

# Allison Rentz

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Allison Rentz is a metro-Atlanta artist who works in performance, installation, drawing, and multimedia to create social commentary with an autobiographical flavor. She is interested in how people interact with each other and with their environment. Recent works have also included references to the artist's dreams and her life as a single mother.

Allison's art is typically presented in Atlanta, GA; as well as nationally, internationally and on the Web. Her work has been exhibited at The Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Flux Night, Elevate, MODA, Whitespace, Eyedrum, and other art spaces and public places. She was the inaugural recipient of the Idea Capital Grant, and received the Bjork Award from Eyedrum in 2008.

To learn more about Allison's projects: <http://www.allisonrentz.com>.



performance artist

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Photos by Unisa Asokan



2014

"Bubbles, The Universe is My Home"

My ex recently died of lung cancer, but he wasn't a smoker, and he was only 39. This has made me hyper aware of indoor air pollution, especially since we lived for many years in a space that was probably unsafe. While I was touring the parts of the new Eyedrum building that haven't been renovated yet, I was super grossed out and I felt compelled to protect the audience from the possible threats to their health. The wood frame with the circle cutout commanded me to put something in it, and an act of bibliomancy cemented this protective bubble idea for me. The book, which was given to me after touring the space, is called "The Universe Is My Home," includes characters that travel to another galaxy inside a bubble to interact with aliens that look like glowing orbs. Like the characters in the book, the audience encountered the space while inside a human hamster ball.

Performance Installation @ Eyedrum Gallery: Atlanta, GA

B u b b l e s , T h e U n i v e r s e i s M y H o m e

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Photos by Unisa Asokan



2012

“Bagged!”

I put people into red bags. If they didn't cooperate, I treated them like a small child. This idea comes from a dream I had about gangs, in which a rival gang was marking its territory by turning people into their gang colors. This less violent alternative to typical gang warfare appeals to me. My artistic response to the dream was to wrap people in colorful sheets, converting them into a new group/identity through performance art. Flux Night 2012 was the perfect venue for this performance because it happened during rival performers' shows in a raw guerrilla style, rendering it a true act of gang behavior.

Guerrilla performance at Flux Night 2012: Atlanta, GA

B a g g e d !

# Allison Rantz

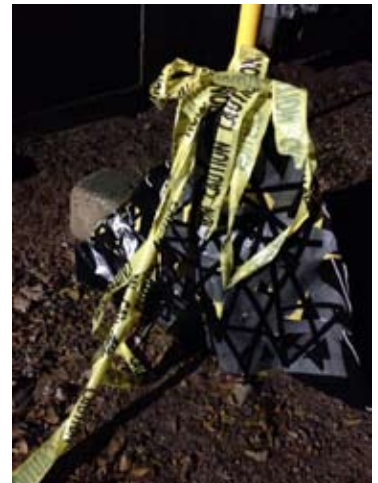
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Photos by Kaitlyn Muma



Photo by Casey McKinney



2014

## "RAPE Alley"

After assessing the chance of rape, Unisa Asokan runs through this alley every day to her apartment and she decided that we should do a performance there as a form of healing from our experiences with sexual assault. My performance consisted of me sitting in my son's car seat on the passenger side of my truck while a friend sat in the driver's seat. We listened to my song and looked at a male figure sculpture in the alley. Site specific performance in an alley: Atlanta, GA

R A P E A l l e y

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2013

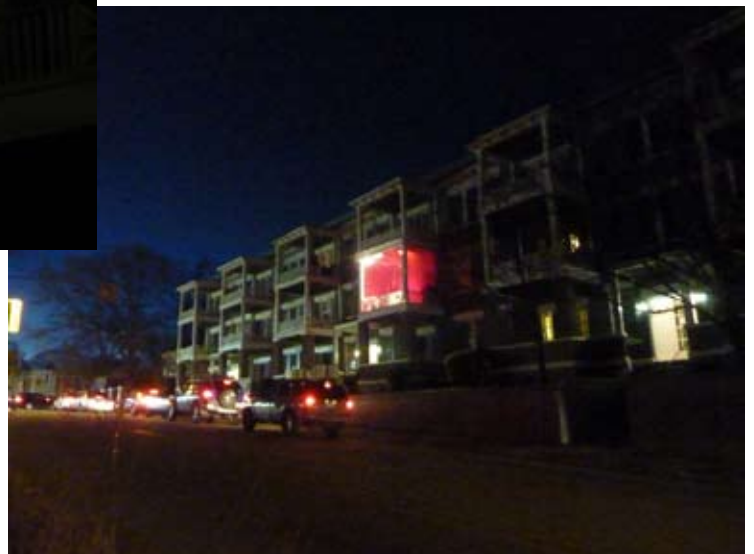
"Rapunzel's Longing Hair: a Chinese Frankenstein Performance"

With the performance art band, Chinese Frankenstein (Allison Rentz, Unisa Asokan, and Stan Woodard), I sang a song of longing, and the audience threw plastic penis sculptures up at me.

Performance on a balcony: Atlanta, GA



Photos by Terry Kearns



Rapunzel's Longing Hair

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Photo by Artrelish

2012

## "Look in the Mirror"

Based on the juvenile idea of a boy using a mirror to look up a lady's skirt, I wore hospital panties with a photo of my son attached to the crotch, and straddled a mirror and beckoned the audience to "Come on. Look in the mirror." I was surprised by the audience's desire to get down on the ground between my legs to look in the mirror. There was a lot of embarrassed laughter. With all those people so uncomfortably next to my crotch, I felt like I was giving birth again.

Performance @ Whitespace Gallery: Atlanta, GA

Photo by Whitespace



Look in the Mirror

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Photos by Unisa Asokan



2013-2014

"Look in the Mirror"

Expanding upon my more modest version of "Look in the Mirror," I inserted a laser printed transparency photo sculpture of my son inside my labia, straddled a mirror and beckoned the audience to "Come on. Look in the mirror."

With all those people so uncomfortably next to my crotch, I felt like I was giving birth again.

Performance @ Doogallery and Flux 2013: Atlanta, GA

L o o k   i n   t h e   M i r r o r

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2011

## "Ping Pong & Mommy"

During this performance, the audience viewed my son, Ping Pong, and I through a window and listened via a baby monitor as, together, we encountered and reacted to the environment I created. In order to eliminate distractions and allow Ping Pong to react naturally, a two-way mirror was arranged on the window.

