## the common S E N S E

ANN HAMILTON

Commissioned by

Henry Art Gallery Seattle, Washington

#### ANN HAMILTON

#### the common S E N S E

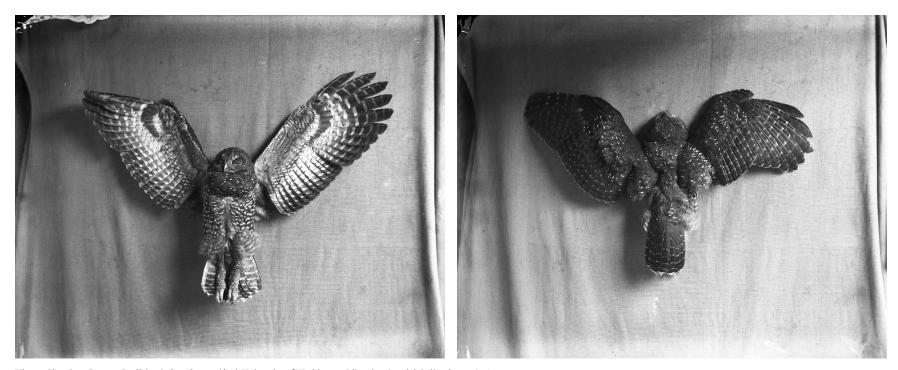
the common S E N S E was a museum-wide exhibition of commissioned works by artist Ann Hamilton at Henry Art Gallery in Seattle, Washington. For the common S E N S E, Hamilton conceived of the Henry as a hub connecting to the University of Washington's collections and academic programs.

As a Visiting Fellow, she conducted research in the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, the University Libraries Special Collections, and the Henry's holdings of costumes, textiles, and photographs. The material elements of the exhibition were drawn from these collections. Images of animals specimens; bestiaries and children's ABC primers; fur, feather, and gut garments were stitched together with sound, voice, printed texts, and the movement of air in a building newly opened to light.

Time was also a material of the exhibition. Over the six-month duration of *the common SENSE*, the project shifted with some elements depleting and others accumulating. Periodically, the galleries were animated by reading and singing.

#### Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, Washington

Aristotle wrote in *Historia Animalum* and *De Anima* that "touch" is the sense common to all animal species. In this project, touch is not only physical contact but a form of intellectual and emotional recognition. The exhibition was full of images and skins of animals: once alive, they touched and were touched in return by the world they inhabited. For Hamilton *the common S E N S E* is "an address to the finitude and threatened extinctions we share across species—a lacrimosa, an elegy, for a future being lost."



Viretta Chambers Denny, Stuffed owl, from front and back, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1896

The Museum is an institution of sight, a house of looking and seeing, a place where we behold with our eyes. We may be stirred, moved or touched by what we see but we rarely touch the thing seen.

I lament this distance.

We stroke a pet, reach to draw a curtain and feel the fineness of the cotton, touch the hand of another person. We sleep between sheets, stay warm inside silk underwear and wool coats; cloth is the constant tactile companion to our body, is the hand that is always touching.

Cloth covers nakedness—makes us social. Its surround is an early architecture and its origins are animal: the fleece of sheep, the skin of bear, the spun thread of a silkworm.

Each extension of a hand or paw is toward contact. Contact with the ground, the air, to someone or something outside the self and from this extension one is always touched in return—that is touch's reciprocal condition and exchange. When we touch we go from being observers to being included; things seen become things felt.

In silence or in speech, reading and being read to are other forms of touch. The words of poets and writers stir us. When this happens we may be compelled to note, copy, or underline and often to share that touch—by passing the book from hand to hand, by reading out loud, or by sharing the page. The distance between author and reader, and reader and reader diminishes as the capacity of words to compel recognition travels from contact to contact, screen to screen, and perhaps from hand to hand.

This project is a series of invitations. It begins—or ends—with the image of a camera draped in cloth; with it, an invitation to be photographed. Your images will become material in the project. This is the project's first exchange.

Then, there is an invitation to take fragments of readings, poems, texts, and to submit your own.

In the South Gallery, there is an invitation to listen and feel the air generated by a field of twenty mechanized bullroarers inspired by ancient instruments used from Greece to Australia to call or signal over great distance.

In the North galleries, there is an invitation to pull down from the walls segments of birds, mammals, and amphibians.

An exhibition is a form of exchange; like a conversation, it is organic, changed by each person who enters and whose acts of giving and taking will become the public life of the project.

-Ann Hamilton

#### LIST OF ELEMENTS

ONEEVERYONE PORTRAITS

SCISSORS

COMMONPLACE COLLECTIONS

ABC PRIMERS, PHOTOGRAPHS & PUZZLE\*

ANIMAL LITERATURE & ENCYCLOPEDIA

CARTS, CURTAINED

CLOTHING MADE FROM ANIMAL SKIN\*\*

READERS, SCRIBES, VOCALISTS

MUSICAL SCORE

WOOL BLANKETS

NEWSPRINT PADS

IMAGES OF ANIMAL FEET & UNDERBELLIES\*\*\*

AIR A BOOK

A FIELD OF BULLROARERS\*\*\*\*



#### **EVENTS**

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CHORALE DIRECTED BY GISELLE WYERS

