

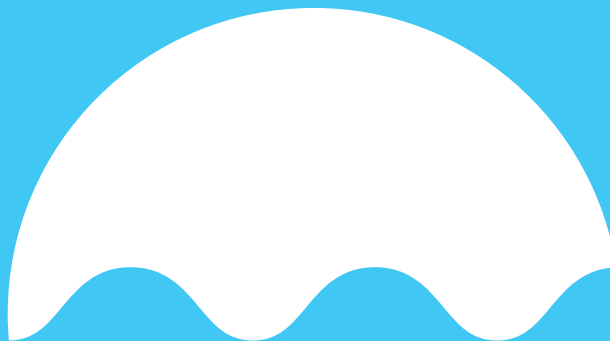
# BMoCA

The Flood Project

Rising Above &  
Restoring Boulder  
Through Art

Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art

October 2013 –  
September 2014



**The Flood Project:**

**Rising Above &  
Restoring Boulder  
Through Art**

Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art

October 2013 –  
September 2014

Viviane Le Courtois  
the bARTer Collective  
and YOUTunes  
Berger & Föhr with  
Shark's Ink.



In September 2013 historic rainfall and catastrophic flooding devastated communities along Colorado's Front Range. Boulder County was among the worst affected areas.

In response, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art and the City of Boulder initiated *The Flood Project: Rising Above & Restoring Boulder Through Art* (October 2013 - September 2014). Instigated as a catalyst for community healing, *The Flood Project* comprised a series of temporary public art projects and public programs over the course of one year.

## Introduction: An Institutional Flood Plan

Water, as an agent, maintains a capacity to both nourish and wash away. At times it is calm, at times *turbulent*. For the city and county of Boulder, water has a long history of being both bountiful and dangerous. The same source that has helped to shape the landscape and serve the community has also ravaged it time and time again. Boulder is said to derive its name from Boulder Creek, the primary water source that runs through its center, a likely appellation for the rotund granite-chunks scattered along its bed from eons of floods. Its precarious positioning, at the mouth of Boulder Canyon and the base of a steep upstream slope, leaves the city highly susceptible to flash floods. It is not a matter of *if* a flood will occur, but *when*.

In September 2013, rainfall started on the 9th, and by the 11th the National Weather Service had issued flash flood watches to dozens of counties across Colorado's Front Range. By early September 12th the watches had become warnings as heavy rainfall intensified and flood conditions heightened to what was later called a 1,000-year rain (meaning any given year has a 1-in-1,000 chance of experiencing such heavy precipitation) and a 100-year flood (meaning a 1% chance of a similar event occurring in any one year). On September 14th, President Barack Obama declared a major disaster and issued federal aid to the state of Colorado. The impact of the historic natural disaster, which claimed the lives of eight people, was record-breaking. The torrential rains swelled creeks and rivers, overflowed dams, filled streets and homes with water, caused landslides, swept away bridges and roads, and left hundreds of homes destroyed, and thousands more damaged.

In the wake of the flood, as volunteers and national and local agencies stepped in to restore and renew roads, bridges, schools, parks, libraries, businesses and homes, we wondered what response Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA) should have. What are the responsibilities of a museum to a community shaken by disaster? What is the role of art in a community's recovery? In a moment calling for immediate and long-sustaining action, we viewed the responsibility of rebuilding Boulder as something shared by everyone. As people and agencies worked to pick up the physical pieces, it became clear that the museum had something specific to contribute—helping those devastated by the floods pick up the emotional pieces by becoming a catalyst for healing through creative experiences.

In October 2013, BMoCA, in partnership with the City of Boulder, launched *The Flood Project: Rising Above & Restoring Boulder Through Art*.

With quick action, BMoCA and the City issued an open call to artists, from which a selection committee chose three primary artist commissions to respond to the 2013 Colorado Floods and raise money to benefit flood relief efforts. The selected commissions include two participatory and temporary public art



(Top) Lefthand Canyon Drive is in ruins seen here on Saturday, September 14, 2013 on Olde Stage Road in Boulder. Photo: Jeremy Papasso. Courtesy The Daily Camera from *A Thousand Year Rain: The Historic Flood of 2013 in Boulder and Larimer Counties*.



(Right) The Summit County Rescue team working to save Suzanne Sophocles, at center, from her severely flooding home on September 13, 2013 on Streamcrest Drive in Boulder. Photo: Jeremy Papasso. Courtesy The Daily Camera from *A Thousand Year Rain: The Historic Flood of 2013 in Boulder and Larimer Counties*.

proposals, *Rescued Memories* by Viviane Le Courtois and *Still Waters Runs Deep: Recipes, Stories, and Songs* by the bARter Collective and YOUTunes; and a limited-edition lithograph print designed by Berger & Föhr and produced with Master Printer, Bud Shark of Shark's Ink., Lyons, Colorado.

Spanning the course of a year, the multifaceted project involved a series of collaborations, participatory projects, temporary public installations, a commemorative print, an exhibition of photographs, and poems by local high school students, a convivial benefit, and a constantly growing number of programs.

### **Defining Our Role**

With the museum's civic responsibility defined, the question was never really a matter of whether or not BMoCA should respond, but instead how that should be done. Moving forward there was no official protocol to follow. The museum was not equipped with a *flood plan* for how best to deploy artistic responses and healing to hundreds of miles of flooded land and billions of dollars worth of damage. In setting forth, we determined that the commissioned projects must function in a way useful to the community's recovery and rehabilitation *now*.

As a museum of contemporary art, BMoCA's mission is to be connected to our time, our present circumstance, and our place – and, most importantly, that the art and artists we engage not be estranged from the events of the moment. It was important for us to enlist artists with a genuine interest in producing positive social change, and in *this* community's rehabilitation. We felt BMoCA could best contribute to renewal efforts by facilitating an artistic response that was both immediate and personal. As long as the message was authentic, we felt the projects would have success.

*The Flood Project* focused on ways artistic responses could contribute to the understanding and interpretation of catastrophic events and societal tragedy. It raised the question: how do we commemorate and recognize the significance of the historical event without focusing too much on what was lost? In different ways, each project's approach to this challenge was to shift focus from suffering to healing, highlighting how a new sense of community can develop in the aftermath of a natural disaster and facilitate healing.

### **Community-Specific Projects**

From the beginning we were clear about one thing: we did not want *The Flood Project* to be cast in bronze, sanctioned at a safe emotional distance from what was being experienced now, and planted in the center of an urban plaza



for the benefit of a public 10 years from now. Narrowing time and context to a specific group of people in a moment in time rather than a broad public in perpetuity, the project challenged the monumentality and other traditional purposes often associated with public art.

Of the three commissions, the print by Berger & Föhr with Shark's Ink. took the most traditional approach. The limited edition print the artists produced commemorates the historical importance of the floods, honoring and recognizing the significance for those impacted. The work illuminates a sense of renewed community that develops after the disaster, instilling a humanizing sense for those who lived through the events. It reminds us that all people in our community experienced the floods. Some may have been impacted more extremely than others, yet we all picked up the pieces, and together we will make it through.

The other two commissions, one by Viviane Le Courtois and the other by the bARTer collective and YOUTunes, proposed temporary public projects that emphasized personal interaction and audience participation. Both projects engaged the community through the collection of public narratives such as stories, objects, songs, memories, and recipes from flood survivors. The projects fostered conversation and helped bring the community together to face issues the floods might have revealed or created. Appealing to ritualistic tendencies and celebratory themes, the projects served to unite people and bring forth important post-disaster questions. Both projects primarily focused on things we do not need for literal survival, elements that fulfill our lives, give us comfort, joy, and define character. The things that occupy our days, connect us to our past and past generations, and become a part of who we are. By engaging people with "place and habit" the artists are able to build and emphasize a sense of community.<sup>1</sup>

By physically going into and directly engaging the local community, the projects by Le Courtois, the bARTer Collective and YOUTunes recorded the emotional climate and events of the floods through the voices of the public. *The Flood Project* offered community members a platform and an outlet where they could be heard, a place for them to share what they had experienced and witnessed during and after the floods. *Foto Flood: Works by Boulder High School Students* added important accounts of the flood through the voices of the youth.

