Welcome to the premier issue of the JAKE JOURNAL, an infomercial disguised as a peer-reviewed scholarly periodical promoting the hazards of the Jacob Lawrence Gallery and other choice morsels on fleek at the School of Art + Art History + Design of the University of Washington. Savvy readers will see right through the thin muslin of academic habiliment implied by our masthead, easily recognizing by our second issue that the JOURNAL might just be a press release or newsletter pulled at four pins by tailors to the Emperor. But as hastily basted as Issue No. 0 may be, the stitches are holding an easily repeatable pattern—à la mode yet timeless—together, and the cloth is actually a fine weave of ideas and activities within the School.

The JOURNAL will be issued for each new exhibition at the Gallery and feature all of those curatorially-pertinent details. In addition, it will contain profiles on our faculty, interviews with students, scholarly articles, exhibition practice tips and how-to’s, and a calendar of must-dos. Issue No. 0—our fall line—previews Tad Hirch’s polymathic exhibition; asks five new faculty members The Same Three Questions™; conducts a bilingual Ariadnean interview with second-year MFA candidate Ellen Xu; conveys crackerjack spackling lessons from yours truly; and helps you pencil-in your dance card for October.

I would like to thank the School’s intrepid Director Jamie Walker for the JOURNAL’s imprimatur, and the Jacob Lawrence Gallery Advisory Committee for their sage counsel. Special recognition must go to the Gallery Assistants past and present who worked on the JOURNAL and completely pinked the job: Founding Designer Justen Waterhouse (BFA, Painting + Drawing, 2015) took my “rock of eye” notions of a publication and cut our first patterns; Nadia Ahmed (BA, Art History, 2018) meticulously hand-stitched Issue No. 0 into being; and Jueqian ‘Ripple’ Fang (BFA, Photomedia, 2014) and Joanna Lee (BA, Interdisciplinary Visual Arts, 2016) provided critical feedback to our designs and content when they weren’t overachieving in creating the Gallery’s first website.

It is an exciting time at the University of Washington School of Art + Art History + Design, and the JOURNAL is the Gallery’s attempt to help articulate and promote just that. I’m honored to be a part of it, and as the first Director of the Jacob Lawrence Gallery, I proceed with Jake’s admirable art practice and legacy as an educator and agent for change in mind.

Scott Lawrimore
Director, Jacob Lawrence Gallery

ROCK OF EYE FROM
THE DIRECTOR

Stately, impeccably-dressed Jacob Lawrence came from the Art Building stairhead, cutting a commanding swath and bearing a palette on which a brush and knife lay crossed.

—Former student
EXHIBITION:
TAD HIRSCH
CONTENTIOUS PRODUCTS
Contentious Products features two new works that examine contemporary gun culture in the United States created with the support of the University of Washington’s Simpson Center for the Humanities and the National Foundation of the Humanities. *A Well-Regulated Militia* (2015) explores representations of assault rifles and their owners in social media. Upon entering the gallery, visitors encounter a large-scale, multi-colored mosaic projected across the far wall. Upon closer inspection, she discovers that the mosaic is comprised of thousands of images of people posing with AR-15 semi-automatic rifles taken from social media postings. In front of the projection, a joystick is mounted on a plinth reminiscent of an indoor shooting range firing-point. With this controller, the viewer navigates video-game style, panning and zooming through the collection of strangely compelling and occasionally disturbing images of adults, children, and sometimes, animals, posing with what the New York Times has called “the most wanted gun in America.”

To create this work, Hirsch wrote custom software that collected nearly 90,000 assault-rifle-related images from Instagram, a popular image-sharing service. Using face detection algorithms, the software extracted a subset of 15,000 images for inclusion in the piece. Finally, machine vision algorithms were used to arrange the images by visual similarity, creating a striking composition of bold, abstract color.

The resulting mosaic provides a rare and unsettling portrait of enthusiasts for one of America’s most controversial products. With approximately eight million in circulation, the AR15 is the most popular rifle in America, despite its limited utility for either hunting or personal protection. Perusing these images raises challenging and disturbing questions about relationships between people, weapons, culture, and regulation.
The serene, contemplative space of the gallery is occasionally and violently disrupted by the sounds of gunfire, produced by the companion piece The Report Report (Seattle City Bang Bang) (2015). This work is based on custom software created by Hirsch that monitors calls to Seattle’s emergency 911 service. Reports of gunfire are echoed by sounds of gunshot played in the gallery. At the same time, a spool of paper containing details of the gunfire incident emerges through a hole in the gallery wall, reminiscent of a grocery receipt printer.

