



SEP 10–NOV 6, 2022

# FEAR OF PROPERTY

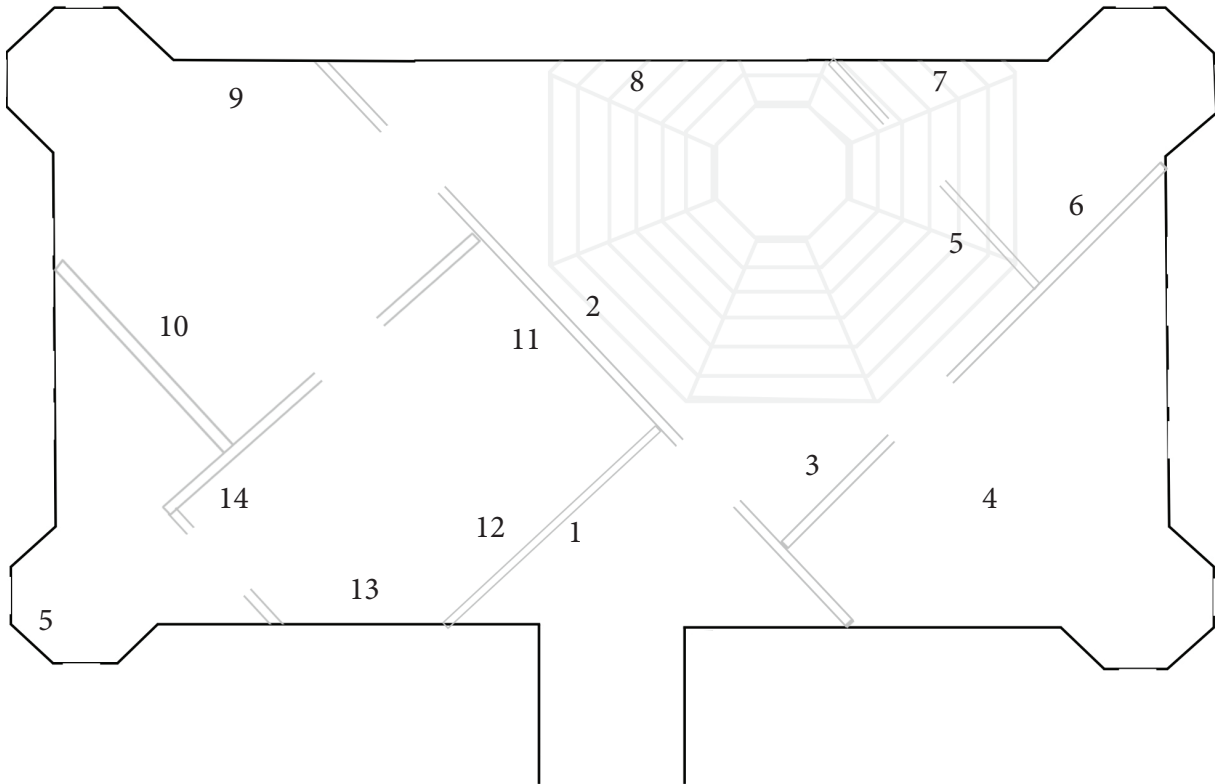
Property: something protected or shared or forcefully taken, something gained or lost or desired or enjoyed. Private property plays a role in well-being, some philosophers have argued, but it's also been the basis for all kinds of exploitation, as history has shown. Either way, so much has come to rest on this concept. It's an abstract idea that shapes concrete reality in profound ways, shadowed by questions of who owns what, and why, and the friction of public and private interests. As time goes by, property also comes in many different forms: some are physical, others increasingly intangible, some deeply familiar and others leading toward unknown horizons.

*Fear of Property* develops out of ongoing conversations with artists around these ideas, various related histories and emerging futures, and a range of lived experiences in between. The exhibition also gradually builds on the intuition that property organizes not only social and economic relations, but dimensions of emotional life today as well. The works on view have their own unique contours of feeling as such, even as they draw out concerns around ownership and agency, land and the buildings we inhabit, caretaking, culture and language, artificial intelligence, and more. And some of them might hint at ways of being in the world that aren't framed in terms of "property" at all.

The exhibition title itself is drawn from an essay by cultural anthropologist Cameron Hu, where he speaks to the underlying logics of futures trading while reflecting on the work of artists Marissa Benedict, Daniel de Paula, and David Rueter. His closing insight in that essay, a "fear of property," points to disembodied financial inventions that still ripple outward today. In this exhibition, his concept opens up other paths for thought, too, spreading out into many different contexts.

Presented concurrently in two settings, *Fear of Property* features works by thirteen artists in the gallery and six videos online at Renaissance TV, where they can be viewed throughout the run of the show.

