

Eco Echo: Unnatural Selection

# Exhibition Guide

Works/San José, 2018

## Exhibition Statement

We live in a time of heightened ecological awareness and denial. Climate change, environmental degradation, species extinction, bio-engineering, and genetic modifications are just a few of the issues in which actions, decisions and consequences are engaging our social and political conversations.

Anne Beck

Barbara Boissevain

Ginger Burrell

Judith Selby Lang

Richard Lang

Kent Manske

Michelle Wilson

Nanette Wylde

Ecology also refers to a sort of housekeeping—the manner and nature with which environments are cared for. Technology and the increased scale of our actions has resulted in ecological effects which transcend physical borders, often causing individual entities to lose control of the care and quality of their physical existence; and providing others opportunities for both care taking and/or exploitation.

Our understanding of ecological issues is tied to the wonder and magnificence of science; the scope and reach of which has permeated our existence. Science continues to discover, uncover and invent phenomena beyond common comprehension, often inserting these into our personal lives without our knowledge, consent, or well-being as priorities. The scientific paradigm provides many positive outcomes yet these often include harmful and sometimes unacknowledged negative effects. Monoculture, medical interventions, genetically modified foods, robotics, and pharmaceuticals are obvious examples. These manipulations of nature encircle our planet, and with each minute movement, create waves of both concern and delight—echos which reverberate in the lives, if not the minds, of earth's inhabitants.

*Eco Echo: Unnatural Selection* presents an array of artists who respond to aspects of our ecological environment in unexpected and diverse ways. Each artist is grappling with some ecological concern, creating echoes which are celebratory, poignant, beautiful, complex, and provide opportunity for audience examination and reflection.

## Anne Beck



### ***All the King's Horses***

2016  
Handmade Cotton Rag Paper & Mica  
39" x 42"  
\$2000

Living in the coastal Redwood Forest, I've come to see the ancient behemoths as the ultimate pacifists, willingly succumbing to their relatively puny, shorter-historied consumer. The Redwood Forest, like any still-functioning ecological system is complex beyond our comprehension, sentient, interconnected. For *All the King's Horses*, I pressed cotton rag pulp into a round of a recently harvested Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)—an economic equal to the *Sequoia sempervirens*, and an integral part of mycorrhizal networks in the Redwood Forest underworld.



### ***Anne Beck & The Landlooker Society Tinder Collection for Fires to Be Kindled & Fires to Be Quenched: A Future Repository***

2018  
multiplicity of media  
dimensions variable

1. This world-order {kosmos}, the same of all, no god nor man did create, but it ever was and is and will be: everlasting fire, kindling in measures & being quenched in measures. – Heraclitus, 500 BC Ephesus
2. tin-der – n. – materials which will readily ignite with a spark, ie: cotton balls, neurons
3. tinder bag – n. – a satchel for collecting and storing tinder for naturalists, survivalists, nomads and others oft in need of building fires in the rain.

Seeking to excavate and record conceptualizations of tinder across demographics & dimensions, we ask with this participatory installation If all is fire, what of it shall be kindled & what of it will be quenched? What tinder will ignite or snuff out the fires (metaphorical, metaphysical, emotional, actual, etc.) we cultivated in our lives and the lives of others? Can this contemplative exercise provide prescriptions for healing ourselves, our communities, our world?

## Anne Beck & Michelle Wilson

### *The Rhinoceros Reading Room & Ephemera Collection*



Audience participatory activities resulting in: watermark in handmade paper, zine and project ephemera  
Approximately 9' x 11'  
2017

*The Rhinoceros Project* begins with Albrecht Durer's woodblock, *The Rhinoceros*, and endeavors to recreate the famous image as a life-size (7 x 9') embroidery and watermark in handmade paper through public, participatory sewing circles and papermaking happenings. The watermark is a ghostly image and the project intends to create space for conversations on loss and memory, extinction and value systems, wonder and myth, and revitalization.

*The Rhinoceros Project* is currently Artists-in-Residence at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, where the rhinoceros in progress, and where the second part of this installation can be viewed.