The Report Report (Seattle City Bang Bang) is also a response to the recent proliferation of “crime maps” enabled by the rise of the “open government” movement that provides public access to official datasets. For Hirsch, crime maps—particularly when employed by real estate and law enforcement officials—have a disturbing tendency to reinforce social and economic segregation while simultaneously absolving citywide complicity in its creation. By downplaying the geographic component, the work recasts gun violence as a shared, citywide concern.
The show also features video documentation of several interventionist works taken from Hirsch’s fifteen-year career working at the nexus of design and social change.

Several of these pieces were created by The Institute for Applied Autonomy, an arts/technology/activism collective that Hirsch founded in 1998. Contestational Robotics included several works that explored the subversive potential of automation technologies to deface property, avoid surveillance cameras and otherwise advance the interests of artists, activists, and juvenile delinquents. Although more than a decade has passed since these works were first created, they remain highly relevant and continue to be exhibited at museums and galleries around the world. TXTmob, another Institute for Applied Autonomy project that Hirsch created to enable street protesters to coordinate action and monitor police activity, became an important milestone in the development the mobile phone-enabled, widely decentralized mass mobilizations that have rocked cities around the world in recent years. TXTmob is widely acknowledged as the direct predecessor to Twitter.
Pivot, a recent work created with students at the University of Washington, brings Hirsch’s smart-yet-subversive sensibilities to bear on the problem of human trafficking. Designed through a collaboration with the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN), Pivot provides a line of communication between human rights advocates and trafficked persons by secreting anti-trafficking information inside ordinary-looking feminine hygiene products which are distributed by healthcare professionals and advocacy workers. This project has won several distinguished design awards, and is currently in use by anti-human trafficking organizations across the United States.
Prior to joining UW, Hirsch was Senior Research Scientist and Manager with Intel Labs. He has also worked with Motorola's Advanced Concepts Group and the Interaction Design Studio at Carnegie Mellon University, and has several years experience in the nonprofit sector. Hirsch was a member of the Rhode Island School of Design's Digital Media faculty from 2006-2008, and has taught courses in art, design, and engineering at Carnegie Mellon University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Oregon. Hirsch is also founding member of the Institute for Applied Autonomy, an art/technology/activism collective that has been operating since 1998. Hirsch's work has been included in festivals and exhibited in museums and galleries throughout Europe and America including the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, Ars Electronica, The New Museum, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, MassMoca, and The Frye Art Museum. He has been the recipient of several prestigious awards and commissions including an Award of Distinction at Prix Ars Electronica 2000 and Rhizome Net Art Commissions in 2002 and 2006.
Ellen: 我和Anna一起做 kaleidoscope 为我们的行为表演。

Justen: [Google 查 Robert Morris on her laptop]

Ellen: 我们的 works 也 uses 鏡子 as 材料。已經沒有 surprise 了，不管你用著什麼肯定 會著到歷史上之前使用者的藝術家。

Justen: 感覺這是個現代的問題。你能想出来的 作品已經有人做了。Google一查就找得到，我講過，現代藝術主要是判斷，選擇與 決定。* **判斷什麼作品值創作，那個故事值得。

Ellen: 這就是為什麼我們對自己的感受、其他人已經解釋太好了，但你哪到什麼價值吧。沒人能替你代表。你什麼跟你不一樣，是你 本身。這的地方只是有規則。

Justen: 那你如何保持方向感?

Ellen: 如果沒有規則你為什麼要有方向感？你想去哪兒？

Justen: 你不覺得方向與價值感有關嗎？說說你自 己的經驗。我印象是只從你來到學校你的 作品發現了很大的變化。

Ellen: 我來到美國之前學的是水彩, 油畫, 雕塑, 比較傳統。來到西雅圖，新來到這部門, 我不知道我要做什麼, 但肯定不是來拍照片 的。虽然我在 Photomedia, 但我更在乎新 貌的知識对我创作思路的改变, 而不仅仅是丰 富我的作品形式。

Justen: [笑]

Ellen: 我當時想往概念轉只是沒有轉的太明白。當時感覺我一切周圍變的太快了，我的生活 一下就變了，沒辦法抱住。我最初的作品一 直在探索如何凝固時間。墨水是中國最傳統 的，石膏是屬於西方的材料，墨水滴到水裡， 一瞬間散開著，但石膏的吸收把它固定住。 像照片一下能看到一時的時刻。不涉及 認識到一張 "完美的照片"。

* Chinglish – a mixture of English and Chinese – transliterated here, so that you may imagine how the whole conversation sounded.

