

MAMMUT

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TWILIGHT OF THE MEGAFUNA

MAMMUT #3

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AZ currently resides in Los Angeles and is a proud supporter of the Los Angeles Kings.

Title illustration on page 11 by Christine S. Lee and Gundula Prinz

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EXPERIMENT

balloon launch: Alternative Energies

BY DAVID PRINCE

The *Alternative Energies Project* explores themes of resource and energy consumption and investigates creative engineering as a means of inspiring new approaches to how we expend and consume energy. This project encompasses a number of recent installations and performances including my most recent project, *balloon launch*.

balloon launch was initially inspired by my father's work as an astrophysicist—he would use enormous helium balloons to carry gamma-ray imaging payloads into the upper atmosphere. I've always been drawn to the imagery and gesture of releasing these balloons, and today I see it as a metaphor for the greater process of scientific inquiry. In my father's work, the goal for the payloads was the retrieval of data in the form of gamma-rays. As an artist, I have grown most interested in the release of the balloon itself, as a metaphoric embodiment of the activity of questioning. For me, the launch of a balloon has come to represent a venture into the unknown and the whimsical sense of hope that accompanies scientific investigation.

The balloons are constructed from hand-made bioplastic film, designed to be entirely biodegradable due to their composition of cornstarch and corn husk fibers. The images document the successful launch of one of my prototypes, using a combination of hot air and helium propulsion. I am currently developing a solar heating coil that will enable future balloons to rise solely by means of hot air.

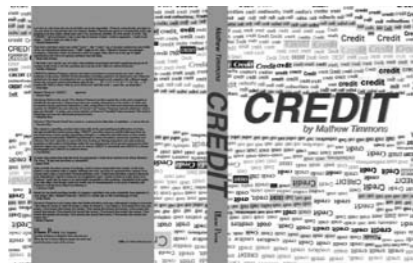
The *balloon launch* project interprets the process of scientific inquiry as an activity based in wonder, and depicts discovery not as an endpoint, but as an opportunity for new openings. Through the launch of these balloons I hope to re-imagine the purpose of technology as a creative force and escape the paradigm that technology exists solely for the sake of commodity. I also aim to illustrate some of the tensions in relationships between human innovation, human consumption and our environmental predicament.

David Prince works in a wide variety of materials and media. His subject matter includes topics such as heroism, civic engagement, ecology, and impermanence. He received an MFA in Sculpture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2006 and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY and Los Angeles.



CREDIT

BY MATHEW TIMMONS



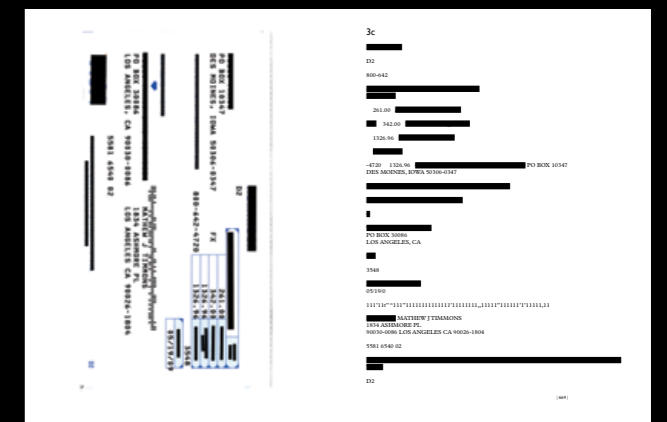
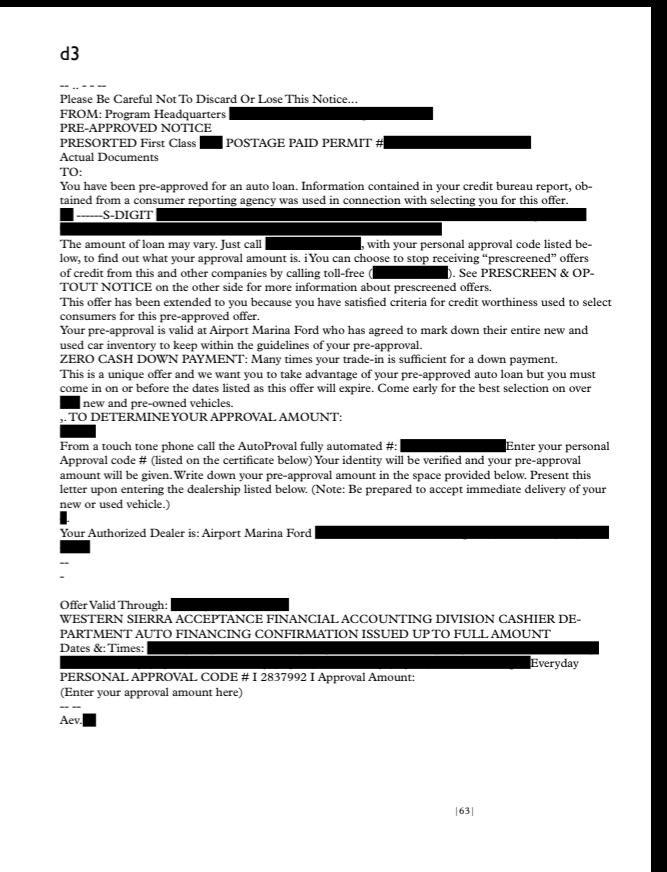
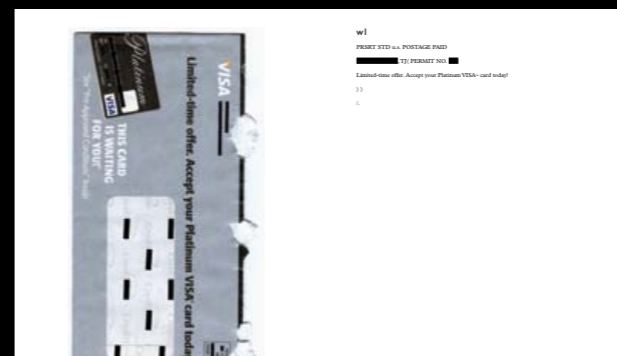
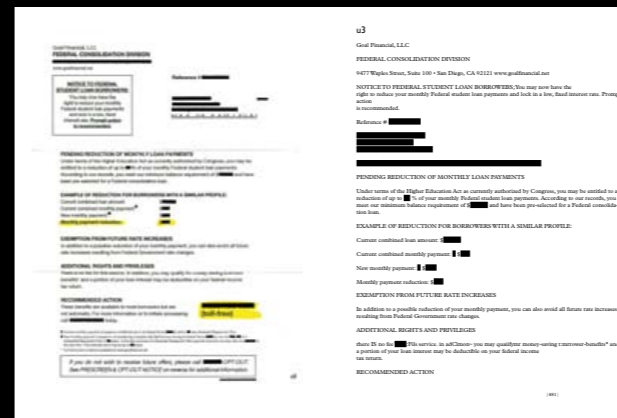
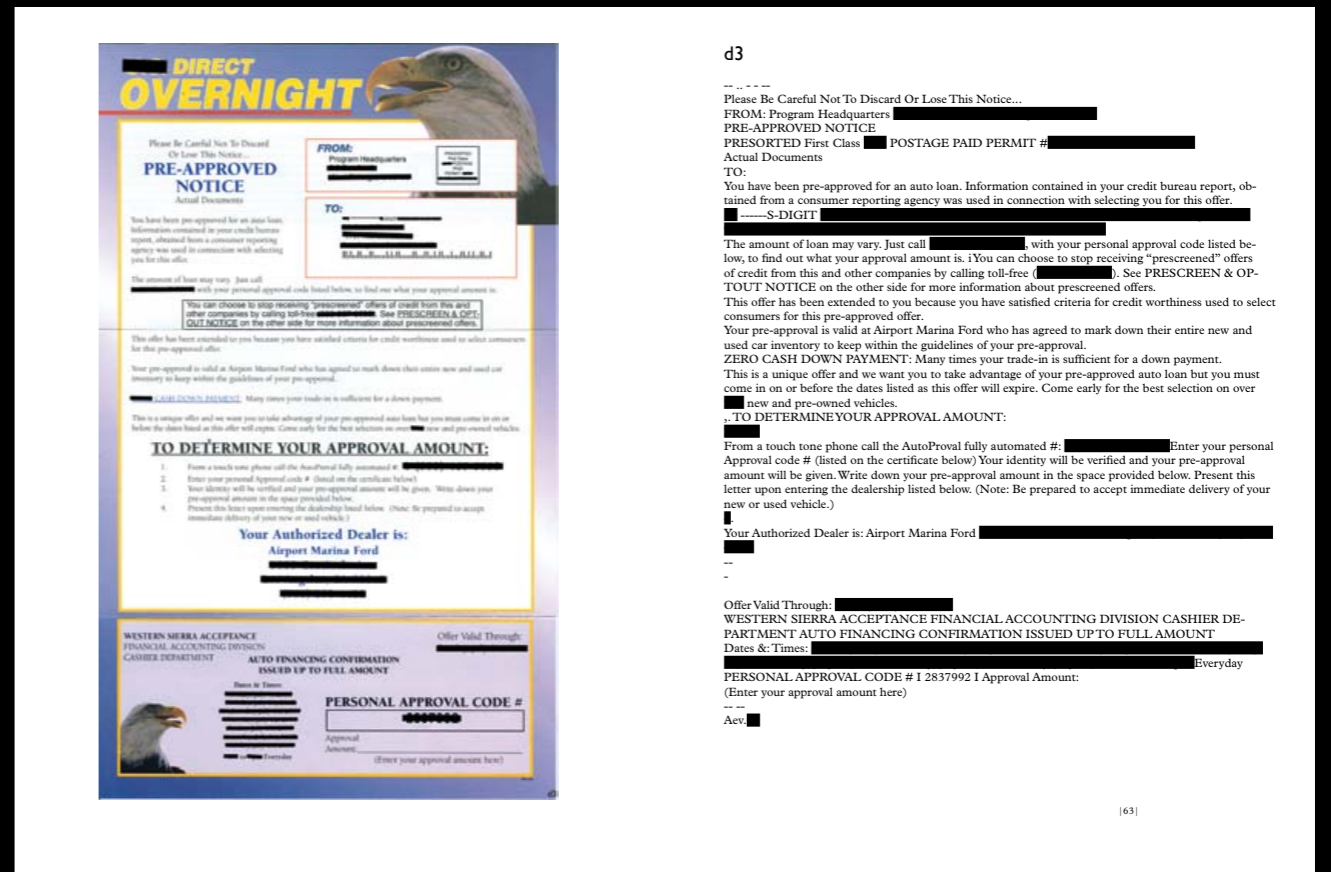
CREDIT is an 800-page full-color large-format hardbound book, available for \$199.99 from Blanc Press in Los Angeles or at blancpress.com. CREDIT has been roundly endorsed by a number of artists, writers, editors and critics, including Harold Abramowitz, Stan Apps, Marcus Civin, Brian Joseph Davis, Ryan Daley, Craig Dworkin, Brad Fliss, Lawrence Giffin, James Hoff, Maximus Kim, Matthew Klane, Janne Larsen, Matthias Merkel Hess, William Moor, Joseph Mosconi, Holly Myers, Sawako Nakayasu, Sianne Ngai, Ariel Pink, Vanessa Place, Dan Richert, Ronald Quinn Rudlong Jr., Ara Shirinyan, Danny Snelson, Erika Staiti, Brian Kim Stefans, Robert Summers, Rodrigo Toscano, Matias Viegner, and Steven Zultanski.

