



# ANTHONY

ANTHONY LUENSMAN

Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery  
September 28—December 9, 2012



ALEX J. REED: THE FLAYING OF MARSYRAS (c. 1575)

The old painting stops me, the one painted and repainted  
by Titian in his old age to show Marsyras, flayed alive.

The subject like the late work on the brutal death of Actaeon  
is all frenzy in the making as a living thing is dismembered.

At the center of monstrous cruelty is the spotless, blond Apollo,  
young and perfectly focused in peeling away flesh with a blade.

A cast of beasts and wild humans watch or extend a willing hand  
in this stomach-churning rite, as one—Titian-like—looks on.

A music contest ended here with the prideful, old satyr  
hung upside down—his hairy goat legs matted with sweat.

This fool challenged the youthful, beautiful god and lost,  
and beauty chose sustained cruelty innocent of forgiveness.

As the blood flowed from raw wounds, a slaving dog lapped  
the stain on the soaked ground, painted in smeary gobs of color.

And another horned satyr lifted a gleaming bucket to catch  
the chunks of skin, muscle, and exposed throbbing organs.

Under the wind-buffeted limbs of trees, the crowd stares,  
as the weary satyr, castrated, swings with black legs splayed.

Close up, the painting looks in its loose, agitated strokes  
as if unfinished, until I look closer and Marsyras looks at me.

Royal W. Rhodes



*Spiracles* (detail), #1 and #2, 2012, neon, monofilament, 16-18' x 17½" diameter  
*Freezer Curtain*, 2012, PVC strips, aluminum rivets, steel hangers, 146½" x 120" x 2"  
*Theater Curtain*, 2012, pull chain, rubber, aluminum Unistrut, 72" x 120" x 6"  
45-45, 2012, ground pink eraser, acrylic, 55½" x 97" x 1¼" overall, 45 (7" diameter) individual discs

Front:  
*ASFALLSBUKKAKESOFALLSBUKKAKEFALLS - Jojo* (detail from series of five), 2012, video projection installation, approx. 00:30:00 loop, 48" x 36" image

Back:  
*Campfire - Duo*, 2012, photograph, mounted on Dibond, 31" x 47" image

# ODD THINGS, STRANGE BODIES + QUEER SPACES

## ANTHONY LUENSMAN'S "TAINT" — BY MATT MORRIS

**T**he play benefits from a pared-down style of presentation, with minimal scenery... The moments of magic... are to be fully realized, as bits of wonderful theatrical illusion—which means it's OK if the wires show, and maybe it's good that they do, but the magic should at the same time be thoroughly amazing.<sup>1</sup>

That the appearance of magic should coexist with the visible mechanisms by which it is produced manifests a series of breakages: between art and life, between figure and ground (in the case of Kushner's *Angels* and Anthony Luensman's exhibition "Taint," the backgrounds are the rarified spaces— theater and gallery— within which art is contextualized<sup>2</sup>), and, perhaps most endemic to the works on view, between the constituted effects of master narratives upon which society functions and the impossibility of their application into the life of the queer subject. The entirety of Luensman's exhibition, nay his entire practice as I know it, seeks out the magical poesy of materiality and form while always emphasizing the constructedness of the installations, objects, and images that comprise his vision. Wiring, rivets, installation hardware, and the other means of production are an integrated part of the aesthetics with which Luensman deals. While the reasons to never deliver magic without also revealing the apparatus that conjures it are no doubt plural, this trope usefully calls attention to the instabilities and failures inherent in coded, normative social behaviors and categories. Contrary to the reification of heterosexuality and gender typical to our culture, Luensman never presents an object without also pointing to the desires, pressures, and memories by which the object is constituted. Here there is no man behind the curtain, except when there is as in *Rosebud* and *Whistling*

*Boy*, where the curtain is rendered transparent. Elsewhere, in *Theater Curtain*, the curtain has been rigged high above the heads of the audience. In its ascent, it has become more than one kind of curtain: obviously—spotlighted and crimson—it is a theater curtain at its most classic and recognizable, but constructed from metal chains and rubber, it links spaces of public spectacle to the industrial-eroticized aesthetics of the gay club—sites for dance, socializing, vanity, and semi-public sex—continually more visible and available since the Stonewall riots of 1969, though necessarily transformed through the threat of decimation that accompanied AIDS in the 1980s. The memory of other queer spaces and the possibility that this intervention into the Weston Art Gallery may too negotiate the public/private problem of queer space totally permeates Luensman's exhibition.

