

P A I N T I N G

*D o n P o l l a c k*

*T R U E L I F E*

*N O V E L E T T E S*

MAY 4 - JULY 6, 2018



**G A L L E R Y V I C T O R A R M E N D A R I Z**

300 WEST SUPERIOR STREET CHICAGO, IL 60654

E X H I B I T I O N

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# PAINTINGS

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**T**rue Life Novelettes is the most recent addition to the bigger project; *Crossing The Great Divide* which is loosely a series of landscape and history projects I began in 2009. It explores among other things, current events and personal literary interests through the construction of large scale [48x72"] book cover paintings. I use a variety of images juxtaposed with bylines and misplaced authors in order to create new meanings. I read the print edition of the New York Times for current content and subject matter, and because I still like the feel of a large document and printed typography. Recently and with a twist of prescient irony, I found myself reading a special supplemental section of the Times declaring that “the post-text future is here!” Could that be good for painting, now that we are entering an online culture ruled by pictures! But if our information will become dominated by pictures, slogans, and emotional announcements, I do fear that the arguments driving political discourse will soon become completely supplanted by popular memes. What should the new best sellers look like? Do I have enough time to read them? Underneath all this fanfare is it possible that the discussion will also be reduced to the display of personal artifacts of material culture? In the fashion section of today’s Times the headline reads, “Can you wear Dior to the Protest March?” (Enter my books.) I first start by writing columns and mixing up the authors with made-up titles (from films and books) and looking for strange connections to create a metaphorical tension. I then look for popular images and taglines in the news, print media, and the publishing business, and search for catchy phrases from film dialog. Then I combine everything into a new design layout to form a hybrid of ‘true life novelettes’ and modern classics. Climate change denial and alt/fake news declarations become great sources for topics in the overwhelming modern noise machine too grim to bear. I cancel my cable subscription. But what are the conditions for making a painting in a world saturated with images? While the representational, abstract, and technical concerns of painting collapse

into the same memory well, what are we to say especially when we have “seen all the films and seen all the pictures”? The works of Tursic and Mille have pointed me into this new direction. In order to visually reclaim myself from disappearing into the ruins, I adopt a strategy combining editorial cartooning, oil painting and graphic design. I am attracted to those handsome publisher’s design formats, especially the ones that utilize carefully-placed typography and eclectic images—such as Everyman’s Library, Penguin Books, and Barnes and Noble. There are colored stripes running along the sides of the covers identifying the modern story collections, with the authors’ names set in script fonts. These various formats also hold the space to paint a combination of historic events and contemporary imagery from popular culture. I also patrol the web and search for vintage advertising campaigns for copy. Perhaps this grimness can have an uplifting thread. However, Virginie Vuillaume in *Another Girl* warns, “desire leads to disaster, partly bound up with fiction but also with death and catastrophe. The fate of those who are in love with images is always tragic, desire always leads to disaster.” So now Tursic and Mille’s painting that appropriated an image of a house on fire from a scene from Andrei Tarkovski’s film *The Sacrifice* also becomes my subject matter for the cover of the *Year of Living Dangerously*. For 2017, *The Year of the Eclipse*, the cover takes direction from a modern classic rendition of *Frankenstein*, with his head screwed on backwards. Maybe the only way left to paint now is by moving things forward by the only way possible,—through other mediums. The byline lyric for *Eclipse* is now taken from the Youngbloods popular song of 1967, *Get Together*,—so come on Frankenstein, ‘Smile on Your Brother’.



Don Pollack

fig. 01



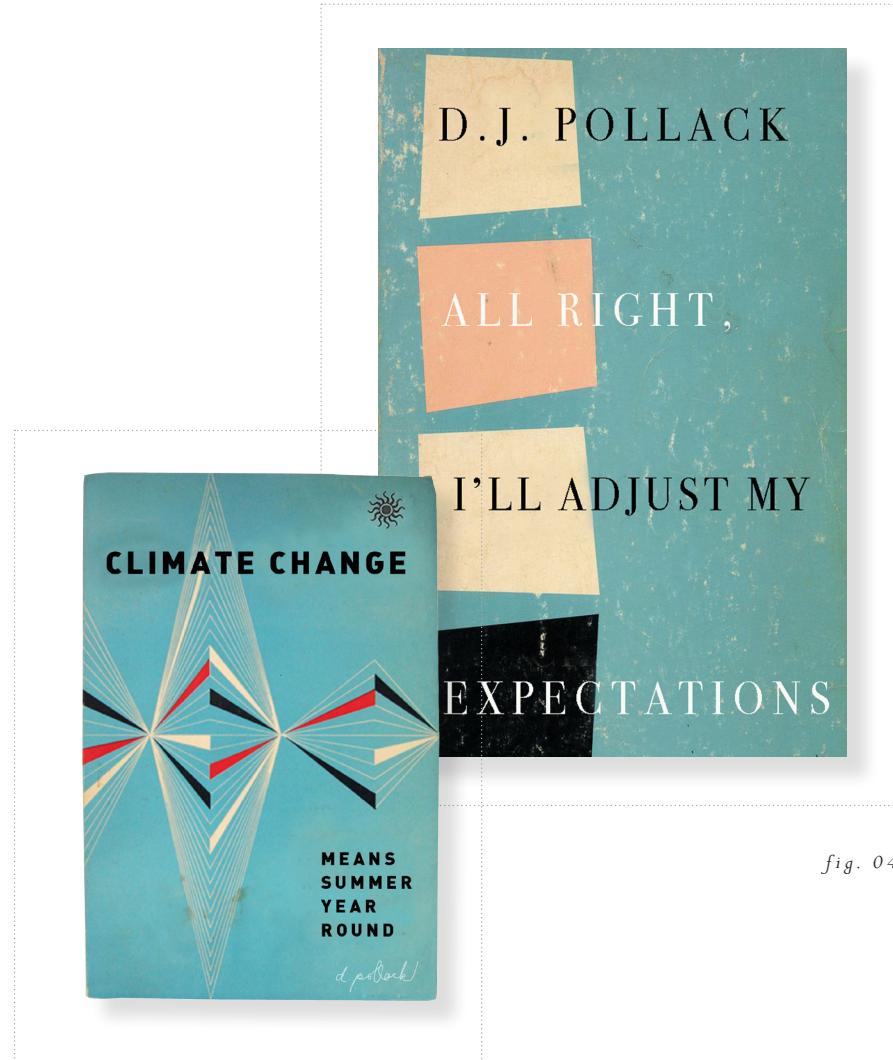
fig. 02



fig. 01, 02 TYPOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENTS FOR COVERS  
GARAMOND CASLON PERPETUA