Ping Pong played with specially made cars and slept on a bed I made for him. I wore long arms to demonstrate the importance of a mother's arms. The audience could hear our interactions and a sound recording over the baby monitor.

Performance Installation @ Flux 2011: Castleberry Hill. Atlanta, GA



Photos by Stan Woodard

M o m m y   &   P i n g   P o n g

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Photo by AtlantaMetroMix.com

Photo by AtlantaMetroMix.com

Photo by Stan Woodard

2011

Donorcycle derives from a post-Japan nuclear disaster dream. It reflects my disdain for what I feel is the inherent danger of motorcycles and its intent is to create awareness for organ donation. Initially conceived for a performance during a motorcycle exhibit at MODA, I also presented this piece at Underground Atlanta. With volunteers dressed in hazmat suits providing the backdrop, I writhed around on the ground with balls. The volunteers performed three different actions: circling around me, standing in a line behind me, and scattering out into the audience. A volunteer “scanned” audience members with a device that provided audio feedback.

Elevate / Art Above Underground Atlanta: Underground Atlanta. Atlanta, GA



Photo by Stan Woodard

Donorcycle

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An attempt to contain a 1 year old's recent obsession of drawing all over everything. The result was a quiet mother and toddler chunk of time.



Photos by Mackenzie Mitchell,  
Jon Ciliberto, and Allison Rentz



M o m m y   &   P i n g   P o n g

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November 26, 2010  
That's a Nice Wall  
some parts are  
too close  
to danger



Photos by Stan Woodard  
and Jon Ciliberto

Inspired by gang graffiti and Sesame Street, I made imagery with my body. This is my version of a gang. There is no one else in the gang because nowadays, my only friend is my son [and he's too young to be in a gang].

This piece was a process piece, and is to be the first in a series. I will eventually be creating a fan sculpture that is mounted on the baby buggy.

Performance @Sidney Marcus Target: Atlanta, GA

T h a t ' s   a   N i c e   W a l l

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photo by Martha Whittington



photo by Stan Woodard

2006

The performance installation consists of the artist crawling on her hands and knees, with a sculptural representation of a container for hate strapped onto her back. The journey includes the donning of the hate container, collection of hate, tampering down of hate, and then a process of removal [or containment] that is based on the model of nuclear waste disposal at Yucca Mountain.

"Bring it on! A series of solo positions" @ the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center: Atlanta, GA  
Supported in part by the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center.

c o n t a i n i n g = h a t e

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## ARTEMPEEREALISM



2007

What initially began as a playful investigation into a law that elevates the importance of art, soon became a response to the American political/economic system, and its hostility towards artists and art. So far, I have considered the conflicts and tactics of claiming ownership over land, and engaging people and other animals to become citizens. Further questions remain to be answered, such as, "What would the role of money be?" and, "How would this country interact with neighboring entities?"



Photos by Stan Woodard  
@Spruill Gallery action



Spruill Gallery action:

1. I drew a plan to turn the Spruill Gallery into artempeerealism.
2. I sat on my dictator chair and looked for potential artarmy recruits in the audience. Good thing I brought my binoculars because the audience was very far away.
3. The recruiter [John Lowther] enlisted new members.
4. We [the dictator and artarmy] carried part of the camp over the land, symbolically marking the territory. The final destination was the Spruill sign, which we draped with the artempeerealism sign.
5. The dictator sat on her chair, using a plastic wrapped stick to control entrance and exit to the gallery.

dictator

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2005

Interactive performance installation with various phases, including a compost bin.  
294" x 129" x 96"

"Art in Freedom Park Public Art Exhibition 2005:" Atlanta, GA  
Supported in part by Art in Freedom Park.



c o m p o s t

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2004

Interactive performance installation including a projected animation with sound, sculpture, and pulleys that explores my artistic direction.

Approximately 500 square feet

"Conversations with the Contemporary Figure" @ Eyedrum: Atlanta, GA

I \_ s o \_ i l l u m i n a t e d   : : :   t h e   b i f u r c a t i o n

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2004

Installation with plastic, drier sheets, interactive video projection, performance, sound, laser printed transparencies, pulley, rope, wire, sound, and a shopping cart.

214" x 188" x 144"

"SEEN + HEARD" @ the B Complex: Atlanta, GA



I \_ s o \_ c y c l e

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2004

Plastic, laser printed transparencies, cellophane tape, thread, wire, basketball goal, permanent marker, and rope.

A performance installation about control.

13' x 5' x 10'

"The Windows Project" @ the Downtown Arts Center: Lexington, KY

Supported in part by the LACC.

Follow Me

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2003

Floor leveling compound, fabric, lego robot, confetti, overhead projector, transparencies, great stuff, performance, and recycled materials.  
Interactive installation with a political and personal perspective.

8' x 6.5' x 8.5'

Small Gallery @ Eyedrum: Atlanta, GA



M e s s ,   n o   m e s s .   P 1 \_ 4 \_ R 3 = C 1 \_ P 3

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2006

Performed by Allison Rentz; conceptualized by John Lowther and Allison Rentz, with text and audio by John Lowther and Allison Rentz. Sound engineering by Jeff Rackley. A part of the Atlanta Poets Group's Language Harm show: themed "How Stuff Works", inspired by "DER LAUF DER DINGE" ("The Way Things Go") a film by Peter Fischli and David Weiss.

Performance intervention in a tunnel in Beziers, France.

