



IN THE MAKING

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DIANA SHERLOCK, CURATOR

In its title, *In the making*, a group exhibition of Alberta College of Art + Design alumni, alludes to a question: What do ways of making tell us about art, craft and design objects and their contexts? It also references the context out of which this exhibition emerged, an art school sponsored touring exhibition of alumni that aims to support and situate their ongoing practices, which are forever in the making.

The twenty-four works span a diverse range of disciplines—photography, performance, video and sound installation, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry and glass—and represent various conceptual and material intersections between craft and emerging digital media. *In the making* defines craft and digital media as ways of making that use particular materials, processes and knowledges, but which might not be discipline specific.

Just as makers are thinkers, thinkers are makers too, so in addition to the twelve artists in the exhibition, Nicole Burisch is a researcher with the project. A graduate of the Alberta College of Art + Design's Ceramics program and Concordia's graduate Art History program, Burisch's observations and interviews with the artists bring her considerable theoretical expertise on contemporary art and craft practices to bear on *In the making*. Although the sample of artists and works in the exhibition is small given the college's long history of successful alumni, the diversity of practices provides a good indication of how contemporary artists engage current theoretical ideas about art, craft and design at the intersection of contemporary craft and emerging media that are also in the making.

This exhibition assumes the centrality of the processes of making to art, craft and design. Craft theorist Glenn Adamson argues in his book, *the invention of craft*,¹ that intersections between handwork and modes of technological production, especially modern industrial production, form the basis of the origins of modern craft, not its antithesis. Yet even today, artisanal² craft is more often than not framed as industry's *other*.

Contrarily, and to extend Adamson's logic into the contemporary moment, *In the making* posits the ongoing productive relationship among industry, technology and the handmade. The works in this exhibition demonstrate that technology and ways of making are not merely tools or processes required to get the job done, they are integral conceptual and social extensions of the work that allow these artists to produce objects and ideas they would not have been able to produce otherwise.

Significantly, new digital technologies not only continue to shape the ways things are made, but also can accelerate, decentralize and mobilize production processes in ways that are affecting the economic, social and political status of objects to a degree not seen since the Industrial Revolution. In this way, artists and works that might ordinarily be separated by historically persuasive disciplinary boundaries, further reinforced by institutional and economic systems, share material and conceptual space in *In the making*.

MACKENZIE KELLY-FRÈRE: MY OWN SATISFACTION IN THE WORK REQUIRES THE SIGNIFICANT RESISTANCE OF A MATERIAL OR TECHNIQUE: THE CHOICE OF ULTRA-FINE THREADS AND LUDICROUSLY COMPLEX TECHNIQUES IS INTENTIONAL BECAUSE IT OUTSTRIPS MY ABILITY TO KEEP TRACK OF THE DETAILS, TAKING ME OUT OF MY HEAD AND PLANTING ME FIRMLY WITHIN MY BODY.

Given the fact that *In the making* investigates the conceptual intersections of craft and emerging digital media, there are a number of works in the exhibition that use emerging digital technologies and traditional craft, but many do not. However, all of the works in the exhibition do provide insight into how ways of making within each artist's practice inform or extend ways of thinking about relationships between craft and digital media, between specific disciplinary languages, and about ways of understanding and articulating the world that might not be easily categorized.

Often the artists' practices question traditional definitions of both craft and emerging digital technologies, but do not favour one over the other. Rather the works highlight different points of intersection between craft and emerging digital media to explore what is created when these two things collide to create something specific to a culture at a particular time and place. Craft and emerging digital media are both always temporal and contextual, shifting shape to take new forms and create new ideas and this too is what *In the making* aims to explore.

The artists' works relate to a number of ideas that recur and overlap within the exhibition to tease out the sameness and difference between ways of making and thinking in craft and emerging media. Key ideas include the relationship between tacit and conceptual knowledges; the coexistence of traditional and contemporary ways of making that involve processes of translation and remediation; the labour and

love of craft and technology in terms of production, distribution and consumption; the dematerialization and rematerialization of art and craft since Conceptual art; and the deskilling and reskilling of postdisciplinary practice.

