

## DRAWING OF A HOUSE (TRIPTYCH)

2015, graphite pencil on house, and multi-channel hand-drawn animation

S:L  
RUMSEY  
STREET  
PROJECT

Diana Shpungin's working method encompasses drawing, sculpture and hand-drawn video animation under an acutely conceptual framework. Exploring themes of memory, failure, longing, mortality, loss and apprenticeship, Shpungin's works employ a painstaking and obsessive process while seeking empathy across identity lines.

For Diana Shpungin's *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* it all started with a simple pencil, a fundamental tool universal in its function and familiarity.

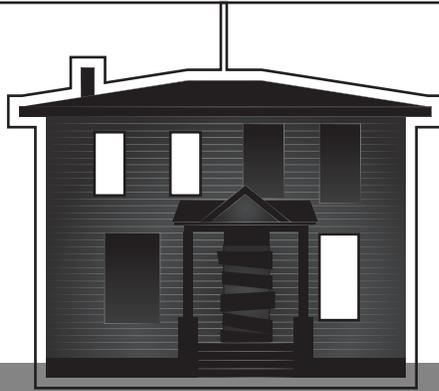
*Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* is a large scale, multi-faceted participatory work consisting of drawing, sculpture and hand-drawn video animation, functioning as one over all monumental installation and community project for SiTE:LAB in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Kent County and The City of Grand Rapids. The vacant house is converted into a massive sculpture and three-dimensional drawing by way of it being entirely tediously encased by hand in graphite pencil. While selected windows of the home double as screens, exploring narratives related to the domestic themes embedded in the historical memory of the space, --past, present and future, through ambiguous themes of still life, figuration and abstraction. The *(Triptych)* in the title of the work refers both to the home's address (333 Rumsey Street) and to the three loose narratives taking place on the three sides of the home.

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#DrawingOfAHouse 

#DianaShpungin 



# DRAWING OF A HOUSE (TRIPTYCH)

## DIANA SHPUNGIN

### FACTS

#### 1. How long did the project take?

From conception to completion, approximately 8 months. Which was an incredibly accelerated amount of time for a project of this scale and ambition.

#### 2. What are the materials and process?

The house was very specifically altered through a multi-stage process based on the artist's aesthetics. It was deconstructed, reconstructed, boarded up and cleaned up to create a minimal sculpture. The house was then primed in its entirety with a special coating to allow the graphite to stick properly. Then the graphite was tediously applied by hand to the complete surface.

#### 3. How long will the graphite surface last?

Graphite is both an incredibly temporary and permanent material dependent on how it is treated. Of course it can be smudged or erased but it is also fairly waterproof and is one of the most archival and lightfast materials if left untouched. The project will stay up through the spring and we expect some fading, smudging or aging, as that was considered and adds to the concept and the temporary nature of the work. But the graphite should last the entirety for the most part.

#### 4. How many people worked on this project?

We estimate at least 100 people were involved in making this project happen.

#### 5. Who were the people?

The artist and her team of assistants, SiTE:LAB staff, community members, the former resident pastor of the rectory, people who work and reside in the neighborhood, volunteers who answered an open call, faculty and staff from local schools, local artists, school groups of all ages, university arts students and recent graduates.

#### 6. What is the process for the animations?

Many hand-drawn pencil drawings were photographed and compiled to create the video animations, in a very painstaking, old school frame-by-frame process. Each frame in its entirety is a unique drawing; this creates the flickering feeling of the imagery.

#### 7. How many drawings for the animations?

Close to 1000 individual drawings were made to complete the nine animations for this project.

## KNOWING HOW TO BREAK GLASS QUIETLY (THE ASCETIC)

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

*Knowing How To Break Glass Quietly (The Ascetic)* is a hand-drawn animation with relatively sparse occurrence, relaying solitary themes of existence and an unspoken secret knowledge. Blinds are seen in a window, a mysterious hand appears and a single eye quickly peeks through, the pane of glass then fractures in a subtle incident without a discernable cause.

## THE DUST IN THE LIGHT (THE PESSIMIST)

2015 • hand-drawn video animation  
continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

The hand-drawn animation *The Dust In The Light (The Pessimist)* consists of numerous drawings of a delicate abstract composition. The mark-making itself reveals a skeptical vantage point of seeing only the debris within the light, disclosing thoughts of pessimism in an otherwise ethereal luminous space.

## A DRAFT (FOR FELIX)

2015 • hand-drawn video animation  
continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

*A Draft (For Felix)* is a minimal rendering of a curtain. The hand-drawn animation depicts fabric blowing gently in the wind in a meditative exercise referencing and as homage to the late Cuban American artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

## THE VANISHING POINT

2015 • hand-drawn video animation  
continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

An illuminated hallway is seen with an ambiguous figure approaching in the hand-drawn animation *The Vanishing Point*. The figure stands in a wind path and its hair begins to blow upward chaotically. What may at first seem mysterious, ominous, or even paranormal becomes more abstracted and rooted in a self-reflexive absurdity.



## A SEVERED LIMB PERSUADED TO RETURN

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

*A Severed Limb Persuaded To Return* is a hand-drawn animation conveying ideas to both nurture and injure. The peculiar narrative unfolds as a houseplant sits in a window, spins inexplicably, is watered and then harshly pruned away to nothing, only to later reappear in an uncanny supernatural act of redemption.

## A MILLION TO ONE (FOR BLUE VELVET)

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

The title of the hand-drawn animation *A Million To One (For Blue Velvet)* refers to the equal mass of ants to humans and our general diminutive position on earth. Furthermore, the work is a favorable nod to the symbolic opening scene of the 1986 David Lynch film *Blue Velvet*, where suburbia is not quite as it seems on the surface and foreshadows what is to come. An amalgamation of abstraction and representation, the sound and imagery fluctuates between that of formal patterning and something perhaps more disquieting.

## CHRONICLE OF A NOW EMPTY SPACE

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

The hand-drawn video animation *Chronicle Of A Now Empty Space* consists of a minimal ambiguous narrative pointing to ideas of the domestic transitional space. A candle is seen flickering and then gets blown out, shades are lowered and elevated, a jarring sound is heard as the window gets inexplicably covered by scraps of plywood, hinting at the myriad of possibilities that a dwelling can inhabit, --tenancy, vacancy and abandonment, merely to return again.

## A SMUDGE MAY WELL BE AN APPARITION

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

*A Smudge May Well Be An Apparition* consists of many hazy stain-like graphite drawings. The obscure imagery ambiguously points to possible recognizable imagery without any certainty, encompassing the common human tendency of searching for figuration within an abstract composition and the often divine phenomenon of pareidolia to see things when they perhaps are/or are not there.

## THE LIGHT IN THE DARK (THE OPTIMIST)

2015 • hand-drawn video animation • continuous loop, dimensions variable • edition of 3

*The Light In The Dark (The Optimist)* hand-drawn animation process involved covering many pieces of drawing paper with graphite pencil until the surface was unable to absorb any more. The many nonrepresentational drawings were then photographed with a flash and set in motion with the sound of the reverberation of pencil on paper, revealing the illumination within the blackness of the graphite surface, and pointing to thoughts of optimism in an otherwise dark void.