

Virginia Overton

Why?! Why Did You Take My Log?!?!

Chuck Nanney

Selected Ambient Works, Volume II

Tucson John

Tucson Nights: After Dark in the Naked Pueblo

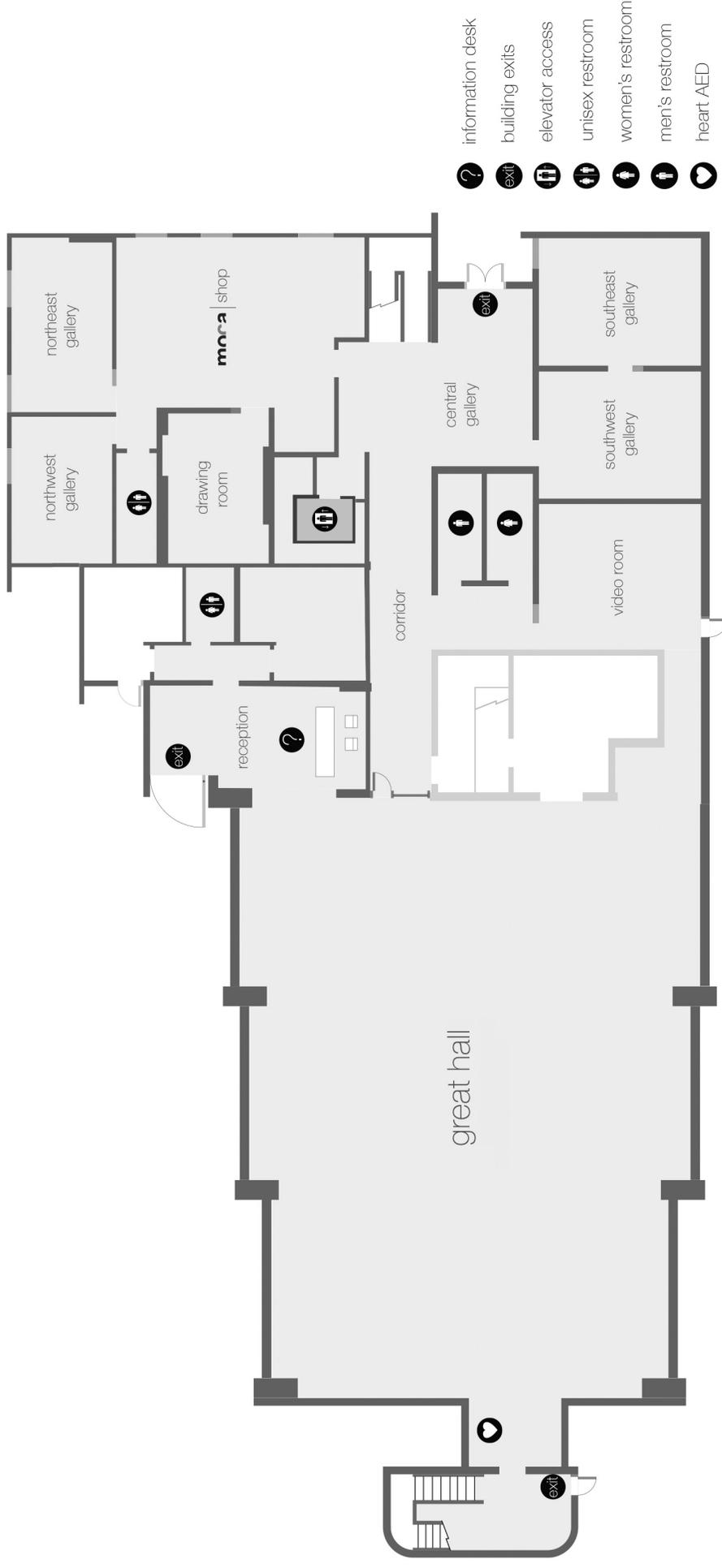
A Night on the Edge of Forever

Guest curated by Steve Terry

17 June – 1 October 2017

The logo for the Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson (MOMA) is displayed in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters 'm', 'o', and 'a' are in a dark grey color, while the letter 'r' is a vibrant red. The letters are closely spaced and have a slightly rounded, modern feel.

Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson



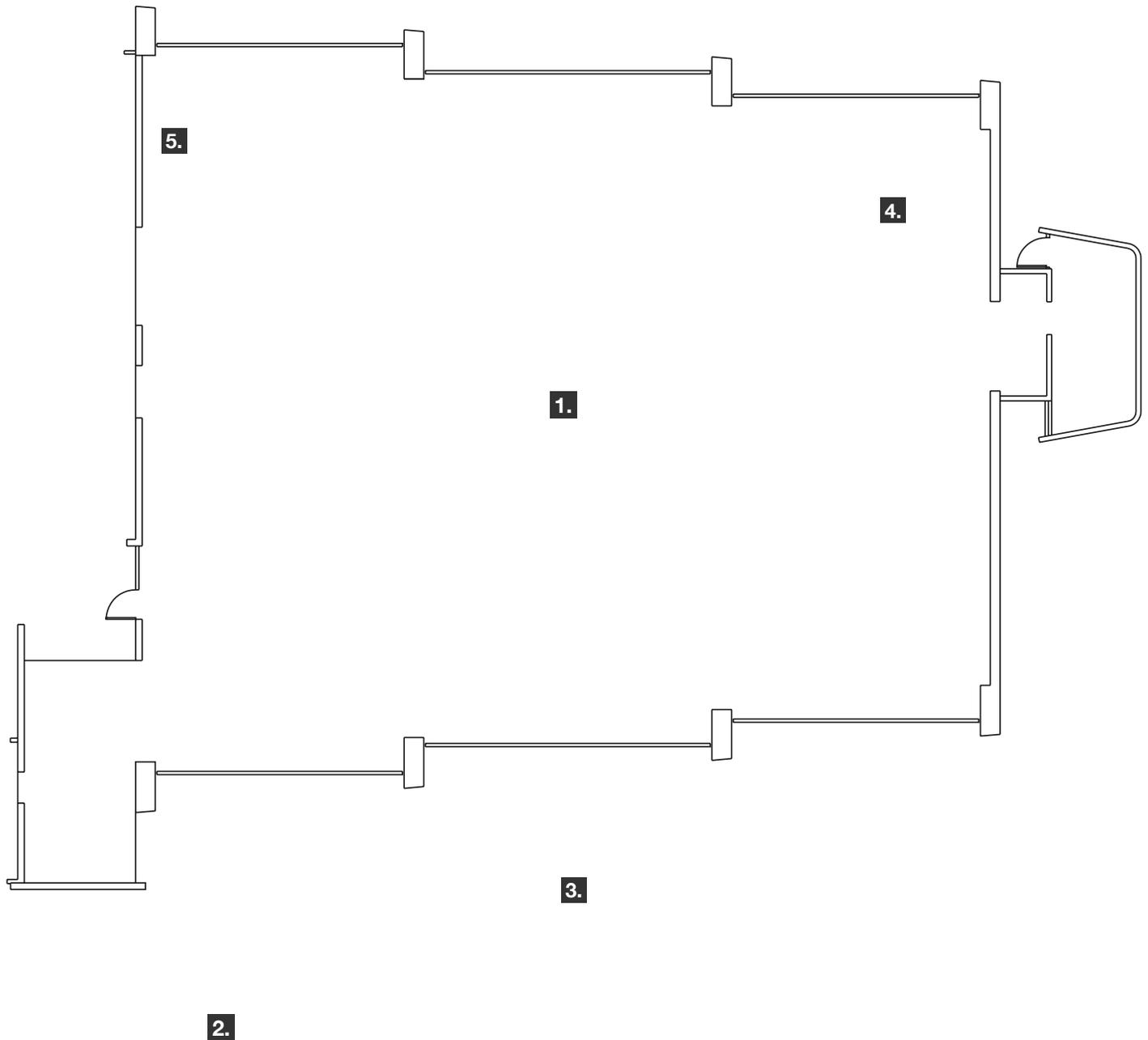
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moca map

- information desk
- building exits
- elevator access
- unisex restroom
- women's restroom
- men's restroom
- heart AED

GREAT HALL

Virginia Overton *Why?! Why Did You Take My Log?!?!*



GREAT HALL

1. *Untitled*, 2017 trusses, plywood, sandbags
2. *Untitled*, 2017 nylon
3. *Untitled (Utility Pole)*, 2017 wood and steel
4. *Untitled (Water Feature)*, 2017 truck bed trailer, gutter, cement block, wood, waterfall pump, and water
5. *Untitled (MOCA Tucson sign)* 2017

Virginia Overton was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1971 and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Her solo exhibitions include The David Ireland House, San Francisco (2017); The Whitney Museum of American Art, NY (2016-7); The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT (2016); White Cube, London (2015 and 2016); Storm King Art Center, Mountaineville, NY (2014); Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland (2013); The Power Station, Dallas, TX (2013) and The Kitchen, NY (2012). She has participated in numerous group exhibitions and projects including Lever House, NY (2017); ICA Philadelphia, PA (2016); Art Basel Parours, Switzerland (2016); Pier 54, High Line Art, NY (2012-13, 2014); and MoMA PS1, NY (2010).

Curator's Essay

GREAT HALL

Virginia Overton *Why?! Why Did You Take My Log?!?!*

17 June—1 October 2017

Virginia Overton's site-specific installation arose from an attentive response to the Neo-Brutalist space of the former fire truck garage that is MOCA's Great Hall, as well Tucson in general. The first phase of her three-week-long residency at the museum consisted of soaking up the native ambiance, doing reconnaissance, taking reference photographs, scavenging, and interacting with local characters who had stumps to spare or a thirty year-old Chevy Luv truck bed trailer to sell. One person's trash is another's treasure. That process segued into ten days of intensive planning, calculating, drawing, implementing, and construction. Overton's manipulation of detritus and what some would call junk is conceptual and virtual bricolage on a sometimes grand scale, imbued with an ethos of economy. This is an enterprise founded on a fondness for reclaimed objects and a capacity to allow them to act as markers of their own history by letting accrued defects show how they have been used, then deftly transforming them into artworks acutely responsive to a particular locale.