Many of these ideas have recently become hot button topics in academic and curatorial circles evincing the material turn,³ a research stream in the humanities since the 1990s that further deconstructs entrenched power structures through its renewed analysis of materiality to consider the mind and the body, culture and nature, and the idea and the thing on equal ground. Materiality, matter, things and our relationships to them have always shaped our world—and the artist/craftsperson's world in particular—but with the rise of maker- and user-driven cultures fostered by both the handcrafts and emerging digital technologies, there is renewed participation in this material world by professionals and amateurs alike, and much curiosity about its potential influence on systems of power and contemporary social practices.

In the making suggests that, at this moment of the material turn, contemporary artists are revisiting the materiality of the dematerialized conceptual art object made famous by American critic and conceptual art curator Lucy Lippard⁴ in an attempt to reunify this supposed conceptual/material split. Contemporary art, specifically conceptual art, has reinforced this false binary since the 1960s, and it is clear to many contemporary artists, especially those who work with craft and digital media practices within art

schools, that art history and its institutional structures continue to maintain this division and its associated hierarchies.

In the making argues, as art historian Amelia Jones has, that “the dematerialization in the 1960s and 1970s, however, was never full or complete and, in fact, ... the interest in dematerialization actually pointed to a fascination or obsession with the material work both within and beyond the concerns of “art” *per se*.”⁵ To understand this one needs only to look at the very material and conceptual, feminist performance-installations by artists such as Carolee Schneemann or Faith Wilding in the ‘70s that are now receiving renewed attention. It also makes me recall the first time I ever saw a Sol LeWitt open modular structure, which I expected to be industrially slick, but instead, was made of wood and hand-lacquered with tell-tale evidence of its making.

In the making exhibits the synchronistic effects of the rematerialization of conceptual art and the dematerialization of craft as demonstrated by the artists’ modes of production, and links these to broader critiques of material and immaterial labour written about by Professor John Roberts, Adamson, Jones and others. The exhibition, therefore, challenges assumed hierarchies between the conceptual and the material, between thinking and making, and focuses on processes of making to reveal these complex dialectics.

Discussions about making, materiality and materialism demand concurrent analysis of labour, production and consumption. Roberts argues in his book, *The Intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling in Art After the Readymade*⁶ for a labour theory of culture in which the move away from traditional artisanal skills (deskilling) associated with modern mechanical reproducibility, new technologies and conceptual art, can also innovate new ways of working (reskilling) from other theoretical domains that could reciprocally transform social and economic production and its concomitant structures.

Roberts suggests that since modernism, the real question in determining artistic value has been “how, with what materials, and to what ends does the artist labour?”⁷ His articulation of artistic labour suggests that while the shift from artisanal labour to the artist’s technical-organizational role in the production of the artwork—from material to immaterial labour—frees it from its artisanal bonds; it aligns the artist’s labour with extended divisions of labour as seen under capitalism. There is then, according to Roberts, an “erosion of the distinction between intellectual labour and manual labour, the creativity of the artist and the routinised work of the labourer...[which results in] an actual shift in artistic practise,”⁸ and this, I would argue, might be even more palpable in artists’ works that use emerging digital technologies, especially to make digital crafts.

Yet Roberts, like Marx, maintains that artistic production and productive labour are different and it is the artist’s capacity for reskilling that protects the artist/craftperson’s subjectivity and art/craft’s critical agency from the alienating forces of labour and



capital.⁹ Roberts is careful to note that the shift towards technical production does not necessarily mean a “decline of artistic skill, but the re-positioning of the notion of skill within a deeper dialectic: the necessary interrelationship between (received) skill, deskilling and re-skilling.”¹⁰ In relation to contemporary art and craft, Adamson succinctly condenses Roberts’ complex argument to point out that now “multiple productive modes can exist within a single artwork: artisanal making (skill), appropriation (deskilling), and strategic reinventions of the artistic profession itself (reskilling).”¹¹

This conflation of productive modes within a single artwork is characteristic of the works included in *In the making*. Moreover, reskilling makes it necessary for contemporary criticism to radically rethink contemporary conceptions of value associated with artistic skill and craft, points that Burisch and the artists discuss in some depth. Thus the initial perceived schism between the material and the conceptual

fathered by Duchamp’s readymade is here complicated and reinterpreted through various forms of material thinking as revealed by each artist’s unique way of making.

