

WHAT REMAINS

February 17 - May 14, 2023

An exploration of remnants and decay in terms of photography as a medium, the natural world, history, and human-made phenomena.

Featuring artists Brian Cavanaugh, Liam Currin-Rogers, Deanna Dikeman, Chelsea Gilmore, Jeffrey Mack, Leah Swenson, Shana Cruz Thompson, and Thomas Yi.

Curated by Genevieve Waller and Mary Grace Bernard



Colorado
Photographic
Arts Center



Curatorial statement

For many artists and scholars, photography has a direct connection with temporality and mortality. As literary theorist Roland Barthes asserted in *Camera Lucida* (1980), “Photography may correspond to the intrusion, in our modern society, of an asymbolic Death, outside of religion, outside of ritual, a kind of abrupt dive into literal Death. *Life/Death*: the paradigm is reduced to a simple click, the one separating the initial pose from the final print. With the Photograph, we enter into *flat Death*.”

Images take a moment out of time and thus remind us of our own brief existence. When loved ones pass away, buildings fall into disrepair, or natural things decay, our photographs show them still in their prime. Photos remain, while most everything and everyone else changes, grows older, or expires. And even the survival of physical and digital photographs is tenuous: paper prints can disintegrate and digital images can be lost forever when a hard drive crashes.

In this exhibition, we bring together works by eight artists who use the medium of photography to document fleeting moments, places that have deteriorated, the detritus of chronic illness, still lifes that will decompose, the rot and misappropriation of history, the human body as an ephemeral and contested site, trace images of substances and objects that once rested on photo paper, and remnants of film and discarded photos reimagined and given new life as sculpture. Together, we see these works as important and beautiful meditations on what it means to confront our own impermanence and how photography can help us come to terms with loss and the passing of time.

Mary Grace Bernard and Genevieve Waller
Curators of *What Remains*

About the curators

Genevieve Waller is an artist, writer, historian, and curator. She creates photograms (cameraless photographs), sculpture, drawings, and videos that deal with excess, substitution, transparency, and the status of everyday objects. She researches and writes about the aesthetic of camp, the history of gay culture, film, modern and contemporary art, and popular music. Originally from Wichita, Kansas, she received an undergraduate degree in Art History at Wichita State University, an M.F.A. in Photography and Art History at Ohio University, and an M.A. in visual and cultural studies at the University of Rochester. She spent a year in Berlin, Germany as a Fulbright grantee and for many years has been a college radio DJ. Currently, she resides in Denver, Colorado where she works at the University of Denver and is the founder and editor of the art journal *DARIA: Denver Art Review, Inquiry, and Analysis*.

Mary Grace Bernard (MG, she/her) is a transmedia and performance artist, educator, advocate, and crip witch. Her practice finds itself at the intersection of performance art, transmedia installation art, art scholarship, art writing, curation, and activism. Exploring seemingly separate fields like the material and immaterial realities of (dis)ability, the living dead, queerness, cy-borgism, crip time, post-humanness, spirituality, madness, care, dependency, and the boundaries between the personal and political spheres of existence, she seeks to dissolve binary thinking while converging otherwise invisible communities and their stories.

Types of photographs in this exhibition

Archival inkjet/pigment print

A digital print made with a high-quality inkjet printer using pigment-based ink and fine art photo paper. It is designed to last a long time with proper care and storage due to the fade-resistant inks and archival paper.

Chemigram

An image an artist creates by applying darkroom chemicals or other substances to a light-sensitive surface, usually photographic paper. The word was invented by the Belgian artist Pierre Cordier in the 1950s. The final image is set by bathing the paper in photographic fixer.

Cyanotype

A type of photographic print using ultraviolet light-sensitive iron salts coated on paper or fabric to make images in shades of blue. The process was invented by the English astronomer and chemist John Herschel in the 1840s. You create a cyanotype by placing objects or a negative onto the paper/fabric and exposing it to sunlight or an ultraviolet light bulb. The image is developed by washing the exposed paper/fabric in water.

Giclée print

Giclée is a French term that means “to spray” and it refers to the way inkjet printers apply pigment. A giclée print is an image made from a digital file printed directly onto fine art photo paper. The digital file can be a scan of a photographic film image.

Photogram

A photographic image you produce without using a camera, usually by placing objects on a light-sensitive surface like photo paper and exposing the ensemble to light. The resulting image often resembles a silhouette or X-ray depending on the translucency of the objects.