In the wake of AIDS, critic and curator Aaron Betsky expressed concern that queer space had been utterly "destroyed" and was "in danger of disappearing" altogether. And yet he posits a past and future for the function of queer space that can speak specifically to the project of "Taint":

*[Queer space] has shown all of us how to create identities that depend on real experiences and connections with other humans to create a community that is not dependent on institutions or clichés, but that is an ephemeral, woven network of belonging that allows us to cruise through the continually changing landscape of the modern metropolis. Queer space is not one place: it is an act of appropriating the modern world for the continual act of self-construction. It is obscene and artificial by its very nature. It creates its own beauty. It allows us to be alive in a world of technology. There we can continually search within ourselves as we mirror*

1 Tony Kushner, *Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1993), 5.

2 The appropriateness of linking gallery to theater in the interrogation of this work is significant as the Weston Art Gallery is physically conjoined to a theater, the Aronoff Center for the Arts



- 1 *Betel Nut Boy – Night Market*, 2009, photograph (Image courtesy of the artist.)
- 2 *Self-Reliance – Buddha*, 2009, photograph (Image courtesy of the artist.)
- 3 *Alex J. Reed*, 2012, photograph in acrylic frame, 34¾" x 55" image, 40" x 60" frame

ourselves in the world for that self that has a body, a desire, a life. Queer space queers reality to produce a space to live.<sup>3</sup>

Luensman queers the gallery situation by occupying not only the center but also the liminal and peripheral spaces in the building. This is the "obscene" that Betsky writes about—the omitted margins upon which our objects of attention are contingent. Similar to architecture wherein primary, inhabitable rooms are dependent upon an infrastructure of spaces behind the walls, below the floors, and above the ceilings, so too is it necessary to construct a marginalized "other" by which an upright, mainstream society may define itself in contrast.<sup>4</sup> "Taint" restructures the gallery environ itself and along with it disorients us from the most readily available conventions with which to interact with art and art spaces. Ceiling tiles have been removed; works have been buried in the walls; words, meaning, and elements of the permanent architecture have been doubled, pluralized; and perhaps most strikingly, closet doors have been opened. An outing has occurred on several formal and psychological levels. In dismantling distinctions between public and private, seen and unseen spaces, Luensman metaphorically questions how such distinctions regulate bodies. The whole of the exhibition space has been fused to the enormous problems of desire, pleasure, and otherness with which all of the work contends.

This is the paradigm of *taint*. Taken as colloquialism for the perineum, *taint* is the in-between erotogenic zone between the genitals and anus. Alternately, it is a verb that the dictionary attaches to the "morally bad or undesirable," "harmful," to "make unfit," and to "besmirch."<sup>5</sup> It should not be taken for granted that the bodily definition that could so easily carry with it sex acts, more broadly conceived shares in its naming a range of activities that apparently threaten the moral fiber of society. Neither should the interrelatedness of these references be ignored in processing Luensman's "Taint." But while both definitions are legible within the body of work presented under this moniker, it is the gesture of double entendre (a staple trope for outing throughout history: think of Oscar Wilde, Jean Genet, Quentin Crisp, Paul Lynde, Fran Lebowitz) that recurs throughout the exhibition as a means for opening up meaning. Pluralism as a given—with the potentialities for humor, disclosure, and surprising opportunities for radical empathy—underlies all of Luensman's production.

Queer—as an interpretive lens—troubles easy delineations, and from the start interior is projected out toward exterior; modesty and immodesty are seen to be two views of the same thing. *ASFALLSBUKKAKESOFALLSBUKKAKE-FALLS* is a series of five video projections on the windows that look out onto the streets of downtown Cincinnati. Passersby walking in the city by day or cruising at night become involved in the exhibition through these stop-motion animations that alter the stretch of sidewalk running alongside the gallery. A white-gloved hand (one of the only instances of clothing being worn in the entire exhibition) caresses, splats, covers, and gropes the faces of a series of handsome young men staring impassively ahead. This costumed pas de deux is a hyper-stylization of *bukkake*, the sex act of ejaculating onto a partner's face. Through choreographed simile, Luensman issues a radical disclosure into public space, one that calls attention to other myriad erotics already being signaled around us. These videos flicker from frame to frame with roles in flux, plays for power questioned, and a politics underlying not only sexual encounters but, more generally, human interactions. Who submits to whom and in what ways? Who is allowed to disclose their desires and to what degree? What are the many intricate and constantly shifting ways in which desire and power intersect?