In the exhibition, this material thinking often finds its form through the artists’ use of translation and remediation to address the conceptual and material coexistence of traditional and contemporary ways of making. In her essay, “Remediating Craft,” artist and writer Amy Gogarty extends the logic of media theorists Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin’s concept of remediation as they apply it to new media to analyze its relevance for “the particular conditions” of contemporary craft.¹² Remediation, according to Gogarty’s analysis “frequently borrows the content—without the form—of the original,” or “the new medium asserts its improvement upon—without significant alteration of—the original,” or “remediation call[s] attention to the gap between the new (improved) and the old (less desirable) medium.”¹³

Following Bolter and Grusin’s logic, Gogarty continues, “More aggressive remediation . . . refashions the older medium or media entirely, while still marking the presence of the older media and therefore maintaining a sense of multiplicity of hypermediacy.”¹⁴ Importantly she notes that the inverse of this is also true—older media can refashion newer media for critical effect—and this is often the case in contemporary craft. Further to these ideas, translation (the verb, to translate) is often used in the process of remediation, but it is also the result of remediation (the noun, a translation). A translation, like remediation, is always understood in its making as an interpretation of the original, but paradoxically a translation, a remediation is also always an original.

In both cases, the original and the copy are interpreted reciprocally; you can’t understand one fully without knowledge of the other. Both remediation and translation draw attention to the technological and epistemological limits of each by gauging what is lost or gained in the process of interpretation.¹⁵

Ward Bastian is but one of several artists in *In the making* who uses remediation in his work. His abstract monochromatic photographs capture reflections cast from the surface of black, blown glass vessels, which he made with the final photograph already



in mind. In this way, these photographs are not mere documentation of a blown glass form, but rather studies in the commonalities of two very different mediums and ways of perceiving objects in the world. *Highlights* demonstrate Bastian's pervasive interest in light, the common element in rendering both glass and the photograph visible.

What is particularly interesting about Bastian's process is how he almost reverse engineers the blown glass form so that its final shape is dictated as much by the photographic effects it will later create through its reflections as by the molten medium he crafts by hand. In this way photography mediates Bastian's glass vessels, and conversely, the way in which Bastian sees in these photographs is shaped by the properties of glass.

Well-Tempered Clavier and *Trial II*, both by Korean-Canadian Hyang Cho, rely on processes of translation to draw out issues of interpretation and power. Each of the books in Cho's *Well-Tempered Clavier* contains a score that was printed by an electronic score-writer while she played a complete version of Johann Sebastian Bach's composition of the same name, first compiled in 1722 and again in 1742.¹⁶ *Well-Tempered Clavier* was published posthumously, but prior to this, it circulated informally among musicians. One can speculate that there were multiple versions played by various musicians, each with their own interpretations and transcribed edits—an open-source score of a classical composition. Musicologists know that, while Bach's published version was the first collection of compositions for keyboard in all twenty-four keys, there are also several precursors going back to the 1500s.¹⁷ Like all artists, Bach too built on what came before him. To this day, *Well-Tempered Clavier* is one of the most influential sets of classical compositions used to teach piano.

Cho is not a trained pianist, but repeatedly played this well-known didactic score to make this work of art. Each book, documents the process of translating Bach's published score into Cho's learned interpretation of the score, replete with errors. The stack of fifty-three books signifies an accumulation of the artist's tacit knowledge and experience embodied through consistent practice. Her exercise reveals how knowledge circulates and re-circulates through the practice of standardized texts, but also how

knowledge, language, even something as codified as a score, can be reinterpreted and subjectively influenced by users.

