

Cassandra Thornton

Artist & Feminist Economist

Founder of The Feminist Economics Department (the FED)

Co-Director of The Re-Imagining Value Action Lab (RiVAL) in Thunder Bay, Ontario

CONTACT

(347)499-8424

cassie.thornton@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts 2012

in Social Practice

California College of the Arts

Bachelor of Fine Arts 2004

in Sculpture and Painting

University of Wisconsin- Madison

STATEMENT

It is a normal day, everyone is bored, everything good seems impossible. A small white woman has a tantrum in your school's cafeteria about her for-profit education at a "public institution," the way her school has colonized the city and her zero-sum future of shallow work, unpayable debt and constant eviction. It is Cassie Thornton, or one of her agents. Cassie produces perversely hard-hitting social situations that result in unexpected transformations on the streets, in workplaces, and at schools. Thornton stops time to summon up the unknown unknowns that reside in the silences between people, institutions, and economies. Cassie Thornton is a feminist economist and artist who uses dance, writing, visual art, hypnosis, experimental research, tours and radio to reveal debt and insecurity as a source of solidarity.

LOCAL PRACTICE

I moved to a small city in Northern Ontario, Canada, at the end of 2017. In Thunder Bay I do a myriad of local projects as an organizer, facilitator, and collaborator. My projects in Thunder Bay are strewn throughout this document, but I highlight them here because the nature of the collaborations and the anti-colonial learning indicated by these projects has become important to all my future work.

Co-Director of the Re-Imagining Value Action Lab where I plan, facilitate, and host many workshops and conversations about pressing local and international issues. Art Teacher for "Solving Problems", a Winter 2017 thru Spring 2018 class at Boys and Girls Club of Thunder Bay, supported by Community Arts & Heritage Education Project.

Volunteer and Team Leader, Wiindo Debwe Mosewin (formerly the Bear Clan Patrol of Thunder Bay), Indigenous led safety patrol.

Co-facilitator of Local Crafts & Contemporary Art, taught at the Correctional Facility of Thunder Bay 2019 with Ivory Tuesday, supported by Elizabeth Fry Society. Facilitator of Basic Participatory Art Workshop, a one time workshop at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Co-organizer DISRUPT, a local anti-poverty movement.

Undercover Disobedience Yoga Instructor at Body Mind Centre in Thunder Bay.

RECENT PROJECTS

DESPERATE HOLDINGS REAL ESTATE

Radical real estate agency that invites settlers to reconsider the idea of real estate by touching land.

Dream Farm Commons, Oakland, CA

ProArts Gallery & Commons, Oakland, CA

BAD SUPPORT

Solo exhibition about institutional care curated by Magdalena Jadwiga Hřrtelova.

Gallery at the Academy of Fine Arts Prague 2018

FEMINIST ECONOMICS YOGA

Yoga workshops and videos inserting civil rights era civil disobedience and the work of radical feminist economists into yoga time.

Casa Chocolat, Berlin

Supermarkt, Berlin

Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, NYC

The Warp & Weft of Care, various locations in Houston, TX

RiVAL, Thunder Bay

Bemis Center for the Arts, Omaha

Furtherfield Gallery, London

The Luminary, St. Louis

COLLECTIVE PSYCHIC ARCHITECTURE

An architectural gallery installation making visible the psychic and financial barriers to health and care, curated by Taraneh Fazeli as part of exhibition series called Sick Time, Crip Time, Creepy Time: Against Capitalism's Temporal Bullying.

Elizabeth Foundation Project Space, 2017

Bemis Center for the Arts, 2018

The Luminary Art Gallery, 2018

Red Bull Arts Detroit, 2019

THE PEOPLE'S VR

A video installation based on collected visualizations of distrust as a wall, curated by Amanda Nudelman.

Swissnex Gallery, SF, 2018

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHEONIX

The world's only institution of higher education dedicated to accumulating the human capital of the no-longer-living. Our participatory classes cover themes of finance, debt, money and value & we offer revenge consultancy services to those who have been wronged by global capitalism. Collaboration with Max Haiven.