I pre-approve your purchase of this book. CREDIT has scans of hundreds of pages exemplifying the most successful and monstrous of all pataphysical sciences: capitalism >> BRANCH >> giving you credit where it's most often not due. Don't show low interest in the maxed-out world around you! Squeeze a few more swipes out of your American Flag Discover Card. The health of everything around you depends on how confidently you consume on a budget you can't afford. New Nikes and a sushi dinner away from complete recovery. —Ara Shirinyan

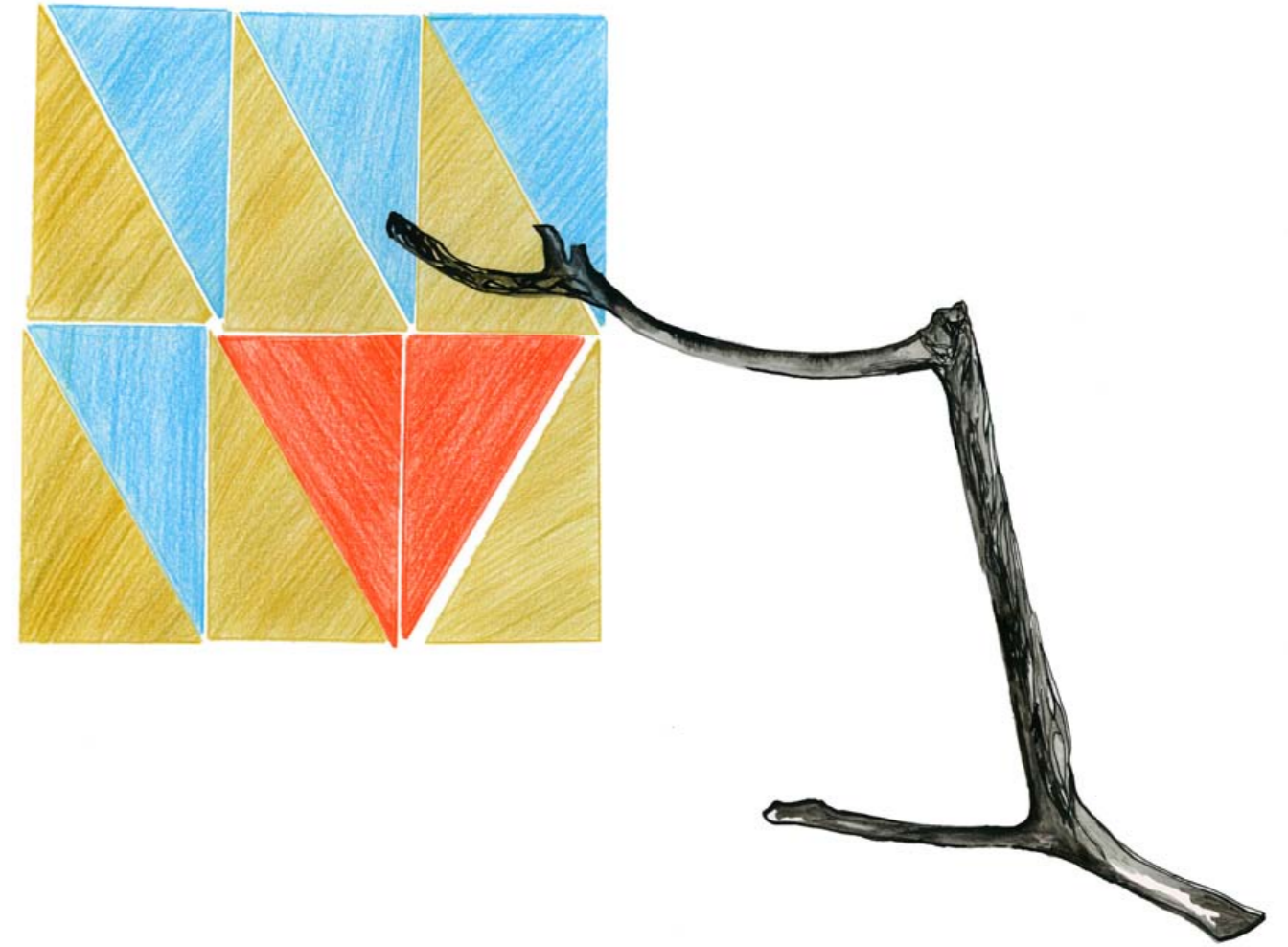
Timmons has surfaced the excessive consumer culture that is the USA—which is also its undoing. In a day and age where banks, mortgage companies, and credit card companies are flatlining, Timmons enacts a redistribution of the sensible that disrupts the common of the community: he shows what has been present but in a way that highlights the twisted irony of it all. He demonstrates that in our current economic climate we are simultaneously surrounded by a call for "frugality" and a call to keep up our excesses: the schizophrenic nature of (late) capitalism, to be sure. Timmons, drawing on the likes of Berlin Dada, the British Independent Group, and the cut-and-paste style of William Burroughs, reconfigures these politico-aesthetic sensibilities in a new and refreshing way, one that is not only visually shocking, but also one that is politically astute and remains honest to the ethical ambiguity that surrounds us today (and yesterday). —Robert Summers

Congratulations! You've been preselected to apply for a copy of the new book by Mathew Timmons at a low introductory rate of just 199.99 and no annual fee ever. Documenting the social and economic space defined by the writing that falls between bulk mailing and fine print (full color and some of it very fine indeed), CREDIT appropriates direct mail credit card solicitations and advertisements in order to explore the nature of disclosure in a series of plays between display and censorship, see-thru windows and security envelopes, financial promise and legal threat—or simply, in Guy Debord's terms, between monologue and true communication. Testing the limits of publishing—CREDIT is the largest and most expensive book publishable via Lulu—Timmons' book is well beyond most readers' means. But remember, you could always charge it and hope to juggle some good balance transfers down the road.... Respond Immediately and Request Your Copy Today. —Craig Dworkin

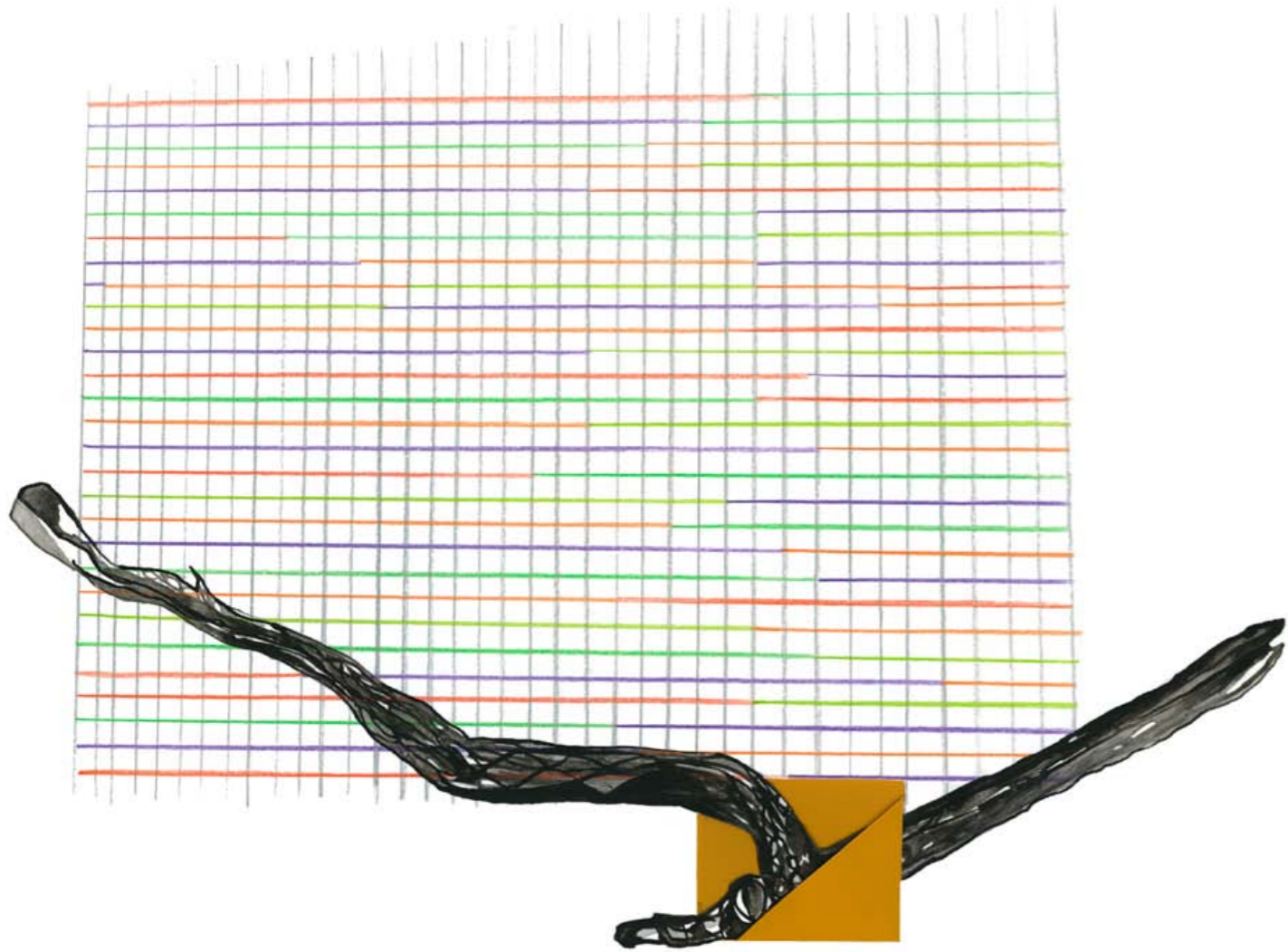
Mathew Timmons has published prose, poetry and criticism in various places including: P-Queue, Film Forum, The Physical Poets, Or, eohippus labs, Area Sneaks, Artweek, Artillery, The Magazine, X-TRA and The Encyclopedia Project. A chapbook, Lip Service (Slack Buddha), was recently published. His first full-length book, The New Poetics (Les Figues Press), and his micro-book collaboration with Marcus Civin, a particular vocabulary (P S Books) are forthcoming. He teaches interdisciplinary arts and writing workshops for the CalArts School of Critical Studies.



