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# **REMNANTS** Keith Long, James Perkins, Jean Shin

April 8 - May 30, 2017



The Cluster Gallery is pleased to present “**Remnants**”, a group exhibition curated by **Lisa A. Banner**. Featuring works by **Keith Long**, **James Perkins**, and **Jean Shin**.

Spring welcomes the fresh and new, implying moist raw earth, warming to the sun, buds and shoots, unfurling leaves and fragrant blossoms. Or the cold waves crashing in spring onto a beach littered with driftwood, broken shells and heavy sand cast up from winter storms. It is a time of beginning, and clean starts. Spring Cleaning reminds us that the first time we open the windows and let a cool breeze waft through a room, it lifts our spirits. We anticipate interpretations of fashion that allow us to put on new clothes for the season, with lighter fabrics, revealing different contours and interpretations of the body, framing new identities.

Each of the artists in this exhibition reveals to us the remnants of the process of creating those new identities, taken from the fabric of life. It is no coincidence that two of the artists in this exhibition have chosen to title some of their works with the same theme drawn from fashion: Spring Collection.

Using leftovers collected from discarding, or unveiling, or manufacturing, Long, Perkins and Shin create fresh interpretations from odds and ends, inviting us to peer into the creative process and reexamine our own relationship to recycling and cycling into a new season. With them, we can reexamine what spring holds for us.

**Keith Long** finds discarded wooden furniture and other items, like wooden handled umbrellas, on the street. Using reclaimed wood from discarded objects, he creates fresh interpretations of masks, weathervanes, and ready to wear garments, suspended from hangers. His Spring Collection includes wedding gowns made from the backs of broken chairs and elegant goddess dresses and shirts formed from veneers and gilded borders removed from broken furniture. Masks, created to hide or to reveal, imply ornate headdresses formed from spindly handles, reclaimed and recycled wood, leather and painted surfaces. Their identities seem inherent in the quality of the wood, and the lines of the sculptures.

**James Perkins** has taken remnants from his time as a banker on Wall Street, his Italian wool suits, elegant silk ties, expensive watches, and leather goods, and created a reflection of his alternate universe, where he created basketball jerseys too large to fit, from those suits. He rehearses another set of dreams and aspirations in his sculptures made with floating silk fabric, grounded and held to the floor with the Carrera marble bases. In the film where he took these sculptures into the “field,” brought them to a beach to be washed and adorned with salt, he involves them in a ritual confrontation with the primal and essential reality of the ocean. In a series of Rolex watches, Perkins teases with ideas of what is real and what is fake, true and false, in our insatiable culture of commerce and luxury.

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**Jean Shin** transforms the remnants donated to Materials for the Arts, leftovers from commercial manufacturing of luxury leather goods, into the extraordinary forms defined by what is removed, as much as what remains. Whether proportioned skins were tanned and prepared to become those accessories from the bodies of animals. The essential animal nature of the original skins is revealed, in the tanned and empty remnants of what was discarded after cutting out the patterns of the items. Shin explores leftovers given by a community and reimagines them as the Spring Collection presented here, revealing her interpretation of the voids that remain after creation, and the forms of the originally whole animal skins and hides.

In each of these artists' work we can reconnect with an essential part of Spring, that of rediscovering from what was left behind. Present in the tide lines marking receding snow with layers of melting, new forms emerging from driftwood and sidewalk detritus, suits hanging sullenly in the closet, or scraps peeled and discarded onto the floor. Remnants of winter and what came before are retained in the fragments that yield to new interpretations that repurpose and revel in the cool breezes of Spring.

Lisa A. Banner, Ph.D.  
Curator

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