Curated by Karsten Lund



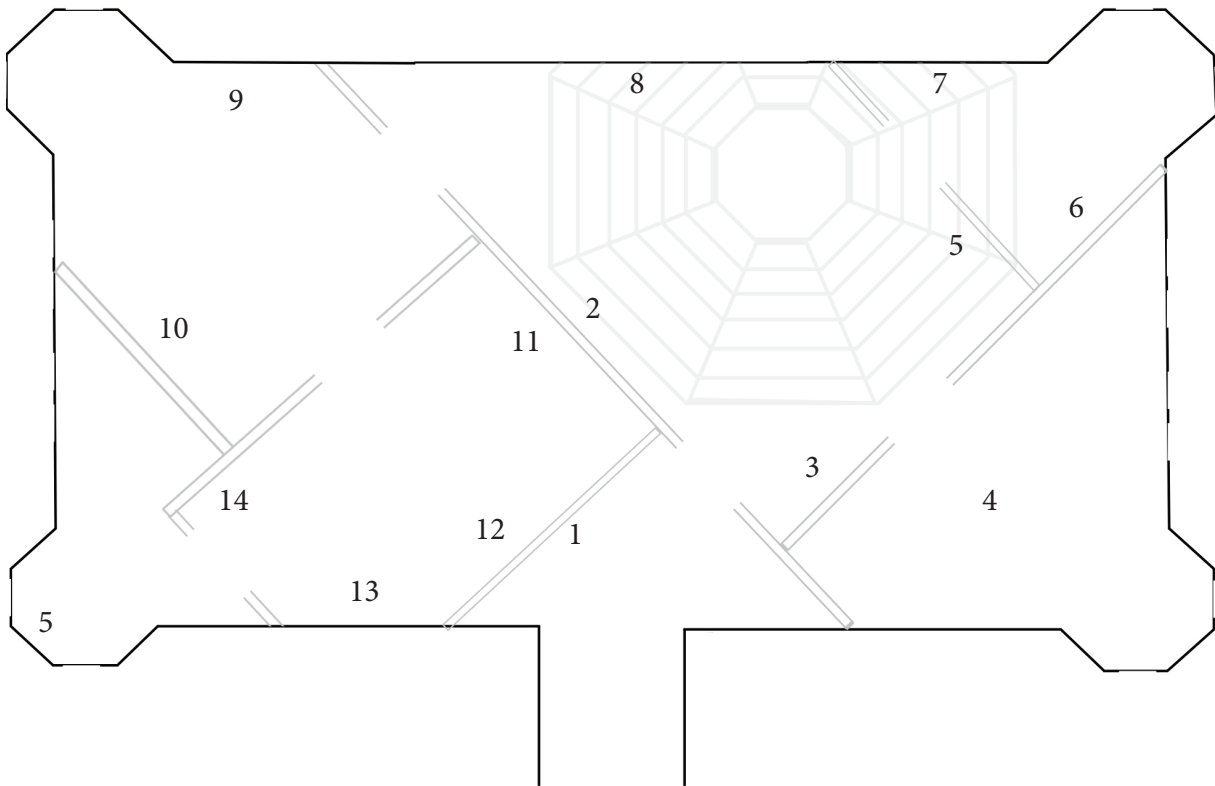
### 1. Christopher Williams

*Model No. 2745 (Son) Distance to lens: 105.5 cm Garment label: HANOI TOCONTAP VIETNAM 48 Model No. 1542 (Mother) Distance to lens: 159 cm Garment label: VEB Wäschekonfektion m94 Obercrinitz 40° Model No. 1316 (Father) Distance to lens: 231 cm Garment label: Dreiklang 60 2450 60° Sleepware courtesy of Adlershofer Fundus Kostüm- & Requisitenverleih, Ernst- Augustin-Str. 7, Berlin-Adlershof, Germany (fmr. DDR) Pillows manufactured by Heinrich Häussling GmbH & Co., Branchweilerhofstraße 200, Neustadt an der Weinstraße, Germany (fmr. DBR) Bedding manufactured by Oberlausitzer Leinen, Hoffmann GmbH & Co. KG, Zittauer Straße 23, Neukirch/Lausitz, Germany (fmr. DDR) Studio Thomas Borho, Oberkasseler Str. 39, Düsseldorf, Germany October 7, 2019, 2020*

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner

Williams writes: “This is a family of professionals, lifestyle models skilled in the art of producing the appearance of sleep. Each model is calibrating their performance to correspond to their specific position as it relates to the three planes of focus. To feign the visible conditions of sleep for hours, remaining motionless, with eyes closed, while a team of technicians calibrate lighting, adjust camera settings, maintain hair and makeup, and arrange set and wardrobe details for continuity and blocking, requires a great deal of discipline. In this ‘production play,’ in this Cold War drama, the cloak of labor provides cover for dreaming... To focus is to assert a preference for one surface over another. What value or significance is assigned to this focus and why is it privileged? What are the ideological implications of depth of field?”



## 2. Andrew Norman Wilson

### *Structural Analysis with Clones*, 2019

Ink on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Document

These works on paper seamlessly merge scans of Kodak ads from magazines published in the 1910s-20s—with the original ad copy removed in Photoshop—and computer-generated images from the stock 3D-model marketplace Turbosquid. These works extend the original ads' claims for photography into speculative future scenarios as Wilson plays with different types of intellectual property and embraces the mutability of digital post-production.

