FEVER DREAMS / / Interview with Andy Fabo

In a 1981 essay published in *October*, Benjamin Buchloh described contemporary artists engaged in figuration as "ciphers of regression," artists whose practices represented a step backwards in the forward march of artistic progress. This prominent art historian, born in Germany and working now as a professor at Harvard, was employed at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) when he wrote this essay, appointed head of the university press between 1978 and 1983.[i] Buchloh was in part reacting to the extreme heat of the neo-Expressionist market of the late 1970s and '80s, which in many ways mirrored the excesses of Wall Street at the time; *New York Times* critic Roberta Smith reflects that "The Neo-Expressionists were an instant hit. The phrases 'art star' 'sellout show' and 'waiting list' gained wide usage, sometimes linked to artists you'd barely heard of."[ii]

Buchloh, like Clement Greenberg had for the modernist generation before him, played an outsized role in the nascent post-modern scene in Canada. However, unlike Greenberg, the rapidly expanding field of artistic production in Canada prevented him from playing the singular role that Greenberg had during his time. Simply put, the proliferation of university studio programs and the coalescing of artistic communities in various urban centres allowed for a multiplicity of practices that had not existed in Canada prior to the 1970s.

Fever Dreams, which presents figurative works drawn from the Permanent Collection of the MacLaren Art Centre and dating from 1978 to 2000, highlights a seismic shift from a virtually monolithic focus on abstraction at mid-century to the more pluralistic artistic practices of the latter quarter of the twentieth century. Issues of identity, politics and representation are at play in much of the projects, responding to the recessions of the 1970s and 1980s, Indigenous activism, queer mobilization and feminist practice. The exhibition communicates the diverse and growing possibilities proposed by a younger generation of artists, planting seeds for the expanded field of artistic production we enjoy today. The artists in this exhibition include Carl Beam, Cathy Daley, Michael Davidson, Andy Fabo, Will Gorlitz, Dieter Hacker, Leopold Plotek, Jane Ash Poitras, Jeannie Thib, Renée van Halm and Shirley Wiitasalo.

The works in this exhibition are largely by artists working in Canada, with the exception of a single work by Dieter Hacker, a leading German Neo-Expressionist painter who showed with the Marlborough Gallery in New York City in the 1980s.[iii] The show reflects the work of multiple generations, employed in competing modes—Neo-Expressionism, conceptualism and abstraction—and media—painting, printmaking, collage and sculpture. Many of the artists are or were Toronto-based, and their individual practices reflect the different milieus in which they worked within the city. What ties the projects together is the figure, whether loosely hinted at as in Leopold Plotek's work, implied in absentia as in Renee van Halm's, or explicitly personal as in Jeannie Thib's self-scaled Venus and mother figures on *Monumenta*l kozo paper.

I met with Andy Fabo in Toronto on January 17, 2019 for an interview. Fabo's piece is the earliest in the exhibition, an untitled work from a suite of eighteen paintings of beautiful young men, shirtless and beguiling. Shown at A Space in 1978 in an exhibition entitled *Studs*, the original presentation of these paintings was no doubt shocking to an audience not accustomed to such explicitly queer themes presented in a highly personal vernacular that borrowed as much from Tom of Finland as it did from Pop Painting.

Andy Fabo's presence in the Toronto scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s was catalytic: he, along with Oliver Girling, Rae Johnson, Brian Burnett, Sybil Goldstein and Tony Wilson, formed ChromaZone, a collective and DIY gallery that presented over 400 artists in both their short-lived exhibition space—Girling's Chinatown apartment—and throughout Toronto at various satellite venues. From its earliest days, ChromaZone was tied to the return of figuration within Toronto: Goldstein and Fabo noted "more formalist critics disparaged ChromaZone as a gallery that hailed a return to the retrograde practices of figure painting," but their agenda was in reality far more multifaceted. What they embraced were works "of any medium that more actively engaged the struggles, issues, desires and pleasures of the real world."[iv]

The interview that follows highlights the Toronto artistic community at a critical juncture: what Fabo describes are the years immediately following the decline of one dominant scene and the emergence of multiple communities that intersected and worked together to execute major projects like *ChromaLiving*, *Monumenta* or the *New City of Sculpture*, met at night at the Cameron for drinks and live music, and debated terms in the multiplicity of Toronto art periodicals that flourished in the period.[v] This interview is the first of a series, to be released as we continue to exhibit works from this period.