Book designers such as Alvin Lustig, Paul Rand, Barbara de Wilde, Abby Weintraub, and Carol Carson are studied.

design



*fig. 03.04 TYPOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENTS FOR COVERS*



*fig. 05*

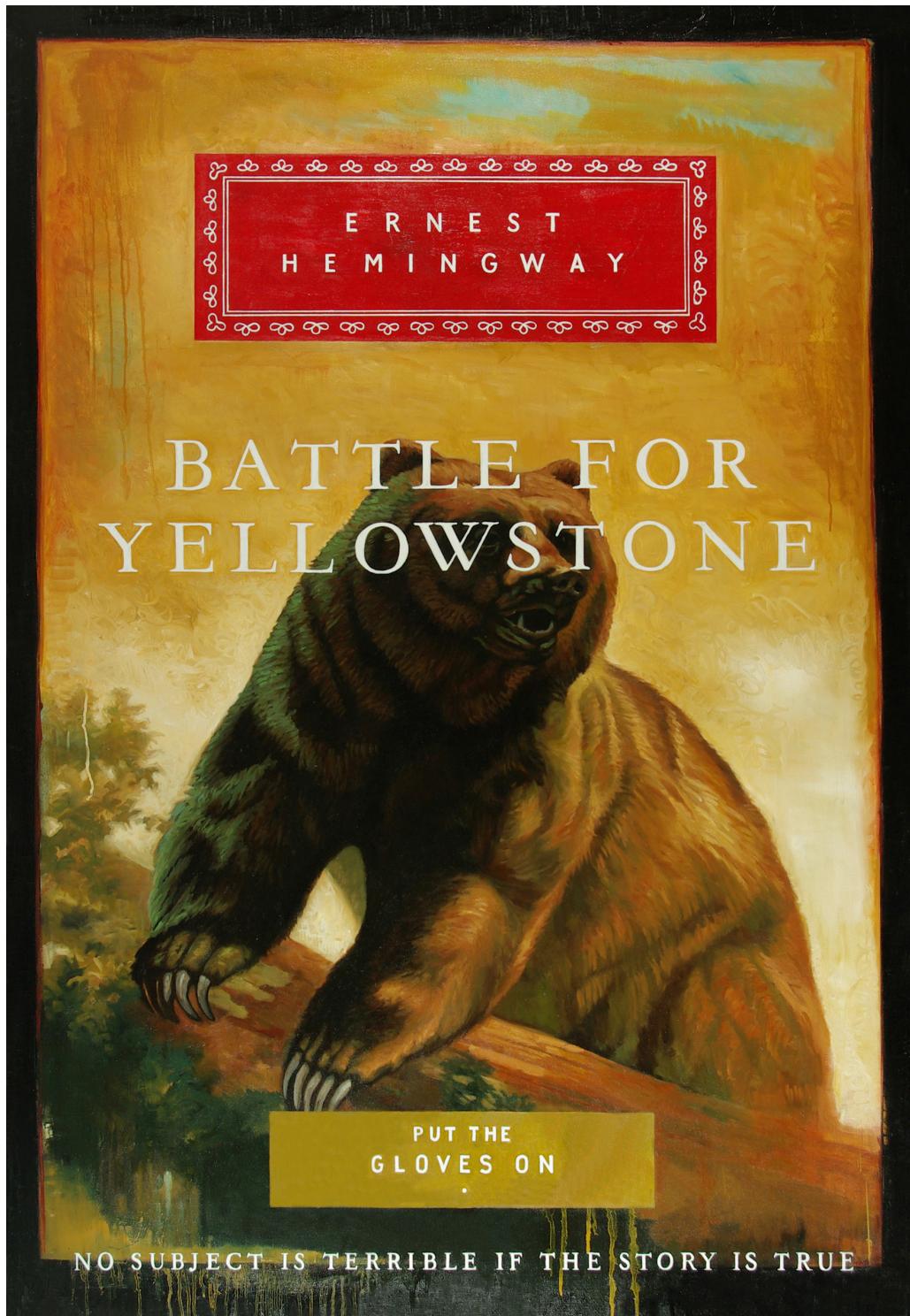
*fig. 05* PRINTED COVERS  
**34 DAYS TO WASHINGTON**