To make *Trial II* Cho transcribed an audio recording of an English translation of Franz Kafka's famous German text, *The Trial*, which remained unfinished at Kafka's death and was first published posthumously in 1925. Cho's resulting thirty-nine-foot scroll of continuous graphite text contains almost six full transcriptions of this recording. Due to the speed with which Cho had to work to keep pace with the audio recording, her written text is mainly unreadable and each translation includes its own omissions and errors. Here Cho's material process is contained by a conceptual frame predetermined by external factors such as the original translation of Kafka's novel from German to English, the speed of the English audio translation, the width and length of the paper scroll and finally the artist's own processing of these translations through English, her second language.

Cho's translations reveal the reciprocal relationships between the original and the copy and between languages, relationships that are also key to the ongoing formation of cultures and artists' practices alike. The errors in Cho's translations of the English audio version of the text reveal communication gaps, misunderstandings and interpretive glitches that likely also exist in the original translation of the work.

Cho, whose Korean heritage means she must function in a second language in her adopted home, is acutely aware of how one's self is continually formed through language. She understands as well how quotation and translation can be powerful tactics against authority or what Walter Benjamin has called the "destructive power of quotation,"¹⁸ through which the past is not preserved through repetition, but in fact, ripped from its context, recontextualized, and overwritten with new meaning.

Haida artist Dean Drever also discovers new ways of dealing with the past in *Pass the Hat*. In this almost eighteen-foot paper totem, the artist translates his original carved cedar totem into an imposing stack of 10,666 sheets of heavy white paper that have been individually plotted and cut from a digital scan of the original totem and then

hand-registered during the installation process. The imposing resulting work, *Pass the Hat*, depicts a thunderbird, Drever's Haida animal figure, who places a hat on top of a bear's head, which represents his daughter.

This work speaks clearly about the importance of passing traditions from one generation to another and how tradition is always contemporary, always in a state of flux, always taking on new forms. In both its concept and its material processes, *Pass the Hat* plots a complicated path between cultural translation and cultural adaption that also resonates in Cho's works.

Comprised of laser-cut paper pads, Pavitra Wickramasinghe's series, *Line Poem*, *Alchemy of Light*, digitally remediates abstract, automatic pen-and-paper line drawings into intricately interlaced bas-relief paper sculptures of negative space. Each drawing is

scanned and redrawn in Illustrator to create a vector drawing that modifies the artist's hand-drawn gestures into hard-edged coded lines, and then is inverted. Similar to Drever's process for *Pass the Hat*, Wickramasinghe's digital files are processed and sent to a laser cutter that cuts away the negative space between the lines in each drawing.

What remains is a three-dimensional drawing that is unevenly carved and burned into the stacked sheets of a half-inch paper pad: a two-dimensional drawing is transformed into a three-dimensional bas-relief. Once scanned and redrawn in Illustrator, each original drawing could be technically reproduced inexhaustibly.

Yet Wickramasinghe's process is far from standardized. The laser burns to different depths and chars the fine laser-cut edges of each cut edition differently depending on the speed of the laser through a certain path, the air currents around the laser's tip and the material qualities of the paper. Although the machine is fully programmed, a momentary lack of awareness or control by the artist during production can result in the complete destruction of a work by flames.

As indicated by Mackenzie Kelly-Frère's titles, *Codex 1 and 2* refer directly to the process of translation and coded source material that generated the pattern for these immaculate weavings. The compositions of *Codex 1 and 2* rely on digitally encoded translations of natural phenomenon (atmospheric noise generated by lightening) randomly bitmapped¹⁹ to form complex patterns that are then meticulously woven by hand using silk, linen and hemp threads coloured by Sumi ink and plant dyes.

Both weavings are displayed flat on glass tables with modern wooden legs fashioned out of an old loom by Frère's partner, Kristofer Kelly-Frère. The horizontal orientation of the weavings on the transparent glass surface allows viewers to *read* the weave pattern from both the top and the bottom as they walk the length of each work, heightening an awareness of the object as text. Kelly-Frère's weavings collapse tensions between chaos and order, the natural and technological, and the material and the conceptual to pose questions about rationality and phenomenological experience.