A SILENT READING WITH JOSHUA BECKMAN

BULL ROARCHESTRA WITH STUART DEMPSTER

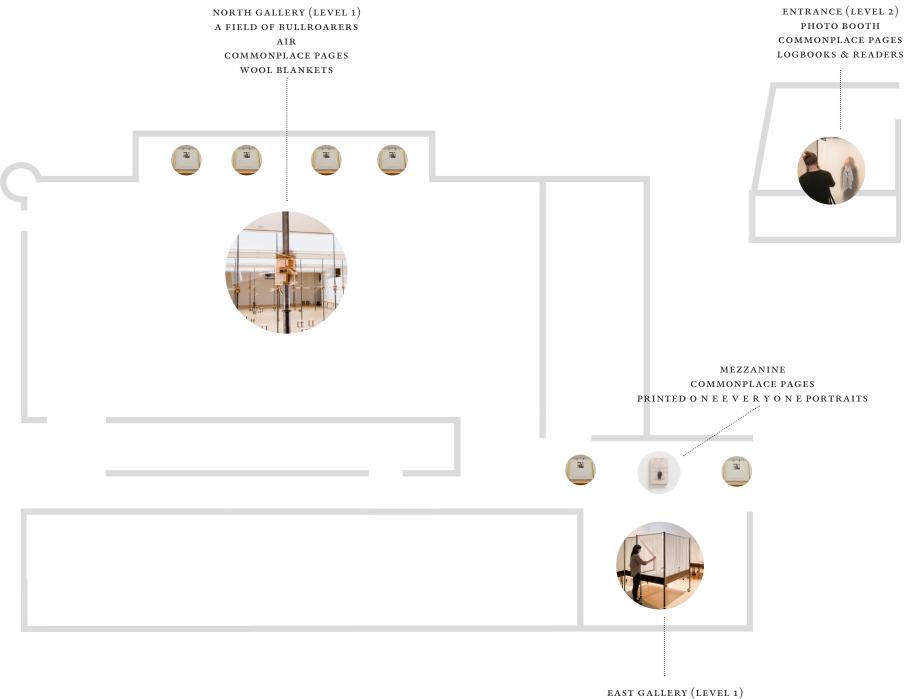
... THAT LANGUAGE IS SHAPED AIR ... BY JUAN PAMPIN WITH THE SEATTLE CHAMBER PLAYERS

<sup>\*</sup>ABC Primers, Photographs & Puzzle are from Special Collections at University of Washington Libraries.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Clothing Made From Animal Skin are selections from the Henry Art Gallery's collection.

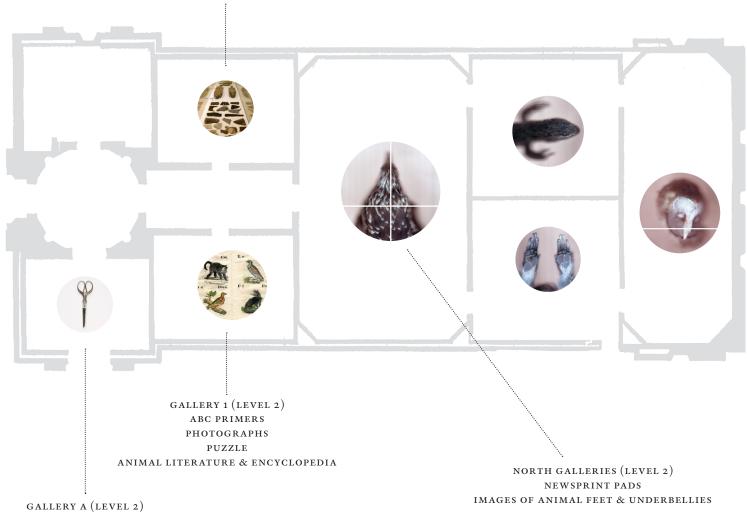
<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Images of Animal Feet & Underbellies are scans of specimens from the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture.

<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup> A Field of Bullroarers was designed by Jerry Garcia and Phil Turner of Olson Kundig Architects.

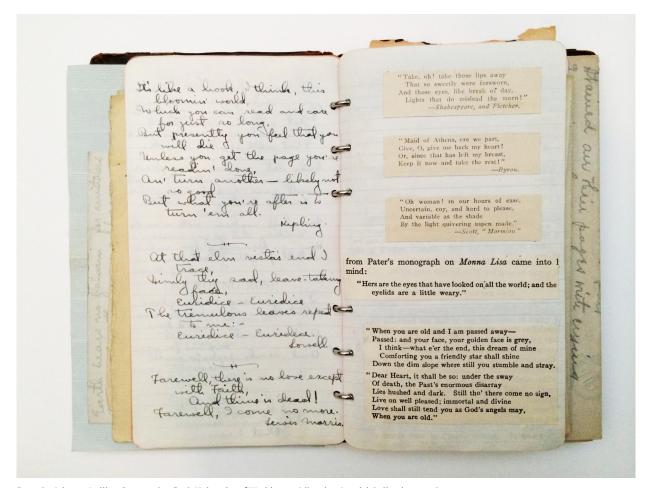


EAST GALLERY (LEVEL 1)
CLOTHING MADE FROM ANIMAL SKIN
CARTS, CURTAINED

GALLERY 2 (LEVEL 2)
ANIMAL SPECIMENS
FUR & TEXTILE SWATCHES



GALLERY A (LEVEL 2)
COMMONPLACE COLLECTION
SCISSORS



Dorothy Stimson Bullitt, Commonplace Book, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 20th century

#### COMMONPLACE COLLECTIONS

Commonplacing was once a common verb that referred to the process of reading, copying out, and managing selections from one's books. The practice has its origins in antiquity in the idea of loci communes, or "common places," under which ideas or arguments could be collected for use in different situations. A commonplace book is a model for organizing and arranging the collected excerpts of a reader and reflects idiosyncratic interests and practices of an individual's organization of knowledge.