Catalog and documentation have been part of the architecture of previous exhibitions. This projects followed the inaugural route of Abraham Lincoln

design

*fig. 06*

BATTLE FOR YELLOWSTONE, oil on canvas, 48"x72" | 2017



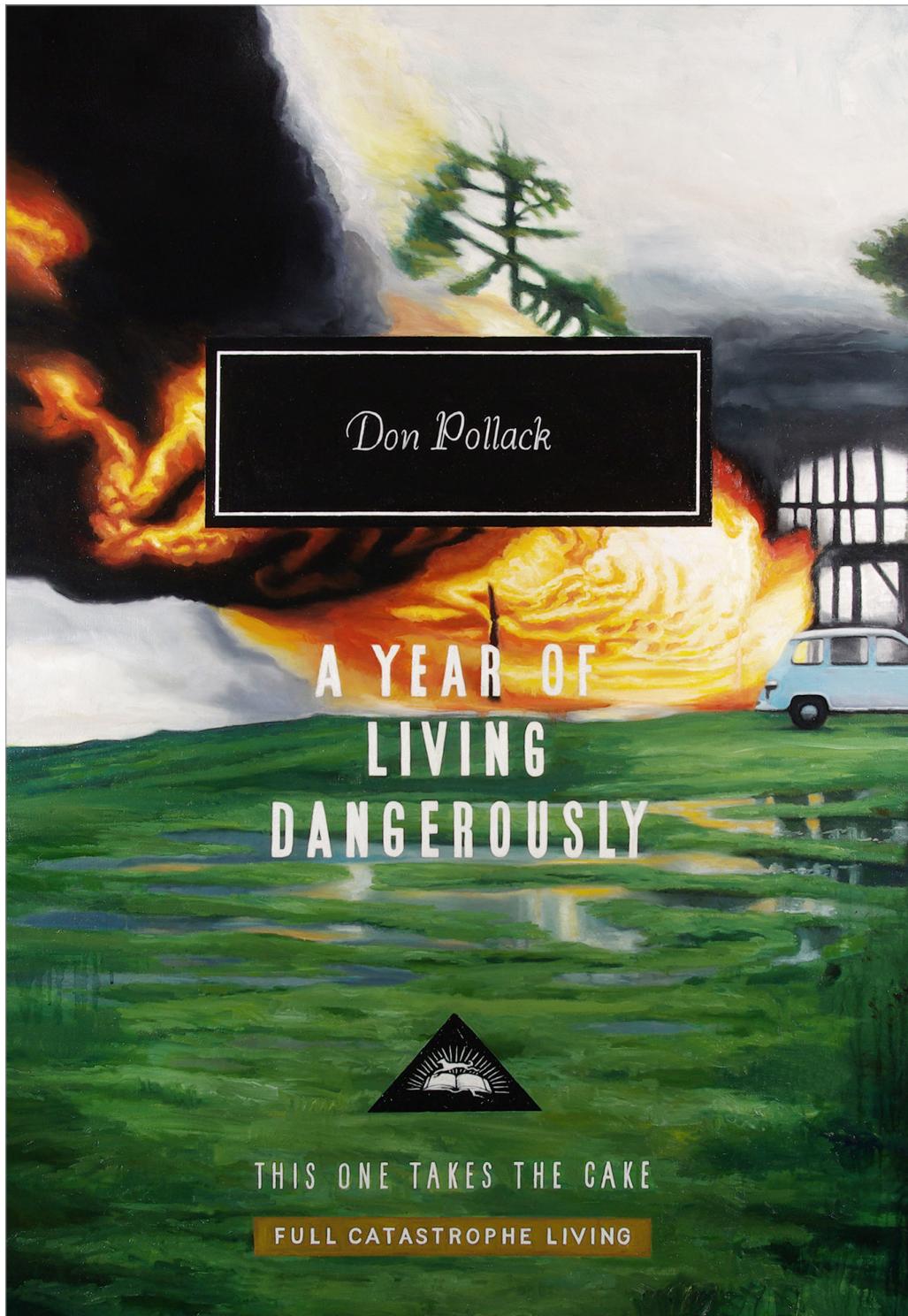
*fig. 06*

I've always enjoyed talking to Don Pollack about his current interests. He has an ongoing curiosity that loves research. I was Don's art dealer for 21 years which gave me an opportunity to watch his creative process develop. Although a painter first and foremost, Don's work has an underlying conceptual layer.

All of Don Pollack's projects begin with extensive research followed by an epic journey into the physical landscape. These journeys have included a 34-day bicycle ride from Chicago to Washington D.C. following the same route that Abraham Lincoln took on a train ride during his election campaign. A few years later Don embarked on another bicycle trip, this time, following the route of Lewis and Clark. A 2-month journey from Chicago to Oregon's Pacific Coast. Moving at the speed of a horse and buggy, this long-distance ride allowed Don to experience the landscape in real time before documenting the landscape in painted images. These slow treks through the landscape of his chosen subject matter give him time to explore the preconceived notions and history of the landscape itself.

In this new body of work, Don Pollack explores our relationship with information and the physical material of culture. Painting large scale fictitious book covers which act as a vehicle of response to a world that inundates us with information both real and fake. The paintings become a metaphor for this misinformation. Beautifully executed, with only a title as a clue to the real story within. The paintings provide a skeptical inquiry into the current culture of information and how we perceive it. Leaving the viewer with urgent need to discover the truth of what is presented to us, a subject worthy of our attention.