Let us say art is in locomotion, in pursuit of something. Let us suggest that art has been in pursuit of the ideal, the better, Utopia, the unifying—beginning with Plato’s forms, winding through Kandinsky’s spirituality, then most recently progressed by Duchamp’s rejection of “retinal art.” In the twentieth century, Marcel Duchamp compared this locomotion to moves on a chessboard, each assertion both an answer and a清洁 end to its precursors. But art in the twenty-first century is less sure of itself, suggests contemporary artist Tino Seghal. In our lifetime, art does not assert, instead it dialogues with questions.

If so, whose voices do we allow to take part in this dialogue? And what is the lingua franca?

Born and raised in Inner Mongolia, China, Ellen Xu is a second-year Photomedia graduate student whose young practice has spanned representational oil painting to performance art. One of 7,000 international students transplanted to the University, Ellen offers a viewpoint that must understand itself as looking in from the outside.

In this bilingual interview by two transplants, Ellen lends her questions and her language to the dialogue.
Ellen Xu and Neal Fryett

I Have No Desires, 2015
Durational performance, wooden structure, nail polish

Photo: Hami Bahadori

2014
Plaster and sumi ink

2015
Painted studio, mirror, tongue
work. The way these people express themselves is different here. I wanted to understand why this difference. I have a lot of things to say, I often feel constrained.

J: Do you bring up this problem during crits?

E: All the time. I noticed how much people here valued the concept of one's work and being able to explain it. Having to communicate in English makes me examine my reasoning. And beyond that, there are other interesting issues. If I manage to explain my work to you, perhaps my idea is too simple. Also, why did I have to produce the work if I could explain it?

J: [laughs] Is explaining work the cheapest way to make art? I could explain it?

E: People need critiques. It's so useful. But when your work is complex, total matches up with what you produce, one-to-one ratio – there is a danger. Language splits, and goes this way or that, when your meaning is actually just down the middle.

J: Coming from a culture that has to understand things in a very specific way, I have problems with language and speech. Whichever language you use, you still need the work. The way these people express themselves is different here. I wanted to understand why this is different.

E: This is a problem, a big problem. But I don't spend time overthinking it. If an aspect of an idea makes sense to me, I'll just go ahead and make the work. I need to do something. It's kind of like my job. I try to communicate my ideas through the work itself, as exactly as I can show it. But if I haven't a solution to the question I'm working out, I'll just show the work anyways. I'm using my work to show my question.

J: Work becomes more than just expressing something, then. That's like Communism.

J: That's like Communism. Something, then. That's like Communion.

E: I think that's more your stance. What I like very best is people's reaction to the work, not whether or not they like it. I like it best when they ask me questions, because it will be from an angle I've never thought of before. Even seeing what they find boring. The reaction a merging, an intersection – like lighting fireworks. Pew pew!

J: A chemical reaction. Regardless if you can pin down an answer to your questions.

E: How clearly my audience can read my work, I don't know. My work is a product of reactions and questions. All my problems and questions originate from me. Before I came here I had questions, I got here and had more questions, and through the process of discovery, I found even bigger questions. I've gone from trying to solve my questions to finding questions. As it is with my identity.

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J: I don't know... there are no answers. But in having no answers, in this process of questioning, that is your sense of direction.
THE SAME THREE QUESTIONS

AN INTRODUCTION TO NEW FACULTY
What’s your praxis?

I specialize in forms of art that are ephemeral and time-based, specifically performance, and audience participation. In other words, I’m interested in types of art that disappear, and in the relationship between the artwork-as-process and the traces that it leaves behind, such as photographs, objects, and even memories. Another important question that drives my work is how artists engage politically and socially with the world around them.

What’s your pedagogy?

In the classroom, I love hearing from students about their reactions to artwork. I’m constantly looking for ways to engage students in dialogue with me and with each other. Contemporary art is unbelievably rich in surprise and variation, so there’s something there that can spark the curiosity of every student. Share with me what interests you, and there’s sure to be contemporary artwork that speaks to that.

What’s on your horizon?

Currently, I’m wrapping up a book project that addresses audience participation in politically engaged art in New York, in the 1990s. My next major project focuses on bohemian public art in Zagreb, in the former Yugoslavia, in the 1970s. I’ve been in the process of learning Croatian for that project for the past four years, and am excited for my next research trip to Zagreb.
What’s your praxis?

