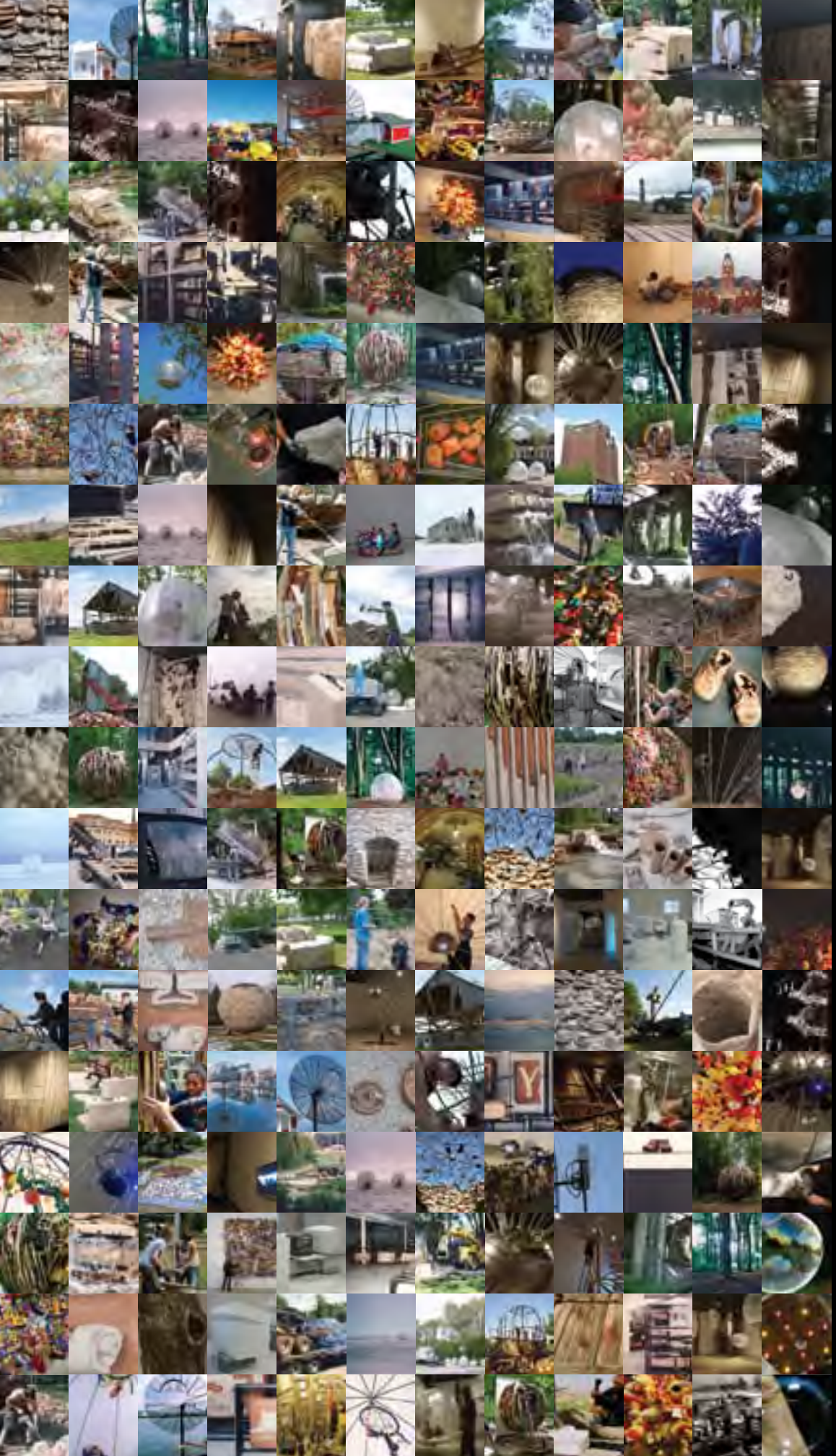
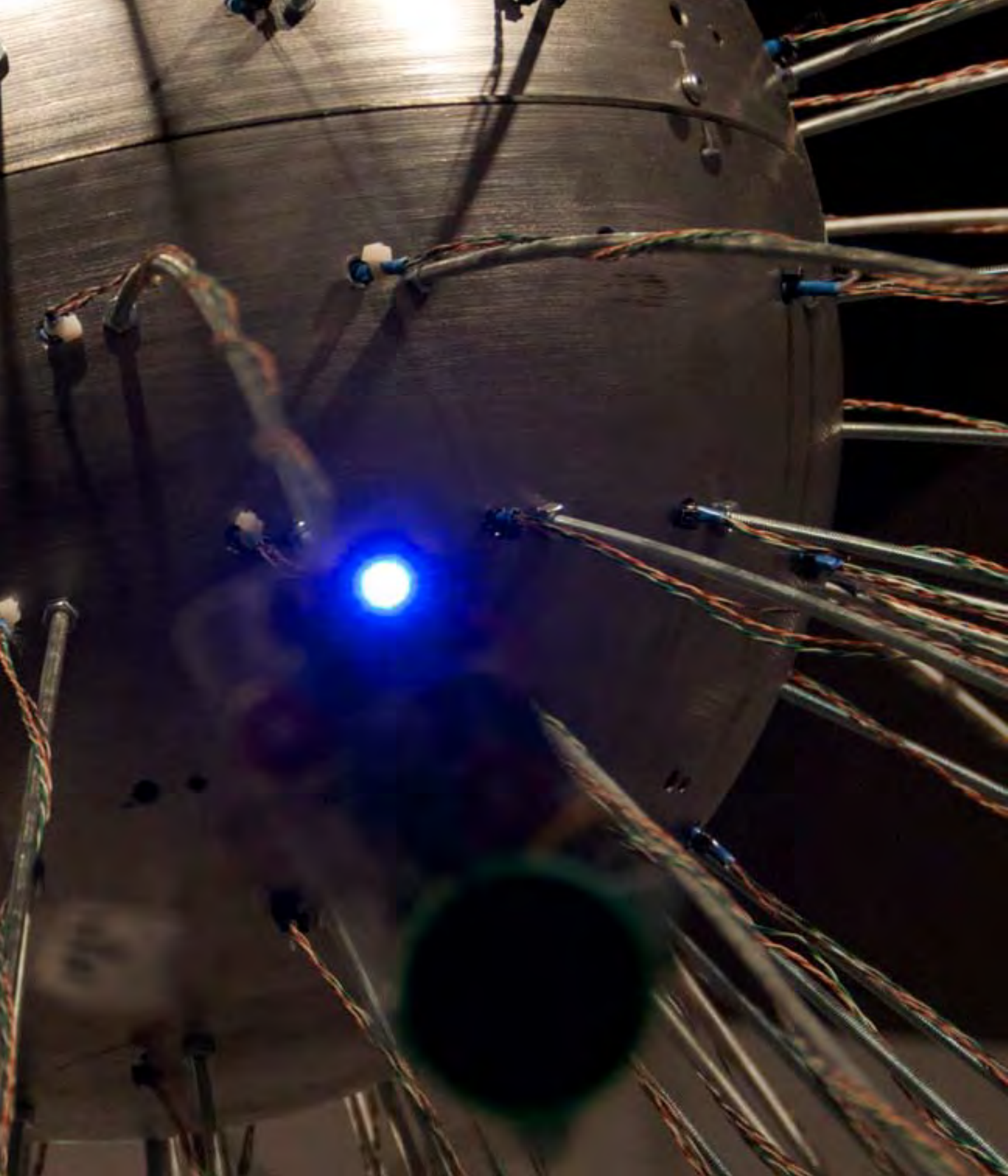


ERNEST DAETWYLER

SELECTED PROJECTS 1998-2010















ERNEST DAETWYLER

SELECTED PROJECTS 1998-2010





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It is a distinct pleasure, in conjunction with the exhibition *life is but a dream* and the launch of this compendium publication, to acknowledge the significant accomplishments of Swiss Canadian artist Ernest Daetwyler. The artist's innovative and multi disciplinary approach has garnered significant acclaim and an international audience.

The interactive and site-specific art created for *life is but a dream* transformed Gallery Stratford. Daetwyler's sculptural works and time-based media inspired critical thought and reflection, and at the same time engaged the public with a sense of immediacy and playfulness. The compelling installations left a lasting impression on visitors of what an encounter with contemporary art could entail.

Accompanying the exhibition, Gallery Stratford is pleased to work with the artist to launch a publication surveying projects and site-specific installations from 1998-2010. Highlighted in detail are many of Daetwyler's interventions, which are often placed in the public realm: ephemeral plastic bubbles on a frozen lake, satellite dishes altered to produce soap bubbles, unearthed and transformed remnants of the Second World War north of Berlin, a contemporary sculptural work assembled from reclaimed sandstone elements of Stratford City Hall, a barn installed upside-down in a gallery space in *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]*, and the reconfigured abundance of toys and the kinetic audio sphere in *life is but a dream*. The readers are given new perspective on the depth of the artist's practice and the complexities of his installation process.

Gratitude is extended to the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, The Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, the partnering public art galleries as well as the corporate and private sponsors who supported the publication. The writers are to be commended for their insightful contributions: independent curator and critic Corinna Ghaznavi; Crystal Mowry, Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery; Curator Pamela Edmonds of the Art Gallery of Peterborough; and Rob Freeman, Executive Director/Curator of the Art Gallery of Mississauga. Special thanks also go to the hardworking installation team who worked with Daetwyler to masterfully install the projects; Jennifer Rudder, former Curator of Gallery Stratford who invited the artist for a solo exhibition; Elisabeth Feryn for the excellent photo documentation; and Gabriela Aceves for her inspired graphic design of the publication.

In closing, my deepest appreciation goes to the artist Ernest Daetwyler for his vision, passion and continued dedication to share his art with the public.