Asked what she does, Overton has semi-jestingly referred to herself as an improvisational sculptor, but it's not a joke. She is supremely in the present tense production-wise. A major motive is ethically-driven recycling. Let's call it availablism. Coupled with those codes is an endeavor that's authentically relational, with shop owners, other artists, random members of the public, and especially with the staff, interns, and volunteers at MOCA, whose diligent and enthusiastic assistance was beyond essential to this happening. A spirited can-do attitude on the artist's part is much in evidence, toiling for five hours in 104 degrees, covered in dirt, verging on heat stroke, because it needs to get done. The artist's leadership and participation is crucial to a communal undertaking. Formal acumen, inventive reuse, and, along with it, the artist drills, hammers, and pulls nails. Thinking on her feet, making it happen, on the brink, unresolved and exciting but exacting, and then there it is, sorted out superbly.

*Why?! Why Did You Take My Log?!?!'*s remarkable centerpiece laterally and imposingly bisects the Great Hall, derived from eight, forty-four-foot-long roof trusses found at Gersons Building

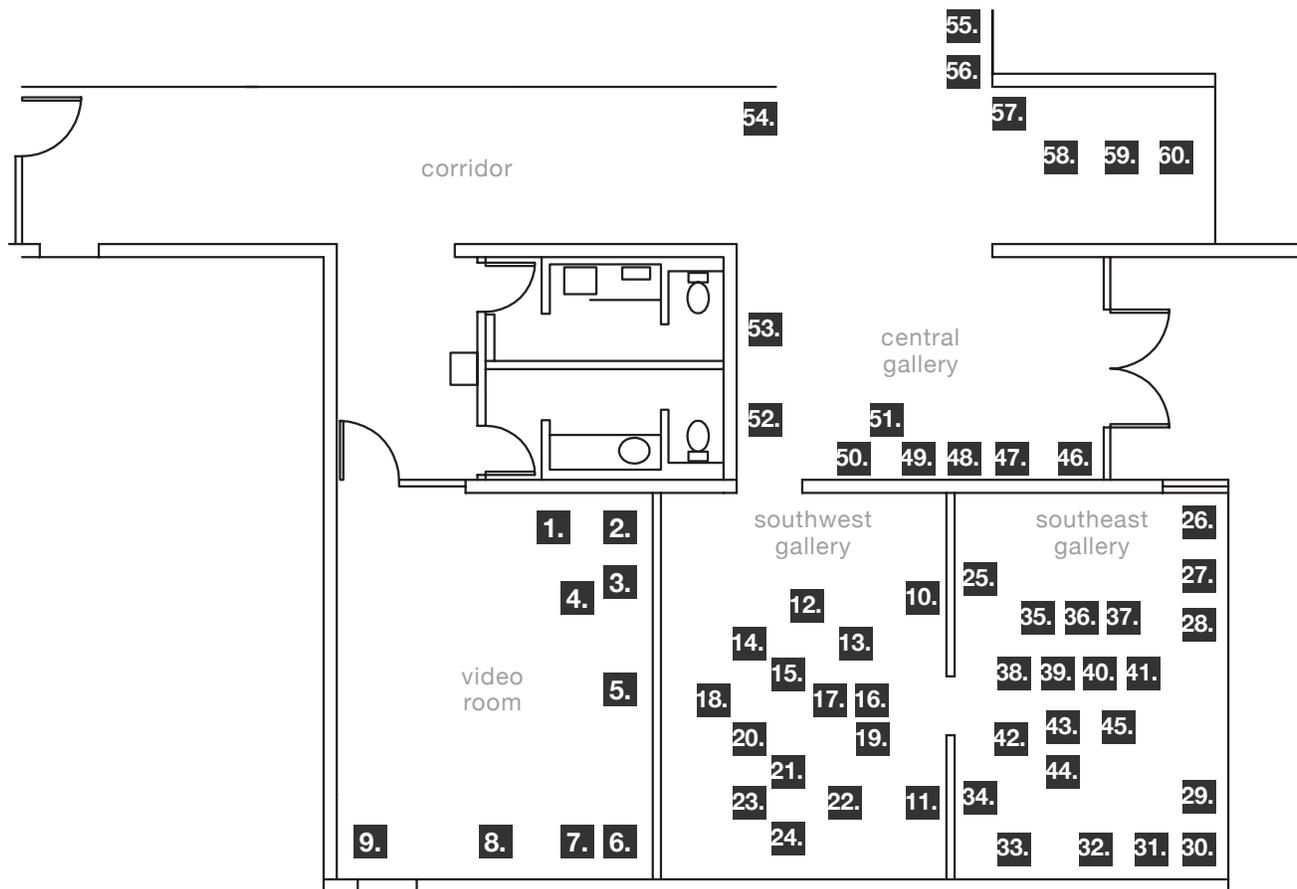
Materials. Forsaken, baked, worn-out, never to be sold, then espied, retrieved and reconfigured as a deserted future-ancient starship, or a colossal gem. Geometry and balance, equilibrium and close-to-massive scale, dichotomies and dualities of old and new come together to make something unprecedented. Decrepit dark brown wood makes its last trip as new blond (ply) wood braces help it stay together for its last job. Transmutation of matter that all started with a popsicle-stick model. The water feature is pumped out of the rusted cinder block and 2x4's-supported truck bed through battered inoperative gutters also sourced at Gersons, up and over, zigzagging, recirculating. Relevant in the middle of the desert, a closed-circuit synecdoche of the tunnels siphoning Adam's Ale from hundreds of miles away to a very dry land. Playful and soothing too, the sound of rushing liquid coursing through the system, with the added attraction of a semi-surrealist backdrop previously used on a public access show in Joshua Tree, CA. Picked up by Overton on her way into town, along with the piping pond system it provides a microcosm of the surrounding landscape.