As you moved through *the common S E N S E*, there were shelves stacked with newsprint pages printed with short passages of text that have been submitted to the project's online tumblr site: readers-reading-readers.tumblr.com. The website collected literary fragments related to touching and being touched. These text fragments, contributed by many individuals, were a guide and an accompaniment to the exhibition.

READERS READING READERS —

A

# C O M M O N P L A C E

A BOOK FOR

the common S E N S E



Photo: Jonathan Vanderweit

Photo: Ann Hamilton Studio





### Readers Reading Readers A Commonplace

Part of the common S E N S E, an exhibition by Ann Hamilton, on view at Henry Art Gallery, from October 11, 2014 - April 26, 2015

> on this site on touch on the exhibition

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A hand cupped the heel of a woman who wished to climb a tree to see the stars more clearly. The men laughed into their tumblers. They all went swimming again with just the modesty of the night. An arm touched a face. A foot touched a stomach. They could have almost drowned or fallen in love and their lives would have been totally changed during any one of those evenings.

Michael Ondaatje. Running in the Family. Translated by Sally Livingston. Toronto: McClelland & Steward, 1993. pp. 40-41.

#Hand #Touch #Touched

1 note

#submission





#### ...we will all go

Feeling very much out of sorts herself. Jo hurried into the parlor to find Beth sobbing over Pip, the canary, who lay dead in the cage with his little claws pathetically extended, as if imploring the food for want of which he had died.

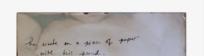
"It's all my fault - I forgot him there isn't a seed or a drop left. Oh, Pip! Oh, Pip! How could I be so cruel to you?" cried Beth, taking the poor thing in her hands, and trying to restore him.

Jo peeped into his half-open eye, felt his little heart, and finding him stiff and cold, shook her head, and offered her domino-box for a coffin.

"Put him in the oven, and maybe he will get warm and revive," said Amy

"He's been starved, and he shan't be baked, now he's dead. I'll make him a shroud, and he shall be





#### ...an isolating trap

American men, in an attempt to avoid any possible hint of committing unwanted sexual touch, are foregoing gentle platonic touch in their lives. I'll call it touch isolation. Homophobic social stigmas, the long-standing challenges of rampant sexual abuse, and a society steeped in a generations old puritanical mistrust of physical pleasure have created an isolating trap in which American men can go for days or weeks at a time without touching another human being. The implications of touch isolation for men's health and happiness are

Gentle platonic touch is central to the early development of infants. It continues to play an important role throughout men and women's lives in terms of our development, health and emotional well being,

#### ...the process of transformation

I was a small child, crouching over a swampy pond, watching tadpoles. Enormous, soon to become frogs, they swarmed around the bank. Through the thin membrane covering their distended bellies, the tangle of intestines was clearly visible. Heavy with the process of transformation, sluggish, they provoked one to reach for them. Pulled out onto shore with a stick, touched carelessly, the swollen bellies burst. The contents leaked out in a confusion of knots. Soon they were beset by flies. I sat there, my heart beating fast, shaken by what had happened. The destruction of soft life and the boundless mystery of the content of softness. It was just the same as confronting a broken stem with sap flowing out, provoked by an inexplicable inner process, a force

#### ...Ou

Our soul within, A their ow eyes mee That, sp tenderes

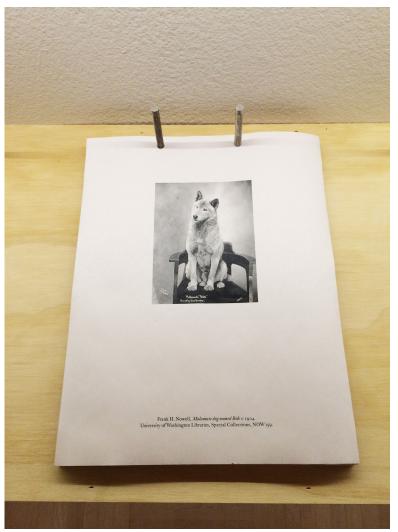
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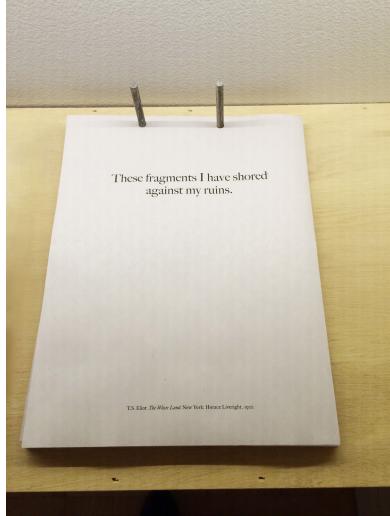
#submissi

#### ...su clari

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Photos: Ann Hamilton Studio











#### ABC PRIMER



We imitate the sounds of animals — the "moo moo" of a cow; the "whoof whoof" of a dog — are learned along side "mama" and "papa." And though language differentiates the human species from other animals, the images and sounds of animals are our first ABC's, our first spoken words.

In time sound becomes letter becomes word becomes sentence, paragraph and book. It is through language that we reach back across language's divide to touch and be touched by our contact with animals.