Emily McKibbon: Your work, an untitled painting from *Studs,* is the earliest work in *Fever Dreams*—the painting itself is from 1978, and the exhibition, *Studs*, was in 1979. I wanted to start by asking you about your education and how it was that you ended up in Toronto, and how this work fits into your first years here?

Andy Fabo: I grew up in Calgary and went first to the University of Calgary and later to the Alberta College of Art. The University of Calgary had a lot of overflow of modernism from Saskatchewan, which was next door, and the Emma Lake Workshops. So there was a real effect, a real influence of Greenbergian modernism. Even though I think that, at that time, the scene was so anti-intellectual then that my instructors might have read a magazine article by Greenberg, but they never read a whole book by him. But they had the lingo down, like "push and pull" and worrying about "the *edge*" and stuff like that. They had a terrible art program—we learned to seal, to mask hard-edge paintings and seal them, so your stripes had a hard edge, which Frank Stella never did. So I went off to Europe, Paris, for a year, and saw a lot of contemporary shows—David Hockney and Francis Bacon. So I knew that even though some of my instructors felt like modernism and post-painterly abstraction was like dying and going to heaven, I knew that all this other stuff was going on.

When I moved here [in 1975], I kind of expected a larger gay community, a LGBTQ community, and that wasn't very visible. Artists like General Idea were kind of being cagy, like Andy Warhol was. Even in New York City, you wouldn't know about Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns unless you lived there. Those three [Warhol, Rauschenberg and Johns] were my heroes, because I could see in them a kind of post-modern pivot, a vision. I had a very strong intuition that these were my people in some way. And in fact, that series, *Studs*, has eighteen works, and so it's a kind of a cross between Warhol—the seriality of Warhol, the frontal seriality of Warhol—and *Bed* (1955), the quilted bed of Rauschenberg.

Anyway, so when I got here, the first artist that I knew of was that was kind of an "art world" out artist was Evergon, actually. At that time he was doing these collages that he would photocopy so that they become unitary rather than just collages—colour photocopying was just taking off in that period. And I didn't meet him until decades later, but a good friend of mine was collecting his work and was my first sale, the very first *Studs* that I had done in Calgary and brought with me. All the rest were done in Toronto and Montreal, but with that one, it had real jeans on it, it was done in encaustic. It was the only one done in encaustic. They all had underpants underneath and you could open the pants for the most part. Most of them have t-shirts, some have just bare tops, and then they have fetish materials in the negative space, like leather or vinyl.

I was working at a leather and denim steam bath, called the Barracks, which was right on Widmer St. It was a period where gay liberation had happened, it was very hippie, and I was a baby hippie. But all of a sudden there was this kind of feeling that the "establishment," to use a hippie term, had a notion of gay people as being these effeminate ponces. And so there was this style called the "Castro Clone," which was named after Castro Street, which was the new gay neighbourhood in San Francisco that arose in the 1970s. It was jeans, flannel shirts, plaid shirts—or else t-shirts, jeans and t-shirts—short hair, moustaches, kind of recouping Burt Reynolds from the Cosmopolitan spread.[vi] That's also when gay magazines started up. Before then it was *After Dark*[vii], which was a dance and theatre magazine. They'd get dancers, men, to take off their tops—there was a lot of interest in Rudolf Nureyev and also just any handsome young actor, whether he was gay or straight. And then the beefcake magazines started up. Now it's so standard to see male bodies in advertising and everywhere—maybe too much [laughing]. But back then, it was not visible—the object of desire was not in the public purview. It seemed radical to me to create these images of men, men that one would desire, butch men. But it was also a critique of that, too—gay men have always had that kind of duality where you know that it's an act, a role. When Judith Butler came out with her notion of performing gender, gay people totally understood it. It was not a complicated thing.