My Mother/My Self
BY ERICA LOVE



My Mother/My Self (#5), 2008, mixed media on paper,
18 x 24 inches



My Mother/My Self (#9), 2008, mixed media on paper,
18 x 24 inches



A childhood memory begins like this: I was four years old when my mother and I went for a walk in the woods beyond our backyard. I only remember: watching her dig and dig until the stick was freed from the ground. Also: watching her bathe it in Clorox Bleach and nail it to a 2 x 4. It wasn't driftwood, we lived in Pittsburgh, but it sure looked like it. Placed prominently on the mantle, it appeared in many family photographs. Some examples: Christmas morning and at six in the morning on my first day of private school.

Erica Love lives and works in New York City and Los Angeles. To view more of her work, visit ericalove.com.

From the Editors

For our third issue, we focus on megafauna—a term that loosely applies to large mammals including the namesake of this magazine, the American mastodon.

While the term megafauna is frequently used to describe both living and extinct animals, it appears most often around the discussion of the Pleistocene extinction about 12,000 years ago—the massive die-off of many large North American mammals such as majestic mammoths, fierce saber-tooth tigers, gigantic ground sloths and car-sized armadillos. A passionate debate rages on whether these extinctions were caused by humans or not (we lean towards the side that assigns at least some responsibility to humans), but one thing is certain: today, many species of flora and fauna are imperiled by human development. It would be a terrible thing to knowingly watch another die-off of large mammals. We believe that our own future will be tied to the success or failure of our efforts to preserve large animals and the ecosystems needed to support them.

Like the animals themselves, this is a big topic—too large for our modest publication to deal with fully. Instead, we have invited artists, designers and writers to offer a personal perspective on megafauna.

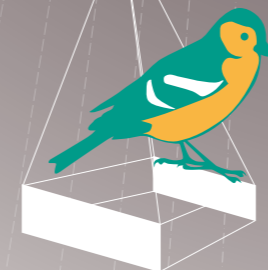
This special section begins with the illustration of a lonely tick bird who sits without the rhino that provides its food source. The following pages are filled with images, essays, and documentation of projects that consider how megafauna are represented or used as symbols, and how they offer metaphors for understanding our own lives.

Finally, we are happy to announce that we are collaborating with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County to launch Megafauna Awareness Day on June 19, 2010. First proposed by scientist Paul S. Martin in his 2005 book, *Twilight of the Mammoths*, we believe this day of awareness and celebration is necessary because many people do not know about the magnificent large megafauna that were present on earth until very recently, while every school kid can rattle off the names of the most obscure dinosaurs. Our hope is that this day will spread, becoming an annual event in a variety of locations to remember extinct megafauna and celebrate the megafauna of the present and future.

Thanks for reading and we look forward to you joining us in person next June, or possibly starting your own megafauna event where you live.

Matthias Merkel Hess and Roman Jaster

TWILIGHT OF THE MEGAFUNA





Musing on Turner's Bison

BY CLAUDE WILLEY

Bouncing along a dusty road just outside the city of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, a lone bison stopped in the sage, silhouetted by a cloudy blue sky straight out of a Georgia O'Keefe painting. It was the perfect photo op, and the crystallization of how we relate to bison, which are still a symbol of the American West but have made a resurgence in recent decades largely as a marketable, edible commodity raised by the thousands. This bison, apparently so wild and *in situ*, might soon be on a plate at Ted's Montana Grill, a chain of restaurants that feature bison meat.

I took the photo while I was on Ted Turner's Armendaris Ranch as a participant in the 2009 Environmental Borderlands Summer Institute, put together by Katherine Morrissey for the National Endowment for the Humanities, which included stops in Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico. We spent three days at Turner's 360,000-acre ranch in the semi-arid savanna of south-central New Mexico, which has restoration sites for Aplomado Falcons, Bolson Tortoises, and—just down the road on Turner's Ladder Ranch—the publicly contested reintroduction of the Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs. Other highlights were the second-largest bat flight in the U.S. from the ranch's lava tubes. But no aspect of the ranch's flora or fauna would impact us like the real show-stealer on the Armendaris: the bison.

These large beasts are the cornerstone of Turner's ranching enterprise. Part American icon and part economic product, the bison captured the imaginations of those in our group, even though we saw them mostly from a van window. The majestic animals watched us from a distance, wary of our movements when we emerged from our motorized vehicles. We were told that they watched our eyes, but we never got close enough to find out. At night, as we traveled back to the bunkhouses, the vans slowed in the darkness to allow large dark forms to pass in front. Calves stayed close to the cows. Lights were dimmed. We watched, transfixed, as the ominous shapes slowly crossed our path.

The tags in the bison's ears were chosen by Turner to be a dark color so they would not stand out. This choice reveals something about Turner's feelings about these animals. Perhaps Turner fears his bison will appear less 'wild' if the tags are clearly visible. It seems he's uncertain whether these beast are wild, managed, or some combination of the two. But clearly, the bison on the Armendaris are commodities no matter how one looks at it. The bison are property of Turner Enterprises and a good number of them must be slaughtered each year, with the meat sold to keep the ranch in the black.

The many conversations I had with those in our NEH group invariably lead to the issue of intent. What was Turner doing with the bison? Was it a kind of rewilding, a reintroduction of hoofed grassland mammals, even though science claims such animals had no presence in

this area during the Pleistocene or later? Was Turner's plan, we pondered, based on science, pure whimsy, or some combination of both? Does Turner see the Armendaris as a kind of quasi-Pleistocene nature park?

Watching the bison roam the vast landscape of the Armendaris got me thinking about the selective nature of megafauna conservation. Outside of Turner's ranches, conservation on public land is more complicated. What is needed are charismatic species, large unfragmented areas—megalinkages—and public support.

The bison is undoubtedly iconic and quintessentially American. For some, it's a stand-in for the various native peoples pushed off their lands. For others, the bison is a symbol of an almost complete mammalian extirpation due to human hubris and an unfettered Anglo expansion into the American West. The bison stands as evidence of our uncomfortable past. It was once a great beast whose immense herds covered the Plains region of our country. Some put the total bison peak population in North America at somewhere between twenty-five and thirty million. Author Dale Lott, has noted the bison as "the most emblematic of North America...its fate tied to the life of wildlife on a continent so long and dramatically transformed, especially under the weight of our impact." No matter how we choose to see the bison in the twenty-first century, it is an animal with a long declensionist history on this continent. Just how we imagine the bison's future is currently up for grabs.

Aside from our own musings, the bison has played a key ecosystemic role in grassland ecologies. As a large herbivore, its population would ebb and flow with historic cycles of draught and wet years, kept in check by the limitations of vast grasslands. With the bison, the concept of *carrying capacity* played out again and again. When the grasslands declined, so did the bison.

The concept of *Buffalo Commons*, imagined by economists Frank and Deborah Popper, gels nicely with this notion of bison/grassland symbiosis. In 1987, their controversial research proposed that places like Kansas would lose people in a mass out-migration at such an alarming rate that reuse of the plains would be imminent. The Poppers claimed that the Great Plains could be used as a *Buffalo Commons*. Needless to say, the Poppers caught flack, but would later be redeemed by Kansas Governor Mike Hayden when he acknowledged that the Poppers' prediction had in fact come true. The failure of farming in Western Kansas, which relies on depleting fossil water from the Ogallala aquifer, and the related economic downturn made the idea of the *Buffalo Commons* seem almost realistic.

Perhaps this reality falls in line with fantasies of people-less landscapes and wildlands teeming with only flora and fauna. Nineteenth century painter and author, George Catlin, envisioned a Great Plains Park created by our federal government and populated by great herds

of bison. Many since have revived the idea, but is a bison sanctuary in the cards? Is it much too romantic to re-imagine the Great Plains covered with migrating mammals? Could Turner's land one day be part of a giant park?

Over the course of my trip with the institute, I couldn't keep the Armendaris and its bison out of my mind. It became the place by which I measured all others—and I stayed on several ranches where numerous restoration and reintroduction projects were in the works. The bison on Turner's ranch floated through my mind like specters. They provided a representation of megafauna's place in an increasingly human world.

Will the megafauna of the future be much like the bison on the Armendaris Ranch? Will they be forced into roles as profitable yet unthreatening creatures? Will they live their lives as self-willed mammals in ecological prisons, tagged and managed in a global economy in which they function as nothing but mere commodities? Or will they fulfill our latent fantasies about wild landscapes filled with powerful herds unrestrained by fences and roads?



Claude Willey is an artist and educator, teaching in the Urban Studies and Planning Department at California State University, Northridge, at Art Center College of Design, and Sci-Arc. He is co-coordinator of *MOISTURE*, a multi-year water research project in the Mojave Desert, and the pilot of the *Invisible Trajectories: Passing Through the Inland Empire*, a 'story-based' project looking at mobility and access limitations within Southern California's Inland Empire. Over the past 10 years, Willey's activities have merged ecology, environmental history, renewable-energy technologies, urban transportation and landscape history.

The Last North American Megafauna: 5 Portraits

BY COLLEEN CORCORAN

On June 6, 2009
an adult female **Grizzly Bear** and one of
her two cubs were hit and killed by a
train in Alberta, Canada.

The second cub was found nearby and
released back into the wild. Although,
it is unknown if he will be able to
survive through the winter on his own.



January 2005,
Two of the last four adult **Mountain Lions**
known to be living in the Santa Monica
mountains were found dead from ingesting
anticoagulants (rat poison).

The cats were exposed to the rat poison
after eating coyotes that had eaten
rats. The rats and coyotes have a higher
tolerance for the poison.



In May 2008,
A 9 foot **Alligator** in the Florida Keys died
from eating a plastic toy turtle that
blocked its large intestine and made it
impossible to digest food.



On September 23, 2007
A **Blue Whale** washed up on the beach in
Ventura, CA, after killing itself by
crashing into a ship. It is thought that
the whale became disoriented during
nearby navy sonar testing. It was the
third blue whale in two weeks to wash up
in this area.

The blue whale is the largest animal ever
known to have existed. Although these
whales were once abundant in all the
world's ocean, they are now critically
endangered, with only a few thousand
left worldwide.



On September 25, 2008
California Condor #336 was found in
Big Sur, suffering from lead poisoning.
The Condor died the next day. Lead
poisoning is the most common cause of
unnatural death for the critically
endangered California Condor.

