

# Mount Pleasant Community Art Screen

ELISABETH BELLIVEAU

CURATED BY EMMY LEE WALL WITH CHELSEA YUILL  
CAPTURE PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL

APRIL 2020

## A Vase with Pale Roses (Animations on Still Life)

INTERSECTION OF BROADWAY AND KINGSWAY ON THE EAST SIDE  
OF THE INDEPENDENT BUILDING, VANCOUVER  
SCREEN HOURS: SU–TH: 9 AM–9:30 PM; FR&SA: 9 AM–10:30 PM

PRESENTED BY CAPTURE PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL IN  
PARTNERSHIP WITH GRUNT GALLERY, ORGANIZERS OF THE  
MOUNT PLEASANT COMMUNITY ART SCREEN



Elisabeth Belliveau, *Still life with fallen fruit*, 2019, time lapse and stop-motion animation video, 5:51. Made by Elisabeth Belliveau at Studio Kura (Itoshima) and Youkobo Art Projects (Tokyo). Courtesy of the artist.

TEXT BY CHELSEA YUILL  
CAPTURE PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL

As a self-taught animator, Elisabeth Belliveau explores contemporary life through stop-motion animation and sculpture. For this year's Festival, Belliveau presents four works on grunt gallery's Mount Pleasant Community Art Screen: *Still life with fallen fruit* (2019), *Troisieme* (2017), *Izanami* (2017), and *Ballroom* (2016). Through movement and digital technology, Belliveau creates a stage to capture the life of objects that reference the Western canon, hierarchies, value, labour, and interdisciplinarity from a feminist material perspective. Teetering between the artificial and natural, her works consider what image-making is and can be while posing the question, "What are the politics involved when things come to the table?"

Originally from Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Belliveau is currently based in Treaty 6 Territory ᓃᐅᓄᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐ Amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton, AB) where she teaches at MacEwan University. Belliveau completed a BFA with Honours at the Alberta University of the Arts, and an MFA in Studio Arts at Concordia University. She has completed several international residencies and has recently exhibited at Momenta Biennale, Montreal (2019), and at The Embassy of Canada Prince Takamado Gallery, Tokyo (2020). In the fall, she will be presenting new work for the Alberta Biennial.

**CHELSEA YUILL**

How did you begin creating stop-motion animation?

**ELISABETH BELLIVEAU**

After my undergrad—being a young artist, broke and doing residencies—I needed to find a way of having a sculptural practice that was mobile and inexpensive. A friend of mine snuck me into Quick Draw animation in Calgary and it just clicked. I thought "this is a way I can work where I can bring together, writing, time, and sculptural worlds through animation."

**CY**

What is your process when collecting materials and how do you actualize these moments of transformation where objects warp, morph, and become hybrids?

**EB**

Most of the objects I choose are based in an experience of place or time. They're partly biographical and partly what's at hand that I can use to quote artists, historical paintings, or poetry. Lately, I think a lot about women's stories and women in art history, painters like Clara Peeters and Rachel Ruysch, who made their mark by inserting themselves into the Western canon through still life. With Peeters, she often painted her portrait into the reflections of household objects like cutlery and glass vessels. Since painters who were

women were limited to "low genres" such as still life, I was impressed with their subversion in this genre—what seems mundane hints to a narrative charged with meaning.

I had the privilege of attending art residencies in Japan, where I saw Kabuki theatre, which has also been a major influence in the way that costumes and environments seamlessly transform right before your eyes.

I was staging a lot of time-lapses that mixed organic and non-organic forms and I kept thinking about the moments in-between that are hard to catch because they're invisible in human time. I started 3D printing organic materials, excerpting them in and out between the digital and material world to make visible that transformation. Now, I'm exploring lenticular printing and hope to use virtual reality in the future.

**CY**

A term you've coined to describe the conceptual, material, and technological elements of your practice is the "digital erratic." Could you share a bit more about this term?

**EB**

The digital erratic comes from thinking about excerpting objects in and out of 3D space—from the digital to the material and the glitches or things that don't translate. Years ago, I visited a glacial erratic in Okotoks, Alberta known as "Big Rock." It's a giant rock that was left behind when a glacier passed through. This rock bears a story of time and place yet is completely out of sync with its surroundings, a kind of glitch. I think of digital erratics similarly, as something that falls out, is left behind, or is out of place. "Digital" can be defined as relating to fingers, or to data and technology and "Erratic" is to deviate, to be inconsistent.

**CY**

There's a circular rhythm to your work, sometimes looping between decay and life. Can you speak to the symbolism of it?

**EB**

The work I've been making for the past few years is in constant dialogue with the writings of Clarice Lispector (1920–77), a Brazilian novelist. The way she writes about inner lives and cycles resonates, as she thinks about time in a geological, cosmic, slow, and sometimes non-human way. The title of my forthcoming show this May in Toronto at Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography is *Alone in the House*, a line from Lispector's last work *A Breath of Life*, where the character Angela desires to write a novel about the world of things.