Moneylab 3, Amsterdam, 2016

Berliner Gazette Conference, 2017, 2019

Transmediale, Berlin, 2018

EGFKA, Ruhr Valley, 2018

Heterotopian Summit, 2018

MYSTERY HANDS

Mystery Hands is a children's book and an immersive installation for children to learn about the financialization of their world so they can imagine alternatives--before their imaginations are turned into financial instruments, curated by Lorelei Stewart.
Gallery 400, University of Illinois, Chicago 2016

WHATEVER IT COSTS TO DEFEND OUR SECURITY...

Series of cursed watercolor paintings to be placed in the offices of bankers responsible for profiting off of children through making predatory loans to public school systems, curated by Caitlin Foley and Misha Rabinovich.
Installation and talk at Flux Factory, NYC 2016

OVERFLOWING AFTERWORK YOGA & PUB

A pub transformed into a yoga studio where yoga classes became an occasion for performative lectures about human value outside of labor, in preparation for a post-work society.
Mayworks Festival for Working People and the Arts in Halifax, Nova Scotia Sponsored by Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and Anna Leowens Gallery 2016

NO JUSTICE NO SERVICE

Series of events & workshops to encourage the organization of adjuncts with other low wage workers & artists, in collaboration with Jessica Lawless, with Service Employees International Union (SEIU).
Workshop at CHARGE, Hosted by Houston Art League 2016
Festival hosted by The LAB, 2015

GIVE ME CRED!

Auxiliary credit reporting service as a humane alternative to credit reporting.
www.givemecred.com
SPACES, Cleveland 2014
Southern Exposure, 2015
Red Bull Arts Detroit, 2019

DEBT2SPACE PROGRAM

Radio spot, performance piece and poster series exploring exportation of indebtedness to space using radio waves.
www.debt2space.info, 1(707)ENDEBT
Portland State University, Recess Art PDX, KBOO Radio, Portland 2013
Royal Nonesuch Gallery, Oakland 2013
Cannonball, Miami 2014
Strike Debt Radio Collective, KPFA, Berkeley 2013-2014
E-flux Gallery, NYC 2012

FEDORA ARCHIVE

Performance art piece where a fictional student played by actors performing articulate breakdowns, collaboration with Lara Gold.
www.fedorarchive.tumblr.com
California College of the Arts, 2012
University Gallery at University of California, San Diego, 2014

POETS SECURITY FORCE

Security firm to protect vulnerability itself, collaboration with Byron Peters.
www.poetsecurity.net
California College of the Arts, 2012
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2012
Elizabeth Foundation Project Space NYC, 2013
Funded by the Blade of Grass Foundation, NYC.

COMMUNALIZATION OF DEBT THROUGH SOUND

Vocalization of indebtedness as sound for catharsis and non-verbal rebellion.
Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, NYC 2012
Momenta Art, NY 2012
Massachusetts School of Art and Design, MA 2012
Cooper Union Tuition Summit, NYC 2012
Charlotte Street Foundation, Kansas City 2013

FEMINIST ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT BEAUTY SALON

Beauty salon installation with artist-designed services that confront economic suffering. Services in exchange for time.
www.feministeconomicsdepartment.tumblr.com
Ictus Gallery, SF 2012

PHYSICAL AUDIT

Dancers touch every surface on a tour of 20 NYC banks, curated by Douglas Paulson and Christina Vassallo.
www.physical-audit.tumblr.com
Flux Factory, NYC 2012

DEBT VISUALIZATIONS

Psychotherapeutic service to help visualize debt as a material or a space.

www.debt-visualizations.tumblr.com

California College of the Arts, SF 2012

Southern Exposure, SF 2012

Elizabeth Foundation, NYC 2012

Cannonball Miami, FL 2014

University of Illinois Gallery 400, Chicago 2016

SOCIAL CRAFT

Designed and taught undergraduate workshop lasting one quarter, students built a house using traditional methods on campus and lived on it, in collaboration with Cara Levine and Nicholas Morris.

social-craft.tumblr.com

Srishti School for Art and Design, Bangalore, India

funded by IMPACT grant for Social Entrepreneurship, SF 2011

SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

24-7 free intergenerational outdoor learning operation in Brooklyn's public parks, collaboration with Christopher Kennedy.