#### **Artist As First Responder**

Channeling Josef Beuys' famous declaration that 'everyone is an artist', in the case of this project we have asserted every artist as a citizen.<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps a more appropriate phrase is every artist as first responder.

The impulse to tackle sociological and political issues in participatory public-engagement fully matured by the 1960s. Strengthened by a sense of urgency, especially during moments of social crisis, artists of the '70s and '80s enacted communal change with interventionist praxis to the social field. The essay by Matt Jenkins provides more historical context for *The Flood Project* and places the projects by Le Courtois and the bARTer collective and YOUTunes within the genre of *Social Practice*, a popular term with allegiances to many performance and experimental genres, and a practice that stems from the aforementioned traditions. Jenkins' essay probes fundamental inquiry about ways art can facilitate renewal in such a situation as the 2013 floods.

Going further, *The Flood Project* and the artists involved fit within a more recent trend of art, artists and cultural institutions responding specifically to disasters. A type of response we started to call *Relief Art*, a term that developed over the course of the project in conversations with bARTer collective artists Nikki Pike and Martha Russo.<sup>3</sup>

Artist as first responder is not a new concept, and *The Flood Project* is not an isolated incident. While it is less common for this type of initiative to come from a museum, there are examples of similar projects by artist-activists and cultural organizations initiated in response to natural disasters around the world. Following the 2011 tsunami in Japan, artist Ichiro Endo and Tokyo art collector Hiroko Ishinabe organized Yappeshi Matsuri ("Let's Do It!" Festival) in the hard-hit city of Ofunato. In New Orleans, artists launched Transforma, a many-sided response to Hurricane Katrina that offered support to artists who wanted to help in recovery.<sup>4</sup> Following the devastating cyclone and massive flooding in Queensland, Australia in the summer of 2010-2011, Arts Queensland and the Australia Council organized the Creative Recovery Pilot Program that help fund art-focused community development. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Caron Atlas, director of the nonprofit Arts & Democracy project, was asked to arrange cultural programming for special-needs evacuees.<sup>5</sup>

### **Developing Institutional Frameworks**

Pushing the boundaries of traditional conceptions of an art exhibition in an institutional setting, *The Flood Project*, challenged BMOCA to rethink its role as a museum and the ways that it serves its community. The ongoing nature of both the recovery efforts and the projects challenged conventional parameters of museum exhibitions. *The Flood Project* expanded BMOCA's vision to serve the public through social action and community-engaged art physically inside the community and outside the walls of the museum. The majority of the project was not expressed through physical objects and the

true magnitude of *The Flood Project* cannot be re-experienced. BMoCA felt an important responsibility to create a catalog documenting *The Flood Project*. Often participatory projects disappear, and it is important that the voice of the artist is articulated and the voice of the public captured. The catalog is our presentation of a project that exists outside of our museum and a way to give the project life beyond life.

### **Organization**

The book is assembled and sequenced in three parts: contextualizing essays, artist projects, and community outreach. The project was not easy to explain. The art that was produced was hard to define and impossible to encase. Contextualizing the project, and all its complexities, within the institutional framework was not what the project was about. The hope is that the complexity still exists. The catalog is meant to offer a glimpse of the thousands of hours and the hundreds of people the different projects engaged with the hope of providing an overall perspective of the extent of the historic floods that took place in September 2013.

### **Proactively Looking Forward**

Art can be used to facilitate creative thinking around problems. Perhaps the lesson learned through *The Flood Project* is that art can always function as a way of imagining new solutions by helping us understand things we have not yet experienced. Rather than summoning art after catastrophe strikes, we should proactively use the inventiveness of art to help us prepare for what might come.

In reflecting on BMoCA's institutional history, we are reminded of the 2007 collaboration between the museum and EcoArts Connections on the presentation of *Weather Report: Art and Climate Change*, an exhibition curated by Lucy Lippard. One of the works the exhibition presented, *Connect the Dots* by Mary Miss, imagined what a 500-year flood would look like for Boulder. Giving visual warning signs, her project focused on Downtown Boulder and used a series of dots integrated into the city fabric to help residents better understand the nature of floods. Along Boulder Creek, blue circular markers were attached to trees and fences to create a three-dimensional mapping of the height-level of the floodwaters. Miss' project demonstrated the power of artistic imagination to envision an event outside our daily experience. At the time it existed outside of memory or experience, but it was very possible. Here, the work warned us about events that occurred in September 2013.

Floods are something we have to constantly be aware of along the Front Range.

We take for granted our bridges, our roads, and our homes. We were not expecting the flood of 2013. Yet we were warned, not just by scientists, but also by artists. As Ted Burnham brings up in his essay, we should consider how we prepare for such events. Burnham's essay also suggests that the impact is not always negative; that the land and ecosystems, as well as humans are adaptable to change, no matter how severe.

While likely unintentional, the blue circle in *Convergence* by Berger and Föhr with Shark's Ink. is evocative of the blue circles of Mary Miss' project. Although Miss made a more literal connection in her use of the dots, both Miss and Berger & Föhr chose to represent water as a blue circle. The shape of the circle seems to suggest there is no beginning and no end – and might unconsciously represent our relationship with water. It is a relationship that fluctuates. Water will always nourish and cleanse and bring both calm and turmoil. The three works in *The Flood Project* remind us that, yes, we can – we will – move on. The floods left the land wounded and the community shaken, changing Boulder forever. Topographic change, perhaps the projects' only permanent object, *Convergence* serves as a remembrance that: it is not a matter of *if*, but *when* it will happen again. Our memory of The Flood Project should be not of suffering, but that of healing - a reminder that we are resilient.

Mardee Goff  
Associate Curator  
Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art



## Rescued Memories by Viviane Le Courtois

Viviane Le Courtois' *Rescued Memories* was a participatory art project that culminated in a temporary public sculpture installed in Boulder's Central Park. The participatory component implored members of the community to give objects, or the memory of objects, ravaged by the floods. The objects and their memories were then fossilized in porcelain and placed in a large boulder-shape sculpture made of stucco, sand, and straw. The project served to help the community heal, transforming, as Le Courtois' intended, "individual losses into a collective process of recovery."

The participatory period of the project took place during the months of October and November 2013 at a series of pop-up events and happenings in public and private spaces throughout Boulder and the neighboring communities of Lyons, Jamestown, and Fourmile Canyon. Offering tea and cookies, Le Courtois invited victims of the floods to donate objects and share their experiences. Le Courtois' own resilience was tested shortly after beginning the project as she faced challenges to her initial plan. Hoping to collect hundreds of objects over the course of two months, she quickly realized it was not as easy as she anticipated. If belongings swept away in the flood had been salvaged, many people were forced to throw them away due to contamination from sewage, mold, and toxic debris. Le Courtois soon recognized that many possessions would be lost forever, but that talking about these objects and their loss was in many ways more helpful than recovering what was likely no longer useful. She decided then that when the physical object could not be collected, she would collect the memory of the object. The objects were then cast, or recreated from photographs, sketches, or descriptions provided by their owners into porcelain *fossils*, which were then incorporated into a boulder-shaped sculpture. The cadaverous objects embedded into the surface of the sculpture reminded us of the objects buried under the rock and debris of the catastrophic events of September 2013. They represented individual loss, reclaimed memories, and a collective memory of community sacrifice.

