



Klimp_001 Image from Opening Reception, 2024, Artist in burlap dress, seated in front of artwork by Darcy Fraser Macdonald. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.

We Were Never Civilised

by

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WE WERE NEVER CIVILIZED

We were sold on the packaging.

Fed juicy ideals and glossy dreams, we gobbled it up.

We were told to dream big -- that hard work and perseverance would pay off.

Soaring optimism. Booming economies. Predictable weather.

Everything and everyone in their place.

We were given the tools, but not the controls.

It was all just a casing, designed to obscure the content within.

Equality is not a commodity in a civilized world.

Packaging

Packaging is about what we see, and what we don't see. What is hidden, and what is expressed. What we value and what we don't. My work revisits the ongoing art conversation, that of Form + Content, on a physical and metaphysical level, regarding the consumerist veils that shroud our daily existence. Unfolding discarded packaging and unpacking the content, I am left with a shell, a skin, a vessel. Upon closer observation, these husks glisten with the trappings of consumption - misguided and excessive. Questions arise as to what is the remaining Content, when the literal contents have been emptied from their container. The physical relic remaining is symbolically rife with content of its own. And moving past this empty remnant, can it still be prescribed the role of Form? Or rather, what are the unseen modalities at play here? What methodologies give shape and structure to the concepts that are inherently woven in.

The word '*what*' always comes into play when discussing form + content. What does '*what*' mean? What is '*what*'? What is an object? '*What*' itself is an object, possibly even a thing. It is an object with unknown identity and purpose. For what reason does it exist? By not declaring itself, it has an

enigmatic power because its existence has not yet been defined. It is autonomous, potentially lawless. Parameters need to be established. We want clarification. A commanding “What?” demands information. Upon discovering an alarming situation, one might say “What the hell?”! It is an evaluation of the surface of a scenario; a face-value assessment. How are we perceiving the package before us? The phrase “what is what?” tumbles us into an even deeper sense of confusion. All sense of order and rationality is absent. *What* is hungry for information... As a sentence, it is rather silly. So *what* is a package and how do we engage with it?

Packaging and Playing with

Playing with trash, which I have come to discover is exactly what packaging was always intended to be, is a way of ‘making-with’¹. When you engage with trash, sinking down to its level, connections are made. ‘Tentacular thinking’² spreads out, draws in and connects seemingly dormant objects together, enticing agency within them and among them. Donna Haraway defines symposium as a ‘making-with’ where “nothing makes itself: nothing is really autopoietic or self-organizing...(we are) never alone.”³ This is the realm where hybrids⁴ happen, where objects are bestowed the title of Thing⁵, where quasi-objects⁶ proliferates. The word ‘hybrid’ comes from the Greek word ‘hybris’, meaning outrage, and the resulting hybrids are “the fusion of two [seemingly] incompatible species”⁷. These

¹ Donna Haraway “Staying With the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene”. Haraway takes us on a journey where the world around us is vibrant and interconnected, everything acts upon everything.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Jane Bennett “Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things”. Bennett elevates objects to Things, asking us to rethink our relationship to unseen objects.

⁶ Bruno Latour “We Have Never Been Modern”. His quasi-objects bridge the gap between the natural and social sciences. He demonstrates how those two perspectives view objects and their limitations.

⁷ Nicolas Calas “Transfigurations, Art Critical Essays, On the Modern Period” p. __ Calas points out that historically the topic of hybrids caused strong emotive reactions.

mergings of objects bring with them other content, symbolism and meaning. The collisions and combinations of these can yield new hybrids, new monsters, new myths.

Packaging and Power

Language is an important part of how packaging functions. It is a way to grapple with an unwieldy thing, define it, give it purpose. As well, packaging has its own vernacular for us to interpret. Packaging often has been printed upon, but inherently conveys a deeper message, using a visual language akin to Chomsky's 'deep-structure.'⁸ It is a form of control. When the message is controlled, then so is the perspective. In this manner, packaging is about power. Language is power. It is all in the editing. Who decides what is shown and how it is shown. What is being sold, and who is buying it. Packaging is a by-product of our capitalist economy, aiding in its global dominance. Who is benefiting from the messages that saturate our trash? Who or what, wields this power, this control? Control is inequality. The ideal state of being civilized has little room for inequality. What does it mean to be civilized? And have we ever been civilized? Glossy packaged dreams and falsified premises have led us into a new age of serfdom in the western world. As Eduardo Galeano said "the economy is not democratic". There will be no revolution.

Two phrases come to mind pertaining to power and perception, which I wish to apply to the realm of packaging. "See what you believe" and "Seeing is believing". In terms of the latter, there is a package presented. A ready-made reality. Usually it is the creation of another, fabricated from and for their desires. They have their motives for creating it, and they would like you to believe in it too. Share their dreams, with your money, vote or support of course! There is an implied sense of time and action. That a person was originally a non-believer but has been swayed to now believe in what has been physically presented, and has become a believer. (A believer of *What?*). And where there is packaging,

⁸ Drawing parallels between Noam Chomsky's "deep-structure" found in language to the visual language of design.

there is content within. The person is accepting at ‘face-value’ what they are seeing (perceiving), often without questioning deeper. How many of us question the items that we consume daily? Or our daily routines that mimic what we see on television, which mirror our daily routines?... Everything reflects - often without reflection. Unquestioning faith. A person may feel they are in control of their desires and fate, that they choose to believe with good rational logic. But the content within can be anything, benign or malignant. Form is creating the content and that content is unknown and variable from person to person.

Packaging and Perception

The former phrase “See what you believe” is the flipside to “Seeing is believing”. It is generated from within a person's self rather than from another's self. How does one ‘see what they believe’? It is perhaps a state of denial. Or a state of creation. *What* do you want? That is where it begins. What you want is not present or perhaps does not exist. Maybe that ‘*what*’ is not attainable or simply it is intangible. This results in a construct, where a person creates their own reality. It is a gauzy film woven from their personal convictions. Their self-made packaging is fabricated from desires. Sovereignty, (and slight madness?), is present here, in the Now of the making. A person is in control of their desires and fate. Content is creating the form.

The very act of exploring trash is one of perception. One person's trash is another's treasure. “If you spend time with trash - perhaps, even if you just think about trash - you can't emerge untouched, immune, nor do you remain the same person you were before.”⁹ The manner in which something is presented guides how it is received and interpreted. Packaging is a malleable form of perception, a liquid medium of sorts. Subliminal messages can be slippery and hard to classify. Capitalism is founded upon the ability to market a perception, a desirable package that the masses eagerly consume. Its form may change from entropy or from manipulation, altering the perception of it as well. Marketing and

⁹ Lea Vergine “When Trash Becomes Art: TRASH Rubbish Mongo”. Vergine gives trash autonomy and agency, in that it can actively affect humans.

advertising is based on selling a lifestyle. Whether attainable or not, things sell. In this manner we are talking of realities. Packaging of a reality is perception on a theatrical scale.

My Perspective

It is about decoding stuff. I am coming from a space of curiosity. A land of Why Not's and What If's. A place that allows for emotions, magic and failure. Mine is a mind that wishes to lay bare, expose, open up, and recontextualize things. I like playing with Time and Space. Expanding on perspectives, to discover new perceptions, both mine and others. One could say this is delving into theoretical Realities, but we don't want to bring out the big R word. That is for philosophers and theorists and not players of games.

My games are time-based. Oscillating between past and future, materializing new lifespans for forsaken objects, and disrupting time by altering the motion -physical and cognitive- of the spectator. I exist and make in the Now! The other dimension I am interested in is space. How we experience a Thing, and how we share space.

I paint and weave my concerns into my works: environmentalism, feminism and socialism. I seek to make a stand against capitalism and colonialism and the plethora of injustices they have wrought onto/into our world. I do not endorse that reality. In my disgust for their ideals, their perspective, I choose trash - specifically packaging- as my material and my substrate. Simultaneously, I am drawn to trash for its merit as a sovereign Thing, rich with its own narrative.

Use of Trash

We are living in the shadows of giants. Artists, and the work that they create, are a package of sorts. I have heard "nothing surprises me here, this would have been shocking and profound in a different time, but is just a little saucy by today's standards". And it has been said for many decades that 'painting is dead'. Yet painting persists, art still happens. It is true - nothing truly new or profound can

happen in the art world in this contemporary time. *What* is an object anymore? Anything! Is there any need for shock value or novelty sake anymore? Who are we trying to impress? *What* is the point?

There isn't a point. There is simply a joy in making and 'making-with', of existing with a 'lucid indifference'¹⁰ where in every image can exist a 'privileged place'¹¹ as Albert Camus puts it. Otherwise, where and when do we situate ourselves? The artists of today are dealing with the discarded packaging of the giants who preceded us. The forms that they created had content relevant to their time. But that time is gone, those conversations finished. Their content is largely gone or altered, archived in textbooks and websites. What we have inherited are tropes, clichés, and stereotypes. What was unique and profound as material form has become homogenized and swallowed by institutions. Global manufacturers imitate once-relevant forms, reducing them to 'styles' so that they may market home decorations as 'art' for the masses. We are left with the packaging of what and who those great artists were, the Modernists and Postmodernists - their trash. And *what* a mess!

What a fun mess! Trash has a world of its own. A reality of its own. A language of its own. Packaging is a very particular sort of trash. The purpose of its existence is of a fast sort. The marriage of industrialization to capitalism requires a quick mass production of packaging. The faster, the cheaper - the better! Its only value is to ensure that people consume the product. It directs desire, guiding the consumer to pass through itself in order to procure the goods. This makes packaging both visible, while in its advertising mode, yet also invisible. Packaging has a sort of identity crisis. *What* is it? *What* does it desire? One thing certain about its identity, is that it is probably the least valued of all mass-produced goods - from a human perspective. It is the supporting actor to what is truly desired, it has no lines to say of its own. It was not given space to speak for itself. And its life span is predetermined to be brief, like clones in a sci-fi movie. As an artist, I am interrupting that life cycle. The slow process of human

¹⁰ Albert Camus "The Myth of Sisyphus". Camus explores the realm between the rational desires of humans in conflict with the irrational nature of the universe, naming this place The Absurd. He views this space as incredibly creative and liberating.

¹¹ Ibid.

intervention, whether through paint, thread or welds, guides the view and perception of the spectator. Inverting a fast process to a slow process is a way of unmaking, of changing time. Slowing time and creating a space for the packaging to exist with sovereignty. Physically, packaging is essentially a surface, a plane.

Many years back I read *The Third Policeman*, a novel by Flann O'Brien from 1940, where he explores a creative interpretation of atomic theory. He supposes that all things are made of atoms and that those atoms inherently contain (retain?) identity to the original Thing. In the novel, the bicycle has bicycle atoms which bit by bit are being swapped with the fellow who constantly rides it, for human atoms. The surface of the bicycle in contact with the surface of the person. Over time they take on one another's traits, much to the concern of the fellow's friend who feels compelled to intervene and save his friend. This is another way of haptically knowing a Thing. Where the surfaces of things meet and 'hybrids' are created. It is an involuntary 'making-with'. People, animals, objects, things - we affect one another. This planet is a giant assemblage to borrow from Jane Bennett's definition of such. Recombining, reconfiguring to redefine (and re-understand) the experience that we call life and art. Sympoiesis has a home here.

Burger Wrappers

Let us dive into the trash heap, beginning with a lowly packaging item, one that has the intended lifespan similar to a fruit fly. A fast-food wrapper is a skin, cloaking the food. We assume its purpose is to protect the food and contain its warmth until it is consumed. If that was solely the case, then why bother to print advertising on it? Rather, many wrappers dodge the waste bin and survive in the urban wilds, like sentinels on every street silently proclaiming their message. Their very presence acts as a colonial calling card. Connecting this litter with Deleuzian lines, we are reminded that capitalism has the planet in a stranglehold. These wrappers are embedded with messages, printed and implied. The invention of the printing press allowed knowledge deemed crucial to be disseminated fast and in

immeasurable volumes. But this communication was only accessible to those yielding power and control. In terms of the global fast-food industry, who has this power? What is the message? And are we receiving?...

Unfolding the individual narratives of each wrapper, I augment and challenge those by embroidering feminist, socialist and environmental concerns onto the wrappers. Considered one of humankind's oldest 'recycling' methods, some needlework artifacts date back to 30,000 BC. Over the course of time, embroidery has been absorbed into the realm of women's work. As a woman, I employ this language to further disrupt the patriarchal nature of industrialization and capitalism. Mine is an intervention, a slow-process that interrupts the fast-process of fast food. It is transformative, elevating trash into high art.

Burlap Sacks

Shall we denigrate ourselves to low art? What is a sack drained of its seed? Saggy. Spent. And of what use is it? And so, burlap sacks entered my studio practice. Beginning as wordplay on the phrase 'get in the sack' and a tanuki's legendary 'saggy sack', I could not resist weaving with paint, pornographic images and ridiculously gymnastic-like testicles onto these burlap sacks. Originally these sacks were filled and taut, containing nourishing seeds. Those seeds have been long released into the world. Germinating what? And pray tell, what does the flaccid husk spawn? These substrates are rice bags from India and coffee bags from South America and Africa. The economical and political details differ between these two types of sacks, but both speak of consumption.

In considering the great distances traveled for these products, I find parallels with the history of Shunga. Globalization isn't just about products and things. It is also the consumption of cultures and of fetishized sexuality. The art of Shunga has transversed time and place - being appreciated well over a century after its creation in lands far from its origin. Our western world has an appetite to consume it.

Wedding Dress

I became Mrs. Darcy Fraser Macdonald Saturday Aug.3 2002 at 5pm. I sewed my dress from a 1948 Butterick pattern, along with other vintage dresses for the bridesmaids. He baked a pound cake and made a fondant icing in a blue and white wedgwood-inspired pattern. It was beautiful but dry. We choked it down laughing.

In the spirit of consumption and feminism I have remade that 1948 dress from burlap coffee sacks. Why do this? And why with coffee sacks? Well, let us first look at what a wedding dress is. What is signified by this ceremonial package? It is a package that is only used once - sacrilegious to be thrown away. And if one is relegated to the thrift store, it becomes the most abject unwanted item of all!! It is the ultimate capitalist packaging, the ultimate dowry, packaging the woman for just one moment until she is consumed. Ultimate trash!

Playing with Roland Barthes principle of mythmaking¹², the idea of the wedding garment undergoes a transformation with the change of material form and the context of its creation. Originally, the ideals, virtues, desires and expectations of a marriage are sewn into this ceremonial garment. The materiality of burlap coffee bags brings its own content which recombines with the former idea to create new significance. The materials that create the garment's form bring their own content of consumption. They speak of commodities, cost and value, resources, weight, identities - local and national, and time stamps. Coffee itself is rife with its own symbolism and narratives. Considering the surrealist art work of Duchamp "The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even", there is the presence of a chocolate grinder. The presence of it is in reference to the masturbation of the bachelors as they 'grind their choc

¹² In Roland Barthes' "Mythologies" in terms of objects, he proposes a process of signification - transcending language to myth. Simply put Signifier + Signified = Sign. These objects are defined by human perspective. In comparison, Latour's is critical of the directional defining of objects, in both naturalization and from the social-sciences. Whether attaining Myth status or Quasi-objectness, both writers empower objects.

themselves'¹³. Akin to cocoa beans, coffee beans are a life-giving source, pleasure-giving. The world is as much enamored with coffee as it is with chocolate.

Stepping away from the hollow matrimonial package, let us consider the woman contained within the dress. She is an idea, a concept of Bride. But *what* is the bride that inhabits the garment? Is she also a type of packaging? In terms of what she embodies: domestic labour, future children, a sexual mate, a trophy - she is consumable. An object with implied ownership. And that brings with it a perspective of power, and lack of. She is defined by her title, her function. What is her worth?

Egg Carton

Both mine and Darcy's mothers were born in 1948. The eggs that would later become me and Darcy existed in 1948. Like matryoshka dolls spanning from future perfect to past perfect and back again in a surreal superhighway reality mapping matriarchal DNA. What came first - the woman or the egg?