Photos by Nath Sapin of [www.sourcediffuse.org](http://www.sourcediffuse.org)



e g g o h w e e \_ s t

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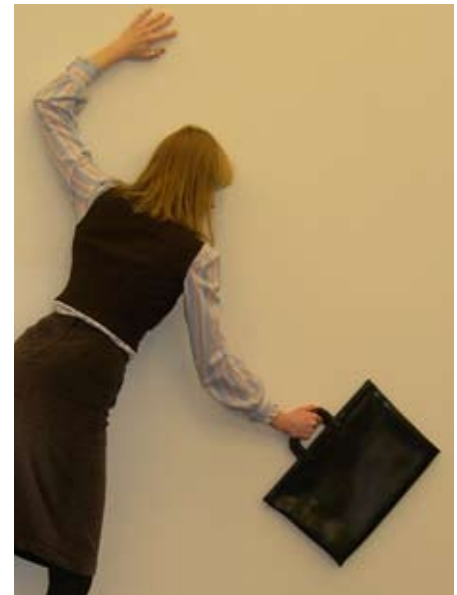
Allison Rentz, Karen Tauches, and Kirsten Mitchell, photo by Jon Ciliberto



photo by Jon Ciliberto



John Lowther, personal assistant



June 2006 - January 2007

The ARTILLECTUALITES was a collaborative exploration of the business of art. We were artistic socialites who would party together, and dress in themes. We had many meetings, conference calls, and email correspondences. The group dissolved because of differences about money and how one acquires it.

the ARTillectualites

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2008-2010

Playful musical performance loosely based on random American cultural influences.

With Stan Woodard and Nisa Asokan.

Various locations including Eyedrum, Freedumb Fests, and the Highland Inn: Atlanta, GA



One night, Nisa, Allison, and Stan played in Stan's studio. In a moment of fun, they lit a bamboo torch and went on a parade to the cemetery. Ha, Ha, it's like "Chinese Frankenstein!" The group was born. Nisa and Allison tended towards a more complicated theatrical approach than Stan preferred. "It's a band!" Stan says.

C h i n e s e   F r a n k e n s t e i n

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## EXHIBITIONS

### 2012 - 2014

#### "RAPE Alley"

I sat in my son's car seat on the passenger side of my truck while a friend sat in the driver's seat. We listened to my song and looked at a male figure sculpture in the alley.

Performance in an alley: Atlanta, GA

#### "Bubbles, The Universe is My Home"

Performance installation in the Existing Conditions show at Eyedrum: Atlanta, GA

#### "Beware of the Sith"

In a performance to reclaim my safety, I demonstrated moves learned in a self defense class while confronting scary people on the Beltline.

Commissioned by Hormuz Mininia for a party on the Beltline: Atlanta, GA

#### "Rapunzel's Longing Hair: a Chinese Frankenstein Performance"

With the performance art band, Chinese Frankenstein, I sang a song of longing, and the audience threw plastic penis sculptures up at me.

Performance on a balcony: Atlanta, GA

#### "Bagged!"

I put people into red bags. If they didn't cooperate, I treated them like a small child.

Guerilla performance at Flux Night 2012: Atlanta, GA

#### "Look in the Mirror"

Straddling a mirror and beckoning the audience to "Come on, Look in the Mirror," the piece begged the audience to assume the position of a curious adolescent male and look between my legs. A plastic photo of my son's face was held in place with my labia. The piece morphed with each performance.

Performances @ Whitespace Gallery, Doo Gallery, Flux Night 2013 and Mint Gallery: Atlanta, GA

### 2010 - 2011

#### "Ping Pong & Mommy"

During this performance, the audience viewed me and my son, Ping Pong, through a window and listened via a baby monitor as, together, we encountered and reacted to the environment I created.

Performance Installation @ Flux 2011: Castleberry Hill. Atlanta, GA

#### "Donorcycle"

With volunteers dressed in haz mat suits providing the backdrop, I writhed around on with balls.

Dance Truck @ MODA's Drink in Design!: Atlanta, GA

Elevate / Art Above Underground Atlanta: Underground Atlanta. Atlanta, GA

#### "Ping Pong & Mommy Rock!"

An attempt to contain a 1 year old's recent obsession of drawing all over everything. The result was a quiet mother and toddler chunk of time.

@ Sous Whiskey Marrin: Atlanta, GA

PERFORMANCE

# PERFORMANCE ARTIST

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## "That's a Nice Wall"

Inspired by gang graffiti and Sesame Street, instead of graffiti permanently installed on the wall, I made imagery with my body.

Performance Intervention @ the Sidney Marcus Target parking deck: Atlanta, GA

## 2007 - 2009

### "Putatoring"

PutAting is a collaborative book-art experiment started by Allison Rentz and finished by over 20 contributing artists. The blank books are handmade from recycled materials like plastic waste, trash, and discarded paper.

Published by Fifth Planet Press: ISBN # 978-1-880855-16-4

### "labour free"

Performance installation sketch. Fertility rituals are handy and necessary in cultures. A short piece of magical hope.

The SCAD space in Studioplex: Atlanta, GA

### "Chinese Frankenstein"

Playful musical performance loosely based on random American cultural influences. With Stan Woodard and Nisa Asokan.

Various locations including Eyedrum, Freedumb Fests, and the Highland Inn: Atlanta, GA

### "Idea Capital Grant"

Inaugural recipient of a grant from a grass roots initiative established to help jump start Atlanta-based, artist-initiated projects that might not otherwise be supported through mainstream arts institutions.

### "type specific"

Site specific performance intervention on an old wagon.

Le Flash: Castleberry Hill. Atlanta, GA

### "trueBADoor"

Performance Installation with an exhibition of drawings.

Garage Projects: Atlanta, GA

## 2006

### "ARTILLECTUALITES"

Performances about socializing, identity, and art as business.

A collaboration with Karen Tauches and Kirstin Mitchell.

Interventions in Georgia, USA

Video of "c o n t a i n i n g = h a t e,"

Video documentation of the performance installation. Video footage by Stan Woodard.

"AIR TERMINAL: INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION OF VIDEO ART" @ Primo Piano LivinGallery:

Lecce, Italy

### "eggohwee\_st"

Performance Installation collaboration with John Lowther [poet].

Intervention in Beziers, France

PERFORMANCE

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## "containing = hate"

The performance installation consists of the artist crawling on her hands and knees, with a sculptural representation of a container for hate strapped onto her back. The journey includes the donning of the hate container, collection of hate, tampering down of hate, and then a process of removal [or containment] that is based on the model of nuclear waste disposal at Yucca Mountain.

Performance installation. Supported in part by the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center.

"Bring it on! A series of solo positions" @ the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center: Atlanta, GA

## 2005

### "compost"

Interactive performance installation. Supported in part by Art in Freedom Park.