While Luensman implicates every part of the building into his project, the poetic content keeps tempo through a series of photographic works

that runs from the videos in the street-level space down into the galleries of the lower-level exhibition space. The photographs connect the space we occupy as viewer to a series of scenes elsewhere and never let up on the medium's potential as a kind of object-making. In two earlier series of photographs, *Betel Nut Boy* and *Self-Reliance*, he documented himself involved in interactions with his own sculptural works, employing a variety of materials including neon, eraser shavings, metal, and rubber as he does here in "Taint."

With ambivalence for the rhetoric of factuality that haunts photography, Luensman calls attention to himself and his gaze within a pair of reflexive works that are as

What are the many intricate and constantly shifting ways in which desire and power intersect?

3 Aaron Betsky, *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997), 180, 192–93.

4 As David Halperin points out in *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 15–18, the term "homosexuality" enters the English language in 1892, while "heterosexuality" is defined in contrast to this idea and does not appear until the early part of the twentieth century.

5 Merriam-Webster OnLine, s.v. "taint," accessed September 25, 2012, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/taint>.



much about his choice of the photographic medium as anything else. The stairway that connects the two levels of the gallery is outfitted with an immense photograph, *Alex J. Reed*, and the equally large, wall-sized *Flashwall*. At the base of the stairs, *Flashwall* is an automated stand-in for the paparazzi, with bulbs flashing and sharp sound effects like a metallic intake of breath accompanying. Meanwhile, the photograph that faces it shows a fragment of a young man looking forward, nearly but not quite meeting the gaze of the camera. From over his shoulder, a figure painted in black and white leers. This scripts the chain of events: looking, being looked at, and being self-consciously aware of that attention. The problematic relationships of those positions recur throughout "Taint."

A tribe of nubile men populates all of these images in an alternative world predicated on the tenuous hunt for new or rare pleasure. Philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault saw the necessity of proliferating new possibilities for pleasure in an otherwise constrictive society. Speaking of S-M, Foucault considers:

*These practices are insisting that we can produce pleasure with very odd things, very strange parts of our bodies, in very unusual situations, and so on...The possibility of using our bodies as a possible source of very*

*numerous pleasures is something that is very important...Pleasure also must be a part of our culture...We have to create new pleasure. And then maybe desire will follow.*<sup>6</sup>

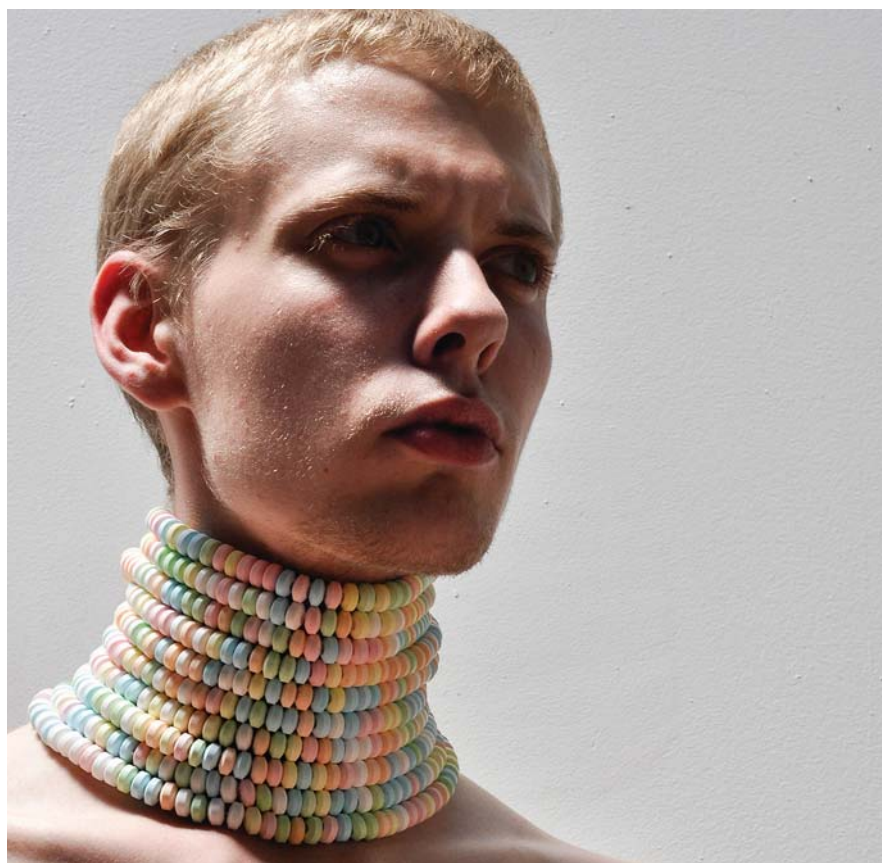
In the photographs in "Taint," sex is sidelined—at most sublimated—through intuitive negotiations of pleasure, desire, rejection, and loneliness as performed by the undressed men in the images. In *Campfire - Duo* and *AKNEE-BETWEENKNEES*, bared legs and feet near one another and sometimes barely touch. *AFBSFBF - Jibari* echoes the videos one floor up, with a tattooed, dark-skinned model who stares forward while the white-gloved hand presses against his cheek and lower lip. These are fetishizations of the everyday. The stuff of infatuations and daydreams, they show how easily a simple gesture—gathered friends, touching knees, caressed cheeks—can be charged with tenderness and possibility. Notice the amount of backs facing the camera, of models turned away, of averted gazes and fragments of bodies—an arm here, a waist there. Without more explicit scenarios on display, they form a kind of desire that makes much out of little, a romantic asceticism that subsists on little love and even less intimacy.

