

NATURE'S STAIN

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Making Suggestions: Carmel Buckley and Joel Fisher at Aisle

Matt Morris

1.

There was a little girl weaving through the crowds at the opening reception for *Nature's Stain*. Her face seemed expansive and her eyes deep. She was carrying around a paper airplane, asking people to sign their name on it. She interrupted my conversation with someone, but what she wanted was more interesting than whatever we were talking about.

"Would you please sign this?" she asked the two of us pleasantly. I took the folded paper aircraft from her and turned it over in my hands. It was already densely covered in signatures. It reminded me of how children solicit signatures, drawings and notes from friends when their arms and legs are put into casts. But it was also fast becoming a comprehensive guestbook for the evening. I wondered if casts for broken bones were guestbooks in their own rights, if there wasn't some unarticulated desire to have documentation of who witnessed the pain and the healing. The visitation for the

maimed. I remember how intimate signing a cast felt, especially if the only room left was on the person's thigh.

"Is there anyplace in particular you'd like me to sign it?" I asked the little girl.

"Wherever there's room. Look, here, under this wing there's a spot. I need to find you a pen," she looked around the room in long sweeps side to side.

"It's alright. I have one here," I said, reaching into my pocket. I turned the plane face down.

"Your name will be visible from the ground," she observed thoughtfully in a feat of spatial reasoning that would have been well beyond my imagination at her age, whatever her age was. When I had signed it, I passed it over to the person I had been conversing with, and he also signed it. We handed it back to her.

"Where are you going to fly it from?" I asked her.

"Maybe out the window," she contemplated aloud, looking out of the third floor gallery window onto a lush late summer garden and parking lot beyond it. "Or maybe over the edge of Niagara Falls! We're going there next." She clearly preferred the drama of her second idea, and I did too.

Her paper airplane was a collaborative drawing, produced at a two-person drawing exhibition. All of us present were compressed across the surface of the object, especially when, towards the end, some signatures began to overlap into a curling cursive mish-mash of marks. Our handiwork might all be sent over a waterfall. The plane would move through air, land into water, and become pulp again, this time stained with ink.

It isn't wholly my intent to use Lou (that was the young lady's name) and

her paper plane as the keystone in an interpretation of the recent works presented by Carmel Buckley and Joel Fisher. Of course not. It wasn't even one of the works selected and displayed. But it was an interesting happening to have happened then.

Buckley's practice is like a conceptual game of Red Rover, played between sculpture and drawing. There is an ongoing exchange in the drives,

means and total experiences of her objects and her drawings on paper. For *Nature's Stain* she presents only drawings, but their literary source material and their relationship to her sculpture practice can be inferred from the exhibition.

Fisher (who, as it happens, is Lou's father) synthesizes mark making (read: drawing) and the object (read: sculpture) into a final holistic form.

All of his works in the exhibition are produced on—or out of—paper he makes by hand. And, as I'll discuss, the paper makes the rules. Both artists have previously reduced their practices to a few entirely elegant strategies. Yet here, they have embraced a more varied breadth of conceptual intentions, wherein the physical properties of their works become suggestive of the act of depiction. At an axis point between



Carmel Buckley & Joel Fisher, installation view, Aisle Gallery main room

object and picture, sculpture and drawing, the artworks in *Nature's Stain* step out into a psychological midsummer's night, and take on fantastical forms that relocate them into an intermediate space between the real and the supposed.

2.
Shadowy, mystical, fantastical creatures, rendered in creative methods that emphasize the hand-made, *Nature's Stain* echoes some of the sentiments around which the Arts and Crafts movement in the 19th century gathered. Both artists seem to question histories that inform their work: the relationship between art and social movements, and how little has been needed to constitute an art experience at different points in the past.

The Arts and Crafts movement, which began in England, sought to preempt a total abandon of artisanal pursuits that had thus far defined much of human civilization. The Industrial Revolution was afoot, and many small, hand-produced industries were already being replaced by machinery and factories. The illustrators, typographers, architects and other applied artists that comprised the Arts and Crafts movement saw themselves as a last resistance against a world where humans would become increasingly detached from their own lives. One of their central aesthetics—Truth to

Materials—has been adopted and permuted by numerous movements since their time. Often, their furniture designs and architecture would reveal their own means of production in their final appearance, allowing joinery and

wood grain to connect the final product to the artist who made it and to the origin of the material it was made from. One reason I even bring this period up is that, like the arts and crafts produced within this community,



Carmel Buckley, *Untitled #30 (CPE34)*, 2010, Japanese paper, ink, 18x22 in

Buckley's and Fisher's works evidence their own history. There is never any disguise or pretense in their work; however, the simplicity they share tends to offer leads into a regard for the unseen.

Having come of age alongside the internet well after Industrialization, I think things have either gone better or much worse than the Arts and Crafts artists had feared. Industrialization

gave way to digitization, and rapid successions of electronic technology could be seen as further separating us from each other, and more, inserting a wedge between ourselves and our conceptions of ourselves as physical beings. But one can still find letterpress note cards or textiles that have been printed by hand. There are still furniture makers, bookbinders and candlestick makers, although certainly their numbers have greatly diminished.

Arts and Crafts isn't an arbitrary point of reference. Buckley's work makes direct allusion to the period through the person of Harry Clarke, an Irish illustrator and leading figure of the movement until his death in 1931. Clarke is best known for dark, enigmatic illustrations for two large tomes: *The Fairytales of Perrault* and Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. Buckley has lifted from and riffed on Clarke's



Carmel Buckley & Joel Fisher, installation view, Aisle Gallery hallway

drawings; part historical revival and part formalist investigation, her works are open ended and mysterious. Buckley repeatedly isolates elements in Clarke's complex pictures and draws them out of context, so the potential for her marks to suggest volume or to activate the sheet as abstract patterns may be fully realized. Elements from Clarke's original illustrations have been reorganized into forms that are much less recognizable. One senses an interplay of figure/ground relationships, but a conundrum presents itself when attempting to decide what is the figure and what is the ground plane. Much of each page is left blank, with interior spaces, magical forests and half-formed figures clothed in ornate regalia only partially suggested. The open and blank forms introduce a cartooned quality that greatly differs from the density of her source material. All of the work exudes a spirit of play and experimentation, so that the reference to Clarke and his work is really just the backdrop for a practice that elevates doodles into complex, layered drawings and expresses a willingness to traverse a continuum of associations, be they historical or modern, philosophical or instinctual.

While Buckley's drawings throughout the past decade are nearly always characterized by repeated hand-drawn marks—dotted lines, small circles, chain links—they have tended towards minimalist investigations into simple

forms like the grid, the circle, or the triangle. They sometimes recall needlepoint samplers in her investigations into the potential for how to create a line. In fact, Buckley has even used thread to create marks with sew-

ing in other series of works on paper. Always Buckley's two-dimensional works feel that they are just barely so, that they could be treated as objects almost more easily than as pictures. The drawings we see are often



Carmel Buckley, Untitled #13 (CPT92), 2010, Japanese paper, watercolor pens, 18x22 in

'representative' of some abstracted imagery, but also are the physical evidence of their being made.

By comparison, Buckley's newest drawings are complexities developed through many different types of mark making within each work. And while at times they refer back to her previous explorations into reductive formalism, the various elements in each work often come together as swelling conglomerates, almost-dress forms, foliage and flowers.