Art in Freedom Park: Public Art Exhibition 2005: Atlanta, GA

### "corporate striping clean"

"I Miss A Merry K UH" performance installation.

"Embedded: Living with Technology" @ Athica: Athens, GA

## 2004

### "Follow Me"

A performance installation about control. Supported in part by the LACC.

"The Windows Project" @ the Downtown Arts Center: Lexington, KY

"I Miss a Merry K UH \*ccw\* demo w/King George", and 2-d work.

"Terrorist Art 2: Election 2004" @ Polvo Art Studio: Chicago, IL

### "I\_so\_illuminated ::: the bifurcation"

Interactive performance installation exploring my artistic direction.

"Conversations with the Contemporary Figure" @ Eyedrum: Atlanta, GA

### "I\_so\_cycle"

Performance installation about the interweaving of consumerism and capitalism.

"SEEN + HEARD Festival" @ the B Complex: Atlanta, GA

## 2003

### "Mess, no mess. P1\_4\_R3=C1\_P3"

Interactive installation that includes a sculptural element that houses a Lego robot and an overhead projector.

Small Gallery at Eyedrum: Atlanta, GA

### "Controle"

Interactive performance installation - a collaboration with family members exploring control issues on a personal level, as well as in a broader social context.

"UpRoAR Goes Postal!" @ the old Post Office: Roswell, GA

## E D U C A T I O N

AB Studio Art - Drawing and Painting

University of Georgia: Athens, GA

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## P R E S S

### 2013

Kearns, Terry. "Year in Review: A photo scrapbook from ubiquitous Architecture Tourist"

<http://www.artsatl.com/2013/12/architecture-tourist/>

### 2011

Fox, Catherine. "Review: FLUX 2011, where the art biennial, the circus and diverse Atlantans came together"

<http://www.artsatl.com/2011/10/review-flux-2011-where-the-art-biennial-the-circus-and-atlantans-of-many-stripes-come-together-for-a-convivial-evening-in-the-street/>

Alexander, Andrew. "Dance Truck hauls into MODA"

Creative Loafing Atlanta: <http://clatl.com/culturesurfing/archives/2011/04/05/dance-truck-hauls-into-moda> April 5

### 2008

Grad, Ben "Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList"

Burnaway: <http://www.burnaway.org/2008/11/allison-rentz-artempeerealist/> - November 5

Abernathy, Jeremy. "Truebadoor: Helpless Naked Piping Loud"

Ghostmap Microwave: [http://ghostmap.blogspot.com/2008/05/truebadoor-helpless-naked-piping-loud\\_06.html](http://ghostmap.blogspot.com/2008/05/truebadoor-helpless-naked-piping-loud_06.html) - May 6

Hicks, Cinque. "Tales of the Gothic"

Bare & Bitter Sleep: [http://www.influxhouse.com/comments/825\\_0\\_1\\_0\\_C/](http://www.influxhouse.com/comments/825_0_1_0_C/) - April 29

### 2006

Lowther, John. "micro review - allison rentz @SLM in Roswell"

Artnews@pd.org listserve - November 4

Ciliberto, Jon. "MANufacturing = LOVE"

Artnews@pd.org listserve - November 6

Public Domain Podcast with Robert Cheatham, Karen Tauches, and Susan Cipic - October 5

Lowther, John. "Containing Hate (not quite a review)"

Artnews@pd.org listserve - July 16

### 2004

Best Festival Dedicated to a Hormone

Creative Loafing: Atlanta, GA - Best Of Atlanta 2004

### 2003

Fox, Catherine. "ART 'GOES POSTAL'."

Access Atlanta in AJC: Atlanta, GA - October 23

Feaster, Felicia. "Advertising Meets Activism."

Creative Loafing: Atlanta, GA - July 31

PERFORMANCE

ARTIST

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I am a multi-faceted Atlanta artist who makes performances, installations, drawings, and other art objects that are influenced by my life, dreams, and control.

Throughout my art career, my performances have incorporated various forms of social control. Lately I've been concentrating on affecting the audiences' experience with my performances. My center has shifted from what I experience (and if my field of vision contains beauty) to what the audience sees happening, and what they feel.

I am a mentally ill, single mom of a 5 year old, and my art reflects that. I am excited that lately I've been working on a performance and drawings with my son. He's been in my performances before, but this is the first time he knows what a performance is and is making decisions about it. We shall see how that goes...



INSTALLATION

PERFORMANCE ARTIST

## Review: Year in Review... (1 of 1)

6/29/2014

Year in Review: A photo scrapbook fro...

### Year in Review: A photo scrapbook from ubiquitous Architecture Tourist

SHARING THIS ARTICLE



AUTHOR

Terry Kearns

December 27, 2013

TEXT SIZE

By TERRY KEARNS

*This is the first in a series of articles looking back at the arts in Atlanta during 2013, to run through January 3.*

Camera at the ready, Terry Kearns, aka [the Architecture Tourist](#), is a fixture at art and design events. We asked him for this 2013 scrapbook, 15 images (painfully) whittled from the [hundreds he took](#). We've included one of the Tourist himself so you will recognize him in 2014.



Allison Rentz in 'Rapunzel's Longing Hair: a Chinese Frankenstein Performance.'



The Atlanta Knitteratti in East Atlanta Village. Brigitte Flood, Annie Perry, Katherine Kearns, Stephanie Hass with Trevor Jones of Living Walls.



The Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, one of the churches on the Atlanta Preservation Center's organ crawl.



Impromptu dancing during Sourwood Honey Band's performance on the Atlanta BeltLine.



Restaurant designer Smith Hanes (The Optimist, Watershed, No. 246, etc.) talks to Blake Howard, host of 'Creative Mornings Atlanta.'



Ion Yamazaki in 'A Mundane Affair,' a performance about dementia, at Flux Night.

artsatl.com/2013/.../architecture-tourist/

# performance artist



## Review: FLUX 2011... (1 of 3)

# Review: FLUX 2011, where the art biennial, the circus and diverse Atlantans came together

October 3, 2011

TEXT SIZE  

By CATHERINE FOX

You know the story about the blind men and the elephant. Their descriptions of the beast depended on which part they touched. I feel that way about **FLUX 2011**. The experiences of those attending this year's version of the annual arts festival, on September 30, varied greatly depending on what they saw (impossible to see everything), what time they were there and whom they ran into during their wanderings.