The birds usually encounter the lead when
it is left in wilderness areas by hunters
using lead ammunition.



Colleen Corcoran is a graphic designer from Texas, living in Los Angeles. She graduated from the CalArts graphic design MFA program in 2008 and is now trying to figure out how to do everything at once. She is interested in how graphic design can use humor, narrative, and ambiguity to educate people and promote positive social change.

Guten Morgen Deutschland!

BY NIC HESS



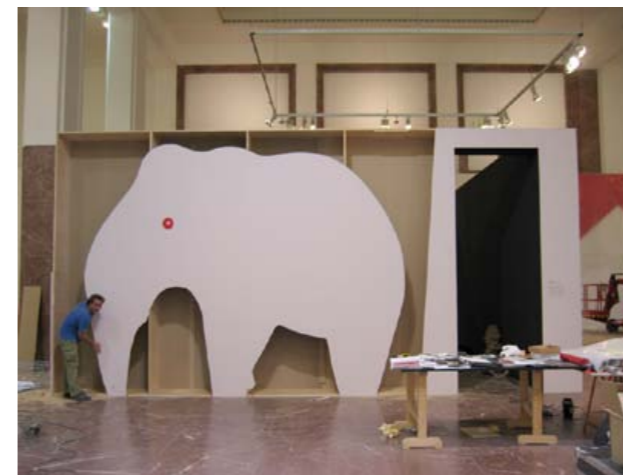
Munich's *Haus der Kunst* was built by the Nazis in 1937. My exhibition was the first in a series called *Kritischer Rückbau* or critical reconstruction. The goal of director Chris Dercon was to build the museum back to its original state.

My installations took place in the *Ehemalige Ehrenhalle*, the former Hall of Honor. When I began the installation, there was a big plywood cube in the middle of the hall. It was installed for the exhibition *Utopia*, and displayed some archival documents of the exhibition. I started to cut figures out of the cube; the biggest was a silhouette of an elephant modeled after a little toy from my childhood. I chose the elephant because for me, it was similar to the monumental size of the exhibition hall and I wanted to cut out the biggest living animal (on earth, not water).

Generally, the exhibition was a reflection on the history of the *Haus der Kunst*. I reacted to all kinds of historical facts that were related to the museum and the national socialism of that time in Germany. The idea was to put the elephant somewhere in the hall. In order to be flexible, I put it on wheels and moved it around

to find its place within the installation. But I realized that the elephant didn't fit in, not because of its size but because of ideological matters. An elephant seemed to be too safe and intelligent for a journey through such a dark period of human history. So I moved the elephant into the stairways on the upper floor and wrapped masking tape with a printed rope on it around its leg. After the exhibition, the elephant remained there.

Nic Hess lives and works in Zurich and Los Angeles. He attended the Gerrit Rietveld Academy Amsterdam and HdK Berlin (1992–96). His newest project is *Fly a Dragon Kite*, a public light-sculpture at Plaine de Plainpalais, Geneva. Nic Hess, alias Hermeto Ze Maria, is part of the *Frankie & Tony Show*. Find out more at nichess.ch.



Plywood elephant from *Guten Morgen Deutschland!*, a solo exhibition by Nic Hess at Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany, 2003, curated by Stephanie Rosenthal

Elephant Odyssey

BY MATTHIAS MERKEL HESS

The billboards appeared like a movie campaign, blanketing Los Angeles with the message that “after 12,000 years, they’re finally back.”

“They,” in this case, were the elephants at the San Diego Zoo’s new exhibit, *Elephant Odyssey*, and according to the ads, these megafauna were walking straight out of tar pits, giving cave-painted stick men a tusk in the rear, or simply stepping out of a rock full of fossils.¹

The ad campaign, designed by M&C Saatchi’s Los Angeles office (yes, that Saatchi), was simple, effective and, at least for me, compelling enough that I made the drive south to engage in one of my least-favorite activities: visiting a zoo. Sure, I’m happy that zoos serve as sanctuaries for preserving endangered species, but that doesn’t mean I look forward to spending \$35 to be jostled by crowds and eat overpriced food just so I can see once majestic animals sleeping or stalking in their too-small cages.²

But this show promised something different: a seven-acre re-creation of fauna that once lived in Southern California, or at least their living relatives. (“Discover Southern California’s past through the animals of today.”) So in place of the mammoth, we have an elephant; for a giant ground sloth we have the much smaller tree sloth, for the saber tooth cat we get a lion and cheetah, etc.³

I applaud the zoo’s ambitious project and judging by the crowds there on an August Sunday, this exhibit will introduce tens of thousands of people to ideas such as the Pleistocene extinctions, megafaunal fruit, rewilding, archeological research via packrat middens, the recent world-wide amphibian die-offs, and the pressures on current large mammals. It’s a lot to contemplate, so you’ll definitely need to take a lunch break at the Saber-Tooth Grill and grab a rather pathetic Mammoth Cookie Plate or the always popular Animal Head Sippers.⁴

My fear is that this exhibit is almost too timely and is simply an example of good marketing by one of the world’s largest and savviest zoos. When I wandered into the zoo’s Gorilla Tropics & Scripps Aviary, which were completed in the early 1990s, I felt like I was right back in that moment of “We Are the World” meets *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*. It felt like a time capsule of how we thought about environmentalism and our connection to other cultures and habitats.

So rather than far-away Africa in the “Gorilla Tropics,” I’m glad the zoo is looking in its own backyard for a major exhibit. Cut out the distracting donor signs⁵ and the piped-in music via green in-ground Bose speakers⁶ that turn the seven-acre “Elephant Odyssey” in to a retail-like space, and you’ve got something. Sure, the metal trees are more Serengeti than California oak savanna,⁷ but in this age of global connectedness, we have to realize

that we Californians don’t know rain forest, but we sure know tar pits. So let’s start there and work forward.

Maybe what the recently charred Angeles National Forest needed to keep it from turning into an overgrown tinderbox were some large herbivores, such as elephants, sloths, camels and horses. Through their eating, defecating and stomping, they could create a balance which Southern California humans obviously have not been able to achieve. In this sense, I hope *Elephant Odyssey* plants the seed for bigger and more ambitious projects to reintroduce surrogates for the missing pieces of our ecosystem.⁸

Matthias Merkel Hess is co-editor of Mammot Magazine.

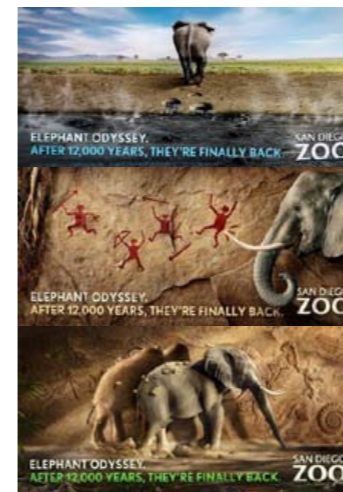
For more information about the exhibit, visit elephantodyssey.com.

To watch the TV spots M&C Saatchi created for the exhibit, visit youtube.com/SDZoo.

IMAGE CREDITS:

1 img.designswan.com

2-8 Taken by the author, August 2009



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Animal Stories

BY JACOB TILLMAN



I'm interested in stories, and my paintings could be considered narrative paintings. But rather than illustrating a particular narrative, I'm trying to make an image that is ripe with potential for giving rise to a narrative in the viewer. Said another way: instead of being interested in the narratives of the animals depicted in these pictures, I'm interested in the narratives that come with the animals who are viewing them.

(left) *Stage*, 24" x 18", oil on canvas, 2009

(right) *Sitting Room*, 12" x 12", oil on canvas, 2009

Born in Laramie, WY, where his parents were part of a Christian commune called Mercy Farm, Jacob Tillman and his three siblings were raised as pastor's children in the small Colorado town of Longmont. Driven by voracious curiosity coupled with a healthy dose of doubt, Tillman moved to the San Francisco Bay area at age 21 where he studied painting at the California College of Art. Currently he lives in Venice, CA, and is a graduate student in painting at UCLA. For more, visit jacobtillman.com.

Sloth Bear Found to Have Participated in 1849 Gold Rush

BY KELLEY BROOKS



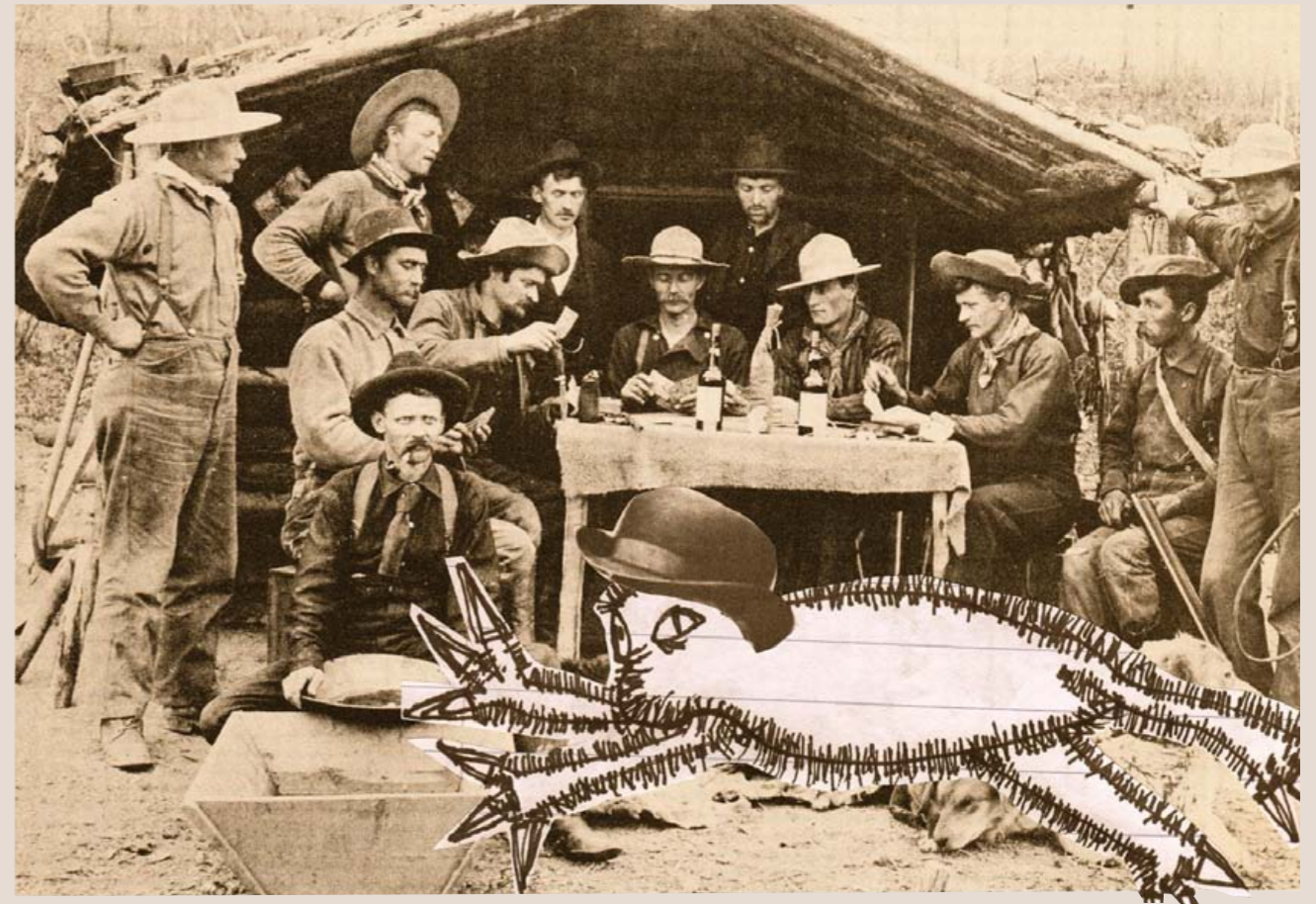
While researching the origins of Sloth Bear and his migration to North America, I discovered there was a strong Sloth Bear presence during the great gold rush of 1849. Photographs and documents prove that a family of Sloth-like prospectors lived in the Sacramento area of Northern California. Ezra Augustus Slothburger, Lotta Slothburger, and Hezekiah Grrrrruber were registered miners at the Golden Goldy Goldfields camp just east of the American River.