Elsewhere, as in *Untitled #13*, the imagery is deconstructed further, as if the various parts of the final image had been dropped onto the page, with chance relationships forming between them. Here the works are dream-fragments, and all that is partially depicted has been mapped over an as yet unrevealed psychological terrain. As ambiguities, these works are sensitive to what those viewing them might project onto them. What's more, they are mutable: a world of highly detailed marks and idiosyncratic shapes that remain non-specific, a post-post-minimalist retort to Judd's Specific Objects.

A bank of Buckley's drawings hangs together as an interruption in Fisher's adjoining body of works. These four works are all black ink on off-white paper. Together they read as a historical portrait gallery. In each, enormous gowns and highly coiffed wigs appear

stacked together without any figures wearing them. *Untitled #24* depicts a striped shape against a floor and back wall of a space that is striped similarly, as if the entire scene were hewn from wood and the central form was a

dryad. She (if it even is a 'she') has become one with her environment. She may have been carved by an Arts and Crafts carpenter before being drawn by Buckley. Whatever her history, she functions as a



Carmel Buckley, *Untitled #31 (CPTCO)*, 2010,
Japanese paper, ink, 18x22 in

specter, an embodiment of the formalist patterning and systems of mark making that were previously unfettered in Buckley's work.

3.

It had taken him nearly six days of walking to near the city limits of East Liverpool, Ohio. And this was brisk walking, for about ten hours a day, with breaks scattered throughout and sleeping along the edge of the Ohio River at night. It was early fall, and hotter than he had expected it to be when he set out from Cincinnati. He had saved up money, then quit his job, so that he could devote whatever time was needed to walk the parameter of the state of Ohio. He was born here and raised in different parts of the state, but hadn't lived here for many years. As an absurdly poetic reimagining of a cartographer's mission, he wanted to walk the outline of the state as he saw it drawn on a map. The bottom edge of the state is defined by the Ohio River, separating it from Kentucky to the West and West Virginia to the East. At East Liverpool, the river crosses the border into Pennsylvania, heading towards its source in Pittsburgh. The night before, he had sat with a lantern and read about the city he now approached. Its heyday was in the 1890s, when one of the prominent ceramics companies found themselves wildly popular at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. He thought he would allow some time

in the city to hunt down any remaining ceramicists, and maybe learn a little about their production methods. He thought he might even get a hotel room for the evening, as a reprieve from the outdoor living of the past few days. Even Thoreau went into town from time to time, when he was living at Walden.

When he left East Liverpool, his approach to the hike would be very different. The river would no longer be his guide, and he would be relying much more on maps and on a need to constantly locate his position. The only thing separating Ohio from Pennsylvania is an imaginary line. He would head toward Youngstown, knowing that he should be a few miles east of it to actually be walking the border between the two. And in so walking it, he hoped to realize in physical space what was, to him, only a concept. It was this notion that we had made drawings of land, property, borders and divisions that had inspired his expedition. He hoped to actually become the line through his movement and the traces of his actions.

He progressed in stages. From day to day, a winding mark would be added to the one from the day before.
For Joel Fisher's *Circle*. (see page 16)

4.

In 1969, Joel Fisher shifted the emphasis in his creative practice from

what was being drawn onto sheets of paper to the paper itself. He decided, and rightly so, that under certain thoughtful conditions, the pages would be more than enough of an aesthetic experience on their own. He made his own paper, and he made it in contaminated environments so that bits of dust and detritus would catch in the paper pulp as it was being formed into sheets. Upon careful inspection, the off-white paper was not really blank. Each one was rather full of miniscule disruptions and variations compressed into the paper fibers: tiny, flattened universes, dense with wonderment. The page contained all the information of the piece, and the page facilitated a highly intimate art viewing experience.

More recently, Fisher has developed a body of work collectively titled *Apographs*. A selection of these pieces is included in *Nature's Stain*. In these, he reintroduces a drawn mark across the surface of the page. Each drawing features one complex line. Read together, they are almost runic. Like runes, the drawings are esoteric in their own way. Each mark is an enlargement of one of the imperfections in the sheet on which it is drawn. If the viewer spends enough time looking, he can find the much smaller bit of fiber in the same zigzag as the drawing across the surface of the page. Seeing both together, the *Apograph* works appear as dialogues with themselves, echoing call and



Joel Fisher, Apographs #2-9, pencil and found fiber on handmade paper, each approx. 6x6 in

responses between the second and third dimension. Compared to Fisher's earlier unmarked sheets, these have a figure/ground relationship, but the gap between which is which has been narrowed to a whispered exchange. A figure and the ground behind it have never perhaps so resembled one another.

Three of the *Apographs* are hung in an adjacent space from the rest of this series. Just beyond them on the far wall of the gallery is yet another permutation between the odd drawings and Fisher's paper making.

The drawn elements in those three works have been re-created in handmade paper that the artist made on location in the days leading up to the exhibition at the approximate scale and proportions of adult humans. Referred to simply as *Figure 1*, *Figure 2*, and *Figure 3*, these giant paper glyphs have been adhered to the gallery walls, and brushed lightly with the white wall paint used at Aisle, thus creating a form of compression between the handmade paper shapes and the walls on which they are presented. At this scale, the drawings are more overtly suggestive of figures, like abstracted, tribal paper dolls. They possess a force that not only collapses presumed dichotomies like drawing v. sculpture and non-representation v. representation, but, through size and space, starts to share the reality of the viewer.

5. Carmel Buckley and Joel Fisher are excavators. Fragments of 19th-century illustrations and who-knows-what caught in the weave of handmade paper are isolated in this hushed

exhibition. They suggest that sometimes the parts are greater than their sum. They are border crossers and border tracers. In a handful of strokes of quiet genius, both call attention to taxonomies in the



Carmel Buckley, *Untitled #15 (CPT112)*, 2010, Japanese paper, watercolor pens, 17x20½ in

perception of art, only to blend or even abolish those preconceived structures. Most significant of these 'conceptual slips' between areas of thought is the persistence in drawing one's attention to what is yet unseen. What has been left blank or undefined may be completed conceptually with notions of spirituality, fairytale or even ghost story—another means for the past to visit the present.

They have found that 'old' is the new 'new.' Adapting traditional processes of producing drawings and returning to Arts and Crafts imagery that is more than a century old can be surprisingly revelatory. They have repopulated areas of Conceptual art, Process art and Formalism that have been both of their playing fields for years. The population is one of ghostly emissaries, headless princesses,

stick figures, dust bunnies and paper shadows. And like any cast of gothic characters, there is more unknown about them than there is known. They slip into or behind the pages on which they have been placed, and leave us to imagine the rest. □



Carmel Buckley, Untitled #22-25, 2010, installation view, Aisle Gallery, Japanese paper, ink, 17x20½ in

Notes Towards a Prepositional Drawing

Joel Fisher

Dedicated to Josef Albers, who is still teaching me

A short reassurance to my audience before I begin:

I don't want my title to frighten anyone off. You might think from that my talk will be full of grammar. For most of us, our contact with grammar was the first experience we had of something assuming the role of theory when that was a role it was never intended to take. A descriptive process should simply describe what is happening. Like many of you, I particularly hated grammar because I felt that it was imposed. This is exactly true. The way grammar was taught in my day, felt to me and most of my friends as if we were being fitted for shackles.