Because of this, we invite people who were there to tell us about your experience in the Comments section below. We will also be publishing observations from other quarters in the coming days. As for the view from my part of the elephant, it seemed to me that Flux Projects, which staged the festival, and Executive Director Anne Dennington mounted a pretty damned successful community arts event.



A street scene during FLUX 2011. (Photos by Adam Davila)

The parade put on by the Krewe of the Grateful Gluttons, with its creative do-it-yourself lanterns and participatory feeling, set the right tone. I'd like to see it last longer or recur intermittently throughout the evening, because such activity in the streets definitely goesos the energy level.

"Livers," a roaming performance by the gloATL dance troupe (below), served that function as well. Following the dancers through the streets was a kick: Cirque du Soleil meets the running of the bulls. Crabbing and loping through the streets, swarming beneath a tree, they led observers into one of the more magical spaces of Castleberry Hill.

SHARING THIS ARTICLE



AUTHOR

Catherine Fox

MORE ARTICLES BY AUTHOR

Woodruff Arts Center names Virginia Hepner its new president and CEO

Art with a bang: A video about fireworks artist Cai Guo-Qiang

Review: Elegant, frisky, abstract, figural - variety defines sculpture at Atlanta Botanical Garden

CAVIA

# PERFORMANCE ARTIST

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## Review: FLUX 2011... (2 of 3)



Their animal-like characters and misshapen Caliban costumes resonated with the grotesque creatures in Monica Cook's projection, 'Volley,' the 2011 public art piece from Atlanta Celebrates Photography. Though billed as interactive, it was not, and although I admire Cook's imagination, this piece was almost too repulsive to watch.

If our animal nature was one theme, the end of nature was another. Both Kim Anno's projection, 'Men and Women in Water Cities,' and Eric Corrie's 'Water Will Be Here' alluded to rising seas brought on by global warming. The most spectacular of all the spectacles, 'Home Sick,' a four-story 3D projection by Jeff Demetriou and Fake Love (below), added another vision of apocalypse in its chronicle of the creation and destruction of an Edenic landscape.



The festival also offered experiences of different scales and types, from perceptual to conceptual. Coming upon the vertical tubes of light floating and swaying in an alleyway ^ Brian Holcombe's 'Sun Chimes' ^ was a delight, as was Amy Rush's peephole puppet show, 'Hotel Tableau,' which spoke to our fantasies about what goes on behind closed doors. D'AIR Aerial Dance Theatre was good circus fun.

There were, of course, the disappointments. Nancy Floyd's self-portraits deserved a better presentation. Allison Rentz's performance with her child was pretty aimless and rather creepy ^ one could question the propriety of putting a child on display like a zoo animal, and way past bedtime to boot. Medeology Collective's 'Exquisite Corpse' was a high concept unfulfilled. The visitor who saw only those works could have left FLUX feeling underwhelmed.

# performance artist

review

## Review: FLUX 2011... (3 of 3)

As with a number of Atlanta's outdoor projects, mapping and signage could be improved. It might make sense to condense the site. Some of the projects in more out-of-the-way locations got short shrift from foot-weary visitors. And speaking of foot-weary, it would be helpful to provide seating areas not connected to retail and more water stations.

The crowd, estimated at 10,000, doubled that of FLUX 2010. The downside of increased attendance was the difficulty in seeing some of the more popular or time-based works. Ultimately, however, people are as important to this kind of event as the art. The participants were diverse ^ multigenerational, multiracial, multisocial ^ yet I'd wager that most people crossed paths with someone they knew. Both are good, community-fostering things. The Castleberry Hill district, with its narrow streets, human scale and lively storefronts, set the stage for interaction, an urban experience that is not common enough in Atlanta.

### COMMENTS

**Elyse Defoor**

Oct 07

For me, Medeology Collective's "Exquisite Corpse" was the best piece. It was bright, full of experience, and truly delightful. Jeff's installation was beautiful, well thought out and executed; the sound made it even better. The rest felt like a circus. Wish Gregor Turk's piece would have been much larger; loved the concept of it though. I think as a whole, last year's FLUX was better, but am thrilled that more people came out to see it!

**Allison Rentz**

Oct 04

We were in a locked in the space, which was only viewable through the window because I wanted Ping Pong to be safe, and to not be distracted by the audience.

**Anonymous**

Oct 04

Hi! It was not past Ping Pong's bedtime. In fact, I put him down to sleep upstairs at his bedtime. Also, the performance was driven by Ping Pong's interests. He dressed up in a costume, played with cars, played hide and seek, played with the boxorn, and played in his box house. Did you read my project description? The performance was right on target. It was very rude of people to tap on the window.

**ruth dusseault**

Oct 04

Please block traffic from the entire district next time. Why were there cars driving through the festival? Drunk pedestrians don't herd. Like artists, they need space to express themselves.

review

performance artist

## Tales of the Gothic (1 of 2)

<http://www.influxhouse.com/archives/A2008041/>

Tue Apr 29, 2008 :: Tales of the Gothic

Allison Rentz in "Truebador"

by Cinque Hicks

Last Friday's Castleberry Hill Art Stroll was an improvement over last month's stroll by about a factor of ten. If March's shows appeared to be organized by safety-minded accountants at CNN, April's shows are by in large gutsier and riskier with bigger payoffs and grander, more exhilarating flops.

Which side of the fence Allison Rentz's "Truebador" at Garage Projects fell on is a matter of debate, but I for one won't quibble with her willingness to take a broadminded risky leap.

The installation consisted of her usual materials--plastic sheeting, recycled plastic waste products, rope, tape, sharpie marker, and chains--in a minimal palette of black, grays, white, and red. This is the palette of death metal album covers and Tim Burton flicks. Rentz also seems to allude to heavy metal tropes in the spiky gothic imagery of her ink drawings and in her personal calligraphy, which I always imagine has an Iron Maiden soundtrack playing behind it.

