



Move Me: Kineticism in Art

2008

Presented by the Visual and Performing Arts Department Exhibitions and Collections Class

Works in the Exhibition

Vladamir Barsukov

Magic Forest, 2008 copper, brass, steel, and aluminum

Mysterie, 2008 steel, copper, and brass

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Arthur Ganson

Madeline's Fragile Machine, 2002 steel, steel wire, motor

The Accumulations of Time (edition 2 of 3), 2007 wire, steel, motor, thread

Thinking Chair (edition 4 of 10), 2007 wire, steel, painted wood, motor, stone

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Steve Hollinger

Pods, Tanks #1-4, 2008 mixed media

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Michio Ihara

3d Chicago, 2002 stainless steel Model of Wind Cubes 3, 2004 stainless steel

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Mary KennyDeath Down Under, 2005

stop-action animation mixed media theatrical set

The Hunt, 2004 stop-action animation film still

Under the Sea, 2007 stop-action animation mixed media theatrical set

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Charles Lanphear Celestial Journey, 2007 ink jet print

Cells, 2007 ink jet print

Hot Glass Moving, 2008 ink jet print

Inner Velocity, 2008 ink jet print

Kinetic Rhythms, 2007 ink jet print

Shifting Lights, 2008 ink jet print

Wave Rider, 2008 ink jet print

• • • • • Anne Lilly

Aristotle, 2006

Conversation with Glenn Gould, 2006 steel

Flower Theorem, 2005 steel

This Living Hand, 2006 steel

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Mary Sherman
An Urban Sky, 2002
oil on wood, newspaper, motor, steel,
and aluminum couplings

Move Me: Kineticism in Art

kinetic | kə-'ne - tik | ► adjective

relating to, caused by, or producing motion

Movement is an inevitable force of life; it exists within everything and everyone. From nature to industry to the very atoms that comprise objects and our bodies, movement is virtually everywhere, even when we perceive all to be still. In *Move Me: Kineticism in Art*, eight Boston-based artists exhibit works in a variety of media that remind us how integral motion is to life. Some utilize natural elements, such as solar power, wind propulsion, and viewer interaction. Still others embrace technology by incorporating gears, motors, digital imagery, and stop-action animation. *Move Me: Kineticism in Art* transcends the physical to provoke the viewer to move and be moved.

Introduction

Since the dawn of time, motion has determined how all beings live their lives. Including wind direction, water flow, the shifting of tectonic plates, and precipitation that falls from the clouds that change in the sky, motion is ubiquitous and continuous in nature. It is these movements of the Earth that determine how and when things grow; all beings must live by nature's timetable. Early peoples relied on and even worshiped this natural movement as it established where and how they could survive.

Movement is prevalent in scientific advancements as well. Was it not gravity that made the apple fall on Sir Isaac Newton's head? If that apple had not moved in that particular direction, perhaps Newton would not have developed his theory of motion and force. Since ancient Greece, scientists have been studying the atom. These tiny particles make up everything, animate and inanimate objects; they are constantly in motion. Motion can even be found within atoms themselves, one of the smallest particles in this universe; electrons are continually orbiting around the nucleus just as planets orbit the sun.

Today's world is largely mechanized; from automobiles to cameras, machines with intricate parts make lives easier so people can move faster. What would people do without the electricity that rapidly moves through power lines to bring computers and televisions to life? Human life depends on movement now just as much as it did when people relied solely on nature. It is impossible to be still. In today's modern and fast-paced world, we tend to forget how integral movement is to our lives.

Artists throughout history have tried to depict movement not only because it is an important part of life, but also because it is life; it is inescapable. Until kinetic art appeared, however, movement in art was fixed, frozen in time. The main purpose of kinetic art is to show movement with actual moving parts or by stimulating the senses of the observer. French artist, Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* of 1913 is considered to be the first kinetic sculpture. Made in his Paris

studio, the work consisted of a bicycle fork with the front wheel mounted upside-down on a wooden stool. The artist or viewers could spin the wheel in order to observe the wheel in motion.¹ Kinetic art became more and more prevalent throughout the 20th century. Brothers Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner were Russian Constructivists who pioneered kinetic art. Gabo, in particular, wanted to create works that were mobile in a constant state of change, whether it is dramatic or gradual, reflecting new scientific, technological and political ideas. In their *Realist Manifesto* (1920), Gabo and Pevsner declared that they wanted to "renounce the thousand year old delusion in art that held the static rhythms as the only elements of the plastic and pictorial arts. We affirm in these arts a new element, the kinetic rhythms."² Kinetic art succeeds in presenting a new way of understanding the world in terms of man's relationship to nature and man's relationship to technology.

Two popular directions of kinetic art have been natural movement and movement as a result of automation in the advancing, modern age. Alexander Calder's famed mobiles could be motorized or wind-driven, investigating both mechanized and unpredictable, natural motion. One of Calder's first outdoor sculptural mobiles, Steel Fish (1934), is made of steel wire with asymmetrically balanced abstract shapes that are able to elegantly capture the directional movements of airflow.3 Fellow American kinetic sculptor George Rickey was greatly influenced by Calder's work. Using his own interest in solid geometric forms and mechanics, Rickey designed large sculptures out of metal with parts that move with wind direction. His sculptures were meant to be machines that produce efficient and productive motion but had no significant use; this was a comment on mechanized productivity in the modern world, specifically the United States. Three Lines (1964), one of Rickey's wind-driven outdoor sculptures, has three polished, stainless steel vertical blades, which move through the air with erratic sophistication and have no sense of purpose. This combination of natural movement and contemporary materials, stainless steel, employs kineticism to update art for modern viewers.⁵