Sight, sound, smell (especially of the old wood) are all activated. The weathered utility pole with crossbars now standing on the plaza is a beacon of bona fide vernacular charm, spotted on a visit to old friend and supporter Oliver Mosset's property. Wrapping things up as a foil to the extemporization are two works in Overton's serial mode, the "MOCA Tucson" marquee light box and a six-by-ten-foot mud flap girl flag, a recurring motif related to her childhood in truck-besotted Tennessee. The ubiquitous curvy mud flap girl is cannily rescued and re-deployed from behind dirty tires twenty-five feet in the air to delightfully caper in the wind, garnering attention, and also acting as a stand-in for the artist after she departs.

Not too crowded, not too sparse, a mix of balance, beauty, and brawn coalescing with a light but assertive touch and rigorously intentional placement. Clearly in dialogue with minimalism, though just as critically an assured intervention into an architectural space, nuanced investigations of equilibrium, weight, and gravity converse in a carefully stabilized assemblage employing the natural push and pull in materials. It's not an insider thing, the appeal is universal, determined by an undeniable "wow" factor wedded to a subtle élan while also being down-home in a way, relatable to the honest labor and fulfillment that comes from fixing a fence on the farm. Supplying multiple entry points for the viewer, Overton's art honors the memory of things through a prism of inventive interpretation of space and an engagement with all the senses. Action is her operative language, as she pours a dizzying multitude of ideas and entitles into a sieve to see what shakes out, and what does is superlative.

VIDEO ROOM & SOUTH GALLERIES

Chuck Nanney *Selected Ambient Works, Volume II*



VIDEO ROOM

1. *Abbot*, 2017 acrylic and rhinestones on plywood, door hinges
2. *Male Voiceover*, 2017 acrylic on plywood, casters
3. *Spinal Insertion #1*, 2017 plywood
4. *Untitled (Bug)*, 2016 digital print on vinyl
5. *Costello*, 2017 acrylic on plywood, door hinges
6. *Square Manhole*, 2016 acrylic on plywood, casters
7. *Untitled (Phone Tower)*, 2016 digital print on vinyl
8. *Fin*, 2017 acrylic on pine, mending plates
9. *Menthol*, 2017 plywood, digital print on vinyl, acrylic on pine, plexiglass, cut timber, ceramic clay with aluminum leaf

SOUTHWEST GALLERY

10. *Empty House*, 2017 acrylic on plywood, door hinges
11. *Personal Management*, 2017 acrylic and rhinestones on plywood, door hinges
12. *Belief Isn't an Abstraction*, 2017 acrylic, plywood, casters, plexiglass, cut timber, acrylic and mica on pine
13. *Dragging Man*, 2016 acrylic, plywood, door hinge, corner braces, cut timber
14. *Preconceptions*, 2016 gold leaf and acrylic on plywood and cut timber
15. *Walkie Talkie #1*, 2016 cut timber, mending braces, square dowel

16. ***Walkie Talkie #2, 2016*** acrylic, cut timber, mending braces, square dowel
17. ***Useful Consequences, 2017*** acrylic, cut timber, cut pine, nails
18. ***Shallow Crossing, 2016*** acrylic on plywood, cut timber
19. ***Blood Flow, 2016*** cut timber, cut pine, acrylic
20. ***The Calm, 2016*** cut timber, cut pine, gold leaf and acrylic on plywood, door hinges
21. ***The Storm, 2016*** cut pine, square dowel, cut timber, door hinges, acrylic & gold leaf on plywood
22. ***Gliding and Spasming, 2016*** cut pine, cut timber, acrylic, corner braces
23. ***Causal Plane, 2016*** cut pine, cut timber, acrylic and gold leaf on plywood, door hinges
24. ***Drone, 2016*** cut pine, cut timber, acrylic and gold leaf on plywood

SOUTHWEST GALLERY

25. ***Telepath #2, 2014-2017*** acrylic on plywood and pine, door hinges
26. ***Untitled (Fairylnd), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
27. ***My Cathedral, 2017*** acrylic, plywood, caster
28. ***Untitled (Storefront), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
29. ***Untitled (Waiting Room), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
30. ***Untitled (Tina Louise), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
31. ***Untitled (I Want To Live), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
32. ***Untitled (Todd), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
33. ***Conversational Skills, 2017*** acrylic and mirrors on plywood, door hinges
34. ***Truncated Endless Column Viewer, 2014*** acrylic on pine, corner braces
35. ***Trouble, 2017*** cut pine, acrylic on plywood
36. ***Untitled (Producers), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
37. ***Difficult Situations, 2017*** plywood, pine, acrylic, corner braces
38. ***Stand, 2017*** timber and reclaimed wood
39. ***Baguette Magique, 2017*** cut timber, corner braces, ceramic clay with acrylic and rhinestones
40. ***Untitled (Balloons), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
41. ***Focus, 2017*** acrylic lighting gel on plywood and cut timber
42. ***Untitled (Full Moon), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
43. ***Something That Disrupts, 2017*** cut plywood, pine, timber, aluminum leaf, acrylic, door hinges, corner braces
44. ***Natural World, 2017*** timber, plywood, acrylic
45. ***Subject Matter, 2017*** acrylic on plywood, cut timber