Egg cartons are a special sort of packaging. The literal content created the form to suit its physicality, exerting its peculiarities in an outward manner. The perspective from the carton would be of an inward force giving direction and form. It is a snug interaction, like spooning. This directive is not just to mimic its form, but protect it. The material used to create this defense is of the lowest form of tree products, mushy unbleached pulp. Pulp has the power to transmute itself, possibly in infinite ways, soak it back to mush and reshape. And yet it has incredible strength, such that it is entrusted to care for the precious eggs within. Eggs are loaded with symbolism and significance; throughout history and cultures exist many narratives. Also prized is the packaging of the egg itself. Beautiful speckled quail and blue robin eggs, decorated pysanky eggs, and egg-shell inlay.

What is it to delicately apply egg-shell inlay on a worthless egg carton? What does it mean to enrobe a Thing with the Thing it encased? The packaging of an egg becomes the packaging of the

¹³ Nicolas Calas p.141 quotes Marcel Duchamp on the meaning of the chocolate grinder.

packaging intended to protect the original packaging.. On one level, the function of the form is subverted, much like Méret Oppenheim's Luncheon in Fur, rational senses are befuddled. An unspoonable spoon. Strange alchemy has saved the carton from degrading in the dirt, and elevated it to a higher status.

Large Cardboard

In 2005 I fell asleep on the couch in our 1912 Winnipeg home. Odd things happen there. I dreamt I was Marcel Duchamp's c. 1915 art object known as "The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even". I was the Thing and the Thing was me. Timelessly and quietly standing there, years and decades passed. People moving about, around me, behind me - looking through me (which tickled!). And talking. Trying to surmise what my secrets and intentions were. Creating fantastical narratives themselves. Ceremoniously enrobing me at times for grand travel, and handling me so delicately - except that one time when those bastards laid me flat and drove at reckless speeds down that pot-holed New Jersey turnpike!..

The Bride has a coy mischievous smile like Mona Lisa, perhaps even a mustache. A world of machinations and fascinations within her. I forever feel an affinity with that piece.

Comprising two equal parts, the upper half is the 4th dimensional realm of The Bride and celestial space, whereas the lower half is the 3 dimensional realm of the bachelors and earthly machines. The Bachelors are signified as hollow garments reminiscent of burlap jute sacks. The Bride is singular in number and importance. I personally feel she extends past the upper half and is the work in its entirety, a universe unto herself. It is a wooden standing 3D structure, with the figurative elements on planes of glass. The glass was cracked in 1926, a random act but signifying the works' completion.

As a substrate, glass has plenty of metaphorical depth. It can be seen as a plane of existence in the quest for the 4th dimension.¹⁴ It can also play the role of a mirror, reflecting reality but also then creating another dimension.¹⁵ Glass is physically transparent, cardboard seemingly not so. Before the unfolding of the cardboard presented in my art work *The Content Stripped Bare By Her Package, Uneven* - that cardboard had dimension. It contained a volume, specifically it contained domestic goods that were sold at the Westmount Safeway in 1947. Once unpacked, we have a 2 dimensional object. On one surface is the printed advertising, reflecting ideals and desires in the hopes that it will sell the content within. The flipside is a different reality. This surface is barren. On a molecular level like the 3rd policeman, it has rubbed shoulders with the content. Possibly having swapped some physical content. Perhaps those molecules miss the former content, and long to reunite?

As mentioned before, packaging can be invisible, where people look through it - past it - to what it is they desire. But packaging is invisible in another way - in that the inner machinations can be covert. Hidden realities. How did the goods arrive here? The glossy packaging encases the actual content.

Future Perfect/Past Perfect

The inner machinations of AI is another realm of mystery. It is kin to my assemblage of trash. Its 'knowledge' base is an amalgamation of random bits of data. It has blindly consumed any and all information fed to it. There is no hierarchy to the images it has absorbed, this too is a civilized realm of sorts where there is equality among pixels.¹⁶ Trash fills my studio space. They speak to one another (trash talk). It is a language inaudible to human ears. An invisible net, a tentacular knowing of one another. They are things to one another. There is equality among trash, civility even. We know trash

¹⁴ Both Nicolas Calas p.124 and Herbert Molderings (p.17 in the publication for the Museum Tinguely Exhibition of Duchamp), reference Duchamp's interest in trying to portray the 4th dimension in a space that viewers could experience.

¹⁵ Calas p.125 quoting Duchamp, "the plane of the mirror is a convenient way of giving the idea of a three dimensional infinite space. It is at this plane that the three dimensional infinity stops."

¹⁶ Hito Steyerl explores the inherent power and sovereignty within the hierarchy of images, de-establishing that paradigm and proposing a new way to perceive and value images/objects in various essays in "The Wretched of the Screen".

predominantly from their physical forms. Sometimes we also know them from their molecular composition. In an attempt to better discern and understand this connection among these cohabiting things, I present the query to the visual-generating AI Dream by Wombo. Each waste item has been gifted a name, which I feed to the AI. It presents a grotesquely abject yet intriguing form back to me. It is intestinal, a casing bloated and twisted from all the information it contains and controls. It wants me to see reality as it ‘understands’ it. A Sausage-reality. Reminding me of meat being packed into the intestine, which it would have originally encased when part of the living animal. Rewinding the process further presents to us the food consumed by the animal, traveling through the intestine to later become the muscle. Returning again to the 3rd Policeman, where does a permeable membrane begin? Or end? What sort of invisibility does it afford us?

In this moment, what has fed the AI is past perfect. As fodder, those images are complete, frozen in time. And what the AI gives back to me is a possible future perfect. Chance plays its hand here. If I inquiry the AI on a later date, what it will have consumed beforehand will be different. The monster never ceases to consume. There are infinite ‘possibles’¹⁷, infinite future perfects, infinite motion. What arrests this is my choice. I am the stoppage, the delay in this absurd pattern. I am the pivot point of this configuration space¹⁸. Having chosen five images, we then have a visual conversation, sealing this moment in with paint on canvas. While working at the University’s gallery, I collected the vinyl letters from Jill Miller’s exhibition *Future Perfect*, these apt letters are sewn into this conversation. These paintings are another transformative art process, a ‘making-with’ using trash and technology. Modern

¹⁷ Craig E. Adcock p.16 quotes Duchamp as he refers to his various art projects as ‘possibles’. Of which he randomly chose some to form his Large Glass. Duchamp was known for embracing chance in life and art, seeing the gamelike nature in both.

¹⁸ Playing with a simplified definition of configuration space (physics), where the possible motion from a reference point can be figuratively mapped.

alchemy. Depicting an unknown thing in an unreal space, these resulting hybrids function as a 'snapshot'¹⁹ of the Right Now.

And how is this interaction with AI perceived? How are the artworks perceived in their abject yet alluring state? To further play with perspective, these paintings are presented at varying angles to the wall that they are mounted on - challenging the path and perception of the spectator. Some of the paintings are predominantly seen from their backside, where oil stains and stitchwork are revealed. As the artist and curator of these paintings, I am empowered to decide what is revealed and what is hidden. Turning the perspective inside out, as though walking through a looking glass.

Tripping Hazard

For the past two years, a large pile of rusty tire chains has heaped itself onto my studio floor. It boorishly lounges in the middle of the walkway, hoping to trip anyone and everyone. It is indiscriminate in its quest. Regularly, it tugs at my feet when I'm tired, spilling me over - which makes me laugh since it was the Tanya-of-the-past who placed it there to trip up Tanya-of-the-future. The realm of the ready-made is completely one of perception, where an object considered abject, or simply unseen, may be transformed into a Thing! My Tripping Hazard is a ready-made machine, and it functions very well!

I was delighted to recently learn that Duchamp too had a tripping hazard begun in his studio in 1917. Called 'Trebuchet' it was a coat-rack nailed to the floor with its spiky prongs pointed upwards. Seen by various writers such as Adcoc as a way to " 'delay' his friends, suggest(ing) slices taken out of the continuum"²⁰ of time and motion. Interrupting the flow of one's motion is a stoppage in time and space, as well as thought. A pause. This sort of art involves the spectator. It twists itself 3 dimensionally with past and future motion, this pause marks the present moment. When the trap is triggered, it graces one with awareness - and perhaps embarrassment.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.7 Duchamp also sought to capture motion and space in his studio practice. Referring to it as a 'snapshot effect'. This was in imitation of the camera's ability to stop real-life motion onto glass photographic plates. His artwork 3 Standard Stoppages is a prime example.

²⁰ Craig E. Adcock p.14

As well, “*trébuchet* is a chess term describing a pawn which is placed to trap the opponent”.²¹ A trap can be seen to limit one’s motion, one’s choices, but it can also redirect and open up one’s ‘possibles’. In this manner, to trip one up is to also challenge one’s perspective. “If you introduce a familiar word into an alien atmosphere, you have something similar to distortion in painting, something surprising and new.”²²

Metal Installation

And is the same true for when you introduce an object thing into a familiar atmosphere? I suppose we need to discuss the rusty elephant in the room?... Alright.

Accumulated into the awkwardly acute corner of the gallery resides my forays into abstract metal sculpture. Constructed from industrial waste and river finds, their individual forms harken to Modernist sculpture. But the content is not there. They are a mass of ‘possibles’; possibly good, possibly bad and possibly ugly. They are rusted in their terminal moment. Amassed, they form an installation that is out of context. Denied plinths, proper lighting and appropriate space around them - Why are they here? They are my monster-sized tripping hazard. They are my spatial distortion.

It is with a lucid indifference toward the objectness of objects that I encounter them. What is of concern is perspective and perception. Whereas the Tripping Hazard tracks, pauses and redirects time and motion on behalf of the spectator - the metal installation is a stalemate between spectator and object. Physical motion is abruptly halted. The spectator can not access the sculptures from all angles. Rather the spectator is bounced back with the option of retracing their steps backward or being dejected at an angle. This machine of mine functions like a mirror in its reflective capacity. The configuration space of possible motion around it is hyper focused into an acute quadrant. I experience art as “the figuration of a

²¹ From the Museum Tinguely Exhibition Publication, it cites Serge Stauffer p.92

²² Ibid. It quotes Marcel Duchamp in conversation with Katherine Kuh p.92

possible. Not as the opposite of the impossible/ nor as related to probable/ nor as subordinated to likely.”²³

In Conclusion..

How do we conclude a narrative that was here long before us and long after us? The packaging and perception of realities is a hot commodity. Art allows us to peek behind the façade, see what is hidden, see the inner machine that creates and perpetuates realities. Art wakes us up. “The realization of the game-like nature of life is of greatest importance. We should not strive for absolutes, don’t make truths of the rules, recognize that we play the game according to rules as we see them now.”²⁴ We live, love and create in the Now. The future is not ours.

Appendix: Objectivity of Objects: how we experience things.

Object as Thing.

It is a great honour for an object to be bestowed the title and position of Thing. Both consist of matter and are situated in space. How does it transform from one to the other? Purpose may be one qualifier, whether practical function or emotional attachment. An exalted thing may be demoted to object if it loses its purpose. Purpose gives value. Value gives recognition, one may even say existence.

Object as Abject.

Objects can often be dropped further into the realm of junk if their qualities become perceived as abject. It is on the opposite end of the spectrum, where the Thing is desirable and the Abject is not.

Object as Object.

²³ Marcel Duchamp quoted in Museum Tinguely Exhibition’s publication p.19

²⁴ Ibid.

This is where modernist sculpture lives. The object is autonomous and does not have to answer to anyone. In its physical position, it has a position of power. It is essentially a Thing, whose purpose is aesthetic. Its materiality is valued and justified. Its occupation of space is sanctioned.

Object as Found.

The ready-made has an odd life. It already existed with some sort of title, usually based on a practical function. Yet it is somewhat invisible, its real potential unseen. Until a qualified eye (aka Artist) singles it out and proclaims it a Thing. Suddenly with spotlights on, it finds itself in a new environment out of context with what it had previously known.

Object as Image.

And now things start to change. Similar to compressing the layers on a digital file, the object and the space it occupies is compressed to become a flattened object. There are hints at how it used to exist, an angle that implies depth. Aerial perspective indicating a former narrative. This is a record of an object in space, yet it itself is a 2D object.

Object as Performance.

An object moving through space, either of its own volition or in conjunction with a person or other object. These sorts of events are either captured to be replayed or witnessed as a non-repeatable occurrence. It is a soupy experience of an object, where many elements are at play. Some are controlled, others variable which allows for many interpretations.

Object as Happening. Like Performance but not premeditated...

It happens...

Object as Perception.

Involving more of our senses, redefines object and space. Some artists construct using sound and light as their materials. Technology affords us other ways to 'view' an object.

Object as Concept.

Sometimes a thing may exist as an idea or word. The idea has a starting point, and thoughts grow from it, linking to one another. A form is created. Pauses for reflection stand in as space surrounding the form. Concept is Object. It is also said that 'ideas do not die' (though they may adapt and find other words to shape them). An object is typically tangible, made of molecules and energy - it succumbs to entropy. A fluid cycle of becoming and un-coming. Whereas an idea is perhaps an immortal object, immune to time.

We are forever trying to wrest power from the colonial uncivilised assholes of the world. May the revolution never die.

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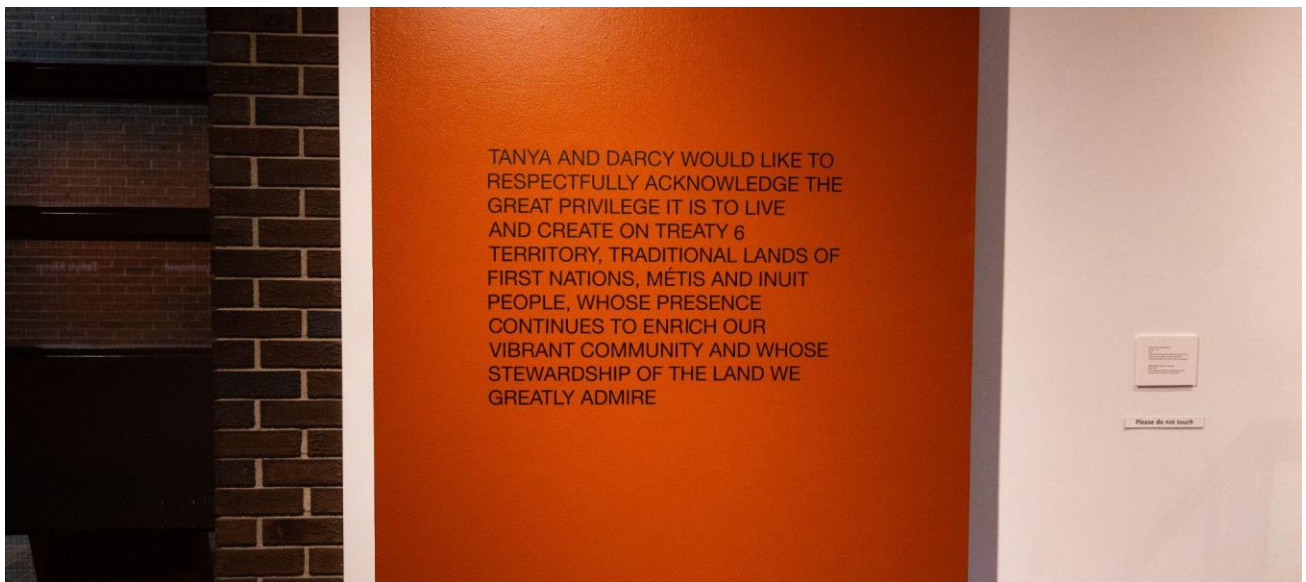
Thank you to the FAB gallery team, photos by Daniel Belland and Kaylin Schenk Photography.

Thank you to the MFA Entry Scholarship, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the Calgary Foundation (Kathleen and Russell Lane award) for monetary support.

