



The Ecstasy of Mary Shelley
LACE Emerging Curators Program

Opening Reception: January 4, 2017 7-10PM
Exhibition Dates: January 5 – February 12, 2017

Curated by **Virginia Broersma, Nick Brown and Kio Griffith**

“With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet...when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.” – Mary Shelley

There is a striking parallel between the moment when an idea hits and the moment life is conducted into Dr. Frankenstein’s monster in Mary Shelley’s tale of a scientist’s Promethean experiment. Transformation occurs with a zap of electricity, a lightning strike, a neuron firing in the brain. The trajectory of life can be converted, mutated, revolutionized with a single flip of the switch. Ecstatic religious experiences, Satori or enlightenment, transmogrification, race, gender and sexual identity...what are the techniques, interventions and impetuses of these perceptual shifts and transformations? How do they manifest themselves and how are they maintained?

As with St. Teresa of Avila’s experience of rapturous thrusts to her heart – “So surpassing was the sweetness of this excessive pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it.” – transformation often comes with both pleasure and pain, agony and ecstasy, a dopamine high careening downward to lycanthropic depths.

The Ecstasy of Mary Shelley as an exhibition and lab combines artists whose work exists in this space of conductivity between ecstatic highs and monstrous lows. Overlapping strategies run throughout the various artists’ works such as subverting a point in history or tapping into the ritualistic performances of the body; surrealistic dream imagery relating to the detritus of real life. As artists themselves, the curators have taken the idea of an exhibition and have used it as an opportunity for imagining how the agglomeration of these works will breathe life into the monster, or perhaps into a rapturous encounter, which remains to be seen.

Featuring:

Cassils, Nathan Danilowicz, Valerie Hegarty, Naotaka Hiro, Annie Lapin, Candice Lin, and Gala Porras-Kim