LIFE IS BUT A
DREAM



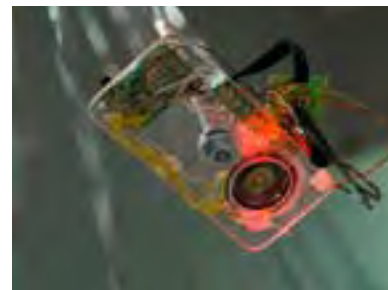
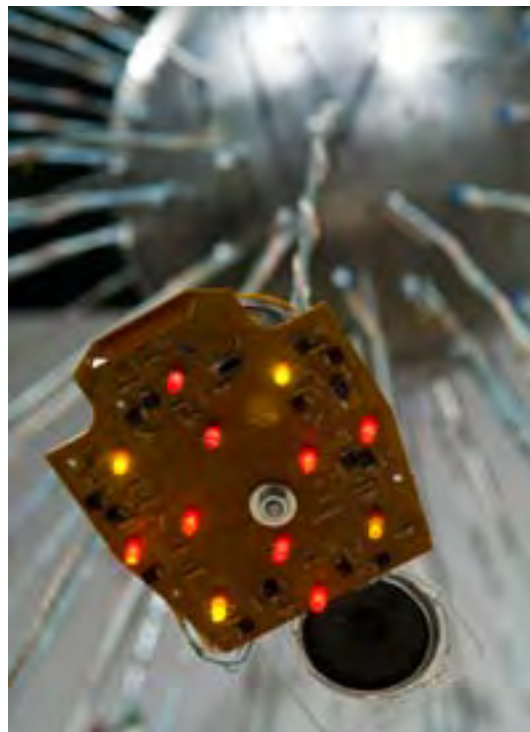






















REALITY IN REVERSE [barn raising]











Crystal Mowry

STATIC UNCERTAINTY

It is walking a tightrope with no safety net of “whys” below. At times it is tempting to dive into the global broth, where all of us are boiling and eating the same ideas, but this is a childish wish and a dangerous extremism that leads to the loss of all personal responsibility. In this dream of ecumenical upheaval, we forget that witnessing is a quiet, creative act. We forget that developing an independent judgment, a confrontation with the opposition, is the very making of culture that eventually leads us to shared epiphanic occasions.¹

Writing about the particular challenges of artistic experience and practices at the end of the last millennium, Curator and Critic Francesco Bonami ushered us into a paradigm that seems all too familiar today. Uncertainty, and how we might craft meaningful experiences out of it, are notions that have been relevant to Ernest Daetwyler’s work over the last decade. Whether he is building a giant sphere crafted from the ruins of a ravaged city, offering us the semblance of shelter without the actual assurance, or literally inverting the iconography of his local environs, Daetwyler offers constant reminders of the distance between collective traditions and individual experiences.

Informed by the tradition of barn raising that has been practiced by the Mennonite and Amish communities in the Region of Waterloo since the late 18th Century, *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]* (2010) is a culmination of Daetwyler’s reclamation-based approach to art-making. Barn raising is motivated by a shared understanding that collaboration can provide crucial assistance and reduce need borne by individuals. Today, echoes of this tradition can still be heard in myriad community building projects carried out by large-scale humanitarian organizations and grass-roots community groups alike. This form of collaboration also has a parallel in the form of “wiki barn raising”, an event in which members of a community meet and interact at a designated time in order to develop content for free online resources such as Wikipedia.

For *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]*, Daetwyler sourced and dismantled a derelict barn near his home and studio in Atwood, Ontario. Working in collaboration with an experienced crew of Mennonite barn raisers, Daetwyler used the reclaimed materials to build an inverted and slightly scaled-down folly of the barn within the pristine confines of a white-cube gallery space. Juxtaposed with the looming physicality of the barn is an accompanying video which depicts the barn only moments before it falls. Dynamic, yet haunting, the video serves as evidence of an earlier reality of which the viewer has no first hand experience.

What Daetwyler crafts is nothing short of vertiginous. The barn with its uncanny, skewed posture in the gallery amplifies the distance that separates it from its viewer. One can’t help but sense that it is about to topple over at any moment, that this barn’s demise is as inevitable as that of its predecessor. We feel frozen in the moment. Witnessing the fall of the past with every expectation that we will be around to rebuild it.



1. Francesco Bonami, “The Road Around (or, A Long Good-bye)” in *Echoes: Contemporary Art at the Age of Endless Conclusions*, ed. Francesco Bonami (New York: The Monacelli Press, Inc, 1996), p. 16.





Ernest Daetwyler's recent projects *Life is But a Dream* and *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]* foreground ideas of community, rebuilding, commodification and art as a practice of renewal. The barn, made obsolete and torn down, points to a rural tradition that is fast disappearing. The wooden boards show signs of wear and use; they are the materials of rural structures that evoke nostalgia for a way of life that we already no longer know in a world where industrial agriculture is rapidly replacing the family farm.

Reality in Reverse [barn raising] operates on several levels: it is a sculptural object with immediate presence, it commemorates and critiques, and it juxtaposes radically different and contradictory elements of contemporary culture. The barn was reassembled in the gallery upside down. The inversion points to an inherent irrationality in our contemporary approaches towards progress, and reinvigorates the material by giving it new form. The tradition of barn raising is a social one that is still practiced by the Amish and Mennonites today. Existing without banks or insurance, the people carry their own and come to one another's aid in times of crisis. The values of this particular community are foregrounded because their members made up Daetwyler's installation crew. Their way of life is brought into tension with the barn that is rendered functionless in a contemporary gallery, demonstrating what Andreas Huyssen terms the 'relentless museummania' that acts as a counterpoint to the planned obsolescence of consumer society.¹

According to Huyssen, 'museummania,' witnessed in the unprecedented restoration of old urban centers, museum villages and landscapes, occupy ever larger chunks of everyday culture and experience.² This, writes Pierre Nora, demonstrates the eradication of memory by history, where musealization suppresses and destroys lived memory. In this process, reconstruction replaces permanent flux, representation actual phenomenon, and analysis subjective experience.³ Huyssen reminds us that historically collective memory depended on the stability of social/group memory. Currently, the clashing and fragmented memory politics of specific social and ethnic groups challenge notions of collective consensual memory and hence, social and cultural cohesion.⁴ But where Nora laments a de-ritualizing of the world through a preference for the new over the old, and warns that unless we are vigilant, history will disappear, Huyssen points to the more positive aspects of critical memory cultures that disrupt master narratives and reflect more clearly on the realities of contemporary life. By deconstructing and reconfiguring the barn, Daetwyler operates within this uniquely postmodern space defined by David Harvey as one where radically different realities coexist, collide and interpenetrate.⁵ Reminding us of Jacques Derrida's project of deconstruction, where meaning is always unstable, and collage/montage is the primary form of discourse, Harvey outlines how the new practice of any producer is to work with raw materials (fragments and elements) that the consumer can recombine. This creates a democratic (and empowered) reader and a local, pragmatic representation of the world rather than a unified one.⁶

1. Andreas Huyssen, "Escape from Amnesia: The Museum as Mass Medium." In Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Making Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 14.

2. Ibid.

3. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire." *Representations*. No. 26 (Spring, 1989), pp. 8 ff.

4. Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 17.

5. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990, p. 49.

6. Ibid, pp. 51 ff.



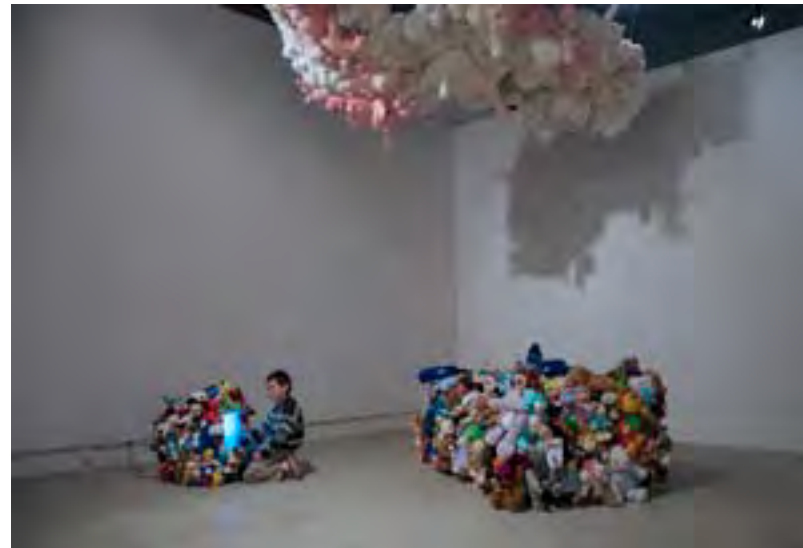


Daetwyler's project is not nostalgic but rather an attempt at encompassing the radically different realities and contradictions that we necessarily inhabit. After all nostalgia, as Susan Stewart reminds us, especially in the form of the museummania that Huyssen refers to, is both an objectification of peasant classes and an aestheticization of rural life.⁷ Daetwyler's sculptural reconfiguration of the materials of the barn, and his inclusion, in the gallery space, of Mennonites who represent a real contemporary community, and exemplify a historical collective memory, makes visible the postmodern space that Harvey calls the 'constant present' where schizophrenia is favoured over (Marxist) alienation, and the focus is on the participatory/performative rather than on the finished product.⁸ He holds at bay the closing off of lived experience, which Stewart describes as the process of abstraction replacing labour, art replacing nature, and the still life replacing history.⁹

The video shown alongside the installation *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]* further works against a dematerialization and an erasure of history and process: the video was shot in the basement of the original barn where, against the sounds of boards and steel roof elements clapping in the wind, we see the details of the working barn, the basement and foundation, and light streaming through the cracks. Once the details of the structure have been documented, the camera moves to the exterior and tracks the dismantling of the building; the sequence of boards and braces being removed ends in the final great crash when the structure is pulled over and collapses. Daetwyler's inversion of the barn also addresses the real ecological disasters that we face today. Specifically how corporations, monocultures and genetic engineering threaten not only the family farm and a traditional way of life, but also the very health of the planet. As Alexander Wilson points out, the characteristics of industrial agriculture are high-input cropping dependent on fossil fuels, resulting in intensive animal husbandry, mechanization, and the reduction of human labour. The goals are efficiency and monetary, the 'by-products' pollution, habitat destruction and unemployment.¹⁰

The issue of labour is deeply embedded in Daetwyler's projects: his inclusion of the Mennonite crew disallows abstraction to replace labour; and his own labour and that of the community, work against the erasure of labour that occurs in a capitalist system that drives us to commodify everything and forces us into an endless drive to accumulate without guilt. *Life is But a Dream* follows this project further by reflecting on the objects we acquire, consume and discard: in this case toys that the artist believes mirror our society. While the title of the exhibition is taken from the merrily lyrical childhood song, the other installations, entitled *Monster TV*, *Monster Sofa*, *Dream Spheres*, and *The Wall of Nightmares and Dreams*, are more ambiguous. Indeed, even while the title evokes the lyrics of 'row, row, row your boat,' it simultaneously recalls the fragility and fleeting nature of life and dreams. Whereas 'life is but a dream' can suggest a carefree life, it also suggests the ephemeral nature of dreaming life, where the soap bubble we have just blown into existence grows, quivers only momentarily and then bursts, leaving only thin air.