Mechanization became a very important avenue to explore in kinetic art as the world was rapidly advancing; kinetic art often paralleled contemporary innovation. Swiss artist Jean Tinguely critiques advanced industrial society in his work, Homage to New York (1960). Tinguely, with the help of other artists and engineers, created a machine with moving parts that partially self-destructed in front of a crowd at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. In addition to physically showing movement mechanically as well as self-destructing, this work was a comment on energy, the movement of the city itself. Tinguely created the dramatic demonstration to captivate viewers' attention and force them to think critically about society's dependence on machinery.⁶

Kinetic art was, and is, continually explored. A series of famous and vital kinetic works by Hungarian painter and photographer László Moholy-Nagy are his *Light-Space-Modulators* (1930). There are many versions of these sculptural lighting devices, either mobiles or mechanized sculptures. Made of metals and plastics with panels of colored lights, the modulators could be set with pre-determined arrangements to form light patterns that would illuminate the modulators themselves as well as the space around them. Moholy-Nagy sought to study light with new materials and natural geometric forms. His interest in color displays led to observations in color changes on different materials and the creation of shadows. More importantly, the *Light-Space-Modulators* examine movement of light in space in a complicated, scientific and vibrant way. Moholy-Nagy, through the *Light-Space Modulators*, comments on man and technology as he studies the dynamism of light.⁷ This important study of light and motion would lead to further developments in kinetic art using digitization, film and animation.

Video art produces moving images on screen that are able to stimulate the eye and mind much more efficiently than a still image. Along with other technologically progressive movements of the 20th century, cinema and video art have become available to vast majorities of the world's population.

Contemporary "artists are using video in combination with film, computer art, graphics, animation, virtual reality, and all manner of digital applications... New expressions are emerging from this hybridization." In the art installation, *Theme Song* (1973) by Vito Acconci, the artist presents himself on screen attacking viewers with a never-ending, demeaning song. Acconci attempts to address viewers intimately, but his effort is hampered by the overwhelming output of statements he provides in his videos. Acconci comments on the problematic faith people put in modern communication devices and the inability of mass communication to engage people personally. Oftentimes, video art installations can be used as a catalyst that asks observers to contemplate problematic issues in modern society.9

Kinetic art is remarkably versatile; it can be created and presented in a variety of ways to represent the many areas in which motion affects life. Kinetic art examines life in the modern world; movement is a natural, technical, and unavoidable function of the world as we know it.

Amber Steele

- ¹ William A. Camfield "Marcel Duchamp's Fountain: Its History and Aesthetics in Context of 1917" Marcel Duchamp: Artist of the Century ed Rudolf E. Kuensli and Francis M. Naumann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 81.
- ² Nicholas Rourkes, Plastics for Kinetic Art (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1974), 175.
- ³ Alexander S.C. Rower, Calder Sculpture (New York: Universe Publishing, 1998), 5, 36, 74.
- ⁴ Lucinda H. Gideon PH.D. and Valerie Fletcher PH.D. George Rickey: Kinetic Sculpture A Retrospective (Vero Beach, Florida: Vero Beach Museum of Art, 2007), 19.
- ⁵ DeCordova Museum. Sculpture Park (2006) George Rickey, Three Lines (1964)
- < http://www.decordova.org/Decordova/sculp Park/rickey.html>
- ⁶ A.M. Hammacher, Modern Sculpture: Tradition and Innovation (New York: Harry N., Abrams, Inc Publishers, 1988), 292.
- ⁷ Hammacher, Modern Sculpture, 282.
- ⁸ Michael Rush. Video Art (London: Thames and Hudson, 2003), 11.
- 9 Rush, Video Art, 10, 30.



Vladimir Barsukov

The meditative and ethereal qualities of Vladimir Barsukov's mobiles invite viewers to engage with the work in a relaxed, calm, and peaceful manner. By "mixing rational and irrational things" Barsukov's art considers the constant movement in the world in a reflectively simple yet profound way.

After moving to the United States from Russia, Barsukov was no longer confined by the limitations of Social Realism. While still in Russia, Barsukov simply gave his art as gifts to friends and family. His art was a hobby that he continually developed but never openly and freely displayed because of the restrictions on abstract art in Russia. Once in the United States, he expanded his art of creating mobiles that can either hang from the ceiling or wall or rest on a pedestal.

Barsukov draws inspiration from Russian Constructivists Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, as well as artists Alexander Calder, George Rickey, and Marcel Duchamp. The "movement of beautiful things" due to wind propelled forces as seen in leaves, wind chimes, kites, air balloons, sailboats, and wind mills sparks his imagination and creativity. He also explains that "kinetic art is not only what we see moving. It may be perceptual." As a sensory response, Barsukov's mobiles reflect the constant, unseen motion in the wind yet draw upon intuition and understanding. His ideas and inspirations are gathered from a variety of sources and experiences which allow viewers to reflect on the forces of nature in a meditative way.

Having earned a Ph.D. in physics and mathematics from St. Petersburg University in Russia, Barsukov is comfortable with the principles that govern the balance of his mobiles. He pays acute attention to detail when creating delicate mobiles with materials such as copper, brass, stainless steel, and other metals. Patiently crafting his constructions, Barsukov uses basic, hand-manipulated tools. From the first concept to the finished piece,

many adjustments and modifications are sensitively made to result in a balanced composition.