I am reminded of Andre's distinction that "Art is what we do and culture is what is done to us." Our experience was that we didn't do grammar; it was done to us. When something that is expected to help us to understand feels instead like a restriction, we might be justified if we develop an ambivalence toward 'understanding' and even 'knowledge.' What then is lost? We still meet artists who don't want to think about what they are doing because they fear that it will stifle their creativity. Where else except from a sense of being shackled could this sentiment come from?

I should say that after years of disliking the thought of grammar, I have recently begun to look at it in a different way. I no longer see grammar as a set of rules so draconian that, simply to accommodate them, we have to deform ourselves,¹ Instead I see grammar as a description (even an image) of things happening in space, almost like sculpture. Perhaps the most important lesson that art teaches us (and this might be sculpture's contribution to a broader understanding) is that simply taking a different point of view can be liberating.²

Why might I be thinking of grammar as a map of at all in relation to drawing? Actually, in two ways: in the big way, meaning the elements of drawing, and, how they are put together in relation to each other. Things like ground, line, or point of view when combined in specific ways create something bigger than they can do individually. We can look at elements of drawing as we would look at the building blocks in any language, and assign roles like we do for individual parts of speech. These are sometimes like characters in a play, or a group of interlocking and cooperating professions. Each one plays a specific role.

Let's begin:

The full potential of drawing is squandered when a drawing is seen as primarily as a thing — as a noun. We seem to love the idea of something, like a noun, that can stand on

its own; it implies solidity in a world otherwise in flux. The discrete object has an important place in art, and that includes individual drawings, but for drawing in general to aspire to this can freeze it into a rigid identity and

deny layers of subtlety. We can't afford to be satisfied with drawing as a noun, we need to find another way to look at it.

We use the word drawing to mean either a thing or an action. We multiply possibilities when we choose to see drawing as action — when drawing functions less as a noun and more as a verb. This expands what drawing can do, to include occupying time and establishing sequence.³ This makes a dynamic difference, but it is still not enough. Drawing as movement and duration still can't deliver to us its full richness.

From early childhood, I have seen drawing as an activity in possession of a magical charm. Drawing makes things appear that weren't there a moment before. This conjuring up onto a blank page is undeniably miraculous, but drawing's real magic is found in all the other ways that it increases our sensitivity to what was previously invisible. Bringing to sight the unseen is part of drawing's nature.

Our habits close off things for us. A full century ago, William James identified our habit of recognizing the existence of the substantive⁴ parts alone. He noted that this had become so extensive that a language that might have been flexible refuses to lend itself to any other use. He said that we ought to be able to say "a feeling of *and*, a feeling of *if*, a feeling



Joel Fisher, drawing for Figure 2, pencil and found fiber on handmade paper, approx. 6x6 in

of *but*, and a feeling of *by*, quite as easily as we say a feeling of *blue*, or a feeling of *cold*."

When we tacitly accept a limited understanding of drawing we not only close off possibilities but also prevent our discovery of finding drawing embedded in other activities. A fresh way of looking actually changes what we see. A shifted point of view can bypass engrained habits. Achievements are not just in things. The truly outstanding also exists in relationships, in intervals, approaches, and context. Through drawing we exceed our habits and thus expand our possibilities. All we have to do is to expand what we

believe drawing can be, and we effortlessly open up insights elsewhere.

Reassuring solid qualities emerge when we think of drawing as a thing (noun). A kind of energy emerges when we think of drawing as an action (verb). The possibilities and the nuances really begin to multiply when we become aware of drawing's relational aspects. When intervals are set up via relationships an extra dimension enters. Prepositions are the words that identify relative position. *Prepositional Drawing* can imagine a drawing *toward*, or *for*, or *because*, or *instead*, or *below*, or *after*...

—

In 1968 I spent a memorable day with the painter Josef Albers. As we were looking at one of my paintings, he mentioned that he didn't understand why frames have to be on all four sides of a painting. Is it possible, he wondered, to have a frame that held a painting on only its opposite sides, or even only one side, or perhaps just a corner? Frames signal the beginning of context. Could context be named without creating a barrier? For a painter this was a surprisingly sculptural question. Simple awareness of a relationship is all that it takes to distinguish context in a radically different way.



Joel Fisher, *Circle*, soft ground etchings, set of 5 prints, each 26x20 in

Every preposition names a context that begins as a vector in the very heart of our subject, and it can do so without circumscribing and isolating that heart of concern from its surroundings. There are ways to think of context other than that of a conventional frame. Inside space and outside space can mix without being a threat.

We might consider *Prepositional Drawing* as a form of generative (rather than descriptive) theory. Look at the potential within each preposition as a generator of imagination and experience. In the notes at the end of this talk you will find a list of prepositions.⁵ When you have a quiet moment, read through the list slowly and allow your imagination to link each word to a potential drawing.

Drawing often inclines toward something else. This has traditionally been a depiction, or a structure or a visualization. There is energy in inclination. Drawings embody energy because they take a position in relation to something else. "Every force evolves a form," said Mother Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers.

Drawings *incline toward* but they also *lead to*. That's why the title 'Thinking Through Drawing' is an appropriate name for today's conference. The word *through* is (I am obliged to point out) a *preposition*. Drawing is clearly a pathway to thought. It is worth asking, as we begin today's program,

if drawing could in fact be a form of thinking.

We might start by trying to figure out what we mean when we use the word 'thinking.' Is thinking something that we do alone? Is it active or passive? The philosopher Robert Sokolowsky says that thinking is not something we do entirely on our own because we are only allowed to think by what our thoughts are about.

The old expression "A penny for your thoughts!" suggests that an exchange is possible. When that phrase was formulated, a penny was certainly more valuable than it would be today; today a penny is the smallest useful unit, a financial atom. A bagatelle for your thoughts, we might say today. Not quite nothing but almost. Within the functioning values of our culture, we might let the thinker starve. We don't get paid for our thinking, only for our products, whether real or implied. You sell your book, or your patent, or your sheet of paper. We might be paid for a drawing that is thoughtful, but thought itself, whatever it is, is hard to commodify.

No matter how clear thought is, it is not substantive. We could say "there is no there there." Drawing, so easily ignored, could take us to that 'there.'

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In order to think about 'Thinking through Drawing' let's begin by reviewing some

of the ways we use the word. I have discovered at least seven common uses of the word 'thinking.' Let's look at some of the uses and see which ones have something to do with drawing.

1. We might be sitting at the edge of the sea and just thinking. By 'thinking' we probably mean daydreaming, a vague flitting from one notion to another, a gentle flowing reverie. We use the word *thinking* to describe a kind of automatic, unfocused, ebbing and flowing of brain processes.

There are certainly modes or types of drawing that come into existence in exactly this way, doodles are the most common, the many meandering drawings that seem to grow out of the page and spread across the surface like they are flowing. Some approaches to drawing seem to make visible all the little twitches of our nervous system, unprotected gates that allow for unconscious ideas to surface.

2. Imaginative thinking can include creating a story in our mind and living in that story as it develops, a process that sometimes carries us along with no choice. Imagination is more than this, of course, and it appears when we invent alternatives. Playing chess may be logical, but it is essentially imaginative. From imagined possibilities we choose one path over another.