Unlike Kelly-Frère's weavings, Jolie Bird unravels traditional textile skills in her equally meticulous handmade readymades. In the domestic tableaux, *Extended Long Play*, she precisely, and completely, hand-wraps a selection of vintage found objects in continuously aligned fine gold thread. Trained in traditional weaving skills, Bird challenges the idea of traditional handcraft and the associated historical knowledge by inventing a new way of working with thread; her skill here is eccentric invention.

In *Extended Long Play*, Bird winds a fine, taut line between the rich singular materiality of the final wrapped forms and the conceptual references of the

found objects—a reproduction Eames rocking chair, a 1960's portable record player, vinyl records, etc.—that speak loudly to post-Second World War consumer production. She exploits this dichotomy between contemporary industrial modes of making needed to produce these consumer-grade objects in multiples and the contemporary craftsmanship she uses to enshroud and transform these objects into an original, autonomous work of art. Bird reinscribes the devalued, alienated industrialized labour that made these consumer objects by applying her individual artistic labour to the surfaces of each, questioning the value of each in turn.

Wednesday Lupypciw's *My Sex Website* is a textile installation featuring the video *BED OF INTIMACY*, which continues her research into feminism, labour and economy as it relates to both textile practices and technology. With tongue firmly planted in cheek, Lupypciw develops a fractured video narrative between herself and one other character that takes place in what she calls her "imaginary sex dungeon," as she tracks the gendered invention of the Internet. She irreverently mixes references to early grainy Internet webcam performance and feminist art and tapestry production from the 1970s.

Unlike in early feminist and media art, DIY domestic crafts and Internet interaction are seen here to satisfy our salacious need for instant gratification that is beyond labour, and beyond politics. Lupypciw's characters queer both craft and technology to create a hybrid identity between the two that is neither and both simultaneously, to contrast materiality and immateriality, life and art.

The video's confessional imagery, a type of craft-tech porn, humorously evokes the counter-culture of earlier, often political, conceptual practices in both '70's feminist art and emerging digital technology networks. Lupypciw's seemingly off-hand, woven tapestry refers to a dematerializing screen, its errant and very material woven bits and bites sticky-tacked to the installation's walls and monitors' surfaces with gelatinous goo. In the video and the tapestry, the artist humorously mocks fetishistic labour intensive practices in both craft and emerging media by using a "well-enough-made craft" or "sloppy craft" aesthetic.²⁰



Although Luyyciw's process is in strong contrast to the fine, traditional weavings by Mackenzie Kelly-Frère, and even Jolie Bird's especially labour-intensive process, the work did not necessarily take less time or skill to produce. Rather, "sloppy craft" is not anti-craftsmanship, but for critical effect subverts or alters methods of production that value time, labour and traditional skill. Luyyciw's *My Sex Website* and the video *BED OF INTIMACY* upturn prevalent stereotypes about the value of labour, gender and sexuality as they pertain to art, craft and emerging media practices.

To craft is a verb meaning to make with care and it can pertain to an action, material and/or idea. Whereas Wednesday Luyyciw performed for the camera in *BED OF INTIMACY* and left material traces of her crafting, both the tapestry and the video, Robin Lambert performs live with guests for *In the making. Lunch with Strangers* is exactly what it states. During the course of the exhibition, Robin Lambert invites strangers whom he has invited via newspaper, radio and social media calls to join him in the gallery to share lunch and a conversation.

Each participant chooses a set of handcrafted ceramic dishes from the table for their meal. Lambert commissions these sets of dishes from other artists in his network and purchases them for the performance. After the intimate performance of eating lunch in the gallery, the dishes are washed and replaced on the table. At the end of the exhibition, each "stranger-no-more" receives the dishes they chose to eat from to keep.