Creating mobiles is a process that cannot be entirely preplanned or designed without some actual building and testing. Although Barsukov envisions an image in his mind and draws it out, the finished work may be entirely different after he constructs it. In drawing, he imagines the lines, like a threedimensional painting, while still considering the basic physics foundations of mass, gravity, and weight. The elements and pieces of each mobile are so deeply interconnected and linked that it is impossible to forget that one slight movement or change in size can affect and disrupt the stability of the entire work. Whether drawing sketches, analytically figuring out the different forces and weights acting on the mobile, balancing the structure as he works, or combining all these techniques, the complex process of building mobiles is unpredictable and exciting. Even when determining the material and coloration, Barsukov revels in the unique and changeable nature of each metal. He uses a small hand torch to create a thin oxidized layer which reflects light and in turn gives the metal "unique, rich, and abstract colors." The process of coloring the metals is very specific and precise because if the flame is held for too long the piece will blacken. He often textures the surface as well, and considers it a success when it looks like a fabric and viewers are "surprised that the copper isn't silk."

Reflecting on kinetic art and contemporary artists, Barsukov remarks, "Nowadays a lot of people make many different kinds of kinetic art. It's sort of like an explosion!" For his own work, Barsukov feels there is still a lot of room for artistic creativity in making mobiles by hand. He states, "handmade objects have the real soul." At times, viewers of Barsukov's work have asked him to replicate specific pieces. His answer to this request has been, "to replicate one is to almost create a new one." He playfully

thrives on the slightest differences in the size, weight, or length so that each is unique and individual.

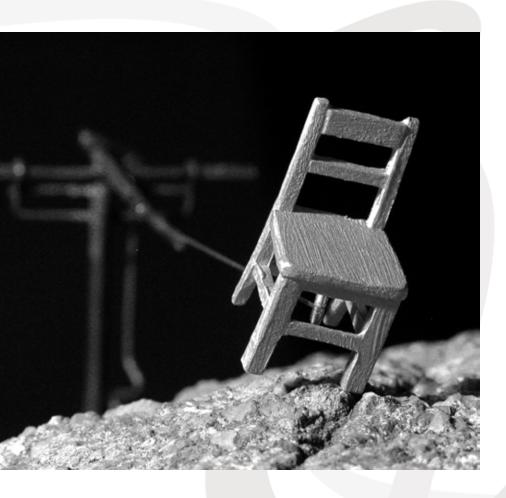
Barsukov reminds the viewer to look around. Leaves flutter, boats glide, planes fly, and kites soar. The beauty of moving objects exists in the world in the simplest ways.

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Vladimir Barsukov was born in Russia and has spent the last nineteen years of his life living, working, and creating in the United States. He received his Ph.D. in mathematics and physics from St. Petersburg University in Russia in 1971. Since residing in the United States, he has worked at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and has taught workshops and classes on the art of making mobiles at the Brookline Arts Center in Brookline, MA; Sharon Arts Center in Peterborough, NH; Concord Art Association in Concord, MA; and Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA. In 2007, Barsukov has been involved with numerous juried exhibitions: Kathryn Schultz Gallery, DeCordova Museum, Handworks Gallery, Cambridge Art Association, and Corcord Art Association. In April of 2007, he was interviewed on Boston Neighborhood Network TV, "It's All About Arts." He also appeared in Kinetic Abstractions, a three-artist show, at the Kathryn Schultz Gallery in March of 2008. He is represented by numerous galleries across New England and was recently featured on the front page of the Boston Globe's Sidekick on March 25, 2008 and in the textbook, The Art of Seeing (7th edition). Today, Barsukov lives and works in Cambridge, MA.

Laura Norris

^{*} All quotes from Artist Interview, October 1, 2008



Arthur Ganson

Boston-based sculptor Arthur Ganson creates mechanized sculptures that have a certain duality to them. At first glance they are humorous and playful, yet they are highly evocative, suggesting profound, open-ended meanings. His work is deeply personal; some of this stems from his childhood. As a shy and quiet child, he created small objects as a means to communicate with others. He still uses his sculptures to communicate with most people, drawing them "to that narrow place between two infinitely large fields of clarity and ambiguity and let you stroll around." Though they carry this personal history, Ganson's works look to speak to everyone individually. Each creation comes from ideas and feelings that move Ganson, but everyone who observes his work and interacts with his sculptures finds individual meaning based on personal experience.

Some of his ideas come to him fully evolved, requiring only the details of how to make it work to be sorted out, while others develop piece by piece. Again, childhood comes into play here, as Ganson feels that his best works come to him when he is thinking most like a child. This is when his imagination is truly able to open up and inspire him to create a sculpture unlike what he has done before.² Though his work is clearly unique, two specific people have profoundly influenced him. One is the Swiss-born kinetic sculptor Jean Tinguely, whose name is referenced in some of Ganson's titles. His work has also been strongly affected by his admiration for the sculptor and puppeteer Bruce Schwartz. Earlier in his life, Ganson saw a show that Schwartz put on. The puppeteer's unique style of not hiding himself from the viewer influenced Ganson's approach and is one of the reasons he does not hide the mechanical workings that make his pieces move. Ganson hopes that the actions of the piece are so captivating, as Schwartz's puppetry was, that the mechanics behind it fall away.³

Arthur Ganson strives for his sculptures to be "clear but ambiguous." The

phrase being something of a contradiction, the intent is for the mechanics behind the work and the actions to be obvious and understood, but the viewer should question why they are there, why such a seemingly innocuous object is placed into motion. Though he hopes that the viewer does receive some emotional stimulation from the piece, he does not try to define or label what it is. He himself puts a specific emotion into each work, but the viewer's response is personal. Ganson views his works as a conduit through which he may actively communicate with people. They are a go-between, allowing him to express himself without speaking.