Silver gelatin photograph

An image on photographic paper that contains light-sensitive, silver metal particles suspended in a layer of gelatin. Most black and white photos from the late 1800s to the present are silver gelatin. Once the paper is exposed to light—often in a darkroom using an enlarger with a photographic negative—it goes through three chemicals to bring out and fix the image: developer, stop bath, and fixer.

About the artists

Brian Cavanaugh repurposes objects and combines other media in his artworks like photography, video, light, motion, live plants, and sound. He manipulates artifacts through deconstruction and reconstruction, transforming sculptures into multi-sensory, layered experiences. Each work can stand alone, but when combined they add up to more than the sum. Cavanaugh is influenced by history, nature, current events, art, music, and literature. The artist's installations toy with absurdity and context, evolving the constructions into vessels of cultural curiosity.

Liam Currin-Rogers is an artist based in North Carolina. He studied Fine Arts with a focus in Graphic Design at East Carolina University and enjoys photography as a hobby and as a way to communicate his creative ideas. Liam's designs are typically minimalistic in nature and exhibit his commitment to thorough craftsmanship. His process work is exploratory and experimental, and he appreciates learning new techniques. When he is not designing, Liam enjoys playing the guitar, screenprinting, backpacking, and spending time with his spouse and their three dogs.

Deanna Dikeman was born in 1954 in Sioux City, Iowa, and currently resides in Kansas City, Kansas. She has photographed her midwestern family and surroundings since 1985, when she left a corporate job to try a photography class. She has M.S. and B.S. degrees from Purdue University. She received an Aaron

Siskind Foundation Fellowship in 1996, and the United States Artists Booth Fellowship in 2008. Since 1988, Deanna has had 24 solo shows and has been included in over 160 group shows. Her photographs have been featured as public art projects in Kansas City, Missouri; St. Louis, Missouri; and Albany, New York. "A Photographer's Parents Wave Farewell" was one of the top 25 stories of 2020 in *The New Yorker*. Her work has also been published in *Buzzfeed News*, *JPG*, *Country Living*, *D la Repubblica*, *DUMMY*, *GEO*, *GUP*, *Harpers Magazine*, *M Le magazine du Monde*, *TAZ Berlin*, *Der Tagesspiegel Sonntag*, *The New York Times T Magazine*, *Réponses Photo*, *Slate Behold*, *theo*, *De Volkskrant Observatorium*, and *VOSTOK*, among others. Her book *Leaving and Waving* was published by *Chose Commune* in 2021, after being short-listed for the *MACK 2020 First Book Award*. The book received the 2021 *Prix Nadar* awarded by the *Association Gens d'Images* in France. It was also a finalist for the 2021 *Paris Photo/Aperture Foundation First PhotoBook Award*, and is now in its third printing. Photographs from *Leaving and Waving* have been exhibited at festivals, museums, and galleries in eleven countries: Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States.

Chelsea Gilmore grew up in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, received a BFA in Sculpture at Colorado State University, and thereafter began a career in art, arts advocacy, and education. Her practice focuses on creative play, radical imagination, and collaborative project-based learning.

Jeffrey Mack is an Omaha-based artist and has been exhibiting his work since 2011. Jeff is primarily a photographer and printmaker. Diagnosed with insulin-dependent diabetes at the age of three, his work often reflects his experiences with that chronic illness. In his current work he uses insulin pump syringes to create cyanotype photograms. In 2020, a show Jeff curated was nominated for an Omaha Arts and Entertainment Award. In 2022, one of Jeff's cyanotype photograms was selected to be part of the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts annual benefit auction.