Each relational performance is photographed for the artist and this ongoing documentation is added to the gallery walls weekly during the exhibition. Like the ceramists who lovingly crafted the ceramic wares that become, through use, the symbolic center of the performances, Lambert carefully crafts these engagements to evoke the trust and care of his participants during their exchange.

Also with the participation of viewers, Tyler Rock's installation, *Still Water*, reveals the interstitial space between the material and phenomenological, between the visible and the unseen, between the optic and the haptic, and between the mind and the body. When you enter the small dark room, you encounter a clear handblown glass vessel

hanging from the ceiling. It glows with blue light and is partially filled with water and beads of condensation.

The vessel, which acts as a lens, magnifies the mainly invisible striations in the glass that evince its making to form a dense pool of blue ripples upon the floor. The sounds of the participant's presence activate two small microphone switches embedded in the ceiling and a small puff of CO₂ is released into the bottom of the vessel, blowing bubbles that rise to the surface of the water. The bubbles disturb the otherwise still water and the quiet blue light that fills the room shudders in response to the viewer's presence.

For a moment everything pulses, and the space between the viewer and the inanimate glass object becomes activated. The vessel in *Still Water* becomes a lightning rod for an embodied, immersive, participatory viewer experience that expands the field of the craft object beyond its material limits to perform the "thingness of the object."²¹ In so doing, Rock's evocative installation delves into phenomenological concerns by crafting material encounters.

Pavitra Wickramasinghe's video installation, *Silence of Thought, Music of Sight*, invokes a similar relationship to body, space and time. This work incorporates a wall-sized silent video projection of a sea at night, a crystal and glass sculpture made of found objects reminiscent of a British tea-clipper used to transport tea from Sri Lanka (the artist's birthplace) to Europe, and a timed light. The light is triggered by the video at certain moments to turn on and illuminate the ship and its ornately laser-cut paper sails. The ship's shadow is cast momentarily onto the projection of the sea, and prisms of light scatter around the room to envelop the viewer. Seconds later, one is again left with the undulating waves in the darkness and silence.

Technology provides ways to mediate the distance between time and space, but as the work's title suggests, the installation short-circuits our senses to create a synesthetic effect; what we think and experience and what we hear and see can become easily confused, conflated, and interchangeable. Thus the material world and our perception



of it should always be scrutinized, especially when mediated by technology. Our failure to do so will, of course, have real material and political consequences.

Robin Lambert activates his social network and employs a sharing economy, while Brendan McGillicuddy, Stephen Holman, Jenna Stanton, Dean Drever and even Pavitra Wickramasinghe's *Line Poems* experiment with how contemporary artists who make highly crafted forms can work in more networked and distributed ways with the assistance of digital media. Each is interested in the reproducibility and mobility of the aesthetic object assisted by the full or partial replacement of the maker's hand by digital technology. Yet each also recognizes and exploits the need for specific conceptual and material-based knowledge to craft an object using these technological means.

In *Artforum's* June 1967 issue, Sol LeWitt published his now famous "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," in which he advanced what became the central adage of conceptual art, "The idea becomes a machine that makes the art."²² It is to this idea and LeWitt's "structures" that Brendan McGillicuddy returns in *Overtone* to reconsider relationships between the conceptual and the material in sculpture. Imagine LeWitt's drawing, *Isometric Projection #13* (1981), run through a random algorithm to produce an unpredictable, lyrical, three-dimensional form and you would have the renderings for *Overtone*. The work was too complex to be milled by machine. McGillicuddy hand-carved, assembled and immaculately finished more than one thousand

pounds of solid cherry to materialize this highly crafted sculptural reintegration of concept and material form. In doing so, McGillicuddy tests the conceptual limits and phenomenological limits of form so key to LeWitt and the Minimalists who followed him.