ABC Primer, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections



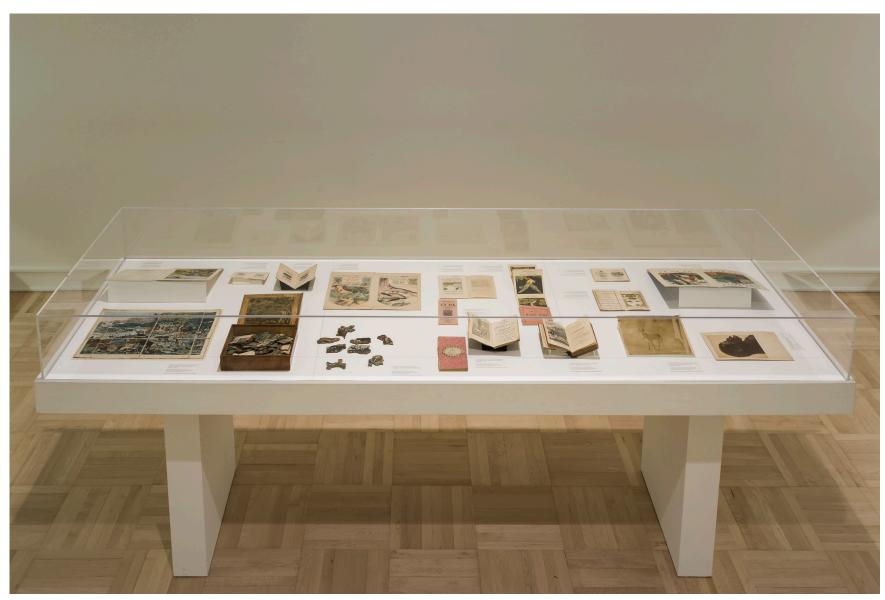
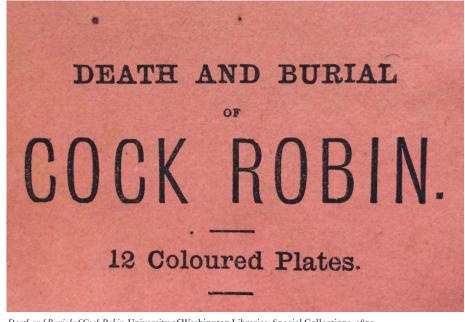


Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios





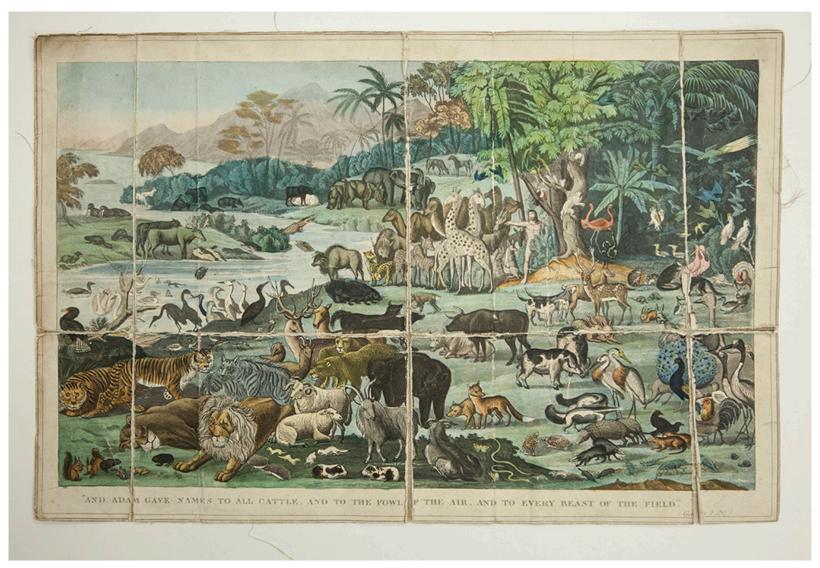
Death and Burial of Cock Robin, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1870







Photo by RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios

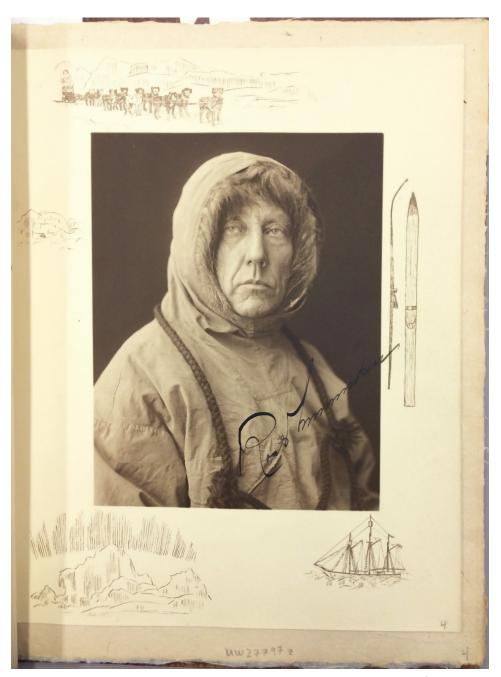


Scripture, Natural History & Zoology (Guide to Wooden Puzzle), University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1840





Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios



Walter B. Beals Album on Roald Amundsen, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1906/1929

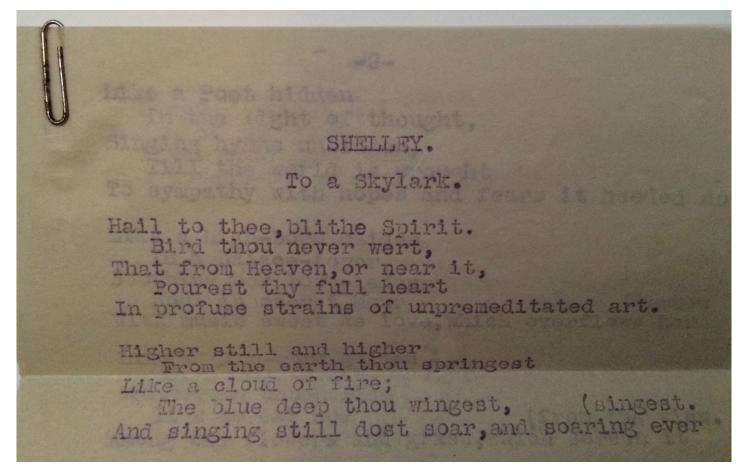


Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios





Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios



Dorothy Stimson Bullitt, Commonplace Book, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 20th century