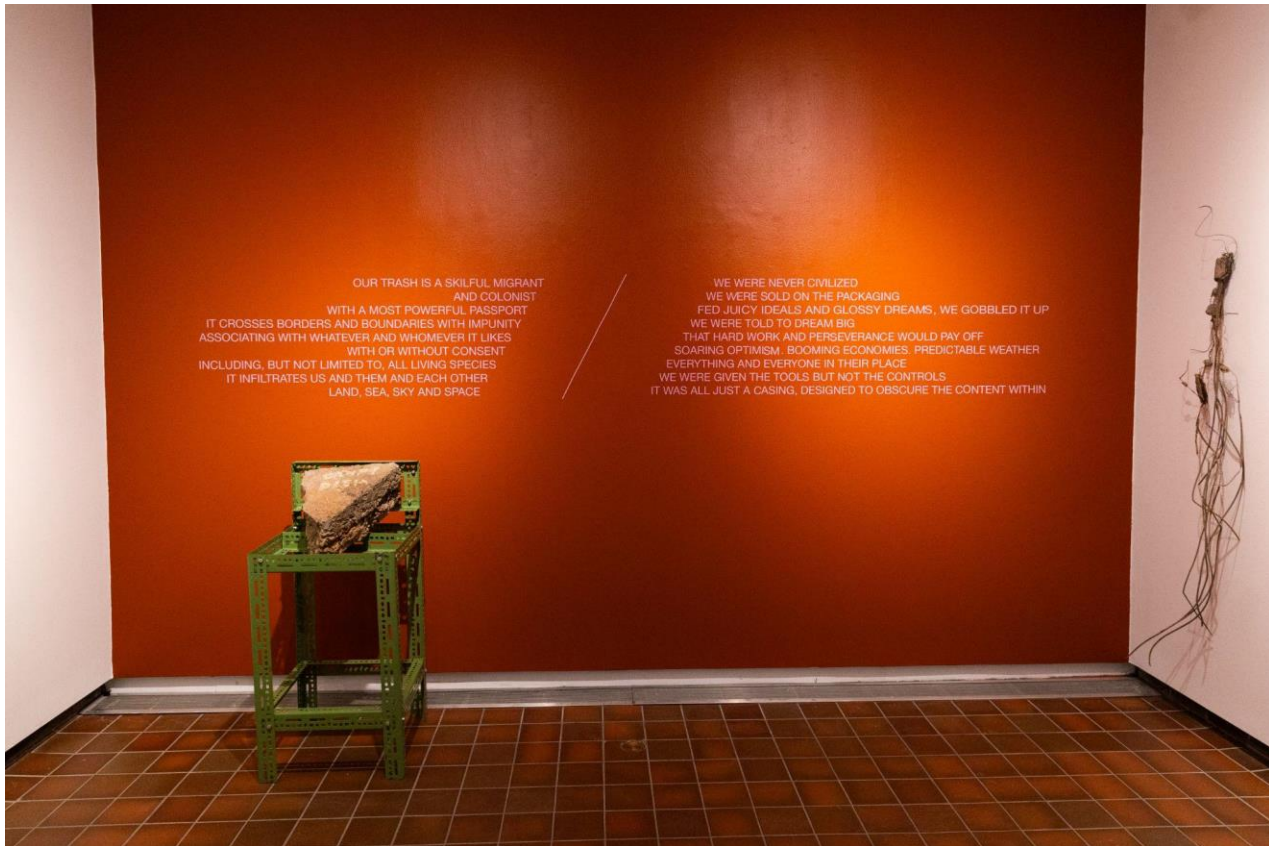
Thank you to my family (Darcy Macdonald, Petter Klimp and Skada Klimp), my mom Deb and my partner Simen Christoffersen for their ongoing support and love.



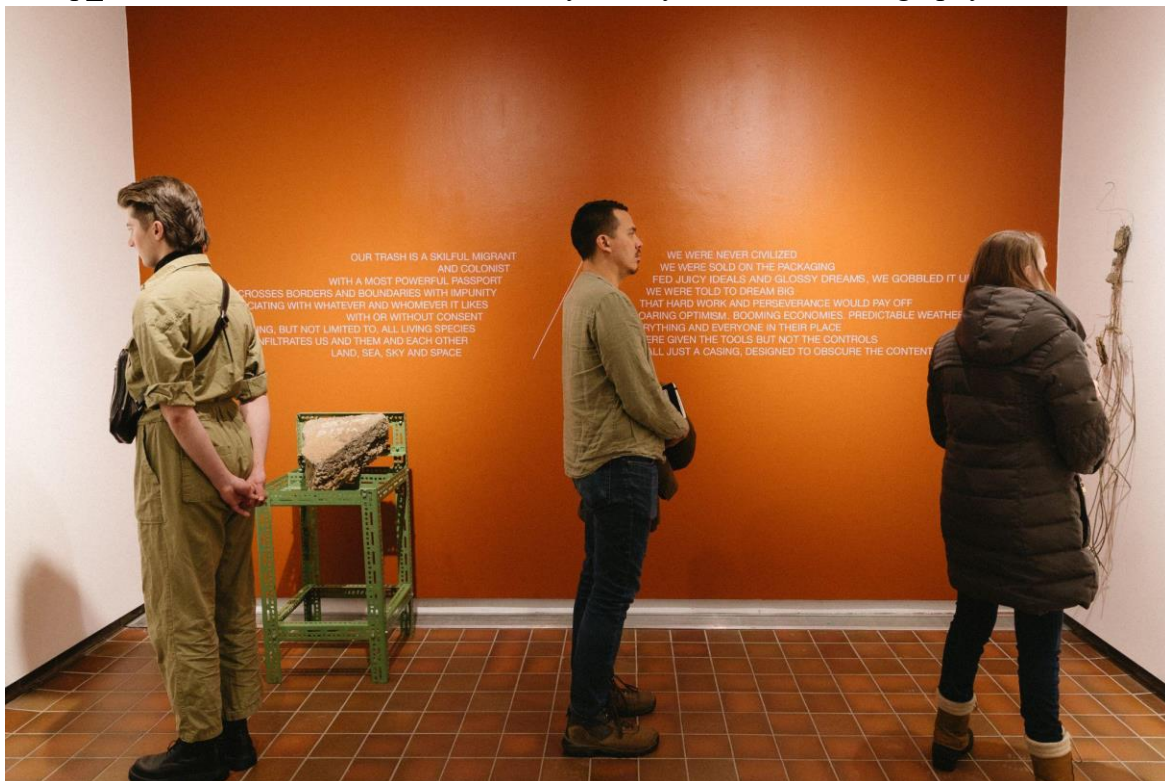
Klimp_002 Title Wall, image from Opening Reception FAB Gallery, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_003 Land acknowledgement, image from Opening Reception FAB Gallery, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_004 Poem wall, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_005 Poem Wall, image from Opening Reception FAB Gallery, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.

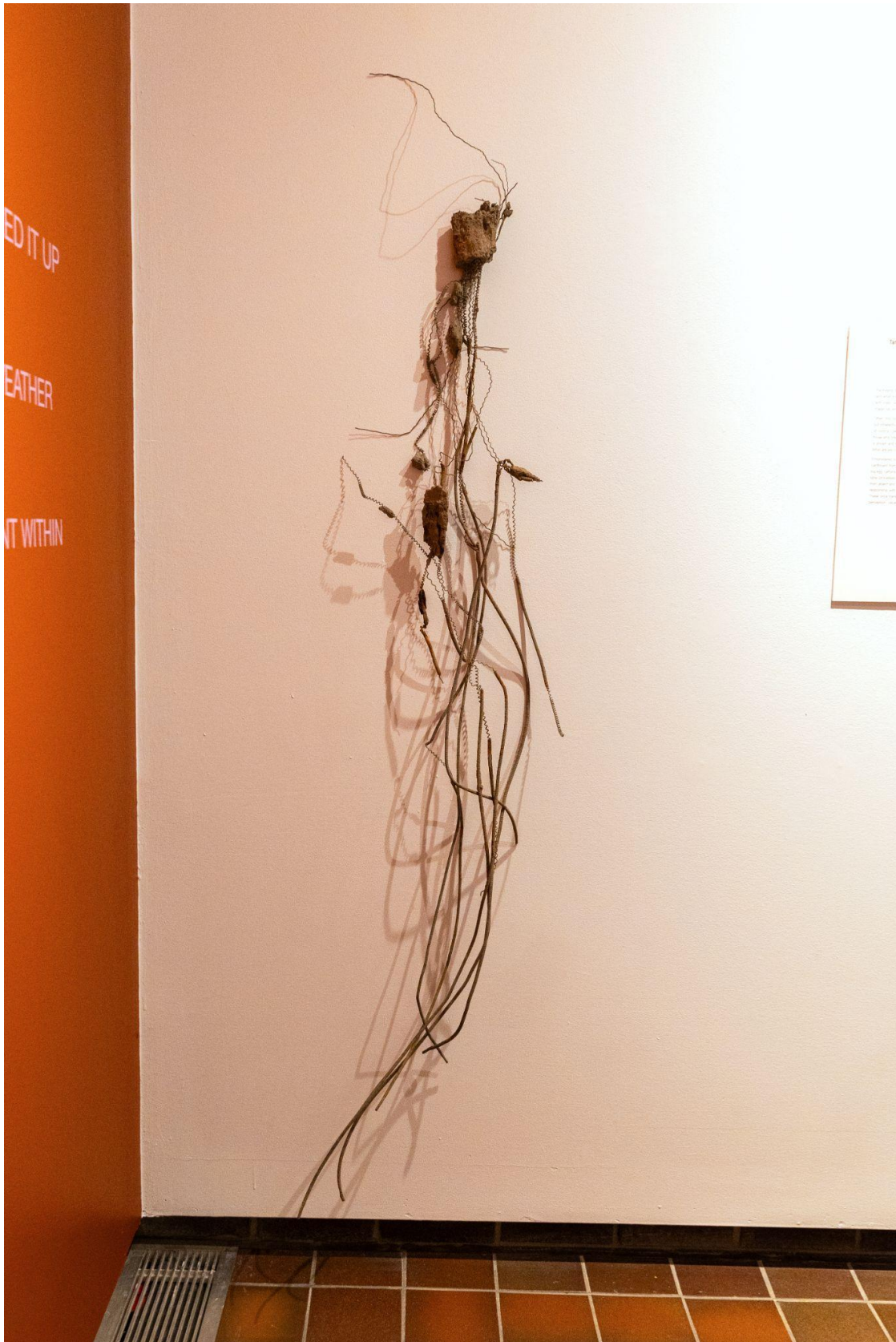
Tanya Klimp | MFA painting
THIS SHOW IS TRASH

Packaging is about what we see, and what we don't see. What is hidden, and what is expressed. What we value and what we don't. When playing with trash, which is what packaging was intended to be, connections are made. My exhibition explores the content within packaging.

Often, this form of trash has been printed upon with overt advertising, but inherently conveys a deeper message. This sort of content is a form of control—persuading perspectives, and in doing so it insures power to those who create the message. It is all in the editing. Who decides what is shown and how it is shown. What is being sold, and who is buying it. What are we consuming and why?

Embroidered burger wrappers, painted burlap sacks, a collaged piece with cardboard from 1947, mixed media paintings, and other works incorporating egg cartons and scrap metal flesh out this exhibition. Through various slow processes, I transmute these rapidly produced and discarded objects from abject and denigrated to valued and elevated. My work questions our relationship with trash and the consumer-driven world we are bound to. These once transient objects can guide us to deeper and lasting insight on perception, value and identity.

Klimp_006 *Brief Artist Statement*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Tanya Klimp.



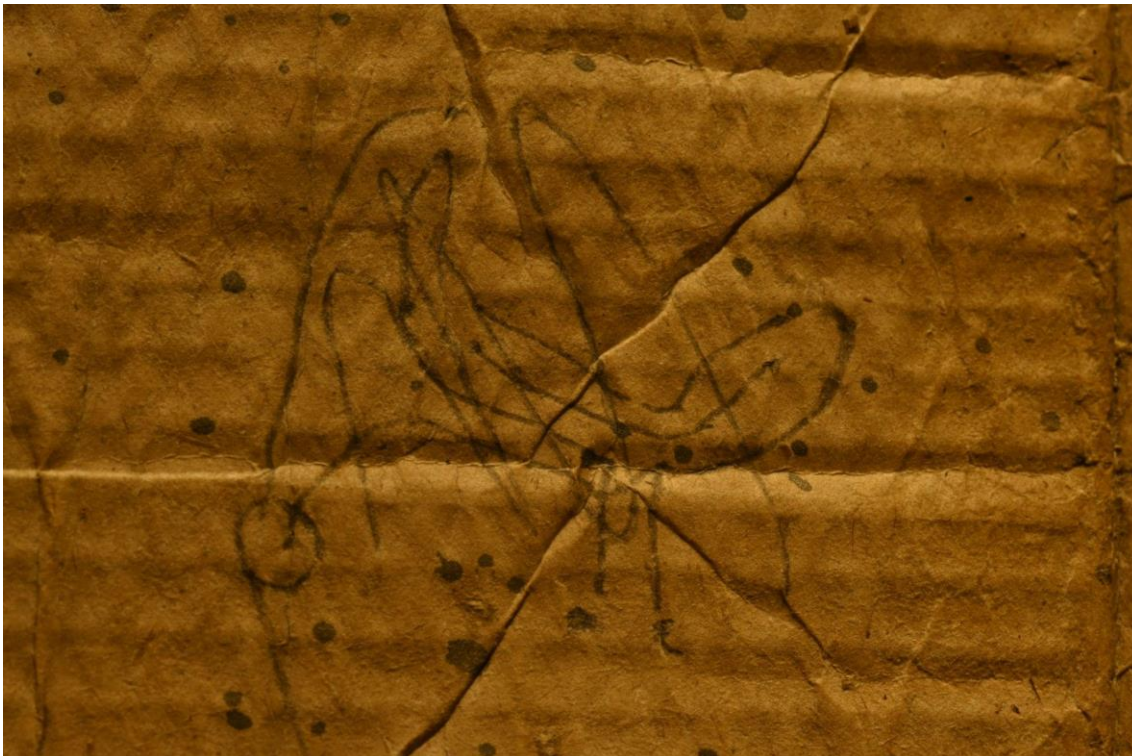
Klimp_007 *Tentacular Think*, 2024, Found object from riverbank, metal, 10" x 60". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



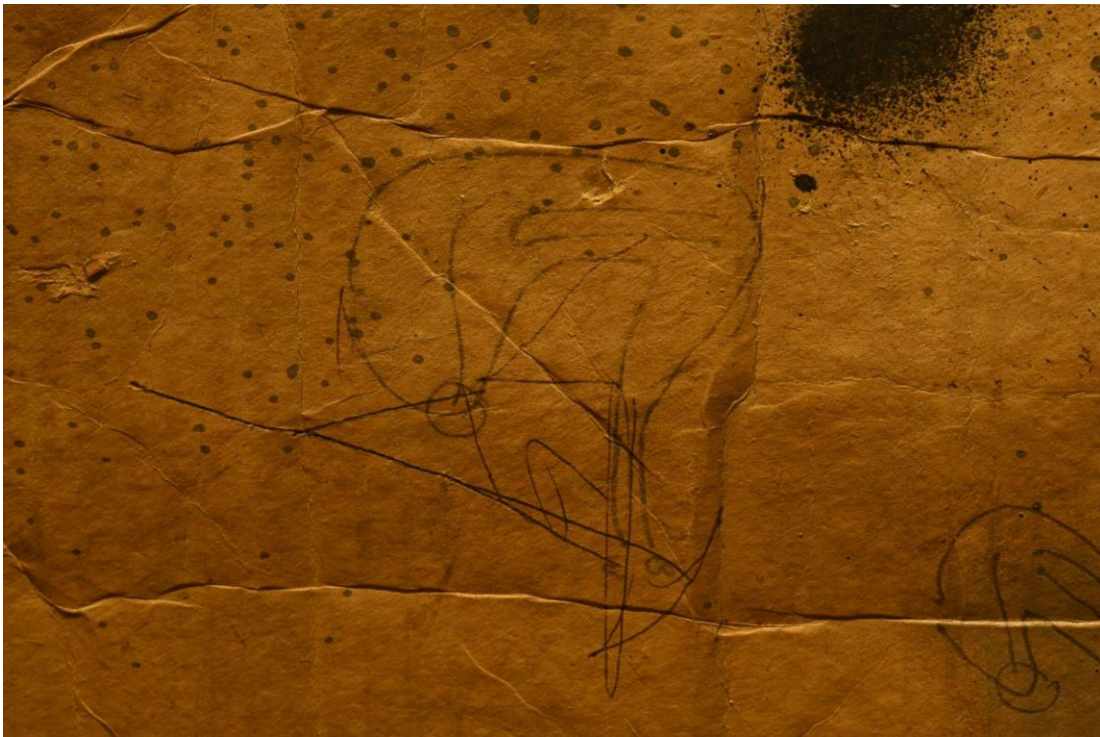
Klimp_008 *Mansplained (How do fallopian tubes work)*, *Extrapolated Sketches of Mansplained*, and *Butterick Wedding Dress Pattern*, 2024 , Found 1947 cardboard with enigmatic drawings, inspired configurations from those, and 1948 Butterick wedding dress pattern, dimensions vary. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