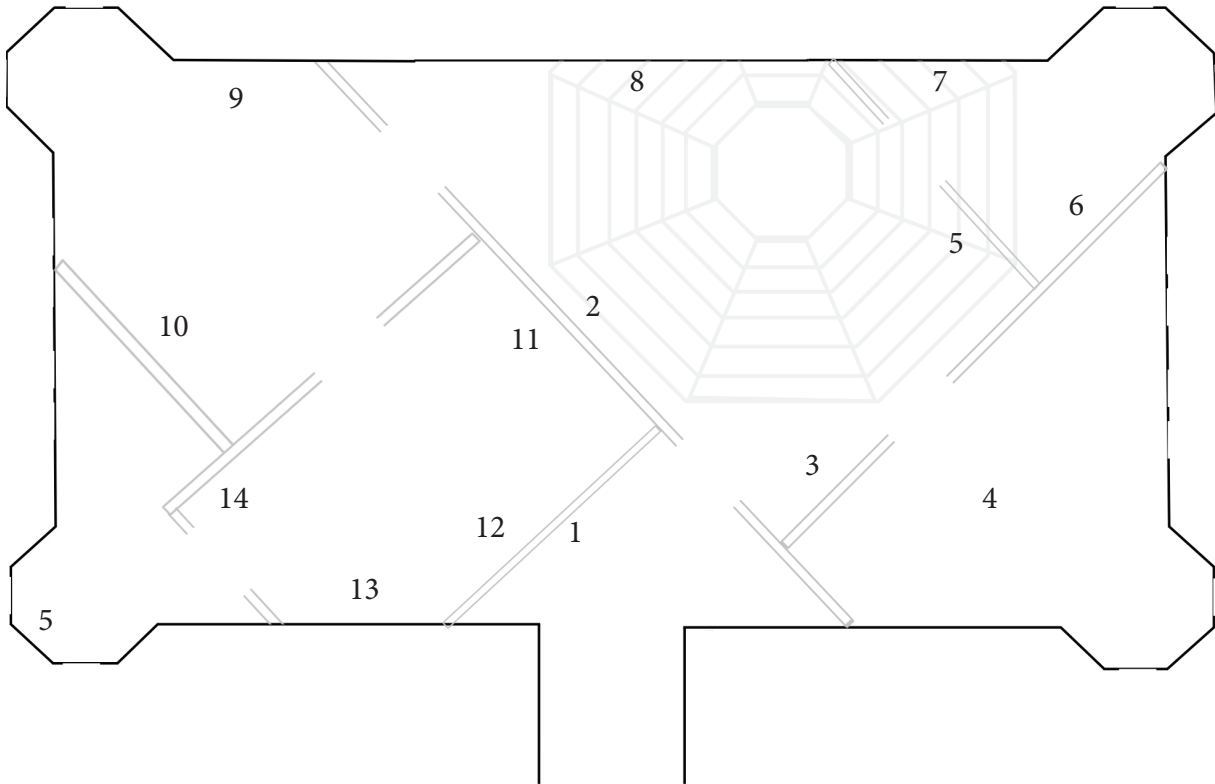
## 3. Yukultji Napangati

### *Untitled*, 2019

Acrylic on canvas

Courtesy of the artist and Salon 94, New York

Living and working in the desert interior of Australia, Yukultji Napangati began painting in 1996 as part of a move among Pintupi women to create work independently of their male relatives. Her paintings give form to personal, physical, and ancestral relationships with the land, depicting places associated with her Dreamings, a time period with a beginning but no end in Aboriginal philosophy during which mythic beings created life and shaped the environment.



#### 4. Niloufar Emamifar & Isshaq Albarbary

##### *Little mouth of cherries*, 2022

Folding stage, commercial-grade carpet, television, video

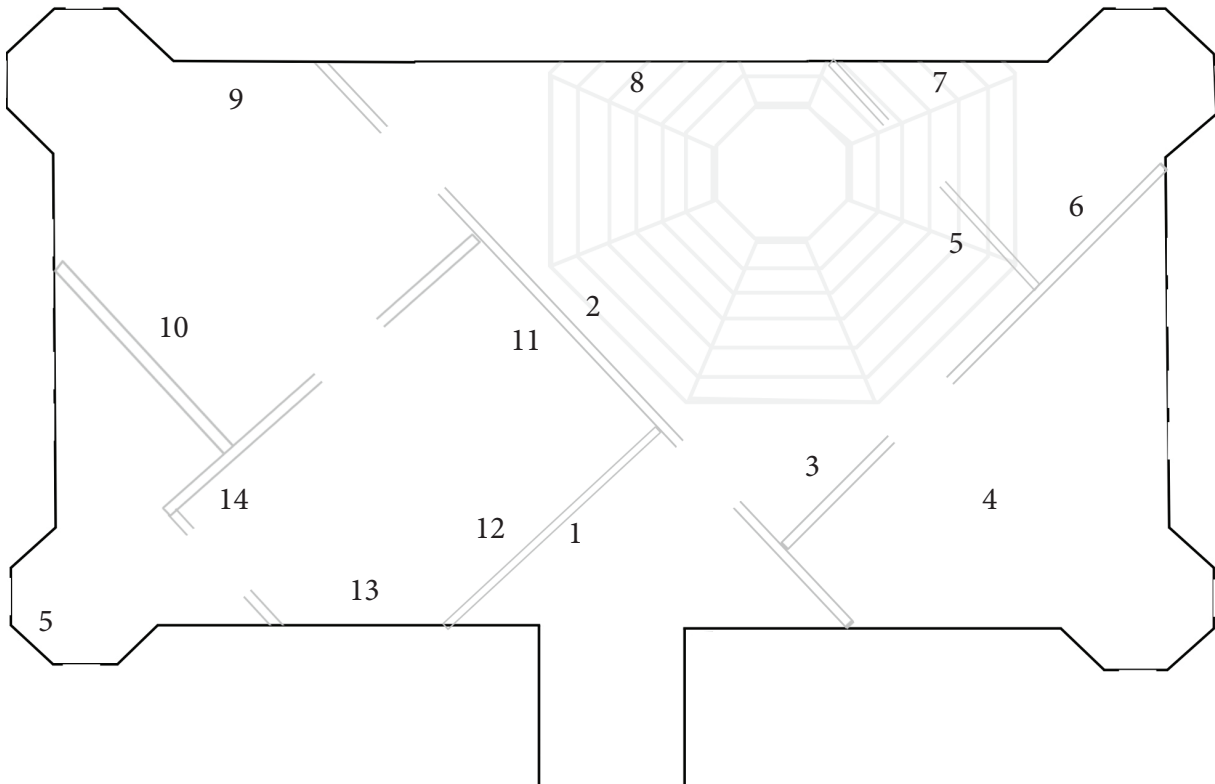
Courtesy of the artists. Produced with the support of a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant

A three-part installation:

I) A video from a surveillance camera at Al-Ahly Hospital in the city of al-Khalil (Hebron) documents the infiltration of 23 *musta'ribin* (Arabic, *نبيبرغتسُم*, literally 'making oneself an Arab')—a secret Israeli military unit—disguised as Palestinians. Some have false beards, and others appear as a pregnant woman, a veiled woman, and a disabled man in a wheelchair.

II) A black fold-and-roll stage riser with grey commercial-grade carpet tiles.