Portrait of Inger Wangness (postcard), University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1914



Collar (girl's), Henry Art Gallery, 1914

#### CLOTHING MADE FROM ANIMALS

The images and skins of animals filling the exhibition were once alive. They touched and were touched in return by the world they inhabited. The first clothing for protecting humans from rain and cold came from the skins of animals. Separating us from the ground and covering us from the sun, animal skins enfolded us. The fleece of sheep, the skin of bear, the thread of silkworm's spinnings—they were our first architecture, our first bed, our first covering.



Muff (woman's), Henry Art Gallery, John Dutton Wright Collection, 1910s-1930s



Coat, evening (woman's), Henry Art Gallery, John Dutton Wright Collection, 1927







Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios









Photo: Mark Woods





Photos: Mark Woods



O'Neil & Kidder, *Untitled portrait (carte de visite)*, Henry Art Gallery, Joseph and Elaine Monsen Photography Collection, 1864-1867

## READERS/SCRIBES

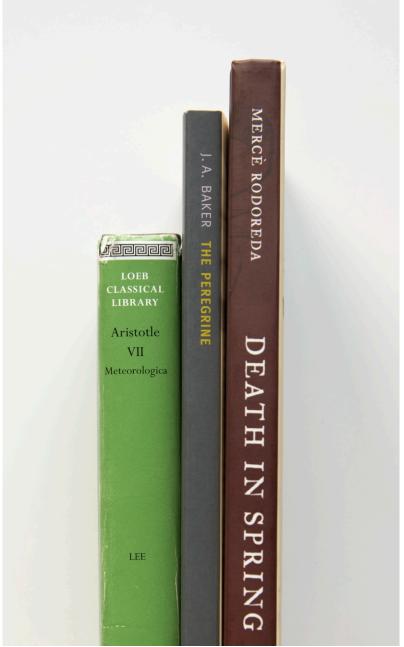
Throughout the galleries in *the common SENSE*, visitors encountered volunteer reader/scribes. Participants accepted an open invitation to read out loud at the pace of their hand as it transcribed segments of text from a changing selection of project books. These books included *The Peregrine* by J.A. Baker, *Death in Spring* by Mercè Rodoreda and *Aristotle: Meteorologica* translated by H.D.P. Lee.

Reading out loud combines several rhythms and forms of attention: the eye reading across a horizontal line of text is the first, the voice sounding out the words the second, the hand copying selected passages onto paper the third. These joined process of reading and writing are an address to the animals—represented in images and materially present in the cultural artifacts in the project.

Over the duration of the exhibition, the reader/scribes formed an ongoing presence that gave the often silent and solitary act of reading a sociability. Although reading at different times of day and from different pages of the book, the individual readers were connected to each other through the reading and writing from a shared text. Each book and scribe log accumulated the marks of individual reader/scribes to become a physical record of the collective activity.







Photos: Ann Hamilton Studio



Photo: Jonathan Vanderweit



Louis Pierre Rousseau, Untitled (baby gorilla), Henry Art Gallery, 1855

## NEWSPRINT PADS IMAGES OF ANIMAL FEET & UNDERBELLIES

The North Galleries were filled with photographic images of mammal, bird and amphibian specimens from the Burke Museum. Bisected or divided into quarter sections, the image fragments of the animals were printed on newsprint pads and hung salon style throughout four galleries. The only parts in sharp focus are those parts of the animal that touched the surface of the flatbed scanner used to create the images. Visitors were invited to tear the top image off the pad and take it with them. The pads slowly depleted—a subtractive accumulation of actual and symbolic loss and our individual and collective consumption.





the subject, observed that when he rubbed his horse's neck, the ANIMAL longer appear round and saring. It should be added that the ANIMAL expressive of affection, and the least direct service to the ANIMAL flexuous movements. We will now turn to the cat. When this ANIMAL is food, which every one may be helded in menageries. The ANIMAL flexuous movements are nearly the same as when the ANIMAL for feet are occasionally structures are nearly the same as when the ANIMAL is to a large extent, as Rengger asserts, those of man. An ANIMAL is to a large extent, as Rengger asserts, those of man. An ANIMAL is to a large extent, as Rengger asserts, those of man. An ANIMAL is a subject to the animal prick of the articulation of the ANIMAL is a subject to the animal prick of the articulation of the ANIMAL is a subject to the ANIMAL is also and the ANIMAL is a subject to the ANIMAL is also and fine and a subject to the ANIMAL is a subject t