CENTRAL GALLERY

46. ***Monster Magnet, 2014*** acrylic on plywood
47. ***Parenthetical Rib #1, 2017*** acrylic on plywood
48. ***Untitled (Crane), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
49. ***Spinal Insertion #2, 2017*** plywood
50. ***Parenthetical Rib #2, 2017*** acrylic on plywood
51. ***Wood Hinge, 2017*** scrapwood, acrylic
52. ***Cult, 2017*** gold leaf acrylic on plywood with door hinges
53. ***Mutantrock, 2017*** aluminum leaf, acrylic, plywood, door hinges
54. ***Beautiful Wall Thing, 2017*** acrylic, holes, and gold leaf
55. ***Mobile Pink Flipper Cloud Lingum, 2014*** acrylic and gold leaf on plywood, door hinge
56. ***Pink Corner Composition Proun, 2015*** acrylic on wooden dowel, pine, corner brace
57. ***Stable Nubs, 2013*** acrylic and aluminum leaf on plywood, corner braces
58. ***Untitled (Balloons), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
59. ***Untitled (Another Full Moon), 2016*** digital print on vinyl
60. ***Untitled (House on the Hill), 2016*** digital print on vinyl

Chuck Nanney was born in Memphis, TN, in 1958, and lives and works in Oakland, CA. Solo exhibitions include Jenny's, Los Angeles, CA; Debs & Co., New York, NY; and Galerie Jousse Sequin in Paris, France. His work has been shown in numerous group exhibitions, most recently as 30/130: Bob Nickas at White Columns, New York, NY, Another, Once Again, Many Times More at Martos Gallery, New York, NY, Readykulous by Ridykelous at the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis.

Curator's Essay

VIDEO ROOM & SOUTH GALLERIES

Chuck Nanney *Selected Ambient Works, Volume II*

17 June—1 October 2017

I love the craptacular, the perfectly imperfect.

I admire the neglected and worn.

Guided by intuition (voices), synesthesia, memory, a bit of amnesia, autobiography, bodily functions, and psychic powers, I embark on a mapping of the human condition.

I never know where I'm starting or where I'm going.

Personal references abound but the process of working determines the object.

Everything means something and something means nothing.

In the end, the works are things that exist on their own in the world, not pictures or representations of anything.

Chuck Nanney's poetic and sincere explication of his predilections, motivations, and goals is jumping-off point for an exegesis of this mini-retrospective of recent activity in a life of fertile art-making going back to the early 1980s. An integral aspect of Nanney's latest work is his handmade alternately blocky and rounded entities made of available materials that poignantly meld vibrant joyousness and bloody-but-unbowed perseverance. Complementing the sculptural objects are seemingly offhand but thoughtful color photographs of vernacular scenes, balloons and wine bottles, a pink garage door, the credits of a favorite noir film shot off a TV screen, counterbalancing the three-dimensional forms as representation allusively resonates with built abstraction. The corporeal and imagistic arrangements populating the floors and walls make for an enchanting maze to navigate that dispenses an all-over, sequential experience through the multifarious spaces of MOCA's East Wing galleries.

Artists Nanney admires such as Ellsworth Kelly, Yves Klein, Anne Truitt, Forrest Bess, and Jack Smith, are obvious touchstones. Though heroes all, his attainment relies on knowingly participating in a lineage while forging ahead on his own unique path. Greatly admiring the fanatically fine finishes of someone like Truitt, for example, while being just as influenced by childhood trips to small southern towns and his response to how everything was jury-rigged and poor, testaments to the resourcefulness of people with little or no money who use what's available to fix and continue the life of objects out of economic necessity. Though pitiful and