Throughout the performance Rentz engaged in a self-absorbed monologue of gestures, including wrapping, tying, excavating, and rearranging of pieces that recalled imagery of birth, loss (breakdown), and recovery. Periodically, the artist would stop all other activities and intone some speech into a resonating container of some kind (a water bottle?) using long, distended syllables. I wish I could have made out more of the speech, but the noise from the street and the jazz band at Noir competed sonically for attention. Nor did the speech seem particularly intended for me, or for anyone other than Rentz herself and that water bottle or whatever it was.

Drawing from "Truebador," ink on paper in plastic sheet

Rentz's performance was an exercise in public vulnerability. The artist seemed to be trying to figure things out as she went along in an intuitive and naive sort of way. This stands to reason since Allison Rentz has been living more or less in public for the last several years. She begs on the internet for money to help pay her credit card bills. She appears at public lectures and forums and makes loopy announcements about her art empire. For Rentz, there appears to be no distinction between the public and the private. Her performance then took on the feeling of watching a teenager playing with things in her room, refusing to clean it up, while the volume in her earbuds is pumped up to 10.

The whole death metal thing enjoyed a brief, black explosion in the art world a few years ago. Banks Violette and Sue de Beer were displaying their adolescent melancholy to an art world that seemed happy to revel in public teen angst. Is Rentz's work an extension of that aesthetic? Maybe. It certainly shares the same sense of a teenager's personal world of dark forces that require signing a pact of irreversible damnation before being admitted. Her work, too, is adolescent in that way; that is, awkward and looking at itself as a dark imponderable. It is always occupying a space where the world is a terrifying carnival ride of disequilibrium.

But if it is gothic, it's gothic as filtered through a southern sensibility of layered age, rot, history, and decay. Where Violette is shiny and slick, Rentz is worn and broken. She is Southern Gothic. This brokenness in the face of great dark forces brings to mind the southern gothic of Michi Meko's latest gambit at Eyedrum or Brian Parks's lonely music in lost spaces.

PERFORMANCE ARTIST

# Allison Rantz

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## Tales of the Gothic (2 of 2)

These artists are all cringe-inducingly vulnerable. They let their flaws direct their work toward what always feels like a demise or endless struggling of some sort. They are all William Faulkner characters, producing "horror as well as amazement." Succeed or fail, I'm enjoying the experience as they take us down this long, dark slide to oblivion.

Posted by: MAZE on Tuesday, 29 Apr 2008 | 10:29 AM

<http://www.influxhouse.com/archives/A2008041/>



CAVIAW

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Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList (1 of 5)

## BURNAWAY

Written By Ben Grad on November 5, 2008 in Interviews



Allison Rentz, dictator. Photos by Ben Grad.

ARTORMANCA ARTIST

VIEW

# Allison Rentz

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## Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList (2 of 5)

Jeremy and I met up with Allison Rentz just a few days after she performed with Chinese Frankenstein at Eyedrum's tenth anniversary party. In between winding the chains and yards of plastic which keep popping up in Rentz' work, we chatted about artempeeREALism, Being An Artist, the trouble haunting one of Rentz' new pieces, and a few of my favorite past performances.



Rentz, collecting the debris after her show at Eyedrum's 10th anniversary celebration.

**I guess I couldn't deal with current events anymore, so I decided I wanted my own country. And the dictator thing... well, I was concerned that I might be related to Hitler, so that's part of it... also, I like sitting on a big chair and telling people what to do.**

**I don't really know much about people, but my family says the dictator thing isn't true. It's a kind of negative criticism of myself. The dictator thing isn't really very good, but that's just what it is.**

**—Rentz**

PERFORMANCE ARTIST

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Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList (3 of 5)



Rentz shares a sketchbook inspired by her dreams.

**It took many years for me to get myself so I do art everyday, most of the day, you know. It used to be really erratic.**

**Right now there's a deadline for some things, and I'm a little bit concerned about money. I've been going through years recently where I'm just like 'I don't care! I don't care about a career; I don't care about money' Then I did care...then I couldn't care...then I didn't care if people saw my work at all. If my projects happen, it's okay, but mostly it's for me.**

**—Rentz**

performance artist

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Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList (4 of 5)



Allison Rentz is a hard artist to “get”—both in interviews and in viewing her work. So much of what makes up her installations is inspired during her daily life or in physically preparing the space. By the time Allison’s art is ready for public viewing, the evidence of her struggle has mostly vanished.

One of my favorite things about following Allison this year has been seeing the change in my understanding of her installations.

Take, for example, my response to her April installation at Garage Projects:

Rentz’ live performance was basically incomprehensible – but not incomprehensible in a good way, where the piece suggests a basic unity that the viewer’s just not able to grasp.

—Me

performance artist

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Allison Rentz, artempeeREAList (5 of 5)



Truebadoor, Rentz



So I spend my daytime recording my dreams. I don't necessarily always work from them, but sometimes just looking at this stuff—it's part of the process.

—Rentz

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## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (1 of 8)

TUESDAY, MAY 06, 2008

*Truebadoor:*

Helpless, naked, piping loud



*Truebadoor*, performance by Allison Rentz. (Images courtesy of [Proclaim It Lost](#).

You can read [Ben's reaction here](#).) As Allison transformed herself into her interpretation of a modern-age troubadour, she used black Sharpie to draw designs on her skin.<sup>1</sup>

*My mother groan'd! my father wept.  
Into the dangerous world I leapt:  
Helpless, naked, piping loud:  
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.*

- William Blake, "[Infant Sorrow](#)" from *Songs of Experience*

CAVIA

PERFORMANCE ARTIST

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (2 of 8)

I arrived at last month's Castleberry art stroll with fairly high expectations. The formula in my brain looked something like this:

Allison Rentz + Garage Projects = delightfully Surrealist performance art madness. Yet unfortunately – and I say it with genuine regret – *Truebadoor* was a disappointment. Part performance, part sculptural installation, and part drawing exhibition,<sup>2</sup> the mission of the show remained unclear. What happened?



*Truebadoor* installation at large. I was (pleasantly) surprised to read [Cinque Hicks' reaction](#) to the show; although we were apparently in the same room, our minds were in entirely different solar systems. His interpretation cites the aesthetics of Southern Gothic as well as, amazingly, death metal album covers. Wow.<sup>3</sup>

Upon entering Garage Projects' modest exhibition space, the visitor was confronted by a large, [biomorphic mass of chains](#) (above and below), twisted aluminum, and great sheets of stretched plastic. The installation created several organic planes of negative space set at different angles and degrees visibility. Allison navigated through these various spaces, either at a distance or sometimes at less than an arm's length from "the audience." Her performance, while not exactly dance and nothing at all like stage theatre, was inspired although haphazardly executed.