The sculpture's shape was both a visual reference to the City's name and representative of the destructive rockslides that occurred in the aftermath of the flooding. The physical shape of the work resonates personally for the artist as it reflects the enigmatic and ritualistic nature of the *menhirs*, or standing stones, found all over Brittany, France, where Le Courtois grew up. Like the standing stones, the sculpture served as a reflective monument, representing material attachment and habits of our contemporary society, as well as loss and recovery.

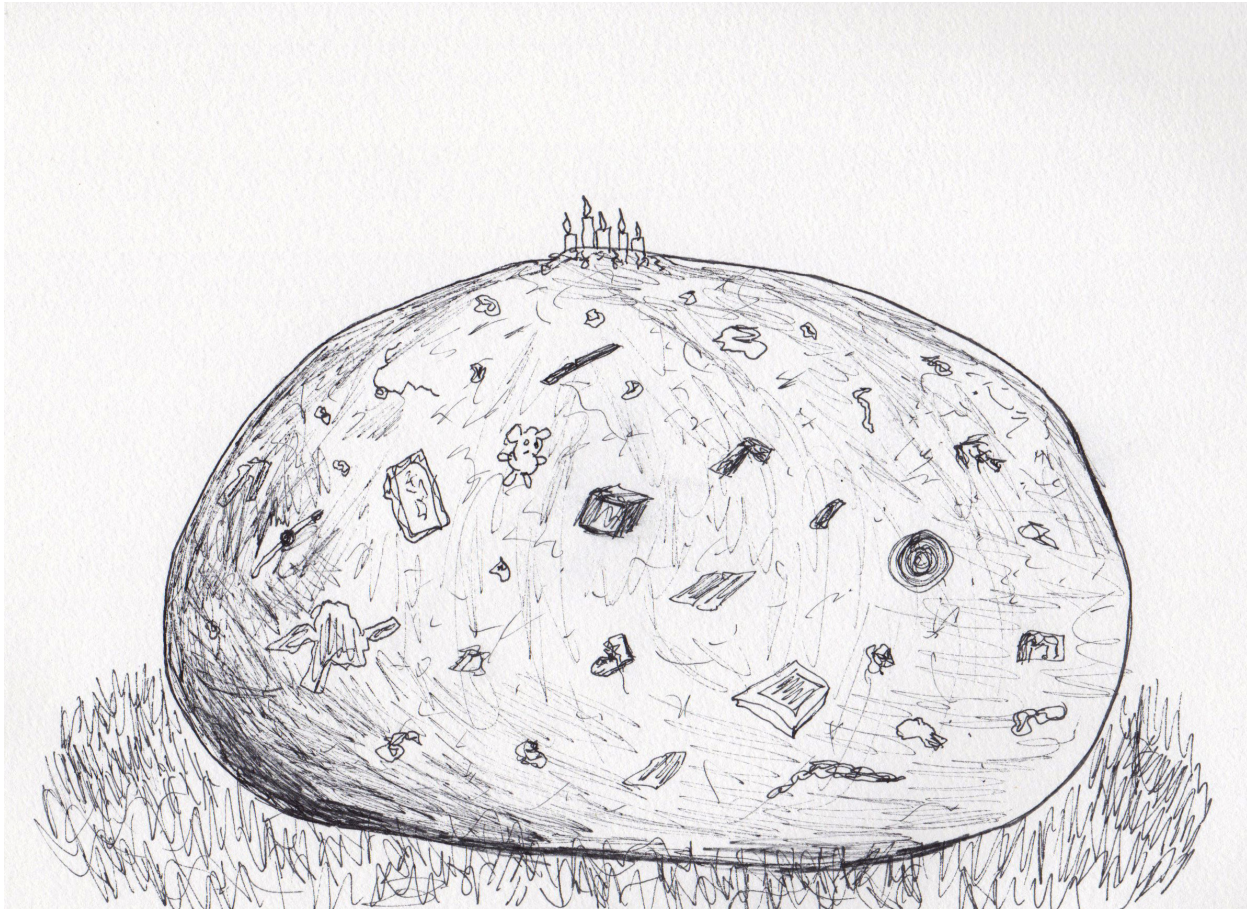
The project provoked contemplation of the value we place on objects and reflection on how that value shifted after the floods. As Le Courtois articulated, "Our lives often revolve around the spaces we create and the



---

(Top) Viviane Le Courtois crossing a log over the North Saint River Creek in Lyons in front of the home of Sally and John King. The bridge that had originally been there was swept away by the flood. Photo: John King.





things we work hard to accumulate. The 2013 flood brought sudden changes to many lives, disturbing daily rhythms and destroying precious belongings. Many people were forced to embark on the difficult path of dislocation and detachment. This project encourage[d] the viewer to think about what belongings are absolutely necessary for a full life."<sup>10</sup>

---

Viviane Le Courtois,  
proposal sketch for  
*Rescued Memories*, 2013.

The sculpture, installed from December 2013 - September 2014, served as a symbol of the material loss that resulted from the floods. It signified the sense of community experienced in the wake of the floods. The physical nature of *Rescued Memories* was temporary; the materials used to create the sculpture were ephemeral. If the sculpture had not been taken down, it would have decomposed over time. But the "rescued memories" continue to live on, embedded in a shared experience, photographs, renderings, and documentation of *The Flood Project*.






---

Viviane Le Courtois  
*Rescued Memories*, 2013  
 site-specific installation in  
 Boulder's Central Park  
 high fired porcelain, steel, wire mesh, stucco,  
 river sand, pigments, straw  
 Objects were gathered from pop-up collections at  
 Boulder County Farmers' Market, Boulder History  
 Museum, Boulder Public Library, North Boulder  
 Recreation Center, Lucky's Bakehouse & Creamery,  
 Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art along with  
 other events in Longmont, Jamestown, and Lyons.  
 64 in (height) x 95.5 in (diameter)

**Viviane Le Courtois** (b. 1969, France) is a process-based artist whose work is often driven by community participation. Finding new life in discarded objects, Le Courtois creates works that address issues of loss, recovery, materiality, and ephemerality. She moved to the United States in 1994 and now resides in Denver. She holds the following degrees: Diplôme National d'Arts Plastiques (BFA), École des Beaux-Arts, Nantes, France; Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique (MFA), Ecole Pilote Internationale d'Art et de Recherches/Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art, Villa Arson, Nice, France; MA, art history, University of Denver, Colorado. She was a resident artist at RedLine, Denver (2008-11) and is currently Program Manager at Downtown Aurora Visual Arts. In 2012, BMoCA presented *Edible?* (February 23 - June 17, 2012), a retrospective of Le Courtois' food-related works from the past twenty-two years.





Viviane Le Courtois exchanges stories with George Peters and Melanie Walker at the Boulder County Farmer's Market, October 2013. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.



Viviane Le Courtois: "Melanie Walker and George Peters contributed 3 pieces of brick that once belonged to a labyrinth they created in the flood zone behind the library. The original idea was to make it a temporary sculpture, so at one point it would become a memory or story...After the 2013 flood, only the story and a few bricks remain."<sup>11</sup>

---

Viviane Le Courtois  
listening to a  
preschool child tell  
his story to his mom in  
front of the Boulder  
Public Library, 2013.  
Photo: Christopher R.  
Perez.



The boy's school had been closed for weeks due to damage from the 8 feet of water, mostly sewage, that filled the building. Most of the school's books and toys had to be thrown away. Luckily for this boy, his favorite toy, a pirate ship, was protected in a shed and did not have to be thrown out.

