

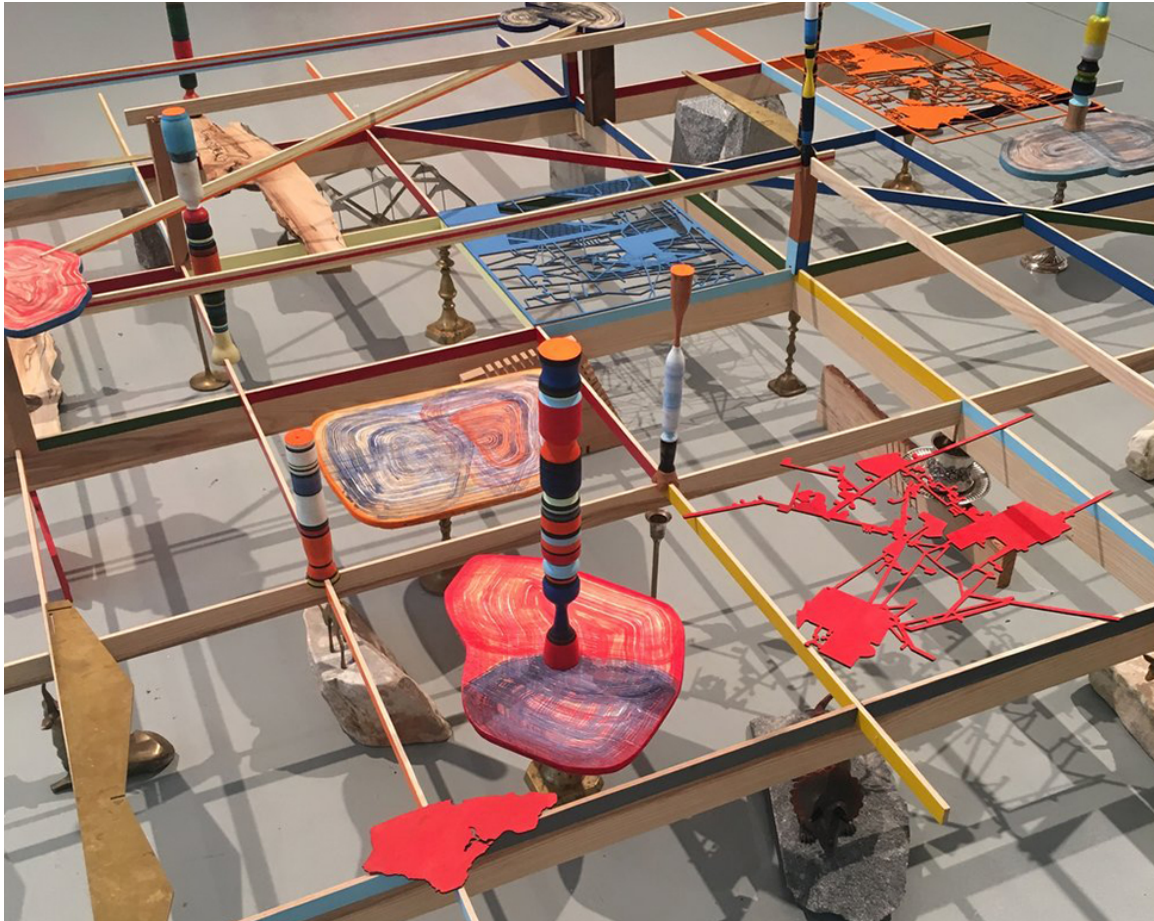
BERKELEY ART CENTER

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PRESS INQUIRIES

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Adriane Colburn, *The Spoils* (detail), 2019. Courtesy of the artist.

Experiments in the Field: Creative Collaboration in the Age of Ecological Concern

NEW DATES: July 25–September 26, 2020

Curated by Svea Lin Soll

Artists: The Bureau of Linguistical Reality, Adriane Colburn, Alicia Escott, Stacey Goodman, Chanell Stone, Livien Yin, Minoosh Zomorodinia

June 30, 2020, Berkeley, CA – Curated by Svea Lin Soll, *Experiments in the Field* is premised on the idea that artists play an important role in humanizing the global climate crisis. Many of us have come to know about the magnitude of the climate challenges we face through visual modes such as satellite imagery, documentary photographs, and simulation models. While scientific objectivity is crucial to our formal understanding, art offers a range of discursive, visual, and sensual strategies to connect with these complex issues.

The exhibition features artworks by the Bureau of Linguistical Reality, Adriane Colburn, Alicia Escott, Stacey Goodman, Chanell Stone, Livien Yin, and Minoosh Zomorodinia. They explore deeply personal and cultural narratives through a transdisciplinary approach, working with performance, video, photography, sculpture, writing, scientific and historical data, and social engagement — a decisively human context that allows art to share meaning and transform values. While addressing ecological concerns, the exhibition is also a conceptual centrifuge for exploration and future action.