From among the figures depicted, one repeats frequently. Named "Alex J. Reed" in the photograph on the stairway

<sup>6</sup> Michel Foucault, "Sex, Power, and the Politics of Identity," interview by B. Gallagher and A. Wilson in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth (Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, Vol. 1)*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1997), 165-66.

landing, he is lovely with a refined boyishness that is adaptable to any sort of mood of formalist experiment. He is blond with radiant, translucent skin. He is Our Lady of the Flowers to Luensman's Genet: an imaginary, a willed companion in solitude. Genet dreamt up Our Lady along with the rest of the cast of his novel while incarcerated, and it was not until he shared his cell with another inmate that his isolation was palpable: "I am no longer alone, but I am thereby more alone than ever. I mean that the solitude of prison gave me the freedom to be with the hundred Jean Genets glimpsed in a hundred passers-by."<sup>7</sup> Alex is a respite from utter reclusion, a means for the artist and viewer to traverse interior, exterior, and sky while standing in a single spot. And yet, with each pose, he iterates a kind of distancing, an ordering of pleasure and desire that situates both beyond unrequited intimacy. *Happy Trail* and *Candy Spine* turn him forward and backward. In *Happy Trail* he is adorned with long menacing thorns lining the passage from his navel to his genitals, which are just out of frame. And in *Candy Spine* candy dots in pink, yellow, and blue (that somehow read as a spectrum, a rainbow path) and their drop shadows line the indentation of his spine down to his ass, bitterly and sweetly. Elsewhere in *Halo* his cherubic face nestles into a bed of white feathers like some heavenly pageant (like *Angels in America*), and in *Candy Neck* the repeated device of candy against skin recalls ethnographic documentary portraiture and the eternal youthfulness of "club kid" aesthetics. The works with Alex are everything that the other works in the show are not, and it is this juxtaposition of lack that underscores the sweet, ruminating *melancholia* that permeates the exhibition.

Sigmund Freud distinguishes melancholia from mourning in part through the relationship to the lost love object; the melancholic "cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost."<sup>8</sup> This is at least true of the viewer who navigates "Taint." Tropes of Minimalism and Conceptualism that inform Luensman's practice are here employed towards a pervasive sense of absence, disconnect, and emptying out. The male counterparts throughout the exhibition are almost always unresponsive and disengaged from the camera; they make one aware of the loss, but the lost love object itself is not visible or attainable. *Stud Finder* (again, wordplay) maps a corner of the gallery through magnets embedded at intervals to form an approximate grid from floor to ceiling. Steel wool shavings encircle each magnetic



