

Weird Dreams, Weird Analysis

We've been having weird dreams.

*We became plants, and our viscera swallowed our legs before
pushing them out our torsos and we walked across the sky.*

*We sprouted wings and reunited with a family we didn't know
we had.*

*We were buried up to our necks in a beach until we taught the
grains of sand to move.*

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Curatorial Statement

It's not so much that we've lost the ability to dream, but that our dreams have become so alien that we do not recognize them as our own. Or that if those are our dreams, then we must be somewhere else than we thought we were.

One part art exhibition, one part therapeutics, and one part research seminar, one part analysis, *Weird Dreams, Weird Analysis* uses the idea of the "weird" to chart novel aesthetic, political, and epistemological dimensions of subject formation and objecthood. For instance, Bifo Berardi demarcates a phase change in the history of the unconscious that's been churning since Web 2.0. With the pandemic, we pass through another psychic threshold. These days, we are confused by the vectors of desire and its sublimations: nascent tendencies toward interiority balance against "extremely online" hyper expressivity, going goblin mode disintegrates into self-flagellating doom-scrolling, a lockdown induced transformation of sexuality and corporeality alongside a blooming of depressive anxiety, "rise and grind" fading to "quiet quitting".

If we aren't where we thought we are, we must ask not only where do we dream of going from here, but also: how is it that we got here? How can transdisciplinary approaches to art, psyche, ecology, body, and technology help us dream weirdly enough to generate subjectivities sufficient to the challenges of climate change, infrastructural collapse, and social upheaval?

Distinct from the unheimlich, Mark Fisher writes about the weird as an encounter that makes us feel that "something is there that shouldn't be". The weird is not just something that doesn't make sense, it is a recognition that there is too much sense, or too many ways to make sense for a specific moment. The weird creates portals to the outside

that remind us that even when we are alone, we are not by ourselves. And even when we are here, we are also somehow somewhere else. We intend to explore weird dreams by asking how weird and adjacent aesthetics of the new (techno, cyberpunk) and the old (goth, metal, tradcath) grapple with deeply sedimented conservatism and colonial hatred while fashioning instruments for receiving and interpreting messages from above the clouds?

Following psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi's transdisciplinary analytic method ultraquistics and Felix Guattari's indisciplined diagrammatics, weird analysis necessitates disciplinary concoctions that refuse to integrate, find a solution, or create a hybrid. Drawing on heterodox traditions of psychoanalysis, the practical, experiential, and aesthetic dimensions of this collaborative project are indispensable. To this end, *Weird Dreams, Weird Analysis* gathers a transdisciplinary array of artists, makers, designers, and theorists.

- Garrett Laroy Johnson with Phillip Thurtle

Project Overview

Weird Dreams, Weird Analysis assembles a transdisciplinary array of artists and theorists. In addition to the art exhibition, we will convene in Chicago for a series of seminars March 16th-19th at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA).

Seminar presenters include:

Thierry Bardini (Université de Montréal)

Beatriz Herrera (Montreal, CA)

Garrett Laroy Johnson (School of the Art Institute of Chicago)

Thomas Lamarre (University of Chicago)

Deborah Levitt (The New School)

Muindi Fanuel Muindi (Seattle, USA)