Although connected under one title, the three installations function as three fully developed and independent works. In the first, Daetwyler again harnessed the aid of his community with a call for discarded toys. *Monster TV*, *Monster Sofa* and the suspended *Clouds and Sun* are entirely made from found, collected, and donated stuffed toys. The sofa and TV are made from stuffies that are crowded, piled and pushed together to create a dense textile fabric that exudes both the comfort of cozy opulence and a nightmarish scene of horror vacui. Every kind of soft toy is found here from small to large, from frog to fish, dog, duck, Cat in the Hat, snake, crocodile, Tigger, hippo, gorilla, Elmo, Teletubbies and Winnie-the-Pooh. All the objects in these two sculptures are whole and recognizable whereas those (all white, grey and pink) in the clouds have been rendered abstract and formed into a cohesive whole hanging mass. The sun is the most hybrid assemblage where yellow and red stuffed toys have been reconfigured into rays by stitching together toys like Big Bird, the Cookie Monster and Homer Simpson.



7. Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993, p. 140.
8. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990, p. 53.
9. Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. p.140.
10. Alexander Wilson, *The Nature of Culture: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992, pp. 194 ff

Despite the overwhelming excess of these objects, they nonetheless attract as much as repel, unlike the *Wall of Nightmares and Dreams* which is made entirely out of plastic toys. All have been used, some are damaged, many continue to play a plastic tune, and when mounted across a large expanse of wall, all are revealed as ugly, garish, slightly repugnant, and disposable. We see naked Barbies frolicking in the Barbie RV, loads of naked dolls, plastic castles and dollhouses, a pink butterfly and a pink rearing horse, cars, Spiderman, robots, dinosaurs, a telephone, a bucket and a huge array of plastic animals varying in scale. At the bottom right toy soldiers, monsters and policemen are assembled to create a particularly violent mini-scene within this mass of cheap plastic from which the endless refrains of some melody sound alongside other grating and glaring audio. If, as the artist claims, these objects somehow mirror our society, what are we to make of all these made-in-China things that he received in the thousands, many of them in duplicate?

Theodor Adorno claims that 'the culture industry' constantly reproduces the same under the guise of the new, and replaces the autonomy of art. Through conformity and endless duplication, an enforced solidarity is produced around something that has not been pre-judged. The monopoly supplies information rather than knowledge, and information cannot lead to either thought, or experience.¹¹ The mass of Elmos and Winnie-the-Poohs demonstrates standardization and conformity. The obsolescence of these discarded objects points to a restless consumer driven to constantly acquire the next new (same) object. Although a critique of this culture industry is clearly inscribed in Daetwyler's work, more complex, and less pessimistic ideas are also present.

In his discussion of Claude Levi-Strauss's concept of 'bricolage,' Derrida reminds us that the bricoleur uses the means at hand to create what he needs, and that this requires both adaptation and change to the original. For Derrida, bricolage is the critical language wherein totalization and empiricism give way to a surplus of signification resulting in freeplay.¹² The important difference between Adorno's 'endless duplication of the same' and Derrida's 'freeplay of repetition





and repetition of freeplay' is that the former regulates behaviour and creates a passive consumer whereas the latter is affirmative, working against prescription and towards a more nuanced and open interpretation of events.¹³ If we think of Daetwyler as a bricoleur, who uses a seemingly endless repertoire of mass produced and disposable objects to create something new, we invert Adorno's premise and experience the viewer as one who is empowered by her abilities to play with and reinvent forms instead of merely consuming them. Daetwyler's installation then becomes both a forum for critique and a playground for thinking about our culture. The space that the artist creates for a moment of reprieve is embedded in the crazy toy-covered television monitor where a video plays a subtle and abstract loop of fireflies. Attracted by and flying, again and again, into the lure of the light, the subtle movements of the fireflies shot at night translate into a black and white image of forms moving across the screen. The open image allows the viewer to meditate on the seduction of media, and form and movement, without having to follow an already concluded narrative or scan for readymade meaning.

The term 'postproduction' was coined by Nicolas Bourriaud to describe the artwork that is created on the basis of pre-existing works in response to the proliferating chaos of global culture in the information age. Based on objects that are already in circulation, and already informed by other objects, art challenges passive culture made of merchandise and consumers and instead makes the forms and cultural objects of our daily lives function.¹⁴ Hence, the experience of joy and horror that fills the viewer when engulfed in Daetwyler's world of commodified childhood. Like the nostalgic wish for a past that is already gone, the simplicity of merely rejecting a commodified world is not useful for living within this world.

Life is But a Dream is an elegant, industrial, interactive sculpture that hangs suspended in yet another room and best exemplifies how art can make commodified objects function. Metal 'feelers' extend from a steel sphere, and a series of sounds are activated when the viewer interacts with the piece. The sounds are those of electronic, interactive toys and include a rooster crowing, the duck song, "the better to eat you with, the wolf replied", Jingle Bells, Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, a cricket sound, a child's prayer, techno sounds, "wanna play, wanna play," and countless others. Thirty-two motion sensors each activate three toys, and the lengths of the sequences programmed to play vary from five seconds to two minutes. Activated by the movement of visitors,

11. Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry*. Routledge: New York and London, 1991, pp. 69 ff.

12. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass. London: Routledge, 1967. 278-294. <http://www.hydra.umu.edu/derrida/sign-play.html>. 01.05.2008, pp. 4 ff.

13. Ibid, p. 9.

14. Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction*. New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002, pp. 14 ff.

a trickle of noise might be followed by a crescendo or a slow decline where only a single voice persists. No matter what the movement, the viewer isn't able to predict the sequence of sounds which seem always to be moving between a chorus overlaid by individual voices, to almost-silence, but then again a confusing jumble. Because the toy is stripped down to its bare essence (sound) the viewer is able to bypass the mass produced object and enter into an experiential space where memory, imagination and fragments of narratives are allowed to surface in freely associative (freeplay) manner. The memories of a fairground, rides, cotton candy, the recollection of the vivid gaudy colours and excitement that accompanied childhood, all surface in the haunting presence of this sculpture made of ninety-six disembodied toy speakers. Bourriauld writes that postproduction scrambles the boundaries between consumption and production such that art enables a culture of use and activity, and allows for narratives to extend and reinterpret preexisting ones.¹⁵ He maintains that the forms that surround us are the materialization of late capitalism narratives; narratives that create communal scenarios that promote collective values and visions of the world. By making these imposed narratives material, artists bring them to consciousness and offer us other pathways through reality. By revealing the invisible structures of the ideological apparatus, artists enable activity and offer up the exhibition site as a place of production. Art is an activity that produces relationships to the world.¹⁶

This space for freeplay and fantasy is most evident in the installation of *Dream Spheres* suspended throughout the room in different heights and scales and flanked by two walls of heavy tree trunks. The spheres are translucent and able to hold the weight of a viewer should they wish to enter into a magic bubble. This space is uncluttered; the gently rotating spheres recall childhood fantasies of elves in dewdrops and sentinel trees that guard the magical forest. Plastic spheres that invoke artificial fantasies and illusions are juxtaposed with the nearly hundred-year old felled trunks of dead trees. The open and natural forms act as a counterpoint to the busy opulence of prescribed commodities and create a space for reflection.

Although Daetwyler creates a space for engagement rather than passive consumption, Huyssen reminds us that no pure space exists outside of commodity culture.¹⁷ Hence, Bourriauld's insistence on the use of commodified objects and processes not merely to make sense of culture, but to also compose alternative scenarios by reediting historical or ideological narratives.¹⁸ It is in this space of intervention that Daetwyler works. By refusing to avert our eyes from the obvious failings of the culture industry, he is able to use and transform them in such a way as to offer the viewer a new context for engagement. Focusing on the creative act (of the artist, of the viewer participant), Daetwyler affirms the power of art as a vehicle for critique, insight, and change.

15. Nicolas Bourriauld, *Postproduction*. New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002, p. 19.

16. Ibid, pp. 46 ff.

17. Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 19.

18. Nicolas Bourriauld, *Postproduction*. New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002, p. 45.





PASSEWALK POLICE PHOENIX





















The multinational project *Pasewalk Police Phoenix* transformed Second World War rubble, fragments of violence into a contemporary artwork.

After two years of research, preparation, technical planning, political problem solving and several visits to the area, this artist-initiated project started in June 2009 on site in Pasewalk and was completed in December of the same year. In an enormously labour-intensive process, the artist and his team from Berlin, comprised of students of several Berlin universities and Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder unearthed, cleaned and transported thirty-five tons of rubble and remnants of World War II in Pasewalk, Germany and Police, Poland. On a twenty-two ton concrete foundation and a custom made welded steel substructure, the "Trümmer team" in collaboration with the City, local schools, businesses and citizens, created a sphere of five-and-a-half meters of concrete, bricks, porcelaine and glass shards, weapons and steel fragments, which can be entered by the public.