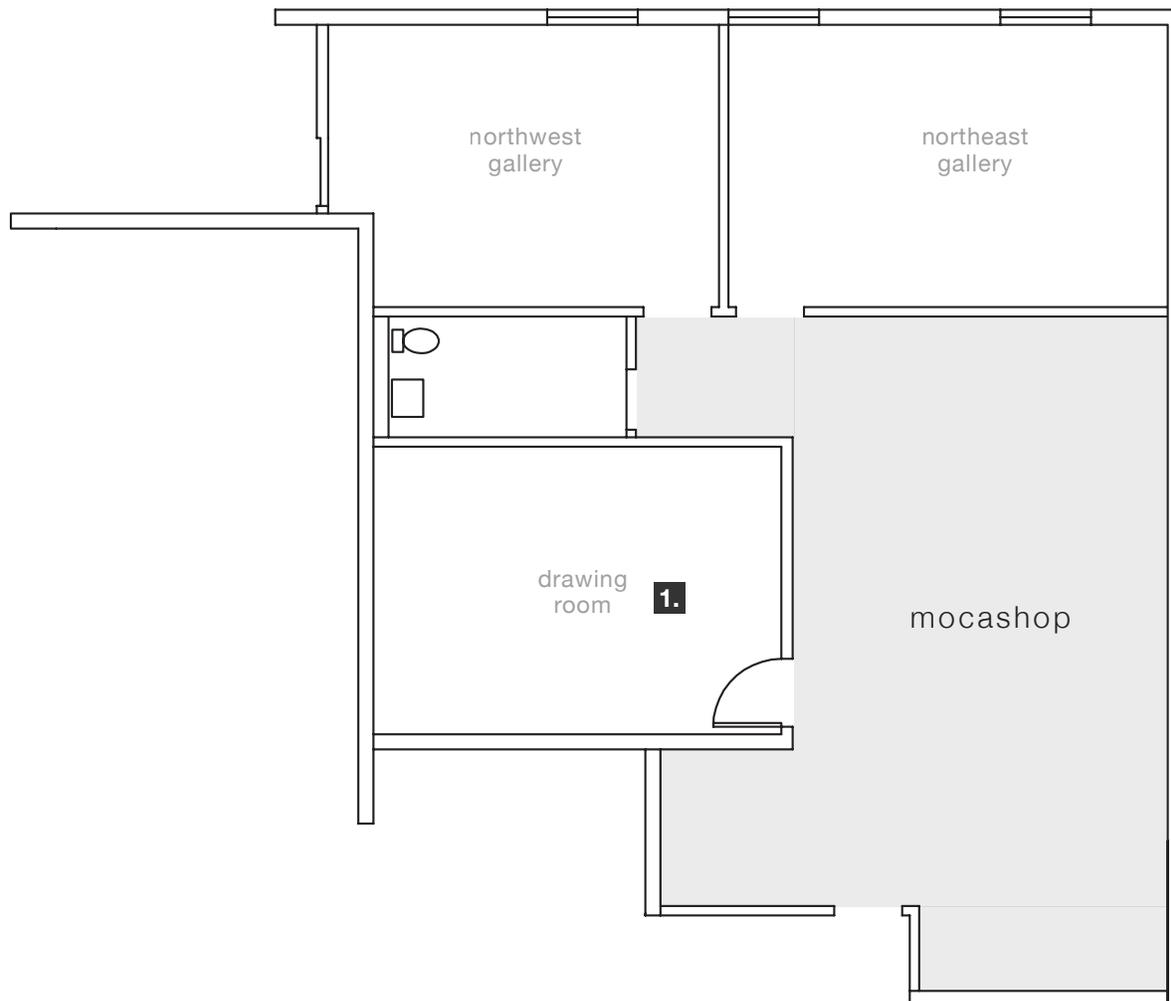
object on one hand, for Nanney these things also embodied a particular type of beauty. A sensitivity on the artist's part to class issues and inhibiting social structures, and his personal relationship to struggles against both, lay a foundation for art that finds its own singular spot in the middle of the continuum between the elegance of someone like Kelly and the anonymous artfulness born out of scarcity at the country store in rural Tennessee.

Painted in vivid purples, pinks, yellows, and creamy flesh tones, sometimes with gold leaf and glitter, the pieces are installed at various heights, and evince an Alexander Calder-like ability to playfully conflate stability and mobility. Dualities of prettiness and roughness and of color and non-color reverberate around the rooms with exacting and meditatively-thought out placements. A red Plexiglas box is in close proximity to a 4 x 4" timber with a painted and aluminum leafed orb on top, so the synthetic meets the natural, and an orange wood square on wheels with a clear yellow cube atop it generates a sci-fi scenario from a homespun robot workshop on a far-away planet. Exultantly bulging and poking out into the air, non-representational forms nevertheless conjure biological or anatomical associations. Strange sticks embedded with colorful rhinestones, a pink rectangle protruding into space with mini- Brâncuși protruding from its side, and black and blue checkerboard painted square scraps, all conflate the "fine" and "lowly" in a flock of inscrutable, beguiling objects. They are totemic, a forest, a little village, a gathering of alien yet familiar forms, with the added attraction of the serendipitous appropriation of the cut-outs left over from longtime compatriot Virginia Overton's truss sculpture in the Great Hall. Mute, but expressive, a bit uncanny, giving rise to that "someone is watching me" feeling. And in a feat of inspired juxtaposition the photographs, of rosy sunset skies, and an insect's shadow, manage to harmonically mix formal opposites as melancholia and hued symbols of happiness cover the spectrum of the human condition.

Intermixing minimalist tendencies with a distinctive rough-hewn quality, the brightness and joviality are affirmed by a devotional quality that speaks eloquently of survival. Art historical references are manifold while staying in the background, because what Nanney does is peerless, something you've never quite seen before ripe with allusion and moving suggestion. The "craptacular" contains multitudes, from desuetude to the gilded, redolent of lived experience, of joy and the pain. Nanney's mapping of the human condition is both physical and metaphorical, with a gravitas based on the experience of persistence and an openness to not knowing where he is going in the arduous search for "things that exist on their own in the world" that are buoyant and bittersweet by turns, dispensing psychic and aesthetic nourishment for the eyes, mind, and spirit.