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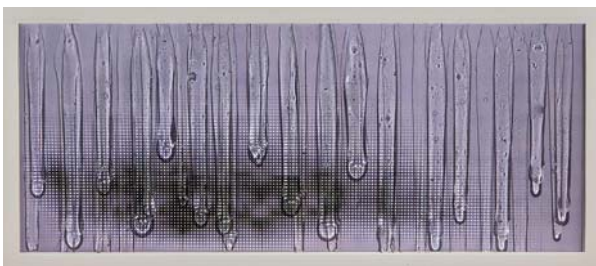
- 1 *Candy Neck*, 2012, photograph, acrylic frame, 25" x 25" image, 33½" x 33½" frame
- 2 *Foot Hole*, 2012, photograph, acrylic frame, 11¼" x 12" image, 15" x 16" frame
- 3 *Kentucky Falls*, 2012, K-Y Jelly, photograph, Tru Vue AR glass, 8¼" x 18¼" x 2¾" (Image courtesy of the artist.)
- 4 *Candy Spine*, 2012, photograph, candy buttons, 29" x 19½" image, 30½" x 21" frame
- 5 *Sleeve Totem* (installation view), 2012, rubber sleeves, acrylic rod, approximately 132" x 2¾" diameter; *Lasersute* (detail, installation view), 2012, lasers, electronics, men's dress shirt, motion sensor, 37" x 23" x 10"

<sup>7</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers* (Paris: Olympia Press, 2004), 169.

<sup>8</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914–1916)*, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1968), 245.



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field, patterned like pubic hair. This is one of several places where the vacancy of the building is treated as a body: cornered, cruised, caressed, and conflated with one of the basic, "pure" units of art-making, the grid.

The culminating mental feature of melancholia according to Freud is the "expectation of punishment,"<sup>9</sup> and Luensman asks the viewer to descend a little deeper into the psycho-poetics of "Taint" that further charge specific spaces within the gallery. Take for example the three works in the corridor of the lower level installed just outside of the lavatories. *Kentucky Falls* ascribes location to the "KY" in K-Y Jelly, and the artwork itself is coated in this lubricant, anticipatory of a kind of action. Facing it, the portmanteau *NEUTEREDNUTELLA* is spelled out in a child's alphabet blocks that are delicately embedded directly into the walls. The syllables are enigmatic as signifiers. From them, one can make out possible references to food and domesticity, emasculation, and perhaps in their combination something scatological. Making use of a child's toy for the production of the piece is not an isolated gesture towards childhood and memory in "Taint"; the libidinal note of the work appears as engrained since childhood as it is embedded

into the gallery walls.

The adjoining photograph builds on this mixture of discomforting emotions: *Foot Hole* shows a nude figure turned away from the camera, pressed against a wall apparently outfitted with a glory hole, that architectural intervention by which anonymous parties may engage in different forms of sex. Here, though, it is a foot that extends from the hole to press up under the cleft of the standing figure's buttocks. Beside "neutered" we might add the chastisement "a kick in the balls." Like the staircase, this is one of the



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transition spaces in the Weston, and the bathroom stalls just behind it feel implicated in this production of "pleasure with very odd things, very strange parts of our bodies, in very unusual situations."

There is an intentional misuse, a queering, a reorientation, and an innovation out of lack that characterizes Luensman's relationship to the physical world. Ultimately, his sensuous relationship to materials and their unexpected deployment defines his creative choices as a maker. With the love object left out of the narrative, the art object becomes fetishized, as in the lubricated *Kentucky Falls*. Sex toys go unused, instead reimagined as architecture, as in *Sleeve Totem*, a clear slim column of French ticklers, decorated with ribs and nubs, that extends from floor to ceiling and suggestively enters the space above. The backlit photograph *Sounding* centers on a cool white CCFT light rod jutting out of the waistband of a man's jeans as erection, urethral sounding device, or both. These displacements and reinventions of how objects are used become proxies for desire and the body that produces it. The body that is conjured through these meditations is permeable, fragile, and most of all mortal.

9 Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243.

In the street level space, *Spiracles* (a reference Luensman draws from Melville's *Moby Dick* for the blowhole on the top of the white whale) reproduces the permanent columns in the space through suspended white neon rings, the reflections of which in the polished floor seem to telegraph downward into the gallery spaces below. Likewise in *Ladder Nest* and *Ladder Lake* in the lower-level galleries, broken ladders respectively rendered in cast urethane plastic and white neon are hung out of the drop ceiling where tiles have been removed. Like the reflected white rings of light upstairs, the works model the transportive potential for art and a tenuous hope for transcendence. The unstable verticality of *Ladder Lake* lands on a pile of solar salt on the gallery floor, Luensman's interpretation of Cocytus, the frozen lake that Dante situated as the ninth and lowest circle of hell in his *Inferno*<sup>10</sup> (remember, "expectation of punishment"). Luensman approaches topics of mortality and the loss of self from the multiple vantages of everyday lack, observations of absence, and literary allusions to afterlife and arrives at the deceptively simple epiphany: "It is possible to die."<sup>11</sup>