EM: We have vinyl in the one at the MacLaren. And studs along the top.

AF: Right, you have that surfer boy one. It's pretty vinyl, right?

EM: Yeah, it's very innocent. He's topless.

AF: That one was more… I mean, you wouldn't wear that colour of vinyl. It's more the colour of a little corvette.

EM: Yes. Exactly. There's something sweet about him. He's very…

AF: He's probably the most innocent of them all. But there's something devilish in him, too.

EM: He's wearing cheetah underwear.

AF: Oh, right. All the pants were mine. I just kept them over the years, because they were done over a three-year period. And all the underpants were mine, too.

EM: It's funny—the first morning the show was open, I was behind on the installation the night before. I came in the next morning to print all the labels, it was the only thing I had to do. So I was in the gallery putting up the labels on a work that was kitty-corner to the piece. And the first people in the gallery, the first to see the show, were a grandmother, a mother and a daughter, they were having a three-generational date. And they undid his pants.

AF: [Laughing]

EM: So I had to slap their wrists, a bit. But I felt kind of guilty because I thought, I can see the temptation.

AF: Yes, I encourage people to take a peek and of course, you know these things, a lot of them have been in warehouses for years, taking all sorts of abuse. But that's what happens in museums!

EM: So it was very funny. I wasn't mad at them, but afterwards I did put up a sign saying "do not touch."

AF: You are a steward of the work. But it's cute that they had the impulse. We've come a long way in a lot of ways.

EM: You mentioned that this series was supposed to go into a three-person exhibition, *The Flesh in the Flat*, with Rae Johnson and Oliver Girling. Could you talk about that?

AF: Yeah, and then that show fell through because A Space had been in a livery stable on St. Nicholas, just kind of tucked behind Bloor and Yonge. And it was a big space, but it was just one floor because downstairs they had a press where they printed a tabloid called *Only Paper Today.* But then they moved into the building that became the City TV building, the Ryerson building, and it wasn't very big. There was a new director, Peggy Lee, working with Jane Perdue. So we decided to do three one-person shows so that you could get a sense of what each of us were doing. Rae Johnson and I chose to show there and Oliver chose a space that Chrysanne Stathacos and Martin Heath ran, a shared space, probably because his paintings were so huge that they wouldn't fit at A Space.

Tom Dean had originally put the show together; he knew Rae because Rae was a student of his at OCAD. Oliver had just come over from NSCAD and had a bit of a head start on us because Benjamin Buchloh had been running the NSCAD press and brought in Gerhardt Richter, who was teaching there. I don't know how much Oliver knew about the European painters, but I had no idea that when I moved here that figuration was going to come back, big time. I felt like I was doing this odd duck thing and that there was never going to be another community, because all of the painters here were abstract painters. So when Tom brought us together we became fast friends, and then we coalesced and put together a gallery with some other friends: ChromaZone. And that was because we couldn't show anywhere after we did our first shows, we really weren't getting another show.

EM: You started ChromaZone in 1981, is that right?

AF: It was September of 1981. The space was on the second floor over a really messy, rag trade kind of textile shop on Spadina, just north of Dundas across from the Victory Theatre. It was Oliver's apartment; he had just a room for a studio that he also slept in, and we converted the middle section into this two-room gallery with a kitchen and bathroom at the back. It was small and it wasn't fancy, but it was just enough. We decided we would do salon hangings, which were very anti-modernist. It wasn't *serious* if you salon-hung. The neighbourhood was just transitioning from a Jewish neighbourhood to a Chinese neighbourhood and Oliver really wanted a sign in Chinese, he wanted to interface with the Chinese community. So we had ChromaZone translated to "colourful country." And Oliver chose this motif of circles, bubbling up or something. And we had a lot of people coming to our door thinking we were a ping pong club.

EM: And you were at this space for a few years.

