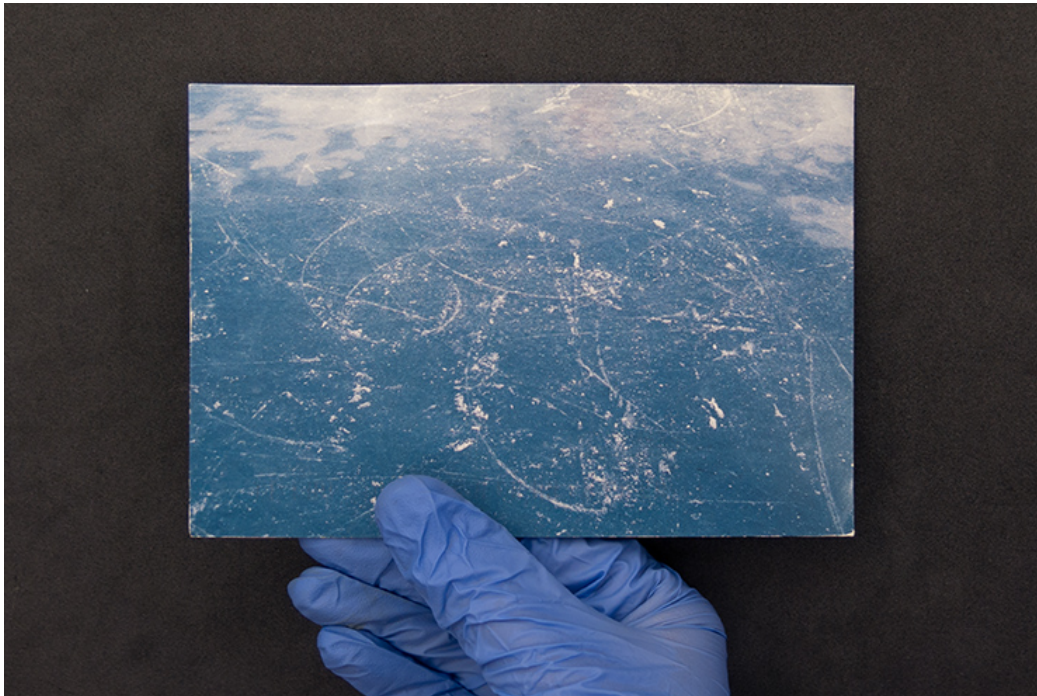


MIT List Visual Arts Center

PRESS RELEASE



MIT List Visual Arts Center presents List Projects 20: Becca Albee.

Becca Albee's first institutional solo presentation features an installation of new video and photographic work.

The exhibition engages two distinct sites of research and production—the archive and Brooklyn's Plumb Beach to reflect on deep and mortal time scales, as well as the enduring impact of a relationship frozen in memory

Cambridge, MA, October 28, 2019—The MIT List Visual Arts Center is pleased to announce *List Projects 20: Becca Albee*, the artist's first institutional solo presentation. Using photography and the moving image, Albee's work draws on an array of visual and printed sources, variously culled from personal archives, official repositories, and the public realm. Throughout, she employs strategies of re-photography, cropping, and overlays in an effort to interweave disparate narratives. Albee frequently shifts the context, content, and meaning of her source materials that include found photographs, film negatives, and other objects. Her exhibition at the List Center engages two distinct sites of research and production—the archive and Brooklyn's Plumb Beach—to reflect on deep and mortal time scales, as well as the enduring impact of a relationship frozen in memory.

The installation features new videos the artist filmed on late-spring nights in 2019 at Plumb Beach, where she observed and documented Atlantic horseshoe crabs spawning during the full and new moons. Initially volunteering to aid in population monitoring, Albee returned to film and photograph the arthropods, their surroundings, and the abstract markings they left behind. In her video recordings, horseshoe crabs glint purple and green under the glow of ultraviolet light that seems to recast the prehistoric species as extraterrestrial beings. Impressions made by the horseshoe crabs appear in a series of silver gelatin prints presented in artist's frames, each painted a different shade of blue. The colors reference the hue of the crabs' blood, which is prized in the medical industry for its ability to quickly detect bacterial endotoxins and form protective clots around them. This distinct property, and the blood's use in biomedicine, resonates with Albee's own experience of living with a blood clotting disorder. Reminiscent of Martian landscapes, her photographs from Plumb Beach document the abstract markings left by these so-called "living fossils" when spawning on the sand. Albee describes the beach as a site that is "vibrating with layers of movement—biological, social, sexual, tidal," all evocative of a set of interests that thread throughout her oeuvre.

The contrasting timescales of the beach—fleeting and recurring at once—find a surprising parallel in the archive, where so-called "ephemera" are conserved, at least theoretically, in perpetuity. A postcard announcing Albee's 1999 exhibition *Photographs on Ice* at the Hanes Art Center, Chapel Hill, bears her image of an outdoor ice rink freshly etched with the arcs of a skater's passage. The verso of the card reveals a note from Albee to the late artist Robert Blanchon; she had sent the invitation to him on the occasion of the show. The two met when Albee was a student and Blanchon a visiting professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 1998, just prior to his death a year later from AIDS-related complications at the age of 33. Albee recently re-encountered the card while immersing herself in Blanchon's archive at the Fales Special Collections & Archives at New York University. For the List Center exhibition, it is reproduced in an open edition and available as a takeaway artwork, attesting to their brief but impactful friendship and his lasting influence on her approach to making art. Blanchon's presence recurs throughout the exhibition: Albee's attentive photographs of select materials from his ephemera, artworks, and papers subtly suggest a continuation of their past conversations and connection. The material traces of memories and fleeting moments reverberate throughout the exhibition, bringing the seemingly incongruous sites of the beach and the archive into poetic proximity.

Becca Albee (b. United States) lives and works in Brooklyn. Her work has been presented in recent solo exhibitions at Situations, New York; Et al., San Francisco; and 356 Mission, Los Angeles. She has participated in group exhibitions at the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; CAM Raleigh, Raleigh, NC; and Art in General, Brooklyn, NY. Prior to her work as a visual artist, Albee was a member of Excuse 17, a punk band influential in the Pacific Northwest riot grrrl scene of the early 1990s. Albee is an Associate Professor of Photography at The City College of New York, CUNY. This work was supported by a MacDowell Colony Fellowship.

List Projects 20: Becca Albee is organized by Yuri Stone, independent curator with Selby Nimrod, assistant curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the List Center will present a screening of videos by Robert Blanchon selected from the Robert Blanchon Papers and Collection in the Special Collections of New York University (presented courtesy The Estate of Robert Blanchon). The screening will be accompanied by a discussion with Mary Ellen Carroll / MEC, studios—Conceptual Artist and Executor of the Robert Blanchon Estate and Becca Albee and takes place on January 24, 2020 from 1:00-3:30 PM in Bartos Theater.



Exhibitions at the List Center are made possible with the support of Fotene & Tom Coté, Audrey & James Foster, Idee German Schoenheimer, Joyce Linde, Cynthia & John Reed, and Terry & Rick Stone. In-kind media sponsorship provided by 90.9 WBUR. Additional funding for List Projects is also provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

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Image: Becca Albee, *Untitled (Postcard Side A: Robert Blanchon Papers, Fales Archive, 2:15pm EST, May 15, 2019)*, 2019, Courtesy: the artist, The Estate of Robert Blanchon, and NYU Special Collections.

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