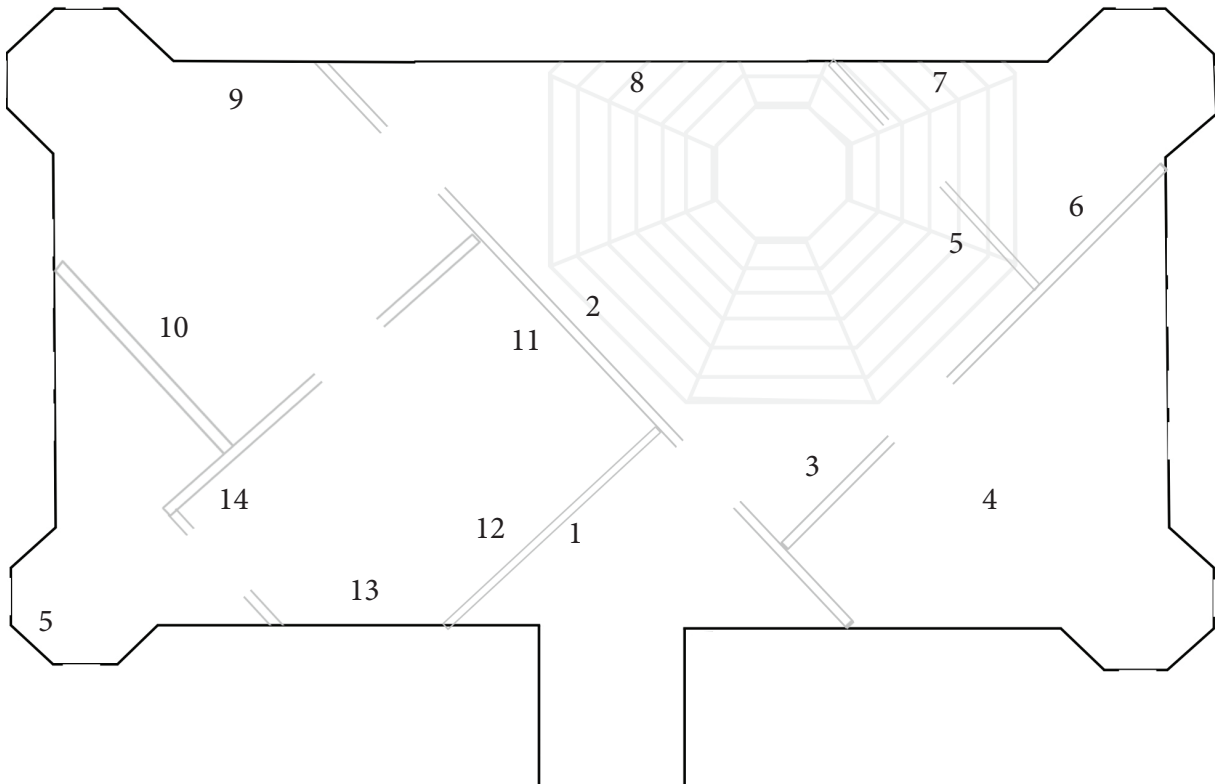
III) Metallic vinyl for the last stanza of a bilingual *muwashshah* (Arabic, *حشوم*, ornate or inlaid)—Arabic strophic poetry originating in Andalusia dating back to the eleventh century. The final refrain of this *muwashshah*, known as *Kharja* (Arabic *ةجرخ*, exit), is a song verse composed in *musta'ribin* language—an extinct dialect of Islamic Spain formed from the mixing of Romance language and Arabic. *Kharjat* (plural) were usually borrowed from other poems, making imitation an open practice among medieval Arab and *musta'ribin* poets and a sign of skill and fame.



**5. Marissa Lee Benedict, Daniel de Paula, and David Rueter**  
***under cover of a solid object*, 2022**

Relief in floor wax, excerpt from the artists' contract for the work *deposition* (2021), debris removed from ventilation ducts under the Chicago Board of Trade's former corn futures trading floor, gelatin silver print (circa 1974, photographer unknown) Courtesy of the artists; photograph courtesy of Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois, Chicago

In 2018, three artists acquired a used trading pit from the Chicago Board of Trade, now obsolete as trading goes digital. A huge octagon with seven tiered levels where traders bought and sold corn futures, the pit itself has since traveled to Sao Paulo and back to Chicago. Here it appears only as an outline at full scale, a ghost of itself that questions what can be distilled from a thing's remnants. A pair of documents and a photograph appear like footnotes above the floor and in the opposite corner of the gallery.



## 6. Pedro Neves Marques

### *The Pudic Relation Between Machine and Plant*, 2016

Video loop, 2 minutes 30 seconds

Courtesy of the artist. Produced with the support of King's College Centre for Robotics Research, London, UK

In a scene suggesting sexuality beyond humans, a robotic hand touches a “sensitive plant,” *Mimosa Pudica*. This species—characteristic for closing on itself when touched—is iconic within the history of botany, where it has raised questions about whether it had a nervous system and drew sexual innuendos. The artist notes that in Erasmus Darwin’s 1789 poem “The Loves of the Plants” it is compared with botanist Joseph Banks’s infamous sexual encounters in the tropics; while native to South America, today *Mimosa Pudica* is an invasive species in precisely the geographies travelled by Banks: Southeast Asia, Australia, and the Pacific.