Though each of his works could be called a self-portrait, one in particular refers directly to him and his experiences. As he meandered about one day on an outcropping of rock he frequently goes to in order to think, the idea for the sculpture *Thinking Chair* came to him. This small sculpture features a yellow chair ambling in an irregular circle around a flat rock. Thinking the small chair would be more interesting than a miniature "Arthur doll" wandering about the space, Ganson created a sculpture that exactly mimics one of his most personal habits.⁵

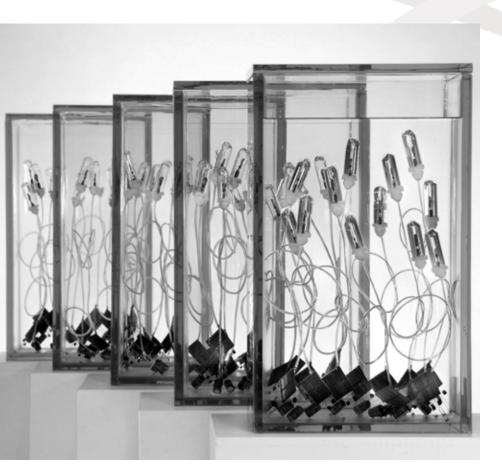
Ganson's sculptures in *Move Me: Kineticism in Art* embrace the idea of movement on many different levels. Beyond the physical movement present in all of his works, he, as the artist, is emotionally involved in each of his works, being moved on a personal level by them. His sculptures are also intended to invite the viewer to explore the work and make each piece personally affective. Ganson does not try to impose a specific meaning on viewers. Instead, he is asking them to explore their own feelings and come to their own interpretive conclusions.

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Arthur Ganson graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a BFA in Sculpture in 1978. Since then he has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions. Perhaps his most significant was his first solo exhibition, Diverse Machinery, which was held at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, MA in 1993. More recent shows include 2008's Machines Contemplating Time at the Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art in Portland, ME; PhantasieMechanik: Story Telling Machines, also in 2008, at the Phaeno in Wolfsburg Germany; and Humana ex Machina, at the Main Art Gallery of Cal State University in Cal State University, Fullerton, CA in 2007. In addition, Ganson has an ongoing exhibition named Gestural Engineering at the MIT Museum in Cambridge, MA where he was an artist in residence for four years. He has also been recognized by the University of New Hampshire with a Distinguished Alumni Award.⁶

Bridget Connors

- ¹ Arthur Ganson, Arthur Ganson presents a few Machines created between 1978 and 2004
- ² Arthur Ganson, Artist Interview, October 14, 2008
- ³ Arthur Ganson, Artist Interview, October 14, 2008
- ⁴ Arthur Ganson, Artist Interview, October 14, 2008
- ⁵ Arthur Ganson, Artist Interview, October 14, 2008
- 6 http://www.arthurganson.com/pages/Exhibitions.html



Steve Hollinger

Independence and self-sufficiency characterize Steve Hollinger's sculptures. Subtle movements and simplified forms strip away the unnecessary.

Steve Hollinger gathers objects that serve as reminders of the things that still remain simple in our increasingly complicated world. By using unlikely objects such as spider webs, bones, and leaves Hollinger has been able to showcase how simple elements evoke complex and subtle concepts. The elements which comprise his work are contained within their own space; the encased solar powered sculptures exist separate from the outside world. Without the need for electricity or hand manipulation they are self-sufficient, and take on a life of their own.

Steve Hollinger's incorporation of solar energy offers a fresh approach to kineticism in art. The use of solar power removes the viewer from direct interaction with the sculptures. Because the pieces rely on absorbing sunlight, they all appear to choose when and if they will move. Their unpredictability reflects the randomness of the world, and our own individual experiences.

While the execution of Steve Hollinger's work is meticulous, the exceptional thing is his allowance for what he refers to as "slop." This term lovingly refers to the mistakes that often lead to success in Hollinger's work. Without planning every last detail, Hollinger gives the work permission to choose its own direction. There is a certain amount of control allotted to each piece, and it is important that each tests its independence.

Pods is the culmination of many past ideas for Steve Hollinger. The thought of what's left is the inspiration for this piece. Pods is the simplest form of technology, "to resist technology for technologies sake." The primitive, fragile, and simple structures of the piece contribute to the strength of the

design. There are no unnecessary parts that distract from the main focus of each graceful pod floating aimlessly in its glass tank. Each pod was created by hand, without the help of assistants. Steve Hollinger melted and put together each and every vial that can be seen floating within the carefully crafted glass tanks. The surgical tubing linking the solar root to the buoyant vial serves as the life line for the piece. The sculpture draws its power from the solar cells that keep the pod itself grounded in unity amid the other pods within the tank. Inside each of these handcrafted vials is a tiny copper leaf, also handmade, which flitters with a surge of power from the other end of the lifeline where the solar cell rests. Each tank functions individually, yet visually they work together as a whole. Every tank consists of only the necessary elements; the artist has concentrated on the most simple and essential forms.

Steve Hollinger's kinetic assemblages contain within themselves the ability to react in their own way to the light directed at them. Their inherent ability to react, almost as if determining their own form, gives Steve Hollinger's work a life-like quality and self-sufficiency. The viewer is engaged by the gentle and reflective aspects of each piece. As he simplifies to only what is essential, we see what is left when everything else is gone. Self-sufficient and individualized, their unpredictable yet gentle movements lull us into a quiet reverie. *Pods* illustrates our human need for a root and a lifeline. We all draw our energy from somewhere; it is what thrives within us that supplies that power.

