

# april april

*Juliette*

Mo Costello & Nabil Azab

24 OCTOBER TO 05 DECEMBER, 2021

*Flower and environment are not reciprocally delimited as foreground and background, separable object and surround, but feature jointly in co-activity. They co-feature as tonal differences in a field modulating the whole of experience at all levels...<sup>1</sup>*

april april is proud to present *Juliette*, an exhibition by Mo Costello and Nabil Azab comprising two artworks: Costello's ongoing site-specific performance and installation, *Rehearsal* (2021), and Azab's *Untitled* (2021), a photograph.

What follows is text that Mo shared on the evening of October 20, 2021 as part of ongoing dialogue among the four of us.

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*Juliette.*

Juliette is the name of a popular portable transistor radio. I found the face cover of a disassembled Juliette transistor radio when the four of us first started talking. It was sometime in April, or May, on a trail near the tracks behind my home. I've been making drawings of it in different configurations ever since. It is, after all this time, an object that I return to again and again.

Juliette has a strange circle-like quality to it. As if it begins at J and somehow, sonically, returns there. As if it is a boomerang of some kind. Perhaps it is the two t's, the one l. Perhaps it is just a beautiful name. One that somehow feels like a song.

'Juliette' and then,

nothing.

But the sound of its own echo.

The relationship between radio and the nature of our conversations over the last several months lends itself to a surprising trail of connections.

Radio as signal. And as a device for communication. Radio waves are transmitted across space and time. Eventually received - if they are received at all - by a landscape of antennas. Solitary receivers seeking, longing, listening.



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Hollis Frampton imagined an 'infinite cinema' or, 'infinite film'. One made up of an 'overarching history of all recorded images', and conceived of the universe as 'an endless film archive'. The image then, both still and moving, is but a moment, out of all possible moments. A small glimpse into the infinite.

Radio, like film, is, in a sense, 'sluice-like'. Some frequencies are received, while others, unfiltered, radiate elsewhere and otherwise. Radio originates in the Latin word "radius"; a "spoke, a wheel, a beam of light, a ray". 'Photophones' - the optical transmission of light - were eventually replaced by 'Radiophones' or, "radiated sound". It is here perhaps, that the convergence of light and sound, reveal the surprising ways in which they are inextricably bound to one another.

Both are, fundamentally, radiation.

Truthfully, I should be packing. It is now long past midnight and there is still much to do before I leave Athens. It was in packing however, that I came across the small plastic plate that bears the name I have shared above. And it was, similarly, in that moment, that the desire to share, to write, arose. Unexpectedly. And from there, a familiar unraveling. In response to a single word, or sound, or color;

'Juliette'.

Followed by the words,

'Instant Sound'.

I will leave you with one final thought, before I return my attention, once more, to placing small objects into small bags. And small bags, into small boxes. In preparation for an early departure:

I often reflect on the ways in which sound requires a medium in order to travel. It requires, as I fear you have heard me say again and again, contact. Entanglement. And collision. It cannot - and this bears emphasis - exist in a vacuum.

'Juliette', somehow, carries all of this for me. In the way that a word, and more so, a name, can carry within it the weight of former lives and future selves in a single utterance. A word, a name, as if two hands, clasped, to form a dish, a basin, a crevice.

A receptacle, of some kind.

## Endnotes

1. Manning, Erin. "Coming Alive in a World of Texture." In *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience*, 8. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.



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**Mo Costello** (b. 1989, Seattle, WA) is an artist and educator drawn to the social lives of image, object and text. Found objects serve as guides in an interdisciplinary practice oriented towards forms of contact and exchange. Mo lives in Athens, GA where they've maintained a studio for the last several years at a local flea market. Recent exhibitions include Howard's, Athens (2019) and Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta (2019). Upcoming curatorial projects include *Small Town Fantasy*, Danielsville, GA (2021).

**Nabil Azab** (b. 1994, Paris, France) is a multidisciplinary artist of North African descent. They live and work in kanien'kehá:ka territory (Montréal). Azab employs drawing, painting, writing and researching as fodder for abstract photographic works that resist the objectivity and disciplinarity of the medium in contemporary life. Upcoming solo exhibitions include *Afternoon Projects*, Vancouver (2022) and *Galerie D'art Desjardins*, Drummondville, Quebec (2022).