I suppose that has evolved with experience. Like many designers, early in my career I was extremely ‘solution’ focused and spent the majority of my time and effort on the execution of design. Over time this has transitioned into a more ‘problem’ focused approach where I find myself spending a significant portion of research time on the context of a problem and reframing this to provide potential solutions. What that has meant from a practical standpoint is that I often embrace all the aspects of a project from user research and strategy to visualization and prototyping.

What’s your pedagogy?

My approach to education stems from my approach to practice and is grounded in problem framing. That being said, design and design education is more than simply a theoretical endeavor but it is also marked by action. I believe the role of the educator is to not only foster a way of thinking but also to provide the skills to take those thoughts from concept to reality. No program can completely prepare a student with every potential skill that may be required of them in the diverse professional setting but the goal of an institution should be to both adapt to the needs of the practice as well as inform new ways of practicing.

What’s on your horizon?

My general research concentration is in the area of ‘product semantics’ which can cover a range of product domains. In recent years, this has focused on digital or computational objects resulting in projects that explore the Internet of Things, wearable computing, and situated technology in the built environment. In each case, this work has been grounded in the relationship between the user and the physical objects they interact with. My intent is to continue this work while building new research collaborations both on and off campus.
What's your praxis?

How do I approach my creative life and craft?...well, first and foremost, by trusting my anima intuition and letting it be a companion voice and guide. The rational, engineering mind is not always satisfied with this partnership, and honestly the challenging thing for me in life has been gently balancing the analytical and intuitive components of my creative self. I do not draw such a hard line between design and other creative arts, or between the sciences and the arts; we need designers, creators and thinkers that can inhabit multiple mental spaces.

What's your pedagogy?

Supporting varied learning styles and levels of expertise in the classroom, ensuring students receive a healthy mixture between theoretical knowledge and commercial best practices, bringing humor and positive energy, being present, and helping creators approach problems from a macro to micro perspective. This final one is important—often designers jump directly into the construction of a thing (the micro) with design, wireframes or code without first completing adequate exploration or research of the broader themes. Systems thinking, Bauhaus art and design lecture foundations, philosophy, psychology, Socratic ethics are all topics I like to explore...

What's on your horizon?

I'm consulting on socially motivated tech endeavors, illustrating and drawing, starting another music project. I've started writing poems again, which feels good. Thinking about humor as a creative tool. Focusing more and more pointedly on how design can help shape and craft society in a healthy direction through impactful digital and analog communities. We are creating things that have a central, profound, and long-term place in the human world/universal ecology; the earth needs to be thought of delicately in terms of the systems and products that are best for its health. Very excited to be here teaching and creating at the UW.
What’s your praxis?

I want to start an informal gathering called ‘G.L.U.E.’ The concept is that the spaces between people, ideas and things are often too wide. For example at a large University, the need to individualize departments (art, sociology, geography etc.) creates a distance between arenas that make it more difficult to see how subjects are related. I hope to bring together people who don’t typically sit next to each other by organizing events that don’t fit under normal departmental headings. This idea underlies much of my practice. I have not decided what G.L.U.E. stands for yet and am looking for suggestions. Please send your thoughts to g.l.u.e.ideas@gmail.com

What’s your pedagogy?

To “learn by heart,” is to learn something so well that one can do it without thinking. The origin of the phrase comes from the ancient Greeks mistakenly believing that the intellect was seated in one of the most noticeable organs of the body, the heart. It is wonderfully poetic that this mistake stayed with us. A frequent goal of my classes is to see what the mistake can teach us.

What’s on your horizon?

I am thankful for your choice of the word ‘horizon’. It makes me imagine all of the new hires in the Art Department standing on the edge of the Pacific Ocean (this new chapter we’re embarking on), looking as far as we can see. Let’s do this! Let’s make a date of it (this is an actual invitation). Back to your question, I am extending some research into the history of science started with Futurefarmers, a collective that I work with. This line of thought that started with Variation on Powers of Ten and then moved to For Want of a Nail. This will begin our inquiry at the Carpenter Center. Amy Franceschini and I are starting a new project that will involve navigating through the dusty archives of Harvard’s Collection of Historic Scientific Instruments.
Lessons in Spackling
With Director Scott Lawrimore*

MANTRA: To be proud of your walls don’t let your spackle sit proud on your walls.

STEP 1:
To keep track of all holes needing repairing throughout the process, identify and mark every blemish with painter’s tape.

STEP 2:
Counterintuitively, make the hole bigger using the butt-end of your spackling knife. Rotate the knife in the hole to make a small dimple in the wall making sure nothing sits proud.