---

Local resident and  
Viviane Le Courtois  
in Lyons. Behind them  
a community altar-  
like installation of  
displaced objects  
found after the flood.  
When the piece was  
dismantled, Le Courtois  
salvaged some of the  
objects, which were  
incorporated into  
*Rescued Memories*, 2013.  
Photo: Christopher R.  
Perez.








---

Scuba diving tube collected from the altar of rescued objects in Lyons. The tube belonged to a woman who had immigrated to the United States from Canada with just a suitcase. She lost her entire house and all of her possessions, except one photo album and the scuba diving tube left at the altar, Lyons, Colorado, 2013. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.



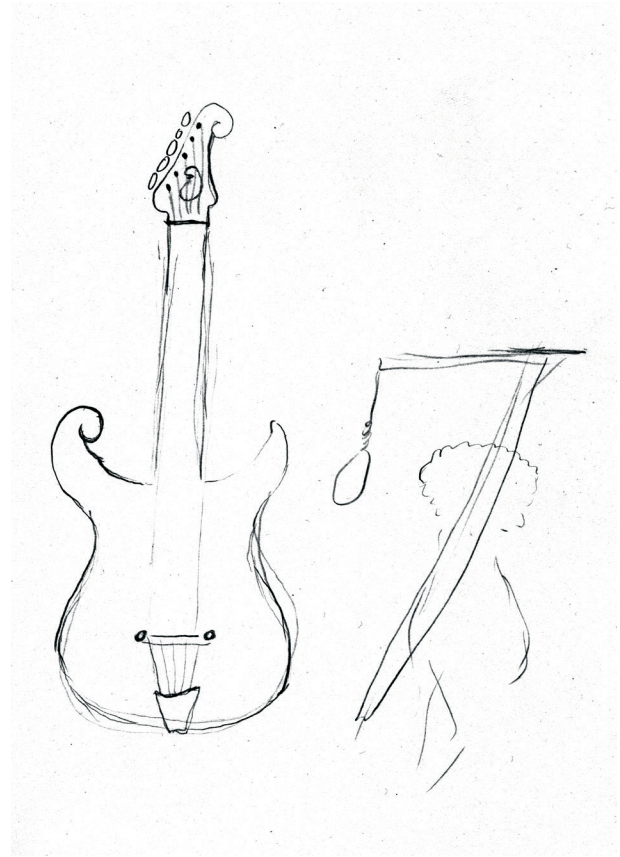

---

Sheet music tangled around plant roots recovered from the altar of rescued objects in Lyons, Colorado, 2013. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.




---

Viviane Le Courtois with Governor John Hickenlooper and local residents of Park Street in Lyons, Colorado, November 8, 2013, where most of the homes and businesses of Park Street had been obliterated by the floods. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.



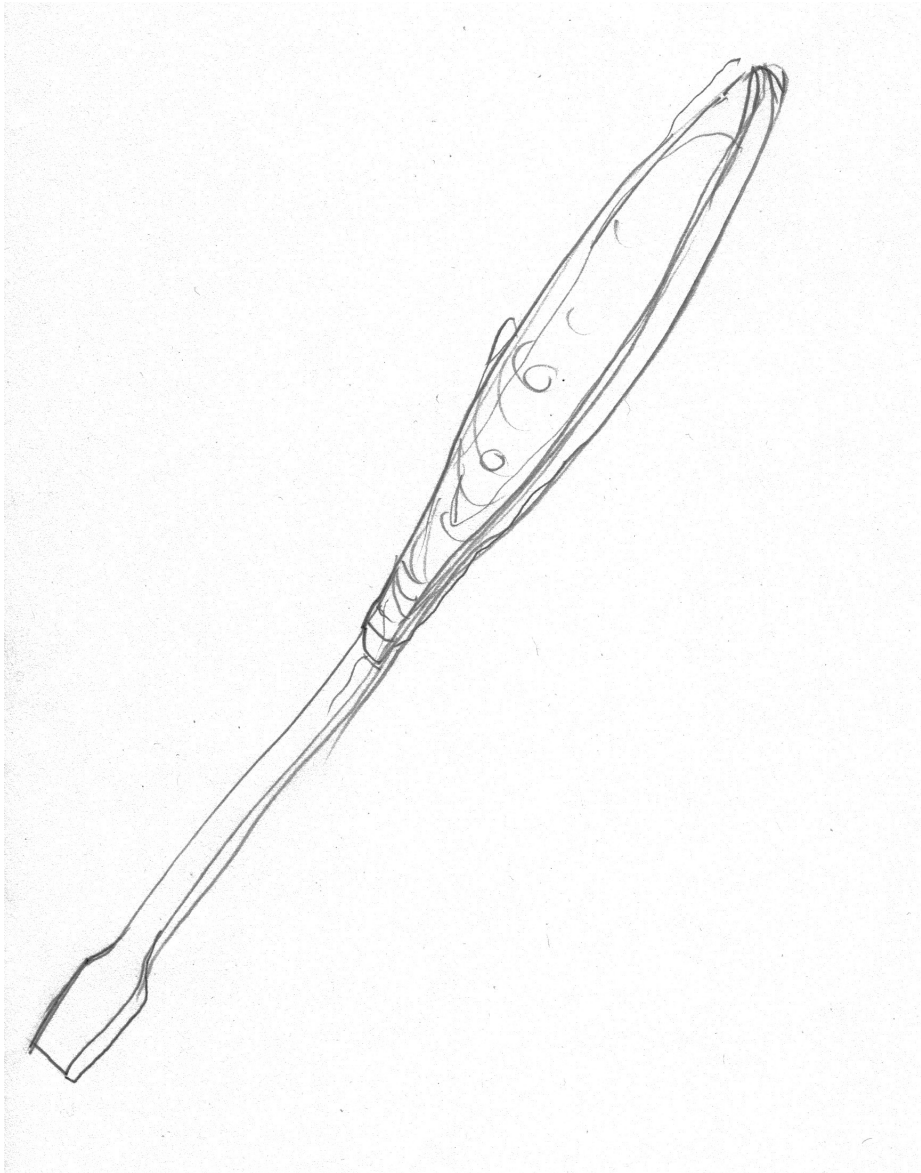
(Top Left) Inside the Tiller's home in Park Street, Lyons, Colorado, 2013. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.

(Right) David Tiller sketch of the mandolin he lost in the 2013 floods. Photo: Christopher R. Perez

(Bottom Left) 1950's tape measure rescued by Priscilla Cohan. The tape measure belonged to her grandfather who was a railroad mechanic. The tape measure was found in the ten feet of mud that filled the neighborhood, it became so rusty from the floodwaters that it could no longer be used. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.

Viviane Le Courtois: "David and Enion Pelta Tiller, members of the band Tarka, lost their recording studio along with all their music equipment. Their house was stripped. A muddy sink and bathtub were left in a corner. Flooded computers sat on a counter, useless. The neighbors' house shifted into theirs, knocking down part of the brick chimney. The object that was most significant to David was a very unique mandolin carved on the back with a cherub carrying a noose and on the handle was a fetus. In the dirt-covered backyard, he quickly sketched, describing the images carved on the mandolin, now disappeared."<sup>12</sup>





---

Sketch of lost  
screwdriver by John  
King, 2013. Photo:  
Christopher R. Perez.

Viviane Le Courtois: "John King had lost his entire sculpture studio and all of his tools. A current art commission was partially damaged. The studio, on the other side of the river, was already being rebuilt when I visited and he was ready to start working again. John quickly sketched what he missed the most: a set of screwdrivers that belonged to [his wife] Sally's father who used to build sailboats. He could replace modern tools, but these were irreplaceable. The night of the flood, they left the house in the pounding rain taking only the dog, sleeping bags and computers. Walking through rising water to retrieve their truck on the other side of the river. They watched as their bridge was swept away. They drove to the neighboring homes and woke their neighbors who could not believe the height and the power of the rushing water. John then drove to rescue other neighbors and safely brought them to higher grounds."<sup>13</sup>




---

(Left) Photo:  
Christopher R. Perez.