Theoretically, McGillicuddy's *Overtone* should be infinitely reproducible from a digital file anywhere the digital milling technology exists, but it's not. Similarly, Stephen Holman's ongoing series, *Printed Ramifications 001–004*, which reveals his research into design possibilities in additive 3D printing, further explores the possibility of completely removing the

artist's hand from the making of a work of art. Multiple iterations of Holman's fantastical digital-mechanical object, replete with nested gears, are printed in different types of ABS plastics from a digital file that the artist is constantly modifying to "improve" the functionality and efficiency of the object's design. Yet, try as he might, the object still does not function—its gears frozen, printed in place and fused to the outer shell at multiple points—it is a failure.

These digital objects reveal a gap, a glitch, between their digital form and their material function. Holman is trained as a jeweler and metalsmith and could easily

Ward Bastian, *Highlights 10* (detail)



modify the finished print by hand to make the gears move, but this is not the point. Rather, *Printed Ramifications 001–004*, like McGillicuddy's *Overtone*, examines the current potential and the limits of emergent digital design and production. Simultaneously, both artists' works demonstrate that it is increasingly difficult to draw disciplinary distinctions between art, craft and design, and furthermore, that there is little need to do so.

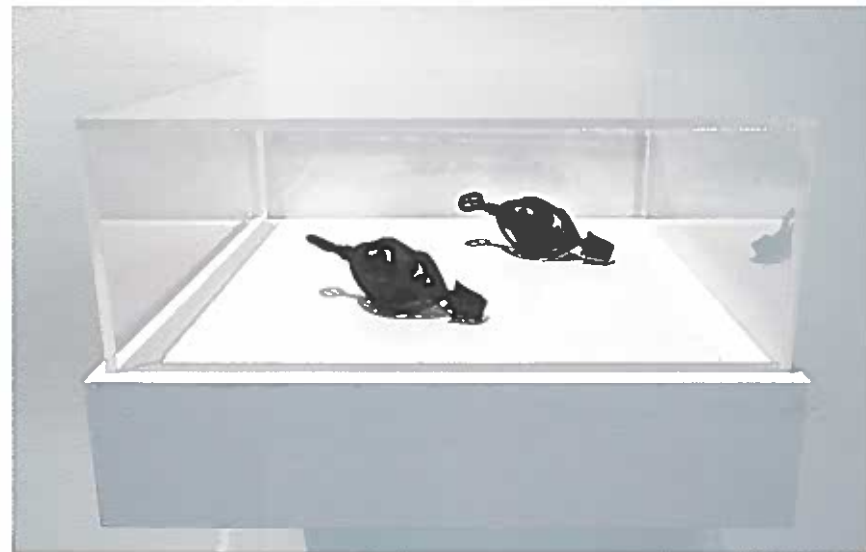
Jenna Stanton also has little use for these distinctions. Stanton's *Handle Series* and *Stacked Series* of porcelain vessels evolved from her recent graduate studies in ceramic design at Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, UK, the centre of British porcelain production. Her works combine traditional mould making, pattern development and industrial ceramic design with new technologies. In *Handle Series*, prototypes were first developed by hand altering slip-cast forms that were further developed



using 3D-modeling software (Deskartes) and 3D-printing technology. Moulds were handmade from the prototypes and slip-cast using bone china. The spouts are hand finished and thinned out to a razor-sharp edge making the forms unsuitable for factory or mass production. This means they can only exist in their most refined state as craft objects, but could still be reproduced.

In *Stacked Series*, prototypes for stacked dish sets of various sizes were also developed using 3D-modeling software (Deskartes) and 3D-printing technology. The moulds were handmade from the prototypes and slip-cast using earthenware. The large eight-inch-diameter stacks were made by using laser-cut templates and then developing plaster moulds on a jolly jigger machine, as is common in industrial ceramic ware production. Decorative patterns were developed and modified using Illustrator and sprayed and silkscreened onto the surfaces in enamel.

Stephen Holman, *Printed Ramifications* (detail)





TYLER ROCK
Still Water, 2012

After seeing the UK Craft Council exhibition *LAB CRAFT*, Stanton realized that in the hands of craftspeople this way of working with new digital technologies could be used to expand traditional ways of making, potentially increasing the reproducibility and mobility of handcrafted design objects. As with Holman's *Printed Ramifications*, designs could be refined and produced in multiple iterations to suit different aesthetic and functional needs.