Drawing can use imagination in all these ways also. A drawing can grow

as a story might grow. A drawing can help us to explore alternatives, and to visualize the paths and consequences they imply. Most of us, I believe, think in images. We don't think initially in

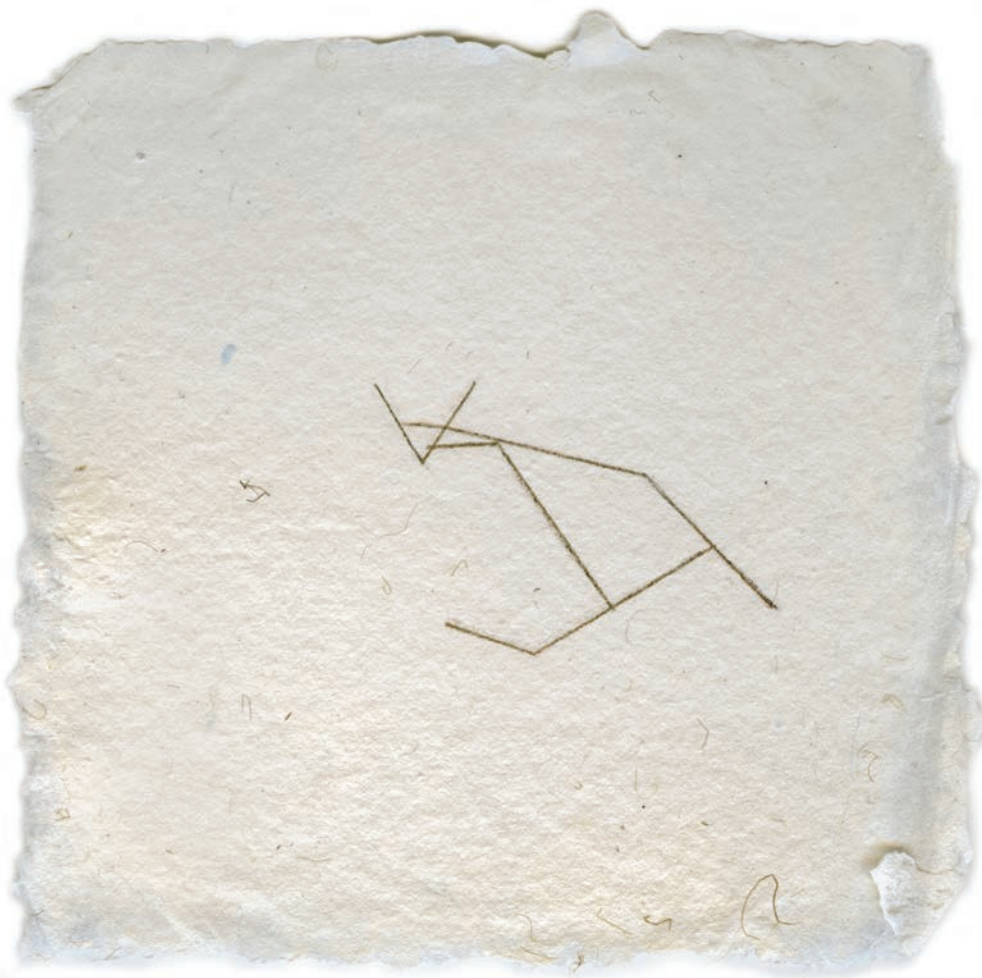
words and then 'illustrate' those thoughts. Thinking through images is a kind of imagination. When Copernicus proposed that the earth circled the sun rather than the other way around, he

could have only achieved that through imagination. Copernicus could be the patron saint for a certain kind of drawing.

3. Most of us remember when we were young, the anxiety of some adult shouting at us to "Think what you are doing!" Is this thinking? Yes, in a way; but the command as it was given is really a plea for awareness. We are being urged to widen our area of concern or revise a fixed attitude.

Drawing can bring awareness to the surface. If we adopt a fixed attitude and follow it through we inevitably make discoveries. But we have to follow it through, past almost certain blockages. Whenever we begin a drawing we assume a specific frame of mind and at that moment place ourselves within a lineage. Sometimes we do this consciously, sometimes intuitively. Even if we seem to be on the outside, we are always functioning from within something. All art is attitude.

4. We might be at a party and we meet someone who wants to tell us 'what he thinks.' Usually this information seems to have little to do with thinking, and it might be closer to its opposite. Thinking, in this sense, is really belief, and has more to do with habit than thinking, probably because beliefs are formed like habits. We all have beliefs but sometimes we don't know what they are until they are



Joel Fisher, drawing for Figure 3, pencil and found fiber on handmade paper, approx. 6x6 in

challenged. Usually someone who wants to tell us 'what he thinks' feels as if he has been challenged. What is clear is that 'thinking' as it is being used here is somewhat autobiographical. It has the stamp of personal history.

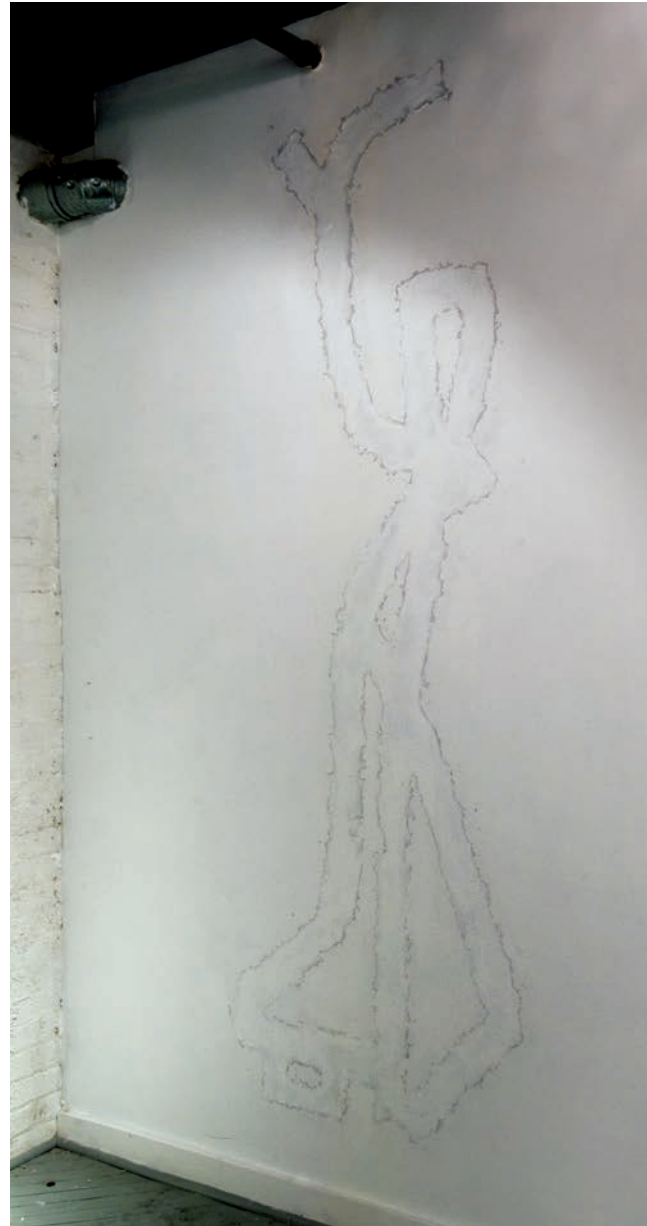
Thinking as belief, opinion or tacit assumption can clearly exist in drawing. It is there when we are appreciating an effort by someone else, and it is there when we are making our own drawing and we inadvertently trace out a form we know very well. Skill is actually a habit. Belief and habit are rich areas waiting to be explored. They open some doors and close others.

