

**Aspen Art Museum**  
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# Educator Notes



Installation view: *Second Chances*, 2015. Photos: Tony Prikryl

## Second Chances

March 27–June 28, 2015

## About the exhibition

Examining the conditions of second chances, this group exhibition centers on the idea of the fresh start as well as scenarios of repetition that afford the opportunity for new resolutions. Attentive to the moment in a second chance when outcomes are invisible yet full of potential, the inherent tenet of this exhibition is one of hopefulness.



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## About the artists

Michele Abeles was born and continues to live and work in New York. Her photographs are often staged and combine flattened, graphic imagery—as seen in *Coaches*.

Lucas Ajemian is an American artist who lives and works in New York. For his works such as *Laundered Painting (41 x 37) II*, he washes paintings that other artists have made and given him in a neighborhood Laundromat.

Ida Applebroog was born in New York, where she continues to live and work. She is recognized for her bold, graphic drawings and paintings of the simplified human form.

Robert Barry was born in New York and currently lives and works in New Jersey. As in *Red Cross*, he often works with text and is not only interested in the forms they take, but the space between.

Josh Brand is an American artist who lives and works in New York. Often working in photographic processes, the work *Untitled (Cymbal)* was made not through a traditional camera, but by working with a photosensitive surface.

Matthew Brandt lives and works in Los Angeles. For his photograph *Loveland Reservoir, CA 4*, he not only took a photograph of this location, but also soaked the print in its water.

Andrea Büttner was born in Stuttgart, Germany, and lives and works between London and Frankfurt. Her work *Hill (orange, green)* is made of glass blown by her own breath.

José León Cerrillo lives and works in Mexico City. His work *Como contar cero por uno, de Nuevo* roughly translates to “How to count zero by one, again.” The work demonstrates that even things that are already broken can be beautiful and have value.

Bruce Conner was born in Kansas and died in San Francisco in 2008. He often worked using inkblots and chance arrangements of form, such as in *MARCH 23, 1997*.

Abraham Cruzvillegas was born in Mexico City, where he continues to live and work. His work *Self portrait nude descending a staircase at the Raval* builds on his interest in “autoconstrucción/autodestrucción” [self-construction/self-destruction] and methods of building and eventual destruction that arise from the constraints of poverty, which require scavenging, recycling, and adaptation of materials.

Trisha Donnelly was born in San Francisco and lives and works in New York.

Vincent Fecteau was born in New York and lives and works in San Francisco. His papier-mâché sculpture is the result of multiple re-workings of the intertwined forms.

Ryan Foerster is a Canadian artist who lives and works in New York. He creates abstract photographs such as *communication breakdown* that are the result of chance.

Sergej Jensen was born in Denmark and lives and works in New York. His work *Aftercare* gives materials another chance and allows the scars to be seen, while his untitled piece is a return to classical forms with a new look.

Friedrich Kunath was born in Germany and lives and works in Los Angeles. His work *Second Chances* was made in response to conversations with the exhibition curator, Heidi Zuckerman, and ties in both formally and conceptually with the exhibition’s central theme.

Bill Lynch was born in Mexico and died in North Carolina in 2013. He often worked with rescued plywood and dreamlike imagery. His first major solo exhibition occurred posthumously.

Nate Lowman was born in Las Vegas and lives and works in New York. *Cavity Creep* was created by using discarded materials from his studio.

Helen Mirra was born in Rochester, New York, and lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Most mornings between April 13 and May 1, 2015, she walked around Aspen focused on developing the half-smile, as described by Thich Nhat Hanh.

Katy Moran was born in Manchester, UK, and lives and works in London. She creates abstract paintings with gestural brushstrokes, such as *Smoker's Junction*.

Jean-Luc Moulène was born in Reims, France, and lives and works in Paris. *Organe Dur (Paris, April 22, 2010)* is a seductive, yet ambiguous photograph whose title translates to "hard body" or "hard organ."

Ken Okiishi was born in Ames, Iowa, and lives and works between New York and Berlin. He creates hybrid works and combines video with analog forms like abstract gestural paintings, such as in *Gesture/Data*.

Anri Sala was born in Tirana, Albania, and lives and works in Berlin. Working across a number of different mediums, he explores repetition throughout various media.

Kaari Upson lives and works in Los Angeles. She has worked with recycled materials, and for *Enneagram 8 (Twin)*, she makes reference through the title to a physiological profiling system that aims to understand how we relate to the world, how we think, and how we perceive ourselves.

Voïna is an artist collective based in Russia. The members create works that engage in political resistance or protest, such as *Smooch the Cop*.

## Questions for discussion

- I Can you think of a time when you received a second chance? What did you do with this opportunity and what did it feel like?
- I Some of the artists in this exhibition reuse materials from their studio or elsewhere in order to give them a new life. What object or material would you want to give a new life?
- I How often do you pass judgment on something or someone? What does it take to go back and look at this situation with a fresh set of eyes?



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## Suggested activities

### Autoconstrucción Sculpture

- | Abraham Cruzvillegas created *Self portrait nude descending a staircase at the Raval* using objects that he finds and recycles to give new meaning. The artist uses the term “autoconstrucción” (Spanish for “self-construction”) to describe the process of creatively responding to your surroundings by working with found materials to address a need.
- | Invite students to go on a scavenger hunt to collect objects from around the classroom, home, or nature.
- | Can students create a new object that serves a purpose? Break into small groups so that they can problem solve using more than one recycled material.

### Gesture/Data Portraits

- | In Ken Okiishi’s *gesture/data*, he layers gestural (sweeping and expressive) brushstrokes of paint on top of a television monitor, which is playing a video that was first recorded on a VHS and then transferred to a digital file.
- | Discuss with students the two words that make up the work’s title: What is an example of a “gesture”? What do you think of when you hear the word “data”?
- | Next, invite students to create a self-portrait inspired by Okiishi’s use of materials.
- | Begin by experimenting with gestural brushstrokes using acrylic or oil paint on a transparent acrylic, acetate, or plastic sheet. Encourage students to explore negative space by allowing some of the sheet to remain visible and transparent.
- | While the paint is drying, ask students to take a photograph or short video of one another. Ask them to consider how they want to pose for their portrait to tell a story. Upload these digital files to a computer and load the portrait image/video to full screen. Then invite students to tape their paintings on top of the monitor in the orientation that they find the most interesting.
- | Hold a discussion about each pairing of digital image and painting. Take a picture of the monitor and painting to document the experience and to create yet another layer.

For more information, please contact the Education Department at 970.925.8050 ext. 133 or email [education@aspenartmuseum.org](mailto:education@aspenartmuseum.org).

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