www.schoolofthefuture.org

Supported by TrustArt.org, SolarOne, NYC Parks Department 2010

TEMPORARY ART BEAUTY SERVICES/ BARTER SYSTEM BEAUTY SALON

Traveling art historical manicure and traveling art history library service, collaboration with Maya Erdelyi-Perez.

www.temporaryartbeautyservices.biz

Volta Fair, Basel Switzerland 2010

Brooklyn College Community Partnership 2008

FUTURE UNINCORPORATED

Consulting Firm in the Woods offering deep reflection about the future in gentrifying or deforesting areas.

www.futureunincorporated.com

Saksala Art Foundation, Haukivuori Finland 2007

3rd Ward, Brooklyn 2008

TEACHING, FACILITATION & WORKSHOPS

2019

COLLECTIVE FINANCIAL HEALTH, Detroit Public Library Main Branch, Detroit, MI

Workshop connecting health and finance supported by Red Bull Arts Detroit as part of Sick Time Exhibition curated by Taraneh Fazeli

LOCAL CRAFTS AND CONTEMPORARY ART, Correctional Facility of Thunder Bay, ON

5 session course taught with Ivory Tuesday, supported by Elizabeth Fry Society

MASTERCLASS, WEST DEN HAAG SUMMER INSTITUTE: PASSIONATE ACTION, Den Haag, Netherlands

One Day Somatic Art Workshop organized by Baruch Gottlieb

SOLVING PROBLEMS, Boys And Girls Club of Thunder Bay, ON

Winter and Spring afterschool workshop with Community Arts & Heritage Education Project

POST-FILIA, AUTONOMOUS NAT'L UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO, Mexico City 2019

Hacking The Debt To Dream Ratio: Creative strategies against financialization with Max Haiven

2018

FOLKWANG UNIVERSITY'S HETEROTOPIAN SUMMIT, Essen Germany

Workshop collaboration with Max Haiven to support young artists to develop and test a radical code of conduct

SKÖNES KONSTFÖRENING, Malmo Sweden 2018

Disobedience through movement workshop in collaboration with Lisa Nyberg.

WOMBCO.IN, MONEYLAB CONFERENCE, SUNY Buffalo NY 2018

Stealth workshop using the lure and hype of cryptocurrencies, then rerouting attention towards anti-capitalist healthcare.

RADICAL FINANCIAL LITERACY TOUR, traveling 2017, 2018

Critical redesign of financial literacy courses as a collective solidarity project, with Max Haiven.

2017

FEMINIST ECONOMICS SEMINAR, SUPERMARKT-BERLIN, Berlin Germany

Experimental seminar about feminist economics and somatic practice.

2016

SELF ORGANIZED ART & ACTIVISM WORKSHOP for LA PAH & FLO 6X8, Seville Spain

One day workshop with Max Haiven about integration of somatic movement into housing struggle.

2015

ART & DEBT INTENSIVE, EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE, Olympia WA

One semester workshop for students about debt and its effect on the unconscious and social space.

MASTERCLASS, PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, Portland OR

Day long workshop for Social Practice Masters students about the relationship between economics and the human body.

2014

CONTRACT WORKSHOP, BERKELEY ART MUSEUM, Berkeley CA

Presented a workshop for artists about contract writing for the Valuing Labor in the Arts Practicum.

ART GROUP, SAN FRANCISCO JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER, San Francisco, CA 2012-2014

Led weekly art workshops for 3 units of incarcerated teens with a focus on: literacy; drawing skills; audio recording and editing; self-esteem; and manicures.

SELECTED LECTURES AND PANELS

Art & Activism Venues

Book release: Debt for Kids at Making Worlds Bookstore, Philadelphia PA 2019

Book release: Desperate Holdings at EM Wolfman Bookseller, Oakland CA 2019

Keynote: Passionate Action at Summer Institute for West den Haag, The Netherlands 2019

Artist Lecture: Collective Psychic Architecture at Beyond Repair, Minneapolis 2019

Artist Lecture: Dismantling the Collective Psychic Architecture of Financialization at Swissnex, San Francisco 2018