Frank Paluch  
*Director Perimeter Gallery, [CHICAGO, NEW YORK]*  
Malibu, 2018



*fig. 07*



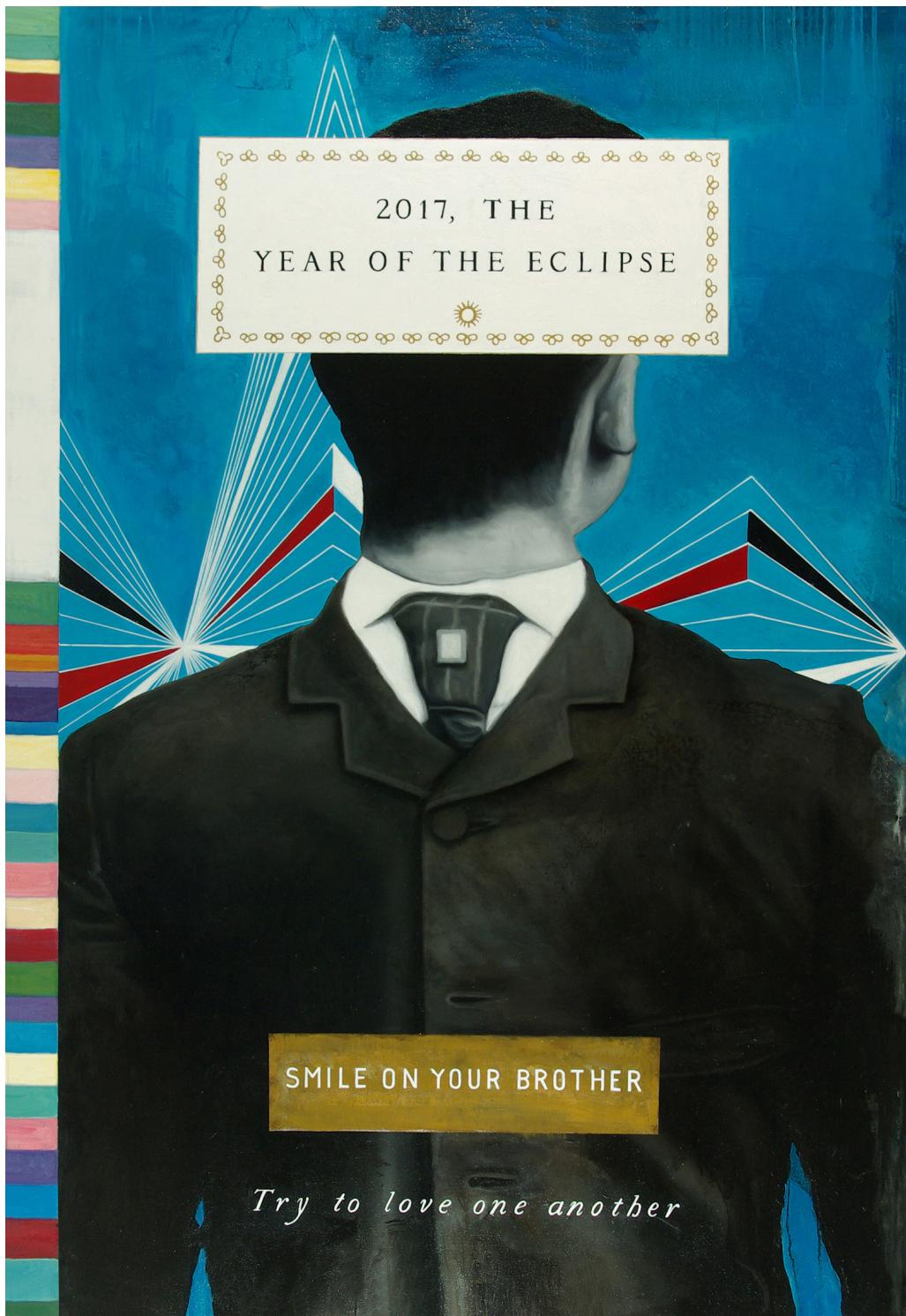
*fig. 08*

*fig. 08* PRINTED COVERS  
*THIS LAND IS NOT EMPTY*

Catalog and documentation have been part of the architecture of previous exhibitions. This project followed the frontier routes of Lewis and Clark and General G.A. Custer across Native America on a journey of reconciliation. This project included among other things, setting resurvey markers and bicycling the 3000mile route for 2months.

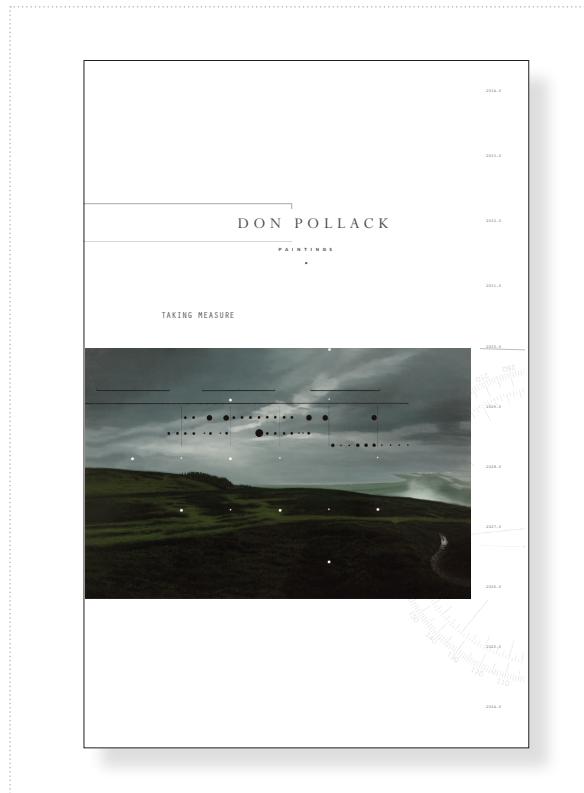
*design*

*fig. 09* YEAR OF THE ECLIPSE, oil on canvas, 48"x72" | 2017



*fig. 10*

*fig. 11*



*fig. 11* PRINTED COVERS  
TAKING MEASURE

Catalog and documentation have been part of the architecture of previous exhibitions. This project explored the landscape archetypes of Ireland and the music and mythology of place.