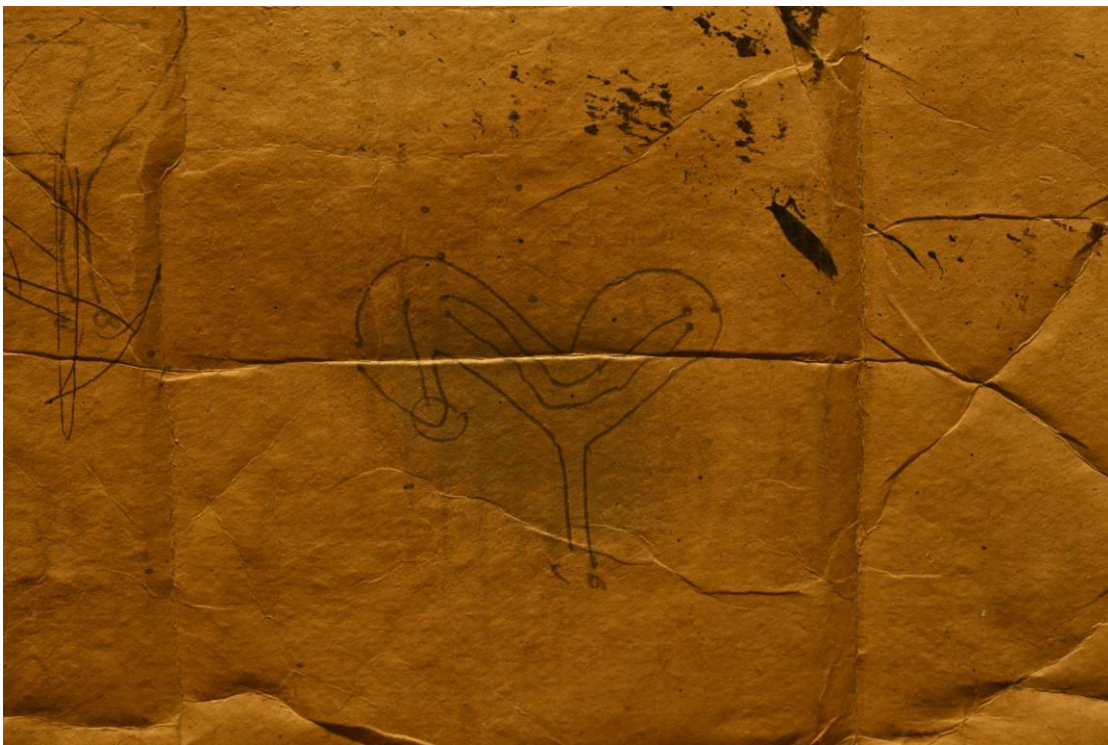
Klimp_009 Detail of *Mansplained*, 2024, Found 1947 cardboard with enigmatic drawings. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



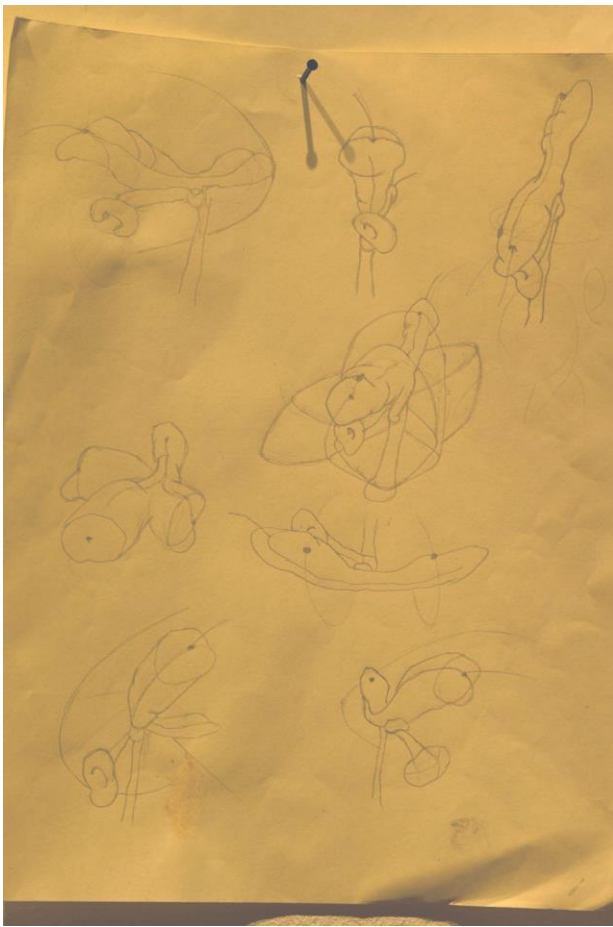
Klimp_010 Detail of *Mansplained*, 2024, Found 1947 cardboard with enigmatic drawings. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_011 Detail of *Mansplained*, 2024, Found 1947 cardboard with enigmatic drawings. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_012 Detail of *Mansplained*, 2024, Found 1947 cardboard with enigmatic drawings. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_013



Klimp_014



Klimp_015



Klimp_016

Klimp_013 - 015 *Extrapolated Sketches from Mansplained*, 2024, pencil on paper, 8.5" x 11". Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.

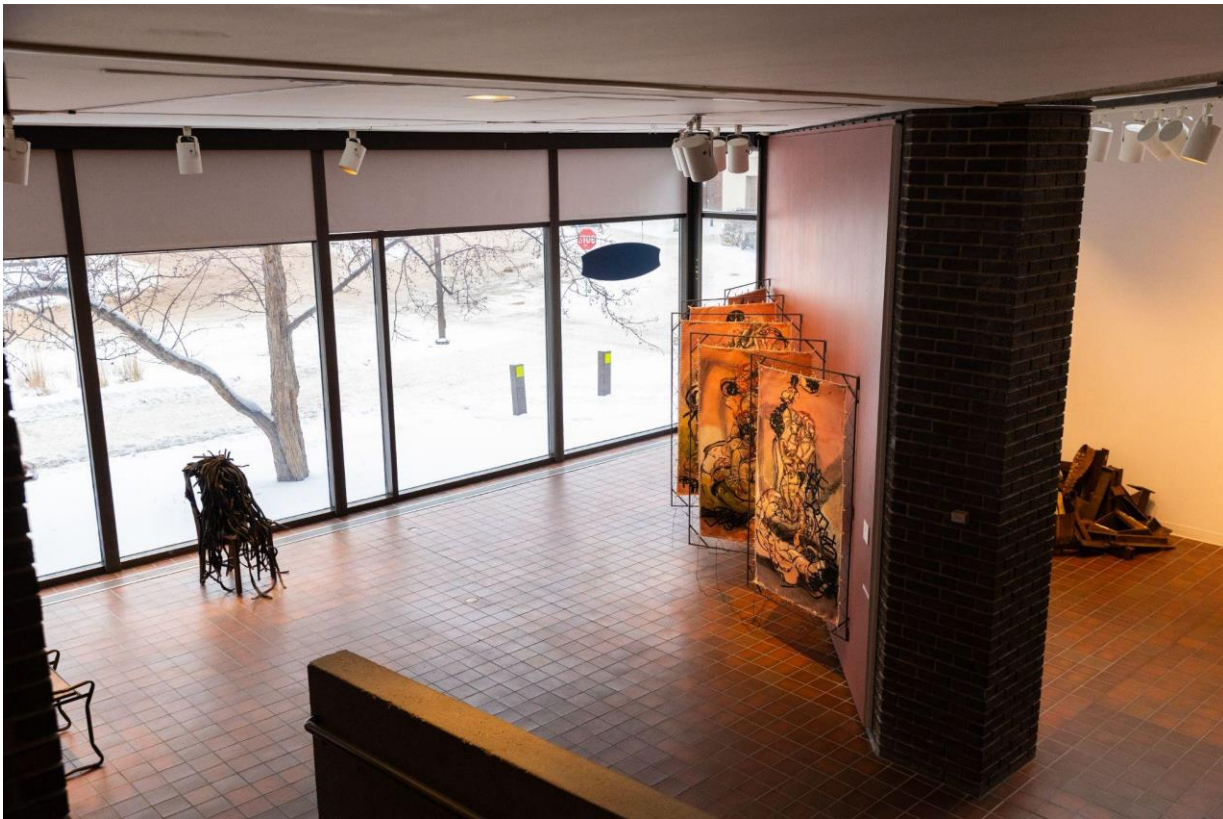
Klimp_016 1948 *Butterick wedding dress pattern*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_017 *Tripping Hazard*, 2024, Found tire chain, pyrographed sign, 30" x 30" x 15". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_018, 019 Detail of *Tripping Hazard*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



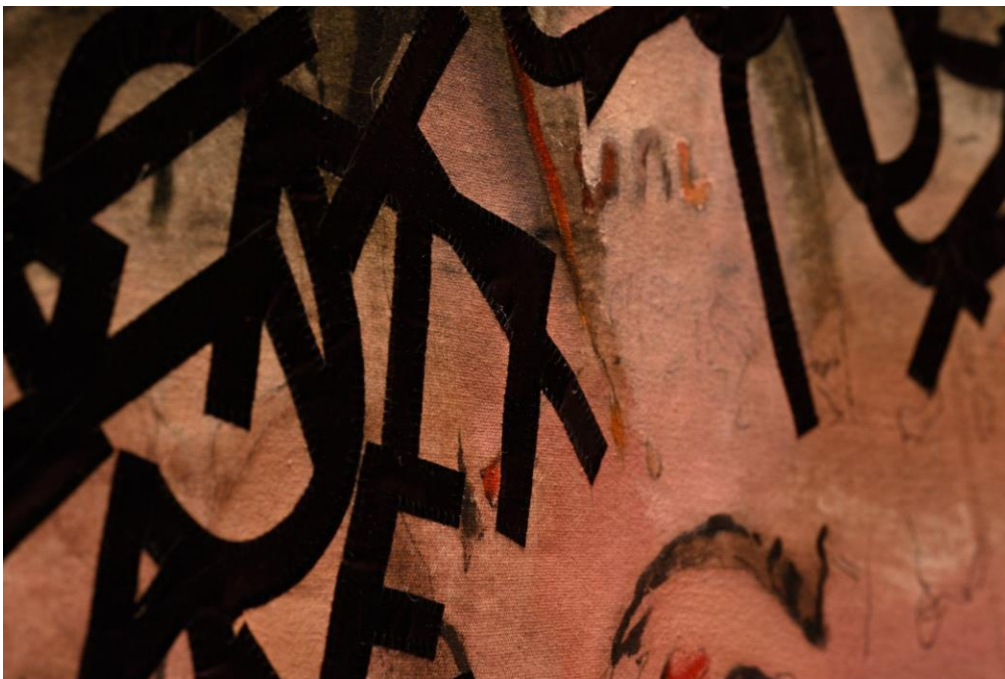
Klimp_020 Front room FAB Gallery, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_021 *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_022 *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_023 Detail of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_024 Detail of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



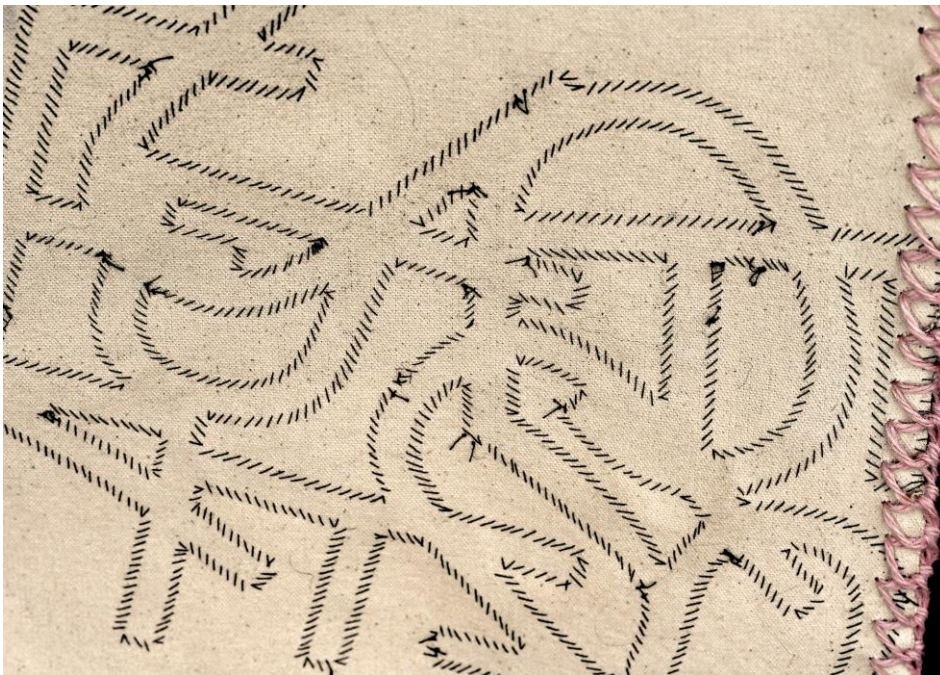
Klimp_025 Detail of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_026 'Backside' of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



