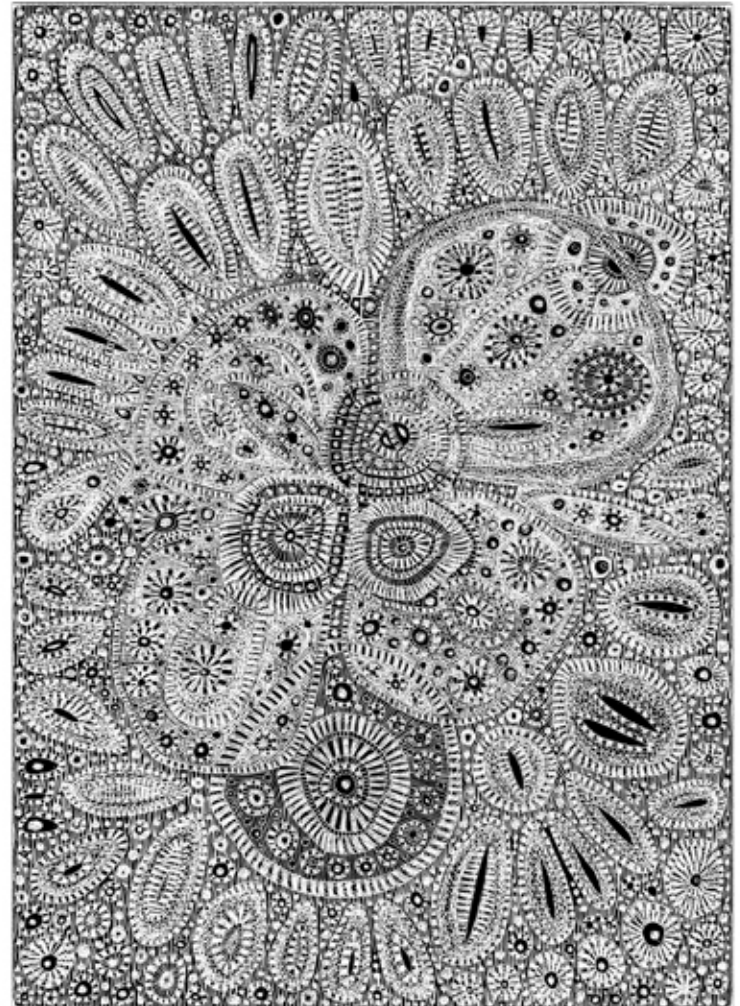


# A TANGLED WEB

December 18, 2014 - January 22, 2015



Causey Contemporary

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Front cover image:  
Howard Gross  
Assimilating (2012)  
scratchboard drawing  
5x7 inches

# A Tangled Web

*"The distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion"*

Albert Einstein

"A tangled web" is taken from one of the more memorable lines from Sir Walter Scott's epic 1808 poem Marmion, which among other things, looked at lust, lies, war and honor. For this exhibition, I am borrowing this partial quote and making it about the complexities and origins of the processes in creative thought.

Each generation of visual artists has a number of participants that believe they have come up with something groundbreaking. Later on, maybe through exposure or discussion, they discover that their original contribution is clearly connected to another work of art they might happen by in person, or perhaps it is something spotted on line or in print, whether it was made previously or as a contemporary work, which has some semblance of common ground. It is at this point that one may come to realize that what they thought was fresh and different is part of a fluid and flexible stream of connected thoughts, a linkage that can span all time – a collective consciousness.

In the end, it is secondary as to who did what first, where influences come from, or who or what inspires an artist because the time in ones studio is unique and ones own. It is an era and a culture that all artists participate in, with all of their experiences, pre-thoughts, open-mindedness and leanings as their filtering process of images and information is unique to them.

For this exhibition, I have selected seven artists from Causey Contemporary and paired each with an artist who they do not know or are aware of who share a connection that I suspect is sourced through a collective consciousness.