design

*fig. 12*

NO PLACE FOR HATE, oil on canvas, 48" x 72" | 2017

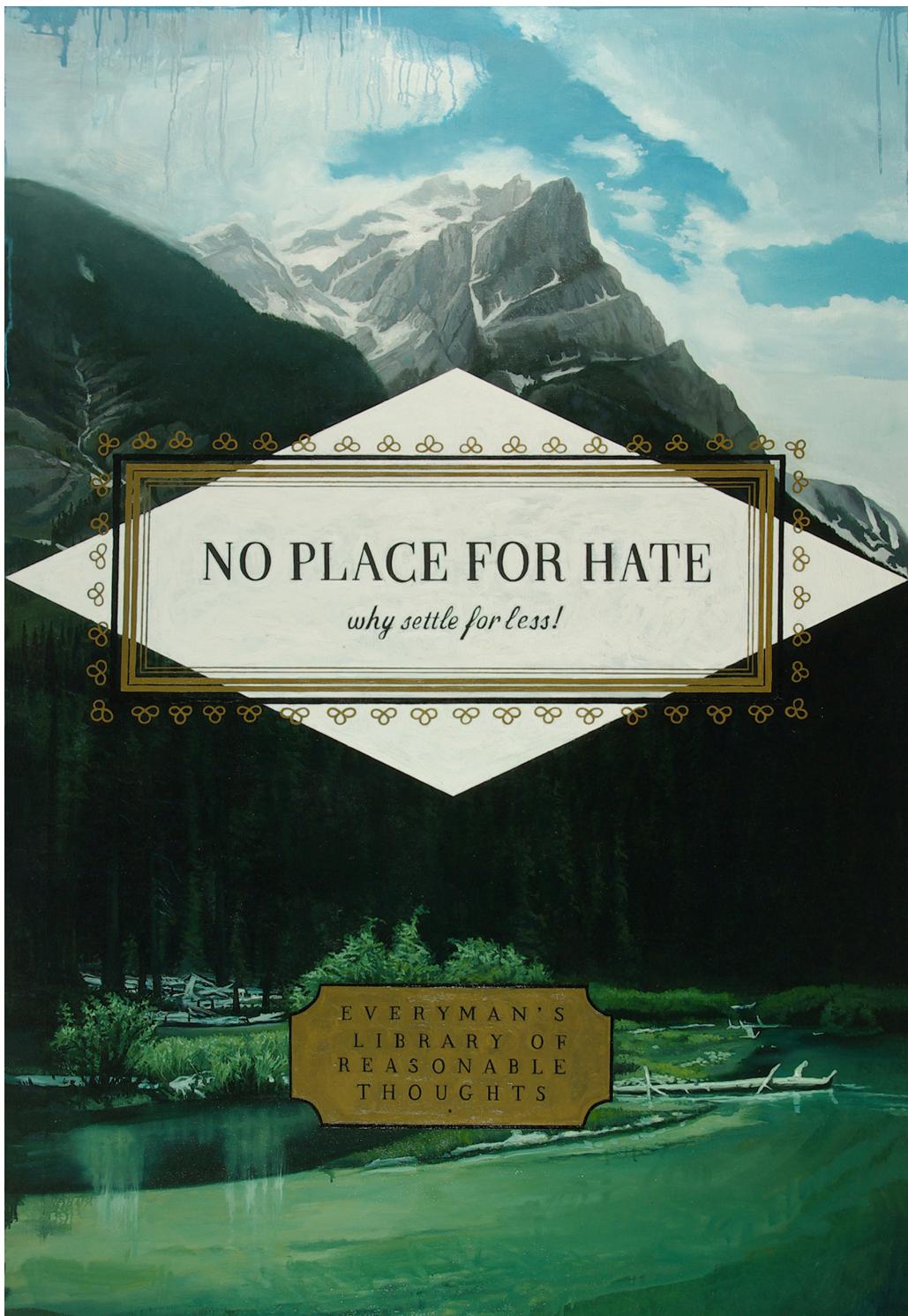
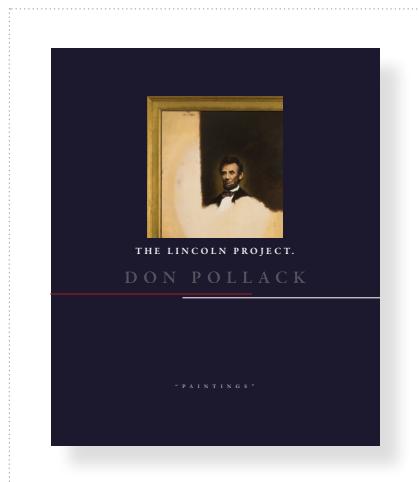