It is interesting to remember that anything that ends in 'graph' must have something to do with writing or drawing. A lithograph. A photograph. An autograph. Or an auto-bio-graph.

5. "Think where you put the keys!" Thinking does not help either me or the questioner here. What is being asked is to remember.

Drawing touches on memory in many different ways. We build on drawings others have done in the past. Sometimes these are forgotten drawings. We occasionally unearth, through drawing, what was lost.

6. Thinking can mean recognition — discovering a pattern, or recognizing resemblance. Thinking connects



Joel Fisher, Figure 1

things with each other and us to them. Sometimes the discovery is methodical, sometimes immediate. Because thinking is implicated in discovery, it becomes a kind of empirical enquiry.

Discovery is embedded in the act of drawing — repeated, sequential discovery. We know things at the completion of a drawing that we didn't know at the beginning. In that sense drawing is both a form of empirical enquiry and a vehicle for revelation. Each time it leads to recognition it creates a kind of echo. Any exhibition or collection of drawings is full of echoes.

7. Thinking very often means reasoning and reflecting. These are not the same but can be in service to the same need. Reasoning can include formulating a cogent argument against apparent facts that are being officially imposed on us. It can mean going over and assessing the risks involved in a new venture. Reflecting makes an image of a situation in order to see it in a different light.

Thinking, like drawing, can be seen as performative, although it is easier to describe someone who is drawing than a thinker who is at work thinking. Both activities seek to persuade, perhaps ourselves, perhaps others, and both do this by deciding what is necessary to exclude, what is necessary to include, and where we put what we keep. In considering placement we select what is helpful.

That is seven but there are certainly more. I discovered two others in this text while proofreading it: in one sentence I use the word *thinking* to mean 'assume' and another time to mean 'consider.'

Reviewing these various uses shows us how drawing and thinking run on parallel paths. Drawing is like thinking, but not what we might call a 'mode of thought.' It is too multifaceted to be proposed as a single system or lens able to give us a specific understanding of the world.

Drawing is not a clear approach in the same way that the scientific method is. The scientific method is a specific empirical system for thinking about, understanding, and acting in the world. Other candidates for 'modes of thought' might be cutting the flat patterns for clothing in a way that creates volume when sewn together, making moulds so that undercuts do not get in the way, or creating meaning by taking away, like we find in carving. These are activities that guide thinking into a direction and attention. Drawing doesn't really do that. It is too polymorphous and dynamic to be called a form of thinking, but it is clearly related to thinking. Everything drawing does, thinking seems to do too, but the most important thing that drawing does (and this is the theme of my talk today) is to place thinking into a relationship.

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The world is a buzzing, humming, turbulent jumble of sensations. We have too much information. This is not a new situation but in the past 200 years the number of sensations has multiplied, and the speed of nearly everything has increased. So far we can handle it. Human beings are both physically and mentally designed to filter information. We do this whether it is busy or quiet. Sometimes we do it consciously.

In university, the lectures are spoken, and talk is almost always faster than we can write. As far as I know nobody, except perhaps a court stenographer, or sometimes a journalist, is taught how to take notes. We are just thrown into it and in the midst of too many things coming at us we try to simplify our methods of recording what is essential.

Each of us evolves a personal style and system. We discover inherent principles in the process. We find some forms of abbreviation can be smoothly reconstructed and others that cannot.

In the sciences like chemistry, or even in psychology or history, most adjectives can be dropped, because from the context we can reconstruct them. E. B. White, an expert on clear writing, believes that the elimination of adjectives creates dynamic writing. One reason for this is that while trying to understand what has happened

readers tacitly reinsert the sense of the adjectives if not the actual words. Consequently as they read they are more involved. If we say, "The city was destroyed by fire," we already know a lot that doesn't need to be said. Destruction by fire is a specific kind of destruction.

How else do we abbreviate? A general title does a lot. In much note taking we find that quite a few of the verbs can be dropped. Nouns and pronouns can be simplified or eliminated completely. Prepositions, on the other hand seem to be absolutely essential. We either keep them or we draw a picture.

I have often thought of note taking as a kind of drawing. We can't remember everything, and we cannot write down every word. How do we select what we record? Preferable forms of notation record facts and also function as aids to help us to remember things too numerous to write down. The question of how we abbreviate is as interesting as it is basic. It happens whenever we remember anything. In abbreviation, one of the basic principles of drawing finds more uses in other places.

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For several centuries Cicero was used to teach Latin because he was known as someone who spoke fluently and persuasively. There is a comparison between Cicero and Demosthenes that



Joel Fisher, source drawing, left, Figure 3, right

I read in William Jennings Bryan but apparently it comes via Plutarch. The difference, as Bryan says is that "*When Cicero spoke people said: 'How well Cicero speaks!' but when Demosthenes spoke they said, 'Let us go against Philip.'*" Cicero, like many

skilled orators impressed himself upon his audience, demonstrating his mastery, maybe showing off. The audience noticed, and appreciated his ability. When Demosthenes spoke, in contrast, what the audience heard was his arguments. Demosthenes was

invisible, but the abuses of Philip of Macedonia were not. Hawthorne, in a similar mode, was known to say that "easy reading is damned hard writing."

In what is called 'the art that disguises art,' we don't try to impress. This is a



Joel Fisher, *Figure 1* (left), *Figure 2* (right)

very broad issue and extends well beyond drawing. It is just as true in serious spiritual practice. Charity is best when it is unseen. A Bodhisattva can help more when he hides his nature. A need to impress never really honours the audience. If a guru fascinates his devotees that in itself may be a sign of disrespect. *The art that disguises art* determines quality in art making, and also in every installation in which art is presented. In an important sense, it is also what good teaching is about.

In *Prepositional Drawing* we don't want to dazzle with fancy flourishes or showy skill. We want our ultimate skill to be almost invisible. Think of the famous duck-rabbit drawing discussed by Wittgenstein. In order for this to work, it has to be exceptionally well drawn. The effect is ambiguous because the drawing is so invisibly unseen.

—
I spent a month carving stone in Edinburgh as part of the STONE project, a huge research project exploring stone and stone working techniques.

After I had the main shape in the stone roughed out, I kept coaxing the form into existence. Every passage of the chisel was like drawing a line. Each additional removal enabled me to see something else. The effect — perhaps the purpose — of each change is to provide increased

vantage. As I change something it helps me to see what I haven't seen before. The process of carving could be described as progressive seeing.

While I was thinking of this I remembered the story of Agassiz and his student.⁶ Agassiz believed that drawing was an aid to observation. The story demonstrates both the difficulty of observation and the process through which each action helps us to see things that we hadn't seen before.

This is the story:

A student is eager to study with Agassiz and has traveled hundreds of miles in order to meet the man and asks if he might be taken on as a student. When he arrives he is not certain where to go, and wanders around looking for someone to direct him. He eventually finds his way to Agassiz's laboratory, but just as he arrives, he finds that Agassiz is leaving for some meetings.

The professor was cordial but regretted that it would be sometime before he could get back, perhaps more than two hours because he was not just going to one meeting but two, one after the other. He would be happy to talk with the young man on his return, if he wouldn't mind waiting. "Certainly not," the student replied, "after all I have come so far already." Agassiz pointed to a fish on a platter in the

laboratory. "While I am gone," he said, "spend your time drawing the fish."