STEP 3:
Apply spackle generously and artfully, wiping all excess around the hole away while leaving a square of spackle that sits proud of the wall and allow to dry.

The Jake is not sponsored by this product, but we like to use spackle that goes on pink and turns white when dry.

STEP 4:
Using sandpaper, drywall pads, or a dampened Scotchbright** pad, gently sand your proud square away in a circular motion to the point where the margins disappear and your hole is flush with wall plane. Inspect with “Mantra” in mind.

STEP 5:
Paint.

Never use a foam or bristle brush. Always roll. You want the subtle texture of the paint roller to blend with the rest of the wall.

STEP 6:
Rejoice and/or repeat steps 3-5 if you still have a visible depression (literally and figuratively).

*Available for hire. Takes power bars as payment.

**Scotchbright does not endorse the Jake (yet). This wet-sanding technique creates no dust.
Faculty Lecture: Tad Hirsch, Interaction Design

Thursday, Oct. 1, 2015, 6 – 7:15 p.m.
Henry Art Gallery and Allen Center for The Visual Arts
Tad Hirsch, Assistant Professor of Interaction Design, gives a presentation about his research and design practice as part of his tenure and promotion process. A reception in the Jacob Lawrence Gallery where his exhibition Contentious Products is on view will follow the lecture.

Jacob Lawrence Gallery Visiting Artist Lecture: Amelia Saul

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7pm
Art Building, Room 003
Amelia Saul, a video artist and writer based in New York, will be the Visiting Artist in Residence at the Gallery, working with students on the narration and foley for a new film, the results of which to be shown as part of an exhibition at the School at a later date. Her films have been described by Residency Unlimited as being, “located in the overlapping territories of theater, performance art and film. She is interested in the unique type of portraiture and mimesis that each mode offers.”
The Renaissance Elsewhere: Alexander Nagel

Thurs. October 15, 2015; 7:30 p.m.
Kane Hall, Room 120
4069 Spokane Lane
Seattle, WA 98105

Italian Renaissance art during the era of Giotto, da Fabriano, Filarete, and Mantegna is characterized by the use of new painting techniques, the development of perspective, and a desire to depict newly discovered lands and civilizations. Join us as Alexander Nagel explains how these artists and others were able to take viewers on a world voyage previously unimaginable.

Faculty Lecture: Dominic Muren, Division of Design

Friday, Oct. 16, 2015, 6 – 7:15 p.m.
Henry Art Gallery and Allen Center for The Visual Arts

Dominic Muren, Lecturer in the Division of Design, gives a presentation about his teaching as part of his promotion process entitled, All Together Now: Preparing Designers for a Dynamic World and addressing how the process of making new products is evolving—designers work in a world with a changing climate, diminishing fossil fuels, and an evolving global economy. Muren’s teaching and research focuses on preparing designers of the future to respond positively to these challenges.

Upcoming Exhibition: SHEDDING & SHREDDING

Wednesday, October 21 – Saturday, November 14, 2015
(Opening reception: Tuesday, Oct. 20, 5-8pm)

Second-year MFA candidates from three School of Art + Art History + Design programs (Photomedia, 3D4M, and Painting+Drawing) present work from their first year of research. Artists from Photomedia are Ellen Xu, Paul Baughman, and Sarah Skwira. Artists from 3D4M are Ben Gale Schreck and Anna Mlasowsky. Artists from Painting + Drawing are Heather Nibert, Dustie Pierce, Ben Dunn, Bryan Robertson and Christie DeNizio.
Mission?

The Jacob Lawrence Gallery is an inspiring space for exhibitions, a vital center for social interaction and dialog about art, art history, and design, and a critical para-educational resource for students and faculty. The Gallery is also a site of knowledge production dedicated to enhancing the intellectual life on campus by advancing discourses on contemporary exhibition and curatorial practice with its ambitious program of lectures, performances, screenings, discussions, and exhibitions, and always testing art’s capacity to challenge, teach and engage.

The Gallery, also known as “The Jake,” is named after one of the School’s most renowned faculty members, Jacob Lawrence, who taught here from 1970-1980, and who served as Professor Emeritus until his death in 2000. As an artist, Jacob Lawrence never shied away from difficult societal issues; as a professor, Lawrence inspired that same approach in his students. The Gallery is the living legacy of Lawrence’s exemplary life and admirable practice. As such, it is a community cultural laboratory, a platform for presenting a variety of artistic viewpoints, and an agent for deploying experimental pedagogy intended to help prepare students to enter and contribute to the cultural milieu while also serving the community at large as a site for discovery, wonder and meaningful exchange.