

# SOME SPONTANEOUS PARTICULARS

DECEMBER 9, 2017 - JANUARY 20, 2018

VANESSA BROWN  
HEIDE HINRICHS  
KATHLEEN RITTER

CURATED BY KIMBERLY PHILLIPS

1.a.

This project began with my pause over a particularly beguiling passage in Susan Howe's 2014 book-length poem *Spontaneous Particulars: The Telepathy of Archives*. It reads:

Often by chance, via out-of-the-way card catalogues, or through previous web surfing, a particular "deep" text, or a simple object [...] reveals itself *here* at the surface of the visible, by mystic documentary telepathy. Quickly—precariously—coming as it does from an opposite direction. If you are lucky, you may experience a moment *before*.<sup>1</sup>

I imagine a telepathic archive: it reaches through the thick opacity of all that has been gathered and catalogued (gathered and forgotten) to disclose itself like a shard of glass. It startles you with its sudden presentness, with its insistent, extrasensory grip. It doesn't wait to be found, but *reveals itself*.

1.b.

This project began with my indignance over the same passage in *Spontaneous Particulars: The Telepathy of Archives*. I imagine a telepathic archive: is this idea not buoyed by our incessant longing for things to reveal themselves to us? I feel we await this visitation at our peril. Things do not appear, but must be searched for laboriously. Hauled out. Handled. Carried on.

1.c.

This project began with the weariness that accompanies my being a woman.

1.d.

This project is an impatient homage. It recognizes its partiality. It queries the implications of retrieval, the ethics of translation. It gathers together women artists whose material handling is a means of bringing form to that which has been passed over, wrongly attributed, or quietly endured. Its choreography is inquisitive and outraged. It posits making as an incomplete act of admiration, persistence and solidarity.

2.

Vanessa Brown is a sculptor who works primarily in steel. She attempts to parse its associations with industry, weaponry and brutality from its subtler qualities such as pliability, versatility and slightness. The imagery in Brown's work draws from a number of sources including landscapes, historical craft, recurring symbols from her own dreams, as well as the biographies and work of other female artists. Her contribution to this project, a new work titled *Marianne*, considers the conditions under which the German sculptor, designer and photographer Marianne Brandt (1893 - 1983) studied and worked at the Bauhaus. Brandt became the first woman to join the Bauhaus' metal workshop at a time when women students were relegated to the weaving and ceramics studios, and she became head of that workshop in 1928. *Marianne* pulls from Brandt's own lexicon of forms and, like an intimate memoir or portrait, offers elliptical references to biographical details, labour, and the cyclical passage of time through her use of shape and line.

3.

Purposely balancing ambiguity and contradiction, Heide Hinrichs' object-based works tell stories of past emotions, mental states and gestures. In this process she often develops a sculptural language that is structured by the semantic exploration of everyday objects and found materials. For a long while Hinrichs' focus has been on the work of Korean-American conceptual artist Theresa Hak Kyung Cha (1951 - 1982). In particular, she investigates Cha's magnum opus, *Dictee*, a genre-defying book known for its highly experimental use of language, polyphonic voice and visual structure drawn from Cha's own work in avant garde video and performance. Through the voices of several women—including Joan of Arc, the early 20th century Korean revolutionary Yu Guan Soon, Cha's mother Hyun Soon Huo, and Cha herself—*Dictee* considers a woman's struggle to speak, and the many conditions that constrain and twist her utterances. Hinrichs' work *white, floating* developed in the context of her translation of *Dictee* into German. *white, floating* conjures a mental space through the looping of two video projections: film scenes mentioned fleetingly in the ERATO-LOVE POETRY chapter of *Dictee*. Facing one another and positioned so closely as to render them nearly impossible to view, except perhaps by the other film scene itself, the projections

together create a charged space—at once empty and full—suggestive of the inchoateness of both translation and memory.

4.

Kathleen Ritter's art practice explores questions of visibility and furtiveness, especially in relation to systems of power, gender, language and technology. In a related series of works brought together for this project, Ritter examines the life and work of Mina Loy (1882 - 1966), an artist, inventor, poet and feminist, active in the first decades of the twentieth century. Concerned with the implications of both retrieval and translation, Ritter first uncovers and then brings into material form a number of unrealized propositions drafted on paper by Loy, including the schematic for a modular alphabet and a pattern for dress material. Together with a framed serigraphic portrait reproduced from a 1905 photograph of Loy, and an unlimited edition—printed on newsprint and translated into shorthand—of Loy's 1914 *Feminist Manifesto* (a polemical response to the Futurists' rampant misogyny), Ritter enacts both an homage and a material re-insertion of Loy's explosive presence into contemporary life.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Susan Howe, *Some Spontaneous Particulars: The Telepathy of Archives* (New York: New Directions, 2014), 18.

## BIOGRAPHIES

VANESSA BROWN graduated with a BFA from Emily Carr University in 2013, where she was the recipient of the Chancellor's Award. She has exhibited in Canada, Germany, the USA, and Mexico. Brown is based in Vancouver on unceded Coast Salish Territories.

HEIDE HINRICHS completed studies at the University of Kassel, Germany, The Academy of Fine Arts Dresden, Germany, and HISK (Higher Institute for Fine Arts) in Antwerp, Belgium. She has recently exhibited in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and the USA, and her work was included in the 2017 Kathmandu Triennial. Born in Germany, Hinrichs lives and works in Brussels.

KATHLEEN RITTER is an artist based in Paris since 2013, when she was an artist in residence at La Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris. Recent exhibitions have taken place at Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Open Studio and G Gallery, Toronto; and Battat Contemporary, Montréal. In addition Ritter has organized exhibitions in Canada and abroad. Her writing on contemporary art has appeared in *ESSE*, *Prefix Photo*, and *Fillip* as well as in numerous catalogues.

ERICA STOCKING was honoured by the City of Vancouver as the Emerging Artist in Public Art in 2009. She received her BFA from Emily Carr Institute in 2004, and since then her work has been exhibited at numerous venues in Vancouver, including the Vancouver Art Gallery, Contemporary Art Gallery, Charles H. Scott Gallery, the Western Front and Artspeak. Stocking has completed three public artworks including a recent commission in 2017 for the náca?mat ct Strathcona Branch of the Vancouver Public Library. She currently lives and works in Toronto.

ANNA TIDLUND is a Swedish-Chinese settler living and working on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. Tidlund is a recent graduate of the Master of Archival Studies program at UBC. She is an archivist at the Vancouver Police Museum, processed the Kate Craig fonds at the Western Front and is a researcher at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery for the *Beginning with the Seventies* project, which investigates activist, women's labour and social movements in the 1970s.

## EVENTS

OPENING RECEPTION AND PUBLICATION LAUNCH  
Friday, December 8, 2017, 7:00 PM

Accompanying this exhibition is a limited-edition publication that assembles material research, found documents and impatient thoughts-in-progress by exhibiting artists Vanessa Brown, Heide Hinrichs, and Kathleen Ritter, and includes an excerpted stage play by Erica Stocking, as well as an essay on the politics of archives by Anna Tidlund.

IN CONVERSATION: VANESSA BROWN, HEIDE HINRICHS AND  
KATHLEEN RITTER WITH KIMBERLY PHILLIPS  
WITH BOOK SIGNING  
Saturday, December 9, 2017, 2:00 PM

Join the three exhibiting artists of *Some Spontaneous Particulars* in the gallery as they discuss their contributions to the publication that functions as both a companion to the exhibition and a partial archive of their research methodologies and artistic process.

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