(Right) A muddy  
Dansko clog donated  
by Jamestown-resident  
Juliette León Bartsch  
who shared her  
family's miraculous  
story with Viviane Le  
Courtois, 2013. Photo:  
Christopher R. Perez.

Juliette León Bartsch: "After the first mudslide hit our home, we frantically left our house through a side door. The only pair of shoes in sight for my daughter to wear were my way-too-big clogs. Somehow they stayed on her feet through the muck as we escaped to higher ground. They were my favorite shoes, but they served a higher purpose tonight." A key to their Subaru became another symbolic object, as Bartsch told: "We had just poured about two thousand dollars of repairs into our Subaru, so it was in fine shape the night the mudslide hit our home – filling our car with debris and smashing it into the entrance way to our house. Our Subaru created a beam that wound up protecting our home and possibly saving our lives."<sup>14</sup>




---

Martha Russo with  
Viviane Le Courtois  
in Jamestown,  
Colorado, 2013. Photo:  
Christopher R. Perez.

Martha Russo lives four miles above Jamestown and helped clean the town after the flood and recruited volunteers. While cleaning with a group of volunteers across from the town's City Hall, she found an old John Lennon t-shirt with the words *Give Peace a Chance* covered in mud.






---

(Top Left) Viviane Le Courtois, *Rescued Memories* objects before they were fired in the kiln, 2013. Photo: Viviane Le Courtois.

(Top Right) Viviane Le Courtois, *Rescued Memories* objects before they were fired in the kiln, 2013. Photo: Viviane Le Courtois.

(Left) Viviane Le Courtois recreating David Tiller's mandolin that was lost in the floods from a sketch Tiller drew at his destroyed home in Park Street, Lyons, Colorado, 2013. Photo: Christopher R. Perez.





---

Viviane Le Courtois constructing the final sculpture for *Rescued Memories*, December 2013.  
Photo: Christopher R. Perez.

## Still Waters Run Deep: Recipes, Stories, And Songs by the bARter collective and YOUTunes

*Still Waters Run Deep: Recipes, Stories and Songs* was a participatory healing exchange led by two artist initiatives, the bARter collective and YOUTunes, in response to the 2013 Colorado Floods. The bARter collective, spearheaded by Denver-based artist Nikki Pike and Boulder-based artist Martha Russo, is a group of action-based artists who instigate mobile exchanges – deploying the bARter truck in public arenas where they invite interchange and audience participation. YOUTunes is a performance-sound project run by artist and musician Preston Poe, where questionnaire sessions with members of the community are used to create customized songs.

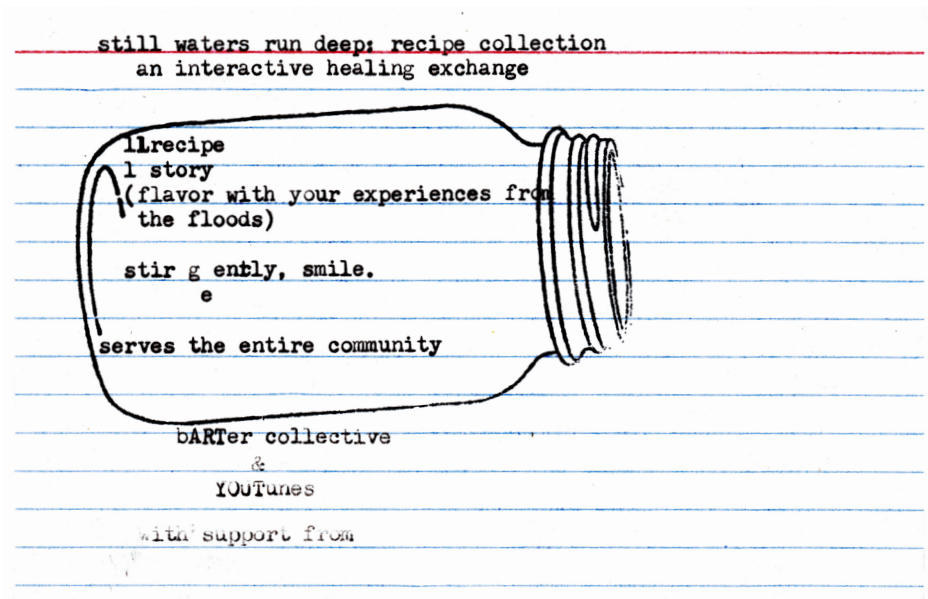
Together, the bARter collective and YOUTunes organized a series of pop-up events around the city of Boulder and the surrounding areas. At each site, with the bARter truck as the backdrop, the artists invited people to recount and record their experiences of the floods.

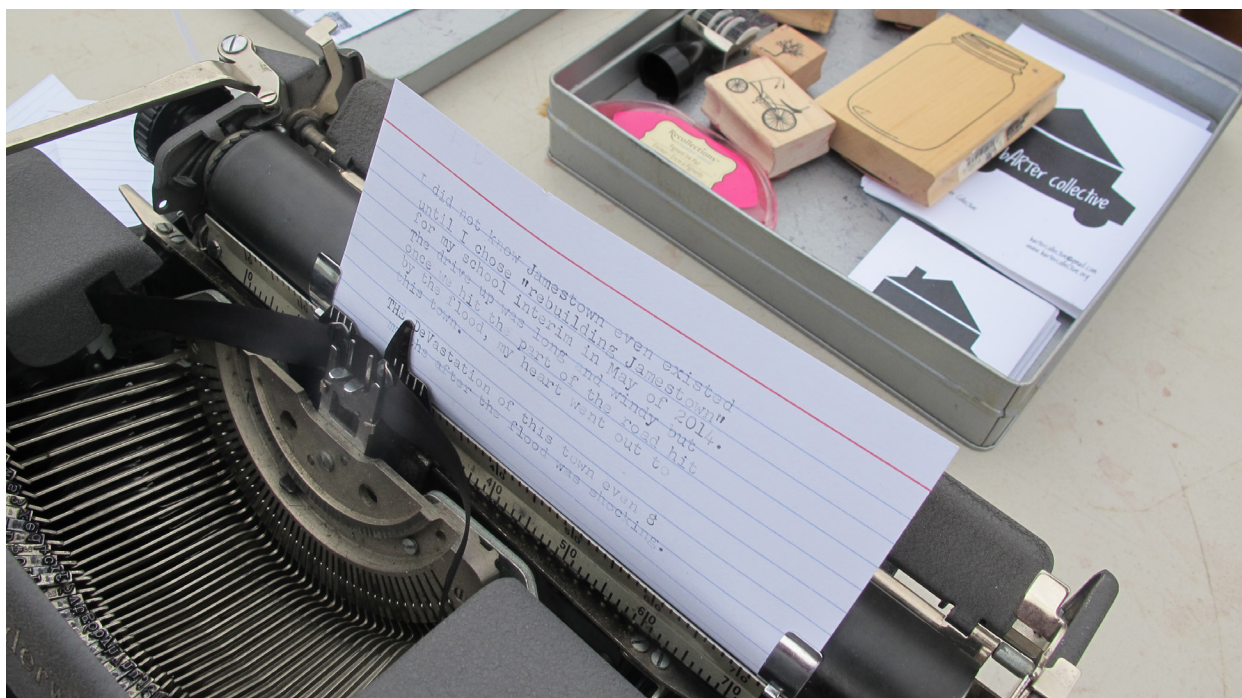
With the community still recovering from the destruction caused by the floods, the artists provided various means of collection with the foresight that for some people it would be easier to share than others. The artists sparked dialogue through familiar outlets of relief and coaxed response by drawing on the power of food and music to comfort and bring communities together in times of need. People were invited to speak, write, or be interviewed about their experiences. No matter how they chose to express themselves, their stories were heard. The project offered a moment, a place, and listening ears to help those impacted by the floods find peace from the emotional trauma of the cataclysmic events. The artists found that most people wanted to share their experiences and over the course of several months the artists collected hundreds of stories and recipes. The narratives captured on index cards and through song provide a history of the floods and their impact on the community.