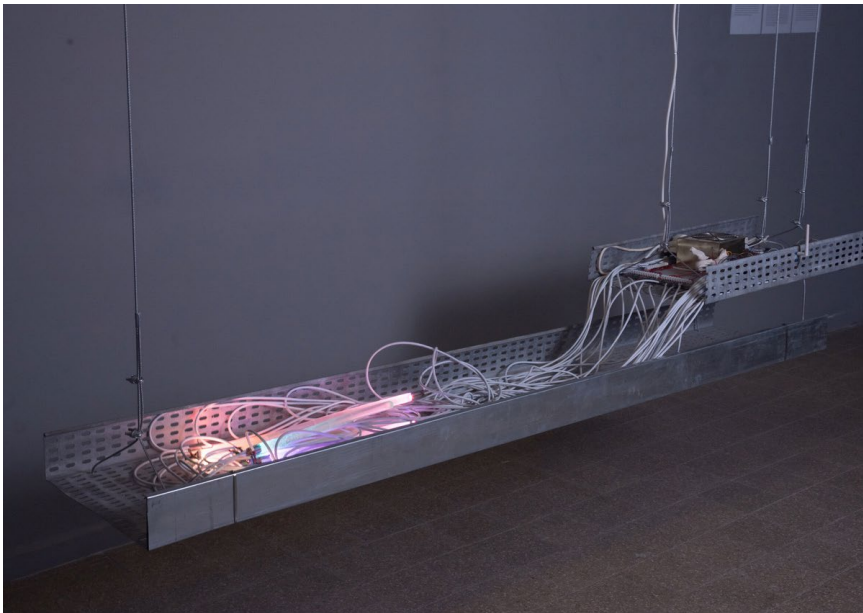
Audrey Rabinowitz (School of the Art Institute of Chicago)

Pierre Schwarz (New York University)

Phillip Thurtle (University of Washington)

Nimrod Astarhan

Nimrod Astarhan is an artist, technologist, and lecturer in the Multidisciplinary Art School at Shenkar College of Engineering, Art and Design where he teaches Digital Art and other specialized trans-disciplinary courses at the intersection of art, digital practices and critical theory. As an artist working in Sculpture and Digital Media he exhibited and initiated group projects in Europe, the US, and the International Space Station and worked on commissioned projects for museums, international festivals and biennales. Recent showings include Ars Electronica, The Ammerman Center Biennial Symposium on Arts and Technology, The Israeli Center for Digital Arts, and Die Digitale Düsseldorf among others. Recipient of the Rabinovitch Foundation for the Arts grant. Nimrod is a recent graduate of the Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art and is currently affiliated with the Art and Technology Studies department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago under the New Artist Society Scholarship.



Nimrod will present a new work using simulation as a vehicle for a speculative archaeology of the unconscious.



Paula Carralero Bierzynska

Paula will present from her Diary series of reverse-painted watercolors on e-waste. She painted abandoned factories and natural elements in Chemnitz, Germany. The work Diary reflects on a possible circular economy, where trashed phone displays take on new value as raw artistic material.