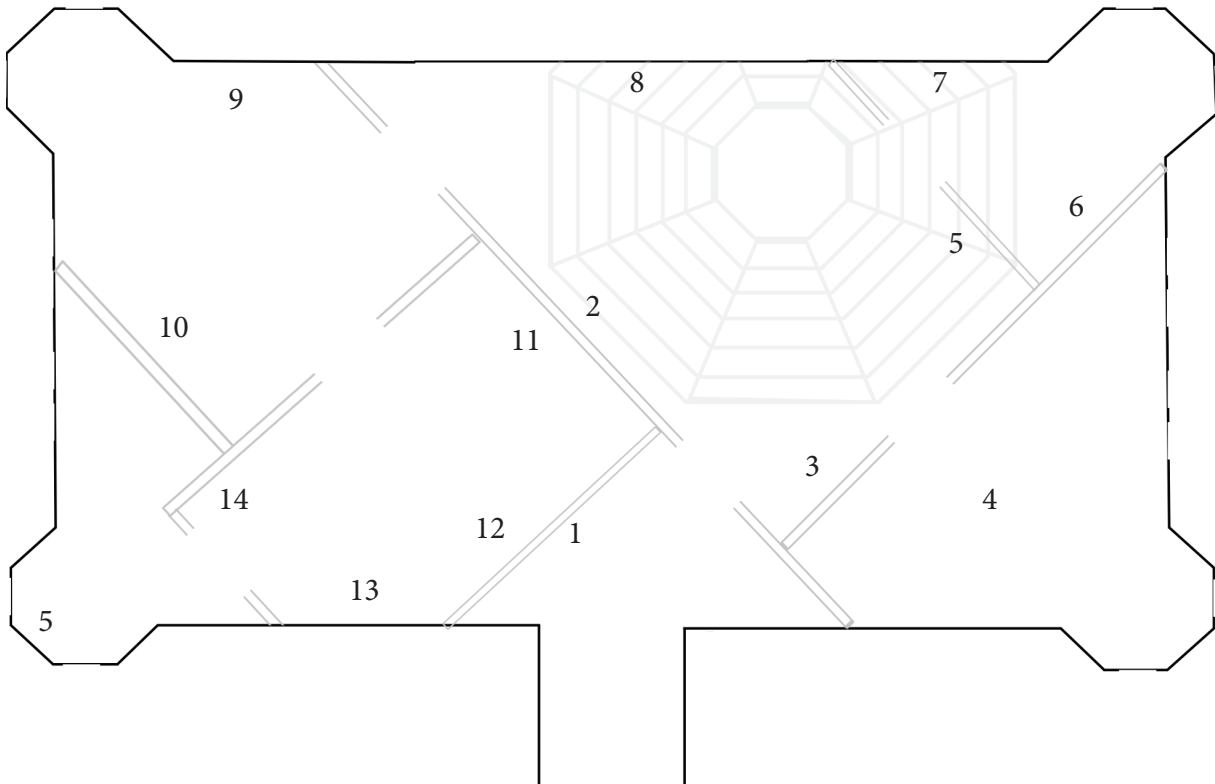
## 7. Andrew Norman Wilson

### *Map Making With Pinge*, 2019

Ink on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Document

With a man behind a camera, this work suggests the arc from map-making to land speculation to resource extraction and its aftermath. A “pinge” is a depression or sinkhole caused by mining activity, such as the collapse of mineshafts. Collapsing time as well, these works combine old Kodaks ads with CGI elements that suggest possible futures. “Beyond their specific political or ecological narratives,” the artist says, “these collages embody the loss of photography’s truth claims and informational value.”



## 8. Kevin Beasley

### *Valentines Pines (residence)*, 2022

Polyurethane resin, epoxy resin, carbon fiber, dye sublimation t-shirts, altered t-shirts, confetti t-shirts, housedress, altered housedress, confetti housedress, raw Virginia cotton, dirt, guinea fowl feathers

Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan, New York

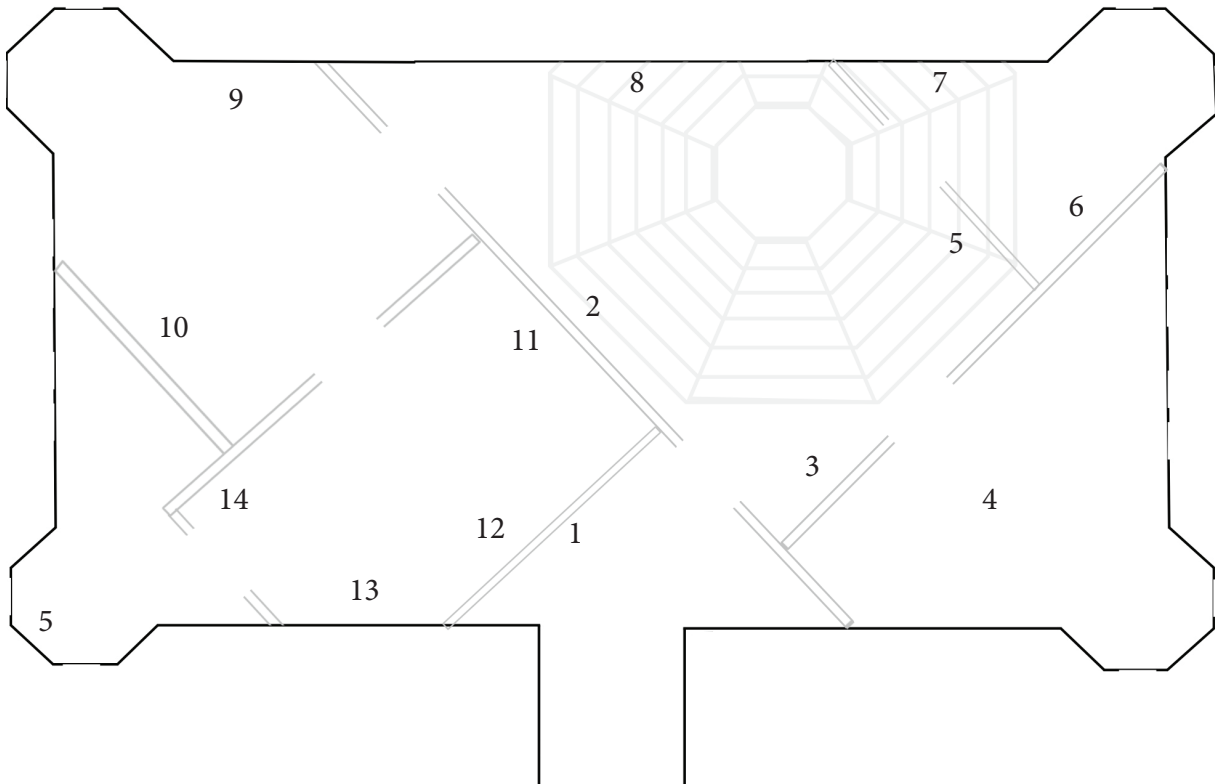
In a series of large works that he calls “slabs,” Beasley looks to his family’s land in Virginia and brings different materials into contact, including raw cotton, resin, and photographs printed on white t-shirts. In his own words, “This work is a continuance of my reconciling black land ownership, its use and its legacy. Channeled through my own family’s experience, I have found it important to understand the ills, difficulties and beauty associated with a multigenerational presence in a place and on a property that has provided so much joy, grief, and discovery. This image marks the different bloodlines in my family and how a property once owned as one residence is now separate. There are at least three to four bloodlines in this property and the uncertainty of its cohesion is a reality from generation to generation. The fear of what it may become.”