“Understanding that climate crisis is both an environmental issue and a social justice issue allows viewers to explore configurations of power as part of the creative process,” says Soll. “When we can practice radical self-inquiry, we honor our anxieties and aspirations, and nurture resilience. Developing literacy in community with others around these issues protects us from becoming overwhelmed.”

The Bureau of Linguistical Reality is a participatory artwork by artists Alicia Escott and Heidi Quante that works with the public to create a lexicon of new words to describe the emotions and experiences humans face as our climate changes. For this exhibition, they present a newly commissioned project of outdoor signs installed in the gallery’s backyard patio that define a neologism coined collectively by artists from the show, the curator, and other members from the Berkeley Art Center (BAC) community at a wordsmithing workshop held in February.

Adriane Colburn presents *The Spoils*, a multilayered sculptural installation of elements combined to convey different aspects of the mining and global transport of raw materials and goods. An ash wood grid sits atop a selection of industrial byproducts from stone quarries, mines, and lumber mills, while capricious thrift store bric-a-brac sits within the grid. The grid geometry references the land as seen through the square aerial imagery of the US Geological Survey Earth Resources Observation and Science images. Colburn also debuts a new video piece with footage from scientific expeditions in which she has taken part.

Alicia Escott's installations of sculptural explorations dialogue with both the manmade gallery and the surrounding ecology, as it is and as it was. Pulling directly from the Coastal live oak and redwood ecology surrounding BAC, she interweaves natural materials with the found detritus of contemporary human life: iPhone chargers, earbuds, gold jewelry, copper telephone wires. She references the historical California Gold Rush that settled the area (while effectively destroying the land), and the more contemporary technological "Gold Rush" that has imposed a building boom on our habitat.

Stacey Goodman uses drone camera footage to capture performance of the artist in nature in a three-part video series titled *This Tree*. In Part 1, *Devotion*, he crawls through mud and bramble to pay homage to a singular tree. In Part 2, *Mastery*, he attempts to trace the shadow of a lone tree on a manicured lawn on the North Shore of the Hawaiian island of Kaua'i. In Part 3, *Communion*, the drone becomes mesmerized by its own reflection, is blessed by water, and hovers beneath the canopy of a protective tree.

Chanell Stone's practice is invested in challenging insular views of Blackness by expanding on narratives subject to Black erasure. This avidity has led her to explore the re-naturing of the Black body to the American landscape. Through a compilation of environmental portraits, Stone explores the notion of "holding space" within one's environment and the nuances of compartmentalized nature. Through the use of black and white analogue photography, her series *Natura Negra* aims to expand the canon of traditional photography.

Bombyx Papaver is a sculptural weaving by Livien Yin named after the Linnaean biological classification for the silkworm and the opium poppy flower. The piece is made from materials once traded for Chinese silk — cotton from the Americas, wool from Europe, and poppy seeds, which signify the opium imported by Britain to solve their chronic trade imbalance with China. In reference to the migration of laborers who produced these trade goods, the sculpture's weavings draw from silk spools along the edges. *Bombyx Papaver* is from a series of sculptural renovations by Yin, and based on the Wardian case, a nineteenth-century container designed by London physician Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward to transport plants overseas. The early terrariums sought to hermetically seal their specimens, yet often arrived at the dock with unexpected guests in tow.

Minoosh Zomorodinia's work is deeply informed by her cultural background, religion, and politics. "Qanat" is a Persian word describing the ancient system of underground tunnels in the Middle East. Qanats were important factors that determined where people lived. For this exhibition, her installation *Qanat* imagines the future of urban gardens, devoid of water. The piece's video projection was recorded in Tehran, Iran, during a visit when the artist took note of rapid development in the city. She also noticed how the qanats were destroyed due to drought. Zomorodinia takes this idea, a very real and critical issue in climate change, and brings it to an almost absurd conclusion.

Now, with certain urgency, the issues of climate change pervade nearly every area of our lives, from day-to-day decision making to global survival. *Experiments in the Field* seeks to celebrate art's social potential, bringing artists together as part of the local community to lead and inspire critical discourse around climate action.