## Barbara Boissevain

These two bodies of work are from the *Big Dirty Secrets* series. As caretakers of our environment, we are bound to the missteps of our predecessors. These images are from a larger body of work I have titled "Big Dirty Secrets," in which I hope to highlight environmental issues relevant to residents of Silicon Valley. The San Francisco Bay Area leads the nation in environmental awareness, yet it is among the most polluted regions in the country. Most of these photographs are aerial shots taken while flying in a two person helicopter, allowing me to get between 200 and 500 feet of my subjects and to uncover evidence of toxicity that is normally hidden from us when we are on the ground. The intent of this work is to cultivate awareness and provoke meaningful discourse about environmental stewardship.



### ***Cupertino Cement Factory II, III, V***

2015 - 2017  
Archival Digital Prints  
30" x 20" and 20" x 30"  
\$700 each

I grew up less than two miles from this site in Cupertino, the Lehigh Permanente Cement plant, and did not know of its existence until I was an adult. My parents and I came to the Bay Area from the Midwest when I was a young child when the high tech industry was in its infancy. At that time the valley contained thousands upon thousands of orchards that I played in, but was unaware that they had been sprayed with DDT. Currently, I live within close proximity to several Superfund sites in Palo Alto. I have witnessed the enormous growth of the Silicon Valley and the population pressures that come with these immense changes to our surroundings. The cement from this plant was used to produce the tremendous infrastructure that we now see all around us and is now within close proximity to a dense population.

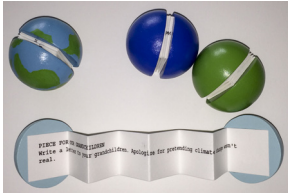


### ***Salt Pond Restoration Grid II, III***

2018  
Archival Digital Prints  
Installation of four 15" x 15" Salt Pond Restoration Images  
\$1600

These aerial shots are of industrial salt ponds that have existed in the South Bay since the 1800's and are characterized by environmentalists as having taken away the lungs of the Bay. These mountains of salt represent our excessive consumptive habits that are at the expense of our environment. Currently they are a part of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, the largest wetland restoration program on the Pacific Coast which to date has restored over 3,000 acres and when completed will have cost over 100 million dollars. Over the course of the next sixty years, these salt ponds will go back to their natural state. Since 2010 I have gone up once a year in a helicopter to document this epic transformation and I plan to continue to go up once a year to document these changes in the Bay as its biodiversity dramatically increases.

## Ginger Burrell



### ***Biosphere***

2017

Artist's book and dispensing machine

Biosphere Book with 4 Spheres in a Wooden Box. \$500

Biosphere Dispensing Machine with a Full Set of Biospheres and Biosphere Book. \$4000

Even as the facts of climate change are becoming more evident, more stark, and more frightening, people are turning away from learning more and taking action. For many, climate change seems too big and too overwhelming.

Biosphere uses the approach of Yoko Ono's "event scores" to provide instructions to save the planet. With 65 different instructions ranging from serious to humorous to shocking, this artists' book is meant to reach the viewer and inspire action through short, thought-provoking statements. Edition of 10.



### ***Climate Change Coloring Book***

2017

Artist's book

\$250

Although found in most every store today as a means of meditative relaxation, coloring books for adults had their origins in 1961. During the sixties and seventies they were produced as a means of commentary, humor, and information. With topics such as post-war workplace conformity, Communism, and birth control, these coloring books were meant for reading and education – not actually filling them in with crayons.

Climate Change Coloring Book, while certainly colorable, pays homage to sixties-style adult coloring books with its message of urgency and education regarding climate change. It also comments on our current cultural tendency for adults to resist growing up and choosing to pursue childlike activities rather than deal with what is arguably the biggest humanitarian and ecological crisis we have ever known. Edition of 50.



