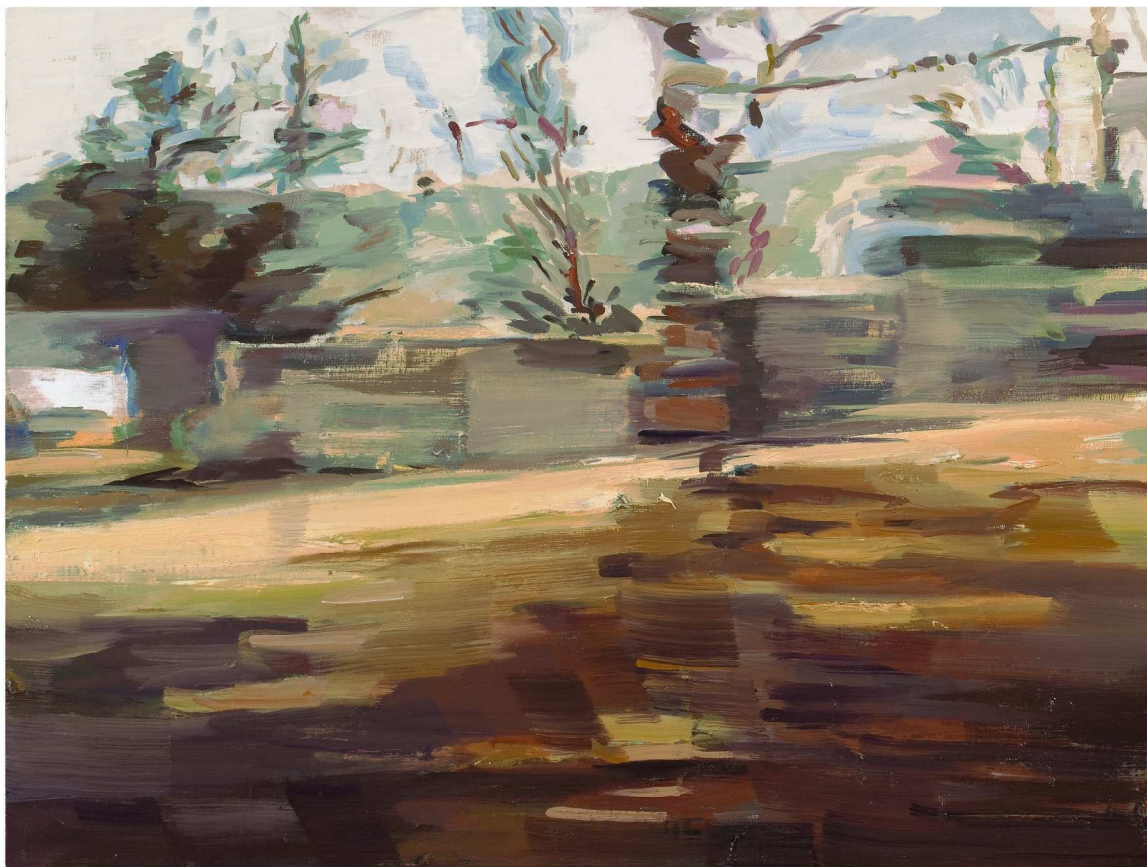
For *Crossover*, Miebach employs her marriage of the traditional basket weaving technique with scientific data using three playful pieces in her series, *The Sandy Rides*. Though colorful, these pieces instigate conversation surrounding the issue of climate change. Using Hurricane Sandy as a marker for this issue, Miebach borrows visual elements of amusement park rides representing the iconic rides ravished by the hurricane including Deno's Wonder Wheel in Coney Island, The Star Jet Rollercoaster in Seaside Heights and Jane's Carousel in Brooklyn.



Nathalie Miebach, *O Fortuna, Sandy Spins*, 2013
Reed, wood, rope, bamboo, weather data, 24"(h)x14"x16"



Nathalie Miebach, *I Dreamed She'll Ride Us All Again (Jane's Tides)*, 2014
Reed, wood, rope, weather data, 24" x24" x28"