fig. 12

*fig. 13*



*fig. 14*



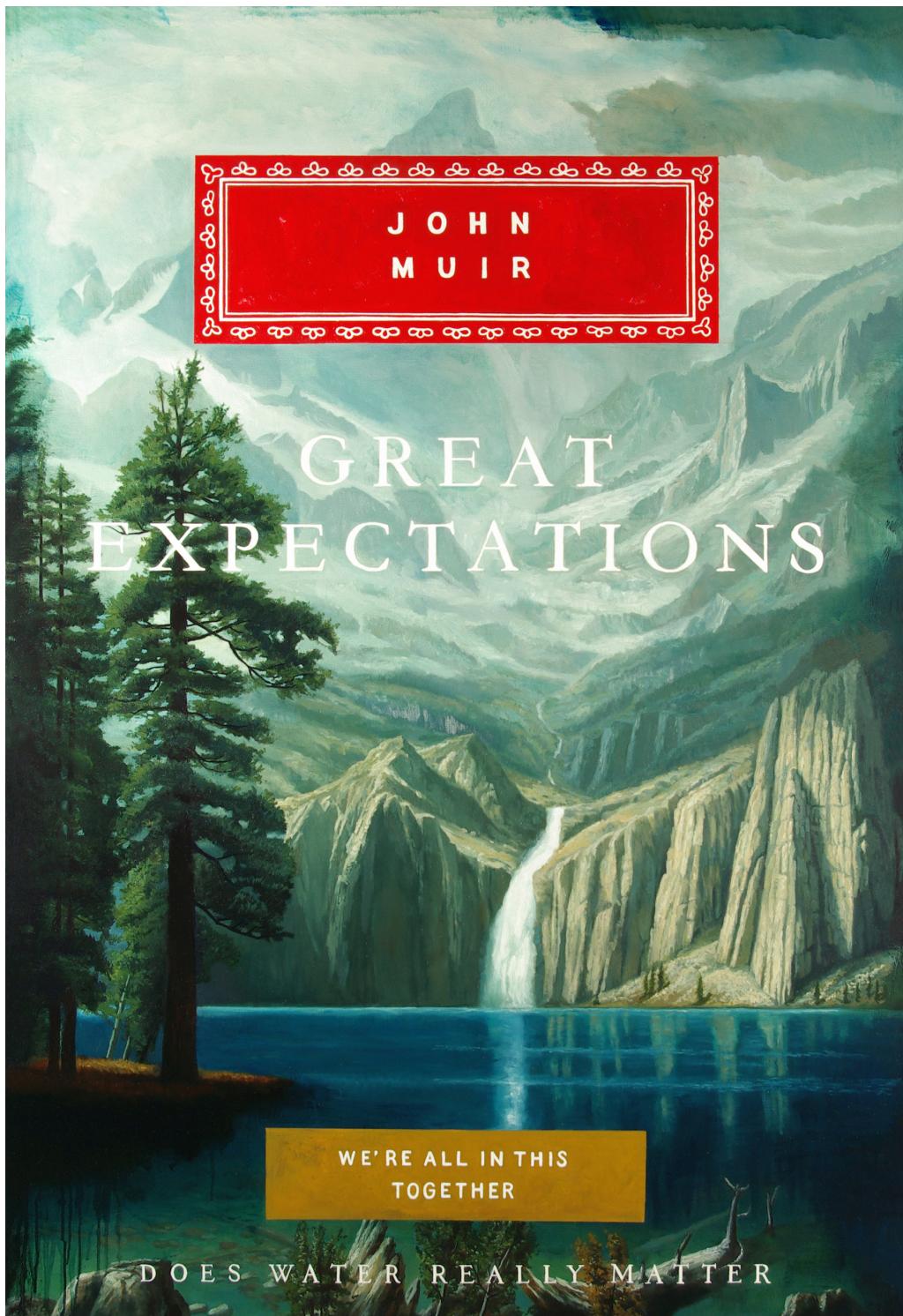
*fig. 13, 14* *LANDSCAPE AND MEMORY*  
*LINCOLN PROJECT*