## 9. Ghislaine Leung

### *Public Sculpture*, 2018

Exhibition loan from Reading Central Toy Library, Reading, UK

Score: A group of toys in the collection of a public library are given a catalog or call number inclusive of the group. The group is loaned and displayed in an exhibition space.



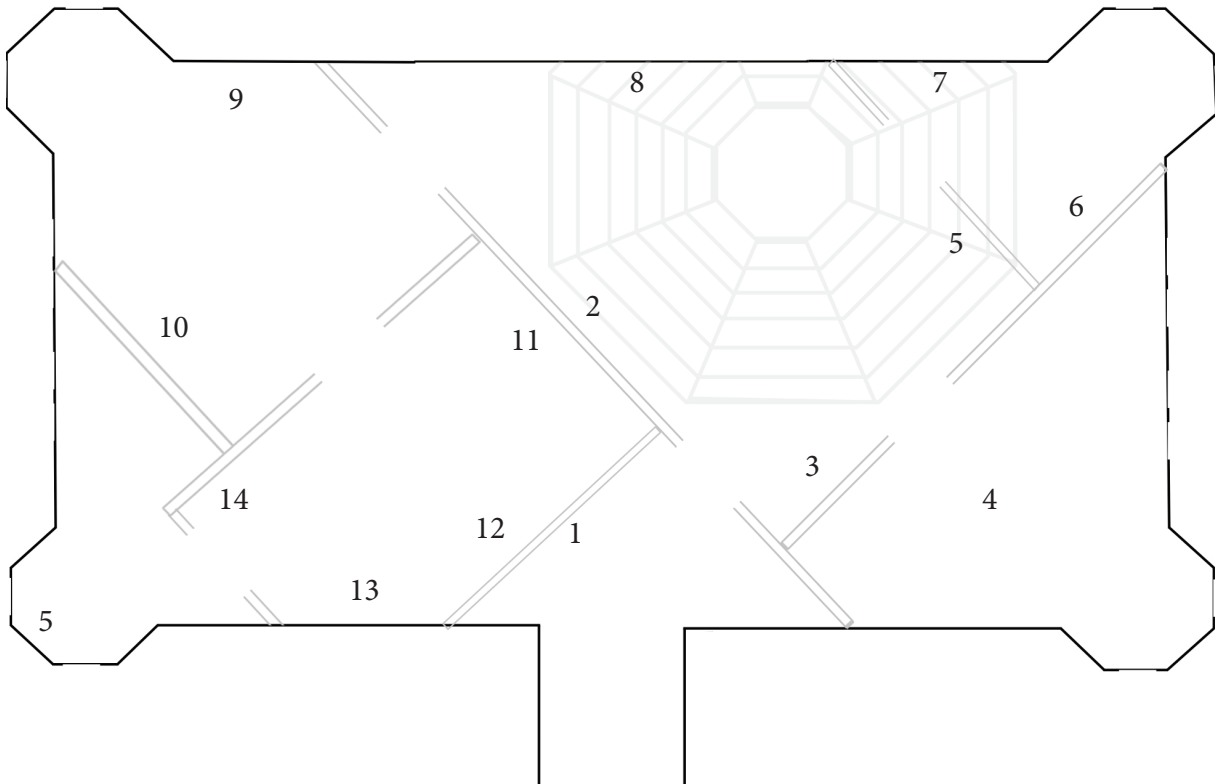
## 10. Christopher Meerdo

### *PARSER*, 2022

CNC cut UV prints on dibond, aluminum lug nut caps, microcomputers, network switch, helping hands, cable sleeve, animations using “BlueLeaks” data set  
Courtesy of the artist and Document, Chicago

Meerdo’s new installation *PARSER* examines the BlueLeaks archive, a vast data set obtained by the hacker collective Anonymous. These images are drawn from a federally sanctioned system of monitoring, collecting, and consolidating national crime evidence for the purposes of arresting offenders across state lines. Originally developed to assist law enforcement in combating terror after 9/11, the majority of this data consists of illegible security footage stills taken by police while visiting loss-prevention departments at big-box stores. Using machine learning (DAIN), Meerdo “tweens” the images in the archive to produce amalgamated synthesized images, disrupting the promise of AI-assisted predictive police algorithms and data forensics.





### **11. Rose Salane**

***Spring 2007, American Stock Exchange, 86 Trinity Place, 2022***

Screenprint on archival paper

Courtesy of the artist and Carlos/Ishikawa

### **12. Rose Salane**

***Summer 2006, American Stock Exchange, 86 Trinity Place, 2022***

Screenprint on archival paper

Courtesy of the artist and Carlos/Ishikawa

Two silkscreens gather handwritten maintenance notes found in the former American Stock Exchange building in New York City, dating from just before the financial crisis of 2007-2008. Hour by hour, on-site building engineers monitored the building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), recording measurements plus occasional mention of weather conditions or personal remarks. Heating and cooling systems used in the former stock exchange are supplied by a centralized steam network 105-miles long underneath Manhattan, used to ensure comfort in the workplace, fire safety, and, in this case, to manage temperatures in server rooms processing trading data.