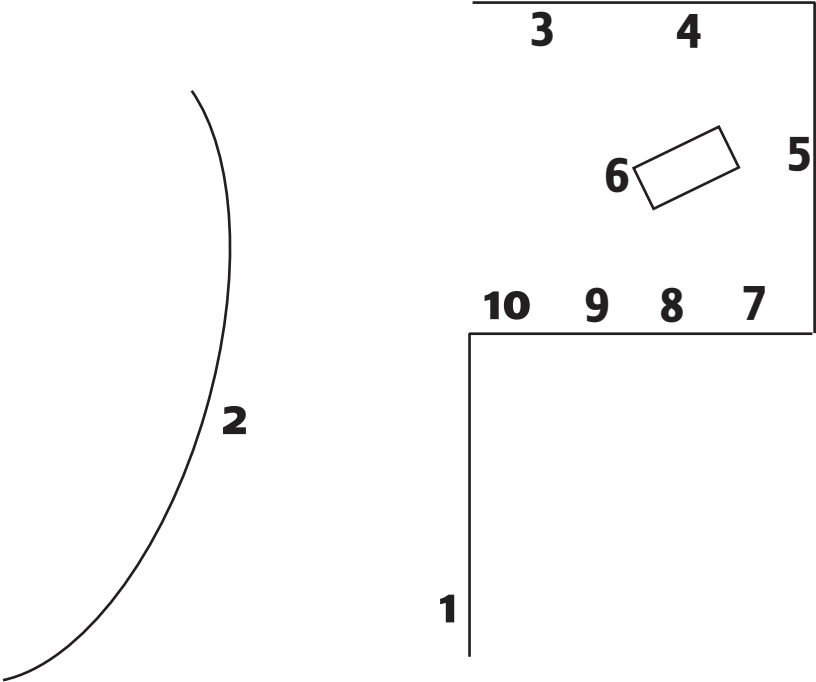
Leah Swenson is a visual artist living and working in Denver. Leah holds a BFA in Photography and Video Art from RMCAD (2013) and has exhibited her work locally, nationally, and internationally. Leah's work is influenced by the idea of mapping and landscape—and applying those concepts to subjects other than geography. Leah's work often incorporates encaustic medium, collage elements, and photography and is informed by many historic and contemporary artists. She is a member of the Artnauts Art Collective, The Postcard Collective, and Pirate: Contemporary Art Oasis in Denver. Leah is also a refugee advocate and serves local refugee populations at one of the top global refugee resettlement agencies in Denver.

Shana Cruz-Thompson is an experimental photographer and mixed media artist based in Aurora, Colorado. Often engaging with personal archives, her work explores themes of legacy, nostalgia, memory, grief, and complex familial dynamics. She holds a BFA in Photography from the University of Colorado Denver.

Passionate about community outreach and arts education, she is the founder of Project Photo Op—a burgeoning nonprofit that strives to empower youth through photography workshops, mentorships, and exhibitions. Shana supports her community as an Art in Public Places Commissioner for the City of Aurora and serves on the board of the Denver Digerati. As the creator and curator of Vigilante Darkroom Zine and past contributing writer for Analog Forever Magazine, she aims to champion women working in analog, experimental, and alternative photographic processes. Shana is a mom to five incredible sons and currently teaches art to middle schoolers (and loves every single second of it).

Thomas Yi is an artist based in Boulder, Colorado. He received his BFA from the University of Colorado Boulder in Interdisciplinary Art Practices in 2019. As a second-generation immigrant, his work attempts to connect disparity within dualities of his identity and create a narrative of intergenerational experiences through photography and video.

Gallery guide



1. Liam Currin-Rogers

(from left to right, top to bottom)

Chemigram #48, Chemigram #64, Chemigram #42, Chemigram #88, Chemigram #99, Chemigram #46, Chemigram #43, Chemigram #86, Chemigram #39, Chemigram #94, and Chemigram #35

Chemigrams on silver gelatin photographic paper
2020

"My artwork is fueled by my curiosities. I am fond of using alternative process photography as a means of delving into these investigations. My chemigram journey started at the beginning of 2020 during my last semester at East Carolina University. I found comfort in the darkroom where I felt safe to explore my creativity without judgment. My explorations began as a process for my graphic design work and eventually developed into a series of their own.

These chemigrams are a part of an alternative process study in which I created an image daily for a total of one hundred days as a way to explore the effects of various chemicals and their applications on photographic paper. Chemigram works by Pierre Cordier motivated me to experiment at length. Additionally, my background in graphic design and affinity for typography paired with my experience in letterpress printing naturally helped shape this series."

— *Liam Currin-Rogers*

2. Chelsea Gilmore

Glimpses

Misprints and film (a collaboration with photographer Em Daugherty)

2023

"I create landscapes that seek new worlds from the *disregarded* things of this one. I am compelled to find moments of intimacy, beauty, and wonder through the transformation of familiar materials into unusual formats.

Combining a large volume of repetitive and organic forms, the work looks familiar yet otherworldly. I take the unassuming and create the unexpected to encourage moments of curiosity and discovery, and challenge the

boundaries of the familiar, the natural, and the dream-like state of remembering.