AF: Yeah. Because we had a notion that we weren't going to accept government money, it was very purist. And it's absurd, because Mercer Union and YYZ had only been around for a couple of years. So we're saying, "oh, it's too

bureaucratic and we don't want to go through that whole rigmarole, apply for grants, be in that frame of mind." So we actually tried to be more like a collective and actually sell work, but we had this thing where we were only going to do group shows themed around an idea.

EM: How did ChromaZone support itself?

AF: We had no money. I don't know how we did it; it's just kind of amazing. We had a little when we first started, after we did a fundraiser at the Drake—before the Drake was cool. It was when it was still art deco, still an amazing narrow bar. We knew all these bands and Sybil was living with a member of the Boys Brigade, a band that was getting a lot of airplay in Toronto at the time.[viii] We put the proceeds towards the gallery and it sustained it for two years, and we also made money off the ChromaZone fashion show.

EM: I found a history of ChromaZone that you and Sybil Goldstein wrote. Just like you said, your reputation was for figurative painting, but you wrote the group's interests were in "the celebration of the emergence of a generation that eschewed the increasingly remote and esoteric strains of formalist painting, process-oriented performance and hermetic video art for art in any medium that more actively engaged the struggles, issues, desires and pleasures of the real world."

AF: Yeah, Sybil was really interested in social realist painting.

Before A Space or ChromaZone, Oliver and Rae both went down to New York City to be in the studio—well, Oliver just went down independently and was involved in Colab and different organizations like that.[ix] Rae was in her last year at OCAD in New York working with Daniel Solomon who was running the OCAD Studio and Tom Dean afterwards. Oliver came back and he knew about Thomas Lawson and *REALLIFE Magazine*. Even though *REALLIFE* was more like Metro Pictures, more about mediation, Tom Lawson was a painter and there was something in that name that meant a lot to me.[x] Everything seemed to be either hot or cold, and we felt we were hot. Especially Rae and Oliver, or even myself and Sybil at the time, we worked in oversaturated colours and there wasn't a lot of subtlety in our work. There was also just the idea of *content*, like Cindy Sherman dealing with gender.

In fact, ChromaZone did a show with Charles Clough, one of the co-founders of Hallwall's in Buffalo with Robert Longo and Cindy Sherman, Michael Zwack and a few others. Charles traded with all of them, so we did a show of his collection. So we were the first people to show Julian Schnabel in Toronto, just a funny little drawing that Charles had. We also had one of the original Cindy Sherman *Film Stills*, the one with the library, black and white.[xi]

EM: A lot of the projects that ChromaZone originated were done in collaboration between different members. One of your frequent collaborators was Tim Jocelyn. Did you want to speak to the work you did together?

AF: I actually met Tim at the Barrack's where I worked. It was the night of the big demonstrations, after the larger steam bath raids. I had been arrested in some earlier raids—I did a show about the experience, *Self Portraits of an Alleged Keeper of a Common Bawdy House* (1980) using the mugshots—but he came in and there were 3000 people out on the street and all the closeted people were afraid to come to the steam baths.[xii] So there was nobody there, we just started talking and ended up in a bedroom together. We were both in relationships at the time and we both tried to stay apart, but he helped to organize the ChromaZone fashion show and *ChromaLiving* and we just fell in love.

Tim never had any training in constructing garments—he went to India and loved all the fabrics, and started collecting fabrics, taught himself to sew, but he always sewed in the flat. So his early garments were always based on tribal garments and were very simple, things that would fit most bodies of some description. And then he started working with other designers to construct clothing, but he was never happy in the fashion world and the fashion world wasn't ready for him yet. So eventually he moved into doing textile work instead of doing apparel. But there are some of his coats in the ChromaZone fashion shows, the ones that were constructivist. Tim was always very eclectic and he stole from the best: Sonya Delaunay, Kandinsky.

EM: Tim Jocelyn helped out with the fashion show, is that right?

AF: It was a big event, a beautifully produced event that Tim did with David Buchan. Have you seen many pictures from that?

EM: Not from the fashion show, not so much.