It is widely believed that Ezra Slothburger was quite successful in his prospecting. He was credited with both discovering the technique of "panning" for gold and was the first to use the phrase "THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS!!!!!"



Ezra's sister, Lotta Slothburger, went on to be one of the most famous mining camp entertainers. She would enchant the rugged men of the goldfields with her otherworldly voice, comedic acting, and naive charm. She wasn't much to look at, but boy could that sloth dance the soft shoe.



The Slothburger's cousin, Hezekiah Grrrruber, was known around the south fork of the American River as a shady character. The above photograph shows a greedy Grrrruber diving for a pan filled with gold nuggets, hoping that the members of his camp would be distracted by the flash of the camera. This was not the case, and Hezekiah was soon kicked out of the camp and left to fend for himself. Grrrruber didn't have much luck finding gold on his own, and ended up poor and eventually succumbing to cholera....or was it diphtheria, or was it typhoid fever... either way it was some kind of old timey pioneer disease.

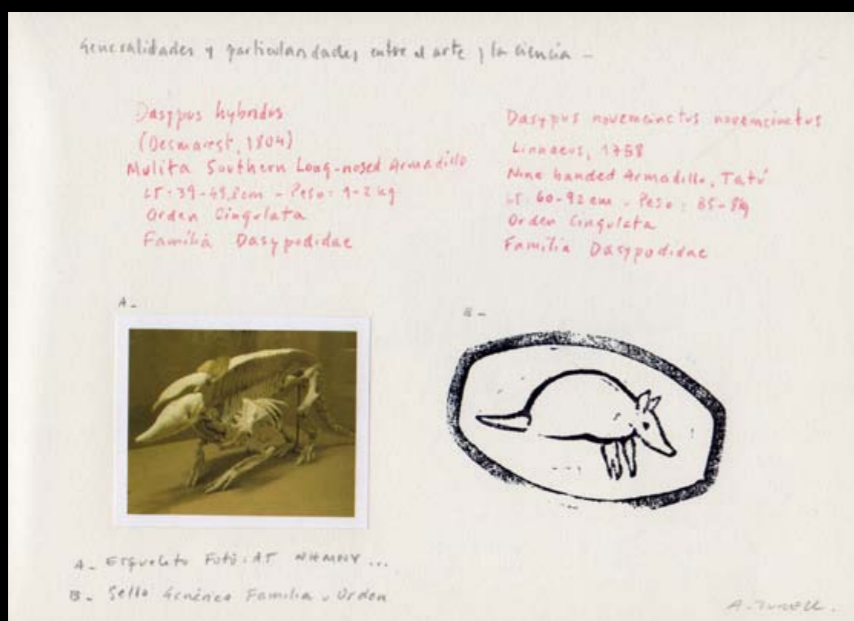
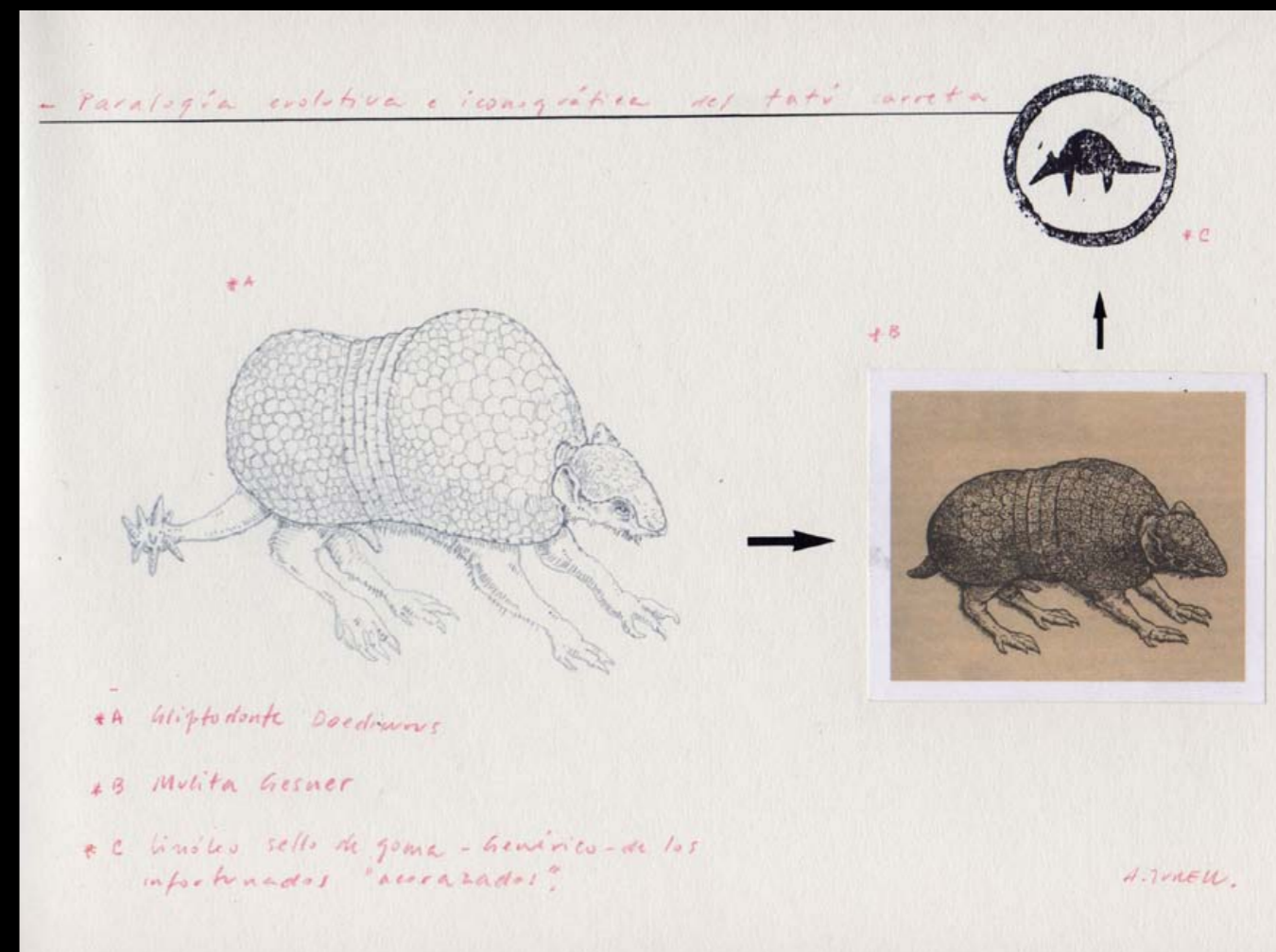
Ezra Slothburger flourished during these times, but he was not without his rivals. Howard W. Rwrarrrrlings had it out for Ezra and even competed with him over the hand of Mary Frances Boone, who was of non-bear descent. Ezra Slothburger was clearly WAY better looking and eventually went on to marry Ms. Boone. Mary Frances bore them one child, a son who is pictured below.



Apparently the Sloth Bear genes are so dominant that they negate all human influence.

Beginning as a napkin doodle after a trip to the La Brea Tar Pits, Sloth Bear is now Kelley Brooks' muse, friend and full-time fantasy realm. In addition to making handmade Sloth Bear T-shirts (because people and babies look ridiculously cute with a Sloth Bear on their belly) Brooks also shares Sloth Bear's adventures at yeoldslotbear.blogspot.com.





As a Uruguayan citizen, these drawings are metaphors from the history of my country and Latin America. Uruguay was visited by Charles Darwin during his famous trip on The Beagle, and in the past was a very rich country known as the "Switzerland of America." The level of education was very high, and artists like Torres García and the South School participated in avant-garde movements. In addition, in the 1950s, Uruguay won the World Cup by beating Brazil and the Uruguayan peso was more powerful than the U.S. Dollar.

When I think about the reality today, I see a parallel between extinct megafauna such as the giant armadillos and the present-day armadillos called *multitas* or *tatús* in Spanish. Mixing megafauna and mega-history

with the "media fauna" of the micro-present, these drawings are connected with the naturalist drawings of the 19th century but presented as my own fantasy of Uruguay's place today.

Alejandro Turell was born in Montevideo, Uruguay. After studying in the sciences for four years, he entered the National School of Fine Arts and completed his studies in Plastic and Visual Arts. Alejandro is a conceptual artist who works in painting, graphic arts and installations. He has taught at the National School of Fine Arts, EMAD (Municipal School of Dramatic Arts), and Clever Lara's Workshop.

Roar from Cucamonga: The disappearance of large cats from California's Inland Empire

BY DEENA CAPARELLI

Rancho Cucamonga, a city in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains just 50 miles northeast of Los Angeles, can be used as a case study for our relations with the large cats that once roamed the American West. I grew up in the community and have lived much of my life there, beginning in a home in the Red Hill neighborhood, formerly known as Arroyo de los Osos, or Bear Gulch.