After establishing pleasure as the drive by which much of psychological activity is dictated, Freud built upon his own theory with the introduction of the death drive, which is not—as it is popularly represented—as simple as a death wish, but is rather "an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things."<sup>12</sup> The death drive is an impulse for a state prior to distinction, individuation, and separation. It is an antidote for the *othering* that happens through social registers of gender, class, race, and sexuality, and, even more, an imagined solution for the violence of differentiation that is characteristic of all use of language (including this essay). Throughout "Taint," the "other" is distinguished: the onlooker from the looked upon, front sides from back sides, the nude and exposed model from the comfortably clothed and protected viewer. Read as a death wish, the works on view in the darkened east gallery could be seen as a desire to withdraw. But read as death drive, the solemnity of these works is hopeful, offering the possibility that everyone and thing is or could be connected.

The aggregate of these works troubles the distinct with the indistinct. *Lasersute* is an item of clothing removed—a clean white shirt hung on a hook without a body to inhabit it. A motion sensor connected to the work sets off an

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explosion of red lasers that dots the chest of the garment from behind whenever a viewer approaches.

This may be a paraphrased shooting further exacerbated by the dry popping noises that erupt with the lasers. It may be even less literal: this

could be the potential psychic collision of any interpersonal encounter, the risk of human contact, the separation between you and me intrinsic in any such encounter. *AKNEEBETWEENKNEES* straddles a corner of the space unevenly, running off one wall and into space to attach to the wall adjoining. Identity is obfuscated in the lineup of figures represented as a zigzag of thighs and knees pressed together. Bodies become pattern, and distinct individualism is lessened. Most of all, it is *Offing* though that culminates "Taint's" death drive in a three-channel video piece. Slick LCD monitors flicker with recordings of the pop-and-flash distinct in earlier tube models of televisions being turned off. This barrage of lights dimming over and over in a slow,



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<sup>10</sup> Anthony Luensman (references to Melville and Dante), in discussion with the author, September 22, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Cunningham, *The Hours*, screenplay by David Hare, directed by Stephen Daldry, performance by Nicole Kidman (Paramount Pictures, film, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1961), 43.



- 1 *Ladder Nest*, 2012, cast urethane plastic, 56" x 36" x 36"
- 2 *Peep Swing*, 2012, wood, rope, peephole, LED, 74" x 23" x 7"
- 3 *Ladder Lake*, 2012, neon, solar salt, 120" x 24" x 26," (3) 60" x 9½" x 2" individual ladders
- 4 *Offing*, 2012, video installation, 13" x 48" x 2¾" overall installation, 3 media players, 3 (19") LCD monitors, 00:15:00 loop each (Image courtesy of the artist.)
- 5 *Flashwall*, 2012, Unistrut galvanized steel, electronics, halogen work lights, speaker horns, 96½" x 108" x 13"



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unsteady pattern reads as visual exhalations, rehearsals for a last breath. The concentrated light in each clip disperses, as apropos an image for the death drive's goal as any to be culled from everyday life.

"Taint" articulates well-worn themes of desire, loss, and mortality but also the interstitial zones that connect these human touchstones, all adjusted to the strange beauty and necessary obscenity of queer space. At the back end of the installation we encounter what is perhaps the most loaded spatial intervention yet: the closet. Far beyond the significance of the proverbial closet for those of us who have inhabited and then "come out" of it, its construction as a delineation of secrecy being opened out from the private to the public involves all positions which are oriented to the closet, including those outside of it who were never

in it. The closet has now been more widely taken up as a space prior to disclosure, and as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick gestures to in her groundbreaking *Epistemology of the Closet*, "coming out of the closet" has become a modality by which

by openings into the marginal spaces that surround it.

Luensman physically manifests this "open closet" with a utility closet in the east gallery that houses the installation *Peep Swing*. Childlike but also erotic, the wood-and-rope swing is outfitted with a peephole in its seat, glowing blue like a sad eye. *Peep Swing* surrealistically stitches present to past, to an originary act of noticing. While we can infer the lens of the camera and the eye of the artist that produced the collected photographic works in the exhibition, here that gaze is realized sculpturally. It is a lesson in looking up underneath a swing's occupant to see others from unfamiliar, even taboo, perspectives. This work is the when and the how of desire, an orientation of eye to body to object to environment by which the rest of the exhibition might be read.