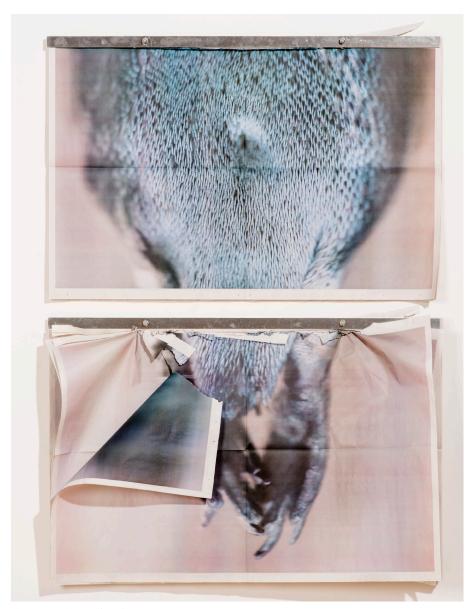
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of touch. Kittens, puppies, young pins and possed, and dogs. All these AN of touch. Kittens, puppies, young pins and possed and dogs. All these AN with the present chapter almost confine myself to the lower. AN in complete antitudes and movements of these two carmorous ANN in complete antitudes and movements of these two carmorous ANN how the principle of antitudes in expression has arisen. With social ANIN the power of intercommunication is certainly of high service to many ANIN the will be secome fabriated in us and in the lower ANIN common to man and to man, or most, of the lower ANIN common to the will be secome fabriated movements. When ANIN some definite end under the same emotion. Great pain upges all ANIN into play in an important manner, for the young of mach ANIN wholly, due to the direct action of the excited sensorium. But ANIN any outward sign, not even by wagging their tails, with ANIN ourselves feel, and as we see in the play of young ANIN show itself conversely in muscular movements. With all or almost all ANIN amanuscules like CHAPTER IN MEANS OF EXPRESSIONE ANI ANI amanuscules like CHAPTER IN MEANS OF EXPRESSIONE ANII and and all ANII amanuscules like CHAPTER IN MEANS OF EXPRESSIONER ANII and and all ANII amanuscules like CHAPTER IN MEANS OF EXPRESSIONER ANII and and all ANII and animal collections.

noto: Jonathan Vanderw









Photos: Jonathan Vanderweit







VernC. Gorst, Two women standing behind a camera and a tripod to photograph a man holding up three geoducks on the beach, Washington State, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1929-1932

## ONEEVERYONE PORTRAITS

As a part of the exhibition, everyone was invited to leave an offering of their image. Portraits were captured through a semi-opaque membrane manufactured by Bayer MaterialScience LLC. The images record the experience of standing behind the film, where one can hear but cannot see. The resulting shallow depth of field is a consequence of the membrane, which focuses only the points where the body makes contact with the material—making the tactile experience visible.

Portraits accumulated over time as a living record of the individual bodies that have moved through the galleries. This accrual was a complement, and a corollary, to the depletion of animal scans that visitors were invited to take from the walls and add to their commonplace book.





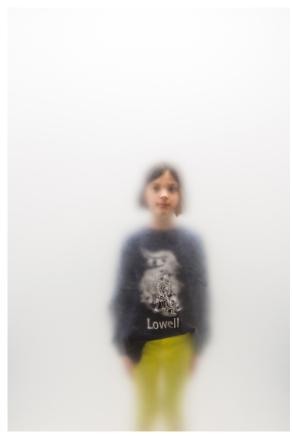








Photos: Ann Hamilton Studio







Photos: Ann Hamilton Studio



Photo: Robert Wade

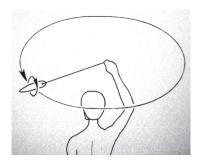




Photos: Ann Hamilton Studio



## A FIELD OF BULLROARERS



Hearing is how we touch at a distance.

-Susan Stewart

Inspired by ancient instruments used from Greece to Australia to call or signal over great distance, often to gather people together, the bullroarers sound the vibration of air passing over a spinning cantilevered arm tensioned with rubber bands. They ascended, descended, and circled vertical poles that extended into the height of the newly opened skylights. Each bullroarer fell at the pace of gravity and climbed with the mechanical aid of the spinning pole and friction from skateboard wheels pressed against the pile's surface. The duration of ascent and descent, controlled by a computer program, moved the circling arms in concert with each other or alone, its deep tonal drone evoking a buzzing hive, a flock of birds, a micro-community of individual organisms operating together.