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Steve Hollinger received his BA in Computer Science from SUNY Albany in 1984. He has worked as a software engineer in image processing and optics at Telex, a computer company in North Carolina, and at Wang Laboratories, in Massachusetts, developing imaging-technology software. Hollinger

is represented by the Chase Gallery, Boston, MA, where his most recent exhibition was What's Left. He has exhibited at the Peabody Essex Museum in Peabody, MA and the DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA. In February 2008 a profile of Hollinger appeared in *The New Yorker* by well-known writer Susan Orlean.

Samantha Getler

¹ Steve Hollinger, Telephone Interview, October 2008

² Steve Hollinger, Artist Interview, October 2008

Michio Ihara



Kinetic art can come in a variety of forms and shapes, but few are able to easily capture the ease of movement and a simple sweeping grace of Michio Ihara's 3D Chicago. Ihara's aesthetic has evolved during an artistic journey of more than fifty years. The main building component of all his work is based on a "modular system" in which a single shape is repeated throughout the sculpture. Each smaller shape builds upon itself to create a larger airy volume that works within a given space. Allowing his art to evolve naturally, his ultimate goal is to create a harmonious connection between his sculptures and the space which the work inhabits.

Ihara does not base his artworks on any particular theme. Rather, his art grows organically out of his life experiences and his materials. Originally trained as an oil painter at Tokyo University, Ihara admits that oil painting was never in his "blood" and that the medium of oil did not allow for open experimentation or growth. It was at MIT that he began to move from away from twodimensional art. Here he was in contact with the artist Gyorgy Kepes, who was an inspiration to Ihara. Describing his first works as "2.5 dimensional," Ihara used paper and scissors to create modular-based designs. He has always allowed his material to direct his efforts as the material is the "extension of blood, sweat; extension of the hand". Through the years, Ihara has gradually moved into metalwork because this medium will support the challenge of creating a large harmonious sculpture. The flat straight lines of the scissors on paper have given way to the flexible, multilayered angles of the cutting torch in stainless steel, brass, copper, and aluminum. The use of metal as a material allows for the wide scale experimentation Ihara was looking for: metal is pliable, strong and carries its own textures and colors into the sculpture.

Ihara is best known for his large scale sculptures commissioned for buildings. While the commission process can be unreliable in terms of actually receiving or winning commissions, Ihara thrives on the challenge of marrying space and sculpture. The most exciting element for the artist is approaching the empty space for the first time. As he envisions the final artwork along

with the architect or developer, his goal with whatever piece he creates is to incorporate the art, space, structure of the building and its use into one harmonious entity. The result always manages to find that happy medium in which all of the concerns are addressed.

Although typically drawn to large-scale commissions meant for architectural settings, Ihara describes 3D Chicago as part of a "new" phase in his artistic growth, particularly since his large scale works are not "kinetic" in that they are not meant to move. This kinetic sculpture reflects Ihara's interest in space as the moving "wings" of the piece engage with the space around it. Wherever the sculpture is set, be it on a city waterfront or grassy campus, the sculpture can interact with the space around it through its gentle arching motions. The wind-driven floating horizontal arms align with each other in the breeze, creating the most volume with the least material. The movement changes the shape of the sculpture, allowing the space and elements to direct how the sculpture ultimately affects the surrounding area and it viewers. The sculpture has a meditative quality in the thin lines, graceful shapes and gentle rotation of the moving pieces. It is meant to soothe and encourage gentle reflection.

Another kinetic sculpture, *Wind Cubes* 3, is on permanent display in the DeCordova Museum Sculpture Park in Lincoln, MA. A larger sculpture, the kinetic movement is more subtle than in 3D *Chicago*. Three poles of varying height hold aloft four to six hollow cubes. The cubes are set into motion by the wind, spinning around irrespective of one another. The model exhibited in the Cushing–Martin Gallery is representative of the artwork's impact on its surroundings on a smaller scale. As the wind moves the cubes around, the mirrored surface reflects its surroundings, creating tiny modular copies of the world. Again, the space around the sculpture has become an important element that makes the sculpture impact a larger space than itself.

Ihara describes himself as one who was "blind," following the dream of being

an artist without truly understanding what the title entailed. As he ventured further into his work, he discovered that he wanted his art to come only from himself without any outside influence. He has intentionally stayed away from the popular art scenes in New York or Tokyo in order to learn about his personal artistic direction. He allows his Asian heritage and childhood in post World War II Japan to be a factor in influencing his open approach to art as the new technologies of the time period swarmed into the country. Overall, his sculptures are more a culmination of his personality than his culture. Now, as he experiments with the application of technology and CAD (Computer Aided Design), he is entering into a new phase. His artwork is becoming more detailed and delicate as the computer drafting program allows for more precise designs than a cutting torch. His work could become even more delicate and precise as new technologies emerge, but Ihara is content to wait and see. If there is any consistent theme to his artwork, Ihara believes "all sculpture has a beginning and end of growth". While he began creating his artwork fifty years ago, it is still growing and changing, quietly expansive.

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Michio Ihara was born in Paris, France in 1928 and received a BFA from Tokyo University in Oil Painting in 1953. He received a Fulbright Grant for special Graduate study at MIT in 1961 and moved permanently to Massachusetts in 1970. He is the recipient of many awards internationally, including an award from the Japanese Government, Ministry of Foreign Affair in 1999. His commissioned sculptures are in buildings around the world, including Tokyo, Auckland, New York City, Los Angeles, Hong Kong and Singapore. His work has been shown at various galleries in Tokyo; the Ankrum Gallery in Los Angeles; the Staempfli Gallery in New York; the Duxbury Art Complex in Duxbury, MA; and was displayed at Boston's "First Night" in 1993. His more recent work can be seen on permanent display at the DeCordova Museum Sculpture Park. He currently resides in Concord, MA with his family.