Panel, LRLX, Oakland CA 2018

Artist Lecture with Max Haiven, RGFKA Theatre Project, Essen Germany 2018

Artist Lecture: Real Time & Space, Oakland CA, 2017

Artist Lecture: The OMNI Commons, Oakland CA, 2016

Artist Lecture: Flux Factory, Queens NY, 2016

Panel; Tacit Futures at Berliner Gazette; Berlin, Germany 2016

Panel: Fugitives of the Creative Economy; MayWorks Festival, Halifax Public Library, Halifax NS, Canada 2016

Lecture: Queering Credit Reports with Stella Lawless; Queer Astrology Conference, San Francisco, CA 2015

Lecture: Art and Money, a History with Max Haiven; The OMNI Commons, Oakland CA, 2015

Lecture: Alternatives to Credit Reporting with Jane Smith; Occupy Forum, 2014

Lecture: ROCK; Headlands Center for the Arts, Marin CA, 2013

Panel: Art, Labor and the Spector of Unsustainability with Leigh Claire LaBerge and Laurel Ptak; Left Forum NYC, 2012

Lecture: Is Debt Real? Niebel Proctor Marxist Library, 2012

Higher Education Venues

Artist Lecture, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 2018

Artist Lecture, Heterotopian Summit, Essen Germany 2018

Panel, Moneylab@SUNY Buffalo, 2018

Artist Lecture, University of Chicago Anthropology Department, Chicago IL 2018

Panel Discussion, Reclaiming Utopia: Challenging the Financial Imagination; Kings College London; 2016

Panel Discussion, Cultures of Finance Symposium; City College London; 2016

Project and Lecture; Moneylab at Institute of Network Cultures: Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences; 2016

Artist Lecture, Artes y Movimientos Sociales; Universidad Pablo de Olavide; Seville, Spain 2016

Panel Discussion, CASCA Anthropology Conference, Dalhousie University; Halifax NS, Canada 2016

Panel: Poet|Artist|Activist: Let's Make a Plan with Christian Nagler, Chris Higgenbotham, Labor Archives, San Francisco State University, 2015

Artist Lecture, Evergreen College; 2014, 2015

Artist Lecture; Portland State University, 2015

Artist as Archivist Lecture; California College of the Arts, 2015

Panel: Anthropology and Social Change; California Institute for Integral Studies, 2013

Artist Lecture; Sonoma State University, 2013

Artist in Residence Presentation; Massachusetts School of Art and Design, 2012

Artist Lecture, SUNY Purchase, 2012

Artist Lecture; SFAI, 2012

PERFORMANCES

2019 MORE WORLD CONFERENCE, CENTER FOR ART AND URBANISTICS, Berlin
2019 APPLIED MICROPERFORMATIVITY CONFERENCE, ANGEWANDTE INNOVATION LAB, Vienna
2018 BEMIS CENTER FOR THE ARTS, Omaha NE
2018 RINGLOKSCHUPPEN RUHR, EGfKA, Essen, Germany
2018 TRANSMEDIALE, HAUS DER KULTUREN DER VELT, Berlin
2017 COCKPIT THEATRE, London UK
2017 DIAMONDPAPER/BERLINER GAZETTE, Berlin
2017 ELIZABETH FOUNDATION PROJECT SPACE, NYC
2016 MONEYLAB CONFERENCE, INSTITUTE FOR NETWORK CULTURES, Amsterdam NL
2016 HEAVY BREATHING SERIES, BERKELEY ART MUSEUM, Berkeley CA
2015 MOTHER FOUCAULT'S BOOKSTORE, Portland OR
2015 GOSPEL FLATS FARMSTAND, Bolinas CA
2015 SOMARTS, San Francisco CA
2013 THE VERY FIRST YEAR CONFERENCE, EYEBEAM, NYC
2012 COOPER UNION, NYC
2012 GUERILLA TOUR, SF MOMA, San Francisco CA
2012 APOLOGY EXHIBITION, THE WATTIS, San Francisco CA
2010 THE KITCHEN, NYC
2010 DIXON PLACE, NYC
2009 JUDSON CHURCH, NYC
2009 MoMA, NYC
2009 BROOKLYN ART MUSEUM, Brooklyn NY
2009 PROJECT ROBOT, Brooklyn NY
2009 ART BASEL, Basel Switzerland

WRITING, RADIO & PUBLICATIONS

A selection of media I have produced that has been distributed locally and nationally .