The context of this project relates to the history of the partner cities Pasewalk, on the German and Police on the Polish side of Pomerania. We find hardly a generation without conflict and wars of the ruling families of Brandenburg and Pomerania and later invasions by German, Polish, Swedish, Danish, Bavarian, French and Russian armies. Sometimes armies without leadership brought hunger, cruelty, death and devastation.

In October 1918, shortly before the end of the First World War, a sulfur mustard attack led to a temporary blindness of Hitler. Germany surrendered while he recovered in a military hospital in Pasewalk. Various sources, including "The role of produced reality in the decision-making process which led to the Holocaust" by Stig Hornshøj-Müller, clarify that in this stage he has been analyzed as a psychopath and forged plans which later led to the Second World War and the genocide of Jews and





dissidents during this sojourn. In Police, a concentration camp and several labor camps were positioned with thousands of prisoners employed in hydrogenation plants for the production of synthetic gasoline. As of 1940, Police has been exposed several times to air attacks by the allied forces and just before the end of the war, bombed, conquered and occupied by Russian artillery. The German town Pölitz became the Polish town Police. Close to the end of WW II, Pasewalk was destroyed one more time in its history, as happened before in 1657 by the Poles and in 1713 by the Russians, in a Russian air attack.

Today, sixty-four years later, the cities of Pasewalk and Police are parts of a new Europe, facing the challenges of a new capital-oriented and globalized society. While the population of Police has grown continuously over the years as a result of the harbor and the biggest chemical plant in Poland, investigations show that many residents of Pasewalk move away in search for better conditions. The region of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is plagued by the highest unemployment rate in Germany with related subsequent social problems such as lack of prospects, addictive behavior and a growing right-wing nationalist movement. A large proportion of youth is divided into autonomous or neo-Nazis, and the disposition for violence remains high.

This context, the presence of 15,000 m³ of debris of war, eighty-five percent of the, during the Second World War, destroyed city of Pasewalk and the ruins of the destroyed hydrogenation plants in Police inspired this project.

In collaboration with the community, wreckage of war on both the German and the Polish side of Pommern was recovered, collected, cleaned and a large walk-in sphere was formed in the Leninhain Park in Pasewalk, making these artifacts and witnesses of the past accessible to us.

The project *Pasewalk Police Phoenix* used fragments of war and violence to create, in a massive collaborative effort, a contemporary sculpture with a silent, strong presence – a symbol of transformation and renewal.









SHELTER SPHERES





The installation *Shelter Spheres* for Artspace consisted of creating an utopian living environment in an urban area, both public and private, in downtown Peterborough, a city where homelessness is a growing concern.

Appearing as dreamy, temporary and volatile spaces, each sphere was made of plastic wrap, steel and wood. Two larger ones invited the public to access its interiors providing shelter and a social environment. Smaller spheres were floating in space as plastic bubbles.

Shelter Spheres had an immediate, poetic and surreal presence.





TIME BOMB [Im Hölzernen Himmel]









The project *time bomb [Im Hölzernen Himmel]* returns used domestic wood furniture in the City of Darmstadt, Germany, back to the forest, the origin of the material, and recycles these fragments to build a large sphere. The expression “im hölzernen Himmel” (“in wooden heaven”) is used to define a state of chaos and transition, where it is not possible to distinguish right from wrong and fact from fiction.

Over the course of the three-week symposium for Cycles and Systems, the 4th International Forest Art Path in Darmstadt, the worn and discarded furniture was collected all over the City. Once dismantled, the material was used to create a sculptural work with an interior space. The hollow interior of the bomb allows seeing the outside world through a fractured perspective, the small openings, holes and cracks where the pieces do not seem to fit together.

Each element of the dismantled chairs, tables and beds saved from landfill, has its own history as a witness of time and a carrier of identity. Reassembled as a sphere, the work appears as a “new planet”, a kind of “Big Bang” in time - a time bomb.

Approaching and entering a bomb made of household furniture in the natural environment, a stone throw away from the US Army Base in Darmstadt, evokes associations on many levels. The presence of what seems to be an exploded time bomb communicates a particular urgency.





THE LUGGAGE PROJECT





“The sense of probing into the distance, of fixing the eyes on the skyline, is something that Canadian sensibility has inherited from the voyagers.”

—NORTHROP FRYE

The City of Kitchener is one of the most diverse and multicultural cities of its size in Canada, welcoming immigrants from all over the world.

The local history shows a steady stream of newcomers starting in the 18th century with the arrival of German and Scottish settlers. Voyage and the perspective of the traveler is very much a part of the Canadian experience and inspired Daetwyler to use luggage as a symbol in this public art project. Luggage represents belongings on the move and all the knowledge, skills and hopes migrants bring with them.



Seven trunks, suitcases and a guitar case represent different time periods in our past. Naturalistically hand carved in Indiana limestone, they are placed along the pathways in the new Victoria Park entrance area close to the clock tower facing City Hall. Three open trunks serve as fountains with continuous sheets of water flowing into ponds. The handles and labels of the luggage are cast in bronze. Each label carries a message from migrants of diverse cultural backgrounds stating why they chose Kitchener as the city to live in. Additional labels in bronze are placed in unexpected ways throughout the park and may be found on the ground, on a rock, on a bench and other places.

The *Luggage Project* celebrates diversity and migration.













LOVE SEAT



Pamela Edmonds

FURNISHING REFLECTIONS: DAETWYLER'S *LOVE SEAT*



In the various domestic spaces called home, we dutifully furnish our surroundings with instrumentalities in order to create the liveable environments that sustain us and reflect our identities. In a similar vein, the placement of public art into our neighbourhoods, cities and towns can also be said to enhance our local environments, expressing the values and unique character of particular communities, contributing to their visual landscapes.

Ernest Daetwyler's whimsical stone sculpture, *love seat*, is an insightful and intriguing disarticulation of these notions of private (interior) and public (exterior) space, revealing a liminality where boundaries dissolve and transform. Set directly on the grassy grounds in the parkland just outside of the Art Gallery of Peterborough in Del Crary Park, this cleverly envisioned work is embedded within a dense web of associated meanings and intimations that link it to the site's specific history and more broadly to the changing nature of urban green space.

With nods to Pop Art, Surrealism and Dadaist sculpture, the brilliance of Daetwyler's *love seat* resides in its relationship to both the literal and absurd - restating a familiar everyday object in an uncharacteristic material, scale and location to evoke multiple readings. "Life-sized" and large enough to appear as an uncanny apparition in the cultivated landscape, the artist has sculpted and smoothed the hard stone surfaces of the neutral beige-grey Indiana limestone to reveal the soft forms and rounded cushions of a functional contemporary styled couch, which offers passers-by a unexpected lakeside repose, time-out in a busy world to stop, sit, meet and reflect.

Originally conceived as part of a proposal to the City of Peterborough's sculpture competition Benchmarks in 2005 - a series of public art installations on the shores of Little Lake - for which Daetwyler was short-listed, the sculpture was commissioned and acquired for the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of Peterborough in 2007. The *love seat* is a playful reference to the gallery's building as a former family residence, a historic Georgian style house built in 1890, that later became linked to the Modernist wing constructed in 1979. The strikingly displaced couch is also a mindful symbol that speaks to casual consumptive habits and waste disposal and the importance of finding viable recycling methods. Not only has the *love seat* become a beloved icon and gathering site - it is also an ever evolving invitational space to encounter, wonder and enjoy both art and aesthetics as well as our ecological and natural resources.







FOREST CELL SPH[a]ir]ES





Created for *Laboratory*, the 3rd International Forest Art Path in Darmstadt, Germany, in collaboration with physicist Thomas Kühl Ph.D. from the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, the idea for this project was inspired by a text from David S. Goodsell, Ph.D. regarding bionanotechnology: “.....applications include creation of targeted nanomachines for use in nanomedicine, applications of self-assembly to create novel biomaterials, the harnessing of molecular motors, DNA computers, artificial life and biosensors. Biologically-inspired evolutionary methods are also being used to discover new nanomachinery, and hybrids of bionanomachinery with inorganic materials are being developed.”

The transparent appearance of the seven spheres, built in metal, wood and plastic wrap, recalls strange forms of alien eggs or molecules, floating in space. The installation evokes associations with an utopian environment or a scientific experiment, particularly when inhabited. Plastic alien spheres provided real and illusionary shelter spaces and became part of the forest environment.





ICE BUBBLES

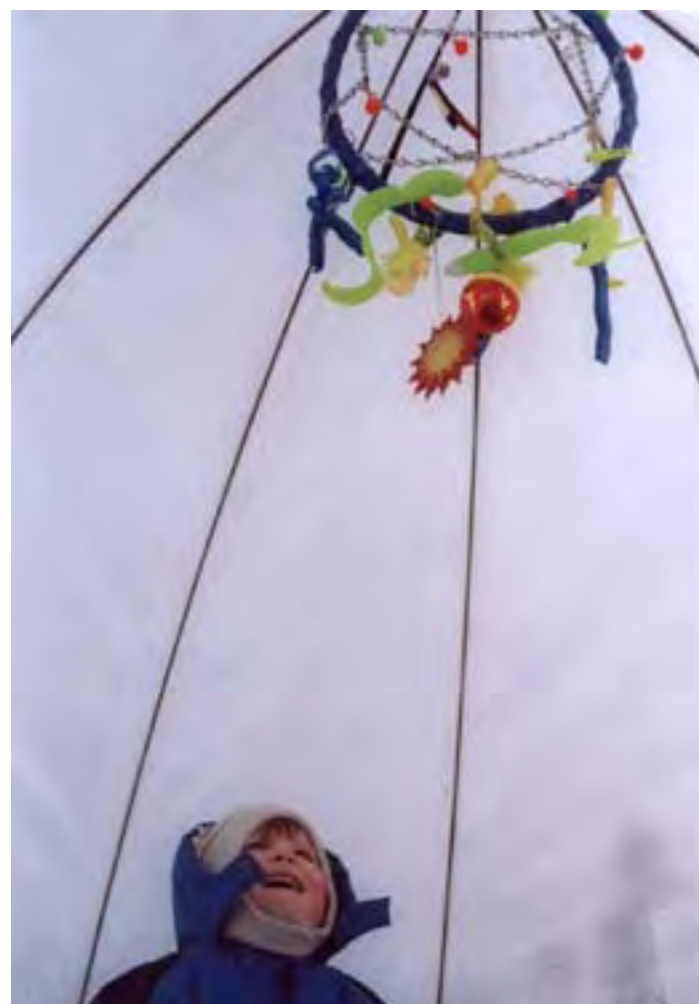




The project *Ice Bubbles* was developed for *Ice Follies*, a site-specific biennale of contemporary art interventions taking place on the frozen lake Nipissing in North Bay. Organized by the WKP Kennedy Public Art Gallery, the exhibition was conceptually based on the tradition of ice fishing, a popular tradition and social winter sport in Canada's north.