Sarah Grzymala

* All quotes from Artist Interview, October 1, 2008



Mary Kenny

Humorous, candid, thought-provoking–Mary Kenny's seemingly innocent stop-action animations challenge viewers' ideas about humans and their role within nature. The worlds Kenny skillfully crafts are captivating and humorous despite darker themes which are consistent threads throughout her animations.

Each film is instinctual, based on the artist's dreams and fears, and explores basic themes such as death and lack of control in one's environment. This is reflected in Mary Kenny's process. Often, she begins with the idea she wants to explore and develops characters. A sculpture of each character is then handcrafted. Kenny credits her broad art training in a variety of media with influencing this aspect of her work. Her choice of materials, ranging from fabric to papier-mâché to wood is significant. Kenny uses traditional craft materials whose ephemeral nature adds another dimension to her work. Her utilization of props that are not permanent and will eventually discolor and decay is purposeful. If the sculptures were cast in bronze, they would not have the same fleeting feeling. The sculptures are placed in a fabricated theatrical setting and then made into a film though stop-action animation. Kenny reveals, "Bringing life [to the sculptures] through animation is the natural next step." As the characters take on lives of their own, this laborintensive process proves rewarding.

In addition to exploring her dreams and fears, Kenny also investigates other interests. Whether tailoring doll-sized clothing for a character or learning how to cut hair, each film allows Kenny to explore various skills on a small scale. Each animation requires her to be resourceful as she transforms homespun materials into believable worlds. She works with the materials she has on hand even if this means adjusting her vision. The available materials limit her, but these boundaries parallel the artistic process and the realities of life. As much as the artist is in charge, certain elements are uncontrollable just as

humans can only have so much control over their own world.

Stop-action animations mark a departure from Kenny's earlier work. As an undergraduate, she was encouraged to create work instilled with social and political meanings. Her large abstract paintings made statements that were trendy at the time, but they were not true to Kenny. Her films are more personal. The shift in work began after a person very close to Kenny passed away in a way unrelated to, but during the time of September 11th, 2001. This loss on a very personal level and on a larger public level forced Kenny to confront her mortality for the first time. The films provide an outlet to confront death while maintaining artistic control. Unexpected humor lessens the fear and sense of vulnerability. The exploration of death may have been inevitable however. As Kenny states,

I grew up in the Boston neighborhood of Dorchester. Even though it was a rough area, my house was right on the edge of a Wildlife Reservation—the Neponset River and also the Cedar Grove Cemetery. Perhaps this explains my morbid fascination with death and love and fear for animals and the natural world.²

The narratives are also informed by the artist's extensive world travels. From the Great Barrier Reef to Alaskan fishing grounds and Costa Rican jungles to the wilds of western Ireland, Kenny has directly experienced the environments she recreates in each film. While viewers often read anti-hunting sentiments or environmental statements into Kenny's work, they are unintentional. Kenny often has no theme for each piece so she used to find it frustrating when viewers took away these meanings. Part of the challenge is trying to get all of the characters to fit into one story line. There are no political statements, only a personal exploration of feelings. Now she finds the meanings people project onto the animations interesting; however she feels this may be the

one failure of her work. In the future she plans to abstract the animations further, removing humans all together.

There is an interesting duality in Kenny's works: the play of power and lack of control. She attempts to control and manipulate the world in which she is working, but she is forced to stay within certain boundaries. These self-imposed restrictions add an element of unpredictability. Like the characters in Kenny's world, the artist trusts her instincts and allows her intuition to guide her.

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Mary Kenny is a Boston-based artist who received her BFA at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth in 1992. She went on to attend the California Institute of the Arts where she received her MFA in 1996. She has had two solo shows: the Mills Gallery (2005) and the Artists Foundation (2007). Her work has been featured in numerous group shows, most recently at the Cantor Gallery at the College of Holy Cross, Art Space in New Haven, and at the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, MA (2006). In 2004, Kenny received a Somerville Arts Council Fellowship and in 2005 she was a finalist for the Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Grant.

Sara Chmielewski

¹ Mary Kenny, Artist Interview, October 8, 2008

² Mary Kenny, Artist Correspondence, October 23, 2008





How does one define kineticism and motion? Does it need to be physically experienced to be understood, or can it simply be observed? Charles Lanphear's digital prints explore the concept of motion on a two-dimensional plane. In his most recent digital compositions, Lanphear uses Photoshop to combine everyday items to create the perception of implied motion.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Lanphear has always used local influences in his work. He started painting in the mid 1960s and then began woodblock printing, etching, and digital imaging. Influenced by the abstract expressionist movement of the 1950s and '60s, Lanphear puts a great emphasis on experimentation and discovery in his digital prints. His admiration of de Kooning, Motherwell, and German expressionists is apparent in his work. Upon examining his body of work, one can see the transformations his art has taken and the similarities that it retains.

While previous artists have certainly inspired the experimental aspect of Lanphear's work, he believes in finding inspiration in everyday things: family, music, and his other passion, golf. Using subjects that he feels passionate about allows Lanphear to create compositions that are captivating and unique. In each image shown in *Move Me: Kineticism in Art* there is careful manipulation of shapes and textures. These images reflect Lanphear's current artistic themes and intentions. Further explaining this idea, he states, "The objective of my latest art project is to expand the boundaries of my two dimensional art with a feeling of dynamic color, motion, rhythm, and energetic forces."