### ***Metamorphosis***

2015

Artist's book

\$500

Metamorphosis began when I was playing with Hedi Kyle's Fishbone binding. A mistake reminded me of a stalk of corn. Since my current work deals with climate change, and since food scarcity is a part of that topic, that corn stalk led me to think about a series of books which, when viewed from above, evoke the many elements that are already changing. The Spiral hurricanes and the effects of increased ocean temperature and sea mass. The Pivoting clouds the overabundance or complete lack of rain. The Piano Hinge our relationship with the sun and how, through our alteration of the atmosphere, that relationship is changing. The Flag book the wave element, the changes to our oceans. The modified Fishbone bindings the issues of food and our tree of life, our animals. Finally, there are four animals in danger of extinction, set in resin in the center of the box much as we find extinct animal parts in amber today. Edition of 10.

## Judith Selby Lang & Richard Lang



### ***What's for supper?***

Bowl of White on White, Bowl of Stuff, Bowl of Nurdles, Bowl of Baby Binkys

2010

Archival pigment prints on Tyvek 40" x 40"

\$1500 each

Also available in the following custom print sizes: 30 x 30, \$1000; 20 x 20, \$750

All of the plastic we dish up was found on 1,000 yards of one beach, Kehoe Beach, Point Reyes National Seashore. It is not being left by negligent picnickers or wayward infants it has been at sea a long time before washing up to shore. Along with the news about BPA and the chemicals leaching into our food from plastic we have learned that every human being on planet Earth has traces of plastic polymers in their bloodstream. *What's for supper?* makes visible what are we feeding to ourselves and to our children.



## Judith Selby Lang

### ***Black Sea Foam necklaces***

ongoing project

16.5" x 32" box size

\$250 each

The tiny black "pearls" from this chunk of foam are being strung into necklaces and bracelets. The repetitious movement of my hands as I slowly thread the small holes onto wire and cord is both mediation and making. Since I began this deconstruction, I have threaded together over 100 feet of strand. With 6 beads per inch or 1200 inches that is already 7200 beads. The lightweight, sturdy open cell foam (trade name EthaFoam) is used for cushioning and packing sensitive electronic equipment



### ***Superball necklaces: Golden Globes & What Goes UP***

ongoing projects

19" x 25" box size

NFS

*Golden Globes* is created from 22 SuperBalls and plastic globes. *What Goes UP* is created from 19 Super Balls and one #2 ball. Super Balls are one of the rarest finds on the beach. This necklace was years in the making. Both were completed in 2011. Reminiscent of amber, fossilized tree resin, this necklace made from the orbs of what was once known as Super Balls. Since Neolithic times amber was prized, used as jewelry and was purported to have healing properties. Super Balls have super powers—with an amazingly high coefficient of restitution—they have a 90% recovery bounce.



## Kent Manske

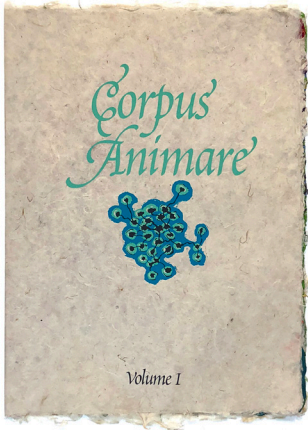
### ***Corpus Animare: Conceptual Fieldwork***

2018

Artist's books / screen-based monoprinting

16" x 22" x .25"

\$2800 each



*Corpus Animare, Volumes I, II & III*, are one-of-a-kind large format artist's books screen printed on fibrous hand-made mulberry paper. In Latin, corpus translates to "body" and animare "to give life". The books' subtitle "Conceptual Fieldwork" reference the artist's exploration of the preciousness, complexity and survival of life. The books contain invented biological forms and compositions that evolved through the planned and serendipitous layering of ink, often with disastrous results. The process was in search of new relationships with an understanding that the world is a set happenings, not things.

