MCKNIGHT

MATTHEW BAKKOM

CAMERON KEITH GAINER

AARON SPANGLER

ANDRÉA STANISLAV

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MCKNIGHT VISUAL ARTISTS

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✕ MCAD

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VISUAL ARTISTS

An exhibition of new work by the recipients
of the 2010/11 McKnight Artist Fellowships
for Visual Artists

Essays by Dan Byers

✕ MCAD

FOREWORD

KERRY A. MORGAN

Director, Gallery and Exhibition Programs
Minneapolis College of Art and Design

I begin where often an introduction ends—with a thank-you to the artists without whom this catalog, exhibition, and fellowship program would not exist. Matthew Bakkom, Cameron Keith Gainer, Aaron Spangler, and Andréa Stanislav are the recipients of the 2010/11 McKnight Artist Fellowships for Visual Artists, and each of them exemplifies the high-caliber talent that these fellowships are designed to reward. While preparing for numerous exhibitions and public art commissions, teaching, giving artist talks, and interviewing for tenure track studio professorships, they diligently and enthusiastically met as a group to discuss the myriad details that affected them—from choosing which visiting critics to invite for studio visits to deciding how to apportion a challenging gallery space for a four-person exhibition. As artists with national and international exhibition experience, they brought to their fellowships a level of unprecedented professionalism and fostered connections that have enriched the program immensely.

All that has transpired over the past year for the 2010/11 McKnight fellows began when three arts professionals (who had never met one another before) took on the daunting task of selecting four artists to receive $25,000 each. The field of 247 applicants had been winnowed to 29 semifinalists and then to 10 finalists, who received studio visits from Deborah Cullen, director of curatorial programs at El Museo del Barrio in New York City; Matthew Drutt, former executive director of Artpace in San Antonio, Texas; and MK Guth, an Oregon-based multimedia artist and former director of graduate study at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. Although the jurors had wide-ranging aesthetic proclivities, the words used to describe the four fellows' work were surprisingly consistent. Their art, according to the jurors, was "thoughtful," "original," "well-made," "ambitious," "accomplished," "witty," "poetic," and "powerful."

Some of these same impressions return, though in more nuanced form, in the four McKnight catalog essays penned by Dan Byers. A former Walker Art Center Curatorial Fellow, Byers is currently associate curator of contemporary art at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburg and one of three curators organizing the 2013 Carnegie International. Last January, Byers spent considerable time with each fellow, and he continued to engage with them this past spring. His thoughtful, articulate writings provide useful frameworks for understanding the unique projects each McKnight fellow has been pursuing.

The second visiting critic was Anne Ellegood, senior curator at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. Like Byers, she braved the Twin Cities' notoriously unpredictable winter weather to visit the McKnight fellows. In February, Ellegood spent two hours with each artist, talking to them about their work and sharing her impressions and suggestions.

This year, a third visiting critic was able to travel to the Twin Cities. In April, Kate Fowle, executive director of Independent Curators International (ICI), made her first trip to Minnesota. In addition to visiting the studios of the McKnight fellows, she toured museums, art centers, and galleries. The conversations Fowle initiated with artists, curators, and directors will hopefully continue for years to come.

A final opportunity for the artists to talk about their work and reflect on their fellowship year will take place while their culminating group exhibition is on view in the MCAD Gallery. Bartholomew Ryan, assistant curator at the Walker Art Center, has generously agreed to moderate what we expect to be a lively discussion about life, art, and everything in between.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the generosity of the McKnight Foundation. Since 1981, this remarkable foundation has provided more than 150 visual artists in Minnesota with significant financial support and with increased access to professional resources both in and out of the state. With these fellowships and the other eleven McKnight Artist Fellowship programs, the foundation has actively sought to raise the profile of individual midcareer artists in a wide range of disciplines. The Minneapolis College of Art and Design is honored to have administered the McKnight Artist Fellowships for Visual Artists since its inception and is committed to making the program and selection process benefit as many artists as possible—not only those who receive the highly competitive fellowships, but also the many other talented artists who apply each year. We all have an obligation to build our state's art communities, and that begins by supporting our most creative resources, our artists.