"Taint" de-privileges the primary in favor of the subtle and the peripheral. Desire is loosened from sexuality, while the pursuit of pleasure hunts for new ways to live and new spaces to inhabit. Melancholia is a current running through all of the production, a kind of unfulfilled longing for an unknown loss that compels the innovative construction of imaginary alternative realities. If the work lingers on death it is a means of approaching an outsized love wherein connections need not be made because distinctions are not realized. The play with space disrupts being "in" or "out" (of closets, galleries, comfort zones) and instead favors "through"; boundaries are brought into question and the work spectrally and poetically permutes throughout

the exhibition. As Betsky supposes, Luensman shows queer space not to be a single place, but an active gesture by which the ordinary might be pluralized, eroticized, and incorporated into a life fragilely lived.



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individuals might come out as black or fat or some other alignment to distinguishing identity structures.<sup>13</sup> We are all of us in a continual state of coming out, of presenting ourselves with the options of how to be open with one another. Luensman's treatment of the gallery environ is a testament to not only such revelations but also the kinds of disorientations that can occur when normativity is disrupted



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<sup>13</sup> Sedgwick expounds on this topic in her book *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

# TAINT: ANTHONY LUENSMAN

ALICE F. AND HARRIS K. WESTON ART GALLERY • SEPTEMBER 28—DECEMBER 9, 2012

## STREET-LEVEL GALLERY

*ASFALLSBUKKAKESOFALLS-  
BUKKAKEFALLS* Series  
(rotation of any three: *Gad, APL &  
Alex, JoJo, Simmi and Julian*), 2012  
Video projection installation  
3 video projectors, approx.  
00:30:00 loop each  
48" x 36" image

*45-45*, 2012  
Ground pink eraser, acrylic  
55½" x 97" x 1¼" overall,  
45 (7" diameter) individual discs

*Spiracles*, 2012  
Neon, monofilament  
#1) 18' 2" x 17½" diameter (21 rings)  
#2) 16' x 17½" diameter (17 rings)  
#3) 12' x 17½" diameter (13 rings)

*Freezer Curtain*, 2012  
PVC strips, aluminum rivets,  
steel hangers  
146½" x 120" x 2"

*Theater Curtain*, 2012  
Pull chain, rubber,  
aluminum Unistrut  
72" x 120" x 6"

## LOWER ENTRY

*Alex J. Reed*, 2012  
Photograph in acrylic frame  
34¾" x 55" image, 40" x 60" frame

*Flashwall*, 2012  
Unistrut galvanized steel,  
electronics, halogen work lights,  
speaker horns  
96½" x 108" x 13"

## WEST GALLERY

*Piano Blind*, 2012  
Piano hinges, aluminum rivets  
51" x 48" x 3"

*AFBSFBB - Jibari*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
43" x 28" image,  
47½" x 32½" frame

*Candy Spine*, 2012  
Photograph, candy buttons  
29" x 19½" image, 30½" x 21" frame

*Eye*, 2012  
Photograph, acrylic frame  
35" x 23" image,  
42¾" x 30¾" frame

*Ear*, 2012  
Photograph, acrylic frame  
35" x 23" image,  
42¾" x 30¾" frame

*Arm*, 2012  
Photograph, acrylic frame  
35" x 23" image,  
42¾" x 30¾" frame

*Rosebud*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
25" x 16¾" image, 28½" x 20" frame

*Whistling Boy*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
25" x 16¾" image, 28½" x 20" frame

*Happy Trail*, 2012  
Photograph, Tru Vue AR glass,  
rose thorns  
29½" x 19" image,  
30" x 20½" frame

*cloudhead*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
23½" x 16½" image, 27" x 20" frame

*Bird Wings*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
39" x 25" image,  
43¾" x 29¾" frame

*Campfire - Duo*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on Dibond  
31" x 47" image

*Ladder Nest*, 2012  
Cast urethane plastic  
56" x 36" x 36"

*Stud Finder*, 2012  
Installation on two walls with  
applied magnets, steel wool  
120" x 90"  
120" x 58"

## CORRIDOR

*Kentucky Falls*, 2012  
K-Y Jelly, photograph,  
Tru Vue AR glass  
8¾" x 18¼" x 2¾"