Stanton's *Handle Series* and *Stacked Series* are ceramic editions that combine her traditional understanding and knowledge of materials, those haptic and tacit knowledges essential to a craft practice, with new distributed forms of knowledge,²³ which are facilitated by digital technologies and widely used within the industrial design field to increase the accessibility and diversity of the designs. John Roberts calls this the "craft of reproducibility,"²⁴ and it is an example of reskilling at its finest.

In the making is an, admittedly, open-ended exhibition that could be interpreted in many ways. The essay you have just read traces only one line of interpretation through these complex works. Nicole Burisch's interviews with the artists that follow will open up many other possibilities for your consideration. Given the rich involvement of contemporary craft and emerging digital media in contemporary culture, there will be many more in the making.



PAVITRA WICKRAMASINGHE

Silence of Thought, Music of Sight, 2012

ENDNOTES

- 1 Glenn Adamson, *the invention of craft* (London: Bloomsbury Academic and Victoria and Albert Museum, 2013).
- 2 Many contemporary craft producers dislike the term “artisanal,” but I have used it here to stress the connection to traditional and handmade ways of making, and how this is often either derided or fetishized in contemporary practice.
- 3 Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce, eds., *Material Powers. Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn* (London, New York: Routledge, 2010).
- 4 Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972: a cross-reference book of information on some esthetic boundaries: consisting of a bibliography into which are inserted a fragmented text, art works, documents, interviews, and symposia, arranged chronologically and focused on so-called conceptual or information or idea art with mentions of such vaguely designated areas as minimal, anti-form, systems, earth, or process art, occurring now in the Americas, Europe, England, Australia, and Asia (with occasional political overtones), edited and annotated by Lucy R. Lippard.* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997, renewed 2001. Originally published by New York: Praeger, 1973).
- 5 Amelia Jones, “Material Traces: Process, Matter, and Interrelationality in Contemporary Art,” an essay published in conjunction with the exhibition *Material Traces: Time and the Gesture in Contemporary Art* (Montreal: Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery at Concordia University, 2013), 5.
- 6 John Roberts, *The Intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling in Art After the Readymade* (London, New York: Verso, 2007).
- 7 John Roberts, “Art After Deskilling,” *Historical Materialism* 18 (2010): 78.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 86.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 87.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 92.
- 11 Adamson, 35.
- 12 Amy Gogarty, “Remediating Craft,” in *Utopic Impulses: Contemporary Ceramics Practice*, eds. Ruth Chambers, Amy Gogarty and Mireille Perron (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2007), 92.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 94.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Diana Sherlock, “A Third Space, X-Y-Z,” in *Susan Shantz: creatures in translation*, ed. Lisa Vargo (Calgary, Medicine Hat, Saskatoon: Alberta College of Art + Design, Esplanade Arts & Cultural Centre, Kenderdine College Art Galleries, 2013).
- This exhibition was held simultaneously to *In the making* at the Alberta College of Art + Design and some similar ideas are addressed in my essay.
- 16 “The Well-Tempered Clavier,” *Wikipedia*, accessed January 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Well-Tempered_ClavierWIKI Bach.
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 Hyang Cho, “That’s How It Is,” (MFA Thesis, University of Guelph, 2009), 18–19.
- 19 Source code from random.org.
- 20 Elaine Cheasley Paterson and Susan Surette, eds., *Sloppy Craft: Postdisciplinarity and the Crafts* (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2015). This book was published after the initial draft of this text.
- 21 Bill Brown, “Thing Theory,” in *Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1–16.
- 22 Sol LeWitt, “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art,” *Artforum* Volume 5: Issue 10 (Summer 1967): 79–83.
- 23 David Pye, “The Nature and Art of Workmanship,” in *The Craft Reader*, ed. Glenn Adamson (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2010), 341–353. Also see John Roberts.
- 24 John Roberts, “Art After Deskilling,” *Historical Materialism* 18 (2010): 91.