ARTIST

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (3 of 8)

Her **instrument of choice** – while it certainly looked great – may have been the critical point of sabotage. In another clever use of recyclables, Allison transformed a two-liter bottle into a bright red, dreamworld equivalent of a troubadour's flute. This one, however, was designed to *muffle* the human voice rather than *magnify* it. Unfortunately, it did its job a little too well. *Truebadoor* – in a show that, with its name, paid homage to the traveling **poets of 12th century Europe**, it's a bit disheartening when you can't hear the performer.



And trust me – we really wanted to hear! It must have been a conspiracy of accidents: equipment malfunction coupled with the nonexistent acoustics of the room and the distracting, ambient roar of Atlanta nightlife. As the eponymous garage door of Garage Projects yawned open onto Peter's Street, city noise and foot traffic passed freely into and out of the art space.

In fact, it was the show's architectural aspect – both in terms of Garage Projects and as manifested by the artist's created environment – that amplified the difficulty of the performance. Allow me to use the concept of **the fourth wall**. If a stage director wants to "break the fourth wall" – to penetrate the audience's physical comfort zone – the director must develop strategies and stage notes well in advance.

performance artist



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## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (4 of 8)

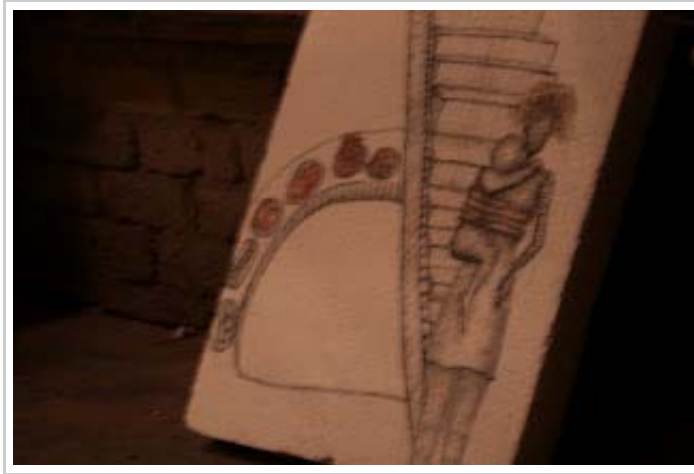
But in performances like *Truebadoor*, the situation is completely reversed. There simply *was no fourth wall*, and although they had no cognizance of the fact, gallery visitors had little to discourage them from walking into or through the performance area. When I look at our photos, taken from within that womb-like spider's nest of a space, it's hard not to imagine the artist's terror: *What the hell am I doing here? Do these people understand at all?*



Some sort of "device." Perhaps this is like that other device installed closer to the head of the room. Allison said it was some sort of *laundry pulley mechanism*, and she's used it as a kind of personal symbol in other installations.

performance artist

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (5 of 8)



*Untitled*, another "naïve" image suggestive of some major themes: maternity, being born, giving birth, etc. During the performance, I noticed that Allison would periodically stop to gaze toward this image for a few seconds before returning to her routine. She said that she was "listening" ~~to the painting~~ for inspiration. It doesn't sound crazy to me; I seriously admire her candor. Plus I'm still a fan of concepts like psychic automatism and visual **free association**. **Those crazy Surrealists!**

It's an important fact that artists who turn to performance don't have the same training as stage actors; the difficulty of *Truebadoor* certainly earns my respect. But all artists (and writers) have to develop a certain relationship to fear – a type self-knowledge that we master in order to effectively engage the public with our various dreams and cultural interrogations.

So with that said, I'd like to offer some words of encouragement. Though it's an often recited 20th century cliché (as in the attributed "**shamanism**" of **Jackson Pollock**, **Joseph Beuys**, or Ana Mendieta) I'll say it anyway: if you really have a vision - whether it's a troubadour or whatever form this vision takes - we, the public, *need* our artists to Become It.

CAVIA

PERFORMANCE ARTIST

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (6 of 8)

*Untitled*, another "naïve" image suggestive of some major themes: maternity, being born, giving birth, etc. During the performance, I noticed that Allison would periodically stop to gaze toward this image for a few seconds before returning to her routine. She said that she was "listening" ~~to the painting~~ for inspiration. It doesn't sound crazy to me; I seriously admire her candor. Plus I'm still a fan of concepts like psychic automatism and visual **free association**. **Those crazy Surrealists!**

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**Become our Troubadour, our Shaman**

***piping loud / Like a fiend hid in a cloud.***

Oh, and don't forget to laugh. : )

--

<sup>1</sup> **On the use of Sharpie:** Although it seemed a bit unprofessional, somehow it added an unexpected aesthetic effect. Instead of simply covering or decorating her body, it actually emphasized the unclothed, and therefore vulnerable, quality of her skin. Although no one likes to be reduced to a stereotype, she seemed to incarnate the heroics of "struggling artist." (I mean that as a compliment.)

**Otherwise,** I didn't really like the use of Sharpie on plastic and on metal. I'm certainly no expert on sculpture, but maybe something else would have been better. Nothing against Sharpies; **Mike Germon** has mentioned a plan for a show of images created with nothing else. I wonder if he still wants to do it.

performance artist

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (7 of 8)

around singer Björk and *The Cremaster Cycle* by Matthew Barney. (Not to mention Hugo Ball's concept of *gesamtkunstwerk* and the feminist performance tradition of Yoko Ono and Carolee Schneemann) If you want to know more, you should buy me a drink.

**Also, on death metal:** The Nov./Dec. issue of *Art Papers* ran a cover story on this same subject. They called the article "Crypto Logo Jihad: Black Metal and the Aesthetics of Evil," and the cover image is an appropriation of the black-and-white cosmetics made famous by Kiss. I wasn't sure if it was a sign of progress or of decadence... until I read the article. It's fascinating and a little wild: discussions of murder, encryption technology, and the dialectics of "ruthless individualism" and "collective empowerment." I guess what interests me the most about *Art Papers* is when they break what appears to be their own sense of taste...