AF: We showed Tanya Mars' codpieces, we had people like Andy Paterson involved—he wore a Campbell's soup tin as a codpiece. There was a whole ad campaign for Loblaw's called "Meat Mainly," and I wore a meat package that actually had my junk under the plastic. I think Brian Burnett had an oil tin. Tanya had just moved here from Montreal, where she had helped started the feminist art gallery, Powerhouse Gallery. Tim was in the fashion show, David Buchan: David did these fabulous outfits. Robert Stewart was in it—he's in a number of Elgin Garden photographs in drag. He was in a band, Government, with Andy Paterson. They were great, a fantastic band. Anyway. I'm just reminiscing.

EM: Let's talk about *ChromaLiving*. You put together a project with 150 artists at a closed department store, Harridge's, in 1983.

AF: It was a Junior Miss department store—I don't think they had men's clothing, at all. And it was quite outrageous, seventies faux art deco, foil wallpapers and we played off of that environment as part of our installations. We had artists who worked in art departments on films who put together these environments that looked like department stores, but way crazier and nuttier. We were trying to really minimize painting. It was very hard because we were known as this painting gallery and all these painters were basically knocking our doors down, trying to be in the show. There's a Derek Caine painting, sort of ironically, behind the sofa to match the sofa—burgundy. But for the most part, we had very few—the paintings were on the walls, but murals.

EM: The photographs are incredible to look at and the thought of coordinating 150 artists is a daunting one.

AF: I think that number might be higher. Because there were curations within curations—Robert Stewart did a curation of video artists, that sort of thing. Downtown video artists. We lost track and it was impossible to tell at some point. And there were performance artists, too.

EM: I know that there was a revisting of *ChromaLiving* a couple of years ago, Chroma Lives, and there have been several shows at different institutions that historicize this time period—at the AGYU, the Art Museum at U of T and the AGO. How do you feel about this process of historicization?

AF: In many ways, I'm really surprised. Do you know Lili Huston-Herterich and Erin Alexa Freedman? Anyway, Erin was doing a residency at the ROM and she saw some of Tim's work and was curious about it and looked him up on the CCCA website. And she found out about *ChromaLiving*; *ChromaLiving* is on the CCCA website. So they decided to do their own project, *Chroma Lives*, and they interviewed me a few times [for background]. They used some of Tim's work, but for the most part they found corresponding artists from their own generation. I was gratified that they were really excited about it because there were a number of big group shows then—did you know about *Monumenta*?

EM: I read a bit about *Monumenta*.

AF: David Clarkson's article?[xiii] It was hilarious. I was amazed that he really captured that… that attitude, frozen in time: dissing our space, saying that we're the expressionists, that by having this big show and including us, it would become immediately obvious that our work was not worth looking at. I've moved on and I thought it was funny. I don't occupy that space of being the figurative artist who's under fire. To me, there's all sorts of incredible people working with images because I went through this transformation of thinking around figuration and issues around the body because of AIDS.

But what it shows is that we were these scamps. We'd go to the Cameron and sit next to Jaan Poldaas and grumble at each other and insult each other. And after a while, by the mid-1990s, there was this kind of respect that we had all held in there. I've moved on: I don't feel polemical and I see the historical placement of things. Jaan's having a memorial show at Birch Contemporary and I never thought I'd outlive him because I've been HIV positive since 1985, it's kind of a miracle that I'm still here.

I was surprising by Chroma Living because it was *Monumenta* and the *New City of Sculpture* that were being endorsed and taken seriously, *ChromaLiving* just felt like this weird, flighty thing, more entertainment, not intellectual or serious enough. So the fact that it's come back and has a higher profile surprised me. Part of that is thanks to Sybil because she worked with Phil Kirby doing the CCCA website. She got all that stuff, the films, the videos, and she did all that work to

preserve it. So just by being documented in a very public place, that's what's preserved. So *Monumenta*, the *New City of Sculpture*, those shows didn't get documented in one place. But Mercer's done an excellent job, though, doing that.

EM: ChromaZone ended in 1986, is that right?