ANDRÉA STANISLAV

ANDRÉA STANISLAV

Ghost Siege, steel, microbead fabric, 20 x 70 x 70 feet, 2009

رؤيا أصبحت حقيقة
THE VISION IS NOW A REALITY

Half a Generation, video still, 2011

Half a Generation, video still, 2011

ANDRÉA STANISLAV
IN SPACE

Andréa Stanislav's multifarious installations, through their moving parts and images, active surfaces, and strategies of visual seduction, have at their heart a deep concern for the implications of space and vision: From the obdurate and reticent space of minimalism and its effect on bodies in space, to contested spaces of subjectivity and social division, Stanislav animates the moments when such spaces enter and dwell in our vision. And in these moments of vision, she plays with different ways of seeing and the control exerted both by and on our sight. Finally, bodies—human, or proxies, in the form of pierced, distorted, repeated, or otherwise manipulated animals—often populate these tableaux.

In this essay, I offer meditations on three past works, each of which contains elements that suggest different aspects of Stanislav's multi-part video and sculptural installation *Half a Generation*, which will debut at the McKnight Visual Artists Fellowship exhibition.

Garden of Iron Mirrors
Taconite is a sedimentary rock that contains enough iron to extract and has hence been used as a major industrial source of iron since the mid-twentieth century. The process of extraction, called pelletizing (the iron is mixed with other materials and rolled into little pellets, which are then fired in a blast furnace), was developed at the University of Minnesota. The rock, indigenous to Minnesota, is processed for its iron, and those pellets are sent around the world to major industrial manufacturers.

On the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota, Stanislav devised public sculptures using taconite boulders that offer an unusual and poetic experience of public space. Grouped in two formations and sited to align with the points of the compass, the boulders appear halved by some unknown occurrence. Two feature a highly polished surface of their own stone, four others are capped in an almost-liquid stainless-steel surface, and one has been left as a boulder in its natural state. From one perspective, they appear to be ceremonial objects or elegant, natural landscaping. But when we shift position, the stainless steel–covered rocks reveal reflections, altering our sense of the material's thickness and interiority by redirecting our vision outward to the world and bringing that world onto their surface. The most shocking phenomenon occurs from the position in which only the blue of the sky can be seen in a rock's surface. Impossibly blue, bright, and clear, the sky becomes something almost artificial—plastic or pure space. The edges of the rock (matched, when covered by the stainless steel, by a precise water-cutting process) become the jarring boundary for this sensory experience. On the new "skin" of these rocks, the sky is powerful, deep, and contained. And when the sky is gray or when clouds are moving quickly—or if we shift position so that we are seeing trees or buildings—the rocks become stoic projection screens. Rarely has the process of splitting and cutting resulted in an experience so quietly pleasurable and cerebral.

Those rocks that have been halved and had their own surfaces polished elicit similar but more subtle properties. Rather than explicitly reflecting the surroundings, their surfaces appear to register the world as perceived through a brief glance or out of the corner of the eye. Moving shadows, skidding reflections, and the glassy, liquid surface play against the richly colored, swirling patterns of iron and rock. They offer the surprise aesthetic complexity of a

split geode but without the dazzle. Instead, they produce a kind of cognitive shift between the protective, rough, hard outside and the glass-like polish of internal complexity and heterogeneity.

Ghost Siege
For a large-scale installation at Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, New York, Stanislav installed fifty flags on tall steel flagpoles. The flags were fashioned from reflective microbead fabric, which shifted color in response to the day's light. A formidable, almost fort-like presence, the flagpoles were arranged in V-formation, facing off with the skyscrapers of Manhattan.