Lanphear became interested in digital art after taking classes at Massasoit Community College. While he thoroughly enjoyed artistic techniques he was learning on the computer, he did not want to abandon drawing and painting. He also realized that he wanted to find a way to utilize the stained glass work he had previously done. When scanning the glass at an extremely high

resolution, Lanphear noticed that the glass translated well to the computer screen. He then began using Photoshop to distort the images of the glass and add layers of other materials such as found objects or scans of his own artwork. This process resulted in images such as *Kinetic Rhythms, Wave Rider*, and *Shifting Lights*.

Each image he produces involves great attention to color, technique, and composition. *Kinetic Rhythms, Wave Rider, Shifting Lights, Hot Glass Moving, Cells,* and *Celestial Journey*, show how Lanphear experiments with glass scans. Each one depicts an implied movement; the pull of the colors and shapes create depth. *Cells* and *Inner Velocity* provide another model of suggested motion by incorporating optical illusion. The viewer's eye perceives the movement of the lines as action and motion. Some portray ordered and fluid motions, while others reflect chaotic and uncontrolled actions. The scale of these works also serves to have an effect on the viewer's perception of motion. Each work is sized to allow the viewer to easily grasp the concept of motion, but not be overwhelmed by the use of color and shifting lines. As a result, the ultimate effect on the viewer is a sense of connection and unconscious understanding of movement in each image.

Charles Lanphear's digital images provide an interesting contrast to the other works featured in *Move Me:* Kineticism in Art. These two-dimensional images suggest implied rather than actual movement. Lanphear uses color, line, and space to create digitized prints, which evoke perceptions of ethereal motion.

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Charles Lanphear was born in Norwood, MA. After high school, he spent three years in the Army and five years in the National Guard. After working as a police officer, he became a commercially rated pilot. This led him to his career as an air traffic controller at Norwood Memorial Airport. During this time, he

took classes at Massasoit Community College, Massachusetts College of Art, and the Museum School. After retiring in 2001, Lanphear began devoting the majority of his time to his artwork. Lanphear has been in several solo and group shows, as well as art competitions. Most recently, he exhibited at the City & Sounds show at the Perkins Gallery in Stoughton, MA, and the Crackertorium Murals at Massachusetts College of Art. He has also exhibited at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA, and Massasoit Community College. Lanphear currently resides in North Easton, MA.

Katelyn McLaughlin

¹ Charles Lanphear, Artist Statement, 2008



Anne Lilly

Anne Lilly's compelling stainless steel kinetic sculptures are solidly grounded in order, structure, and geometry. Lilly encourages viewers to interact directly with her works, inviting touch and exploration of space. The graceful movements of the rods and simple yet complex rotations are mesmerizing; the precise intricacies of each sculpture delight the eye.

While at Virginia Tech, Lilly studied architecture. In this Bauhaus based program she was able to explore printmaking, ceramics, photography, and metal and woodworking, as well. Experimenting with these materials led to her "curiosity in visual expression." After graduating from college she practiced as an architect, continuing to do her own independent artwork on the side. She gradually made a full transition to sculpture.

Lilly credits an elderly man from Dorchester with helping facilitate her kinetic work. He enjoyed having artists in his machine shop, and for three years allowed Lilly to apprentice under him. In his shop she learned all that she could about machining, the process by which most of her sculptures are created. The works of Richard Serra and James Turrell, rooted in physical experience, also helped her clarify her artistic goals.

Lilly's artistic process involves a lot of experimentation. After having begun by using aluminum, then carbon steel, she finally moved on to stainless steel because it is heavy and dense, it doesn't rust or tarnish, and it's tough, which means it will not be affected by the touch and oils of a viewer's hand. However, the rigid stainless steel medium is very difficult to manipulate.

Interactivity is one of the most important themes within Lilly's sculptures. Unlike motorized artwork, which the artist finds "alienating," her hand-powered sculptures allow viewers to interact with each work. Lilly believes that a direct physical experience of the motion reveals the randomness that

is part of the structure. Normally space is something we just overlook; Lilly wants to fully articulate space. Each one of her works investigates ways of making space palpable, of manipulating qualities of space to make it visible. Lilly states that as the lines in her structures move in unison, the space between them seems to be stretching. There's a kind of invisible membrane implied by the lines, and this implied membrane appears to expand, then contract again, as the lines open and close.

Anne Lilly typically explores a limited range of forms, and then creates variations from an initial idea. Flower Theorum was the original sculpture from which Aristotle, This Living Hand, and Conversation with Glenn Gould all evolved. The artist did not intend to create a series of sculptures, yet once she created one, she realized the endless possibilities. Since experimentation often spawns new sculptures, every piece becomes a building block for creating new work. The sculptures that have the most meaning for the artist are the ones which have inspired her to make the largest leap. Lilly states that she sometimes might dislike a piece, but after time has passed, it often starts "talk to her" in a new way.

Anne Lilly's kinetic sculptures can be described as captivating, even mesmerizing. She transforms stainless steel into elegant, delicate looking sculptures. Through the technique of machining, Lilly realizes forms that change our perception of space. Ultimately, direct engagement between sculpture and viewer allows Lilly to connect with each person who interacts with her works.

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Anne Lilly was born in 1966 in Oklahoma. She studied engineering and architecture at Virginia Tech and graduated Magna Cum Laude in architecture. She received awards for excellence from the American Institute of Architects

and the Virginia Masonry Institute. Lilly became a sculptor in 1997 after practicing architecture in the United States and Europe. Her work has appeared in both solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States. In 2003, her exhibition with photographer Don Eyles was named one of the ten best exhibits of the year by the Boston Globe. Lilly has recently shown her work at the Arden Gallery, Rice/Polak Gallery, and the Artists' Foundation.