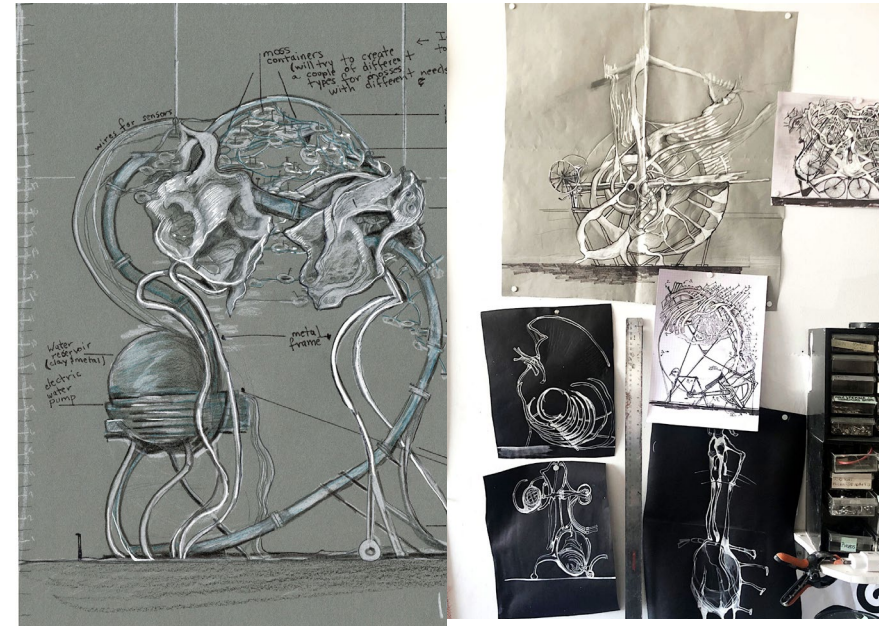


Born in Madrid and raised in Pamplona, Paula Carralero Bierzynska responds to the relationship between digitalisation and the exploitation of our ecosystem. She paints abandoned industrial buildings on reused e-waste. After working in Montreal and Mexico City, she moved to Berlin to study at Weißensee Kunsthochschule with Nader Ahriman. She exhibited widely during her studies, including at Haus des Berliner Rundfunks, Projektraum Bethanien, Neukölln Arkaden, Bar Babette, Brandenburgischen Kunstverein, and Kunstverein Uelzen. She showed internationally in Muzeum Woli in Warschau, in La Ciudadela and Centro Huarte in Pamplona and Sala Perez de la Riva in Madrid. She received the Mart Stam scholarship, der Mittenmang Projektförderung and the Premio Encuentros Arte Joven Award. After her studies, she received the scholarship Neustart Kultur der Stiftungskunsts, and residencies at Künstlerhaus Edenkoben and Powidokie Kaliska (Poland). She had her first solo exhibition at Galerie Weisser elefant, several exhibitions at Lage Egal Berlin and at Brunnentreff Berlin and a duo show in Galerie das Gute Leben in Kandel. Her artist books were presented at Berlin Art Book Fair at the Hamburger Bahnhof and Missread Art Book Fair at Akademie der Künste and her work was published at Textem Verlag in 2016.



Beatriz Herrera

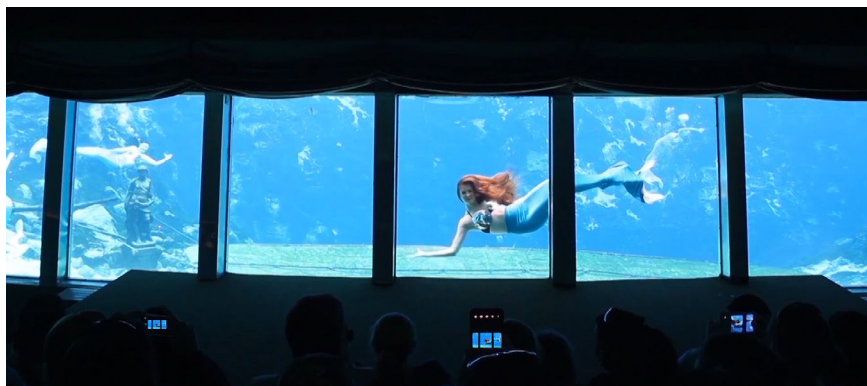
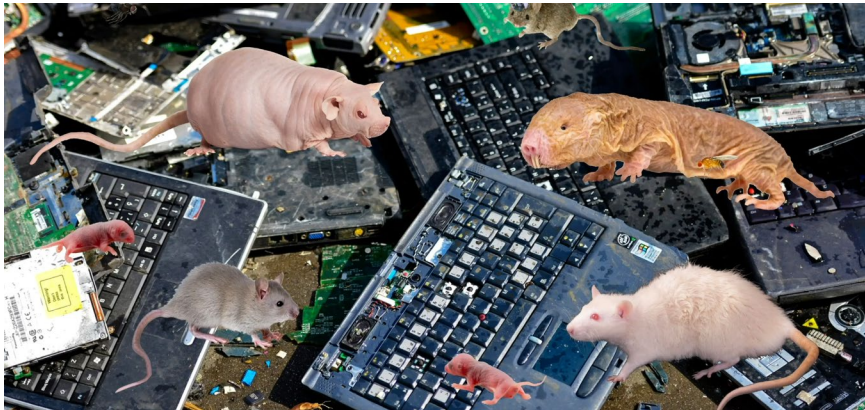
Beatriz Herrera is a Montreal-based, Chilean-born intermedia artist. She holds a BFA in ceramics from Alberta University of the Arts, and an MFA in Sculpture from Concordia University. Since 2020 her practice has shifted from creating absurdist robotic sculptures to ceramics and drawing, in order to reimagine the wild and man-made ecologies comprising our present moment. Her research within the Critical Gardening Collective has focused on the material possibilities of ceramics as a miniature architectural foundation which will form part of a broader organized, distributed, semi-living system; A cyborg garden, a symbiosis between 'old' and new technologies, between clay, data-gathering sensors and mosses, bacteria, rotifers, lichens, tardigrades, all the naturally-occurring microfauna of the bryosphere.