Five spheres in plastic bubble wrap were placed out on the ice. Appearing as alien bubbles, the spheres heated up in the sunlight and provided surprisingly effective shelter from the elements in the harsh frozen lake environment. A white circular platform within each space and a touch activated light invited visitors to rest. A dream catcher made of locks, lures and chains allowed for "safe dreams" in this striking natural context. In the essay for the exhibition catalogue, Eileen Sommerman stated: "Mind over matter, we stare up at the spirit catchers that hang and feel beyond the cold. It's a stark tranquility inside, a profound and inspiring aloneness."

From afar, the transparent spheres with moving human profiles appeared as surreal, non-material bubbles touching down from the sky to be blown away at any time.





The installation *fire escape [docendo discimus]* consisted of light lines installed on the fire escape steel structure of the Discovery Centre in Stratford, a projection of flames and fire on the third floor windows and an audio installation reacting to approaching visitors.

The site-specific project was developed for *Normal Resonance*, a public art project for the Discovery Centre in Stratford, initiated by gallery 96. Located on the north façade of the Centre, the installation fire escape drew attention to the aspirations of Stratford's former Normal School– to spread knowledge and enlightenment– while asserting their validity today.

The Stratford Normal was one of four identical schools built by the Ontario Government in the 1900s as concerns about the quality of rural education rose. Four new schools were established to teach norms and increase the supply of qualified teachers in the province. The light and audio installation in the project fire escape [docendo discimus] articulated the former teacher's college song and credo "docendo discimus" (by teaching may we learn) with several references to light and fire.

With the light lines placed on the existing fire escape and accompanied by a back-screen video projection of flames flickering in three adjacent windows, the words awoke associations on various levels, inviting us to reflect on the role of education and teaching norms in our contemporary moment as a society and in a time of conflict, terror and war.

FIRE ESCAPE

[docendo discimus]





BUBBLE MACHINE











Robert Freeman

BUBBLEMACHINE

*Man's life is but a jest, a dream, a shadow,
bubble, air, a vapour at the best.¹*



In the summer of 2001 the Civic Square at the Civic Centre in Mississauga was temporarily transformed. The square is a normally austere concrete courtyard scattered with a few well-planned gardens and carefully placed benches around a rectangular pool, where a central fountain periodically erupts to break the silence of the summer heat and greet the occasional visitor or passerby with a gentle mist. For a few months the square shared its space with one of Ernest Daetwyler's creations, or more appropriately, inventions...the *Bubblemachine*.

Two large satellite dishes (previously used to receive television signals but now obsolete) flanked the edge of the concrete pool. A pair of white and red house-like structures, made of artificial materials, including plastic lawns, rested at opposite sides of the pool in close proximity to the dishes, offering mechanical and electrical support for the artwork. The pool side of each house was covered with clear acrylic and inside each house was a television playing a continuous video, as if receiving signals from the satellite dishes. Daetwyler adapted the dishes and bestowed them with renewed purpose. Attaching a half-moon reservoir to the centre of each dish, the artist fabricated clear plastic wheels with circular cutouts lined with colourful inserts to revolve inside each reservoir. Behind each wheel small whimsical fans were electrically connected to twirl on command. When receiving the signal, via motion detectors, from visitors to the square, the satellite dishes rotated and the clear discs pivoted in their reservoirs of bubble solution. The fans created a gentle breeze that in turn produced bubbles of all sizes. All these operations were controlled by a computer programmed PLC system. Depending on the weather of the day, the bubbles either fell to the pool and drifted until they burst or joined other bubbles in their leisurely sail across the water's surface or danced and swirled on the wind, creating a kind of ballet one could easily have set to music.

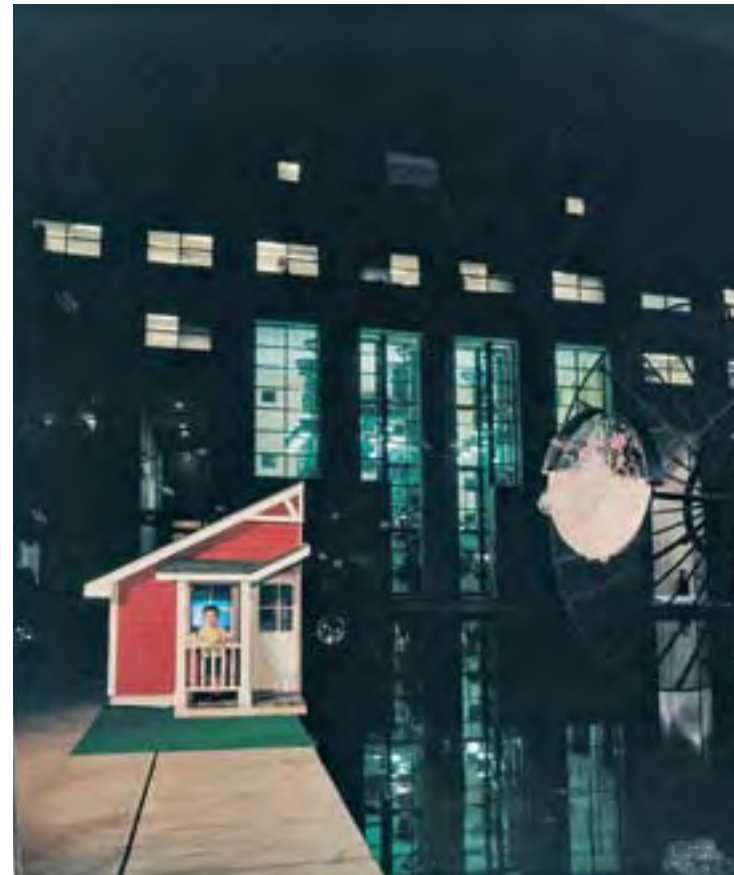
Looking back, what I recall most from that summer experience (other than continually filling the machine with bubble solution), were the smiles, the joy the visitors to the Civic Centre experienced.

"You see, Wendy, when the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of fairies."²

1. George Walter Thornbury (1828-1876) Attribution: The Jester's Sermon
2. *The Adventures of Peter Pan* by James Matthew Barrie

When I considered how I might best approach writing about this artwork, it seemed most appropriate to formulate the contents of this essay in random thoughts, like free word association, paralleling the unpredictable pattern of bubbles produced by Ernest's machine. However, the precise and mechanical nature of this kinetic work defied such a chaotic approach. It would be too simplistic to write about the *Bubblemachine* as merely a kinetic work which produces bubbles. But I would be neglectful not to touch on the robot-like choreography and the fanciful environment that the *Bubblemachine* provided during its installation. The satellite dishes, in black steel, appeared like two alien beings, watching, searching, turning and yes, even talking (words being replaced by bubbles). The initial impact was a transformation of the square, a methodical play taking place in the central pool and being supported and seemingly documented in the structures by the pool's edge. On closer examination the video being played in the houses chronicles futile attempt to capture free flowing bubbles in plastic shopping bags. In one version of the video opera music provided the sound track for this desperate activity. This fabricated environment, complete with sound and triggered by the movement of visitors to the City building, provided a stage. A stage that invited the interaction, no... compelled the participation of everyone who entered the square.

Bubblemachine...even the name evokes visions of a child's toy ...a mechano-like candy machine... Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory... something wondrous, childlike and innocent. A seemingly simple concept... a machine that makes bubbles. Memories of childhood, of fantasies and children's stories (fairy tales), creative and completely separate from reality. Stories of magic and fairies and adventures of young boys and girls. Young eager minds are open to every exciting tale the more fantastic the better. We lose that wondrous curiosity and innocence as we grow up. Logic and practicality replace fantasy and illusions and the tangible and serious leave no room for the frivolous and silly pastimes of children. However, some small part of every adult (a larger part in some of us) clings to the complete joy of being a child. This same connection that makes us smile when we see a child laugh, delights us when we take the time to watch a simple bubble (or many bubbles) dance on the wind.



"I like nonsense – it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living. It's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope... and that enables you to laugh at all of life's realities."

– DR. SEUSS

In the fifties, science fiction writers described a future where machines would carry out most, if not all, of the menial and mundane tasks that were required for day-to-day life and eliminate the need for people in hands-on production of consumer goods. They expounded a life with more free time and more disposable income. Other soothsayers pronounced a world with the ability to communicate globally and instantly. They predicted an increased necessity for government and law enforcement to police our every move. Invasive surveillance and an ever-present media would infringe on our individual privacy.

As television and all media invaded our lives they became our primary source for information and entertainment. The separation between truth and fiction, between the realities of living and the facade of entertainment, blurred and melded. The prediction of Marshall McLuhan became a reality and the media became the message. The media now told us what to buy, what to do and even what to think. Consumerism became an integral part of our daily lives, of society. It became the model from which an addicted society would construct its values. Temporary hopes and desires (soon to vanish like the ephemeral bubbles) are all part of this mass manipulation. The *Bubblemachine* alludes to all of these prophecies.