### ***Genetic Garden: v3.2.18***

2018

Variable installation of thirty screen-based monoprints

96" x 192" x 2"

\$10,800 (\$360 each cell)



*Genetic Garden* is a variable wall-mounted biological landscape juxtaposing invented organisms, membranes, bacteria, genes and cancers. Individual cells explore wonder, beauty, interconnectedness, reason, traits, evolution and death. It is a celebration of the 50 trillion cells working to keep our bodies alive and the 37 million bacteria our bodies release into the air every hour. I am inspired by epistemology, the cosmos, biology, health and aging. The work is fueled by science writing from Epicurean philosopher Lucretius to modern and contemporary science authors including Alexander von Humboldt, Siddhartha Mukherjee, Michael Pollan, Lisa Randall, Matt Ridley, Mary Roach and Rebecca Skloot. The process of making cells is a meditation and a therapy to harmoniously cope with present day issues including the human destruction of species biodiversity and the greed and ignorance that sustains such practices.

### ***Nests***

2016

Screen-based monoprints

22" x 30"

\$400 unframed. \$900 framed



The *Nests* series reflects how many living organisms respond to their external environments. They examine, filter, select and build—to the best of their abilities—to create comfortable protection sanctuaries, otherwise known as homes.

Prints evolve from the physical act of repetitively printing a single pattern into a more complex circular structure. Ink is squeegeed through a single stencil over and over while rotating the paper with each successive squeegee pull.





## ***TreeMan***

1998

Digital mezzotint / pigment print

80" x 36" x 4"

Edition of 4

\$800 unframed. \$800 artist's proof/exhibition print framed as-is.

*TreeMan's* lifesize figure positions tree and man as both independent and combined entities. The severed trunk reveals the tree's growth rings as a human fingerprint. The image confronts the viewer with questions about coexistence, responsibility and stewardship.

## **Kent Manske & Nanette Wylde**

### ***Meaning Maker: Relationship to Nature***

2006 - 2018

Audience participatory fill-out-form pamphlets, wall kiosk, vinyl

21" x 16" x 3"

NFS

*Meaning Maker* is a conceptual art project providing users opportunity to reflect on personal and societal issues. Fill-out-form brochures guide users through specific topics. Completed Meaning Makers are not collected, but kept by participants for future reflection. Ten editions are currently available at [meaningmaker.org](http://meaningmaker.org). These include American Citizenship, Art Viewing Experience, Control, Family Gathering, Food, Higher Education, Periodic Personal Evaluation, Relationship to Nature and U.S. Presidential Elections. We believe making distinctions is essential for human survival.



## Michelle Wilson



### ***Corn, Incorporated***

2013

Handmade paper from denim and corn husk watermarked with government and corporate logos

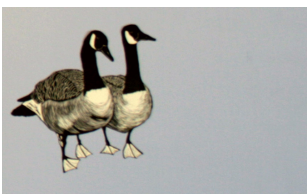
Suite of 10 papers, each paper measures 9" x 12"

\$800

This suite is a signifier for the corporatization of the American diet and its transformation into a corn-based food system. Historically, corn was an iconic American plant, a character in the romanticized origin mythology of this nation. However, the plant—initially bred selectively by indigenous peoples of this continent—has now been trademarked and genetically altered to fit into a corporate product chain. Whether partially made out of corn, sweetened with high fructose corn syrup, or made from animals fed a diet of corn, nearly 99% of all food products in the American supermarket trace their origins to a cornfield.

This food system is an enormous contributor to global warming, through its requirements for massive amounts of petroleum. This petroleum is the basis for corn fertilizer and pesticides, as well as packaging and transport. In addition to the environmental problems to which it contributes, a corn-based Western diet is linked to numerous diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

I used corn-husk fiber to create the watermarks for these papers, which were couched onto a base sheet made from denim fiber. Denim, a cotton twill, is used to make another iconic American product: blue jeans. Blue jeans are also a part of the American mythos; they are a symbolic mix of rugged individualism, work ethos, and sex appeal. Once primarily an American product, they are now almost exclusively produced in China, where their production is causing an unprecedented level of pollution and health problems. The denim fiber for this book was pulped from my own discarded jeans.



### ***Water Lines***

2018

Woodcut, linoleum block print, collagraph, and cut paper

9" x 16"

\$1500

In *Water Lines*, I consider the San Francisco Bay as an interstitial location, a place of transformation. The Bay has a fragile, yet resilient ecology, a multifaceted history, and is a continuous source of wonder.