Glimpses is an installation of sewed misprints provided by Fort Collins photographer Em Daugherty and old film. The stories once told through Em's creative lens are disassembled and re-realized through the subtleties of peering through a veil. The narrative becomes about the process of transformation and the fragility of human perspective."

— *Chelsea Gilmore*

3. Deanna Dikeman

(from left to right, top to bottom)

Birdbath with sunset
Archival inkjet print
2017

Garden hose puddle
Archival inkjet print
2018

Birdbath with blue sky
Archival inkjet print
2018

Birdbath in rain
Archival inkjet print
2018

Puddle over front sidewalk
Archival inkjet print
2019

Puddle at Jane's house
Archival inkjet print
2020

Puddle on concrete slab
Archival inkjet print
2018

"I have always had a fondness for birdbaths. My dad kept a birdbath in the corner of our yard, and it was my job as a little girl to fill it up with water after school. I remember one day when he got home from work and discovered the birdbath was empty. He made it clear he was disappointed. I felt bad because I had let him down. I had also let the birds down. Years later, as an adult with a house of my own, I bought myself a birdbath. I started to see the surface of the water and appreciate the view of the reflected world. The water in the birdbath might be a portal into a mysterious universe. Puddles have the same appeal. A puddle is really just a birdbath on the ground.

Since my father's passing in 2009, I have come to equate birdbaths with his presence. I filled the birdbath on the day he died and took a picture of it."

— *Deanna Dikeman*

4. Jeffery Mack (from left to right, top to bottom)

Sharps
Cyanotype on archival cotton paper
2018

Starburst
Cyanotype on Legion Stonehenge Paper
2023

Traverse
Cyanotype on Legion Stonehenge Paper
2023

DNA 2
Cyanotype on Canvas
2019

Demarcation
Cyanotype on archival cotton paper
2018

Great Wave
Cyanotype on archival cotton paper
2018

"Type 1 diabetes can be a difficult illness to manage. It is mostly invisible, extremely expensive, fatal if not managed well, and potentially debilitating even when it is well managed. I was diagnosed as a diabetic at the age of three. In many ways, the disease has been shaping my life since that time. My artwork attempts to share my experience managing a chronic illness in a light and whimsical way. My work with cyanotype photograms began years ago when I started using an insulin pump. I have saved all of the syringes used to load insulin into the pump. Those syringes are used to create cyanotype photograms with abstract forms made of repeating patterns. The photograms balance communicating the scale of treatment required for keeping me alive with the beauty of swirling forms of white and blue."

— *Jeffery Mack*

5. Thomas Yi
(from left to right, top to bottom)

Untitled
Archival pigment print
2023

strange harm from electric fans
Archival pigment print
2023

mila
Archival pigment print
2023

remember how this feels
Archival pigment print
2023

even small fish are fish
Archival pigment print
2023

"For this series of work, I decided to interpret the thematic elements of remnants and decay as a metaphor for fragments of tradition and identity that have always been deteriorating in my life, such as my ability to speak Korean or feeling out of touch with my family's history and past. I chose to photograph objects which loosely represent those memories and the intergenerational disconnect of my immigrant family experience."

— *Thomas Yi*

6. Brian Cavanaugh

Fight/Flight
Installation
2022

"The pony with rider, *Fight/Flight*, is part of a larger installation shown at Pirate Contemporary Art in July 2022 titled Yankee Doodle, which was inspired by the lyrics to the song "Yankee Doodle Went to Town." *Fight/Flight* is one of four vignettes. My intent was to explore dualities.

With questions more than answers, I thought about “what is there” as much as “what is not.” Is it about coming together or falling apart? Is this depicting a moment frozen in the past, present, or future? I wanted to make something that embodied this multifaceted phenomenon, exploring compound effects of looking through to see more, instead of seeing one side or the other.

The vignette features a life-sized pony construction made from a weathered wooden ironing board and twisted wire with a skeletal wire rider suspended above. Both are partially covered in photographic turkey feathers printed on one side and the other side with book jacket eagle prints. They appear to be frozen in motion; a moment captured. Surrounding the pony and rider are suspended mobiles—wire and photographic collaged birds in flight made from photo fragments, found objects, and duplicated fragments derived from the rest of the installation. Balanced and motion activated by air currents and visitor movement, producing motion in contrast to the stationary pony and rider."