By the time my family moved to Red Hill in the late 1950s, it had been fifty years since bears last congregated by the gulch. The remaining strands of sycamore, willow and toyon on the hill were in their last decade of life and the occasional sightings of cougar, kit fox and bobcat would leave with these trees. My childhood playground was the last segment of exposed spring at the south end of the gulch. The "field" as the local kids called it, was an odd pocket of wild in our neighborhood. It was an island surrounded by a golf course and sprawling homes that played host to a spectacular display of wildflowers in the spring, a den of kit fox and elusive bobcat that were visible only by the prints left near the muddy clay waters. I wonder if it was this bubbling spring that hosted the grizzlies that inspired the first two names of the hill.

In the 1960s cougars still wandered down the arroyo that naturally separates Red Hill from Alta Loma. It was an open corridor to the foothill wilderness. During my early school years, cougars occasionally passed behind the elementary school playground, forcing us inside during recess and causing our parents to make certain we walked home in groups. Cougar sightings on Red Hill quickly motivated frightened citizens to call for cougar hunts. It was well known that cougars still nested in the canyons three miles north of the hill, so just like in the early years of settlement, men hunted and killed the roaming cats usually within a day of sighting. I never saw the cougars that shared the school playground, but occasionally I fantasized that they were hiding out in the tall grasses on the other side of the playground fence watching us with their golden eyes. Despite the community's aggressive actions against the real animal, they honored the idea of the cougar by making it the mascot for Cucamonga Middle School.

In the mid 1980s, I moved my art studio into the old fire station (built in 1937) in the heart of Alta Loma's old town center and watched the last remaining orchards and wilderness areas turn into fortress-like gated communities. The wilderness that was rich with life has mostly vanished during my lifetime and gives me pause to reflect on what had once roamed the same foothills where I work and recreate. And never did I imagine that just a hundred years earlier, Cucamonga might have

been land visited by the third largest cat in the world, the jaguar.

While researching a project on the Inland Empire a few years ago, I became aware of some early documents that had descriptions of the fauna, flora and terrain of Red Hill and Alta Loma. Some of the stories appear to be the sites of my childhood home and art studio, bringing to life a place I hardly recognize. Could it be that grizzlies, black bear, cougar and jaguar mingled with deer, bobcat, kit fox, rabbits, and quail in the foothills of the San Gabriel a short century ago?

THE MISSIONARIES AND RANCHERO DAYS

The following are notes of Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza and Father Pedro Font, who moved through the area en route to Monterey from Sonora. The descriptions are of Arroyo de los Osos, the location of my childhood home now known as Red Hill.

March 21, 1774 ...at half past eight in the morning we set forth west northwest over good country covered with pasturage, the Sierra Nevada continuing on our right. After going about seven leagues we halted for the night at a fertile arroyo which came from this sierra, and was thickly grown with cottonwoods, willows and sycamores. It was given the name of Los Osos, because of several bears, which were seen here and then ran away.¹

There was no description of the bear to determine whether it was a grizzly or black bear sighting. But descriptions like these lured early Spanish settlers to clear the terrain for livestock ranching, and so began the shift from wild to civilized.

Lore of the land from the rancho days (1840s–70s) referred to organized bear and cat hunts near the gulch to protect livestock. Because black bear do not attack or eat livestock, one can entertain the idea that the hunt was for grizzlies. The cat hunt could have focused on a number of feline predators that were known to live in the area and that might attack sheep and cattle. Topping the list would be cougar and maybe bobcat (in a more desperate circumstances). Stretching the list might include the illusive jaguar. Local stories of earliest years of American settlement offer evidence that encounters with these magnificent creatures occurred. But within a very short 30-year time frame, the largest of American cats disappeared from the landscape.

WESTWARD HO!

American emigrants began to settle Rancho Cucamonga in the 1870s. By that time the area described by de Anza was replaced with barren land. The mesquite, cottonwoods and sycamore were used as firewood and building materials for the Spanish settlers. Fifty years of livestock grazing had taken its toll on the native flora, yet elements of wild fauna seemed to still inhabit Rancho Cucamonga, even if that cohabitation was only to last another short span of time.



Abstract Wild: Arroyo de los Osos by Deena Capparelli, 2009, 12" x 16", acrylic and watercolor pencil

The story of a family that had set up a temporary tent homestead near where my studio on Amethyst Street presently sits, paints a surreal picture of silent nights punctuated by the roar of lions and wind storms. It was so disturbing that the family sought the shelter of their nearest neighbor a mile west for the month it took to build their small home.

I had assumed the terms *panther* and *wild lion* were interchangeable by the early settlers and also referred to the cougar. However in a more thoughtful understanding of these documented events I now believe that on some occasions the use of the term lion was actually describing a jaguar. Jaguars are elusive creatures that used to roam the Southwest and part of Southern California. They are the third-largest cat in the world, weighing around 300 lbs. and measuring seven to eight feet long. Another trait of the jaguar is that it roars. Cougars, or as they were called, panthers, do not roar. During mating season,

female cougars will screech like squealing car tires. The sounds of the two felines would never be mistaken for each other.

The following excerpt from a letter written November 1, 1881 from Loyal Stiebys to his mother describes what appears to be an encounter with a den of jaguars on a deer-hunting trip. The man in question was nameless in the letter but was described as a real estate man from Ontario, California. He got lost from his hunting group overnight in one of the canyons above Alta Loma:

Well, he was in a gorge and trying to get to some point so as to see how to get back to camp when he heard the roaring of lions, so he turned and was getting back the way he came as fast as he could when he met two lions.

He said they nearly made the mountains shake with their roaring. That brought the ones from the den down the gorge...He said he thought the rifle weighed 100 pounds at the time but it did not take long to settle their hash. He shot the lions and found camp the next day. One of the lions was over 300 pounds and was 8 feet long.

I saw bear tracks at the vineyard this morning. That is right back of the barn. A panther and a bear had a fight in Lyle creek canyon last week. Two fellows saw them but were afraid to shoot...²

Thirty years earlier, and about 70 miles west of Rancho Cucamonga following the San Gabriel along the San Andreas Fault line, a family of jaguars roamed terrain similar in description to the canyons above Cucamonga. James Capen Adams (“Grizzly” Adams) wrote of an encounter with these jaguars near Tehachapi in 1855. Adams described the night encounter and the low roar of the animal. Fortunately the animal retreated and Adams was able to observe that he was “of large size—a majestic animal of the lion genus.” Adams tracked the large feline to a gorge and an elevated cave that was clearly a den. He describes the den as looking like a slaughterhouse with bones of various animals scattered below. Adams spent a day building a trap for the “magnificent beast” and for several nights was woken by a roar near the area of the trap.

It was loud but clear, short but piercing, different from any roar I had ever heard and, as a new fact in regard to the beast, it added to my wonder, for I had already come to the conclusion that the animal was of a different species from any I had ever known. The track was peculiarly large and firm, indicating an animal of great strength and noble bearing.

Adams went on to describe the jaguar’s ability to avoid the trap while he tracked the cat family for two weeks. The family consisted of a very large male, twice the size of a cougar, a female and two cubs. He described the coat of the male cat as “covered with dark round spots of great richness and beauty.”³

Could it be that the jaguars encountered in Cucamonga a generation later were the offspring of these cats? It seems that encounters with jaguars and grizzlies ended around the same time in California when they were hunted by ranchers and chased out of their habitat by their smaller but more adaptable cousins, the cougar and black bear. Interestingly, the last grizzly was hunted in Tehachapi in 1911. Maybe the gentleman from Ontario shot the last jaguar in Cucamonga in 1881?

The jaguar have all but disappeared from the American Southwest. There have only been a rare handful of sightings over the past 60 years. The last documented sighting of a jaguar was in 2009. The Arizona department of fish and game trapped a large male jaguar named Macho B. This type of cat was long thought to be extinct in the Southwest, so he was collared to research his movements, but within two weeks, Macho B showed signs of distress. Believing he was ill and might infect any other jaguars, the Arizona Department of Fish and Game shot and killed Macho B.

Little is known about the jaguars that may have inhabited Cucamonga and much of the Southwest. It is clear that they quickly vanished as humans moved higher into the foothill and ranchers actively hunted

the animals to protect their livestock. And while the jaguar vanished completely, the cougar has managed to keep its presence even as more and more of its territory has been developed into large estates that push back the boundaries of the remaining wilderness. Whether or not the jaguar family that was sighted by Grizzly Adams was the same family that wandered the canyons above Cucamonga only 30 years later, after that faithful afternoon that Loyal Stiebys wrote home about, there were no more jaguar sightings in Cucamonga.

¹ Ruth Austen: Ontario the model colony, Chatsworth, CA: Windsor Publications, 1990
² Donald Clucas: Light over the Mountain, A history of the Rancho Cucamonga Area revised Edition. Ontario, CA: Kengraphics Printing and Lithography Company, 1974
³ James Capen Adams: Jaguar in California. <http://www.24hourcampfire.com/jaguars>

Deena Capparelli is an artist and professor of art at Pasadena City College. She coordinated *MOISTURE*, a five-year art and land remediation project in the Mojave desert, and *Invisible Trajectories—passing through the Inland Empire*, a California Stories project funded by California Council for the Humanities. She is currently working on a living laboratory at the UC Riverside Palm Desert Graduate Center.

How to Fry an Ostrich Egg

BY OTIS BARDWELL



more butter
 Abigail’s wing-pits
 the maternal instinct

too much pepper
 a small girl’s straw hat
 the realization that everything’s larger

Emperor Commodus
 a sunshine crown in a rubber orbit
 an attempt to banish the butt pickers

a large iron skillet
 a leather pouch full of gold
 the crunch of porcelain under a silver spoon

diamonds in your gizzard
 feathers floating in the dust devils
 a mass of grey kindergarten paste

Edwin Cawston
 a black gladiatorial rooster
 a small boy’s plaid vest
 more butter

Otis Bardwell is an artist based in Los Angeles, longing to escape the insanity. He has written poetry since his childhood in Africa. To assuage his urge to wander, Bardwell used to take frequent hikes in the San Gabriel Mountains (that is, until the Station Fire).

Megatheriums

BY AKINA COX



I began researching the ground sloth to prove their existence to my sister. To be fair, the *megatherium* is an animal of extreme proportions, and seems about as plausible as Bigfoot. Standing 15 feet high, the ground sloth had such long nails that it had to stand bow-legged on the sides of its feet.

Many megafauna are comical creatures with exaggerated proportions such as moose antlers, elephant ears or the general magnitude of whales. Their size forces us to relate to other beings on a non-human scale. This might be the reason that artists and scientists have had a hard time describing the ground sloth. Depictions of it seem to borrow heavily from animals more easily relatable, such as pigs or bears.

