LINEAR THINKING

ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE IN INCHES, HEIGHT BY WIDTH.

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CATALOGUE DESIGN: JEANNE BRASILE

WALSH GALLERY AT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
400 SOUTH ORANGE, AVENUE
SOUTH ORANGE, NEW JERSEY 07079
PHONE: 973-275-2033
FAX: 973-761-9530
WWW.SHU.EDU

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LINEAR THINKING

GIANLUCA BIANCHINO
WILLIAM CROMAR
JILLIAN CLARK
LORRIE FREDETTE
JONES AND ROA
NICK LAMIA
INJOO WHANG

CURATED BY JEANNE BRASILE
The phrase linear thinking refers to a systematic problem-solving approach meant to stimulate reflection. It also refers to the visual form of the line which predominates in each of the included works of art. This exhibition capitalizes on the integration of subject matter and form, inspiring thought on a variety of issues while maintaining the visual construct of the line throughout.

As a curator, I am frequently interested in developing group exhibitions that investigate a simple unifying visual element. My purpose is to demonstrate to audiences how artists, using essentially the same form, can implicate that form in a multiplicity of ways. For this exhibition, I wanted to illuminate the idea that a simple line can be revealed in a variety of means. The line is presented in both two and three dimensions. Additionally, the line is used by some of the artists in an organic fashion, with curves and irregularities in form. Others use the line in a more rigid, geometric format. Variations in thickness, length, volume, color and mass highlight the limitless possibilities that artists can evoke from a form of seemingly limited visual representation.

By using a narrow formal vocabulary, there is also an opportunity to reveal a varied assembly of topics. While the narratives presented in this exhibition are by no means exhaustive, viewers can understand how the line can be laden with a wealth of meaning. This strategy minimizes my role as curator – something that is not in step with the recent trend of the celebrity curator who is often as visible as the artists with whom they work. In letting artists dictate the subject matter, I take a step back and permit the formal elements to unify the exhibition visually, while letting the artists bring to light the numerous narratives that can be imparted to the line.

Artist Gianluca Bianchino uses the line as a directional cue to move viewers throughout his large, site-specific installations that consist of both two and three-dimensional forms. In using a mix of paint, paper, lights, projections and sculptural forms, Bianchino creates an ambiguous space that alludes to questions of identity and similar existential concerns. The artist sees his installations as a multi-media landscape, moving the genre forward into new, allusionistic territory that refers not only to our surroundings on the planet earth, but also to the universe, systems of physics and prior art movements such as Cubism, Surrealism and Constructivism which are similarly concerned with shape, space and form.

William Cromar sees the line as a manifestation of the human desire for order -- a mental signifier of territory. Psychologically, the geometry of the line is a fictive space that hints at relationships real and imaginary. Culturally, line is superimposed over maps to mark longitude,
latitude, topographical features and roadways. The relationship between line and space is often contested -- in defense or refutation of political, social and many other systems of order. For For “Linear Thinking,” Cromar’s lines take on the form of an architectural foil to the physical space of the Walsh Gallery, particularly its hard, rectilinear format and centrally located columns.

Jillian Clark’s chalk-line installations reflect her interest in the relationship between materiality and form. She uses colored dust pigments to introduce an ephemeral lexicon to audiences while simultaneously using the medium to explore notions of “objectlessness.” By using the chalk line as a tool and chalk dust as her medium of choice, the artist concomitantly privileges materials traditionally employed in craft traditions such as carpentry, touching upon the vigorous, ongoing debate between art and craft, and high art and low art. In her artist statement, Clark describes her work as residing in a liminal space, waiting to be brushed off the wall or worn away with time. The fleeting nature of the work reminds us of the impermanence of the materials, as well the transitory quality of our own existence.

Lorrie Fredette’s artwork is inspired by medical and environmental issues pulled from media headlines and historical documentation. Heavily based on research, her methodology entails alterations of source materials that result in distorted likenesses of the original forms and concepts by which she is inspired. Her columnar sculpture, “Pores” refers to vascular systems of plant life, and the human desire to personalize our understanding of challenging conceptual models.

Jones and Roa – the artistic collaboration between Darren Jones and Ryan Roa – explore notions of endurance and physicality through the framework of the masculine ideal. To that end, they enact experiences to bring to mind the effect of time upon existence. Their “Tephra Drawings” can be interpreted as documents of their aggressive actions, using line to document the movement of their arms as they repeatedly punched one another with excessive force. The center of the image is a locus of impact, essentially marking the vectors which suggest the magnitude and direction of their gestures, a vestige of past actions which reside materially in the present.

Artist Nick Lamia uses multi-media installations as a means to demonstrate his belief in the unity between nature and societal constructs. He perceives nature and society as complementary parts of a whole, and uses fragmented imagery of landscapes, abstracted shapes and maps to hint at this symbiosis. His interactive installations permit viewers to manipulate elements of the artwork to change its appearance, metaphorically hinting that individuals can have an impact on their environs.

Similarly, Injoo Whang examines the inter-connectedness of the individual and the collective. Her large serial drawings, comprised of repetitive lines, lead viewers to posit the power of coop-
ervative force. Although visually striking, Whang is more interested in the metaphorical allusions explored in her work, as well as her interest in process which, to her, is secondary to the physical appearance of the drawings.

While by no means exhaustive, the artwork included in “Linear Thinking” attributes a range of narratives and visual characteristics that truly explore the potential of the line. In viewing this exhibition, audiences can understand how a minimal form can be laden with a wealth of meaning. In presenting an exhibition of ostensibly limited representational diversity, there also exists an opportunity to examine the unfettered creative potential demonstrated by each of these talented artists.

- Jeanne Brasile
Galactic Edge
mixed media (acrylic, plywood, lights, telescope and electric wire)
approximately 120” x 76”
2012
WILLIAM CROMAR

tyr[08a]
ivory black pigment,
casein emulsion
96” x 1.5” x 1.5”
2008
shown philadelphia pa
East to West (detail)
blue and lavender construction
grade chalk with snapline tool
dimensions variable
2011
Pores
beeswax, tree resin, fabric stiffener
11’ x 6” x 3”
2012
Tephra Drawing
charcoal on paper
23” x 30”
2011
Fate Shifter
site-specific interactive installation
dimensions variable
2011
Folded Expansion (detail)
ink on paper
42” x 122”
2007
THE WALSH GALLERY EXTENDS ITS GRATITUDE TO THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTERS THAT HAVE MADE THIS EXHIBITION POSSIBLE:

Sherdon Alphonso
Xueming Bao
Frank Capra
Anna Cherkezishvili
Sharon Favaro
Carly Gamble
Jennifer Graham-Macht
Dr. Chrysanthy Grieco
Catriona Hill
Katie Mascari
Courtney Mills
Elisabeth Murray
Melanie O’Donnell
Grace Peletier
Michael Villanueva