The Lincoln project included painting, book design, maps, documents and signage in the exhibition. The graphics are an essential layer to the concept of building a library or museum. Also, the work of the Hudson River painters among others have influenced the visual and cultural exploration of the history of the American West. This painting by Albert Bierstadt hangs in the National Gallery in Washington D.C. and is the inspiration for the *Great Expectations* cover.

*design and painting*

*fig. 15*

*GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, oil on canvas, 48" x 72" | 2017



*fig. 15*



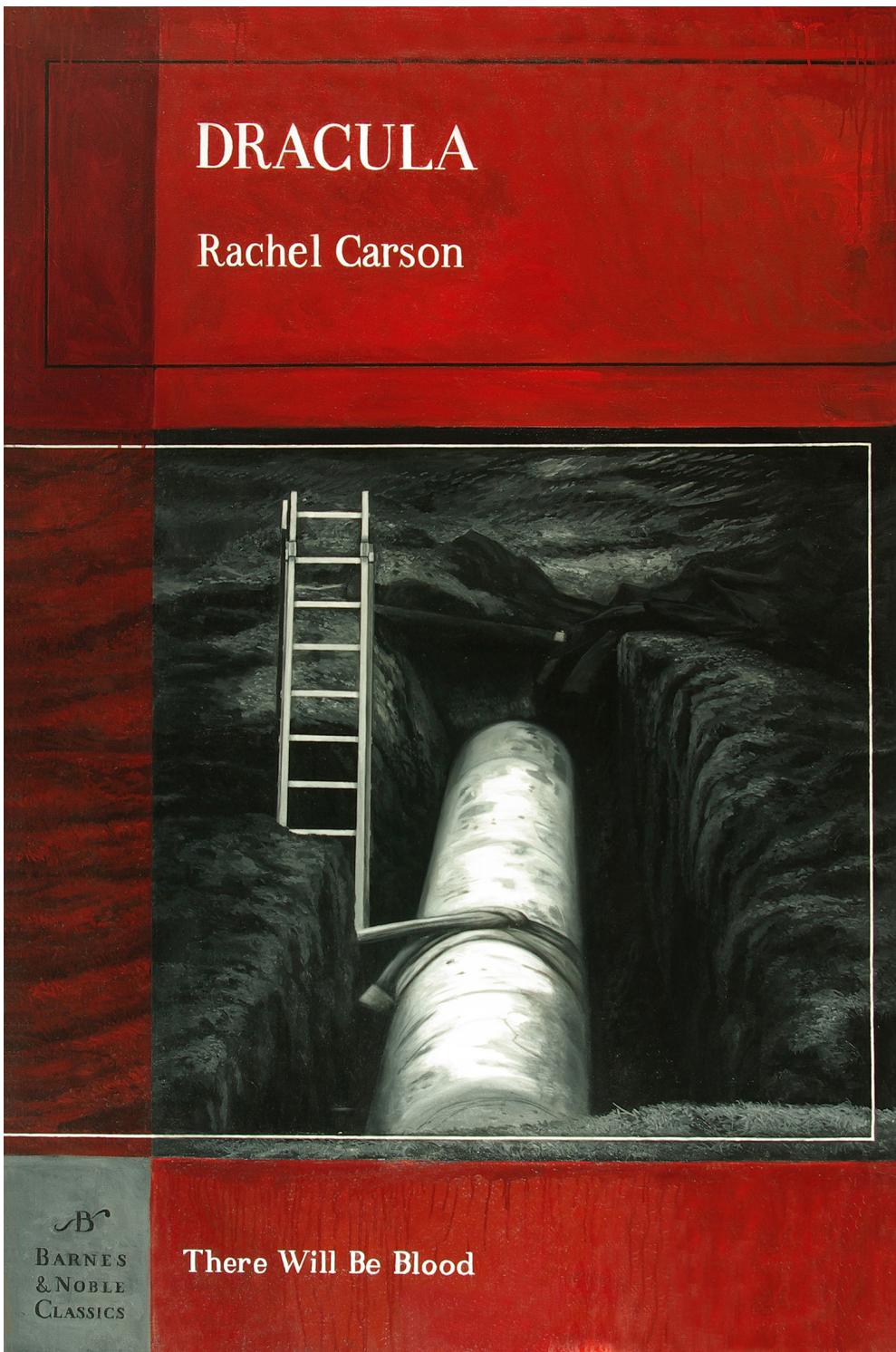
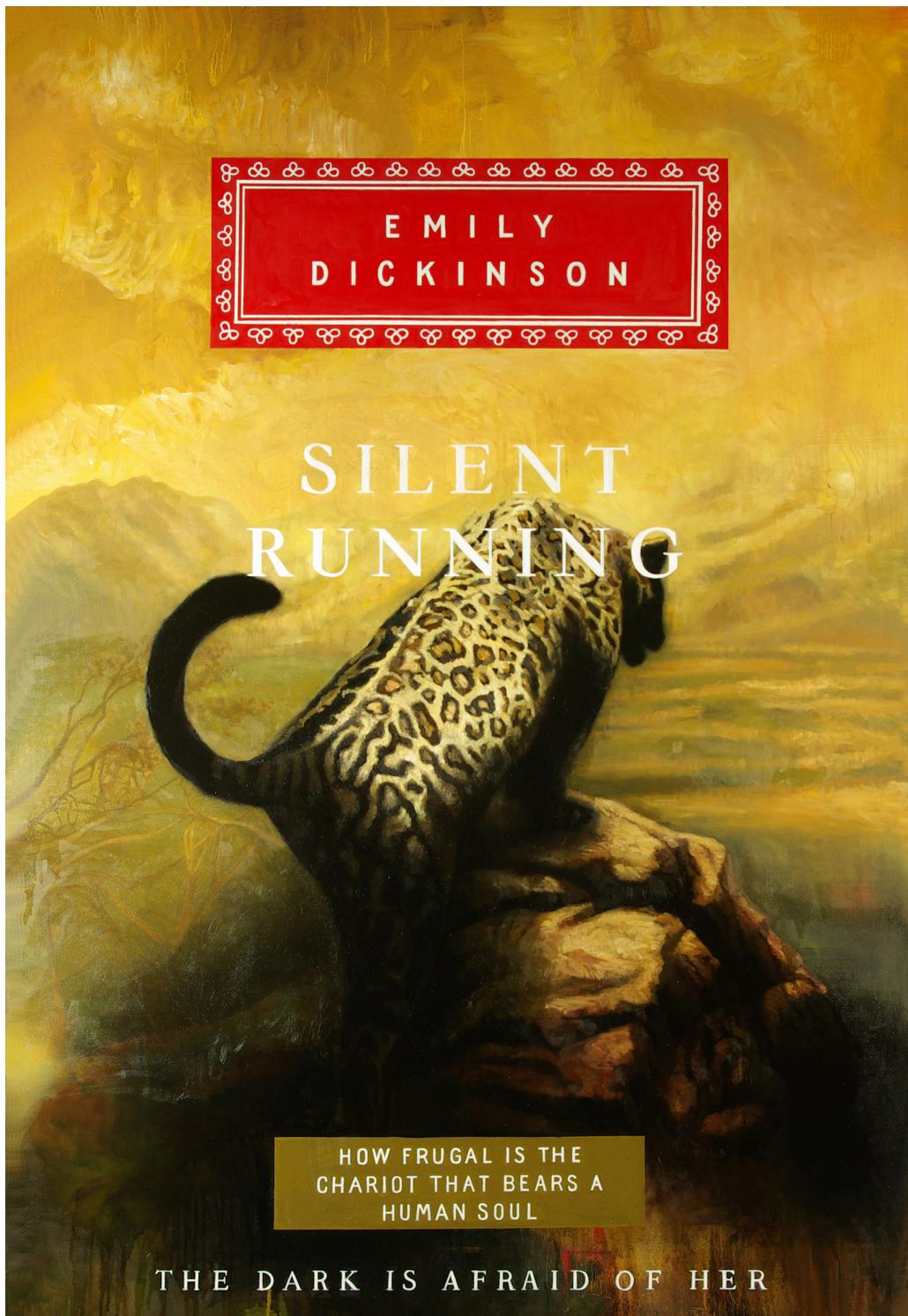