Agassiz left and the young man began his drawing. He wanted to do a good job in order to impress the great man. After an hour his drawing was finished and it looked pretty good. He sat back to admire his own work. As he sat there, he looked at the drawing, and then at the fish, and then back at the drawing. He began seeing things that weren't quite right. Quickly he began to correct his drawing. He wanted it to be finished when Agassiz returned, and it was nearly two hours since he left. When the corrections were done he sat down to wait and to again admire his work. Now it was much better. He looked at the drawing, and then at the fish, and back to the drawing. Again he noticed things that weren't the same. He began again to erase and redraw.

Now he really had it! He had revised it twice, and it was obvious that the second revision had made a difference. He sat down again to admire his work, thankful that Agassiz had not yet returned. He looked at his drawing, quite proud of his work. He compared the fish again to the drawing. He congratulated himself because now it really was good. But as he kept looking he began again to see things that he missed. He erased and redrew again. Again he sat down to wait, but every time that he thought that the drawing was finished,

the same thing happened. Many hours later Agassiz finally returned. He had been delayed, and he had forgotten about the student. He apologized for keeping him so long. The student told him how he had spent his time. Agassiz understood from this story that the young man had the ability to revise his first impressions. The student had learned that the act of drawing had helped him to see, and that each seeing helped him to see further. On the strength of that story the young man was accepted by Agassiz and worked with him for many years.

The changes I was making on my sculpture were aids to seeing. After removing one little bit I was able to see things that I hadn't seen before.

My comparison brings other things into focus as well, specifically how the unique characteristics of our materials can determine the nature and path of what we learn. A mark made by a pencil (which can be erased) is not the same as a mark made by a chisel (which cannot). In carving each line establishes itself as the new ground. It is the foundation that is being renewed. If we draw with a pencil, as happens in the Agassiz story, the ground is unaltered, but the drawing is malleable.

In *Prepositional Drawing* the search is pulled into the drawing as the drawing comes into existence. This

begins to happen even before the first mark is made. Approach is drawing's first ingredient. More and more resonances appear while the drawing floats into existence, but the completed drawing is never finished in any relational sense. After the last mark has been made it continues to explore the space of intention, it finds sympathetic vibrations elsewhere in the world, and aligns itself to them.

When artists really understand how this relational aspect functions they begin to accept that the work is bigger than they are. They see that both they, and their drawing, is in service to something else. We can adapt the words from Robert Browning's poem where he declares that "the reach must exceed the grasp." The reach of the work must be longer than any individual grasp. In drawing, it often is.

I tell my students that one of their most urgent tasks is to find a work that is big enough for them. This is not a minor consideration. Sometimes our world can start shrinking without us noticing. There are plenty of situations that begin as a pathway to freedom or adventure but later become a trap. We know that certain lifestyles do this, and if we live long enough we can cite examples from our acquaintances.

We can find traps in certain activities, in personal relationships or in specific

working situations. Even success can be a kind of prison. What begins as an urgency, or a relief, becomes a burden. Artists sometimes end up doing variations and parodies of their earlier work, discovering that each new action undermines and dilutes their own achievement. We want our work to do for us and for others what we cannot do for ourselves.

—

There is a drawing technique that most cathedral restoration teams are now using as a tool. The restoration team works from a linear drawing that has been created with computer assistance from photographic input. It looks like a pen and ink drawing that depicts the entire façade of the building. The essential thing is that every stone is seen straight on.

Normally the space we see is curved. As our eyes look out from a fixed position near the top of our head, the world at our feet is further away. The world over our head is even further away. If we accurately draw what we see, the space is curved.

The restoration drawing is clearer than a photograph because it offers sharp edges indicating the boundary of each stone. These edges relate to work that has to be done, and the task needs to be seen and understood by the masons without the possibility of misunderstanding. In the same way, a botanical drawing or an anatomical drawing is

also clearer than any photograph can be. We think of a photograph as objective but in some cases it can actually obscure information. A drawing has focus. A drawing sets up purpose.

—

When I began my career as an artist my impression was that drawing was the private part of art making, the intimate part of a public practice. Often drawings were kept in small sketchbooks, like diaries. Permission to look at someone's painting was something that was assumed to be granted without the need to ask. Looking at drawings was different. Drawings were so personal that they were only suitable for private research or solitary study. Before you looked at someone's drawings you asked permission. Painting, even unfinished, was for public presentation, not drawing; drawing was somewhere else.

In my lifetime drawing went from private to public. I believe this shift was partially aided by conceptual art's rigid modes of presentation: painting was unacceptable but photographs and drawing (as diagrams, visualizations, or plans) were accepted. In tandem with writing, drawing and photography became the standard way to record an intellectual statement or express ideas in art. Drawings, even clumsy drawings, were now out in the open.

Today drawing has a new respect. It is even possible now to earn an MFA in drawing. This, as an achievement, is not to be underestimated. It is not just the addition to an academic program of a new media, like film or video. It moves a previously supportive process into a central position.

Creating the option to specialize in drawing means that a previously peripheral or introductory practice has been moved from a supportive role into the pantheon of valued arts. This has not happened easily. These are still those who believe that the apotheosis of drawing goes against the natural order. Although not often mentioned, art education has functioned under a kind of class system. Part of this structure is to have two 'houses' at the top and then all the rest. There is Painting and Sculpture. Think also of the Royal College and the Slade, Oxford and Cambridge, Congress and the Senate. There are actually quite a few of these 'summit twins.'

The revolutions of Copernicus and Darwin restructured the order of understanding. When we begin to think of drawing seriously we also start to restructure an established order. The move of drawing into a central position does not necessarily have to dethrone anyone. It is not really like turning the manor over to the servants, but that case could still be made. It is more like sending Cinderella to the ball. She

still remembers how to distinguish lentils from ash.

At the moment drawing may be the most flexible art form. It slips around corners and lights up dark passages. Far more ancient than painting or sculpture it feels fresher. Drawing reminds us that art can be comfortable in those places in the world that still remain unnamed.

There is another story that was circulating a few years ago.

A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's artwork. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

That may be all it takes. □

Notes:

¹ Speaking of the coercion of rules, think of Winston Churchill's witty comment that not ending sentences with prepositions was nonsense up with which he would not put.

² James Joyce said that he wanted to fly by means of the nets thrown over him in order to keep him from flying. "The soul ... has a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born ... there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. ... I shall try to fly by those nets."

³ Think of the ubiquitous drawing marathons. These are drawing as duration, and much can be discovered in this kind of immersion.

⁴ A substantive is a noun.

⁵ Aboard, about, above, absent, according to, across, after, again, against, ahead of, along, along with, alongside, amidst, among, amongst, apart from, around, as, as far as, as for, as regards, aside, aside from, astride, as well as, at, atop, baring, because of, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but, by, by means of, close to, circa, concerning, despite, down, downward, due to, during, except, except for, excepting, excluding, failing, far from, following, for, from, in, in addition to, in accordance with, in back of, in case of, including, in front of, in lieu of, in place of, inside, inside of, in spite of, instead of, into,

like, minus, near, near to, next, next to, notwithstanding, of, off, on, on account of, on top of, onto, opposite, out, out of, outside, outside of, over, owing to, past, plus, prior to, regarding, regardless of, round, save, since, subsequent to, than, that of, through, throughout, till, time, to, toward, towards, under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon, versus, via, with, with regard to, with respect to, within, without.