Sarah LaFlamme

^{*} All quotes from Artist Correspondence, October 1, 2008



Mary Sherman

While most people would not immediately classify painting as a kinetic art, Mary Sherman challenges conventional definitions of painting by her technique and her creative vision. By inviting viewers to physically interact with her work, Sherman challenges the assumption that paintings have to be two-dimensional.

Sherman's academic training at Boston College instilled in her a profound love of painting. Inspired by Baroque painters and their ability to create the illusion of a ceiling that opens to the sky, Sherman discovered that her interests lay in the surfaces and physicality of the paint, more than the forms the paint was creating. Rather than using paint to create the illusion of a three-dimensional space, Sherman began using paint as a three-dimensional material. She found, though, that the multiple layers of paint she was applying made the canvas sag. Sherman's solution was to experiment with painting boxes instead of canvases; this allowed her not only more space to paint on, but also gave her the opportunity to view the piece from multiple angles since she placed the boxes on the floor.

Not wanting to limit the painting to one mode of presentation though, Sherman experimented with displaying the boxes on the walls and eventually the ceiling. Then she developed a system of motors that rotated the panels so both sides could be seen. This presentation gave Sherman the opportunity to show two paintings at once, a concept that mirrored how quickly, and often without warning, the natural sky can change.

An Urban Sky was originally constructed as a ceiling installation in a commercial gallery. Since the panels can be rearranged to respond to the dimensions of the space the work is in, Sherman is able to install An Urban Sky on a wall as well. One side of each panel is painted an overcast gray while the other side is painted a deep blue. As the panels rotate from dark to light, the viewer's

mood changes with them, like emotions do with the changing of the weather. Sherman included a button as well that produces sounds of a thunderstorm, further involving the viewer in this visual storm. This juxtaposition of colors is meant to suggest a changing skyline, and creates an updated version of a Baroque sky. An Urban Sky has a melancholy mood to it, another way in which Sherman feels it is connected to the Baroque portraits she studied in college. "I'm trying to keep painting alive in this century" Sherman says.¹ She recognizes that oil painting today needs to become more relevant to other contemporary trends in art and that it must be updated beyond just the subject matter.

Sherman's inspiration and dedication to her work come from her background, her imagination and other artists she admires or with whom she has worked. As a graduate student at NYU, Sherman assisted sculptor Ursula von Rydingsvard as part of an internship, gaining an appreciation for how much work it took to be an artist. Sherman also shares the attitude of David Smith who began his career as a painter and later started sculpting. Smith always thought of his sculptures as paintings, treating his surfaces in a painterly fashion, an interest that Sherman shares.

Mary Sherman has traveled and worked around the globe, and her desire to bridge different cultures was manifested in the creation of the non-profit organization, Transcultural Exchange. The mission of this organization is to develop relationships between artists and communities and to bridge differences between cultures. Sherman was awarded a Fulbright to teach in Taiwan where she was an artist-in-residence at the Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts and taught at the Taipei Artists Village. While in Taiwan, Sherman ran workshops and lectured on cooperative art programs, all while creating her own art and instilling in her students an increased appreciation for other cultures.

Sherman's unique kinetic approach to painting challenges any conventional notions of the medium. An Urban Sky encourages us to set aside our preconceived ideas about painting in hopes of inspiring us all to reinvent and update aspects of our own lives. Sherman's passion for her work and her commitment to connecting international artists have inevitably become intertwined. An Urban Sky solidifies the idea that traditional can be innovative, and that by applying motion to painting, we can bridge two separate aspects of art that are often kept separate from each other.

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After graduating with a B.A. from Boston College in 1980, Mary Sherman went on to receive her M.F.A. in 1998 from New York University. She has curated numerous exhibitions, including *The Coaster Project* at the 2000 London Biennale and *The Tile Project Destination: The World* at the Zendai MoMA in Shanghai in 2008. Sherman has shown her work in solo and group exhibitions in the United States and around the world including The Plains Art Museum in Fargo, ND; Quarantine Island in Turkey; Gallery X in New York; and Portrait Gallery in Cairo, Egypt. Sherman has taught at many Boston-area colleges, including Massachusetts College of Art, Northeastern University and Boston College. She has also written for several publications: Women's Art Journal, Arts International and Flash Art. Sherman had traveled the globe and has been an artist-in-residence in China, Turkey and Taiwan. She is the founding director and president of Transcultural Exchange and currently lives in Boston, MA.

Amanda Breen

¹ Mary Sherman, Artist Interview, October 4, 2008



Exhibitions and Collections: A Description

Exhibitions and Collections: An Inside Look is one of the Capstone courses offered for Visual and Performing Arts Majors and Art History Minors. This course offers students the opportunity to learn firsthand about curatorial practices. Students are guided by Professor Carole Calo and Cushing–Martin Gallery Director Candice Smith Corby. Each fall students in the class curate an exhibition of professional artists' work in the Cushing–Martin Gallery on campus. The student-curators develop the concept for the show; choose artwork to be displayed; design the exhibition announcement; write press releases and wall text; install the artwork in the gallery; produce a catalogue; and plan a reception and artist panel. The enthusiasm, diligence, and professionalism of the ten student-curators of Move Me: Kineticism in Art are evident in this compelling exhibition.

Back Row (Left–Right): Katelyn McLaughlin, Laura Norris, Samantha Getler, Sarah LaFlamme, Chris Chiusano

Front Row (Left–Right): Amanda Breen, Sara Chmielewski, Amber Steele, Sarah Grzymala

Not Pictured: Bridget Connors

Acknowledgements

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The students of the Exhibitions and Collections class

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