As part of the Critical Gardening Collective, Beatriz will present *Bipolar Mosses*. Literally bipolar, these mosses tend to grow only in the Northern and Southern polar regions. The Critical Gardeners' Collective researched with the bipolar mosses partners to engage in the kind of modest ecophilia we aspire to. We know an ecological catastrophe is coming, but we do not see any point in the gloom for the sake of gloom; we care for technology, yet we do not think technology alone can solve the problem. We are bipolar both with respect to the ecological catastrophe and its technological fix. It has not escaped us, also, that "bipolar" is the adjective of choice for our time—who isn't, these days, always on the wrong side of the fence, alternatively slightly over-enthused, slightly too depressed, swinging between utter fragility and extremophilic adaptability? Borderline bipolar, one of the signatures of our time.

Dakota Gearhardt

Dakota will present a video excerpt from her *Life Touching Life* project.



Dakota Gearhart is a transmedia artist whose practice concerns the effects of modern science and technology with a particular focus on the radical deconstruction of contemporary power structures according to an ecofeminist worldview. She seeks to make the familiar strange—and sometimes the strange familiar—and through that inversion, articulate a more robust and less oppressive future. Recent works have explored such topics as the commercial flower trade, gender bias in big tech, and coral reef tourism in her home state of Florida. Color, humor, and a disorienting species of maximalism are common features of her collage-based aesthetic. Her work has exhibited at The Bronx Museum of Art, NY; Tacoma Art Museum, WA; Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL; Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, OR; Horse Hospital, London; Horse and Pony Gallery, Berlin; Lab'Attoir, Thessaloniki, Greece; and Taiyuan University, Taiyuan, China. She has been awarded the BRIC Digital Media Fellowship, Franklin Furnace Fellowship, and a National Endowments for the Arts US-Japan Creative Fellowship which will bring her work to Japan in 2022. She is based in New York City where she teaches Motion Graphics with Parsons School of Design at The New School and with the Integrated Design Media program at New York University.



Muindi Fanuel Muindi

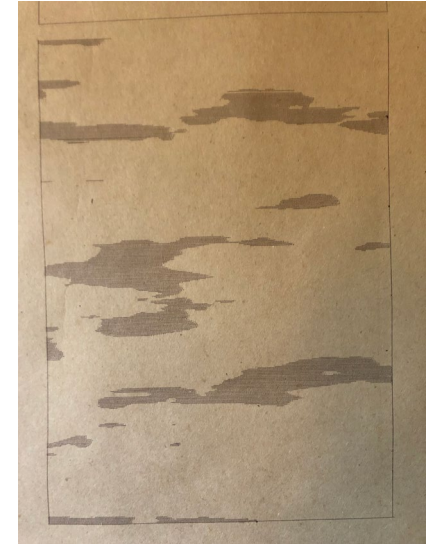
Muindi Fanuel Muindi is a performance artist, philosopher, and poet. Subtly informed by figures, functions, and structures from comparative biology and measure theory, Muindi's philosophical perspective is deeply affected by Bantu philosophies and by Western deconstruction and schizoanalysis. As a performance artist, Muindi develops and deploys dramatic devices to create sensuous experiences that facilitate philosophical inquiry. Having adopted the motto "more grit, less kit", Muindi's performance practice privileges high latency, low fidelity, and seamful designs and the use of TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge).