RADIO:

Interview, Superior Mornings, CBC Radio Thunder Bay 2017
Interview, Up North, CBC Radio Thunder Bay 2017
Interview, Against the Grain Radio, KPFA Berkeley 2016
Host, Strike Debt Radio on KPFA, Berkeley 2014
Host, Debt2Space Program Segment, KBOO in Portland 2013

PUBLISHED ARTICLES:

“Desperate Holdings,” Publication 4: Spellwork -- Technologies and Conjurings (print)
“Political Interruptions, New Orientations & Collective Wishes for Bourgeois Hobby Time,” Public Seminar Blog of the New School, 2018 (web)
The CASH SURVEY in GUTS Canadian Feminist Magazine (web)
A Different Medicine is Possible for Carenotes, a project of Common Notions Press (print and web)
“Feminist Economics & the People’s Apocalypse,” GUTS Canadian Feminist Magazine (web)
“Imaginary Debts of the American Empire...” cowritten with Max Haiven, ROAR Magazine (print and web)
“On Exiting Capitalism”, co-written with Max Haiven, DANCEHOUSE DIARY, Australia (web)
“Debt Visualizations”, BRAND Magazine, Sweden (print and web)
“CRED Reclamation Project”, Temporary Art (web)
“Archive of Sinking and Melting”, Brooklyn Rail (web)
“Physical Audit, Journal of Aesthetics & Protest” (web and print)
“Invisible Labor Inquiry”, ArtLeaks (web)
“Save the System”, Temporary Art (web)

PUBLISHED INTERVIEWS: (online only)

“Cassie Thornton, the Ultimate Socially Engaged Artist” interview with Michael Shaw, The Conversation Art Podcast, 2019
“(Sur)real Estate, Speculative Capital and Housing Displacement,” interview with Max Haiven on Public Seminar Blog of the New School, 2019
“Art, Debt, Health & Care,” interview with Marc Garrett, Furtherfield Gallery Blog, 2018
“Peer to Peer Healing: Rethinking Clinics for Social .Medicine’,” interview with Eryk Salvaggio, Nextrends Blog, 2018
“Transcending Debt: Meet the Feminist Economics Department,” interview with Eryk Salvaggio, Nextrends Blog, 2018
Politicizing Debt an Interview with me by Annie McClanahan for Stanford Press Blog, 2017
Play and Imagination Against Debt by Ania Molenda at Amateur Cities Blog, 2017

SMALL PRESS BOOKS:

Desperate Holdings Real Estate: Dis-Investment Manual published by Tripwire Journal of Poetics in Berkeley, 2019 (print and online)
Imaginacion Politica: Encuentro Internacionale translated and published by Post-filia in Mexico City, 2019 (print and online)
De(b)t: Bad Spelling, an Adult Problem, self published, 2016 (online and print)
ROCK, published by Recess Arts PDX in Portland. 2015 (print)
A Soft Spot in a Hard Place, published by Publication Studio and Portland State University. 2015 (print)
Our Bundles Our Selves, self published on Lulu (print and online)
Application to the London School of Economics, self published on Lulu (print and online)
Feminist Reproduction Manual, with Laurel Ptak and Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A selection of media discussing my work.

Lambertz, Kate Abbey. “Artist Cassie Thornton Is Giving Detroiters Alternative Credit Reports.” DETOUR, Detour Detroit, 14 Nov. 2019, detourdetroit.com/cassie-thornton-artist-alternative-credit-report/.

Steele, Samara Hayley. “Fighting Displacement with Clay: A Subversive Real Estate Office Is Coming to Oakland.” Subversas, Subversas, 4 Apr. 2019, subversas.com/fighting_displacement_with_clay/.

Claire, La Berge Leigh. Wages against Artwork: Decommodified Labor and the Claims of Socially Engaged Art. Duke University Press, 2019.

McClanahan, Annie. Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-first -century Culture. S.l.: Stanford UP, 2016. Print.

McClanahan, Annie. “Debt and Personification,” Invited Lecture at the Society for Critical Exchange, University of Houston, February 2015.