D. Dominick Lombardi, Curator

Lisa Pressman  
James St Clair

Michel Demanche  
Jen P. Harris

Elise Freda  
Moses Hoskins

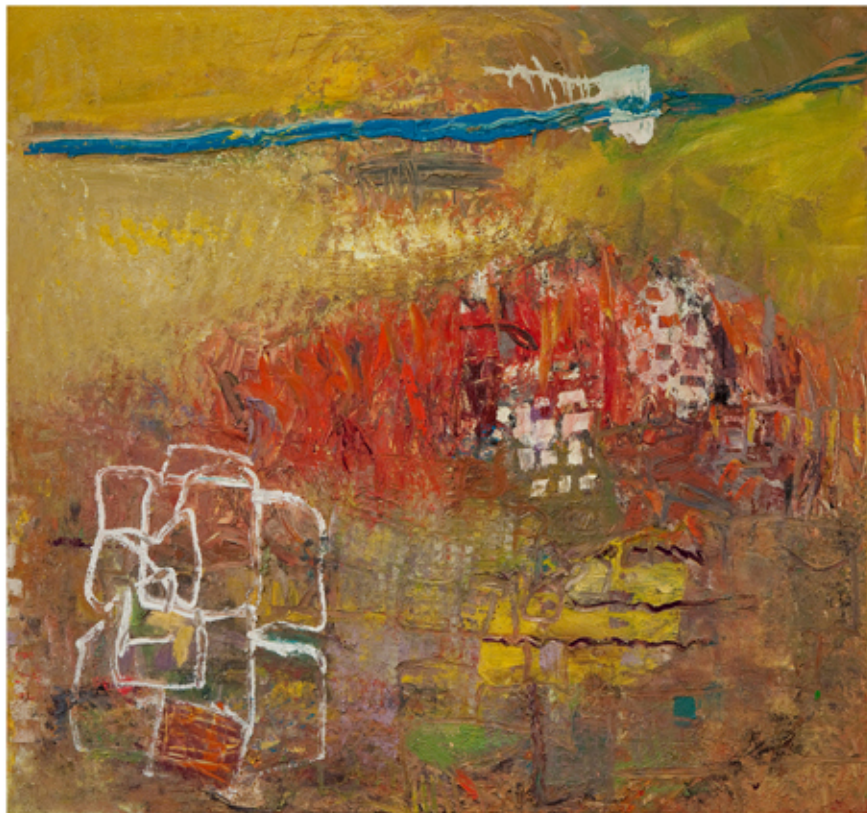
Melissa Murray  
D. Dominick Lombardi

Marielis Seyler  
John Wyatt

Howard Gross  
Victor Matthews

John J. Richardson  
Arcady Kotler





Lisa Pressman  
*Leap of Faith* (2012)  
oil on canvas  
34 X 32 inches

Abstract painter **Lisa Pressman** and representational painter **James St Clair** both have a compelling fascination with the tension and movement in weighty masses of form and color. With **Pressman**, the visual sensation accumulates as she sculpts her multi-hued painted surfaces, pushing and cutting in detail to create texture and movement while her built up layers of color and suggested forms create depth.



James St. Clair  
*The Binghamton* (2013)  
oil on canvas mounted on board  
18 X 20 inches

On the other hand, **St Clair** hunts around the edges of our tri-state from the sea side as he captures, in rants and rolls of thickly applied paint, the ages of overlooked degradation along our otherwise picturesque coast line. Both work through their subject in a similar fashion, yet the result are markedly different.





Michel Demanche  
*Tupestry 2 - Contrary Mary* (detail) (2013)  
 mixed media on paper  
 30 X 58 inches

Mixed media artists **Michel Demanche** and **Jen P. Harris** present storybook-like vignettes in layered narratives. Both use a sort of geometric framework to pull in the viewer; both employ the familiar to create mystery. **Demanche's** content is more oriented to finding the beauty in the quiet moments of everyday as it is literally down to earth, while **Harris's** art brings to mind visions of noble grandeur, suggesting the magic of tall tales and mythology.



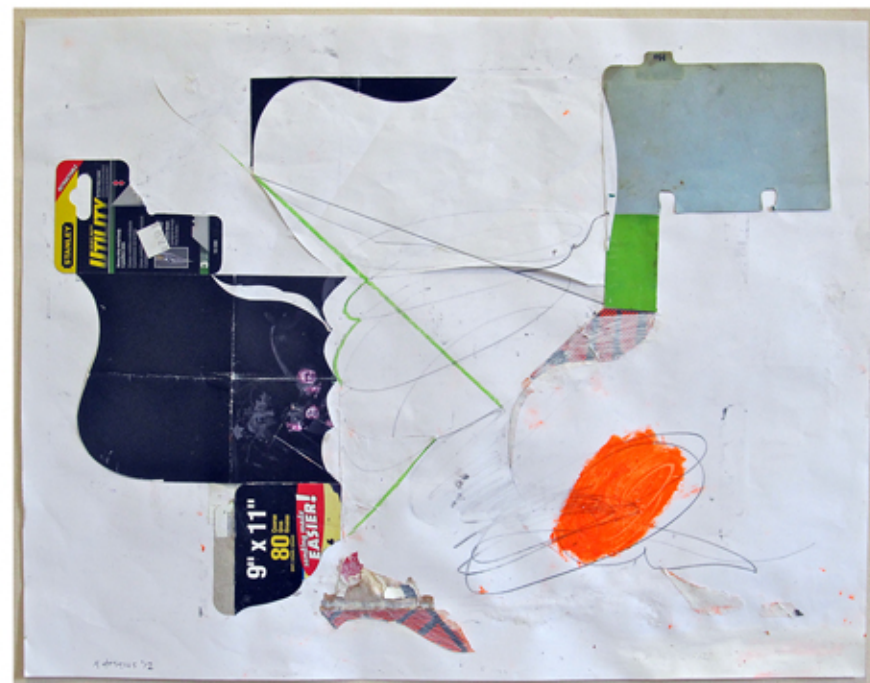
Jen P. Harris  
*Untitled (blue cups)*  
 (2014)  
 ink and gouache on  
 paper  
 38 X 28.5 inches