By omitting any icons or recognizable symbolism from the flags and arranging the identical sculptures in a military formation, Stanislav's work dwelled in a kind of abstraction of power, government, and bureaucracy. Also strangely celebratory in their proud stance, with sometimes waving flags, the flagpoles gave an overall impression of present but absent governmental power. The power was at once martial in upright posture and almost anthropomorphic stance. Flags are the tools that mark and claim space. Around that aggression and confidence is also another kind of abstract power, that which is personified by bureaucracy. Bureaucracy announces itself through the symbols of institutions: seals, logos, flags, titles, departments, doors, hallways, etc. Yet these images and places, which orient themselves to the public, are also obscuring tactics, things to stand in for actual presence, accountability, responsibility, and conversation. The flag is the most recognizable symbol in a bureaucratic arsenal—it is proud, aspirational, inspirational, and deeply symbolic. But it uses that rhetoric to stand in—sacred and silent—for actual actions, events, and behavior. Stanislav's *Ghost Siege* both laid bare and multiplied the flag and flagpole form, making its reticence excessive and its expression of power viscerally present.

Obelisk Migration
Finally, Stanislav's run-in with the FBI at the Washington Monument crystallizes her use of action and material in dealing with the ideological implications of space and form. Armed with a twelve-foot-tall wooden obelisk and a flatbed truck, Stanslav publicly transported the provisional monument from New York City to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The artist's statement describing the project makes

a strong point in its economy: "The sculpture migrated publicly from New York City, NY, to The National Mall, Washington DC and Richmond, VA. The sculpture, artist and crew were 'removed' and escorted out of town by the FBI during The National Mall intervention in Washington DC, Memorial Day, 2000." What was it about the sacred, yet mysteriously coded, ideology of the actual monument that couldn't be contaminated by a sculptural abstraction? And what of the stationary life of the real monument and the portability of its sculptural counterpart? The migrating work's mobility unfixes the stasis and implied fixed meaning from the Washington Monument, freeing it in a way, making it strange, and countering authority.

At MCAD, Stanislav will install a complex installation that brings together many of the forms and processes she has worked with in the past. A multichannel video featuring footage filmed in Dubai of the Burj Khalifa (the tallest building in the world) and the highly marginalized work camps will surround a large sculpture. The vertically oriented, inverted sculpture, referencing an upside-down Burj Khalifa, spans three gallery floors and hangs over a mirrored-surfaced granite rock. An otherworldly apotheosis of power (in the form of capital), space, and form, Dubai has the possibility of further extending Stanislav's interests. While the three works described above were all conceived for and implemented in public spaces, *Half a Generation* transposes some of these public space strategies into the gallery. Yet the conceptual space it occupies is provisional and speculative (though not without its own ideological underpinnings that make this idea of "speculative" space possible). Rather than the direct, firmly positioned address inherent to the public, outdoor spaces of these past major works, *Half a Generation* will offer a place of possibility and intermingling of contradictory experiences and perceptions buffered by the no-place of the gallery, which finds an analog in the no-place of Dubai and all that contradicts the perceived inevitability of its existence.