(Above) the bARTer collective and YOUTunes collection event at the Boulder County Farmer's Market. Photo: Rachel Brand.





#### the bARTer collective

Since 2009, the bARTer collective has employed several tactics and strategies to produce exchange. For *Still Waters Run Deep...*, the artists decided food would be a strong starting point for gathering and engaging people. As founding member Nikki Pike relays, "We realized that whenever we are celebrating or mourning, we come together and share food."

Vintage typewriter at the bARTer collective Jamestown collection events, 2014. Photo: Nikki Pike.

The collective asked each participant to contribute a recipe that has special meaning in their lives along with the stories and memories associated with the dish. "The food we bring often comes from family recipes passed down from generation to generation," says Pike. "Recipes come from long lines of history; recipes have stories, accompany rituals, and reflect the cultures that define who we are as a community. Through the recipe we would dig deeper. Much like the history of the recipe, we would invite people to share their immediate recollections and experiences during the floods."

Over a period of eight months the collective hosted events at Boulder County Farmer's Market, ReSource Boulder, East Boulder Community Center, North Boulder Recreation Center, Boulder Public Library, Boulder High School, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA), Firehouse Art Center in Longmont, and the Mercantile restaurant in Jamestown. For every participatory engagement the collective mobilized the bARTer truck, which was parked at each site to set the stage for a suite of vintage typewriters and blank recipe cards positioned across several tables. As people passed by the truck, curiosity drew them in.

Often people sat to type their own stories. Using the typewriters, they poured their hearts onto index cards, many blending recipes and stories visually in much the same way grandmothers compiled lifetimes of recipes laced with family history. For those who preferred to speak their stories, the artists would listen and record their message. The array of emotions went from tears, smiles and laughter, to silence.

The vintage typewriters – nostalgic objects for an older generation and antiquated machines foreign to younger generations – became a focal point. As the devices by which the stories were documented, they provided an important component to the participant's overall experience. The machines forced





The bARTer collective and YOUTunes collection event at *The Flood Project* opening reception at Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, December 10, 2013. Photo: David Blessing.

writers to slow down, to be present, and to consider what they wanted to share. The process of typing by hand is not forgiving. At first many found it difficult to relinquish the habits of communicating in the digital age of spellcheck and in the abbreviated tendencies of social media. Each card bears mistakes and an authenticity that marks the individual. Strewed around the typewriters were stamps, markers, and stickers, made available for further individualization of each index cards.

The index cards document individual tales and personal sentiment, but cannot capture the extent of emotional exchange between the artists and members of the community. Yet the extent of dialogue captured makes clear how important it was for the artists to be present. Through the process of listening and sharing, small bits of emotional weight were lifted and a shared sense of relief began to emerge. The bARTer collective asserts the project as *Relief Art*, a term conceived from conversations and thought probed during the project. Pike emphasizes, "As FEMA, city and state agencies, and community supporters began the important phase of reconstructing our homes, we, as a collective, moved forward by piecing back together our hearts. *Together.*"





(Top Left) bARTer collective member Martha Russo with Boulder High School students, 2013. Photo: Wynn Bruce.

(Top Right) Students using vintage typewriter to tell their stories of the flood, the bARTer collective and YOUTunes collection event at Boulder High School, 2013. Photo: Wynn Bruce.

(Bottom Left) Student holding the bARTer collective participatory certificate at the bARTer collective and YOUTunes collection event at Boulder High School, 2013. Photo: Wynn Bruce.

(Bottom Right) The bARTer collective in Jamestown during a series of collection events, 2014. Photo: Nikki Pike.

**The bARter collective** formed five years ago by a group of five like-minded artists (Alex Erskine, Anna-Lisa Breit, Alison Clayton, Tyler Moody, and Nikki Pike) who set forth the following manifesto to guide their practice.

***the bARter collective manifesto:***

*the bARter collective is a collective of artists, designers, educators, thought provokers, dreamers, service workers, and citizens who host a mobile exchange space. we trade \_\_\_\_\_ for\_\_\_\_\_. once we fill in the blankety blanks, we adapt our systemic platform to suit each happening.*

*the bARter collective believes in reimagining the contemporary notion of exchange of currency for product or service. our action-based inquiries originate in a belief that every human needs to be actively creative and actively involved in their community.*

*our motivation is driven by citizenship and the need to vitalize and contribute to our local community. our approach is to create dynamic situations that present alternative means of exchange where active creation gives way to goods and services. We would gladly trade the mass produced for blowing kisses and hand written notes.*

Some examples of exchange employed by the bARter collective include the Seed Ball Exchange, the Street Coat Exchange, the Public Reading Exchange, the Image Transfer Exchange, and the Kissing Exchange. For each new exchange the bARter collective team of artists changes, there is always at least one founding member that captains a group of artists interested in the project. For *The Flood Project*, the bARter collective included artists Nikki Pike, Martha Russo, Sarah Swaboda, Charlotte Roadcap, Dawn Witter, Linda Graham, Jonathan McHugh, Jessica Dory, Peter Davies, Amanda Gault, Stephanie Von Fange, and Stacy Sprewer.

**Nikki Pike** (b. 1978, San Francisco, California), a founding member of the bARter collective, is an artist based in Denver, Colorado. Her work has been featured in many local exhibitions as well as been featured in several national institutions. Pike earned her BFA from the University of Colorado at Denver and her MFA from the University of South Florida in Tampa. A former Assistant Professor in Foundations at The Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, Pike expands her teaching into the community where she has worked to educate children at a local homeless shelter, as well as having traveled to educate over 150 children in Juarez, Mexico.

**Martha Russo** (b. 1962, Milford, Connecticut) is a ceramic sculptor and installation artist whose work has been included in national and international exhibitions. She earned a BA degree in developmental biology and psychology from Princeton University and an MFA from the University of Colorado Boulder. Russo often engages in artistic collaboration and has participated in artist collectives including the bARter collective and The Artnuats. Currently, Russo lives in Ward, Colorado, a small mountain-town northwest of the city of Boulder. In 2013 the Santa Fe Art Institute in New Mexico featured a solo exhibition of Russo's work, *cavities and clumps*. Her work was also featured in the 2011 exhibition *Overthrown* at the Denver Art Museum and in the 2010 *Energy Effects* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver in Colorado.

**andy bell**

**i lost my house in the jamestown flood s but my life has been so bl  
bless dby the people at humanitys te am that are my family. they  
managed to raise thirty thousand dollers for us to help us  
survive. thank you.**



bARTer collective member Martha Russo: "Andy Bell Gutsky, a 9th grader, who is a Jamestown resident and family friend, saw us set up with our typewriters in the Boulder High Cafeteria and came over to see what was going on. This was the first time I had seen her since the flood. She and her mom lived right by the Jamestown Creek and their house literally floated down the river and was smashed into a million pieces. She told me they lost everything but their computers and their cat. I asked her if she wanted to write her story. Tears welled up and she said she wanted to just sit with me. With time and hearing other people's memories of the flood she said she would type a recipe card. This is what she wrote. After these moments with Andy Bell, I felt like the project was really doing something. She had a place to open up and be with other people her age telling their stories. Her words were later wheat pasted on the outside of BMOCA. This made her words more public and gave them even more power. She was elated to see her words so big and bold."