— *Brian Cavanaugh*

7. Shana Cruz-Thompson

(right to left, top to bottom)

Palmyra House:

Exterior, Hangers, Car, Last Will and Testament, Farm Sink, and Snapshots

Giclée digital fine prints

2020

8. Shana Cruz-Thompson

(right to left, top to bottom)

Weld House:

Sticks & Stones, Blood, Sweat & Tears (detail), and

Blood, Sweat & Tears
Giclée digital fine prints
2021

"In this ongoing series, I explore themes of loss, grief, and impermanence through the documentation and recontextualization of abandoned rural dwellings. The homes and the discarded objects therein serve as both memorials and memento mori. When I work in these spaces, I am at once aware of the generations that found refuge there and the ruthless fragility of life.

After the sudden loss of my son Daniel in 2008, I found refuge exploring and photographing the wide-open spaces and abandoned buildings of the Eastern Plains of Colorado. My broken heart needed space to breathe, and the openness of the prairie offered it in spades. The abandoned homes I found there provided refuge in a way that was unexpected; the fragility and loneliness of the decaying homes matched my grief exactly.

This feeling was the most pronounced when I discovered the Weld House (named for the county in which it resides) in 2020. Long since left to rot, this house is a refuge for hundreds of swallows that make nests in its eaves and thousands of bees that create hives within its walls. Despite her appearance, this house was still very much doing what she had been built to do—even in her crumbling state, she remained a protector, a sanctuary, a mother. Her tenacity renewed in me a feeling that had been stifled for a very long time. 'Look at us,' I marveled, 'here we both are, with the audacity to keep standing.'

Over the years I have taken care to honor her legacy. She has allowed me to lovingly peel her layers of wallpaper and coat them with cyanotype solution. Using artifacts in the house, I make prints on site, then rehang the finished panels using nails extracted from the home's walls and

floorboards. The iron salts in the cyanotypes oxidize over time and the blue color deepens then eventually fades, much like a bruise. This ever-evolving work is my love letter to the house, to my son, to myself, and to those who once called the Weld house a home.

I discovered the Palmyra House in early 2020, and the connection I felt there was not so much to the house itself as it was to the mother who once lived there. The feeling of despair in the Palmyra house was visceral and familiar. I sifted through the inches-deep debris and pieced together clues from newspaper clippings, letters, receipts, and sympathy cards that revealed that she, too, had tragically lost a son. With this knowledge, my perspective and focus immediately shifted. Through my camera lens, I revered even the most mundane objects left behind as talismans of love and grief. I know this story did not belong to me; I was a voyeur and trespasser. But I will forever feel connected to that house and to that mother from having experienced it.

I make this work to remember, to love, to grieve, and to understand. I find meaning and hope in these small acts of renewal. These homes and their stories still matter."

9. Leah Swenson

(right to left, top to bottom)

Yoga Girls:

S, M, L, Girl Tipping Forward, Pyramid Girls, Girl with Three Black Dots, Three Falling Girls, Circle Girls

Silver gelatin photograms

2018

"These works incorporate found imagery of yoga poses, sewing patterns, and bathymetric charts to explore the idea of body image. They are photograms of paper collage works. In cartography, a "meander line" is used to delineate

the border at which a body of water meets a land mass. In some sense, it is a boundary between the known and the unknown. In this body of work, I am depicting my own 'meander lines,' between external stresses, pressures, and fears and my own selfhood."

10. Leah Swenson

(right to left, top to bottom)

Vide Infra:

Prevailing Winds (Skull), Disregarding "Boundaries" (Brain), and The Line Between Them (Ovaries)

Archival inkjet prints, paper collage, encaustic medium, and carbon

2015

"*Vide Infra* is a Latin term meaning 'see below,' historically used in charts and texts to refer viewers to further information listed elsewhere. In this body of work, I'm considering different ways of mapping and charting information. Photographing medical anatomy charts overlaid with maps of Antarctica, I imagine what could have been lost in translation in these representations of humans and landscapes. I've always been fascinated with anatomical depictions, charts, and maps, and how most of the identity of what they attempt to describe is stripped away in the end product. Using re-arranged text from didactic blurbs printed on the maps, carbon, encaustic medium, paper, and fabric, the prints become maps of something ineffable."

Opening Reception
February 17, 2023
5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
Anderson Academic Commons
Room 340

University of Denver
Anderson Academic Commons
2150 E. Evans Ave., Denver, CO 80210
Upper Level, Dean's Suite Area