APPENDIX

MATTHEW BAKKOM

CAMERON KEITH GAINER

MATTHEW BAKKOM was born in 1968 in Minneapolis. He studied in the University of Virginia's Political and Social Thought program, completing his BA in 1991. Bakkom attended the Whitney Museum's Independent Study program in 1998/99 and participated in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's World Views Studio Program in 2000/01. In 2003/04, he received awards of residency from the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs in Paris and the Irish Museum of Modern Art. He returned to Minneapolis in 2004 and completed his MFA at the University of Minnesota in 2007. During the past ten years, Bakkom has presented and participated in numerous exhibitions at venues in the United States and Europe such as Art of This, Minneapolis; Artists Space, New York City; Art In General, New York City; the Queens Museum of Art, New York City; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; and the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands. He has received grants of support from the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, and the Bush Foundation. In 2009, his first book, *New York City Museum of Complaint*, was published by Steidl-Miles.
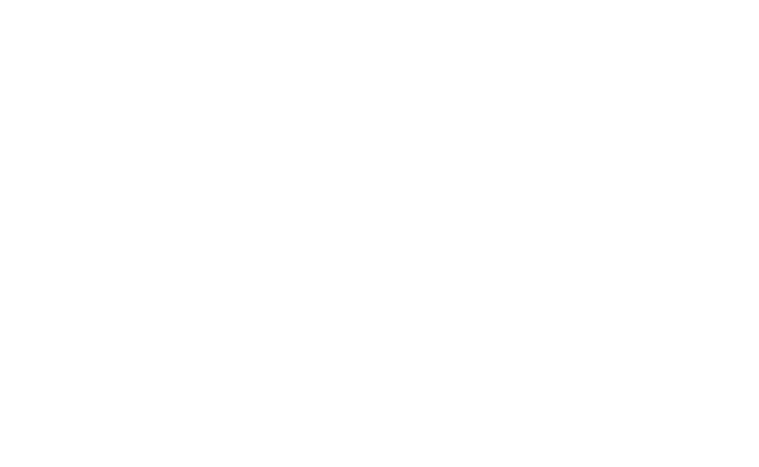
CAMERON KEITH GAINER was born in Evergreen, Colorado. in 1973. He received his MFA from the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, and a BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Solo exhibitions of his work include the University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum in Tampa, Florida, and the Fabric Workshop and Museum Storefront in Philadelphia. His recent group exhibitions include *Keep Out You Thieving Bastards* at James Hendershot Gallery in New York City, the 40th Anniversary Exhibition of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, New York. Recent screenings include the French Cultural Institute in Turin, Italy, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Pula Film Festival, in Croatia. Recent awards include a Pollock-Krasner Grant, and a Jerome Travel and Study Award.

AARON SPANGLER

ANDRÉA STANISLAV

ANDRÉA STANISLAV was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1968. She is a contemporary artist whose practice includes sculpture, video, installation, and public art. Stanislav received an MFA from Alfred University in 1997 and a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1990. Her work has been exhibited around the world, at venues such as the U.S. Ambassador's Residence, Stockholm; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, New York; Fieldgate Gallery, London; thisisnotashop gallery, Dublin; Al Sabah Gallery, Kuwait City; Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast, Northern Ireland; 21c Museum, Louisville, Kentucky; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis; Carriage Trade Gallery, New York City; DUMBO Arts Center, New York City; Jonathan Shorr Gallery, New York City; John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Burnet Art Gallery, Minneapolis; and Packer Schopf Gallery, Chicago. She has received a Franconia Sculpture Park/Jerome Foundation Fellowship, two Grant-in-Aid Awards from the University of Minnesota, the University of Calgary International Visiting Artist Award, and a Can Serrat International Art Center Full Fellowship. Public art projects include *Amphitheater Lumen*, Eugene, Oregon; *Garden of Iron Mirrors*, Minneapolis; *Earth Mirrors*, Sioux City, Iowa; *Reflect*, New York City; and *Nightmare*, Northern Lights.mn, Minneapolis. Stanislav is an associate professor in the Department of Art, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

AARON SPANGLER was born in Minneapolis in 1971 and lives and works in Park Rapids, Minnesota. Spangler received a BFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Zach Feuer Gallery, New York City; Galerie Michael Janssen, Berlin; and Horton Gallery, New York City. Additionally, his work figures prominently in numerous group exhibitions, including *The Spectacular of Vernacular*, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; *A Western Art Exhibition*, curated by Takashi Murakami from his own collection, Taipei, Taiwan; *HEARTLAND*, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands; *Not Afraid*, the Rubell Family Collection, Miami, Florida; and at the New York Academy of Art, New York City. Spangler's work is in the permanent collections of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Artforum*, *The New Yorker*, and *Flash Art*, among other publications.