Power of wa te r

the power of water is unlike an y other power around,  
with strenth as a comm nity we can re uild .

Rabbit snare Stew

:

Run out of food , had to set up a rabbit snare  
and cook rabbit stew.

Set string and a counter weight set with bait and a

\*-Andrew Westfall

bARTer collective member Martha Russo: "A senior from Boulder High School told the story of how he, his sister, and parents were stuck at their home in the canyon on Linden Street for four days. On the second day, they were starting to run out of food and his mom declared, 'We need protein.' His dad remembered he had an old book about making snares to catch animals. They read the book, followed the directions and started catching rabbits."



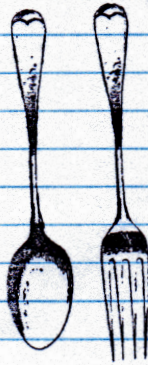
i climbed into the wreckage and grabbed her  
wedding dress,

bARTer collective member Nikki Pike: "You can feel the pain caused from the flood as you begin driving up the canyon to Jamestown. As you approach, you begin to understand the devastation - bridges blown-out, half missing homes, trees overturned and uprooted, and debris everywhere. This is the worst I had seen yet from the aftermath of the floods - and this was eight months later.

Setting up outside the Mercantile Cafe, we waited for people to finish their workday. That night, the local swing band was playing and word was the whole town gathers when there's live music. It was true. Charlotte and I sat from 6pm to midnight, fingers typing the whole time. We gathered over 75 stories and recipes that night alone.

Eventually a young man approached and said: *I'll tell you what happened during the floods.* The young man, Cooper, laughed inwardly and shook his head as he explained the last items he claimed from his home: frozen pizza, beer, and dog food. He had no idea that it would be last time he would enter his home. You could see a sliver of the emptiness in his eyes as he shared the moment he and his wife learned of their loss. He recounts that as he walked around the neighborhood he once knew, he kept turning the corner as if there was more corner to be turned - looking and searching for his home that was no longer there. They could not make out the landscape with the vacancy of the house. Cooper continued on recalling all the things he would have taken if only he had known that would be his last visit to his home. As Charlotte and I listened to his story he recollected items that he retrieved in a series of archeological digs where his house once stood. There was a shift in his tone and a sense of pride when he announced that he recovered his wife's wedding dress."

Dirty Socks Mac and Cheese

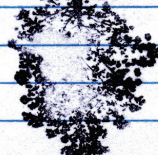


1 lb of macaroni  
2 c cheddar cheese  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  c milk  
2 tbsps butter  
2 tbsps flowers  
pinch of nutmeg  
salt and pepper to taste

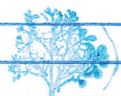
feeds 6 normal people or 2 firefighters



one of my friends in Jamestown got slammed by the flood...they were  
evacuated. days later when they returned to their home she  
found a book in all the sand outside thier front door thzat was  
tangled in abunch of tree roots. thet title of the  
kk was "the roots of depression"  
ey are living inboulder now and doin  
tern. we love them



the man hole cover blow off of the street due  
to the presure of the water under ground.

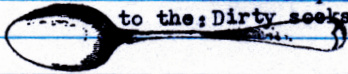




## Dirty Socks Hotel

I was affected in an unusual way by the flood  
my house was fine. my husband works as a firefighter. during the first days he worked one hundred hours. all the firefighters he worked with were unable to return to their homes, so our house became a hotel for firefighters  
"The Dirty Socks Hotel"  
So I cooked and made beds and did their laundry. yes that's my job, my flood job...i made piles and piles of macaroni and cheese.

side note: i always keep aside firefighter meals since we've lived on Nelson road we've had many situations that have required my preparation to convert our home to the Dirty Socks hotel.



Queen of Socks



Since the history of flood recording began in 1894, the largest flood was 7 to 8 inches of rain. This flood was 15 inches of rain in 3 days. The night of day 2 we wondered if we were going to die. The noise was supernatural... Boulders, houses, trees, everything was tumbling into the streets. Plus the noise from the rain on the roof was deafening. The town was divided in half. We knew Joey had died. I think we were all in a mindstopping state. Your mind stops. We went to bed wondering what the next day would bring...

Wendy Stokes



## Bison Bolognese

a special recipe by Emily Choi

quinoa pasta

1/2 lb bison ground

2 an yellow onion

3 cloves of garlic

red pepper flakes

(then i just cheat and use a jar of roasted red pepper sauce)

this is from the 80s on Haight St. in SF  
originated by Rex Boldini

made spicy. serve with punk rock

VOID NOV 02 2013



## No Brand Ranch Scrambled Eggs

recipe by: Tyler Fair & Courtlyn Carpenter

pajamas  
good music (micheal buble please)  
loved one or friend

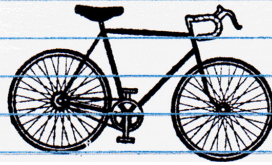
a splash of ranch  
dollarup of salsa  
some eggs

s

scramble while vigourously singing to buble

cook & top with cheese (your fav)

enjoy!



## MIHISTORIA DE MI INUNDACION

El mie coles hablo con mi madre y le conte que

el cli ma no se vaaa muy bien que digamos

habiamos estado vine ~~endo~~ llover por un dia

completo.

Daniel J. Spenc<sup>er</sup>

September 12, 2013 "I heard sirens all night" I knew something was wrong. when I heard the sheep bleeping in the morning.

I drove to the end of the road and it was under water. 100 year flood!!!

I called my kayaking buddies, and assembled the posse. Lucas was so nervous, he was shaking.

We avoided the police road block and dropped in at 75th street. The water was disgusting.

Knowing the danger involved, we stayed away from the river and floated over the flooded field. we kayaked all the way to highway 207.

Lemons into lemonade! It was a once in a life time experience that I will never forget.



The most memorable experience from the flood, the thing I will never forget, is the intense scent of stale urine in everyone's toilet, since we needed to flush with buckets and water was scarce. They say that the sense of smell is most closely related to memory. Everywhere you would go, buckets and piss smell. The very worst was a time I was visiting a friend whom had placed a space heater in his bathroom, right next to his toilet, it was nearly boiling. That is a very deeply ingrained smell/ memory... that and the helicopters.

\_j. fish

#### Recipe for epic S'mores

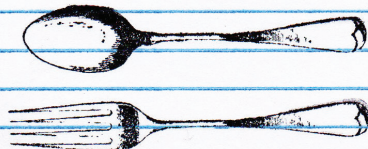
##### ingredients:

Graham crackers, marshmallow cream, peanut butter, melted chocolate

Directions: smother each graham cracker with peanut butter and marshmallow cream, and then place another graham cracker on top.

Then, heat up chocolate until it is melted and dip the graham cracker with the fillings inside into the chocolate.

Freeze the "sandwich" for a few hours, and then enjoy (exclamation point)



We lost our garage and house and everything, but when the water was rising we took our rust colored Tibetan rug and put it in the top of the garage thinking that it was the safest place. My friend said, "Your garage washed away." I thought that it was impossible and then I found the garage roof miles down the river with no rug or anything. About three weeks later, with rubble as far as the eye could see, my friend saw a rust colored material around a tree with only a small corner to be seen. On the corner was a label with our name written on it. The EPA track-hoe dug it out and seven rug bats later we have our favorite possession back with very little damage. We were smiling from ear to ear and felt very lucky.





~~we were all sleeping on our toes~~

it was miles who woke us in the middle of the night.