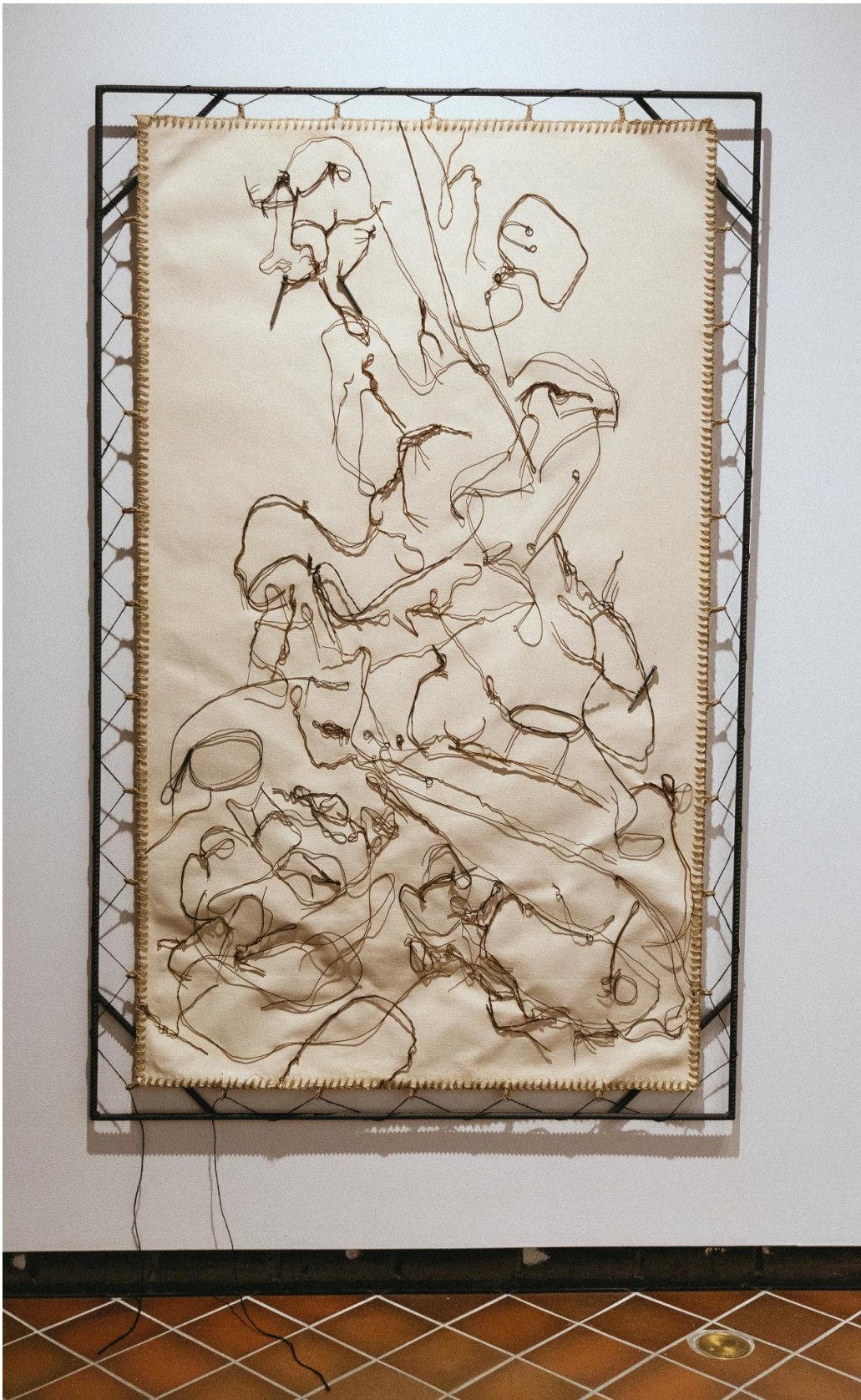
Klimp_027 Detail from 'Backside' of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_028 Detail from 'Backside' of *Future Perfect*, 2024, Acrylic, oil paint, vinyl, thread, charcoal, jute on canvas, rebar frames, 5 panels each 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_029 Middle room FAB Gallery, 2024. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



Klimp_030 *Past Perfect*, 2024, Squished wire from construction sites and jute on canvas, rebar frames, 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_031 Detail from *Past Perfect*, 2024, Squished wire from construction sites and jute on canvas, rebar frames, 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_032 Detail from *Past Perfect*, 2024, Squished wire from construction sites and jute on canvas, rebar frames, 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_033 Detail from *Past Perfect*, 2024, Squished wire from construction sites and jute on canvas, rebar frames, 3.5' x 5.5'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_034 *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



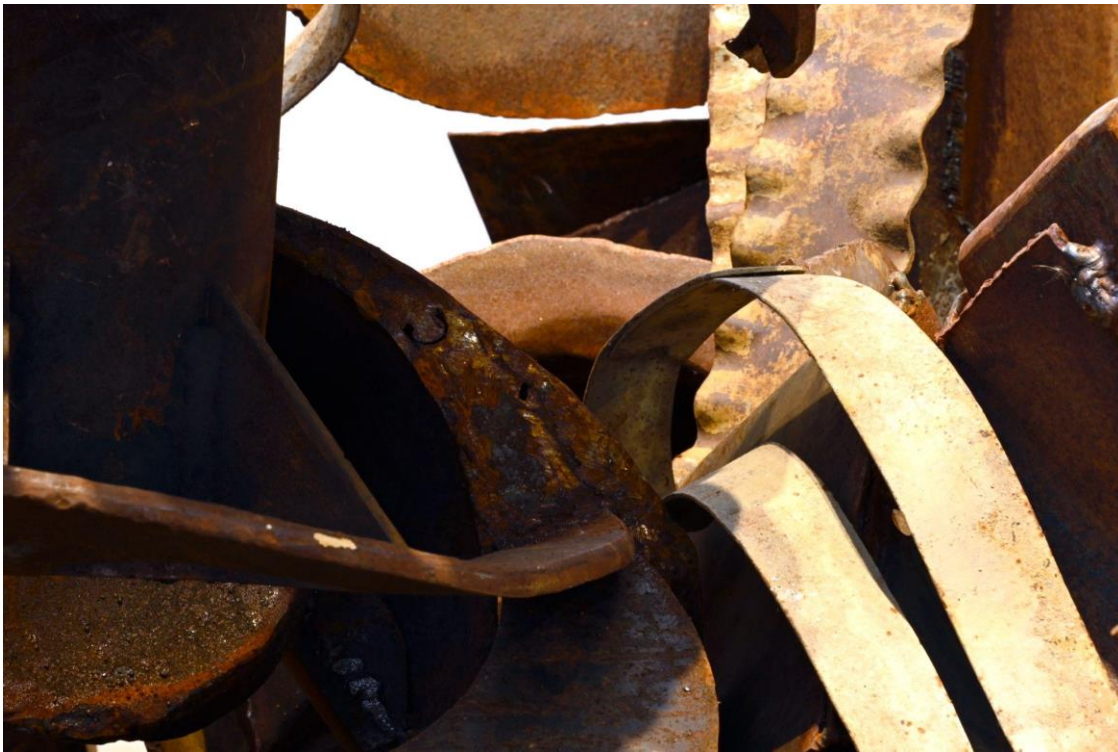
Klimp_035 Detail from *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



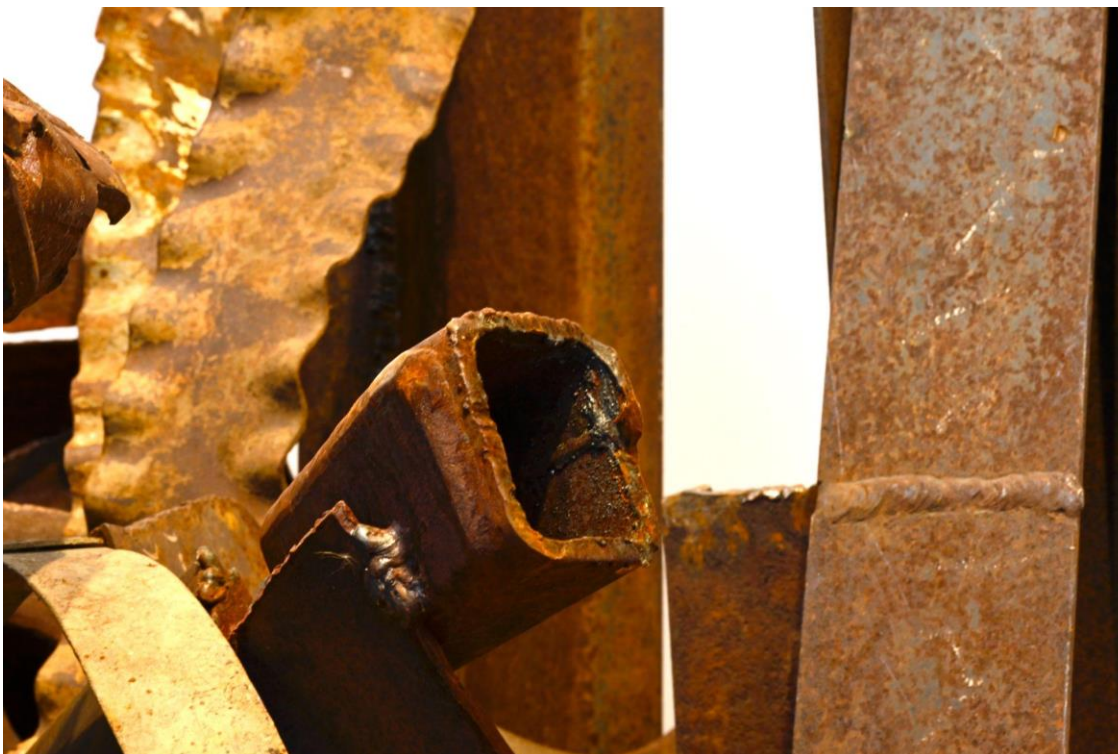
Klimp_036 Detail from *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_037 Detail from *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_038 Detail from *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_039 Detail from *Spatial Distortion*, 2024, Steel sculptures from reclaimed construction and riverbank metal, 15' x 5' x 8'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_040 *The Bride and Her Bachelors*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining, metal armature, 6 bore bits from oil industry, 4' x 6'. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_041 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_042 Hood from *The Bride*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining, metal armature, 4' x 6'. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_043 *This Show is Trash* co-conspirator and artist Darcy Fraser Macdonald, from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_044 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



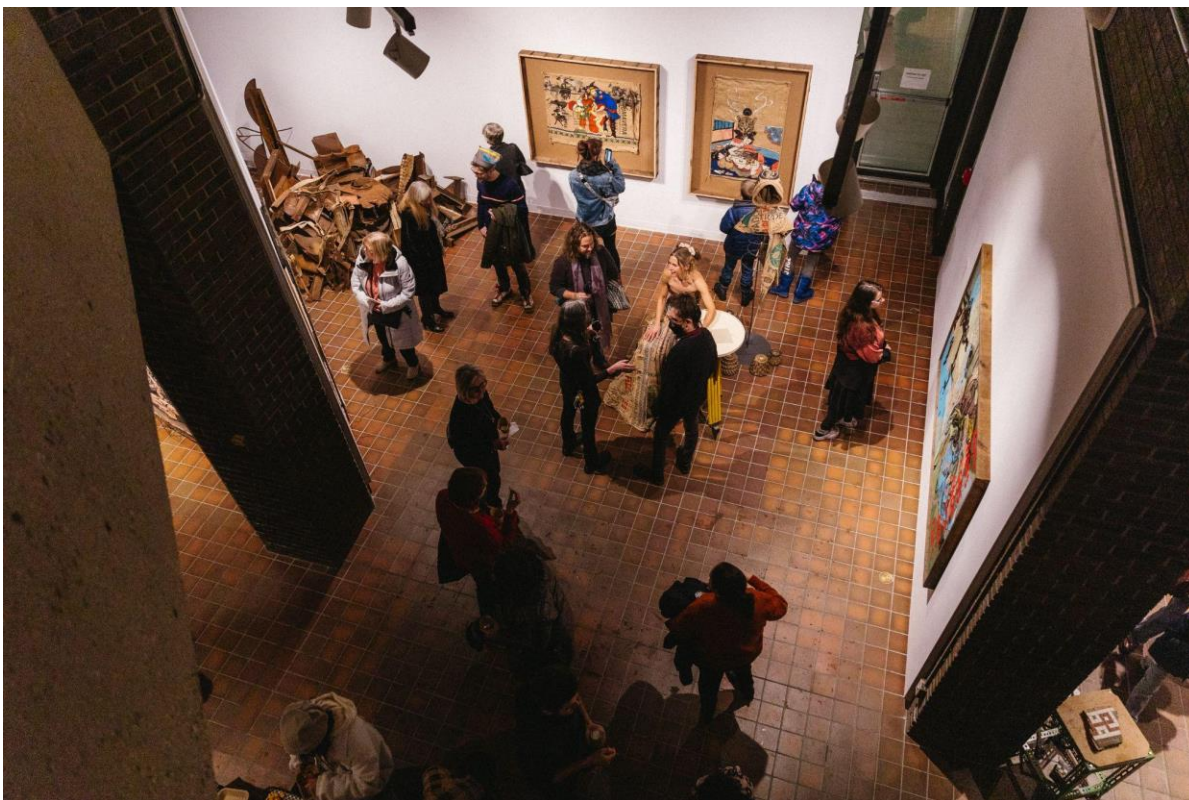
Klimp_045 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_046 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_047 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_048 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_049 *Let's Talk Trash* performance from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.

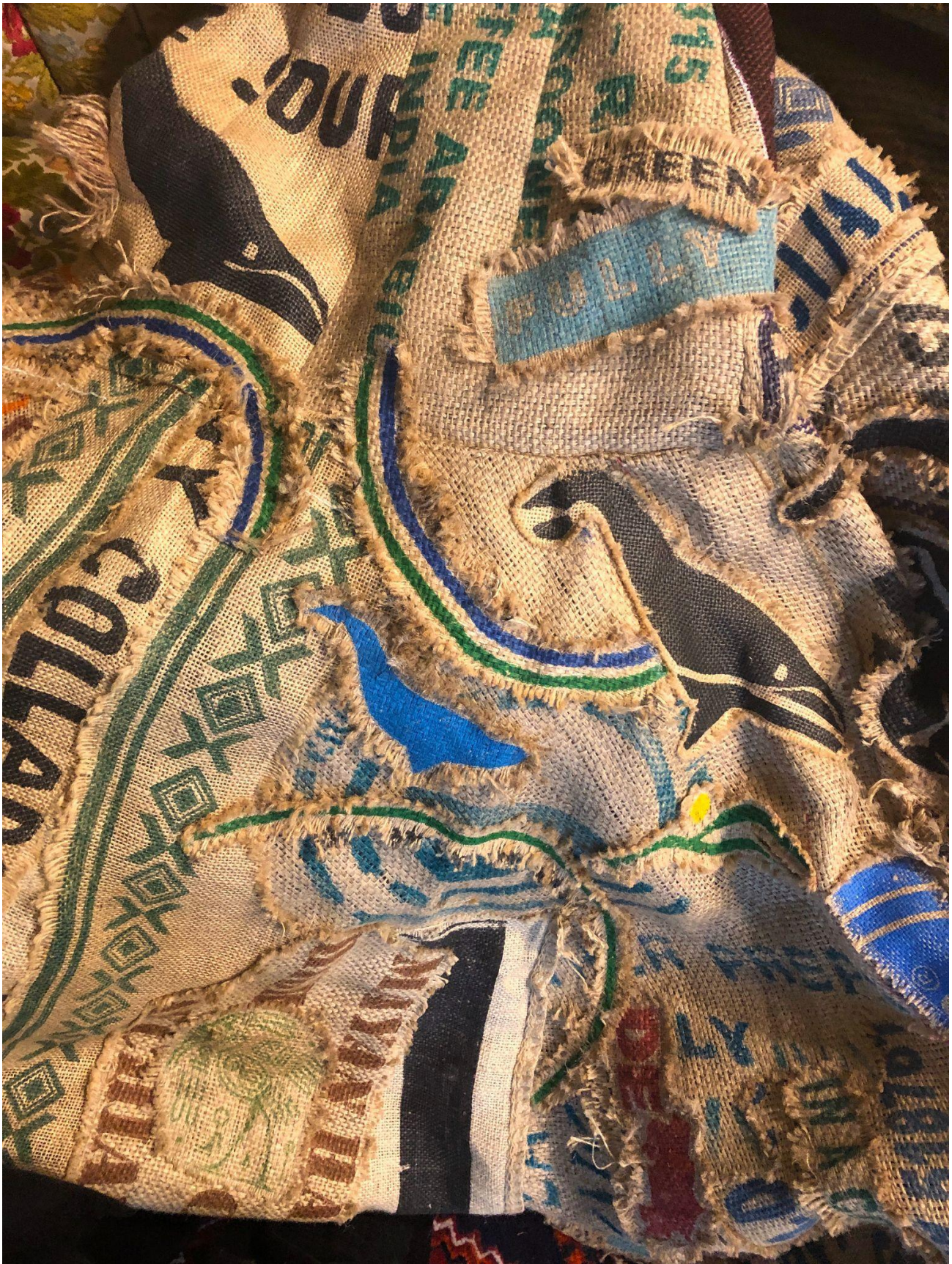


Klimp_050

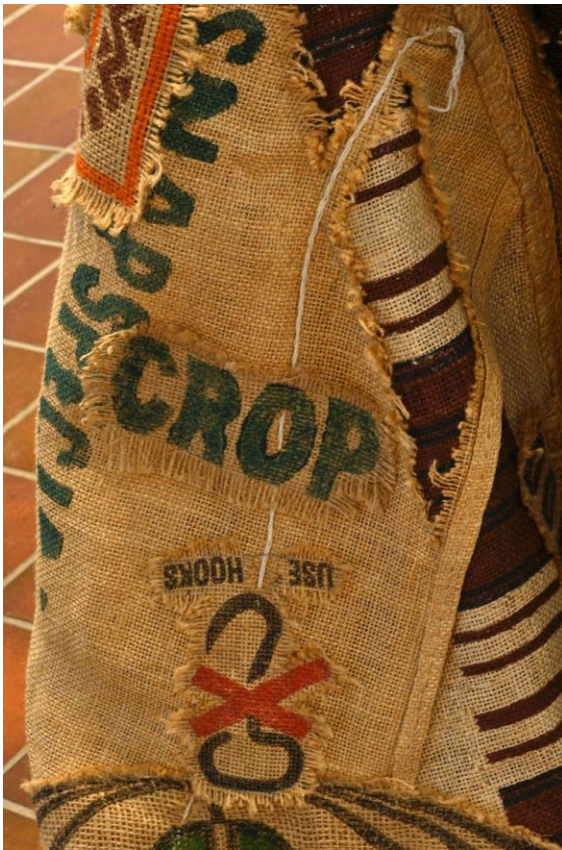


Klimp_051

Klimp_050 - 051 Detail from *The Bride*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining. Photo courtesy of Tanya Klimp.