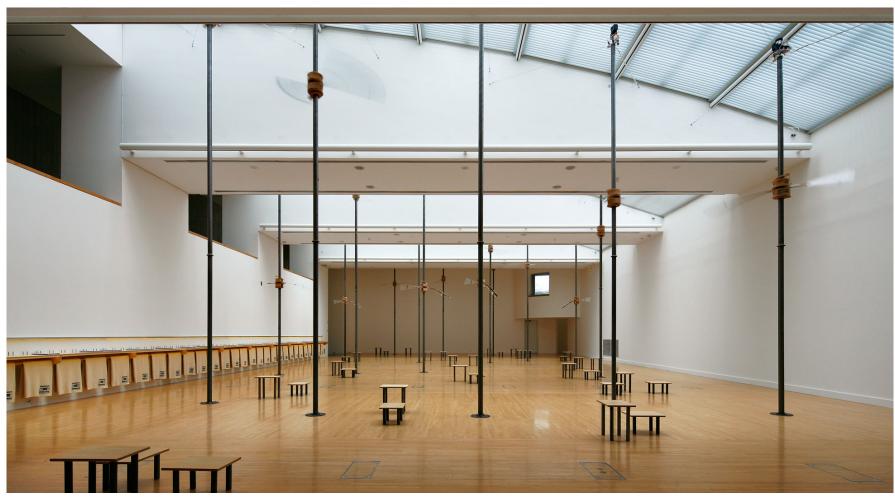


Photo: Mark Woods









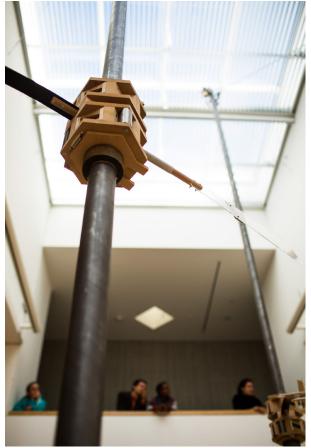




Photo: Mark Woods Photo: Jonathan Vanderweit

Photo: Mark Woods

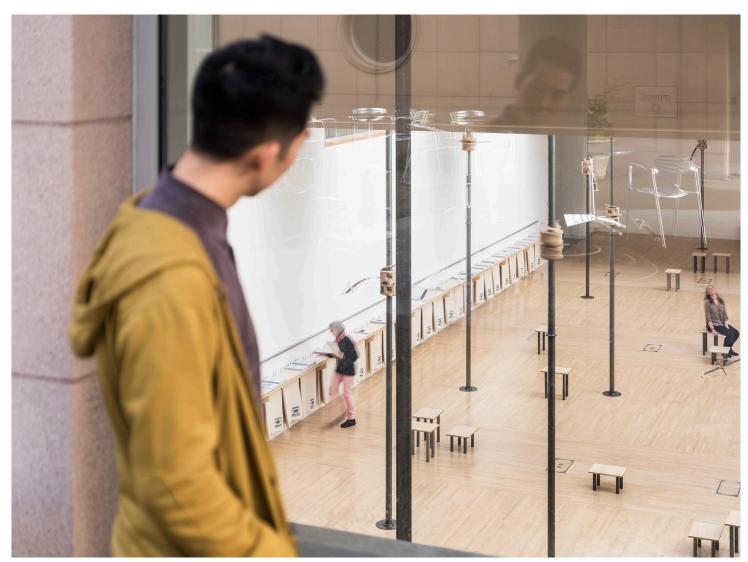


Photo: RJ Sánchez, Solstream Studios





Photo: Mark Woods





Photos: Mark Woods



Join University of Washington Associate Professor Giselle Wyers as she directs the UW Chorale in an evening of song, including various melodies and textual ideas inspired by conversations with Ann Hamilton and her exhibition the common SE NSE.

FRIDAY JAN 23 7:00PM — 9:00PN

# Vening

Henry

Henry Art Gallery January 23, 2015, 7:00 PM — 8:00 PM

## An Evening in the Galleries with the UW Chorale

Join University of Washington Associate Professor Giselle Wyers as she directs the UW Chorale in an evening of various harmonized incantations and melodies that she composed inspired by textual ideas and conversations with Ann Hamilton and her exhibition <u>the common</u> S E N S E.

Chorale members will also present short newly composed melodies, written in honor of specimens and garments on display. The Chorale will chant ancient hymns and sing folk tunes alongside the field of bullroarers, accompanied by sounds of a didgeridoo. Lastly, the Chorale will present a newly composed setting of texts from Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, with texts organized via Ann Hamilton's concordance computer program.

ADMISSION

Free with museum admission

ADD TO CALENDAR

Add to Google Calendar →

## ACCESS

This event is public.

## ACCESS

Henry Art Gallery is accessible to all visitors. Please notify the staff of any special needs or concerns when planning to attend this event.



## Incantation to Remember

## Inspired by Ann Hamilton's the common S E N S E



Incantation may continue for as long as you like, using the above rhythms and notes or others that inspire Insert texts that respond to the materials and images in the exhibit, and relate to them directly or by association \$\cdot\2014\$







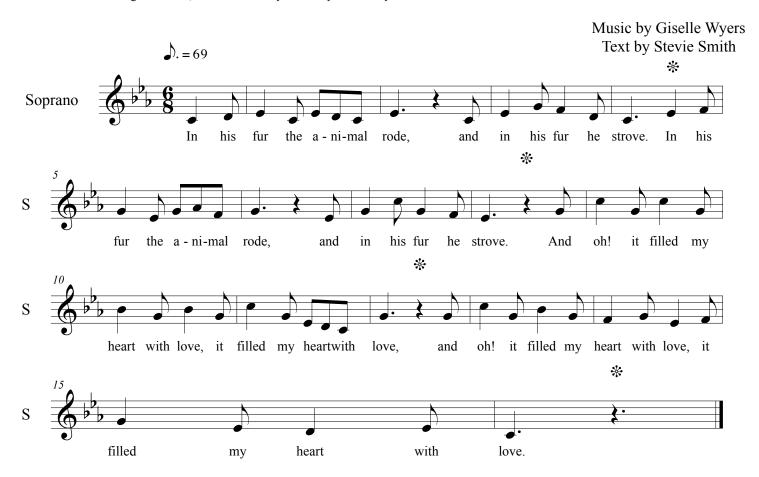


Photos: Jonathan Vanderweit



## It Filled My Heart With Love

to be sung as a round, commissioned by the Henry Art Gallery for Ann Hamilton's exhibition The Common S E N S E



\* Denotes beginning of next voice part. The round may begin or end at any asterisk.



Photo: Jonathan Vanderweit

## A Silent Reading with Ann Hamilton and Joshua Beckman

Acts of reading connect the spaces and objects of <u>the common S E N S E</u>. The often solitary and silent act of reading is both a social and aural address to something that was once alive.

This collaboration between Ann Hamilton and Joshua Beckman focuses on silent reading as shared experience. Working with Beckman's meticulously collected text fragments that reference the lives, songs, and calls of eighteenth— and nineteenth-century birds, Hamilton created video fragments to be projected on the walls of the lower level gallery housing the field of bullroarers. Please join us and be part of this immersive and performative one-night event.

ARTISTS
Ann Hamilton

ADMISSION FREE with museum admission

ADD TO CALENDAR

Add to Google Calendar →

ACCESS
This event is public.