One other commonality between **Demanche** and **Harris**, albeit subtle, is the presence of some intimately involved person or persons in the narrative – someone who remains invisible, or at the very least, stands just outside the picture plane watching with great interest.



Elise Freda  
*Full Sun* (2013)  
encaustic and collage on paper  
30 X 22 inches

**Elise Freda** and **Moses Hoskins** are mix media artists as well, only here, the response to external stimuli results in something that is close to automatic, with strong overtones of controlled progression. **Freda** plots out her space as a grid, with interlocking rectangles that have a near Fibonacci sequence of progression. Both artists use collage elements as their base. **Freda** places her resurrected torn paper segments that are covered in veils of colorful encaustic specifically to enhance their mottling and modulation.



Moses Hoskins  
*Untitled* (2012)  
collage & drawing media on paper  
17.5 X 22.5 inches

And like **Freda**, **Hoskins** has his collage elements, the found pieces of post-consumption cardboard and paper fully visible, save for a frenzied line or quick wash of white. With respect to composition and planning, **Hoskins'** approach is more reactive and freely formed. And even though the results are vastly different, they are both adding and subtracting visual data as they edit things down to a most vigorous relationship between impulse and aesthetic.





Melissa Murray  
*Infinity is Always Longer* (2013)  
 watercolor, ink, graphite, colored pencil  
 and gouache on paper  
 40 X 60 inches

**Melissa Murray** and **D. Dominick Lombardi** mix snippets of reality with the foils of fantasy as they utilize specific bands of color to drive their narratives. Working in a multitude of media, **Murray** presents us with a dream-like setting where symbolic details trigger a mysterious scenario. A scenario that at first glance seems joyful and peaceful, then quickly becomes perplexing when the viewer spots the expired bird on the bottom left.



D. Dominick Lombardi  
*The Conjurer* (2014)  
 Oil and acrylic on canvas  
 36 X 30 inches

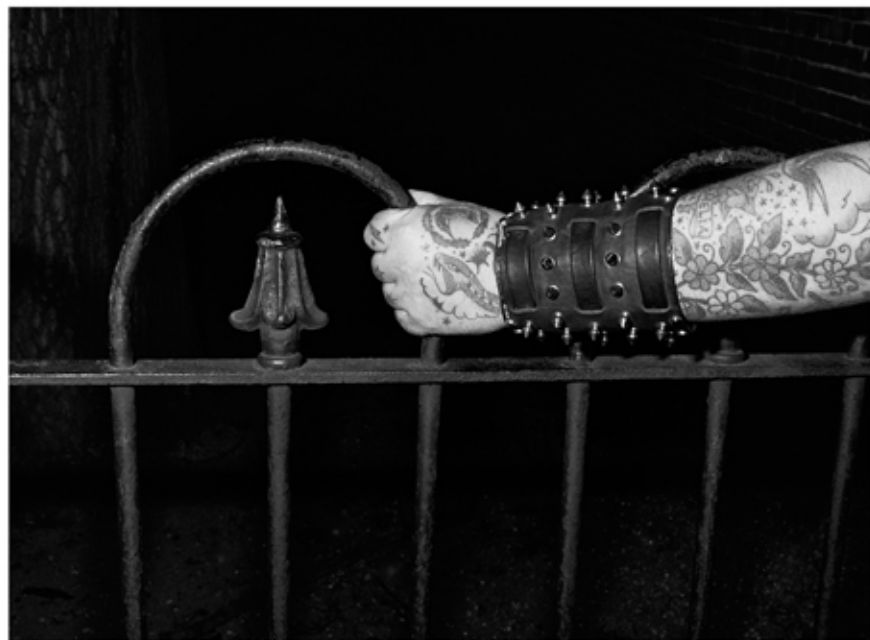
The same sort of change occurs in **Lombardi's** painting when one notices the urgency and awkwardness between the two figures that is initiated by a theft. And as does **Murray**, **Lombardi** plays with the perspective dropping the bottom out of the picture plane to enhance the tension while keeping things moving along with suggestive stripes and dynamic patterns.