Klimp_052 Detail from *The Bride*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining. Photo courtesy of Tanya Klimp.



Klimp_053



Klimp_054



Klimp_053 - 055 Detail from *The Bride*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_056



Klimp_057



Klimp_058

Klimp_056 - 058 Details from *The Bride*, 2024, burlap coffee bags, lining. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_059



Klimp_060



Klimp_061



Klimp_062



Klimp_063



Klimp_064

Klimp_059 - 064 Details of *Her Bachelors*, 2024, industrial bore bits made of steel and carbide, dimensions vary. Photos courtesy of Daniel Belland.



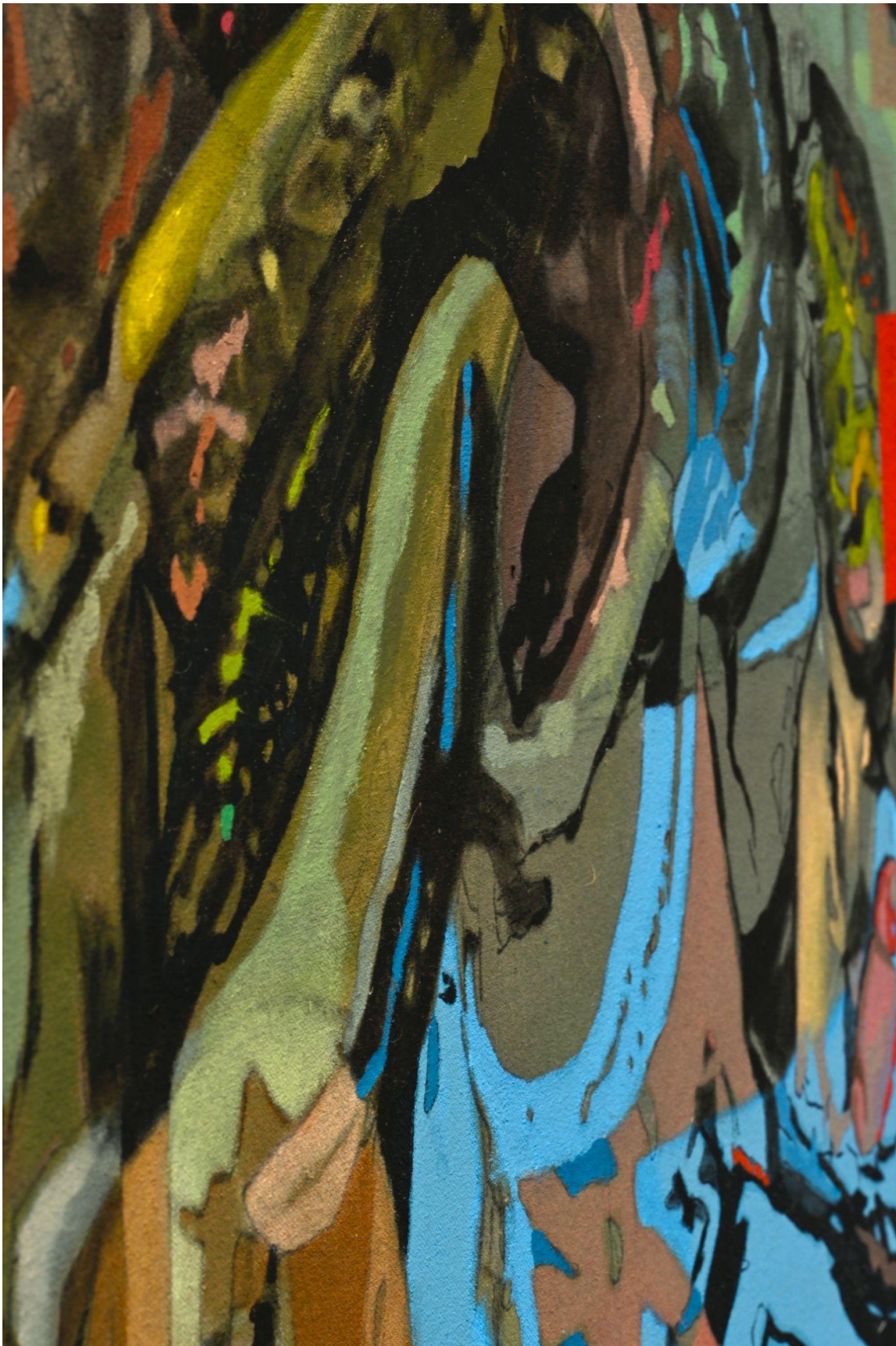
Klimp_065 *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024, Acrylic and oil paint, charcoal, vinyl, thread on canvas, wood frame from salvaged 1947 wood, 80" x 40". Photo courtesy of Tanya Klimp.



Klimp_066 Detail from *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_067 Detail from *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_068 Detail from *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_069 Detail from *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_070 Detail from *Eggs Eggs Eggs*, 2024, Salvaged 1947 wood. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



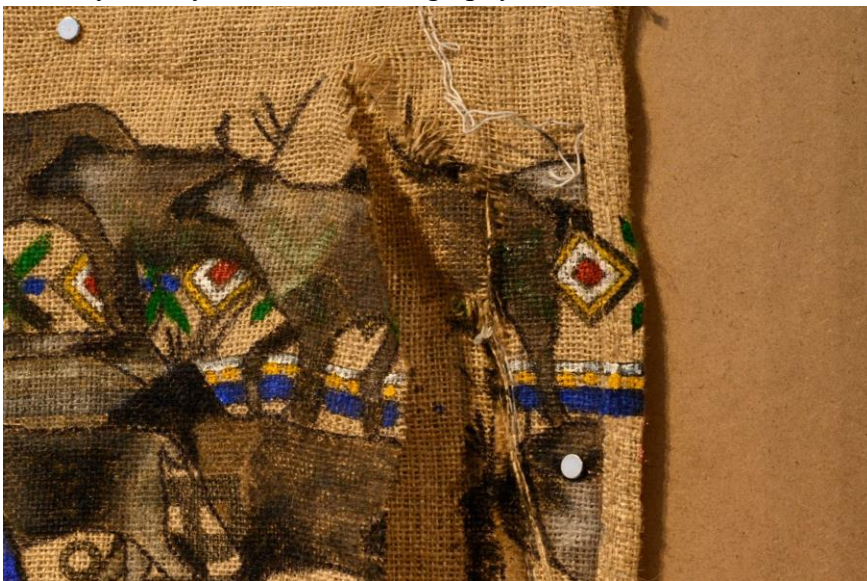
Klimp_071 View of *Sami Love* and *Purruvian Crema*, 2024, oil paint and embroidery thread on burlap bags, frame made from salvaged 1947 wood. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_072 *Purruvian Crema*, 2024, oil paint and embroidery thread on burlap coffee sack, 30" x 50".
Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_073 *Sami Love*, 2024, Oil paint and embroidery thread on burlap coffee sack, 30" x 50". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_074 Detail of *Sami Love*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_075 *Junk Food* from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_076 *Junk Food* from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_077 *Junk Food* from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_078 *Our Best Collaborations!* from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_079 *Southern Crew* from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_080 View Upstairs from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



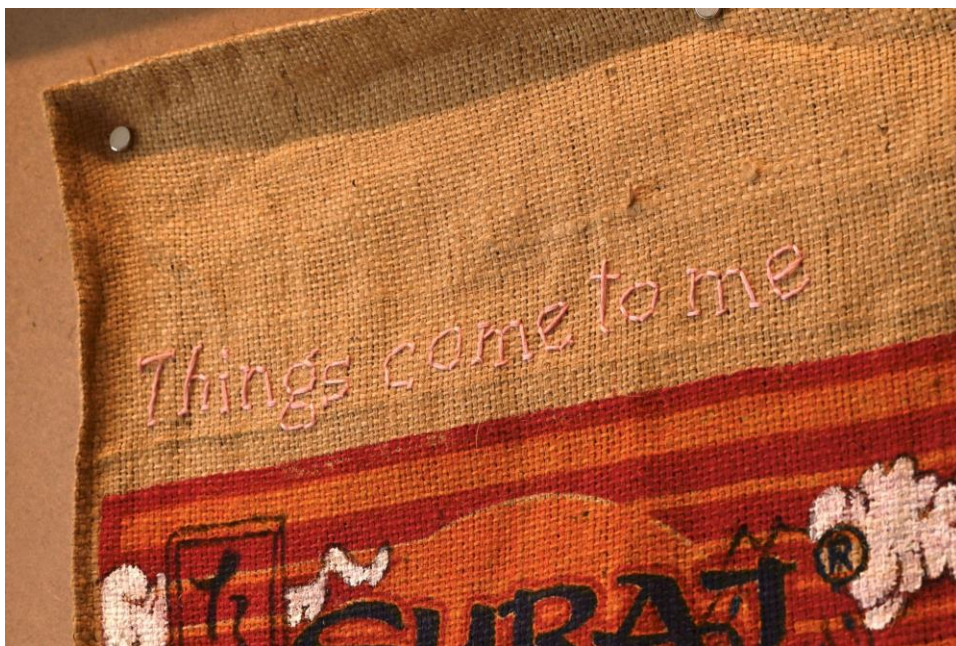
Klimp_081 View Upstairs from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_082 *Planting The Seed*, 2024, Oil paint and embroidery thread on burlap rice sack, 20" x 35". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



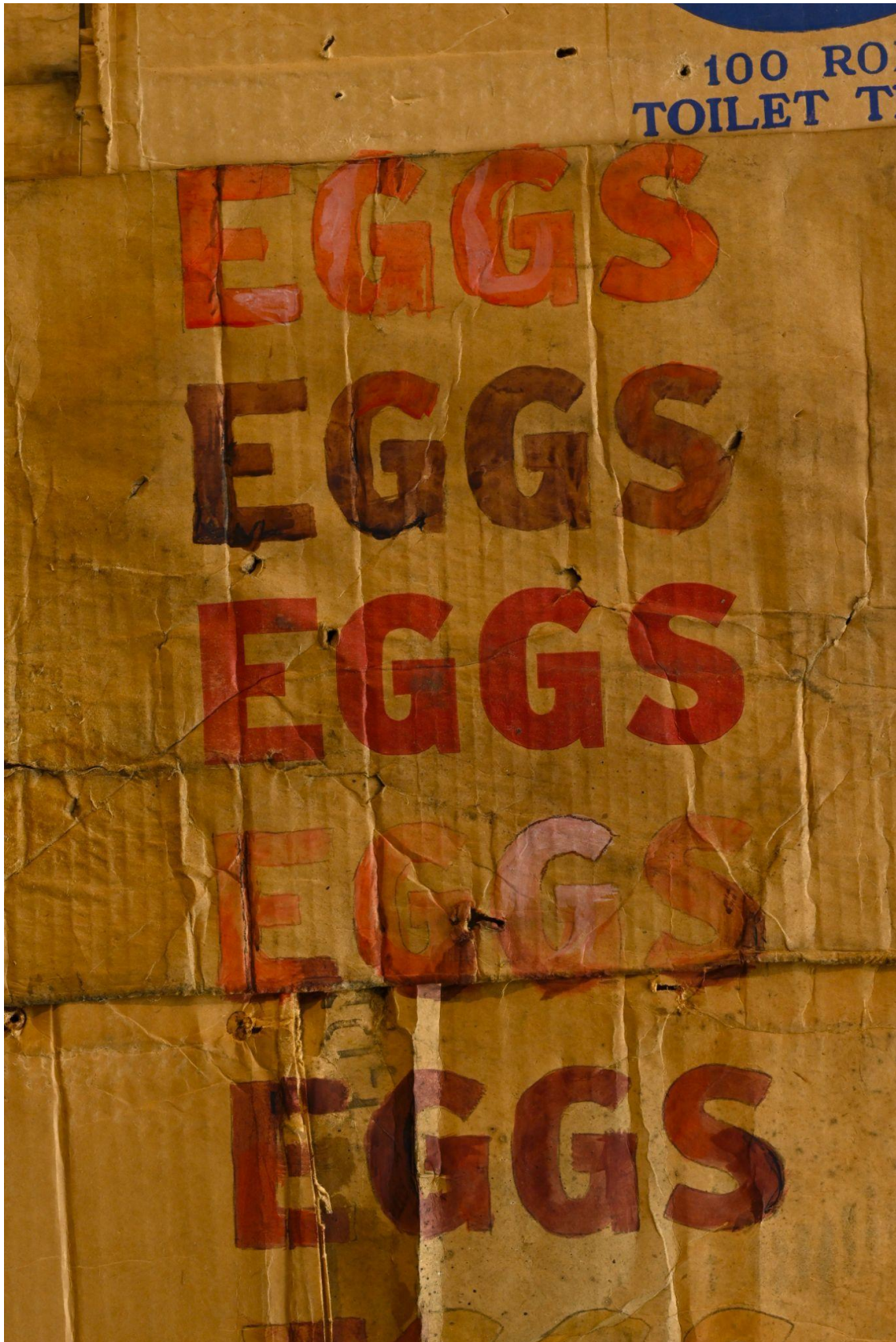
Klimp_083 *Things Come to Me*, 2024, Oil paint and embroidery thread on burlap rice sack, 20" x 35".
Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_084 Detail from *Things Come to Me*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_085 *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024, Acrylic paint and marker on salvaged 1947 cardboard and 1947 wood, 50" x 96" x 30". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_086 Detail from *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_087 Detail from *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