Through looking at various illustrations of the ground sloth, I am reminded of the old tale of the blind monks and the elephant. Maybe each representation of the *megatherium* is slightly incorrect, but by viewing many portrayals, we can arrive at a better understanding.

By painting the giant ground sloth, I am exploring the various ways it has been depicted, as well as celebrating a wonderful mammal that should never be forgotten. The *megatherium* and other megafauna serve as a reminder of nature's mysterious side. As a

six-foot tall female, I have wondered whether I could qualify for megafauna status. Furthermore, when I was a teenager, doctors discovered a tumor weighing five pounds lurking between other organs in my abdomen. The teratoma (Latin meaning "monster tumor") is known for its bizarre contents (skin, hair, teeth, brain cells), its size (the largest recorded was over 100 pounds), and its origins (unknown, but there are dramatic theories). Having a teratoma has made me feel at odds with my body, and relatively freakish.

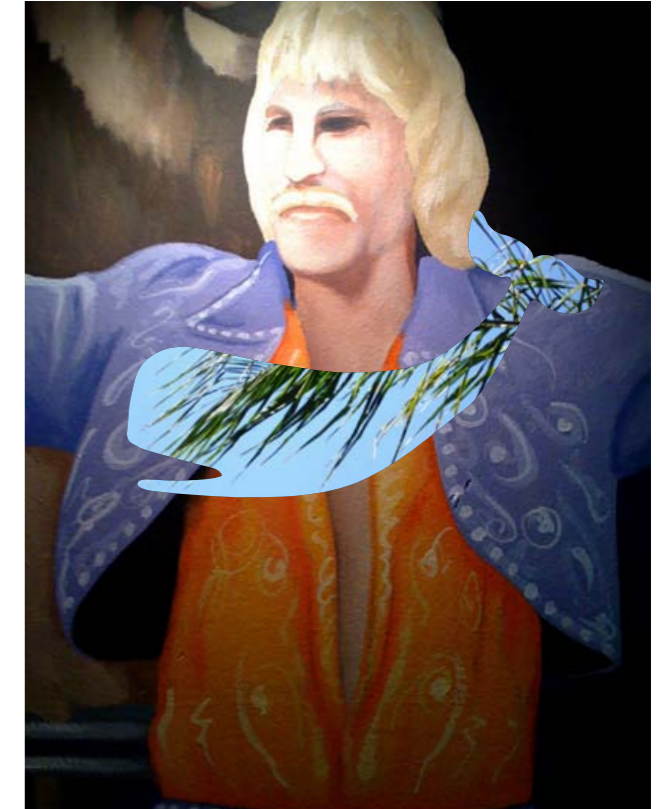
Megafauna, especially the gargantuan ground sloths, provide a valuable life lesson by reminding us that our universe is full of eccentricities, perhaps completely comprised of them, and what we see as aberrations might be the status quo. Maybe the true idiosyncrasy is our idea of ordinary.

Akina Cox is an artist from Red Bank, New Jersey. Besides drawing and painting, she makes videos, and has co-founded a new library. She is based in Los Angeles.



Acoustic Smog Species Confusion

BY CHRISTOPHER SMITH & ERICA TYRON



1. the art of fear / the feel good mechanism of anti-submarine warfare / human perception and language, the undisputed standard / art of destruction? / it takes a lot of effort to destroy

Navy defends sonar amid fight over whale safety
Mon Jan 28, 2008 8:42pm GMT

"Anti-submarine warfare is an art. It takes a lot of effort to learn how to do it," said Capt. James Loeblein, commander of a squadron of destroyers, including the Momsen.

Without more definitive evidence of a link between active sonar and whale injury, additional protection measures sought by environmental groups only hurt sailors' training, said Vice Adm. Samuel Locklear, commander of the Navy's Third Fleet, responsible for Pacific operations.

"It looks to me like a feel-good mechanism rather than something that is really going to benefit the mammals," he said aboard the USS Lincoln.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKN2848010220080128>

2. abstraction from the ecosystem / fear of submarines trumps loss of environment, the training space / o' dark hundred hours / what time is left?

U.S. Navy Wins Dispute Over Sonar, Whales
Pete Yost in Washington, D.C.
Associated Press
November 13, 2008

NRDC said the ruling is a narrow one.

"I don't think it establishes a bright-line rule," said Joel Reynolds, director of NRDC's marine mammal protection program. "The court acknowledged that environmental interests are important, but in this case that the interest in training was greater, was more significant than, interest in the environment."

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/11/081113-navy-whales-ap.html>

3. *Navy, whale advocates settle suit over sonar*
Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times
Sunday, December 28, 2008

Environmentalists contend that the Navy's use of active sonar is hurting or maybe even killing whales. They say studies show the piercing underwater sounds cause whales to flee in panic or to dive too deeply.

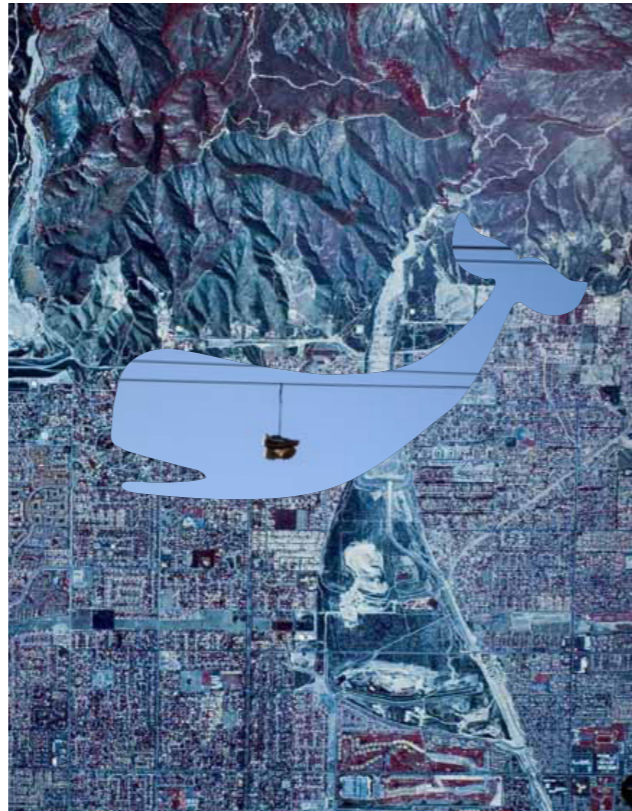
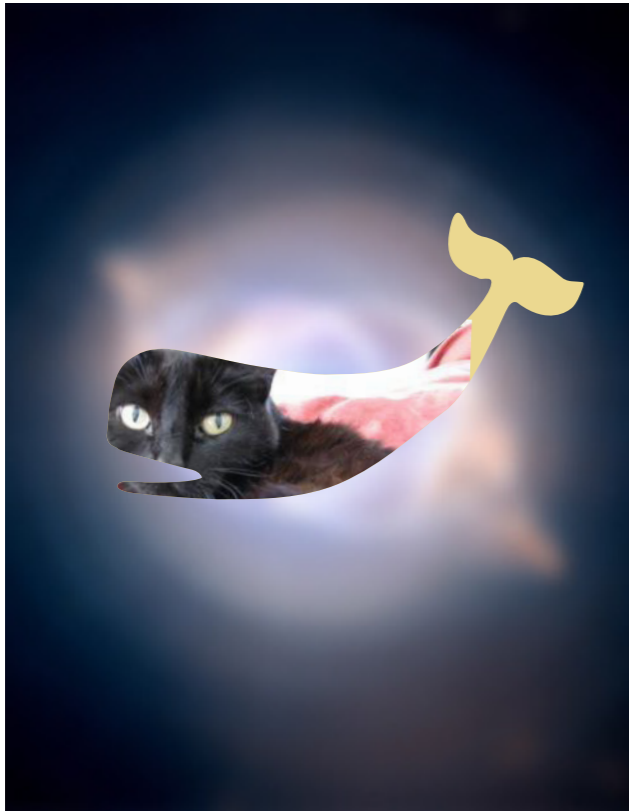
The Navy disputes this and says sonar training is essential for sailors to be prepared to detect super-quiet diesel submarines that are being purchased or built by rogue nations, including Iran and North Korea.

<http://www.sfchron.com/cgi-bin/article/article?f=/c/a/2008/12/27/MNDL1504PU.DTL>

4. strange to think that other species are similar to humans? / species similarity is used to defend experimentation in other research/funding contexts

if whales evolved spindle cells 15 million years before humans did, this suggests that whales are more evolved than humans / what would we find out if we learned to communicate with whales?

"It's like they're living in these massive, multicultural, undersea societies," says Hal Whitehead, a marine biologist at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia and the world's foremost expert on the sperm whale. "It's sort of strange. Really the closest analogy we have for it would be ourselves."



“To date, no neurological studies of the gray-whale brain have been done. In 2006, however, researchers at Mount Sinai School of Medicine analyzed the brains of two other baleen species—humpback and finback whales—as well as those of a number of toothed whales like dolphins and killer and sperm whales. The study revealed brain structures surprisingly similar to our own.

Some, in fact, contained large concentrations of spindle cells—often referred to as the cells that make us human because of their link to higher cognitive functions like self-awareness, a sense of compassion and linguistic expression—with the added kick that whales evolved these same highly specialized neurons as many as 15 million years before we humans did, a stunning instance of a phenomenon biologists refer to as parallel evolution.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/magazine/12whales-t.html>

Christopher Smith is a graphic designer, working for a variety of organizations, friends and businesses. Erica Tyrone is the Director of College Radio for KSPC at Pomona College, online at kspc.org. Together they make a website, findingtheothers.com, and live in Claremont, CA.

**THE PLEISTOCENE
REVOLUTIONARY'S MANIFESTO**

Accepted fact: a sustainable humanity is a fertile lie, furthering the fat humanist belief in the rigors and virtues of progress. Elevating human pursuits above the blood-soaked wonders of the earth. To them, the snorting and passive enemy, the future unfolds at our feet, like a carpet, or maybe a ribbon. Potentially, a ball of string. Or, like, say, an open road. An open door, I guess, would be apt, as well. Something open, is what I'm getting at.

But: Collapse is imminent! Progress is frailty! The future unfolds for nobody!

Too long now – humanity has acted as caustic agents of extinction!

Too long now – clawing, massive hulks dragged into the tar pits of eradication!

Too long now – have we gorged at the trough of convenient lies, of history, of sustainability, of progress!

We propose an immediate return to the pleistocene. No time to dismantle anything. We begin now, calling for a comprehensive and graphic rewilding of megafauna, refining biodiversity, overhauling the ecosystem.