Muindi will show an video/audio experimental time measuring devices.



Garrett Laroy Johnson

In an homage to Vera Molnar's *Letters from my Mother*, Garrett will show a pen-plotter work generated by machine learning algorithms based on his late father's notebooks.



Garrett Laroy Johnson works with responsive media environments to probe, condition, engender, and refract relations between technological determinations and productions of subjectivity. He design and create digital-physical systems activating sound, light, and expressive materials in immersive and quotidian spaces. His media art research deals with the diagram as a conceptual figure for animating transdisciplinary practice with computational media. This research-creation explores embodied and emplaced learning, anxiety as a political affect, and new collective formations for arts research practice. Johnson teaches in Art and Technology Studies at SAIC and earned a PhD in Media Arts and Sciences in 2022 for the dissertation "Diagrammatic Media".

Audrey Rabinowitz

Audrey will show machine-woven textiles based on psychoanalytically informed experimentation with natural language processing and machine learning algorithmics.

The phone rang
FADE IN
for
my
body
wrapped around
the
motions
behind and she felt soothing the head
my
mouth the ground around the fingers of the bed
the receiver that he shouldn't
me
she stroked her between her so
the
core
should the shower;
he she stopped and he she she stopped
that he shouldn't worked another and
rejects It's okay, t
the mouth the ground on the other day again
rhythm motion
that I took to painfully
here there's no bleeding"" calm down, dearest""
nation against the door bottle from the thing t
pulls it the my
the part of the shower and he she flattered around in a finger again
a she
life and he and looked up at him with such an expression of
she replying the scream of his fight to indicate
borders innocence
and exist that his heart almost melted within him'
names my
for names and too much it untimation'
for the time she then getting the towel of
the
irregular
beating
between the receiver in a death and picking her between her
behind with a weapon
heartbeat
or the
He then she would be a
and
violent
language
i
pose
against
my selves,

then then i am a
surviving over and over
in my own
body.

THE TELEPHONE

This is a true story. Isn't it, Kel?

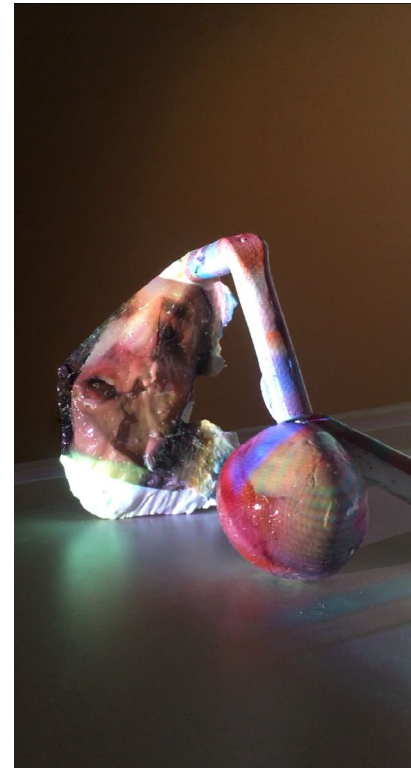
Audrey collaborates with technology that obscures legibility and questions traditional modes of authorship to reveal and challenge systems of gendered control. Exploring what it might mean to create within this sublimated layer of meaning, she explore historical and contemporary landscapes of exploitation, sadomasochism, and obsession with medium like fiber, artificial intelligence, print, and video – reading women's agency into situations where the eyes of patriarchy saturate the very fabric of language and thought itself. Audrey graduated from the College of Charleston in 2021 with BAs in English and Photography, specializing in feminist film studies and silver gelatin printing respectively – and am currently pursuing an MA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Visual and Critical studies.