\*\*

POSTED BY JEREMY ABERNATHY AT 5/06/2008 09:00:00 AM

### 33 COMMENTS:



Ben Grad said...

Poem from William IX's wikipedia entry:

"Thus I give up joy and delight,  
and squirrel and grey and sable furs."

2:54 PM

Cinque said...

Great review. I forgot about that issue of *Art Papers*. It sat around for 2 months without getting read. Now where did I put it...?

5:26 PM

review

performance artist

## Truebadoor: Helpless, naked, piping loud (8 of 8)



Jeremy said...

Same for me. I think Jonathan is right; the images in the mag aren't very exciting. But when you finally get around to reading (weeks or months later), the articles can be pretty good.

If anyone tried to click the images earlier, the thumbnail links were all screwed up. They should work now.

;)

5:34 PM



ALLison REntz, dictator said...

Thank you for your review.

1. My apologies for the confusion: I meant that I was listening to a figure in the installation [I'll try and post a picture of it later], not this drawing.

2. Here is some more info about the piece:

<http://allisonrentz.blogspot.com/2008/05/about-truebadoor.html>

1:01 PM

review

performance artist

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## Castleberry Hill Art Stroll (1 of 2)

### Proclaim It Lost

Art in Atlanta, Atlanta in Art.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2008

#### Castleberry Hill Art Stroll

(Updated! See below.)



performance artist

CAVIAW

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## Castleberry Hill Art Stroll (2 of 2)



I stopped by [Allison Rentz](#)' performance Friday because I'd looked through a few still photographs of her hanging installations and thought they had a lot of potential. The installations are preoccupied with fairly powerful themes - weight, entanglement, birth, and, less directly, music/speech/sound. Unfortunately, Rentz' live performance was basically incomprehensible - but not incomprehensible in a good way, where the piece suggests a basic unity that the viewer's just not able to grasp.

(Jeremy's posting a longer review on his blog sometime towards the end of the week)

review

performance artist

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## "MANufacturing = LOVE"

Artnews@pd.org listserve - November 6, 2006

by Jon Ciliberto

A flat tire did not prevent me from seeing Allison's performance on Saturday. It reminded me again of how excellent an artist she is.

I attach three photos.

Allison did not one day decide, "Hey, I think I will be an artist", and then follow the art world's lead. What she is and what she does are the same, and this is one reason that her art and performances are so rich and strong. It is not the case that she thought, "Being an artist is cool," and "I'll get to wear funky clothes and hang out with cool people", and then via a close knowledge of hip magazines and fashionable materials she began constructing herself as an artist. Allison is a translator of something beyond the existing and her fluency is a result of capacities inherent, rather than an opportunistic reviewer of the lingua franca of galleries, museums and art history. When I see her performances, I am reminded that she is unable not to hear steadily a stream of untranslated information, and nor is she able to cease translating it through her own skill and sweat.

I am reminded that there are demons.

Her art work is remarkably consistent, without ever becoming fixed or static: her sources are not an end product, but rather a fundament which speaks and speaks and one is aware that despite the miles of plastic and black marker and tree limbs and packing tape she has collected and formed over the years, this source is not only unexhausted, but in fact growing and evolving through this very process, and through her process of growing in the world.

That her work shiningly and ceaselessly reveals this richness is proof enough of its authenticity.

Her most recent performance indicates the depth of an artist's work, in: narrative, form, rhythm, spatiality, and metaphor. That is, the observer is clearly aware of not merely the outward appearance (plastic sheeting, costume changes, sweeping pebbles, etc.) but also of: a magnification of time, the bittersweet repetition of actions, the isolation of the individual, the necessity of the Other, intimate and public spaces, and so on. Further, one is aware that outward appearance and these many additional layers perceived are not arbitrarily put together, but that all of the parts are formed and related to one another by virtue of a guiding idea. And, like any worthwhile guiding idea, it is not better expressed in a short paragraph (the useless artist's statement: useful only when there isn't any art present), but presents itself with clarity and obscurity and a clue to the observer: the more you look, the more you see.

Jon C.



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## "Containing Hate (not quite a review)"

Artnews@pd.org listserve - July 16, 2006

by John Lowther

if you saw Allison Rentz' performance last night you already know that it was incredible. if you didn't see it she is performing tuesday thru saturday during gallery hours (11-5 but till 8 on thursday). & if you go, be sure to catch the opening movements which take place in a side room where one must lift a sheet of plastic to enter a small viewing space in order to watch her don the hate container and read a couple of pieces of text before exiting that room to begin her careful journey around the contemporary. it was great to watch the crowd reactions last night, people sidling left and right as she would angle toward them and then everyone following or guesing where she might go next so that they could be well positioned to catch the next set of actions. i am still pondering what feels (to me at least) like a split between the public, even social address of the piece (per the wall text and some of what she read aloud) where the goal is to draw hate out of the social environment -- and the intensely personal address with which she opened the work, facing herself in a mirror in that small side room. [the Other as internalized?...] i bugged out of the contemporary after the performance and then heard one rave review after another as parts of the crowd began to wander into eyedrum. superlatives multiply as i try to say something more specific so i guess i will stop now. the Adorno quote below speaks to my experience of last night, substitute 'art' for 'thought' (if needed). see her performance while you have the chance!

john lowther

The value of a thought is measured by its distance from the continuity of the familiar.

-Adorno

review

# performance artist

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Madmen

## Best Festival Dedicated To A Hormone

Hey, they proclaim their hormonal allegiance right in the name, but EstroFest's SEEN + HEARD event, put together masterfully by interim Artistic Director Martha Donovan, was actually a top-notch avant-garde arts festival for all, no matter the combination of your chromosomes. Highlights included the acrobatic performance poetry of two nude Swedish senior citizens (Ronnog and Steven Seaberg) and their young American friend (Mark Wolfe), a barely-moving bag lady (Allison Rentz) completely covered in silvery plastic, a rhythmic short film study of bathtub chrome by Marianne Kim, and a closing night of debauchery at an erotica party.

[www.estrofest.org](http://www.estrofest.org)

## More Picks

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