ACCESSIBILITY
Henry Art Gallery is accessible to all visitors. Please notify the staff of any special needs or concerns when planning to attend this event.



Stuart Dempster with Greg Campbell, Paul Kikuchi, Susie Kozawa, and Greg Powers (bios on overleaf).

## Bull Roarchestra

"It is not every day one has an opportunity to perform in response to the nearly 20 mechanical bull roarers. *Bull Roarchestra* is commissioned by Henry Art Gallery for Ann Hamilton's installation of these bull roarers as part of the Henry's Ann Hamilton: *the common S E N S E* exhibition. I have formed a small bull roarchestra to respond to the atmosphere and sounds, and interact with the bull roarer installation. The title *Bull Roarchestra* is inspired by John Cage's *Roaratorio*.

The *Bull Roarchestra* instrumentation includes stellar Seattle locals on bass drums, hand bullroarers, conchs, didjeridus, kelp horn, trombones, small instruments, bells, and toys. Even the floor of the Lower Level Gallery may be explored sonically.

The audience is invited to experience, through quiet, meditative movement and attentive listening, the sound of the installation and live performers as sounds echo through surrounding areas."

-Stuart Dempster

OWER LEVEL

GALLERY

THANKS GO TO ANN
HAMILTON, AND
HENRY ART GALLERY
WITH SPECIAL
RECOGNITION TO:

Sylvia Wolf, Director, Henry Art Gallery Nina Bozicnik, Assistant Curator Emily Zimmerman, Associate Curator of Programs Emily Schmierer, Exhibitions, Collections, and Programs Assistant

## BULL ROARCHESTRA with STUART DEMPSTER

THURS, FEBRUARY 20, 7:00 PM



## ... that language is shaped air ... A performance by Juan Pampin with the Seattle Chamber Players

When the Seattle Chamber Players approached Juan Pampin for a commission, he proposed a site-specific composition inspired by the common S E N S E. In ... that language is shaped air ... Pampin establishes a dialogue with the mechatronic bullroarers on view at the Henry. The piece features the SCP members Paul Taub (flutes), Laura DeLuca (clarinets), Mikhail Shmidt (violin), David Sabee (cello) plus UW School of Music faculty Stuart Dempster (trombone), Richard Karpen (piano), Ted Poor (percussion), and Cuong Vu (trumpet).

ADMISSION
Free with museum admission

ADD TO CALENDAR

Add to Google Calendar →

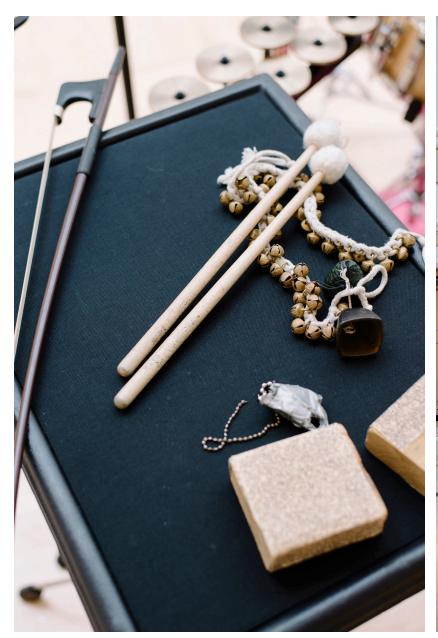
PROGRAM PARTNERS
Seattle Chamber Players

ACCESS

This event is public.

ACCESSIBILITY

Henry Art Gallery is accessible to all visitors. Please notify the staff of any special needs or concerns when planning to attend this event.





Photos: Jonathan Vanderweit

## PROJECT CREDITS

## the common SENSE Ann Hamilton Comissioned by Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, Washington October 11, 2014 - April 26, 2015

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Henry Art Gallery

Sylvia Wolf, John S. Behnke Director Nina Bozicnik, Assistant Curator Judy Sourakli, Curator of Collections Susan Lewandowski, Manager of Exhibitions and Registration

Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture Collections

Sven D. Haakanson, Curator of Native American Anthropology Rebecca Andrews, Ethnology Collections Manager Jessica Bellingham, Ethnology Assistant Collections Manager Jeffrey E. Bradley, Mammalogy Collection Manager Robert C. Faucett, Ornithology Collections Manager Justin McCarthy, Ethnology Outreach Coordinator

University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

Sandra Kroupa, Book Arts and Rare Book Curator Nicolette A. Bromberg, Visual Materials Curator Wesley Nelson, Rare Books Specialist

Lead Reader/Scribes

Jessica L. Burstein, Associate Professor, English, University of Washington Amaranth C. Borsuk, Assistant Professor, Culture, Literature, and the Arts/IAS, University of Washington Bothell Anca Szilagyi, Writer

Choral Composition

Giselle Wyers, Associate Professor of Choral Studies and Voice, University of Washington

Gallery Singers

University of Washington Chorale, directed by Giselle Wyers With special thanks to University of Washington School of Music

Bullroarer Design

Jerry Garcia, Olson Kundig Architects Phil Turner, Olson Kundig Architects Bullroarer Programming

Robert Twomey, Graduate, Digital Art and Experimental Media, University of Washington With special thanks to the following University of Washington faculty:

Axel Roesler, Associate Professor, Art + Art History + Design

Juan Pampin, Associate Professor, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS)

James Coupe, Assistant Professor, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS)

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Joshua Beckman, Wave Books

Richard Manderbach

Jenny Fine, Artist

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Eric A. Hegg, Studio portrait of a donkey, Dawson, Yukon Territory, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, 1899