McClanahan, Annie. “Credit, Debt, and Social Personhood,” Invited Lecture at the Futures of American Studies Institute, Dartmouth College, June 2014.

“Tech Sass (with Cassie Thornton).” Interview by Kate Rhodes, Maysoun Wazwaz. Audio blog post. Congratulations, Pine Tree!

Peters, Byron J. “Misperforming Scripts.” Art in the Age of Real Abstraction. University of London, London. 10 May 2014. Lecture.

Torres, Carla. “Smash Your Debt Like a Piñata, Literally, With Artist Cassie Thornton.” Review. Web log post. Miami New Times Blog. Miami New Times, 12 June 2014.

Barrett, Douglas G. “The Debt of Philosophy—Cassie Thornton’s Debt 2 Space Program and the New Materialism.” Tuning Speculation Conference. Arraymusic Studio, Toronto. 1 Nov. 2013. Lecture.

La Berge, Leigh Claire, and Dehlia Hannah. “Debt Aesthetics: Medium Specificity and Social Practice in the Work of Cassie Thornton.” Postmodern Culture (2014): n. pag. Print. Forthcoming, print date TBD.

La Berge, Leigh Claire. “Debt in an Expanded Field, Work on the Artist Cassie Thornton.” University of Alberta, Alberta, Canada. 26 Mar. 2013. Lecture.

Smith, David B. “\$ // Abigail Satinsky , Destineez Child , Sal Randolph , and Cassie Thornton // A Curated Selection of Artwork from Culturehall with Text by David B. Smith.” \$ // Abigail Satinsky , Destineez Child , Sal Randolph , and Cassie Thornton

Singer, Reid. “Occupy Art School - The New Yorker.” The New Yorker.

Elizabeth (Liz) Jane Ward
ejward1@lakeheadu.ca
(807)-708-2105

Artist Statement

Mx. Liz Ward is a socially creative artist and activist. They use writing and art making as a form of sharing pain and injustice specifically relating to oneself and their own social location. Liz is interested in writing and creating works of art that involve non traditional art forms and concepts that are unapologetically messy. This has led them to work with ideas of access to knowledge, space and gender. They want to use their labour to ask who defines knowledge and how to break that down to produce new meaning, which counters what we think we have to believe in our society. The majority of the work they have done has had to do with the long term effects they experienced due to their Mother and Father's death from substance abuse. Because they experienced multiple forms of abandonment instead of support from institutions and state structures, they wonder what it means for a society to function in that way. Their poetry, which is their main form of expression as an artist shares their story by connecting past memory and trauma and bringing it into the present.

Education

-First year in Social Justice Master Specializing in Women's/Gender Studies
-Honors in Outdoor Recreation Parks and Tourism and Bachelors in Women/Gender Studies
-Rosedale Heights School of the Arts

Art Experience

darearts mentorship: Mentoring youth in their public speaking and sharing their personal stories.

Personal writing: Throughout the years I have done freestyle poetry and creating on my own. Essentially writing the first things that comes to my mind and using it as a release

Gender Study classes creative projects: (class projects that involve picking on a topic and adding a creative component to it)

Employment

June 28th – August 23rd 2014/2015
Camp Counselor with NL – Girl Guides of Canada
Doe Lake, Girl Guide Camp

- Assisted around the camp, supervised and supported the children
- Encouraged problem solving skills
- Lifeguard

- Help facilitate activities for camp such as outdoor skills

Pride Central Assistant school year 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 (LGBTQ support within in LUSU centre)

- Provided a safER space for queer students on campus to have someone to talk too
- Provided education on safER sex/pronouns/making classrooms safER spaces
- Ran events with Pride during the school year to promote understanding

Camp Winston- summer of 2017 and 2018, 2019 (Support and provide a safer space for campers with complex neurology)

- Was also swim activity staff and therefore in charge of running swim rotations for campers
- Was a main support person in my cabin group for children
- responded to campers in crisis when they needed more support
- Summer of 2019 Cabinhead (middle management position) involved supporting staff and coming up with camper plans

Lakehead University Call Program

- Call alumni of Lakehead University to keep in touch and look for donations for funding to support nursing students, student athletes, student internships etc

Other skills

- Honest and open individual
- Clear communicator
- direct and supportive