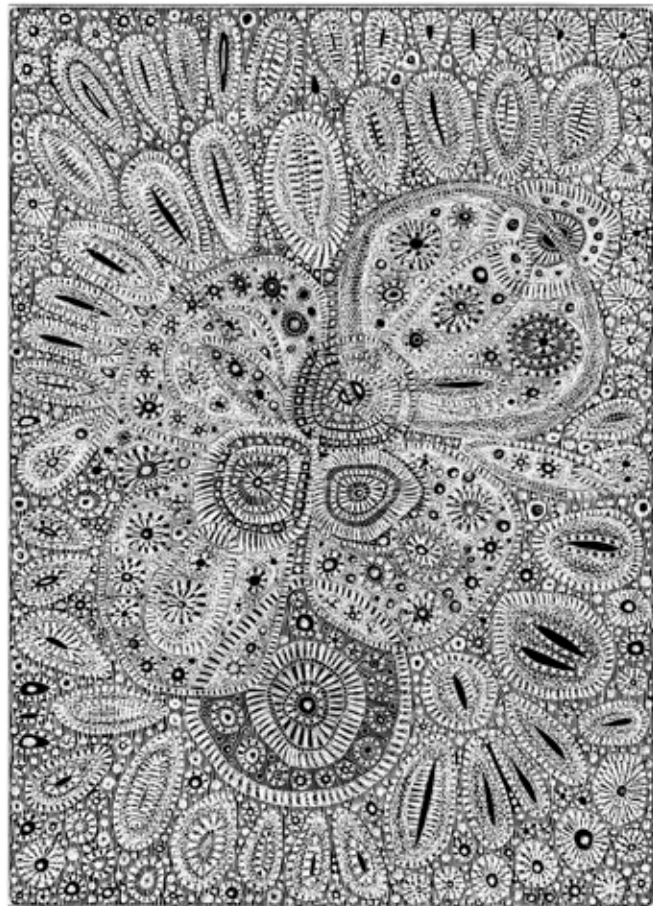
Marielis Seyler  
*Stillness* (2001)  
Silver Gelatin Print  
Edition of 5  
24 X 36 inches

Black and white photographers **Marielis Seyler** and **John Wyatt** project the emotional state of their subjects by way of imposing strong and focused compositional elements. **Seyler** takes us to one of the more mystifying locations our planet to create an otherworldly setting that is only amplified by her subject's seemingly endless garb. **Wyatt** finds intrigue as he captures a rather unique cast iron fence that is overpowered by an ominous, tattoo covered arm.



John Wyatt  
*Coney Island Joe* (1980)  
Tattoo Artist  
Philadelphia, PA  
photograph, scanned negative and  
digitally printed on archival paper  
20 X 14 inches

In both instances, what the subjects are wearing (**Seyler's** aforementioned infinite wrap and what **Wyatt's** subject dons: a thick, heavily studded leather wrist band) makes these two powerful personalities compelling and demanding of an explanation. Yet, what truly bonds these two together is the almost weightless fluidity of the main compositional thrust that divides the visual plane.



Howard Gross  
*Assimilating* (2012)  
scratchboard drawing  
5 X 7 inches

**Howard Gross** and **Victor Matthews** employ complex patterning and interlocking linear movement to express their buoyant visions. **Gross** turns looping lines and floating forms into concrete elements that expand geometrically, and in multiple dimensions. What is most curious is the way in which he suggests elusive foci that change from moment to moment, while maintaining a distinct and alluring compositional baseline.



Victor Matthews  
*A Winter Mountain (detail)* (2014)  
acrylic and oil pencil on canvas  
32 X 90 inches

**Matthews** takes us on a hectic journey as well, only here, we see a more personal, even diaristic transition that builds like the Tower of Babel. And yet, as time flows and locations and events develop we see a side of city life that is energetic and bold, and passion that is vibrant and whole.





John J. Richardson  
*Case Study No. 28* (2013)  
 wood rubber paint  
 16 X 41 X 41 inches

The art of conceptual sculptors **John J. Richardson** and **Arcady Kotler**, who both share the medium rubber, challenge the viewer to rethink the ways in which they perceive the most basic aspects of recognition and reality. They question functionality and purpose, leaving us with a better understanding of the links between the conscious and the subconscious mind. **Richardson's** iconography is more puzzling. He presents us with a narrative that can take a multitude of turns, depending most on what we literally and figuratively bring to the table.

Arcady Kotler  
*Cube* (2012)  
 rubber tires  
 27 X 27 X 27 inches



**Kotler** re-presents references to common objects and makes them into something markedly different by completely removing the original function. The questions arise when one considers the proposed purpose of this new object as we are already prompted to think in terms of daily use.



All images courtesy of the artist.

causey  
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29 Orchard Street  
New York, NY 10002

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