

Though more guiding process rather than theme, this exhibition is built on ideas of ambition, timing, expansion, reclamation and vacancy chains. Really, it's about growing to fill a void, how the same space (physical or otherwise) can be used, reused, emptied, filled, and manipulated to accommodate multiple purposes and multiple actors. It's about how this series of relationships facilitates a certain development intrinsic to the work of artists.

Many of the artists involved in the exhibition recently graduated from The Glasgow School of Art's MFA programme and moved on to other studios and work environments. Their former studios at GSA have been filled by new occupants along with their former roles. Similarly the space for the exhibition has been given new life and new occupants through its reuse. The resource of the car park has traversed vacancy chains and was brought into use as an exhibition venue by GSA's multi-site exhibition program The Rite of Spring 1913. It is the hope of this exhibition to further tie this resource to the arts vacancy chain acting as a second link in an extended sequence of art shows. Other exhibitions within The Glasgow Masters Series will further anchor the space's role as venue.

The title of the show is borrowed from Harrison White's paradigm shifting research into social mobility – concepts which offered a new explanation of resource distribution, networks, institutions, and agency. White's models are particularly engaging when used as a lens through which to view the art world. In a system that is at times characterized by celebrity and the dominant personalities of the day, White offers a separate view, moving away from the view of the individual and the attributes that the individual ostensibly possesses, and moving to a system described instead by patterns of relationships.

This show not only references purely physical resources, but also shifting societal and professional roles, roles that can be viewed as shells rather than inherent attributes of the individual. In the arts, the roles of student, tutor, curator, critic, and the plethora of strata based adjectives that might precede the word 'artist' (emerging, mid-career, established, celebrated, etc.) can be seen as metaphoric venues rather than personal descriptors. In White's model, the individual occupies these spaces rather than owning the role intrinsically. These roles are not self supporting and cannot exist in the same way without the abetment of the pattern of relationships surrounding it. In this model, it is not so much that one role matures into another, it is that a vacancy is passed through the system – which brings one to the troubled term 'emerging artist.' Beyond the tired questions the label dredges up (From what is this artist emerging from? Into what does the artist emerge?) the sense of vulnerability that the label provides bears a good deal of accuracy. The hermit crab is rarely imagined outside its borrowed shell, yet its transition is far from seamless or fluid. It could be argued that for the emerging artist there is an similar amount of scramble and scuttering as they move away from now ill-fitting roles to find a more well suited vacancy, and leave their former space to be taken by another.

-Seth Orion Schwaiger

Vacancy Chain opens Thursday, September 5th at 7pm and runs daily from the 6th to the 15th 1 – 6pm. The Fleming House Underground Car Park, 134 Renfrew Street, Glasgow

Exhibiting artists are AJ Meadows, Stephen Murray, Sasha Panyuta, Alex Sarkisian, Seth Orion Schwaiger, Fraser Sim, Vigdis Storsveen, Jon Thomson, Lisa Ure, James Winnett

For further reading on vacancy chains see the writings of Harrison C. White or Ivan D. Chase's article titled Vacancy Chain in the Annual review of Sociology or online at <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2083338>