fig. 16





*fig. 17*

#### EDUCATION

M.F.A. Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

B.F.A. University of Illinois Urbana, Illinois

#### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018      Gallery Victor Armendariz, **TRUE LIFE NOVELETTES**, Chicago, Illinois
- 2016      Bridgeport Art Center, **THIS LAND IS NOT EMPTY**, Chicago, Illinois  
Carnegie Museum for Art and History, Bernheim Arboretum, New Albany, Indiana
- 2013      Perimeter Gallery, **34 DAYS TO WASHINGTON**, Chicago, Illinois
- 2011      Newzones Gallery, **FAR FROM HOME**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **FAR FROM HOME**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2010      Perimeter Gallery, **MYSTERIOUS ISLAND**, Chicago, Illinois  
Marquette University Law Library, **LAYING THE FOUNDATION [a Lincoln Portrait]**, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 2009      Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, **THE LINCOLN PROJECT**, Springfield, Illinois  
The Union League Club, **THE LINCOLN PROJECT**, Chicago, Illinois
- 2007      Newzones Gallery, **THE SHELTERING SKY**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Merwin and Wakeley Galleries, Illinois Wesleyan University, **AMERICAN INHERITANCE**, retrospective,  
*Bloomington, Illinois*  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **NIGHT**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2006      Margaret Thatcher Projects, **AMERICAN GOTHIC, PAST IMPERFECT**, New York, New York  
Perimeter Gallery, **IMPROVISATION**, Chicago, Illinois
- 2005      Newzones Gallery, **MISSIVES**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **SOUTH OF THE TENNESSEE, REMAINS OF THE CAMPAIGN**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2004      Perimeter Gallery, **VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY, FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON**, New York, New York
- 2003      Newzones Gallery, **GARDEN OF FORKING PATHS**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Perimeter Gallery, **A SEARCH FOR HEROES, LINCOLN & THE ILLINOIS LANDSCAPE**, Chicago, Illinois
- 2002      Perimeter Gallery, **ANCIEN REGIME**, New York, New York  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **ANCIEN REGIME**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2001      Newzones Gallery, **ANCIEN REGIME**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- 2000      Perimeter Gallery, **BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH**, Chicago, Illinois
- 1999      Newzones Gallery, **NORTH AMERICAN INHERITANCE**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **AMERICAN INHERITANCE**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 1998      Marcia Wood Gallery, **ENTERING THE CIRCLE**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 1997      Newzones Gallery, **CROSSING THE NEXT MERIDIAN**, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- 1996      Peter Miller Gallery, **LANDSCAPE AND MEMORY**, Chicago, Illinois  
Marcia Wood Gallery, **MYTHOPOEIA, AN AMERICAN PORTRAIT**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 1995      Elliot Smith Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri
- 1994      Deson-Saunders Gallery, **SHADOWLANDS**, Chicago, Illinois
- 1993      Bess Cutler Gallery, New York, New York  
Monte Clark Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- 1991      Bess Cutler Gallery, New York, New York

#### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2018      **FRONT AND CENTER**, Gallery Victor Armendariz, Chicago, Illinois  
**DECK THE WALLS**, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- 2015      **ARCHITECTURAL BIENNIAL**, Brininstool and Lynch, Chicago, Illinois
- 2014      **BLACK AND WHITE**, Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2012      Art Miami, Perimeter Gallery- Chicago, Miami, Florida  
Group Show, Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2011      Art Chicago, The Merchandise Mart, Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois  
Group Show, Kenise Barnes Gallery, Larchmont, New York
- 2010      **PULL**, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia  
**MEMORY IS A METAPHOR**, Kenise Barnes Gallery, Larchmont, New York
- 2009      **NATURE SATISFIES BY ITS LOVELINESS**, Kenise Barnes Gallery, Larchmont, New York  
**THE EXQUISITE CORPSE**, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
- 2008      **CURATOR'S CHOICE**, Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit, Detroit, Michigan

**SELECTED AWARDS**

- 2017 ENRICHMENT GRANT, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 2016 ENRICHMENT GRANT School of the Art Institute of Chicago, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 2015 SABBATICAL GRANT, Illinois Institute of Art, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 2014 BERNHEIM ARBORETUM, ARTIST RESIDENCY, *Louisville, Kentucky*  
 2012 FACULTY OF THE YEAR AWARD, Illinois Institute of Art, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 2010 COMMISSION AWARD, Marquette University Law Library, *Milwaukee, Wisconsin*  
 2009 SABBATICAL GRANT, Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 ORDER OF LINCOLN, BICENTENNIAL EDITION, State of Illinois, *Springfield, Illinois*  
 ENRICHMENT GRANT, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, *Chicago, Illinois*

**SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

- Philbrook Museum of Art, *Tulsa, Oklahoma*  
 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 Union League Club, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 Fidelity, *Charlotte, North Carolina*  
 Allston & Bird, *Washington, D.C.*  
 Corboy, Demetrio, and Clifford, *Chicago, Illinois*  
 Poco Petroleum, *Calgary, Alberta, Canada*  
 Burnett, Duckworth, and Palmer, *Calgary, Alberta, Canada*  
 Evans, Martin, and Wilson, *Calgary, Alberta, Canada*  
 Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *New York, New York*  
 American Telephone and Telegraph Company, *Chicago, Illinois*

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Jenna Esarey, bernheim ART ON DISPLAY AT CARNEGIE CENTER, Courier-Journal, *February 6, 2016*  
 Lauren Viera, DON POLLACK, MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, Chicago Tribune, *March 5, 2010*  
 Jason Mojica, DON POLLACK: IMPROVISATION, Time Out Chicago, *February 2-9, 2006*  
 Edward Gomez, REIMAGINING THE LANDSCAPE, Art and Antiques, Atlanta, Georgia, *October, 2003*  
 Alan Artner, DON POLLACK, Chicago Tribune, *March 21, 2003*

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

- 2018 TRUE LIFE NOVELETTES, Gallery Victor Armendariz, Chicago, Illinois, *catalog*  
 2013 34 DAYS TO WASHINGTON", Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois, *catalog*  
 2012 Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois, *catalog*  
 2010 Art Chicago International Exposition, Mart Center, Chicago, Illinois, *catalog*  
*Marquette Law Review*, vol. 93, number 4, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, *catalog*  
 2009 THE LINCOLN PROJECT", Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, Springfield, Illinois, *catalog*  
 DESIGN SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL, EXTRAORDINARY CLASS PROJECTS FROM INTERNATIONAL  
 DESIGN SCHOOLS, Steven Heller & Lita Talarico, Rockport Publishers, Beverly  
 Massachusetts, *book*

**TEACHING**

- School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, *Adjunct Associate Professor, Visual Communications Design Department, September 2005-present*

**SELECTED LECTURES**

- Northwestern University, Slivka College, Evanston, Illinois, CROSSING THE GREAT DIVIDE, *February 1, 2016*  
 Bronx, City College of New York, Bronx, New York, *December 10, 2015*  
 Fluid, Society for Literature, Science, & Art Conference, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas,  
 CROSSING THE GREAT DIVIDE, *October 9, 2014 - October 12, 2014*  
 Postnatural, Society for Literature, Science, & Art Conference, Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana  
 34 DAYS TO WASHINGTON", October 3, 2013, *October 6, 2013*



CHICAGO 2018

