

## ***Making and Marking the In-Between***

By Arlo Burness

*Thresholds and Inventories* investigates the moments, objects, and spaces of the in-between and the personal, asking the audience to explore their own personal inventories of identities, memories, places, and spaces. The exhibition showcases the multi-media works of MFA candidates Rylee Rumble, Sam Wagter, Alyssa Sweeney, and Masha Kouznetsova as they explore the interlockings of our personal inventories and the thresholds that lay beyond them.

As you enter the exhibition, Rumble's abstract expressionist colour studies begin to fill the space. Her large-scale paintings depict singular vibrant colours, bright orange, a royal blue, light beige, yellow, and one two-toned white and orange piece. Attached to each canvas is a prescription informational sticker, which gives each piece a new depth of meaning through a zoomed in view of one singular aspect of the physical pills – the colour. In placing the importance on the colour of each pill, the paintings offer a permanent place of the medication in Rumble's life. The typically monotonous, benign, and in flux objects of everyday life are transported by the strokes and hues that are brightened in the exhibition lighting and offer a level of autonomy and identity to the pieces, and in turn, the medication itself. The pieces serve as a physical and permanent reminder of these everyday items in Rumble's life as at some point they will cease to exist. Rumble investigates how these ideas relate to memory with *i dream each night with you in my arms*, consisting of several smaller canvases draped in pastel-coloured cheesecloth, that hang as if they are the remaining parts of a mosaic. The work represents physical glimpses into a childhood, showing the colours of a childhood blanket. It serves as a reminder of moments we have as children – the blankets, teddy bears, and toys that while long

gone, remain the key reminders of innocence. In such a subtle setting, Rumble eloquently forges forgotten memories back into a physical existence, capturing the emotions and tensions that are wrapped in conversations around mental health and memory.

In the back corner of the exhibition, Wagter's video animation *Configuration = 'Debug'* is a striking monument. It contains a looping animation of neon pink tubes and circles that slither around warped, bloated clay-like faces and a computer monitor, which twitch rapidly on screen. Like the tubes, the end and beginning of the animation weave together in a never-ending, cyclical loop, allowing the shapes to ebb and flow endlessly along the walls. The animation plays alongside an eery echoing soundtrack that leaves the viewer feeling as if they are floating in space. The piece itself sits at its own threshold, projected onto the corner of the farthest exhibition walls, distorting at the in-between, and at a connection point. As the tubes travel between the two walls, an additional glitch occurs, accentuating the 'errors' Wagter highlights.

Taking inspiration from Legacy Russell's *Glitch Feminism*, the spasms and glitches that occur in this animation examine queerness and gender, particularly, the undefined in-between spaces of binaries. What once was seen as errors, the glitches now perform a physical identification of the 'other.' Wagter brilliantly weaves the unrecognized spaces of queerness and gender as shown in these glitches, alongside the heteronormativity and cisnormativity of the fluid and natural movement of the tubes. Their movements are mesmerizing, as they intercept and shadow the other forms, but the viewer's gaze is constantly tugged back to the glitches, which demand to be recognized. The daunting video looms in the corner, following the audience as they walk through the exhibition, asking them to partake in their own examination of queerness and identity.

The act of archiving and detailing are taken in magnitude in Sweeney's photography, as she displays abandoned, obscured, and forgotten industrial buildings in positioned vivid contrast to the dark night sky. Ladders, windows, pipes, and walls are illuminated by the buildings' lighting, while other less-lit areas are swallowed by the darkness. Sweeney's photography depicts the buildings through their demand to be recognized and remembered when otherwise typically ignored. The suffocating dark of the night in contrast with the bright lights of the buildings suggest hidden complexities that lurk just past the grasp of the viewer. They disturb the familiar and disrupt the obscure. Particularly vivid in *20:25:50*, a streetlamp offers a tent-like stream of light outside an indistinct building. At the end of the light's reach, the building quickly dissipates into the darkness, asking questions of the possibilities that exist beyond the threshold of light and dark, distorting the building into an eerie state.

Many of Sweeney's smaller pieces highlight the details of her centerpiece photograph, *02:18:35*. The photograph covers a large section of the exhibition wall, shrinking the other pieces around it. It showcases a multi-story industrial building, extravagantly sparkling. The darkness hides its details, and it is unclear what its purpose is, but its magnitude and elegance is the focal point of the piece. It has been forgotten. But it has been found. Sweeney effortlessly revives these discarded spaces, offering a place for contemplation of the industrialization and immensity of our cities, and the potential life and light they hold.

Tucked away in the off-shooting corner of the exhibition lies Kouznetsova's seven works. Questions of movement, fluctuation, and the space between being and unbeing, place and no-placeness, and silence and sound riddle Kouznetsova's works. Her first work *palindromes* shows two mirrors facing each other at a 45 degree angle, with paper, rocks, and steel brackets intricately placed on the flat mirror, with a lamp shining upon them. The tilted mirror reflects

these images, offering new captivations of the objects as the audience moves around the piece. The light, the shadows, and the audience's perception all come together in Kouznetsova's play with place and continuity, as the image of the objects on the mirrored surface transform and reveal, but ultimately the object itself remains stagnant.

There is an additional sense of impermanence in Kouznetsova's work, as her pieces are site-specific, and the materials discarded or re-used to meet the constraints and opportunities of new spaces. Similarly, the materials themselves are delicate. Translucent gampi paper in *unsorted words / palindrome key* dances against the wall as the vent above blows cool air past. The radio used in *atomic clock* is precisely set in both physical space and on its specific channel to air its universal ticking time. All of this is set against the permanency and continuity of what it projects – palindromes that constantly loop back on themselves, the measure of time produced through the atomic clock, and waded with the changes that the exhibit itself places on the works, as they are surrounded by large windows and encourage the audience's engagement with them. Kouznetsova's work is a personalized and intimate reflection on our relationships with place, time, and circularity, and the spaces and entanglements within them.

Rumble, Wagter, Sweeney, and Kouznetsova all seek to reveal and restore the personal inventories that each of us keep, whether they exist within our identities, or as memories and objects outside of ourselves. Their works unearth the moments that exist at the edge of our inventories, the thresholds that demand our attention and interrogation to signal to the point of departure between the familiar and unknown.