DRAWING ROOM

Tucson John *Tucson Nights: After Dark in the Naked Pueblo*



DRAWING ROOM

1. **Tucson John**, color and black and white photographs, various dimensions, 2002-2016

Tucson John would like to extend a very special thank you to Raul Acuna, whose help was invaluable in editing and putting this exhibition together. He would also like to express gratitude to Alyssa Andrews and Dominic Valencia for their utmost patience and upbeat assistance hanging "Tucson Nights," and the rest of the great MOCA staff.

Tucson John was born in Trenton, New Jersey, and travelled the world before discovering and settling in the Sonoran Desert in 1994, where he does fashion and event photography as well as acting as cultural impresario and ambassador for Tucson.

Curator's Essay

DRAWING ROOM

Tucson John *Tucson Nights: After Dark in the Naked Pueblo*

17 June—1 October 2017

With close to five hundred photographs collaged floor-to-ceiling bar bathroom-style, Tucson John's exuberantly vivid documentation of house parties, musical events, and the downtown demimonde is an extensive visual record of more than a decade of vivacious amusement and distinctive dissipation. Sweeping in scope, close to assaultive in effect, striking fashion choices, inexplicable mayhem, and unmanageable and wholly inappropriate behavior compete cheek-by-jowl for attention, a riot of unbridled ebullience amongst now-tamed decrepitude and former semi-lawlessness. Whether it be partying, living it up, engaging in objectionable debauchery, or just having plain good 'ole fun, here a heterogeneous swath of Tucson society cavorts in the hours after the sun goes down and before it comes up. Though there's an emphasis on the years 2002 to 2012, more recent work is included to show that despite major adjustments in mores and real estate values irrepressibility hasn't been completely stamped out. By straddling the past and present the exhibition resists sentimental nostalgia while also acknowledging a shift away from libertinism and literal spaces for creating freely that preceded generic "revitalization."

An accounting of the margins and fringes, it also encompasses a report on a broader passing-through population. Across the board this is evidence that beyond his role of impresario, booster, the one who sincerely brings the good vibes, truly a "fan," he who makes it happen who zeroes in on what happened, T.J. is also an invaluable community historian. The changing faces, the manifold diversity, the alterations to the built and business landscape, he determinedly and enthusiastically chronicles all this in his outstanding, vibrant, and sometimes lurid photographs bearing a kinship to Patrick McMullen's early New York nightlife portraiture, with a nod to Bill Daniel's images of hobo graffiti and off-the-beaten track cliques. That mix of sensibility and picture-taking skill bears fruit in the Naked Pueblo where deeds, looks, and verve attract T.J.'s lens. Participant, observer, and analyst, T.J. takes it all in, revels in and celebrates it with a criticality that makes fine distinctions between what is and what is not worth memorializing.

Thousands of life stories register here, from those of two-year old kids to octogenarians, with frequent guest appearances by non-scene desert dwellers, representative of divergent destinies ranging from those who went on to be lawyers or nurses, fathers and mothers, in well known bands, making it in New York or Paris, incarcerated, or some who have left this mortal coil. The famous, infamous, legendary, and unidentified mixing and mingling in a below-the-surface countercultural milieu off to the side of the mainstream. Weird, outrageous, gross and freaky, from the handwritten sign that reads "For \$1 I'll spit beer in your mouth" to the "I Smoke My Friends Down to the Filter" tattooed on the back of a hand. Prone to frequent disrobing, all

manner of cross-dressing, and extremes of drug and alcohol (ab)use, a half-world many would consider seamy which frequently turns out to have a wholesome, sweet side, with an unorthodox extended family dynamic. Generations are represented who have and still do contribute mightily to Tucson's special charm and Sonoran joie de vivre, frolicking at Vaudeville, the Red Room, Chicago Bar, The Grill, the District, Heart Five, the Boardwalk, and assorted backyards, sidewalks, and porches. There's simulated sex and probably some actual instances, all of which plausibly turned into lots of real sex, and that's stimulating too. All together here in one room in their quest to live a possibly chaotic yet blessed, rich, and high-spirited existence.

These are Tucson John's heroes, who he admires, a commemoration based on a fine-tuned social curation by a person who says, accurately and not immodestly, "It's my nature to be known." A work of cultural anthropology, and a bit of an elegy, of changing mores and a changing city, and maybe even a certain loss of innocence. Inherent in this survey is a realization of global trend away from untamed, guileless abandon and lack of self-consciousness to hyper self-awareness thanks to ubiquitous use of camera phones and social media. That's been happening for years, and is concomitant with a declining lack of confrontation and radicalism, a turn away from spontaneity toward narcissistic perfectly presented personal branding. That can't be denied but is counteracted by what is gloriously on view here, the kids (and adults) running wild in the streets with not much concern for decency and propriety, captured photographically by one who says "We got away with murder, got away with anything, hanging out on Congress Street, where now you'd get run over by an Uber." This is who this honors by showcasing who he chooses to honor. Always noticing, always on the lookout, T.J. separates the nocturnal wheat from the chaff, and even if the occasional tag reads "Tucson John didn't