A drawing however might have more than one preposition, or several in a row; here are 3 prepositional phrases in a row: "meet me under the magnolia, at twilight, without your wig."

⁶ Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz was an exceptional scientist and among other achievements is the person credited with the discovery of the Ice Age. Over the years I have realized that there are several versions of this story. Instead of being variations evolved from a single incident, I think that these stories may stem from related experiences of different people drawing a fish, a teaching technique that Agassiz used for many of his students.

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Joel Fisher

These thoughts on habits, restrictions and potential were the keynote presentation at the 2009 Drawing Research Network annual conference.



Joel Fisher, Figure 3

Carmel Buckley

EDUCATION

- 1986-88 The School of Visual Arts, New York, M.F.A. Fine Art, Sculpture
1983-84 The San Carlos Academy of Fine Arts, Mexico City,
Post-Graduate Sculpture
1978-80 Escuela de Bellas Artes, Madrid University,
Post-Graduate Sculpture
1975-78 Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic B.A. (Honors)
Fine Art Sculpture

Selected AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- 2008 Art Residency in Otranto, Italy
1998 London Arts Board Grant for 'Dumbfounded'
1995 Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist's Award
1989 New York Foundation for the Arts, Sculpture Award
1986-88 Fulbright Award
1983-84 Mexican Government Scholarship

Selected EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 'SculptureX: 6 Sculptors of Ohio and Western Pennsylvania,'
The Sculpture Center, Erie Art Museum, Cleveland
'Sculpture Key West', outdoor group sculpture show, Key West
2010 'Carmel Buckley New Work,' solo exhibition, semantics,
Cincinnati
'Nature's Stain,' two-person show, Aisle Gallery, Cincinnati
'Gesture (inclusive),' group show at OSU Hopkins Hall Gallery,
Columbus
2009 'Trace,' solo exhibition at the Weston Art Gallery, Cincinnati
'Text Show,' group show at CS13, Cincinnati
'Star Maker,' group show, E:vent, London
'Joy Divisions,' group show, Columbus Public Library, Columbus
'The Stars in the Sky are Still Boss,' group show, University of
Cincinnati, Reed Art Gallery, Cincinnati
2008 'Homecoming: A Local Perspective,' group show, Artworks Gallery,
Cincinnati
'the sneeze 80 x 80,' group show, University of Cincinnati,
Reed Art Gallery, Cincinnati, The Substation, Johannesburg,
and Albany Art Museum, Grahamstown
2007 'the sneeze 80 x 80,' group show, Iziko South Africa
National Gallery, Cape Town, and Durban Art Gallery, Durban

- 'Once Upon A Time In The Midwest,' group show, Reed Art Gallery,
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati
2006 '3D-An Exhibition of Contemporary Sculpture,' group show,
Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati
'Bad Drawing,' group show, University of Cincinnati Gallery on
Sycamore, Cincinnati
2005 'OMap,' group show, Modern Art, Oxford
'The Stuff of Substance,' group show curated by Joel Fisher,
Gallery North, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
2004 'the sneeze 80 x 80,' group show, Gazon Rouge Gallery, Athens
2002 '25th Anniversary Benefit Selections Exhibition,' group show,
The Drawing Center, New York
'Century City' included The Big Blue, group show, Tate Modern,
London
2000 'Snapshot,' group show, Contemporary Museum, Baltimore
1999 'Intersculpt,' group show, exhibition of rapid prototypes,
Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester
'The Manchurian Candidate,' group show, 30 Paris Street,
curated by Ciara Ennis and David Goldenberg, London
'relocation,' group show, 18 Museum House, London
'Sleight,' one-person show, Shillam & Smith, London
Two-person show, Economist Building, organized by
Contemporary Art Society, London
'Dumbfounded,' group show, Battersea Arts Center, London
1998 CALM project and touring exhibition of 3-D computer-
generated sculpture
'Host,' group show, Tramway, Glasgow
'Selections: Spring '98,' group show, The Drawing Center, New York
'Carmel Buckley: Recent Sculpture,' one-person show,
East London Gallery, London
1997 'Interior Architecture,' one-person show, The Gallery of
South Orange, South Orange
'The Big Blue,' group show, Coins Cafe, London; Cafe Adler/
Cafe Fix, Berlin
'Irredeemable Skeletons,' group show, Shillam+ Smith 3, London
'Sculpture and Drawing,' Three-person show, Bridport Arts Center,
Bridport
1996 One-person show, Penine Hart Gallery, New York
'The Great Pretender,' group show, Penine Hart Gallery,
New York
Two-person show, Room, New York
One-person show, Spaces, Cleveland
'Black and White,' Marymount College Gallery, New York

- 1995 One-person show, The McDonough Museum, Installation Gallery, Youngstown State University, Youngstown
 'Bodies/Transformations,' group show, TZ Art & Company, New York
 'In Three Dimensions: Women Sculptors of the '90s,' group show, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, New York
 'What is the Connection?,' group show, Trans Hudson Gallery, Jersey City
- 1994 One-person show, Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, Columbus
 'Small Works,' group show, The Sculpture Center, New York
- 1993 'Forms of Life,' group show, Trans Hudson Gallery, Jersey City
 'Exquisite Corpse,' group show, The Drawing Center, New York
 One-person show, Work Space, TennisportArts, Long Island City, New York
 Two-person show, Penine Hart Gallery, New York
- 1992 'The Neurotic Art Show II,' group show, Four Walls at Artist's Space, New York
 'Action,' group show, Trenkmann Gallery, New York
- 1989 'Sculpture '89,' group show, University Art Gallery, Albany
- 1988 'At Home for the Holidays,' group show, A.I.R. Gallery, New York
- 1986 'Bretton Menagerie,' group show, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton
- 1984 'Artists in Industry,' group show, Mappin Gallery, Sheffield, Edinburgh City Art Gallery, Royal Festival Hall, London
- 1983 'Whitechapel Open Exhibition,' group show, Whitechapel Gallery, London
- 1982-83 'Five Artists in Schools,' group show, Piece Hall Art Gallery, Halifax and the Smith Art Gallery, Brighouse

TEACHING

- 1999- Associate Professor, Art Department, The Ohio State University

PUBLICATIONS

- 2010 'Trace,' catalog for exhibition at the Weston Art Gallery, Cincinnati
 'Joy Divisions,' catalog for exhibition curated by Eva Ball at Columbus Metropolitan Library, Columbus
- 2006 'the sneeze 80 x 80,' catalog for traveling exhibition curated by Peter Lloyd Lewis and Natasha Makowski, Athens
- 1999 'Sleight,' catalog, Shillam & Smith, London
 'Dumbfounded,' catalog, Battersea Arts Centre, London
 Contemporary Art Society, Economist Building, London

- 1997 'Selections, Spring '98,' brochure, The Drawing Center, New York
- 1996 'Space, Inside, Outside,' catalog, Room, New York
- 1995 'In Three Dimensions: Women Sculptors of the '90s,' catalog, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, New York
- 1994 'Carmel Buckley: Tools for the Imagination,' catalog, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus
- 1983 'Artists in Industry,' Yorkshire Arts Council, Bradford