The concept of a machine carrying out such a frivolous task as making bubbles seems at first to mock progress, to make light of the technological advancements that have transformed the industrial world over the past century. Daetwyler incorporates outdated (large satellite discs) and new technology and turns a simple activity, blowing bubbles, into a complex and intricate operation. The *Bubblemachine* provides a layering of meanings or metaphors that parallel the duality of our existence.





Bubbles embody dreams, fantasies and the freedom of childhood. They intimate purity, light, innocence, perfection and intuition. They are temporary, fleeting, elusive and carefree, approximating hope, youth and even life.

The satellite dishes carry the weight of industry and technology. Communications, media, television, signals, receivers and transmitters are all manifested in these mechanical aliens. They stand on guard, sensing, searching, scanning and recording. Rotating in precise, robotic fashion these complex, exacting mechanisms are the practical antithesis of the temporal bubbles.

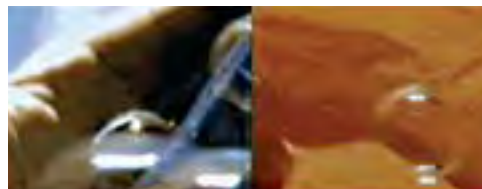
The colourful child-like playhouses are locked and house only the televisions which continually screen the video of the attempts to capture bubbles in a plastic bag... An impossible task, like trying to preserve the innocence of youth, to live in a dream or capture a fairy. Yet the quest goes on.

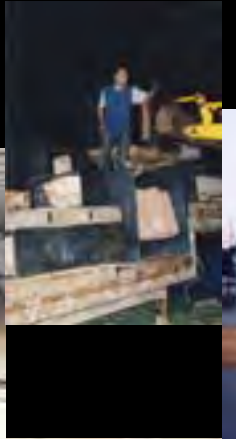
The *Bubblemachine* is elaborate. It's mechanisms and layering of meanings construct a dialogue between practical (technological) and creative (fanciful) realities, between intuition and reason. This struggle between the complexities of daily life and the innocence of childhood is forever a part of each of us. Adult worth is often measured by practical knowledge and technological skills and the demand for tangible and measurable results leaves little room for fantasy.

When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing positive knowledge.

— ALBERT EINSTEIN.







DELETE? FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY







Corinna Ghaznavi

A STORM IS BLOWING FROM PARADISE

A storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

– WALTER BENJAMIN

It must be stone shape and no other shape.

–BARBARA HEPWORTH

The presence before him was a presence.

–HENRY JAMES

Rows of fine steel frames, four deep and stacked, encase fragments of corroded sandstone. The first two frames are empty followed by two holding what is barely discernible as a T then Y then Ø. Beneath it what remains of the word HALL. The stones are those recently removed from the exterior of the newly renovated City Hall in Stratford. Carriers of memory, witnesses of the progress of the twentieth century. Brought from a British quarry in 1898, hand carved, erected, marred by acid rain, touched up with oil paint, silicon, cement, adorned with bird droppings, and finally cut out of the facade to be dispensed of.

With *DELETE? Fragments of Memory* Ernest Daetwyler has created an installation reminiscent of an archeological museum: separate elements, removed from their original context, have been cleanly mounted for display. Remnants of history, decontextualized, pointing towards a source no longer immediately accessible to us.

The installation has great presence. The hues in the stone have subtle nuances which are enhanced by the steel. Standing before the open frames the stones appear almost free-floating, given maximum space, creating a rhythm in spite of their different sizes and patterns. The stacked frames reference piles of debris and yet are a harmonious whole, each frame measured according to the magical mathematical calculation, the “golden section”.

As a sculptor whose cultural roots are in Europe, Daetwyler demonstrates a moment of inherent sadness at the ease with which an element of art historic import is discarded. Frighteningly this is reminiscent of Robert Venturi’s assertion that “Americans do not need piazzas, since they should be at home watching television.”¹ He points to stone as that vital material which forms the basis of so much cultural history. His understanding and response to the material is so thorough that he reads it like a language and claims to be able to identify a sculptor or mason

1. Kenneth Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance,” in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Seattle, Washington, Bay Press, 1983, p. 25.





simply by the chisel marks. Shock and awe combined are his reactions to the fact that this particular stone, made to endure forever, was destroyed in the course of one generation, and once thus decayed, simply removed and given “no further specified use”.

The problematic arising for the artist is the dual one of preservation and renewal. More than merely archiving history, Daetwyler’s interest roots in documenting time - by confronting the viewer with the traces time has left on the stone and by citing a temporal passage as a carrier of historical significance - and displaying the destruction in its wake. Presenting the sandstone elements in their authentic form, he faces the consequence of our century: acid rain on the one hand, poor restoration on the other, which indicates the loss of the craftsman’s and the historian’s ability to maintain a dynamic connection with our own monuments. The emphasis on the stone itself, it’s materiality and presence underlined by aesthetics and the golden mean, is juxtaposed with the corrosion and statement on destruction. Daetwyler’s intimate relation to the material enables him to create a focus on the power inherent in the sandstone itself, thus pinpointing sculptural qualities and historical origins simultaneously. The presentation of the work within multiple frames references the double view characteristic of our cultural moment in that he plays on the notion of the grid, allowing for a moment based on the past to signal both current and future contingency with himself as center. “The self as origin is the way an absolute distinction can be made between a present experienced *de novo* and a tradition-laden past...the actual practice of vanguard art tends to reveal that ‘originality’ is a working assumption that itself emerges from a ground of repetition and recurrence. One figure, drawn from avant-garde practice in the visual arts, provides an example. This figure is the grid...This is the perspective from which the grid that signifies the pictorial surface, by representing it, only succeeds in locating the signifier of another, prior system of grids, which have beyond them, yet another, even earlier system.”² Daetwyler manages to build on a continuum of meaning without losing both the physicality of his material and the transformative moment of the installation which stands as its own referent. He visualizes thus the postmodern moment that Craig Owens describes as “a shift from history to discourse.”³

By creating an installation where the force of the stone itself holds such power, Daetwyler critiques the moment of disembodiment predominant in the information age. The simulated environment of technology threatens to rob us of the immediacy of experience with physical objects, the most powerful of which are artistic and cultural. Daetwyler encompasses the viewer in the tactile:

2. Rosalind Krauss, “The Originality of the Avant-Garde: A Postmodern Repetition,” in Brian Wallis, ed., *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, New York, The New Museum of Contemporary Art in Association with David R. Godine, Publisher Inc., Boston, 1984, 1995, pp. 18 ff.
3. Craig Owens, “The Allegorical Impulse,” in *Wallis* 1984, 1995, p. 225.

"According to its etymology, perspective means rationalized sight or clear seeing, and as such it presupposes a conscious suppression of the senses of smell, hearing and taste, and a consequent distancing from a more direct experience of the environment. This self-imposed limitation relates to that which Heidegger has called a 'loss of nearness'. In attempting to counter this loss, the tactile proposes itself to the scenographic and the drawing of veils over the surface of reality. Its capacity to arouse the impulse to touch returns the architect to the poetics of construction and to the erection of works in which the tectonic value of each component depends upon the density of its objecthood. The tactile and the tectonic jointly have the capacity to transcend the mere appearance of the technical in much the same way as the place-form has the potential to withstand the relentless onslaught of global modernization."⁴

The accompanying sound installation, "You do not have enough memory to complete this task, please close all open applications and try again" addresses both the consequence of the information age and the position of a-historicity that the lack of memory places on us. Pointing to the "obscurity" of this effect, Baudrillard has remarked that "once more it must be seen that all these changes - the decisive mutations of objects and of the environment in the modern era - have come from an irreversible tendency towards three things: an ever greater formal and operational abstraction of elements and functions and their homogenization in a single virtual process of functionalization; the displacement of bodily movements and efforts into electric or electronic commands, and the miniaturization, in time and space, of processes whose real scene (though it is no longer a scene) is that of infinitesimal memory and the screen with which they are equipped."⁵ While he incorporates the technology of burning a CD and a motion detector for his sound installation, Daetwyler also underlines the immense presence of raw material and its importance for experience.

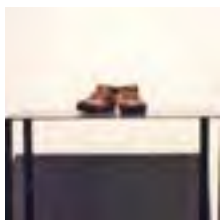
The sandstone's ability to be carriers of signification is established. That signification is multi-layered and is evident in the transformative moment that the installation has while never losing the grid effect. Daetwyler indicates the postmodern moment "by invoking two divinities at once, engages a double view. Sameness and difference, unity and rupture, filiation and revolt, all must be honored if we are to attend to history, apprehend (perceive, understand) change, both as a spatial, mental structure and as a temporal, physical process, both as pattern and unique event."⁶



4. Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *Foster* 1983, p. 29.

5. Jean Baudrillard, "The Ecstasy of Communication," in *Foster* 1983, pp. 128 ff.

6. Ihab Hassan, "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism," in Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, ed., *A Postmodern Reader*. Albany State University of New York Press, 1993, pp. 277 ff.



The moment of loss is counterbalanced by metamorphosis. Strewn on the ground with “no further specified use” these stones create a sad picture. Framed, the elements become isolated and, having lost their original context, become devoid of meaning. Hope is visualized in the configuration of the installation which places historical elements into a new state based on the first principle of the material which was sandstone with a unique colour, materiality, and texture. Thus the work’s inherent content - our relationship to material and the understanding of the worth of art history - is made accessible to us in a new form whose most vital quality is contingency and new meaning. Hutcheon’s view is that “postmodern art gets anchored to the material or ‘historical’ world through the very heterogeneity and profusion of its own representations. In this sense, Hutcheon’s view of postmodernism encapsulates the paradox that Foucault uncovers within Baudelairean modernity: ‘The high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it other than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is.’”⁷

The very point of melancholy that surround the present state of the architectural elements of the City Hall is the point of departure for renewal. Had the work not corroded, there would be no need for reflection on it beyond that of aesthetics. Benjamin has stated that “‘allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things’, the premise being that something becomes an object of knowledge only as it ‘decays’, or is made to disintegrate.”⁸ The sandstone removed from the historic building is not simply rescued but made into a renewed site of signification. An installation laden with reflections on both history and our current cultural state. While the critical stance vis-à-vis progress is apparent there is also an acceptance of the cultural moment in which we find ourselves and the desire to focus on that moment as something necessitating reflection: “to move from the desire and expectation of sure and single meaning to a recognition of the value of differences and even contradictions might be a tentative first step towards accepting responsibility for both art and theory as signifying processes. In other words, maybe we could begin to study the implications of both our making and our making sense of our culture.”⁹

7. David J. Herman, “Modernism vs. Postmodernism: Towards an Analytic Distinction,” in Natoli and Hutcheon 1993, pp. 171 ff.

