

# The Mutable Archive

29 Feb — 18 Apr 2020 at the Bruno David Gallery in St Louis, United States

15 FEBRUARY 2020



The Mutable Archive. Courtesy of Bruno David

Bruno David is pleased to present *The Mutable Archive*, a video work by New York/St. Louis–based artist Patricia Olynyk. This will be Olynyk’s third exhibition with the gallery. *The Mutable Archive* is a multi-layered performance video project that interrogates the lives of those housed in a special archive split between two continents. Who speaks for those who are lost, particularly in the absence of verifiable archival material?

During two residencies: one as a Francis C. Wood Fellow at the College of Physicians and Mütter Museum in Philadelphia and one in Europe’s oldest asylum, the Narrenturm in Vienna, Austria, Olynyk photographed an inventory of human specimens collected by a 19th-century Viennese anatomist, Dr. Josef Hyrtl. Nine

commissioned writers, including Shimon Attie, Buzz Spector, Chelsea Knight, and Ellen K. Levy have each produced a speculative biography about a chosen subject in Hyrtl's collection. Each performed script, a 4K cinematic video, interrogates the mechanics of storytelling and the roles of assumption and subjectivity in science. Each vignette is edited into a richly textured video performance, which is projected sequentially.

The Mutable Archive prioritizes the relationship between each author/performer and their chosen subject while exposing how various narrative strategies can reveal the social and political challenges of the past and the present. Rather than follow conventional archival theory, commissioned writers – artists, musicians, historians, an opera singer, and a spiritual medium – bridge historically rich material and contemporary issues relating to identity politics, migration, racial profiling and gender bias, ultimately revealing the fictitious foundations of the human taxonomy itself.

Olynyk received her MFA degree with Distinction from the California College of the Arts and spent four years as a Monbusho Scholar and a Tokyu Foundation Research Scholar in Japan. She is the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions, including a Helmut S. Stern Fellowship at the Institute for the Humanities, University of Michigan and a Francis C. Wood Fellowship at the College of Physicians, Philadelphia. She has held residencies at UCLA's Design Media Arts Department; the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada; Villa Montalvo, California; and the Narrenturm institute and museum in Vienna. Her work has been featured at Palazzo Michiel in Venice, the Los Angeles International Biennial, The Brooklyn Museum, the Saitama Modern Art Museum in Japan, and Museo del Corso in Rome. Her solo exhibitions include: Sensing Terrains at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., Dark Skies at the Art I Sci Center Gallery at UCLA, and Transfigurations at Galeria Grafica Tokio, Tokyo, Japan. Other recent exhibitions include: Umwelt: Christine Davis, Patricia Olynyk and Meredith Tromble at the BioBAT Art Space, Brooklyn; Skeptical Inquirers at the Sidney Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, New York; Sleuthing the Mind at the Pratt Manhattan Gallery, and Ephemeral: Unraveling History at the Ruth S. Harley Gallery, Adelphi University, New York.

Olynyk is Chair of the Graduate School of Art at Washington University in St. Louis. She co-directs the Leonardo/ISAST NY LASER program in New York, which promotes cross-disciplinary exchange between artists, scientists, and scholars. Her writing is featured in publications that include Public Journal, the Routledge Companion to Biology in Art and Architecture, Technoetic Arts, and Leonardo Journal.



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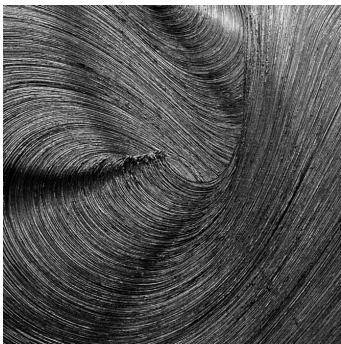
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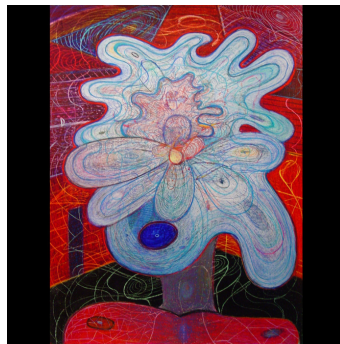


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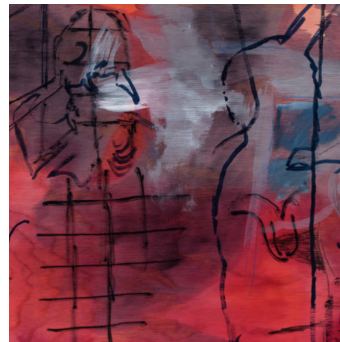
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