NORTH GALLERIES

A Night on the Edge of Forever: The art of midnight films, free theater, and the psychedelic underground San Francisco 1969-1973

Guest curated by Steve Terry

Curator's Essay

Centering on the activities of Steven Arnold, Todd Trexler, The Cockettes, Sylvester, and the Angels of Light, these posters, flyers, artworks, photographs, and books relate to an aligned group of San Francisco artists, filmmakers, and performers during the late 1960's and early 70's. The selection documents creative fertility amid the protest movements, utopian communities, and countercultural tendencies of that era. A social and political history, it also covers a period when an increasingly liberated gay movement started to raise consciousness and attain mass awareness. The "Nocturnal Dream Shows" at the Palace are a primary focus, where a heady mix of midnight movies, radical theater, and pansexual preferences featured the first public performances by The Cockettes, early solo outings from Sylvester, and West Coast premieres of now classic underground films.

The Cockettes emerged in 1969 when Hibiscus joined Kaliflower commune and initiated a transfer of their lifestyle to the stage. Influenced by The Living Theater, Jack Smith, The Diggers, and other dramatic currents in the air, their unique brand of flower power playacting drew inspiration from silent films, 1930s Hollywood, and early 20th century avant-garde art movements. A magical transcendence through ad hoc thespianism was one goal, augmented by flamboyant and fantastical outfits contrived from flea market clothing and vintage accessories, accentuated by exaggerated eye makeup and glitter encrusted beards. Members of both sexes performed original pieces by parodying American musicals, and their appearances at the Pagoda Palace Theatre in North Beach drew a burgeoning audience. Representative titles are *Gone With the Showboat to Oklahoma*, *Tinsel Tarts In A Hot Coma*, and *Journey to the Center of Uranus*. The troupe's increasing popularity led them travel to New York, with mixed results, and soon after Hibiscus' fervid belief in keeping culture separate from capitalism caused a split that begat the Angels of Light. David Weissman and Bill Weber's documentary *The Cockettes* is an excellent place to start for an overview of their life, times, and accomplishments.

Collector, editor, and publisher of Wild Life Press, Steve Terry's interest in alternative cinema and the gay underground's innate rebelliousness precipitated a desire to begin assembling this collection fifteen years ago. He sees the accumulated constituents as more pertinent than ever, with germane parallels to contemporary movements championing collective housing,

alternative means of exchange, the fight against inequality, extroverted sexual behavior, and free information trade. By tenaciously working to preserve and institutionally place this archive of lasting historical importance, as well as exhibiting it, he bestows an exciting aesthetic and educational encounter on everyone from those with foreknowledge of the Cockettes and their fellow travelers to new audiences learning about them for the first time.

As fundamental as the experiential theatrics and the sartorial flights of fancy were supplemental posters and ephemera, designed most often by Todd Trexler and Steven Arnold. Graphically and textually dense, bordering on baroque, mixing surrealistic tendencies, collage, Victorian and Edwardian undertones, and occult references, achieving an apotheosis of high psychedelic, uninhibited, sexually charged hippie art of the era. Featuring hermaphroditic hybrids, icons such as Marilyn Monroe, Kenneth Anger, and Tod Browning, they gave the Cockettes a distinctive visual identity as startling and effervescent today as it was then. Genuinely original, stunning, frequently very freaky, they are resplendent of references ranging from Jess, Unica Zurn, Dorothy Lannone's gender fluid paeans to Eros, and broader mind-altering artistic currents of the day.

Through this illustrative literature viewers can register significant ancillary aspects of the Cockettes' importance passed on from one generation to the next. In their active years, certainly, but even more so as successive waves of influence swept out into the world and substantially affected people and their attitudes. Hibiscus and the others' anarchistic notions of shared property and liberation of labor combined with resistance to categorization is especially apropos in a culture of unparalleled income disparity, overly stratified identity politics, and on both sides of the political spectrum the establishment's antagonism to unmanageable dissent. Defying labels left and right, this Elysian refusal to fit in bespeaks an idealistic ferment sadly bound to founder on the rocks of reality, clashing with inexorable status quo forces. Presenting this material now elicits ruminations on how much things change and how subcultures lose vigor in the process of becoming devalued or even meaningless, even as their legacy paradoxically accrues increasing relevance. Simultaneously inspirational and elegiac, these effusions from fifty years ago expressly elucidate how improbable and susceptible to cooptation and normalization unbridled recklessness and boundary-breaking creativity can be, while also being a clarion call to reject pseudo-opposition in the guise of empty style and pointless posing. The Cockettes and their cohorts are a beacon from the past showing the significant import of breaking down barriers and refusing to be pigeonholed in the service of a genuine dedication to the pursuit of freedom and substantial, serious change.

ABOUT MOCA

MOCA Tucson's mission is to inspire new ways of thinking through the cultivation, interpretation, and exhibition of cutting-edge art of our time.

Established by artists, MOCA is Tucson's only museum devoted exclusively to contemporary art from Tucson and around the globe. MOCA is committed to thinking globally, acting locally, and engaging with the ethics and aesthetics of contemporary life. Through varied programs, MOCA is Tucson's primary educational resource for contemporary art and maintains a full exhibition, education, and artist-in-residence program.

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Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson

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