8. Gregory L. Ulmer, “The Object of Post-Criticism,” in *Foster* 1983, p. 97.

9. Linda Hutcheon, “Beginning to Theorize Postmodernism,” in Natoli and Hutcheon 1993, pp. 262 ff.



In the center of this work is the artist, implicated as he is in both his cultural roots as well as his contemporary moment. A more abstract aspect of this are the works on steel plates which document Daetwyler's own process of realizing this project. Photographs, sketches, and calculations are embedded in wax (the oldest preservative) on steel and serve as a double referent: on the one hand, to the process of time and conservation, on the other, to a new process and archiving of the current reenactment of what were historical elements. This consideration is furthered by the worn children's shoes which are displayed, almost incidentally, on a steel table. Strewn on the floor beside this are computer printouts reiterating what the sound installation tells us. Inextricably beginning and dead-end are enmeshed into an entity. The shoes are Daetwyler's own, positioning him within his own and the general historical moment simultaneously. They refer to personal memory, to the tide of time, as well as to a future moment through the image of a child which will grow forth. This part of the installation is the one that most indicates hope, and further eradicates the traditional dichotomies inherent in nostalgia and modernist approaches. It "abolishes the gap between reference and referent, and instead invests representation itself with a sort of material density that is the stuff of Utopia, this in no way implies that dissent is impossible or unimportant. To the contrary, dissent becomes at once present reality and anticipation of the future. Since the postmodernist can no longer appeal to material referents in arbitrating competing representations, such arbitration of competing views itself provides the only ground for knowledge and for hope. The alternative to dissent is in fact inertia and death. The materiality that postmodernism congers upon our views themselves suggest that, unless we continually examine and reshape those views, hope will be dissipated in that same hall of mirrors in which reality as such gives way to an infinite montage of simulacra."¹⁰

The ability of the installation to address issues inherently contradictory to one another, to convey both melancholy and hope, to document as well as to put forth an object effective as a piece of contemporary art, with a content implicated - but not entrapped - in history, puts it well into the postmodern sensibility of our time which Andreas Huyssen described as "different from both modernism and avantgardism precisely in that it raises the question of cultural tradition and conservation in the most fundamental way as an aesthetic and a political issue...

10. David J. Herman, "Modernism vs. Postmodernism: Towards an Analytic Distinction," in Natoli and Hutcheon 1993, p. 178.

it operates in a field of tension between tradition and innovation, conservation and renewal, mass culture and high art, in which the second terms are no longer automatically privileged over the first, a field of tension which can no longer be grasped in categories such as progress vs. reaction, left vs. right, present vs. past, modernism vs. realism, abstraction vs. representation, avantgardism vs. Kitsch.”¹¹

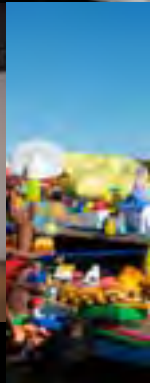
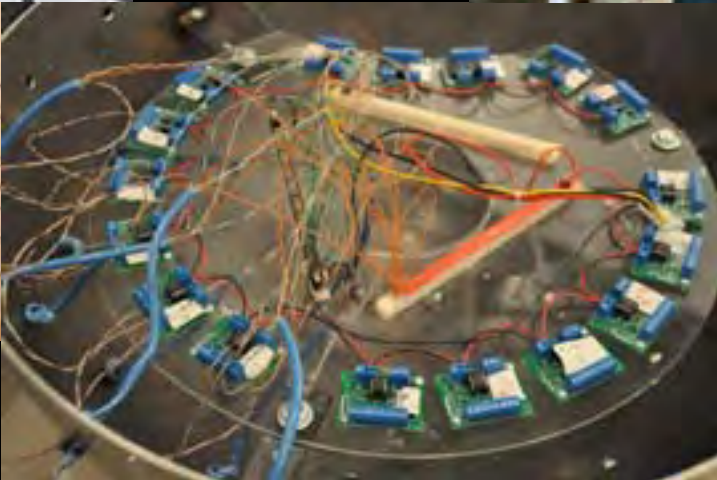
Viewing *DELETE? Fragments of Memory* one last time the aspect that predominates is one of silence. These stones having the ability to speak on their own: through their very presence. This would be what Hassan termed a postmodern impulse, “an impulse in the direction of an art which negates itself (hence the will to unmaking). It signifies a movement toward silence, and manifests itself in ‘two accents of silence’, which together constitute Postmodernism: a) the negative echo of language, autodestructive, demonic, nihilistic; b) its positive stillness, self-transcendental, sacramental, plenary.”¹²

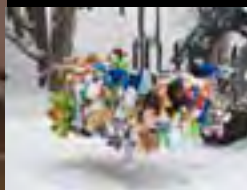
11. Andreas Huyssen, “Mapping the Postmodern,” in Natoli and Hutcheon 1993, p. 145.

12. Hans Bertens, “The Postmodern Weltanschauung and its Relation to Modernism: An Introductory Survey,” in Natoli and Hutcheon 1993, p. 43.









ERNEST DAETWYLER

Ernest Daetwyler studied at the Schule für Gestaltung, Bern, the Centro Europeo in Venice, Italy and received his master diploma from the Schule für Gestaltung, St. Gallen, Switzerland.

His multidisciplinary work is being presented in Canada and internationally. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, Pro Helvetia, Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Office of Culture, Presence Suisse, the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, the Kitchener-Waterloo Arts Award in Visual Arts, Agenda Arts and Culture Pasewalk, the City of Stratford, Ontario, the City of Kitchener and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, New York, N.Y.

Ernest Daetwyler is a founding member and director of the international, artist-run biennale CAFKA, the Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area. www.cafka.org

Recent selected exhibitions and projects: *life is but a dream* Gallery Stratford, Ontario, *Reality in Reverse [barn raising]* Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, *Pasewalk Police Phoenix*, Pasewalk, Germany, *Shelter Spheres* Artspace, Peterborough, *time bomb*, the 4th International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, Germany, *The Luggage Project* Victoria Park, The City of Kitchener, Ontario, Vogelfrei 7, Darmstadt, *love seat*, the Art Gallery of Peterborough, *Forest Cell Sph[air]es* the 3rd International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, *VI Vrsac Biennial in Serbia and Montenegro*, *8th Havana Biennial*, Cuba, *ArtCanal* during the expo.02, the Swiss National Exhibition, Le Landeron, Switzerland, University of Waterloo Art Gallery, *1st KW/AG Biennial* and *Sampler*, the *2nd KW/AG Biennial* Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Durham Art Gallery, WKP Kennedy Public Art Gallery, North Bay, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Cambridge Galleries, Gallery Stratford, Ed Video Media Arts Centre, Guelph and Peak Gallery, Toronto.

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CORINNA GHAZNAVI

Corinna Ghaznavi is an independent curator and freelance writer. She received her BA in Art History, Germanistic and American Studies from the Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg, Germany in 1994, and her MA from the Heinrich Heine University in Dusseldorf in 1996. Since 1997 she has curated exhibitions throughout Canada. Her writing has been published in Canadian and European art magazines as well as in numerous exhibition catalogues. Ghaznavi is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario; she lives and works in Grey County, Ontario

ROBERT FREEMAN

Robert Freeman is currently the Executive Director/Curator at the Art Gallery of Mississauga. He graduated from the University of Guelph in 1973 and has had a long and varied career in the visual arts in a variety of positions with a number of Public Art Galleries in Ontario, including the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre in Guelph and as Director and Curator with Gallery Stratford.

PAMELA EDMONDS

Pamela Edmonds is a visual and media arts curator originally from Montreal, Quebec. She received a BFA and an MA in Art History from Concordia University. Her primary curatorial focus has been on contemporary art and the politics of representation. She is the former Program Coordinator of A Space Gallery (Toronto) and most recently worked as Curator at the Art Gallery of Peterborough as well as Arts Coordinator for the City of Peterborough, where she oversaw municipal arts projects.

CRYSTAL MOWRY

Crystal Mowry is an artist and curator based in Cambridge, Ontario. Crystal is currently the Curator of Collections and Exhibitions at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery where she has organized and curated new projects by contemporary Canadian artists. Crystal's independent projects include The Terrarium Project (2006), an interdisciplinary collaborative exhibition that was presented by the Harbourfront Centre (Toronto) through their inaugural Fresh Grounds Commissions.

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REALITY IN REVERSE [BARN RAISING]

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Alf Bogusky (Director General), Crystal Mowry (Curator), Ontario Arts Council, Susan Detwiler, Gabriele Hertweck, Hans Hofer, Eldon Kuepfer and JK Construction.

PASEWALK POLICE PHOENIX

Canada Council for the Arts, Ottawa, Canada; Pro Helvetia, Bern, Switzerland; Ontario Arts Council, Toronto, Canada; Swiss Consulate, Toronto; Swiss Embassy, Berlin; Canadian Embassy, Berlin; the representation of the state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in Berlin; Schloss Bröllin; Skarb (Pölitiz hydrogenation plants) and the cities Pasewalk in Germany and Police in Poland.