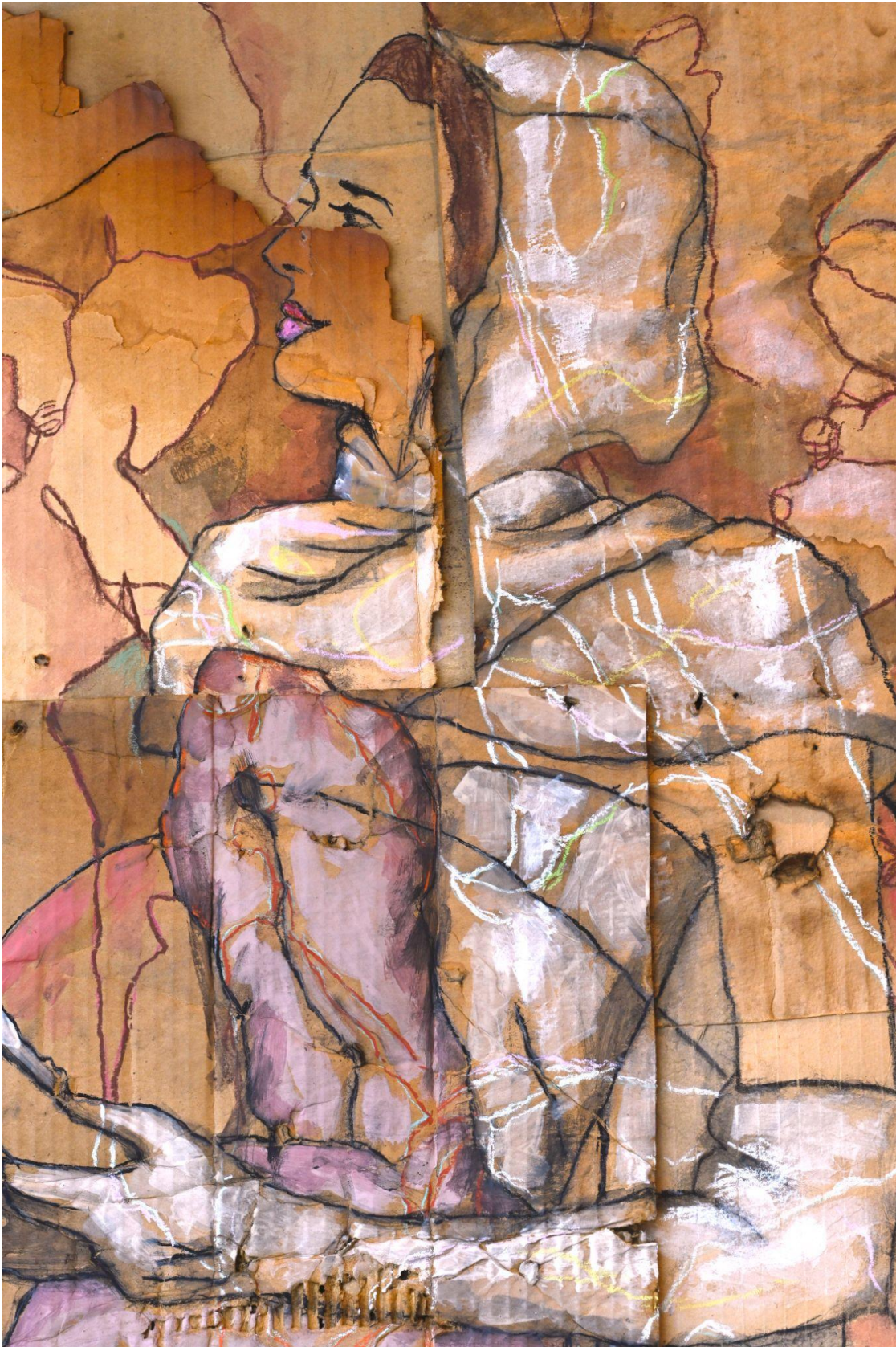
Klimp_088 Detail from *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_089 Detail from *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



Klimp_090 Backside of *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024, Acrylic paint, pastel and marker on salvaged 1947 cardboard and 1947 wood, 50" x 96" x 30". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



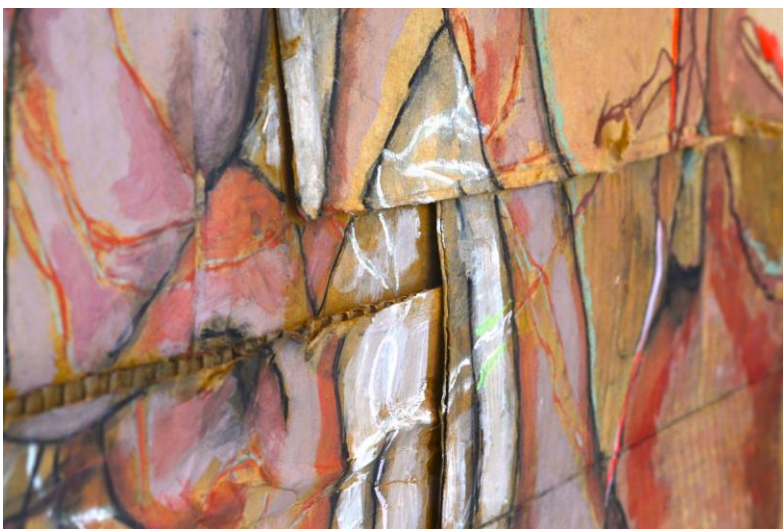
Klimp_091 Detail from the backside of *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package, Uneven*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_092



Klimp_093



Klimp_094

Klimp_092 - 094 Details from the backside of *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Package*, Uneven, 2024.
Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_095 *Burger Wrappers*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrappers, salvaged 1947 wood. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



Klimp_096 View Upstairs from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_097 *Greenwashed*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



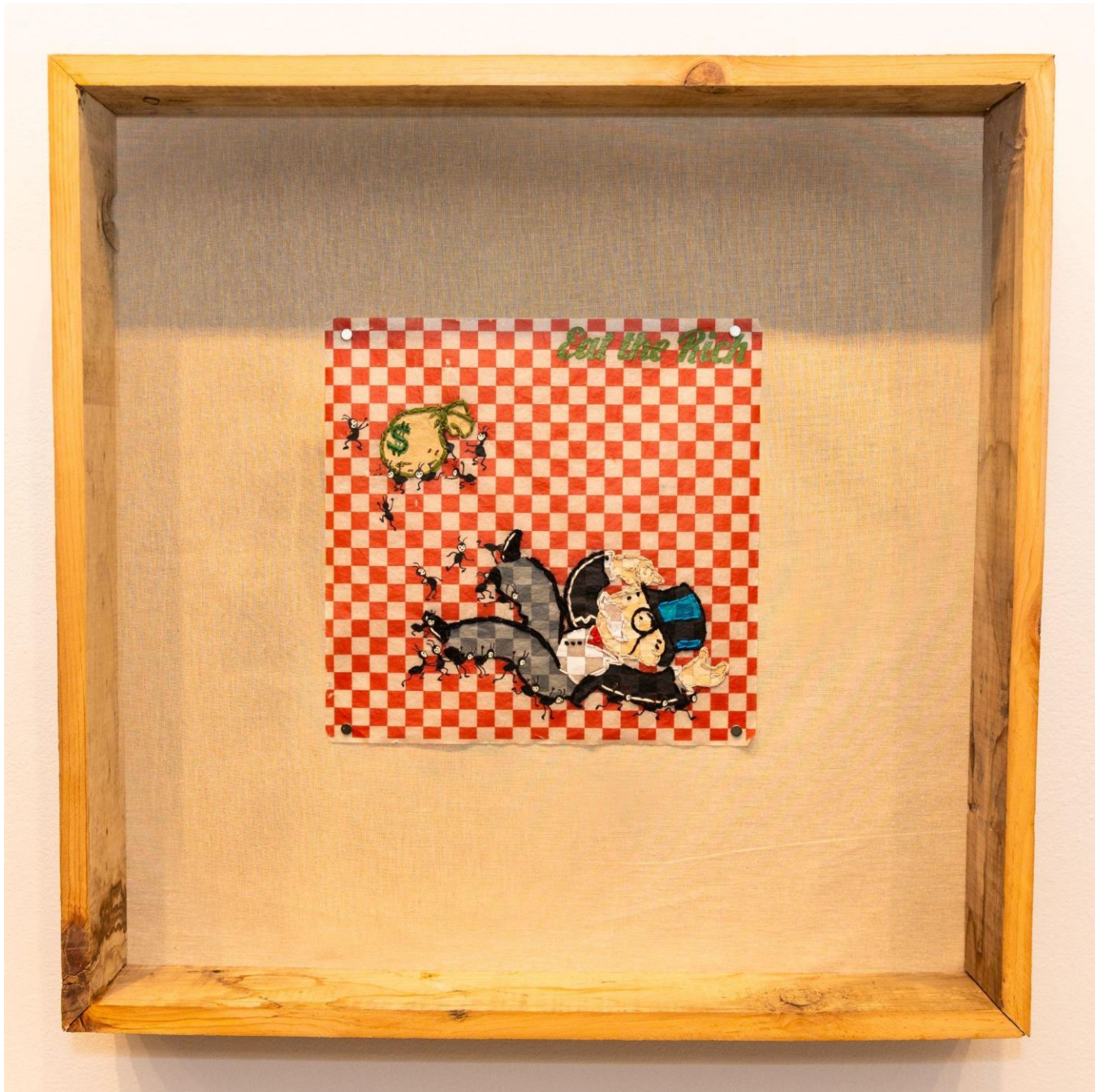
Klimp_098 *EAT ME*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_099 *Bacon King*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_100 *On the Grill*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_101 *Eat the Rich*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_102 *Misfortune Teller*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



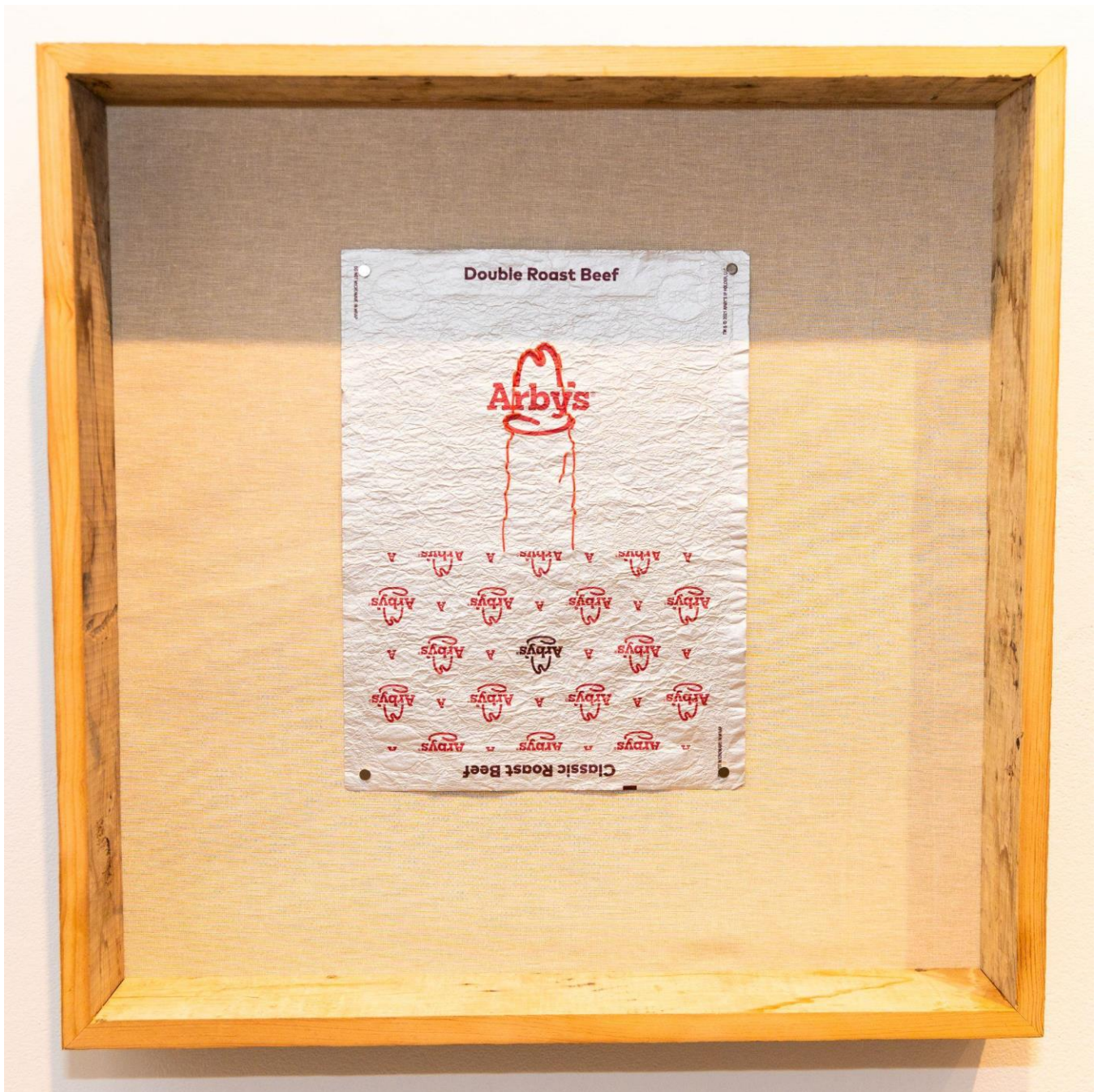
Klimp_103 *You have the Meats*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_104 *FCKD*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_105 *The Works*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



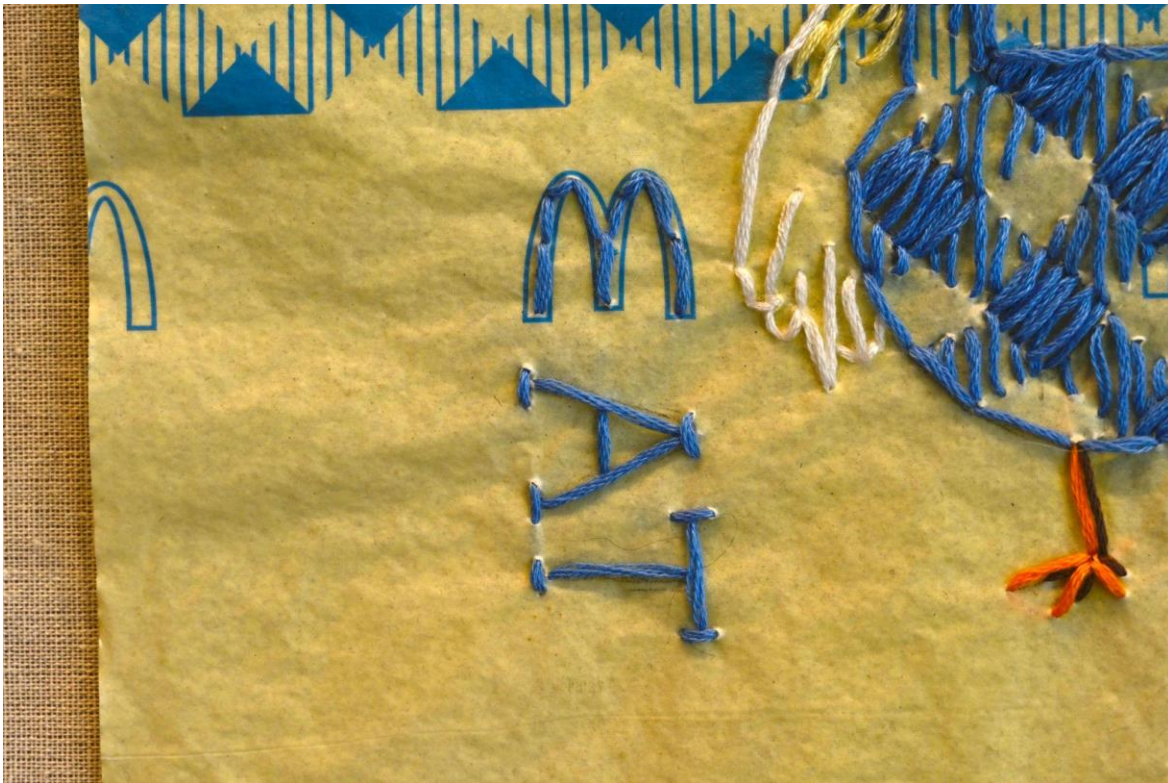
Klimp_106 *Double Entendre*, 2024, Acrylic paint and embroidery thread on burger wrapper, salvaged 1947 wood, 24" x 24". Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