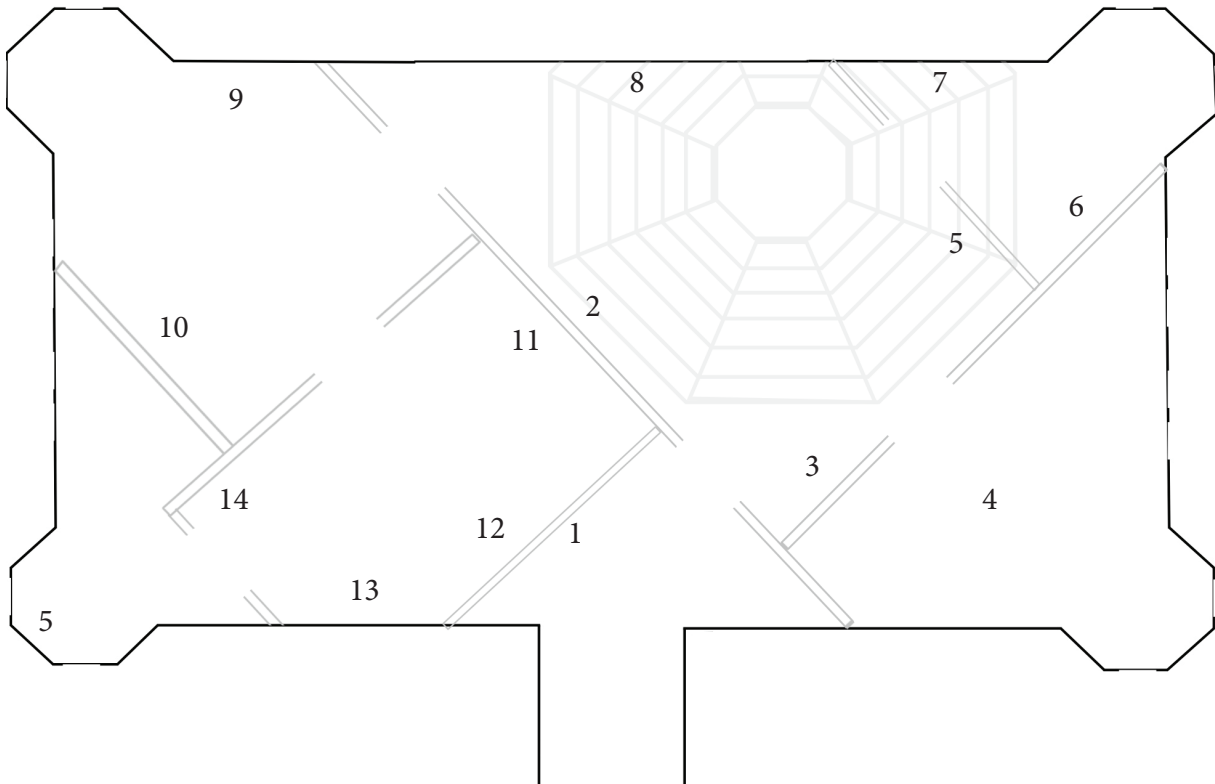
### **13. Rose Salane**

***Doorway with Transom, 2022***

***Wire Reinforced Glass Panels (Fire Resistant), 2022***

Courtesy of the artist and Carlos/Ishikawa

In 2021, Salane purchased a surplus of wire-reinforced glass from the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. This commonly glazing material is designed to protect occupants against potential hazards such as the spread of fire or smoke, according to building codes. Here the glass, sourced from public buildings, also appears as a door frame with a transom window, as if extracted from a façade.



**14. Matias Faldbakken**

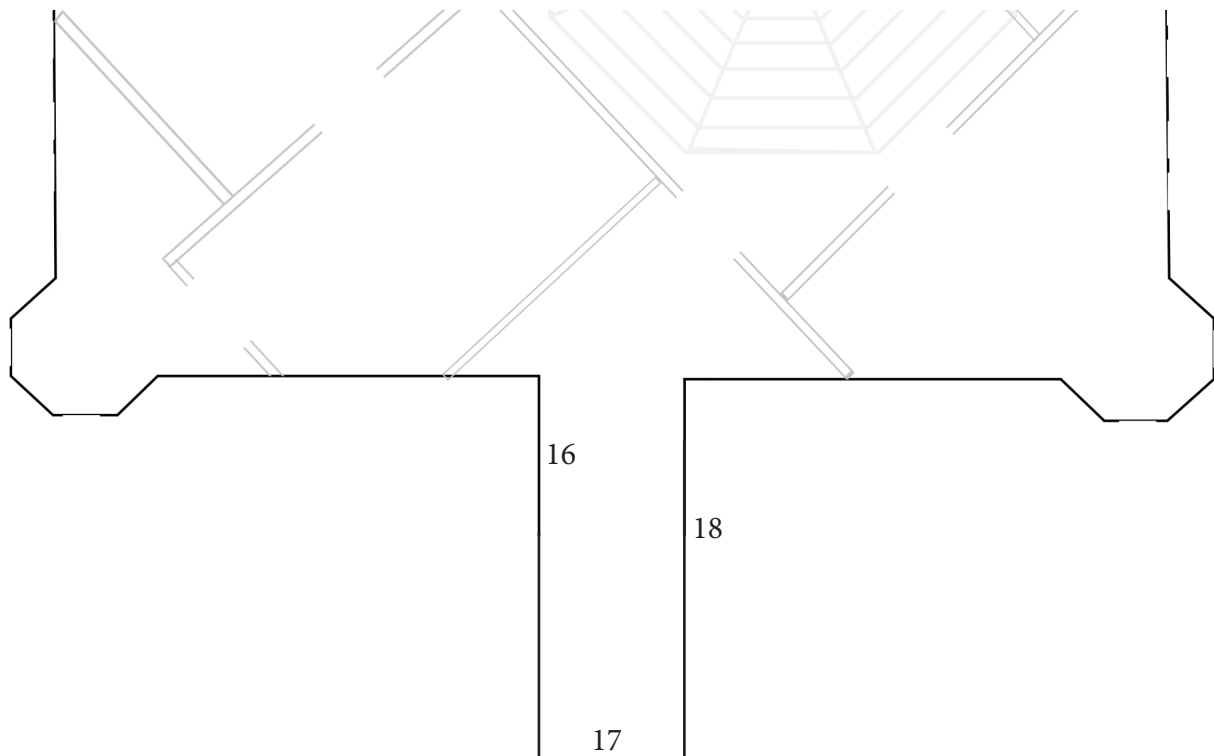
***FUEL SCULPTURE TURQUOISE*, 2017**

***FUEL SCULPTURE GREEN*, 2017**

Cast concrete, rebar, acrylic paint

Courtesy of Paula Cooper Gallery

Faldbakken's work embraces artistic strategies related to disengagement or negation. For works in this series, Faldbakken poured cement into jerry cans. This reduced gesture yields a sculpture but destroys the container's potential to be used, as the concrete takes on its shape and dimensions. Fuel is a resource that has to be contained and transported within an interconnected global economy. Here it comes to a standstill.