Agenda Kunst/Kultur Pasewalk, Ahlswede Ingenieurbüro, Bahrmann GmbH Betonwaren, Bau GmbH Nagel, BauBeCon Sanierungsträger Pasewalk, Bredlow GmbH Strassen- und Tiefbau, Gut Borken, Dr. Brechlin, Edeka Pasewalk, Europa-schule Arnold Zweig, Jatznicker Bauschuttdienste GmbH, Oskar Picht Gymnasium Pasewalk, Museum Pasewalk, Remmers Deutschland, Schlossbergschule Pasewalk, Sparkasse Uecker-Randow, Strassen- und Tiefbaugesellschaft Ernst Röwer GmbH, Technisches Hilfswerk Pasewalk, TEN-PEN-CHii Art Labor, Willhagen & Görs Holz- und Baustoffhandel Wecknitz, Wohnbaugenossenschaft Pasewalk EV.

AND THE PASEWALK POLICE PHOENIX VOLUNTEERS: Adriana August, Amanda York, Anna Muschert, Annabell Pauutz, Anna-Kathrin Lübben, Annika Gräfenhain, Baptiste Aguila, Benedikt Boll, Christopher Robotham, Dana Daetwyler, Dominik Boll, Dorota Tolloczko-Femerling, Dorothea Herlemann, Ed Hancox, Ewelina Benbenek, Fabian Meysel, Felix Pinto, Florian Huber, Gabriele Hertweck, Hannah Kehrer, Ildiko Szabo, Ilze Rimicane, Janni Elsässer, Jesus Soberon, Joab Nist, Joachim Manger, Karoline Müller, Livia Wersin, Kathrin Schneeberger, Katja Möhl, Kolja Hubert, Matthias Menz, Matthias Meyer, Mireille Ineichen, Nadine Raasch, Nara Silva das Virgens Merlitz, Nepomuk Reinhard, Patrick Wagner, Ping Qiu, Rabea Rugenstein, Ruby Riad, Seinab Bahsung, Stephan Pfaff, Sadu Alqalkili, Theresa Mischke, Viktor Riad, Veronika Hilmer und Zine Lackner.

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SHELTER SPHERES

Artspace Peterborough, Iga Janik (Curator), Hans Hofer

TIME BOMB

[Im Hölzernen Himmel] Cycles and Systms, 4th International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, Germany, Ute Ritschel (Curator), Peter Fischer (Technical Director), Assistants Nara Silva das Virgens Merlitz; Babs Rosenberger and Werner Hommer. Anna-Sophia Muschert, Claudia Kappenberg, Daniel Fischer, Doro Huelder, Jens J. Meyer, Gabriele Hertweck, Marianne and Frank Herm-Hertweck, Florian Huber, Janek Junghans, Joachim Kuhlmann, Jöerg Nover, Juergen Schröebel, Leila Grani, Massimo De Giovanni, Meike Deppert, Mirjana Topic, Regina Frank, Roger Santhine, Sabrina Hollstein, Sandro Junghans, Thomas Diener, Volker Laue and Walter van Broekhuizen.

THE LUGGAGE PROJECT

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FOREST CELL SPH[AIR]ES

Laboratory, 3rd International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, Germany, Ute Ritschel (Curator), Peter Fischer (Technical Director), Ontario Arts Council,

Bergwacht Darmstadt, Rekag AG, Gabriele Hertweck, Marianne and Frank Herm-Hertweck, Florian Huber, Werner Hommer, Thomas Kühl Ph.D. and Volker Laue.

LOVE SEAT

Art Gallery of Peterborough, Curtis Collins (Director), Pamela Edmonds (Curator), Owen Sound Ledgerrock and Hans Hofe.

ICE BUBBLES

Ice Follies, WKP Kennedy Public Art Gallery, North Bay, Dermot Wilson (Director), Ontario Arts Council, Gabriele Hertweck, Hans Hofer and Liz Lott.

FIRE ESCAPE [DOCENDO DISCIMUS]

Normal Resonance, The Discovery Centre and gallery 96, Stratford, Ontario, Cindy Hubert (Curator), Ontario Arts Council, Elma Steel, Magic Lite Oakville, Gabriele Hertweck, Hans Hofer, John Sobura and Francis Vilamil.

BUBBLEMACHINE

IN CANADA: Art Gallery of Mississauga, Stuart Reid and Robert Freeman (Curators), Fred Troughton (Director) Ontario Arts Council, Presence Switzerland, Embassy of Switzerland, Ottawa, Consulate General of Switzerland, Toronto, Buhler Canada, Canadian Freight Forwarders Association, Kuehne & Nagel Canada, Canadian BBR Inc., Citadel General Assurance, Darier Hentsch Inc., Swiss Instruments, UBS and especially Gabriela Aceves, Gabriele Hertweck, Robert Gorbet, Paul Goodwyn, Elisabeth Feryn, Hans D. Daetwyler, Hans Hofer, Herb Hughes and Nathan Saliwonchyk.

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DELETE? FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY

City of Stratford, Ontario, gallery 96, Stratford, Pekao (now Peak) Gallery, Zbigniew (Zack) Pospieszynski (Director/ Curator), Toronto, Cambridge Galleries, Gordon Hatt (Curator), Gallery Stratford, Robert Windrum (Curator), Ontario Arts Council, LACAC Stratford, Stratford Perth Archives, Stratford Perth Museum, John Richardson (MP), SQL Power Group, Georef Systems, Steelcraft, Cooper Standard, Three Oaks Foundation, Marklevitz Architect, Gary Kappeler Masonry, Mountain, Hill, Monteith & Ritsma, John Moore Insurance, Lawson Killer Insurance, Court Galvanizing, Elma Steel & Equipment, Ward & Uptigrove, Pratt & Pratt, Gallery Indigena, Book Stage, The Rotary Club of Festival City, Famme & Co., Stratford Business Centre, Mitchell & District Credit Union, Swerdfager Reality, Elisabeth and Stan Dingman, Julia Foster, Bonnie and John Richardson, Donna and John John Sobura, Erla Boyer, Virgil Burnett, Winfried Clemens, Thor Dingman, David Lester, Dave Ross, and especially the Daetwyler family with Daniel, Hans D., Markus and Peter, Melissa Day, Hans Hofer, Herb Hughes, Rex Lingwood, Ricardo Pena, Jeremy Schmidt and Joshua Schmidt.

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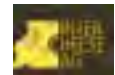
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LIST OF SELECTED PROJECTS 1998-2010

LIFE IS BUT A DREAM, Gallery Stratford, 2010

THE WALL OF NIGHTMARES
AND DREAMS, 2010
plastic toys, electronics,
plywood 500 x 325 x 50cm

SUN AND CLOUDS, 2010
stuffed fabric toys
sun Ø 220cm
clouds 380 x 150 x 50cm
350 x 140 x 60cm
240 x 125 x 30cm

MONSTER SOFA AND MONSTER TV, 2010
sofa, TV, video, stuffed fabric toys
sofa 200 x 90 x 140cm
TV 90 x 65 x 65cm

FIREFLIES, 2010
DVD
video 1min 32sec, looped

DREAM SPHERES, 2010
plastic wrap, wood, steel
5 tree trunks cut to gallery space,
h 450cm
8 spheres up to Ø 210cm

BUBBLEMACHINE WITH OPERA, 2001
DVD
video 5min 37sec, looped

LIFE IS BUT A DREAM, 2010
interactive audio installation, 96 toy
speakers, 32 motion detectors, control
boards, electronic components, transparent
acrylic glass, steel
Ø 300cm

REALITY IN REVERSE [BARN RAISING], The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 2010

REALITY IN REVERSE
[BARN RAISING], 2010
reclaimed barn boards and beams
h 470cm, w 800cm, d 500cm

STECKLEY BARN, 2010
DVD
video 32min 10sec

PASEWALK POLICE PHOENIX Pasewalk, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, north of Berlin, Germany, 2009-
35 tons Second World War rubble incl. concrete blocks, natural stones, bricks, glass and porcelain shards
22 tons concrete foundation
4 tons welded steel enforcements, 11 tons restoration mortar
Ø 550m

SHELTER SPHERES Artspace Peterborough, 2009
plastic wrap, wood, steel
8 spheres up to Ø 200cm

TIME BOMB [Im Hölzernen Himmel] "Cycles and Systems", 4th International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, Germany, 2008-
reclaimed and dismantled furniture parts
Ø 380cm

THE LUGGAGE PROJECT Victoria Park, City of Kitchener, Ontario, 2008-
Indiana limestone, bronze
8 luggage pieces 10% larger than life size

LOVE SEAT The Art Gallery of Peterborough, 2007-
Indiana limestone
150 x 85 x 80cm

FOREST CELL SPH[AIR]ES "Laboratory", 3rd International Forest Art Path, Darmstadt, Germany, 2006
plastic wrap, wood, steel
7 spheres up to Ø 190cm

ICE BUBBLES "Ice Follies", WKP Kennedy Public Art Gallery, North Bay, Ontario, 2004
bubble wrap, wood, steel
5 spheres up to Ø 210cm

FIRE ESCAPE [DOCENDO DISCIMUS] The Discovery Centre, gallery 96, Stratford, Ontario, 2003
Light lines, video projection, audio installation
h 1150cm, w 520cm, d 210cm

BUBBLEMACHINE Art Gallery of Mississauga, Ontario, 2001

ArtCanal, during the expo.02, Le Landeron, Switzerland, 2002

satellite dishes, PLC system, electronics, sensors, motors, fans, soap container, hoses,

house in two parts, plastic bags, TV, video

2 houses 330 x 215 x 240cm

2 dishes 450 x Ø 350cm

DELETE? FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY I gallery 96, Stratford, Ontario, 1998

56 decorative sandstones of Stratford City Hall,

steel, children shoes, audio installation

510 x 199 x 178cm

510 x 199 x 144cm

DELETE? FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY II Pekao (now Peak) Gallery Toronto, 1998

107 decorative sandstones, steel

788 x 510 x 199cm

DELETE? FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY III Cambridge Galleries, 1998-2000

132 decorative sandstones, galvanized steel

788 x 788 x 199cm

Millenniumpark beside Gallery Stratford, Ontario, 2000-

132 decorative sandstones, galvanized steel

788 x 788 x 199cm