Jessica Tucker

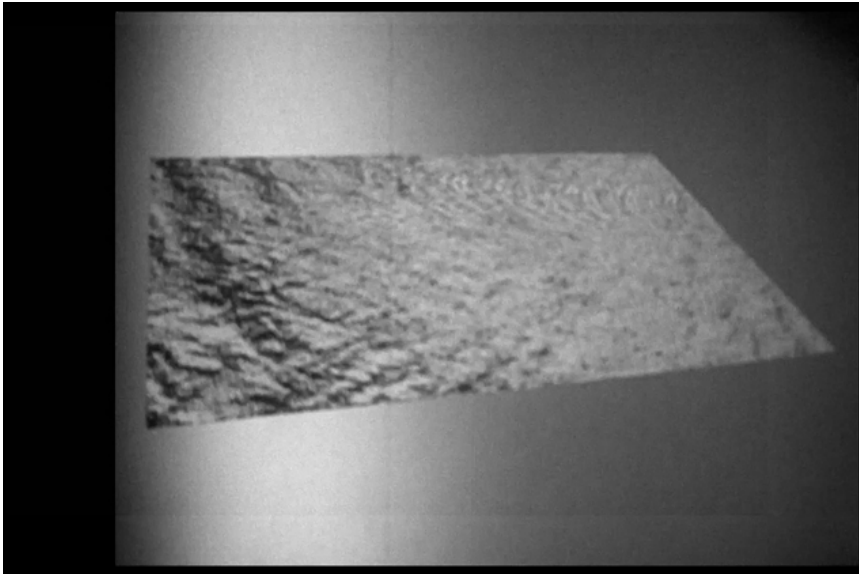


Jessica Tucker (aka Fetter) is a media artist and electronic musician based between Amsterdam and Chicago. Inspired by histories of technology as well as diverse spiritual and scientific definitions of consciousness, Tucker's work playfully examines how interactions between bodies, words, and technologies reshape selfhood. Through electronic music, video, and sculpture, she emphasizes physically performative use of technologies to remap media debris across virtual and touchable materials. Like guided rituals, her performances and installations are immersive experiences that unearth other dimensions of self. Tucker holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she is currently Lecturer in the Film, Video, New Media, and Animation department.



Oswaldo Emiddio Vasquez

Emiddio will show a video essay on lucid dreaming, bad sleep habits, psychically invasive computational operating systems.



Emiddio Vasquez is a Cypriot-Dominican electronic musician and artist. His practice deals with material transformations that blur encoding-decoding processes across media as a way of engaging with the larger infrastructures at stake. Drawing on his personal memories of uprooting and his interest in audio, image, and computation technologies, his work explores themes surrounding the politics of visibility, mediated sensing, and the processes of subject formation. He is currently a PhD candidate in the transdisciplinary programme Media Art and Science at Arizona State University. His academic research interrogates the philosophical and aesthetic implications of treating digitality and computation under a materialist framework. In 2018, he founded Moneda, a record label, sound event series, and publishing initiative.

Susanne Schmitt



Susanne will present a new rococo-sci-fi video + sound work.

Susanne Schmitt playfully investigates the context of meaning of objects and materiality with a particular interest in objects that reflect human-object-commodity relationships. She works with a wide range of materials: from carpet, ceramics and steel to manipulated readymades. Her works have been shown in multiple exhibitions across Germany, including Weserhalle (Berlin), Galerie Irrgang (Leipzig), LVX, Pavillon der Volksbühne (Berlin), NKV Wiesbaden, Kunst- und Kulturstiftung Opelvillen (Rüsselsheim) and Blake and Vargas (Berlin), as well as internationally at MATCA (Cluj, RO) and Curtea, (Bucharest, RO). In 2022 Susanne Schmitt attended a residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris offered by Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral and received the Neustart Kultur stipend of the Stiftung Kunstfonds. She studied Fine Arts, Sculpture and German studies at the Universität Koblenz-Landau, at the Kunsthochschule Mainz with Dr. Andrea Büttner and at the Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin and completed her studies 2020 as Meisterschülerin of Albrecht Schäfer. She lives and works in Berlin.