

MEDIA RELEASE

Lost in Transmission

Lucy Helton with Jason E Geistweidt

On View — by appointment only, June 8th, 2023 — July 31st, 2023, 2 — 6pm

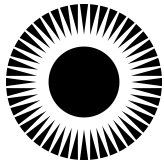
Opening Reception — Thursday, June 8th, 2023, 6 — 8pm

NEW YORK, NY (June 8th, 2023) — Penumbra Foundation is pleased to present *Lost in Transmission* by Lucy Helton with Jason E Geistweidt. Consisting of works from Helton's own series *Lost in Transmission*, and the mixed-media installation *QSL*, done in collaboration with Geistweidt, the exhibition utilizes lo-fi and low-energy transmission technology- radiofax, SSTV (slow-scan television), HAM radio to communicate and build data and images.

Seeing the advancement of our species and technology conjoined, Helton experiments with these relevant image-making technologies used to carry out in-depth examinations of the universe and our planet. By engaging these machines in the fine arts, she attempts to map what it means to be human. Her thermal prints of observations of dynamic ice forms are fictional constructs of the earthly and unearthy, the real and unreal, transforming Earth into a place that was once familiar and lost.

The totemic *Arctic Ice Cores* are radio transmitted images of scientific samples drilled from ice sheets and glaciers obtained by Helton from scientists studying atmospheric conditions. These samples are accumulations over many hundred thousands of years of essential information about local, global, atmospheric chemical compositions and solar conditions from ancient times to the present, in "high-time resolution". Rendered by Helton as decidedly low-resolution images, they stand as stark and subtly shimmery reminders of the effects of our dependence on technology and its literal change to the structure of our planet, with unintended side effects dictating our future.

QSL utilizes automated photography, analog-data transmission protocols, and radio-marine faxes to look at localized climate conditions on Lake Erie, historical and present day, including the record-setting blizzards of 1977 and December 2022. From January to April 2023, Helton and Geistweidt transmitted live and archival images to WEFAX equipment installed at Rivalry Projects, Buffalo, printing them as panoramic feeds in real-time. Eight cameras staged at the Buffalo Lighthouse that automatically captured ambient photographs every 2 hours, US Coast Guard meteorological charts pulled from radio channels, technical diagrams, historical images, and visual translations of radio interference formed the material of this four-month, live performance of technological process and impermanence. The "artifact-uals" are presented in the Penumbra Project Gallery as loops of data received and lost and suspended in the air, and



accrue into map-like accumulations across the wall. Sounds of public broadcasts and background noise from HAM radio, and time and fax protocols echo the process of static images turned into analogue, sonic tones, corresponding to the content of the images and giving a palpable sense of the artists' collaboration with the unseeable, the unpredictable, and the experimental process of discovery.

As a radio shorthand, "QSL" is a call and response confirmation of signal reception. As an inquiry, QSL asks "Have you received the transmission?" while as a statement, QSL verifies "Transmission received." Gallery visitors are invited to participate by filing out QSL postcards, a form of written confirmation of a signal in radio communications. In this case, the cards become a record of the communication completed between the artists (represented by Helton's and Geistweidt's HAM radio call signs) and the viewer-receiver. At the conclusion of the exhibition, all visitor completed QSL cards will be postmarked and sent to Helton and assembled as a mail art piece.

The artists wish to thank [Wave Farm](#) 2022 Media Arts Assistance Fund for Artists, as this project would not have been possible without their support. Special thanks to Rivalry Projects, Buffalo.

The opening hours for this exhibition are Monday through Friday, 2 PM — 6 PM. Admission is free. Viewing is by [appointment](#) only.

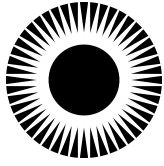
About the artists:

Lucy Helton is a visual artist whose fictitious and prophetic landscapes address contemporary environmental concerns by offering a sublime vision of the planet's uncertain future. Born in London, she received her master's degree in fine art photography from Hartford Art School, CT, in 2014. Seeing visual arts as a means of engagement, Helton uses concept-specific technologies to image the relationship between human beings and the landscapes we inhabit. Gaining a HAM (amateur) radio license, she continues to test the boundaries of art and technology by making both long and short-range image transmissions. Helton's books are collected by the Cleveland Institute of Art, MoMA, MET, Brooklyn Museum, Houston Center of Photography, Hirsch Library at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke University, and the GRASSI Museum of Applied Arts Leipzig, Germany, among others.

lucyhelton.com

Jason E Geistweidt

Jason E Geistweidt is a trans-disciplinary artist working at the nexus of music technology, physical computing, creative coding, networked systems, digital fabrication, interactive installation, and performance. Grounding his research is the use of purpose-built computational



tools and systems for generating media via procedural yet aleatoric or otherwise chance methodologies. Conceptually, the work plays with ideas of control, intention, and expectation within the creative process. His experimental approach works to interconnect disparate systems in a desire to make the intangible — data, networks, computation, and the like — tangible through their transduction into objects, events, and experiences. Dr. Geistweidt holds a PhD in Music Composition from the Sonic Arts Research Center (SARC), Queen's University Belfast, and Master of Arts in Music Technology from the University of Limerick. He currently teaches in the Department of Media Study at SUNY Buffalo, coordinating the activities of the Extensible Media Lab.

geistweidt.com

About Penumbra Project Space

The 300 square-foot Project Space offers emerging and mid-career artists a place to present new work. The exhibitions are developed in conjunction with Penumbra's editorial or educational programming.

About Penumbra Foundation

Penumbra Foundation is a non-profit organization that brings together the Art and Science of Photography through education, research, outreach, public and residency programs. Its goal is to be a comprehensive resource for photographers at any level, artists, students, professionals, historians, researchers, conservators and curators. Penumbra specializes in advancing the use of historic and alternative photographic technologies for contemporary image-making.

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