PAST RECIPIENTS

McKnight Artist Fellowships for Visual Artists
Administered by the Minneapolis College of Art and Design

2009

Michael Kareken
Aldo Moroni
Carolyn Swiszcz
Piotr Szyhalski

2008

Jennifer Danos
Janet Lobberecht
Margaret Pezalla-Granlund
Megan Rye

2007

Stacey Davidson
Andrea Carlson
Megan Vossler
Amy DiGennaro

2006

David Bartley
Gladys Beltran
Jan Estep
Chris Walla

2005

David Lefkowitz
Suzanne Kosmalski
Aaron Van Dyke
Jay Lance Wittenberg

2004

Ana Lois-Borzi
Rollin G. Marquette
Erika Olson
Joe Smith

2003

Bruce Charlesworth
Alexa Horochowski
Robert Patrick
Christopher Santer
Jenny Schmid

2002

Julie Buffalohead
Valerie Jenkins
Chris Larson
Margaret McGee
Martin Meersman

2001

Brian Frink
Freddy Muñoz
Kathryn Nobbe
Anne Sugnet
Amy Toscani

2000

Patricia Canelake
Jean Humke
Barbara Kreft
David Rathman
Bruce Tapola

1999

Harriet Bart
Stacey Davidson
Colette Gaiter
Clarence Morgan
Chris Allen-Wickler

1998

Thomas Cowette
Stuart Mead
Todd Norsten
Robert Perkins
Kay Ruane

1997

Daniel Bruggeman
Shana Kaplow
Jeff Loehlein
Rod Massey
James Ockuly

1996

Philip Barber
Arlene Burke-Morgan
Frank Gaard
Daniel Kaniess
Shannon Kennedy
Mike Lynch

1995

Terence Accola
Diane Katsiaficas
Thomas Rose
Linda Rother
Rochelle Woldorsky
Mara Zoltners

1994

Suzanne Kosmalski
Barbra Nei
Judy Onofrio
T.L. Solien
Bruce Tapola
Steven Woodward

1993

Bruce Charlesworth
Colette Gaiter
Jeff Millikan
Melba Price
David Rathman
Lynn Wadsworth

1992

Doug Argue
Frank Big Bear
Kate Hunt
David Lefkowitz
Rik Sferra
Judith Yourman

1991

Andy Baird
Brian Frink
Herb Grika
Shana Kaplow
Mark Ostapchuk
Scott Seekins
Lauren Stringer
James Tanner

1990

Linda Christianson
David Dick
Carole Fisher
Seitu Jones
Michael Mercil
Viet Ngo
David Pelto
Richard Posner

1989

Virginia Bradley
Richard Brewer
Lisa Cicotte
Susan Fiene
Daniel Kaniess
Timothy Miske
James Ockuly
Randy Reeves

1988

Scott Brennan
Remo Campopiano
Patricia Canelake
Rosa Kittsteiner
Carrie Pierce
Brian Roehrdanz
Amy Sabrina
John Snyder

1987

Frank Gaard
Terry Hildebrand
Gendron Jensen
Kathy Hemingway Jones
Walter Jost
Mike Lynch
Zoran Mojsilov
Aldo Moroni

1986

Bruce Charlesworth
Lou Ferreri
Brian Foster
James Kielkopf
Ken Moylan
Rosalyn Schwartz
Kaveh Shakikan
T.L. Solien

1985

Doug Argue
Dorit Cypis
Georgiana Kettler
Lance Kiland
Suzanne Lacy
Andrew Leicester
David Madzo
William Raaum

1984

Matt Brown
Ronald Dahl
Ken Feingold
Fred Hagstrom
Jacqueline Kielkopf
Scott Seekins
Stanley Shetka

1983

Kinji Akagawa
Barbara Kreft
Bruce Charlesworth
Frank Gaard
Mike Lynch
Daniel Mason
Mary Walker
Peter Williams

1982

Steven Beyer
Leif Brush
Cork Marcheschi
Aldo Moroni
Tom Rose
Stan Shafer
Scott Stack
Leonard Titzer

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

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Aaron Spangler, *Untitled*, also courtesy of Zach Feuer Gallery, New York City
Aaron Spangler, *Smudge*, also courtesy of Charest–Weinberg Gallery, Miami
Aaron Spangler, *Towering*, also courtesy of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

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Catalog design by Alexandra Roche '10 and Ryan Hageman '11, MCAD DesignWorks
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