EVENT LISTING INFORMATION

What:	<i>Experiments in the Field: Creative Collaboration in the Age of Ecological Concern</i> A group exhibition curated by Svea Lin Soll premised on the idea that artists play an important role in humanizing the global climate crisis. Many of us have come to know about the magnitude of the climate challenges we face through visual modes such as satellite imagery, documentary photographs, and simulation models. While scientific objectivity is crucial to our formal understanding, art offers a range of discursive, visual, and sensual strategies to connect with these complex issues.
When:	Saturday, July 25–Saturday, September 26, 2020
Gallery Hours:	Wednesday–Sunday, 11am–5pm by appointment
Location:	1275 Walnut Street, Live Oak Park, Berkeley, CA 94709
Cost:	Free
What:	<i>Experiments in the Field</i> Curator Walkthrough with Svea Lin Soll
When:	August, date and time to be announced
Location:	On Facebook Live from Berkeley Art Center
Cost:	Free

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Adriane Colburn's work has been exhibited at Smack Mellon and Parsons/New School (New York), Luggage Store Gallery and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), Artsterium (Republic of Georgia), and the Royal Academy of Art (London). She has been an artist-in-residence at Headlands Center for the Arts (Sausalito), MacDowell Colony (New Hampshire), Kala Art Institute (Berkeley), and Blue Mountain Center (Tomales, CA). Colburn is currently on the faculty at Bard College in New York.

Alicia Escott was artist-in-residence at Recology San Francisco and the Growlery, and she has previously been a fellow at Djerassi Resident Artists Program (Woodside, CA), Anderson Ranch Arts Center (Snowmass Village, CO), JB Blunk Artist Residency (Inverness, CA), and Irving Street Projects (San Francisco). She is a founding member of 100 Days Action, which was a recipient of the 2017 YBCA 100 Award, and half of the social practice project the Bureau of Linguistical Reality, whose work has been featured in the *Economist*, the *New Yorker*, and on KQED.

Oscillating between the purely abstract and the figurative, Stacey Goodman's works seeks to unsettle and quietly disrupt, allowing him to get lost in subjects that fascinate him — from astrological imagery to Depression Era photography. Goodman sees himself somewhere between shaman and perennial apprentice in his need to both evoke mystery and insight, as well as nurture the desire for discovery, renewal, and beginning again.

Chanell Stone's work has been shown at the Museum of the African Diaspora (San Francisco), Aperture Gallery (New York), and SF Camerawork (San Francisco), among others. Awards include Emerging Artist Award, Museum of the African Diaspora (San Francisco), Purchase Prize Award, Center for Photography at Woodstock (Woodstock, NY), and an artist residency at Real Space and Time (Oakland).

Livien Yin is an artist working in sculpture and photo-based practices. She examines artifacts that unsettle the distribution of power among humans and the natural resources we strive to control. Yin received her MFA in Art Practice at Stanford University and BA in Studio Art at Reed College. She was a 2019–2020 Graduate Fellow at Headlands Center for the Arts.

Minoosh Zomorodinia has exhibited at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco Arts Commission and SOMArts Cultural Center (San Francisco); Pori Art Museum (Finland); Nevada

Museum of Art (Reno); and Pro Arts (Oakland). She has received numerous awards and residencies, including the Kala Art Institute Media Fellowship Award (Berkeley), Headlands Center for the Arts (Sausalito), Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency (Saugatuck, MI), I-Park Foundation (East Haddam, CT), Santa Fe Art Institute Residency, and Djerassi Resident Artists Program (Woodside, CA).

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Svea Lin Soll is a consultant and curator residing in Berkeley. She has spent 20 years as an art world polymath in both nonprofit and commercial institutions, curating and marketing exhibitions and programs, as well as working with artists, architects, clients, and the general public to observe art practices, present artwork, build collections, and provoke new ways of thinking about the world and our place in it. Soll's curatorial projects have included artist-in-residency programs, window projects, and experimental film programs. Her current project explores art and the environment, and how artists are attuned to the needs of our changing planet.

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ABOUT BERKELEY ART CENTER

Berkeley Art Center (BAC) is a hub for artistic exploration and community building that champions work by Bay Area artists and curators. Nestled in Live Oak Park in North Berkeley, the gallery makes contemporary art approachable and accessible at an intimate scale. Since its founding in 1967, BAC has exhibited work by important local figures such as Robert Bechtle, Enrique Chagoya, Taraneh Hemami, Mildred Howard, Hung Liu, Jim Melchert, Chiura Obata, Sonya Rapoport, Betye Saar, Katherine Sherwood, Peter Voulkos, and Carrie Mae Weems, among many others.

For more information and images, contact Daniel Nevers at 510-644-6893 or info@berkeleyartcenter.org. Berkeley Art Center is located in Live Oak Park at 1275 Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am to 5 pm by appointment. Admission is free. Website: www.berkeleyartcenter.org

Generous support for Berkeley Art Center is provided by the City of Berkeley, the Alameda County Arts Commission, the California Arts Council, the East Bay Community Foundation's East Bay Fund for the Arts, Fleishhacker Foundation, Mechanics Bank, and BAC's members and donors.