AF: Our last show was in 1985, when we went to Switzerland, *Fire + Ice*. There was a lot of dissent about it. We did it with Renée van Halm, and there was some tension that came out of our different circles' views of how things should be done. When we got together we had a notion that any phenomenon has its lifespan, so right from the start we knew that we weren't going to run ChromaZone forever. By that point we were all diverging so much in what we were making art about, how we were doing it, who we were doing it with… we just didn't have the coherence anymore.

EM: Toronto, despite it being in some ways a very insular place, it was very much a part of larger conversations that were happening in New York and other places.

AF: I had no idea that there was all this stuff brewing with Foucault and others until I was working with *Body Politic* and a couple of academics in the group, Sue Golding and Alexander Wilson—who died of AIDS in the 1990s. Alex and Bob Gallagher did an interview with Foucault. And I actually remember Foucault at the Barracks, coming in.

A group that Judith Doyle and Eldon Garnett were involved with—they brought Kathy Acker in. And in terms of music, CKLN went bankrupt for a year, and the DJ's just went in and played all this stuff from Britain and New York City, and all the local punk and new wave bands—that's why it got so entrenched here. I saw the Talking Heads at A Space when there were only thirty people in the audience, it was incredible. I had no context for them: I had never heard of CBGB's yet, and I just knew that this was really different. David Byrne would keep coming back; he would stay with Sandy Stagg. So he came to an opening at Mercer Union that was a three person show with Oliver, Jim Anderson and I. And then when we did the *ChromaLiving* catalogue launch, he came to that—that was at Molly's Art Bar/Speakeasy that was on top of the General Electric Building.

EM: That's incredible to look back on, this period. It's still relevant, and still revisited.

AF: Yeah, so it's interesting seeing all these 1980s shows. I just think that the more the merrier.

Andy Fabo is an artist, art critic, independent curator, AIDS activist and arts educator. Born in Calgary, Alberta in 1953, he studied at the Alberta College of Art and the University of Calgary before moving to Toronto in 1978. Since 1980, Fabo has exhibited extensively throughout Canada, the United States and the UK, and was the subject of a retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto, in 2005. He was a founding member of ChromaZone and a pioneering activist on behalf of various issues related to Queer culture and HIV/AIDS. In addition to his independent practice, collaborative video works with Michael Balser have been exhibited at the International Kijkhuis Media Festival (Den Hague Holland); VTape and Video Data Bank (Toronto and Chicago); the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa); and the Museum of Modern Art (New York).

Emily McKibbon is the Associate Director/Senior Curator at the MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie, Ontario; she joined the staff in 2013. From 2011 to 2013, she was the Howard and Carole Tanenbaum Curatorial Fellow at George Eastman Museum in Rochester, New York. She has previously worked in curatorial, collections and research capacities at the National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy, Auckland, the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, and the Ryerson Image Centre in Toronto.

[i] Jayne Wark, "Conceptual Art in Canada: The East Coast Story," in Grant Arnold and Karen Henry, eds., *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada, 1965-1980* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2012): 35

[ii] Roberta Smith, "Painting from the 1980s: When Brash met Flash," *The New York Times*, February 9, 2017. Available online: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/09/arts/design/painting-from-the-1980s-when-brash-met-flash.html. Accessed November 21, 2019.

[iii] The Marlborough Gallery was one of the leading international galleries beginning in the 1950s and continuing through the present. In the 1980s, they represented Francis Bacon, Frank Auerbach, Oscar Kokoschka and other senior artists as well as a cohort of young, largely German neo-Expressionist painters who were selling out shows at their New York location.

[iv] Andy Fabo and Sybil Goldstein, "ChromaZone / Chromatique: A Brief History, 1981-1986," November 2009. Available online: http://ccca.concordia.ca/chromazone/chromazone_history.html. Accessed November 21, 2019.