*NEUTEREDNUTELLA*, 2012  
Alphabet blocks  
1¼" x 17¼"

*Foot Hole*, 2012  
Photograph, acrylic frame  
11¼" x 12" image, 15" x 16" frame

## EAST GALLERY

*Sleeve Totem*, 2012  
Rubber sleeves, acrylic rod  
Approximately 132" x 2¾" diameter

*AKNEEBETWEENKNEES*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on PVC board  
7¼" x 120"

*Lasersute*, 2012  
Lasers, electronics, men's dress  
shirt, motion sensor  
37" x 23" x 10"

*Offing*, 2012  
Video installation  
13" x 48" x 2¾" overall installation  
3 media players, 3 (19") LCD  
monitors, 00:15:00 min. loop each

*Sounding*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on acrylic,  
CCFT light  
16½" x 11½" x 2¾"

*Candy Neck*, 2012  
Photograph, acrylic frame  
25" x 25" image, 33½" x 33½" frame

*Ladder Lake*, 2012  
Neon, solar salt  
120" x 24" x 26" overall installation  
3 (60" x 9½" x 2") individual ladders

*Halo*, 2012  
Photograph, mounted on acrylic  
11½" x 16½" x 2¾"

*Peep Swing*, 2012  
Wood, rope, peephole, LED  
74" x 23" x 7"



Beth Harris and Billy Alletzhauser in concert. Photograph courtesy of Andrea Vetter.



**ANTHONY LUENSMAN** was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1966. He received a bachelor's degree in Studio Arts from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio (1988) and pursued a master's in English at Xavier University in Cincinnati (1995–97). His early work in the visual arts included performance, theater, sound design, and electronics. National and international residencies, along with exhibition opportunities from Detroit to Taipei, have broadened his thematic scope and refined his visual and aural vocabularies. His wide-ranging interests and multimedia capabilities have led to successful collaborations in music, dance, and installation. In 2004, he was selected by the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei for a solo show, "Ersilia." In 2007, he was invited by the Cincinnati Art Museum to create "Arenas," an ambitious series of sculpture and installations presented in the special exhibition gallery, on the museum entrance façade, and integrated throughout the permanent collection.

In steady demand as a new-media innovator, collaborator, teaching artist, and artist-in-residence, he is a recipient of two Ohio Arts Council Artist's Fellowships (2000, 2004) and three City of Cincinnati Individual Artist's Grants (1995, 1998, and 2003). In 2008, he won the prestigious Efromson Contemporary Arts Fellowship. Prints, photographs, and a three-part video sculpture by Luensman are in the permanent collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum. His work is also in the collection of the International Contemporary Art Foundation/21c Museum in Louisville, Kentucky, and, in 2008, he was commissioned by 21c to create an interactive lobby installation. "Taint" is his second solo exhibition supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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**MATT MORRIS** is a writer, artist, and curator currently based in Chicago, Illinois. He received his bachelor of fine arts from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, and is a master of fine arts candidate at Northwestern University's Art Theory & Practice graduate program. His criticism has been published in *Art Papers*, *Sculpture*, *Chicago Artist Writers*, *CityBeat*, and *Aeqai*, as well as numerous other print and

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**ROYAL W. RHODES** is the Donald L. Rogan Professor in Religious Studies at Kenyon College in Kenyon, Ohio. He teaches courses in the history of Christianity, social justice, death and dying, and religion and the arts. His scholarly books include *Faith of Christians*, *Eclipse of Justice*, and *The Lion and the Cross: Early Christianity in Victorian*

*Novels*. His most recent poetry collection, *Book of Hours*, was published in 2012.

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This catalogue was produced on the occasion of the exhibition "Taint: Anthony Luensman" at the Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery in the Aronoff Center for the Arts, September 28 - December 9, 2012.

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Since opening in 1995, the Cincinnati Arts Association's Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery has established a reputation for innovative programming, award-winning publications, and museum-quality exhibitions on the atrium and lower level of a premier 3,500 square foot art space in the Aronoff Center for the Arts. A catalyst for, and integral member of the Cincinnati arts community, the Weston Art Gallery is the staging ground for the most intriguing visual art of the region. With artist projects, collaborations, site-specific installations, and new commissions, ten exhibitions are programmed annually that showcase the Tri-state's diversity of artistic talent in mediums such as painting, sculpture, textiles, prints, photography, electronic media, artist and book projects, independent film, and site-specific installations.



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