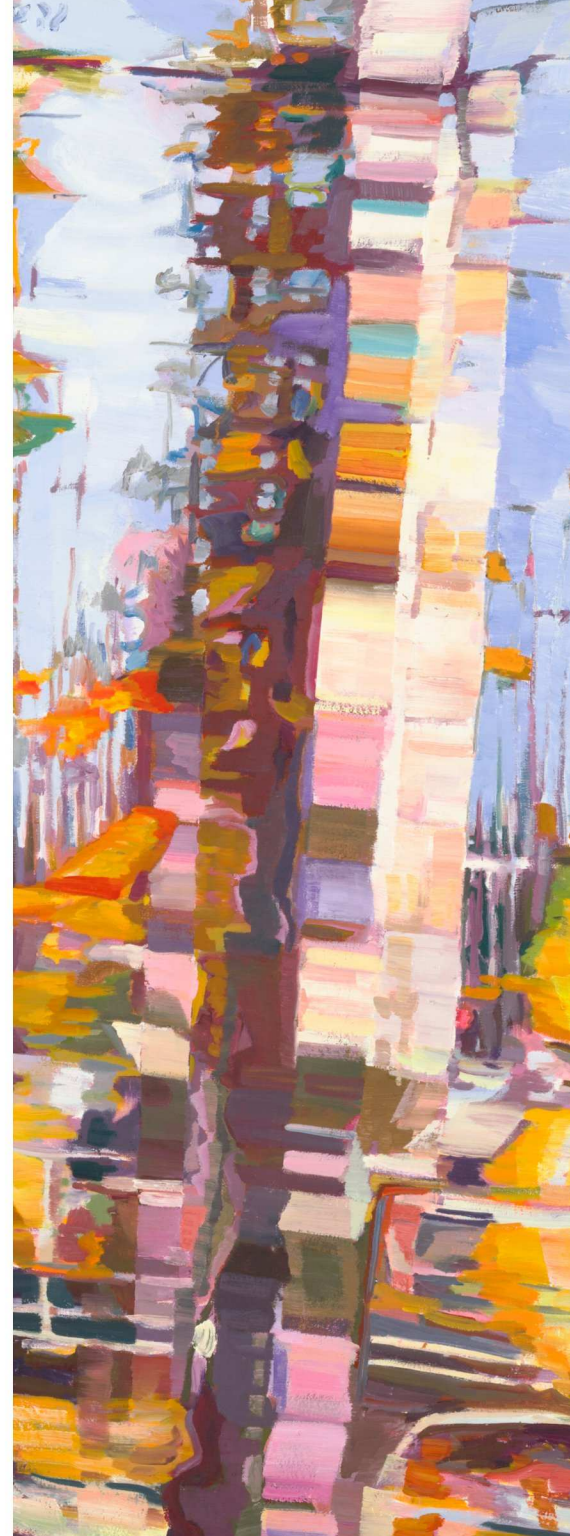


Monica Tap
One-second Hudson no. 2, 2007
oil on linen, 24 x 32"

Monica Tap

Oil paintings probably do not come to mind when one is thinking about media-based art, and yet that is just what Toronto based artist, Monica Tap, creates. Using the video function on her digital still camera, Tap captures video from a moving vehicle. She then paints from the video still, creating paintings that maintain the same luminous quality as the screen she paints from. Using oil, linen, and a landscape format, these blurry landscapes are, in a sense, traditional. But the means in which she obtains her visual aids is more modern.

Monica Tap
Past (burnt orange), 2012
oil on canvas, 54 x 36"



Landscape painters exist in various cultures around the world, each with their own unique voice and terrain. Painters such as Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh, and Jean Metzinger have brought to question the meaning of space and applied their own perspective and color pallet. Tap ushers this conversation to the 21st century by precipitating the question of landscape and abstraction into a conversation relating directly to space and time.

The notion of time and movement has been captured in various ways for centuries now. Dated 2000 BC, a mural in an Egyptian tomb at Beni Hasan demonstrates the physical movement of people through a sequence of wrestlers. More conceptually, Salvador Dalí paints melting clocks in the ever-famous *The Persistence of Memory*. One significant separation between Tap and the aforementioned artists is her ability to capture a very specific moment in time rather than just referencing it. Her access to modern technology truly makes these paintings fascinating because, without the visual aid, Tap is only representing an idea of the passing of time. In actuality, she is visually recreating a fleeting moment captured by digital technology.

Painters have historically used the technology of their time to act as tools that aid in the creation of their work. Many have speculated that famous painters such as Jan Van Eyck and Diego Velázquez employed lenses and mirrors to assist in their process. The use of tools in Tap's case allows her to capture a fleeting moment in time and recreate that instance in the traditional method of painting. The process of taking video is fast-moving, it is only when Tap sits down to paint that her process becomes slow and labor-intensive.

Crossover includes paintings from Tap's series, *One-Second Hudson*. The footage for this series was captured by train along the Hudson River. As with her paintings from other series', Tap uses stills from video captured using the video feature on her digital camera. Her camera captures fifteen frames per second, and Tap created fifteen paintings, meaning that each of her fifteen canvases represents one fifteenth of one second.



Monica Tap
One-second Hudson no. 5, 2007
oil on linen, 24 x 32"

Checklist:

Sophia Brueckner:

Window #1

Window #2

Nicholas Irzyk:

Abstract Painting #9, 2013

Abstract Painting #6, 2013

#1, 2013

No Title, 2013

No Title, 2014

Carlos Jiménez Cahua:

Untitled #99.9 (M[A]VDTTH), 2013, single channel video, 25 seconds

Untitled #99.1 (M[A]VDTTH), 2014, single channel video, 15 seconds

Untitled #99.35 (M[A]VDTTH), 2014, single channel video, 24 seconds

Untitled #80.39 (M[A]VDTTH), 2013, TIFF file, dimensions variable

Untitled #80.36 (M[A]VDTTH), 2013, TIFF file, dimensions variable

Nathalie Miebach

O Fortuna, Sandy Spins, 2013

The Jet Star of the Future, 2013

I Dreamed She'll Ride Us All Again (Jane's Tides), 2014

Monica Tap

One-second Hudson no.2, 2007

One-second Hudson no. 3, 2007

One-second Hudson no.4, 2007

One-second Hudson no.5, 2007



