



The Virtual Coe *Being together while being apart....*

April 16, 2021

Remembering Roan



Roan Mulholland, Recollective Echo exhibition, Hands-On Curatorial Program 2019

The Coe is taking space this week to honor a dear and loved member of our community. We recently learned of the tragic passing of Roan Mulholland. Roan, a recent graduate of The Academy for Technology and the Classics in Santa Fe and a freshman at Lewis and Clark College, was a Hands-On curator with us for three years. Of course, to say that she was a part of this program only touches on Roan's impact on Hands-On and the Coe as a whole.



Hands-On Curators, 2018



Roan Mulholland, *Eye-Opener* exhibition, 2018.
Photo: Terran Last Gun.

As the person who worked most closely with Roan over those years, I will say that my heart is broken over her loss. She was a brilliant contributor to our Hands-On community. We are a tight-knit group, who work very closely together, spending hours each week not just learning about how to curate an exhibition, but about each other, who we are, where we come from, and how we view the world. We become a team, a family. And Roan was so completely and passionately engaged with this difficult and important process. She stepped in so deep to learn about all of her peers and found inspiration in every one of them.

Our last year of working together was a challenging one for all of us. As the ripples of the pandemic closures rolled through our small group, we shifted our meetings to entirely online. Somehow the group held together and supported each other as they faced the crazy transitions of graduation, finishing projects, choosing colleges, facing a summer alone. Roan held strong through all of this, again her words guiding us all to find the power of looking forward by looking back. The nostalgia that the curators focused on for their exhibition, *(I'm Nostalgic for) Memories I've Never Lived Before*, hit hard then and hits even harder now. The *Diary of Nostalgia* that Roan created gathered together so many dreams and memories, pulled from the objects and her friends—stories that continue to hold power.

Roan taught me so much about the quiet bravery of listening carefully to others' experiences and finding common ground, about honoring the goofiness and pleasure of growing up, about K-Pop and cuteness. I will be forever thankful for having been able to share some of her too-short time here with us. Below is a selection of Roan's words and images that she made with us and photos of our time together. We love you, Roan.

—Bess Murphy



Bess Murphy and Roan Mulholland, *Recollective Echo* exhibition opening, 2019

Written by Roan...

2018, Eye-Opener



The fiddle, made c. 1900 in the Yupik regions of the Far North, what is now Alaska. The scroll is a face based off a facemask from the region. It was found with no discernable artist or tribe, but there is evidence it was played and cherished by the families or people that possessed it.

Growing up playing a viola, I was drawn to this piece. The case is worn leather with a burned design, the bow has split from age and use, and the fiddle has paint fading from the fingers at rest. I held it like it was mine. I held my fingers where others held it, I wanted

to feel it resting on my shoulder to see if there was a difference in weight, and in generations and styles of string instruments.



Artist Unknown (Yupik), *Fiddle*, c. 1900, Alaska. Wood, 21.5 x 8 in. NA 1220a



Bagobo Dagger and Sheath

Jingling echoes.

Bells and metal and rattan.

Intricate carvings.

Yupik Fiddle (shown above)

I reflect the face.

The music by fingers dance.

Upon me, see me.

I chose to write haikus because I wanted to express what I thought of the piece in a way that was meant to show the essence of the object. I also like haikus because they are short and simple and full of meaning despite that. Haikus also seemed to fit the pieces I chose, because they are all small and I can see meaning in all of them.



Mocotaugan

*I create things, carved.
Built from hands that used to play.
Pearl for beauty.*



Sculpture Head

*It is Smooth as Silk.
The cloudy Shields, Severed Soul.
Marked with history.*



Torajan Sword

*Rattan and steel and horn.
Do I kill, help or display?
I do not recall*

2019, Recollective Echo



When coming back to the Coe for a second year, the mindset I had of what I was going to choose to explore and research had changed. I didn't know how, but I knew that it had done so in an impactful way. At first, looking around, I was finding pieces that related to me in a more personal way; objects that made me think of memories. That is when I realized what had changed. I was no longer just looking with fascination at the cultures represented, but was searching for myself. I found pieces of my life in them: the pineapple from my French class, where I met one of my best friends, the colorful hat that echoed the sound of my favorite groups new music release, and the doll that was so mysterious it seemed familiar. All these objects I wanted to learn about because they connected to my own story.



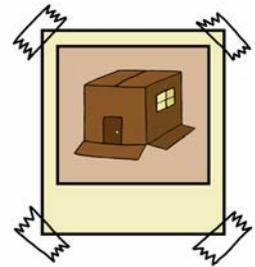
There are limits to words. This is why I chose to draw my pieces. I wanted to make some part of it my own, not by making it better or distracting from the beauty of the original, but to incorporate it more fully into my memories. However, like stories, memories change and through our dreams they change more. So, I wanted to share how I see them, how my brain has changed a ceremonial hat from the Tzotzil Maya group in Mexico into a sunset, and a pineapple into a first meeting. By drawing them out, I unbind the limitations that physicality has set on them. I can make them into a dream.

This is what I want you to take from this. I want you to dream; to make your imagination boundless and continue making your own stories from this imagination, and inspiration from others. I want you to keep



remembering your memories, whether they be from yesterday or ten years ago, because they all matter.

2020, (I'm Nostalgic for) Memories I've Never Lived Before



Diary of Nostalgia

As nostalgia is both an individual and collectivist experience, I decided that a diary of our connections and thoughts about the pieces from the Coe Center would best show how we settled on the theme of nostalgia. Asking each curator to write an entry, how their nostalgia came forward from a piece, and putting them together in a collective diary demonstrates that even though we have different experiences we are constantly looking backwards while we move forward in our lives. Like the birchbark diary you will find in our exhibition, one piece of history can hold many memories.



This exhibition is my last one and I feel in today's society, one of the most important. As this exhibition focuses on our shared nostalgia and how interconnected we all are, hopefully it shows you that our pasts and our histories need to be reflected on, remembered, rather than hidden away and ignored. Meeting with Santa Fe artists and learning about cultures from around the world puts into perspective how much we need to embrace the good and bad of all our pasts, in order to move forward a little wiser and more open to stories not our own.



Artist Unknown (Ming Dynasty, China), *Agate Belt Buckle*, c. 15th Century. Agate and bronze, 2 x 2.25 in. AS0002

My dad's getting older. A belt buckle he wears that I never noticed before. This one, agate and gold, ages well and long. I hope my dad does too.



Artist Unknown (Japan), *Lacquer Container*, late 19th/early 20th Century. Wood and lacquer, 3 in. diam. AS0108

Smooth and round. Secret and golden. Used well and often it reminds me of my own. A childlike fascination with hiding. A desire to have a secret of my own. Smooth rocks turn into jewelry and dried flowers into pins. Too many secrets now. Worn and rough.



Wanesia Spry Misquadace (Fond du Lac Band Chippewa Tribe), *Necklace*, c. 2009. Glass, birchbark, pearls, silver sterling beads, 1 x 7 in. NA1466. Gift from Patricia M. Newman in honor of Judy M. Courtney.

A heart on my sleeve. I wear it now outside, no longer tucked away. Carved and worn but my own. Protected by glass fashioned with pearls of adulthood. Cannot be opened and I like it that way. Why do I like it that way?

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