[v] Philip Monk notes of the particular richness of the Toronto periodical market: "Toronto had an abundance: *FILE* (1972-1989), *Impulse* (1970-1990), *Only Paper Today*, previously *Proof Only* (1974-1980), *Artists Review* (1977-1980), and *Parallelogramme*, the magazine of the artist-run system (1976-1995). Not a typical art magazine per se, *Centerfold* then changing its name to *FUSE*, was another option…I should also mention *Image Nation* (1970-1984) and *Impressions* (1970-1983) in this context although both were photography magazines, not journals of writing or combination of the two. *Art Communication Edition/Strike* published for just over a year (late 1976 to late 1978)." See Philip Monk, "Toronto Talk," n.d. Available online: http://www.philipmonk.com/arguments-1. Accessed November 21, 2019.

[vi] In the *New York Times* obituary for Burt Reynolds, the author notes the actor's broad appeal, describing his figure as "a relaxed emblem of an era of key parties, swingers, and also the hirsute and mustachioed gay clone." The original Cosmpolitan spread appeared in 1972. Guy Trebay, "Burt Reynolds Changed the Gaze: The nude heard around the world.", *New York* Times, September 6, 2018. Available online ,https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/06/style/burt-reynolds-dead-cosmopolitan.html> Accessed March 27, 2019

[vii] *After Dark* was "an audacious mass-market experiment in gay eroticism" that arose out of *Ballroom Dance Magazine* in 1968. It was in circulation for fifteen years, closing in 1983. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/After_Dark_(magazine). Accessed March 27, 2019

[viii] Boys Brigade was a Toronto-based New Wave band that formed in 1981. For more information see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boys_Brigade_(band). Accessed March 27, 2019

[ix] Colab was an artist-run collective formed to facilitate "collaboration, collectivity, and social engagement". Active for about ten years, their projects focused on the social issues of their time, including Reaganism, the gentrification of New York City and the nuclear arms race. For more information see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colab

[x] *REALLIFE* was a magazine critically examining postmodern ideas around mass media and art, and *Metro Pictures* was a gallery featuring many artists engaged in that field of investigation, including Cindy Sherman, Robert Longo and Sherrie Levine. Both were important venues for the dissemination of the work of the Pictures generation, whose work was first popularized in an exhibition entitled *Pictures*, curated by Douglas Crimp at Artists Space Gallery, in New York City in 1977.

[xi] *Film Stills #13*, 1978. This work is held in the Permanent Collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Broad and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

[xii] Andy Fabo worked at the steamhouse the Barracks, which was subject to two high-profile raids in 1978 and 1981. Charged with keeping a bawdy house in 1978, Fabo was working the night of the protests against the 1981 bathhouse raids. For more information see "The Barracks," October 11, 2013, *The Queer Story*, available online: http://www.queerstory.ca/2013/10/11/the-barracks/

[xiii] David Clarkson's history of *Monumenta* includes commentary on the various groups working in Toronto: artists at the Mirvish Gallery, A Space, YYZ, Mercer Union and ChromaZone. On ChromaZone, Clarkson writes: "This last gang was a problem. ChromaZone started after YYZ and while it didn't seem to have a very solid gallery space, the artists involved had an anarchistic energy and a well-defined aesthetic. The painting was definitely 'not abstract', and therefore contemporary, but to us it lacked a crucial criticality and ideology. It appeared to be a restaging of art historical conventions, untroubled clichés and popular myths of avant-garde angst. We expected the future to be modern, and art history to be a conveyor belt of cultural innovation. Rather than excluding ChromaZone's neo-expressionist painterly painting, my co-curators and I agreed on a foolproof strategy. We would put them in the show, thinking: if ChromaZone's new brushy bombasticism was presented in a context of photographic conceptualism and appropriation art, people would sensibly judge it lacking and that would be the end of it. Of course in the end, this newold style of painting was judged fabulously hip and got a lot of attention." David Clarkson, "A Momenta Memoir," available online: http://dupontprojects.com/static/text/*Monumenta*.pdf?h=f9f619ed

Interview to accompany the exhibition *Fever Dreams: Figurative Work from the MacLaren's Permanent Collection*, held December 1, 2018 to March 3, 2019 at the MacLaren Art Centre, Barrie, curated by Emily McKibbon.

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