### ***Mourning This World***

2014

Handmade flax paper grown from seed by the artist, pulp paint, linoleum block prints

30" x 70"

\$1000

This piece, painted and printed on paper that I grew myself from seed, is an expression of mourning for the environmental damage and loss created by the Deepwater Horizon explosion.

## Nanette Wylde

### ***Coral Reef***



2012

Location-based (GPS) Augmented Reality

Contact the artist for placement costs and possibilities

The Coral Reef augment was created for the exhibition Earth•Science•Art, a project curated by Lisa Hochstein, which paired Bay Area artists with USGS scientists from the Pacific Marine Institute in Santa Cruz, California. I was matched with USGS scientist Ann Gibbs who is involved in studying the changing Hawaiian Coral Reef ecosystem and inhabitants. Scientists believe that global warming causes bleaching of the reefs, a process that makes the ocean an unhealthy environment for coral.

The augment acts to memorialize the dying Hawaiian coral reef by bringing lifeforms from the coral reef into the gallery space, reminding us of what lives there and what is at risk for loss.

Augmented reality places computer-generated graphics, sound, or video on the live view of a physical, real-world environment, as seen through an app on a mobile device. This augment is accessible through the free Layar Reality browser. With the Layar app open scan the QR code and wait a moment for the augment to load. Hold your device at eye level and rotate your body in a 360 degree circle. You will see the Hawaiian Coral Reef augment as an overlay on the live camera view of your surroundings.



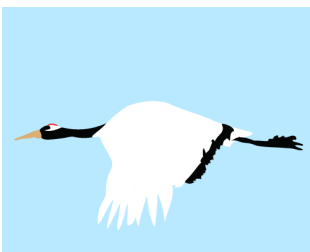
### ***Fish Bowl Facts***

2018

Fishbowl with take-away facts and website resource

This information is free and may assist in improving air quality and lowering fuel usage

Idling engines drive me insane.



### ***Karoyakani / Lightness***

2012

Location-based (GPS) Augmented Reality

Contact the artist for placement costs and possibilities

Japanese red crowned cranes fly and dance in this animated location-based augment created for the people of Fukushima, Japan after a tsunami initiated the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. It was exhibited at the Fukushima Biennale 2012, in Fukushima. The Biennale theme was Sora or Sky. The animated cranes act as a gift of lightness after so much sorrow.

Augmented reality places computer-generated graphics, sound, or video on the live view of a physical, real-world environment, as seen through an app on a mobile device. This augment is accessible through the free Layar Reality browser. With the Layar app open scan the QR code and wait a moment for the augment to load. Hold your device at eye level and rotate your body in a 360 degree circle. You will see red-crowned cranes as an overlay on the live camera view of your surroundings.



### ***On Longing series***

2016  
Cut stencil monoprints, oil-based ink on Rives BFK  
20" x 20"  
\$700 each, framed

On Longing is a series of 50 unique monoprints. Each print is a mandala which contemplates and celebrates the natural world. I had been wondering if I could make work about our global situation of mass extinctions that was not negative, sappy and "in-your-face political." I am particularly effected by the fact that the African elephant is expected to be eliminated from Africa in about seven years if the current rate of poaching for ivory continues. And then there are the huge issues surrounding colony collapse disorder for one of our primary pollinators, bees. It has been challenging for me to make work about such losses that is positive. I wanted to create a series of prints which celebrate non-human life and also has the potential to bring attention to these issues in meaningful or thoughtful ways.



### ***Remembering Elephants***

2014  
Artist's book: Pigment prints, oil-based intaglio, and oil-based wood relief on Awagami IJP Bamboo paper  
8" x 7.5" closed  
\$280

Original text laments irrevocable loss.

Comissioned by Awagami Paper, Japan. Edition of 5.

## **In Appreciation**

The artists would like to thank Joe Miller, the Works Board of Directors, Works members, Works volunteers and Works funding sources for making this exhibition opportunity possible.