Home to saber-tooth tigers, giant bears, mammoths only 13,000 years ago, Los Angeles is the place to begin. Standing atop Dante's Peak in Los Angeles, the Pleistocene Revolutionary sees bison stampeding down Hollywood Boulevard, hunted by a small pack of marsupial lions. Hippopotami drift lazily through the Silverlake reservoir. Gerenuk herd in Griffith Park, where Ancylotherium browse the trees. Mylodons placidly thin the avocado trees of Echo Park. The restoration of natural processes! The Holocene collapsing into the Pleistocene! As if the tar pits in La Brea spewed out its countless

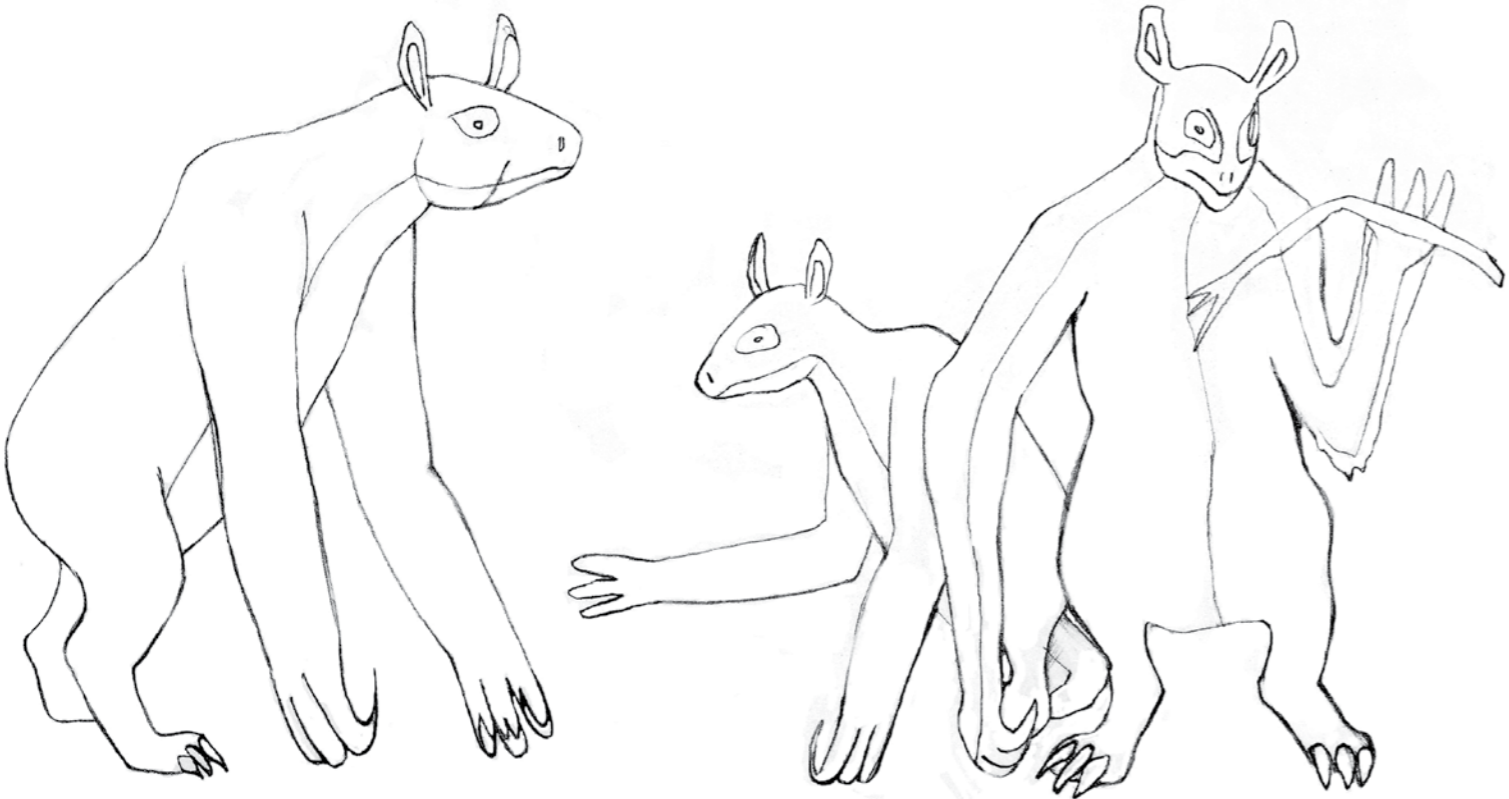
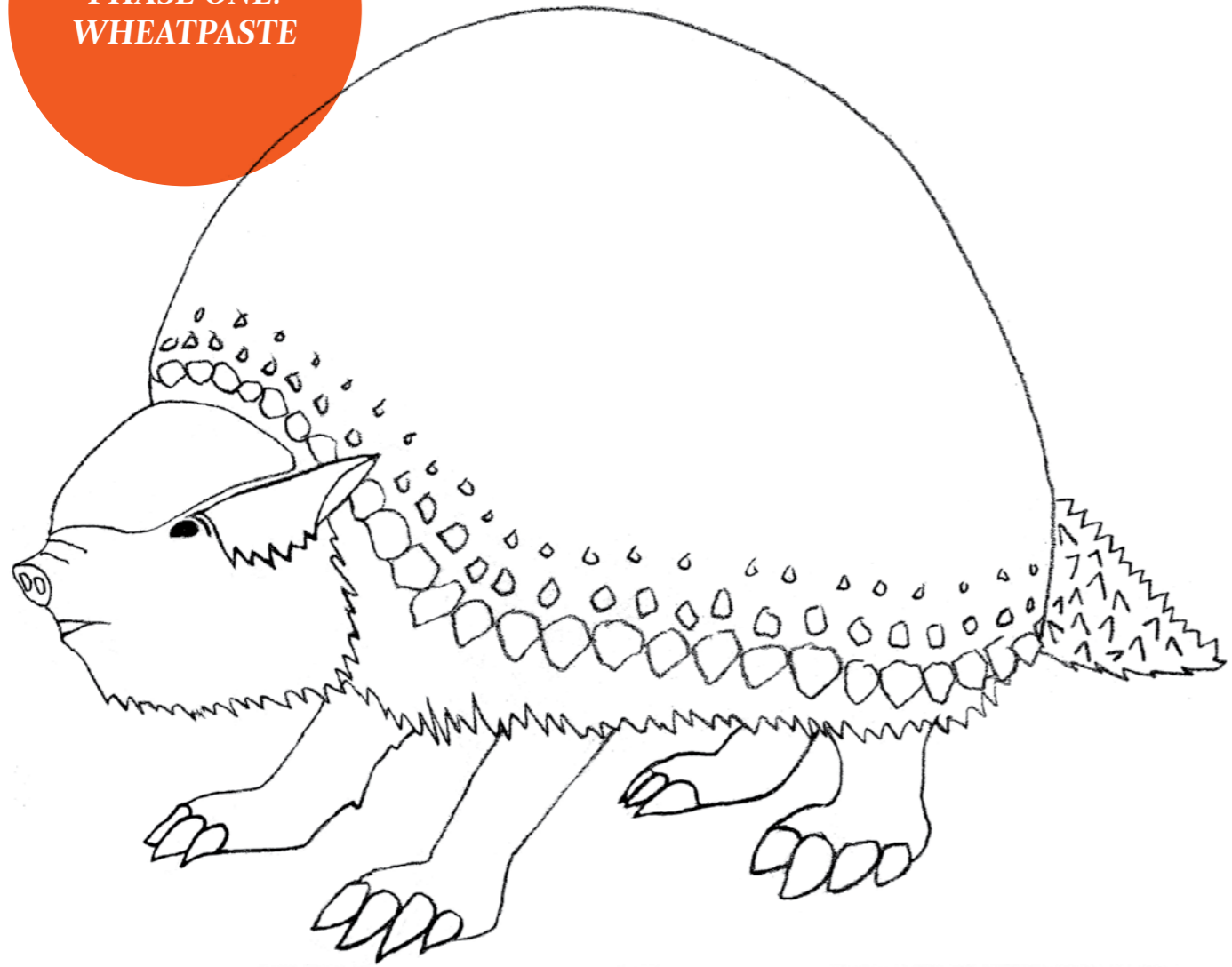
victims back into the recently populated prairies. The prehistoric spears of our starving ancestors being thrust out of their targets' hides, leaving no feast, leaving no nourished ancestors, leaving no history, leaving only the inhospitable and gentle pandemonium of an ecosystem that must not cede to the demands of any one voracious, confused species. Silence, except for the sound of grazing.

Warm nights, in Los Angeles. The scent of musk ox floating out from alleys in Chinatown. The digestive grunting of glyptodons alongside the sounds of the 101 freeway.

The tactics: simple. A full-collapse. Art and science crashing into the other. Art and science aren't even things anymore, they're the urge to mate, the urge to graze. Where once stood images, now stand beasts. Where was once your face, now is a proboscis. What was once a mob, is now a herd. Long hides sway in the wind. Hunters stalk from a distance.



PHASE ONE:
WHEATPASTE





**PHASE TWO:
MASKS**



ON TACTICS

Expect delirium to flood the city!
Expect it to encroach on you from shaded alleys, from plant-choked stairways, grunting!
Expect it to trample you beneath thundering hooves, crushing your bones into the soil, feeding endless grasslands.

That is, unless:
You, yourself, spread the delirium when it arrives, like a plague.
You, yourself, are the beast grunting lowly in the shadows.
You, yourself, slough off your skin to reveal hooves, horns and tusks when the herd approaches.

We have no need or sympathy for your passivity! We need thick, furry hides. We need clawed appendages. Constant grazing.

The goal is simple: to unmoor experience from the bedraggled dock of historical time.

The tactics involve you. To clarify and reemphasize.

To reemphasize, again: You are an agent for the prehistoric. You are the secret weapon. You are an early wave in an endless tide.

Find, following: masks, posters, vast herds of mega-fauna at your disposal.

The posters, paste in public spaces, in private spaces, where they will be seen. Paste them in flocks. Paste them alone. In territorial disputes. Mating. Socializing. In their natural habitat.

The masks thicken your hide, transform ideology into instinct, allow more dimensionality for mega-faunal interaction. Wear them in public spaces, in private spaces, where you will be seen. Wear them in flocks. Alone. In territorial disputes. Mating. Socializing. In your natural habitat.

The pleistocene rises over us like a cresting wave. Further tactics are being devised. Further tactics have been devised. Further tactics are in play. Now. The grasslands need grazing.

pleistocener evolution.blogspot.com

Hearty and reasonable, Johnson and Olson believe in the benefits of fur and spears. They commit to many projects and have a swarthy herd of agendas.



**PHASE THREE:
HAPPENINGS**



