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Beverly Buchanan
Untitled (Double Portrait of Artist with Frustula Sculpture) (n.d.)
Courtesy of Estate of Beverly Buchanan; Jane Bridges; and Brooklyn Museum, New York

Ann Greene Kelly
Untitled (trashed bed) (2016)
Courtesy of the Artist and Chapter, New York

Andrea Crespo
Intensifies (film still, 2016)
Courtesy of the Artist; Hester, New York; Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin and MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge (MA)

Beverly Buchanan

Brooklyn Museum / New York

A multi-channel video installation, newly created for Beverly Buchanan's "Ruins and Rituals" (the most comprehensive exhibition to date of the work of the late artist, who died in 2015), documents four of seven earthworks produced by Buchanan in the American South between 1979 and 1986. Among them, *Marsh Ruins* (1981) — three unassuming masses of poured concrete coated in a surface layer of tabby — lies in the open salt marshes of Glynn County, Georgia. Common to sugar and cotton plantation buildings in the region, tabby is a material whose fabrication — a mixture of oyster shells and lime — is so arduous that its affordability depends on slave labor. The location of Buchanan's sculpture is also the subject of an 1878 poem by Confederate soldier and poet Sidney Lanier, "The Marshes of Glynn," and is just west of Igbo Landing, where in 1803 a group of enslaved Igbo people walked into the marsh, in mass suicide. Buchanan's sculptures foreground their own material histories, intimating that in the American afterlife of slavery and colonization, matter and environment are always at least proximate to racist violence. To this history, each of the artist's earthworks enacts a radical commemoration.

Among the video projections are examples of Buchanan's "Frustula" series: rough cubes of cast concrete, like overlaid bricks. A Guggenheim fellowship report catalogues the creation of *Marsh Ruins* in an adjacent gallery filled with archives and photographs, while a third room hosts miniature houses and shacks modeled after various vernacular architectures of the South.

A didactic text relates the story of the artist's first intervention into public space, when she placed a pile of stones outside a business that had recently reversed its racist hiring policies. Such incremental policy changes offer no accountability for the black lives they subject to poverty and institutionalized violence; in the place of reparations, Buchanan makes a small offering.

by Tess Edmonson

Ann Greene Kelly

Chapter / New York

Like a good ghost story, Ann Greene Kelly's exhibition "May Not Be Private" exudes otherworldly weariness. Though three of the four works — a stool, a chair, and a bed — provide literal places to rest, they present a narrative of ghostly, bodily purgatory.

Untitled (mannequin) (2016) is scarily direct. Wire lathe, Plexiglas, and random steel bars are embedded throughout the gummy resin of a female torso. Semitransparent, it is indestructibly reinforced, though it doesn't assuage the brutality of bricks that pummel and penetrate its surface. A sinister force is trying to destroy it.

Objects here appear like spectral interpretations of themselves. *Untitled (figure)* (2016) uses an overturned aluminum cast of a wastebasket as a plinth for a female figure carved from alabaster. The cast is crude, the figure cracked; both reveal the material tension that resists even straightforward creative processes, and Kelly presents these bastard products in the raw. Juxtaposed against the work's sleek concrete platform, the composition is ad hoc but stable. The figure lists to the side, attempting to resist its own erring.

Familiarity insinuates us into Kelly's tales. The aluminum wastebasket returns in *Untitled (bricked chair with drain)* (2016), this time emulating a toilet basin in a plastic lawn chair covered with Magic Sculpt bricks. To sit in the chair would mean accepting the clumsy, confining embrace of its accentuated arms. *Untitled (Trashed bed)* (2017) is a wonky miniature mattress that at first elicits curiosity. Subtle details — extra stitching and a slight tilt — cue us unsettlingly toward the bizarre but calculated effort to shrink an adult-sized mattress to childlike proportions. Kelly custom fitted a handmade drain into the mattress's center, specially embroidering a slot into which she has inserted a perforated steel plate as a headboard. The sculpture accumulates deliberate and chance gestures like a lifetime. Invoking a child's perspective, this mattress reflects our unsettling awareness when we cannot tell the difference between trait and pathology.

by Sam Korman

Andrea Crespo

List Visual Arts Center / Cambridge (MA)

Sitting in a plastic school chair watching the new semi-autobiographical animation *[intensifies]* (2016) by Andrea Crespo, I was reminded of those motion simulator rides that seat you in front of a screen only to jolt you out of your disembodied enjoyment by jostling you through space. Crespo puts you in the shoes of a boy named Alan as he contends with the ways in which his atypical embodiments work against the needs of the educational system and the expectations of his neuro-typical classmates. The film's understated soundtrack is the source of its drama; at one point an enveloping white light underscores a crisis point for the character. There are no figures, except for a cameo by Sonic the Hedgehog. What little movement occurs does so in the form of animated script. Most frames look out onto routine spaces like the classroom or the therapist's office while fragments of dialogue flash over the scene sometimes too quickly to read.

This commitment to stillness is reminiscent of true crime documentaries where old interviews (between the victim and the accused, for instance) play over an evocative but otherwise empty space as though we were eavesdropping on the past. This tactic gives the sense that the violent future is a foregone conclusion. The film embraces this mounting tension through the device of color coding like the post-9/11 Homeland Security Alert System and Kari Buren's 5-point scale. Meanwhile Alan, having found himself in an online community that alternately supports and trolls him, wonders how his own sense of marginalization compares to school shooters, terrorists, and both the victims and perpetrators of Nazi war crimes. The pencil drawings in the show, uncannily adolescent in their balance of simple outline and rich cultural detail, share the evidentiary quality of the film. In them we witness the violence and paranoia of early 2000s America seep into Alan's suburban psyche as he confronts his own pathologizing.

by Melissa Ragain