REVIEWS

- 2010 Steven Rosen, *CityBeat*, review of solo show, semantics, November 17-23
 Alan Pocaro, *Aeqai*, review of 'Nature's Stain' at Aisle Gallery, August
 Matthew Morris, *Sculpture Magazine*, review of Weston Art Gallery exhibition, August
 Matthew Morris, *CityBeat*: The Best of Cincinnati 2010
- 2009 Jud Yalkut, *Dayton City Paper*, August 19-25
 Matthew Morris, *CityBeat* 2009 Year Review, December 30th-January 05 2010
- 2006 Sarah Pearce, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, review of Carl Solway exhibition, June 18
 Julie Bernzott, *CityBeat*, review of 20th International Sculpture Conference and Carl Solway exhibition, July 5
 Jane Durrell, *CityBeat*, review of Carl Solway exhibition, July 5
- 2003 Jeanne Fryer-Kohles, *Columbus Dispatch*, review of show at Gallery V, November
- 1999 Maria Walsh, *Art Monthly*, review of Economist show, September
 Martin Coomer, *Time Out*, review of Economist show, August 26-September 1
 Jonathan Jones, *The Guardian Thursday Guide*, Economist show, September 2
- 1997 Dan Bischoff, *The Star-Ledger*, October-November
 Gilda Williams, *Art Monthly*, May
- 1995 Lilly Wei, *Art in America*, January
- 1994 Jacqueline Hall, *The Columbus Dispatch*, Sunday July 3
- 1993 Vivien Raynor, *The New York Times*, Sunday November 21
- 1983 William Packer, *Financial Times*, November 22
 Irene McManus, *The Guardian*, November 22
 Bernard Denvir, *Times Educational Supplement*, December 2
 Frances Spalding, *Arts Review*, December

Joel Fisher

EDUCATION

Studied at Kenyon College

Selected SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 'Apographs,' Centre for Recent Drawings (C4RD), London
- 2008 'The Inventory Sculptures,' Joel Fisher,
Gallery Bernard Bouche, Paris
'The Recovered Sculptures,' Vermont Studio Center
Johnson, Vermont
- 2007 'The Secret Paintings,' Art Affairs Gallery, Amsterdam
- 2003 'Isography,' Art Affairs Gallery, Amsterdam
'Secretus & Secerne,' Hatton Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- 2001 Summary European Ceramic Work Centrum (EKWC) 's-
Hertogenbosch, Holland
- 1997 'Mosaic Evolution,' Art Affairs, Amsterdam
- 1994 'Light Catchers,' Lawrence Markey Gallery, New York
- 1991 'Forms of Attachment,' Galerie Farideh Cadot, Paris
- 1988 'Subtle Delusions,' Diane Brown Gallery, New York
- 1987 'Unfair to Facts,' Diane Brown Gallery, New York
'Image and Idol,' Farideh Cadot Gallery, New York
- 1984 'Second Furlong,' Matt's Gallery, London
'Between Two and Three Dimensions,' Kunstmuseum, Luzern
- 1982 'Joel Fisher: Paper works 1970-1982,' Riverside Studios, London
- 1978 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
- 1977 Museum of Modern Art, Oxford
- 1975 'An Irrevocable Action,' Städtisches Museum, Monchengladbach
112 Greene Street, New York
- 1974 Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris
- 1970 'Double Camouflage,' Mansfield Arts Center, Mansfield

Selected GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 'Nature's Stain,' (with Carmel Buckley), Cincinnati
- 2006 'Anatomy Acts,' Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh
- 2000 'Dream Machines,' curated by Susan Hiller,
Camden Arts Center, London

- 1996 '20th Century American Sculpture at The White House,'
Washington DC
- 1994 'Chance, Choice and Irony,' John Hansard Gallery, Southampton
- 1990 'Drawings by Sculptors,' Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore
- 1989 '4 Americans -Aspects of Current Sculpture,'
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn
- 1987 'Structure to Resemblance: Eight Sculptors,'
Albright Knox Gallery, Buffalo
- 1986 1st International Biennale der Papierkunst,
Leopold Hoesch Museum, Düren
- 1985 'Spuren Sculpturen und Monumente, ihrer Prazisen Reise,'
Kunsthaus Zurich
- 1983 'Edges and Shadows: The Sculpture Show,'
Hayward Gallery, London
'Paper as Image,' Arts Council of Great Britain



Joel Fisher, drawing for Figure 1, pencil and found fiber on handmade paper, approx. 6x6 in

- 1981 'Substance and Accident with Colin Crumplin,'
Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol
- 1979 'Pittura-Ambiente,' Palazzo Reale, Milan
'Drawings,' Museum of Art, University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill
- 1973 8e biennale de Paris, Paris
- 1972 documenta V, Kassel
- 1971 'Cover to Cover-The Clothing Piece,' Paula Cooper Gallery,
New York

Selected PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern
 The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn
 Museum of Modern Art, New York
 Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen
 Center Georges Pompidou, Paris
 Stadisches Museum, Monchengladbach
 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
 Tate Gallery, London
 Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge
 FRAC Picardie, Amiens FRAC, Limousin
 FRAC Ile de France, Paris
 SuHo Memorial Paper Museum, Taipei
 Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford
 Castellani Art Museum, Niagara University, Niagara Falls
 Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London
 FRAC - Ile-de-France Le Plateau, Paris
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Ghent
 Georgia Museum of Fine Arts, Athens

AWARDS, PRIZES, FELLOWSHIPS

2001-02 Henry Moore Fellowship (Newcastle-upon-Tyne)
 2000 Artist in Residence University of Auckland
 2000 Gottlieb Foundation Grant
 1994 Gast der Berliner Kunstlerprogram des DAAD
 1993-94 John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship
 1993 Pollock-Krasner Foundation
 1973-74 Gast der Berliner Kunstlerprogram des DAAD

PUBLISHED INTERVIEWS

- 2009 'Joel Fisher in Conversation with Dominic Rich'
Centre for Recent Drawing
- 2001 'The Creative Process in (Some Things We Don't See),'
with Long-Bin Chen, SuHo Paper Museum Taiwan
- 1981 'Joel Fisher,' with Robin White, *View Magazine*
- 1974 'Strong as a Spider's Web,' *Avalanche Magazine*

CURATED EXHIBITIONS

- 2007 'Slow Light,' Gallery North, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- 2005 'The Stuff of Substance,' Gallery North, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- 1980-81 'The Success of Failure,' (London), restructured in USA
by Independent Curators, Inc on tour 1987-88

PUBLIC TALKS ON EDUCATION

- 2010 'Idea Wrestling With The Idea That Excludes It'
(The Wariness of a Single Point of View)
Paper delivered at the International Sculpture Conference,
London
- 2009 'Notes toward a Prepositional Drawing'
Keynote talk Drawing Research Network
- 2008 'Safe Passage,' a talk on Sanctuary delivered at Castle Keep
- 2008 'Primary Narcissism,' a text later published
on the website of the Artists Teachers
- 2006 'What do we do about Nicodemus?,'
ATS Starr Auditorium, Tate Modern

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- (4) Subtractive thinking as a technique and unique mode of thought



*Carmel Buckley, Untitled #25 (CPT36), 2010, Japanese paper,
ink, 17x20½ in*



Carmel Buckley & Joel Fisher, installation view, Aisle Gallery main room

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CARMEL BUCKLEY
JOEL FISHER

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