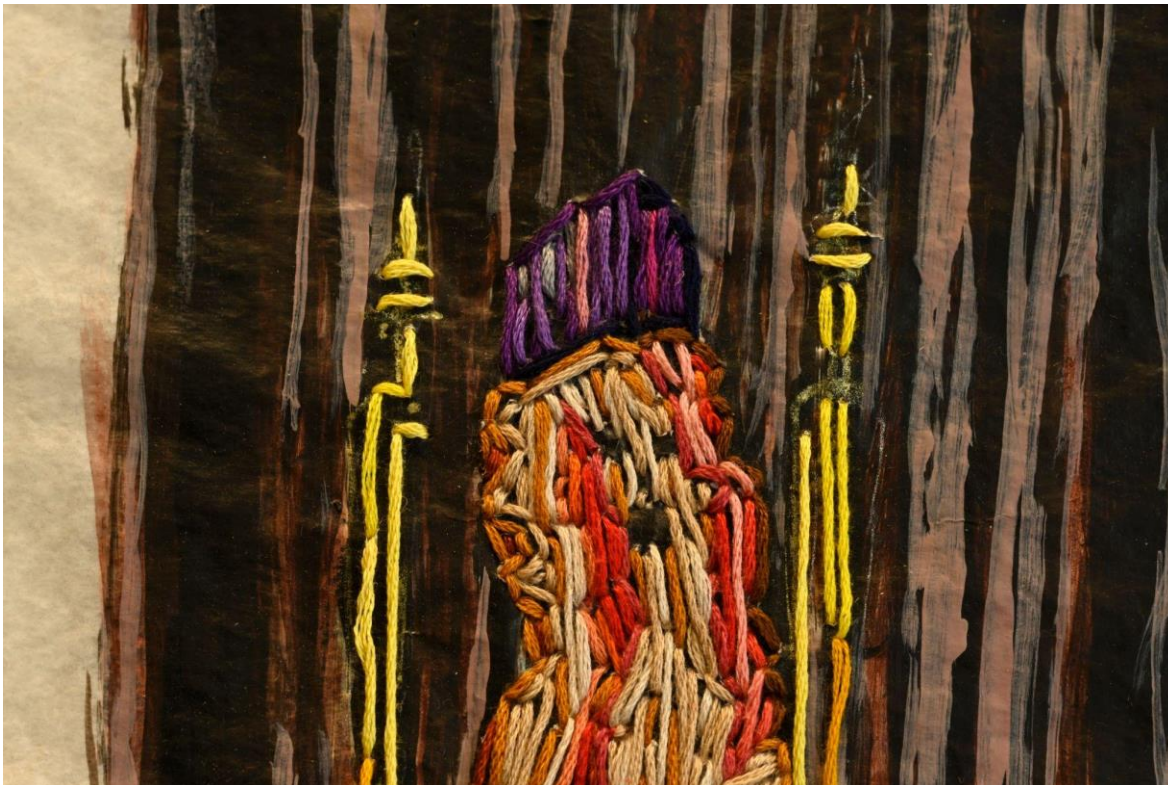
Klimp_107 Detail from *Greenwashed*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_108 Detail from *Greenwashed*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_109 Detail from *EAT ME*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_110 Detail from *Bacon King*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



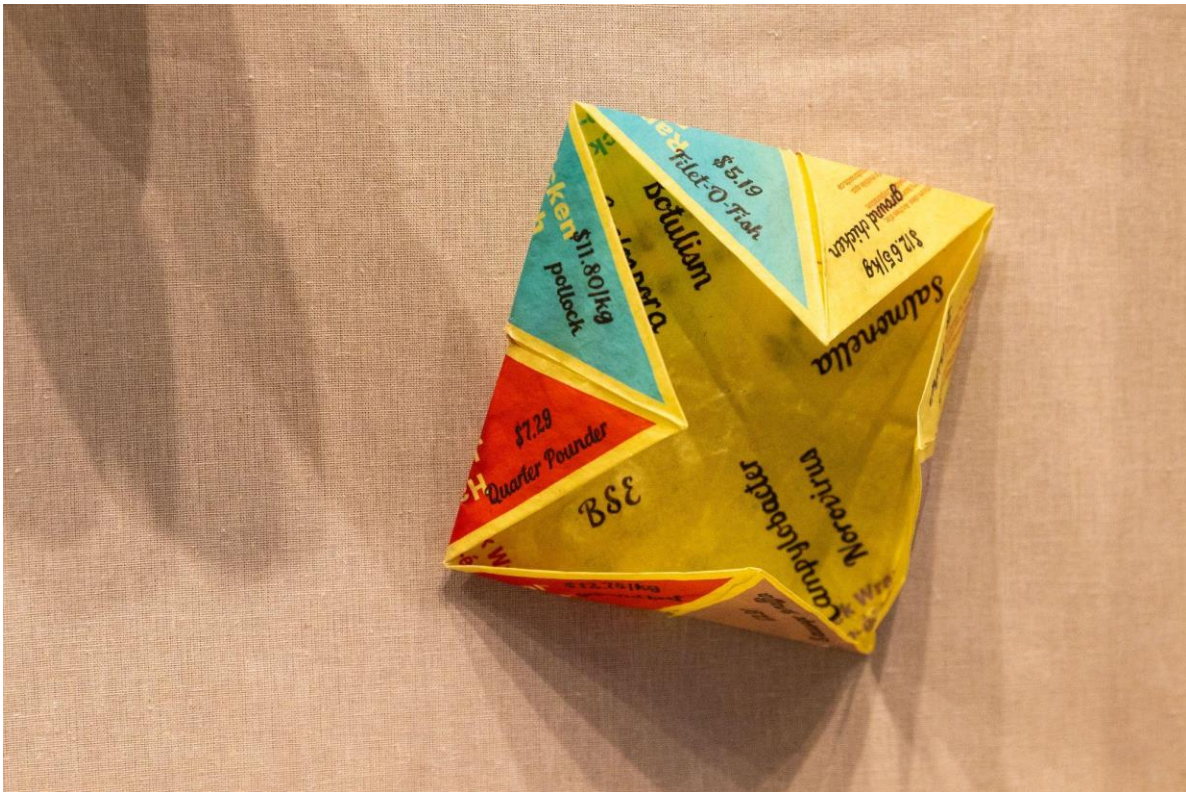
Klimp_111 Detail from *Eat the Rich*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_112 Detail from *Eat the Rich*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



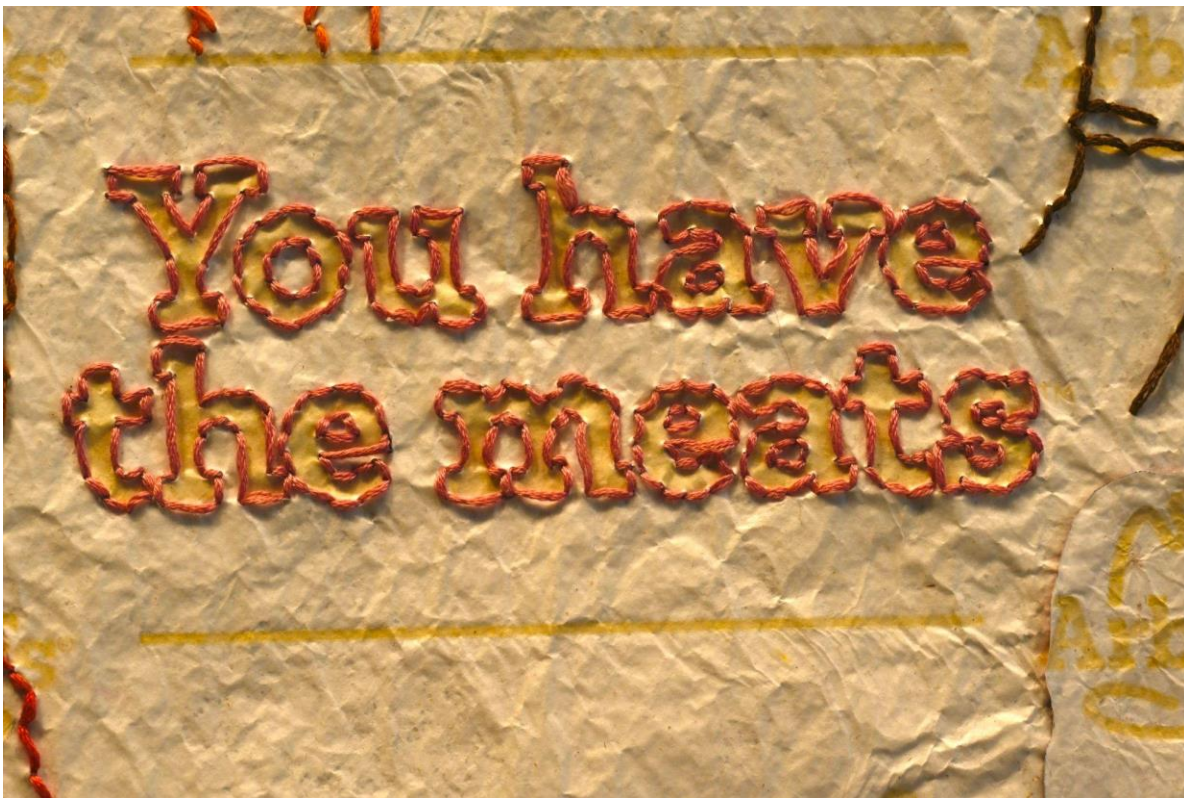
Klimp_113 Detail from *Misfortune Teller*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_114 Detail from *Misfortune Teller*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



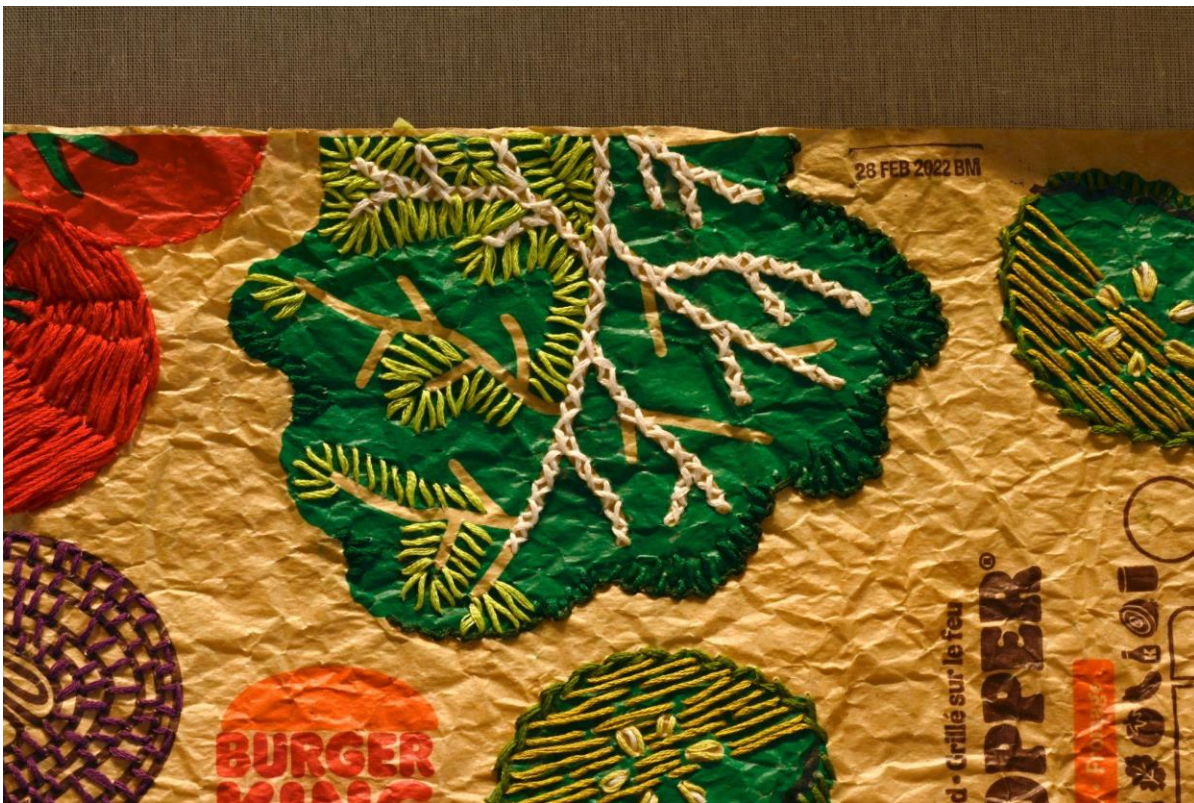
Klimp_115 Detail from *FCKD*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_116 Detail from *You have the Meats*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_117 Detail from *The Works*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_118 Detail from *The Works*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_119 *Handle With Care and Best Before*, 2024, Eggshell inlay and acrylic paint on egg carton, 280 egg cartons (respectively), dimensions vary. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_120 View from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



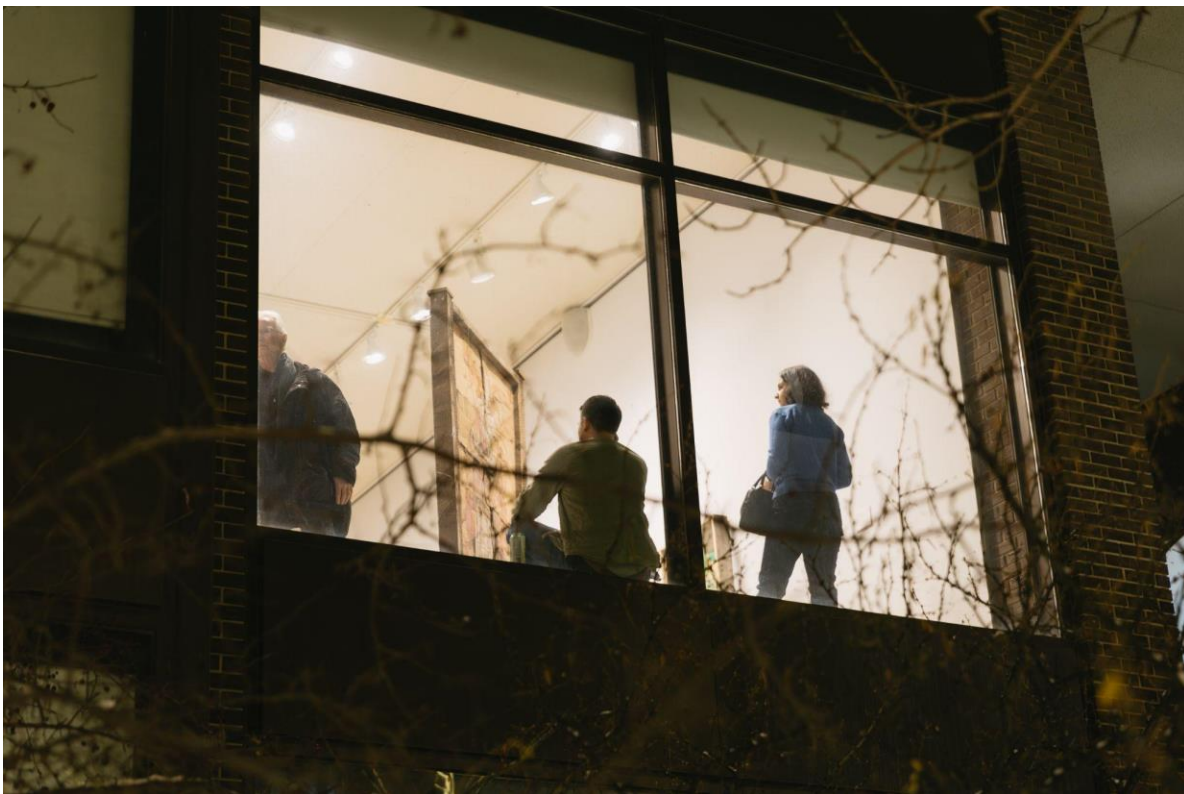
Klimp_121 Detail from *Best Before and Handle With Care*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_122 Detail from *Best Before and Handle With Care*, 2024. Photo courtesy of Daniel Belland.



Klimp_123 View from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_124 View from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_125 View from Opening Reception, 2024. Photo courtesy of Simen Christoffersen.



Klimp_126 *This Show is Trash* artists Darcy Fraser Macdonald and Tanya Klimp, 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.



Klimp_127 *That Show was Trash!* 2024. Photo courtesy of Kaylin Schenk Photography.