

GARDEN

Entangled Matter

Catherine Fairbanks, Candice Lin, Alwyn O'Brien, Katrina Umber

Curated by Kavior Moon

February 10 – March 31, 2019

“To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not preexist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating. Which is not to say that emergence happens once and for all, as an event or as a process that takes place according to some external measure of space and time, but rather that time and space, like matter and meaning, come into existence, are iteratively reconfigured through each intra-action, thereby making it impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future.”

—Karen Barad

How can we see existence as fundamentally contingent, interdependent, and inseparable from the swirling matter and meaning that surround us? How can we think of ourselves as being a part of and caught within, as opposed to being separate from? How can we be compelled to think despite ourselves?

This exhibition brings together works that delve into the conceptual and material intricacies of entangled states of being, in which received binaries of self/other, nature/culture, and space/time become unfixed and blurred. Circling the surfaces of Catherine Fairbanks's "dance pots" are bodies of iconic modern dancers, past and present, interlaced with text, geometric forms, and the colorful spathe and spadix of anthurium flowers, all melding into a pulsating flow of emotive gestures, remembrance, and desire. Candice Lin's mixed media collages juxtapose plant specimens, drawings of organisms that reproduce through asexual or parasitic means, and pictorial and textual fragments that puncture the seeming objectivity of Eurocentric scientific and cultural discourses, revealing their gendered, racialized, and racist histories and blinkering bias towards normativity. In Alwyn O'Brien's ceramic sculptures, hand-rolled coils seem simultaneously to coalesce into a larger form and collapse into multiple others, a vitalistic force that brings to mind Friedrich Schelling's notion of nature as "pure unmotivated surging-forth," a tumultuous excess. In Katrina Umber's multiple exposure photographs, the experience of being thickens and opens outward as subject and object, space and time, and light and materiality congeal into a vibrating field of indexed energy.

As the feminist theorist Karen Barad points out in her provocative book *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007), to see the world as entangled entails a rethinking of—and a recognition of the connections between—being, knowing, and doing. It can be an ethical act that helps us to experience more intensely the liveliness of becoming and encourages us to imagine more expansively futures that might be.

—Kavior Moon

Kavior Moon is an art historian who teaches at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), where she is a Liberal Arts Faculty member. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she received a B.A. in Visual Arts from Columbia University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Art History from UCLA. She specializes in modern and contemporary art history, with a particular focus on experimental, post-studio art practices after 1960. In addition to SCI-Arc, Moon has also taught art history courses at UCLA and ArtCenter. Her writings as an art critic have appeared in *Artforum*, *Kaleidoscope*, and *X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly*.

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Catherine Fairbanks's work looks towards a set of questions about empathy, its qualities and limits as a contemporary construct, and takes an expanded approach to sculpture through the use of ceramics, performance, and sound. She received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and has attended artist residencies in the US and abroad, including the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the National Textile Institute in Iceland, where in 2014 she produced her solo exhibition *Empathomimesis*, and most recently the Wool Factory in Barcelona. She has presented talks on art and empathy at Otis College of Art and UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center. In 2016 her solo exhibition, *Two Chimneys*, at Wilding Cran Gallery in Los Angeles, was a critic's pick in *Artforum*.

Candice Lin is an assistant professor in the UCLA Department of Art and an interdisciplinary artist who works with installation, drawing, video, and living materials and processes, such as mold, mushrooms, bacteria, fermentation, and stains. She received her MFA in New Genres at the San Francisco Art Institute in 2004 and her double BA in Visual Arts and Art Semiotics at Brown University in 2001. She has had recent solo exhibitions at Portikus, Frankfurt; Bétonsalon, Paris; and Gasworks, London; recent group exhibitions include the Hammer's biennial exhibition *Made in L.A. 2018*, as well as shows at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2017), New Museum, New York (2017), and SculptureCenter, Long Island City, New York (2017), among others. She is the 2018-19 Wanlass Artist in Residence at Occidental College, where her exhibition *The inscrutable speech of objects* is currently on view at Weingart Gallery.

Alwyn O'Brien's ceramic sculptures push the medium as a vehicle to explore the metaphorical and literal question "What is the Vessel?". O'Brien studied ceramics at Sheridan College of Crafts and Design in Ontario and completed her BFA at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. She received her MFA in 2010 from the University of Washington in Seattle. She is the recipient of numerous awards, most recently the Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics. Her work is featured in the collections of the Seattle Art Museum, Surrey Art Gallery, Boise Museum of Art, Mackenzie Art Gallery, and the Canadian Clay and Glass museum. She divides her time between Saltspring Island and Vancouver, Canada, where she is currently an instructor at Langara College.

Katrina UMBER is an artist who uses photography to disrupt the notion of the singular essentializing image and to bring into view different dimensions of relationality. She received an MFA from UCLA in 2010 and a BFA from Art Center College of Design. She attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2011 and has exhibited work at Charlie James Gallery and Control Room in Los Angeles; Samuel Zients Space, Brooklyn; The Photographers' Gallery, London, among others. UMBER makes her art and home in Los Angeles.