## 16. [Bookshelves]

**Cassandra Press**

**10 readers**

Cassandra Press is an artist run publishing and educational platform producing lo-fi printed matter, exhibitions and other projects, with the aim to spread ideas and dialogue centering ethics, aesthetics, femme driven activism, and black scholarship. Taking over the bookshelves where the Ren's own publications are usually featured, here they present a selection of readers: *Reader on Cultural Property, Images, and Ownership* (3 volumes); *Reader on Whiteness, Dissonance, and Horror*; *Reader on Reparations*; *Reader on Blackness, Indigeneity and Erasure*; *Reader on Cannibalism, Blackface & Minstrelsy*; *Reader on 'Labor' After Reconstruction*; *RE: FAUCETS: A Reader on the School to Prison Pipeline*; and *Footnotes: The Absolute Right to Exclude: Reflections on and Implications of Cheryl Harris' Whiteness as Property*.

## 17. [Exterior hallway]

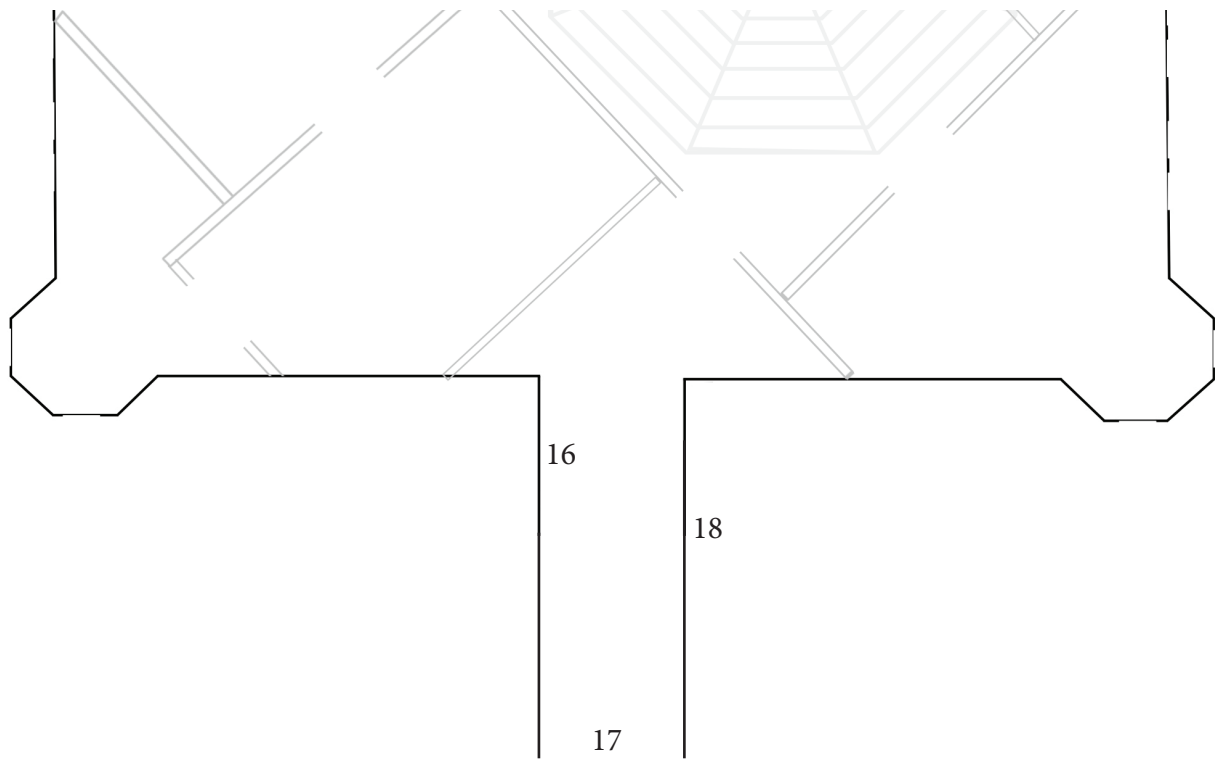
**Joi T. Arcand**

▶Uōbōx (ōtē nīkānōhk), 2018

Self-adhesive vinyl

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Purchased 2020 with the Joy Thomson Fund for the Acquisition of Art by Young Canadian Artists, National Gallery of Canada Foundation

In this installation, Joi T. Arcand introduces Cree (nēhiyawēwin) syllabics into the hallway outside of the Renaissance Society, a shimmering phrase that appears without an immediate translation. In her work, she often introduces indigenous language into public spaces, a gesture continuous with larger collective efforts of language revitalization in places where English language instruction, as a colonizing presence, has forced out other languages.



**18. [Display cases]**

**Joi T. Arcand**

***Fear of Property* exhibition poster**

Courtesy of the artist

Chicago is located on the unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Odawa Nations, as well as other tribes. As a complement to her hallway installation, Arcand has designed an exhibition poster in Potawatomi language on the front and nēhiyawēwin (Cree) on the back, collaborating with translators Kyle Malott, a language specialist and enrolled member of the Pokagen Band of the Potawatomi, and Darryl Chamakese. These posters replace the Ren's usual English language posters in display cases on multiple floors and outside the building.