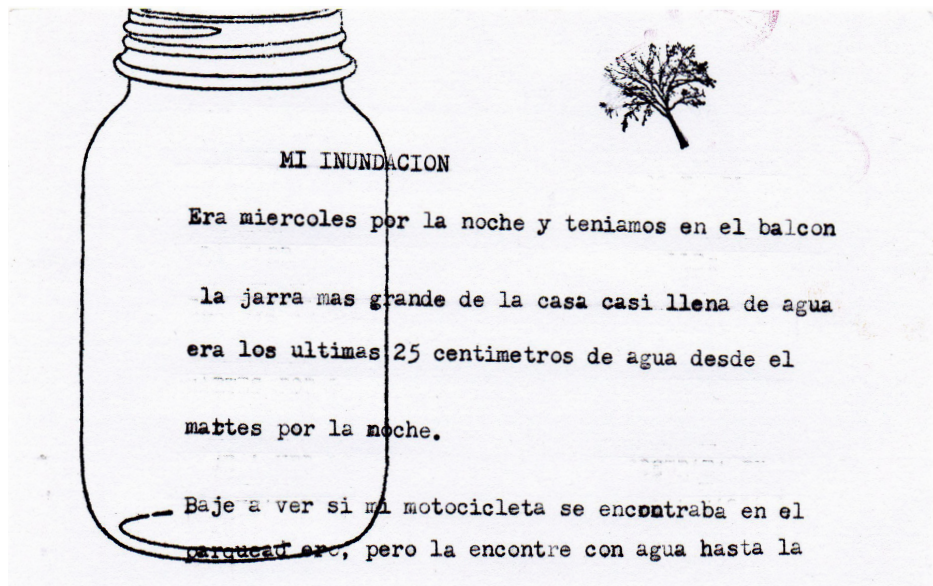
jaime! kyle! get to higher ground!

miles had just come from the collapsed house that took joe from jamestown

for whatever reason, we took both cars road fell out behind us, road fell out in front.

we went up the remaining driveway and house hopped not knowing which rock slide or mudslide would take the house

as a group we gathered and the intensity in the room was so strong when i accidentally surprised rainbow, the whole house was hysterical...



~~600 Yards Away~~ Cooper & Kiki

at 2:30 in the morning in the morning sterling was knocking on the door.

you got 5 minutes to get out

we went up the hill to kents house. up all night

at 7am we returned to the house to gather the necessities: beer, pizza, dog food, cat food, and dirt y laundry

cooper

little did we know, the next morning, we went to return home, and home was not where it used to be. we could literally see the picture hanging in the bathroom in our roofless displaced wrecked house.

carnitas de casa de guillermo

3# pork shoulder ~~kg~~ CUBED

2T cumin

2T cumin

2T paprika

2T garlic powder

2 LEMONS

BRIGHT LIGHTS (serve under)  
start cooking around four

2 LINES

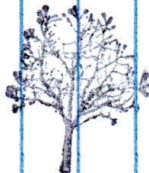
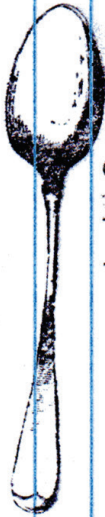
1T of salt

coat the pork  
put in water in pot

boil 2 hours

enjoy!!!!

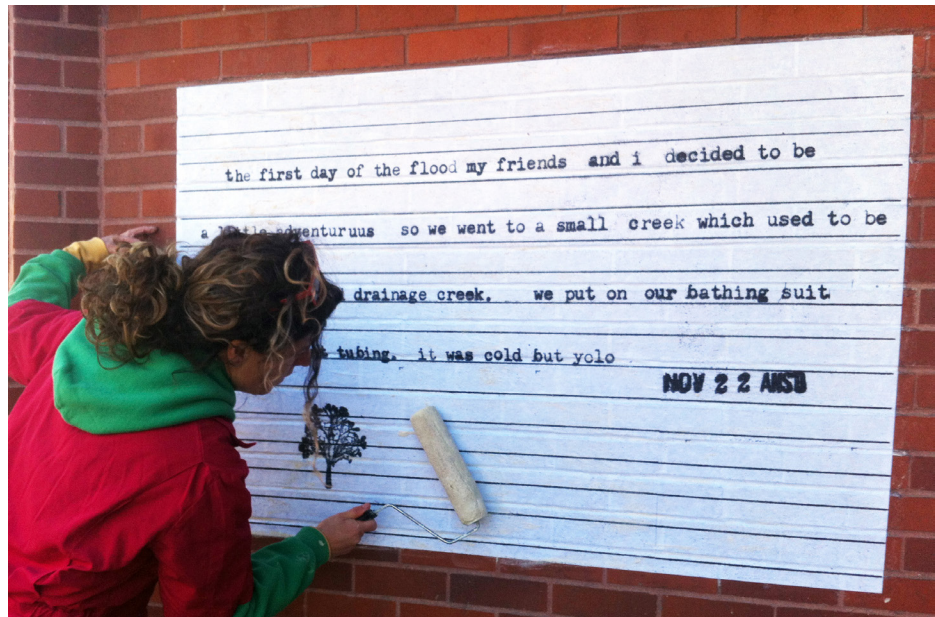
pork should BE CRISPY





---

bARTer collective member Nikki Pike wheat pasting *Still Water Runs Deep...* recipe cards onto the outside of BMoCA, 2014. Photo: Jessica Dory.



---

bARTer collective member Peter Davies wheat pasting *Still Water Runs Deep...* recipe cards onto the outside of BMoCA, 2014. Photo: Randee Toler.



#### the bARTer collective wheat pasting series

Using the stories and recipes collected from the survivors, the bARTer collective designed a series of large-scale recipe cards. With the city of Boulder's support and endorsement, the enlarged recipe cards were placed on public buildings around Boulder using an application process called wheat pasting.<sup>15</sup> The bARTer collective artist Nikki Pike coined the term *anti-posters* for the series because they defy the traditional use of posters, which is typically associated with an agenda in their production and placement. The act of wheat pasting, usually linked with activist art and do-it-yourself event announcements, gave an argot aesthetic to the series. Most importantly, the 54 x 36 inch *anti-posters* serve as reminders, a voice that whispered and shouted through the streets, and showed the spirit of community in the aftermath of trauma.



### ***The Flood Project Dinner and Benefit***

On February 24, 2014 BMoCA hosted *The Flood Project* dinner and benefit to help raise funds for flood relief efforts. The event brought a hundred people together to enjoy a meal created from the recipes the bARTer collective gathered from the community. For this evening, the collective created the place settings and ambiance. The artists collaborated with Chef Hosea Rosenberg, of Blackbelly Catering, to reinterpret the shared recipes – many of which were recalled from memory and not written with exact proportions or instructions. Chef Rosenberg turned family recipes made with a dollop of this and a dash of that into a communal feast of comfort dishes like truffle-mac and cheese or bison bolognese served over polenta and green-chile posole.

---

the bARTer collective place settings for *The Flood Project Dinner and Benefit*, 2014.  
Photo: Tricia Rubio.





## YOUTunes

Preston Poe interviewing a student in the bARter Truck at the bARter collective and YOUTunes Boulder High School collection event, 2013. The interview inspired the song *Jamestown*. Photo: Wynn Bruce.

YOUTunes is a series of participatory performances initiated by artist and composer Preston Poe that uses audience response as source material for custom songs. For *Still Waters Run Deep...* YOUTunes asked members of the Boulder community and surrounding areas to fill out a questionnaire and partake in a 15 minute-long interview. From participants' personal remembrances and stories of the floods, unique lyrics and music were made into eight original songs that comprise a commemorative album dedicated to the 2013 Colorado Floods.

For the project, YOUTunes conducted several collection events alongside the bARter collective, compiling a vast selection of stories from a broad range of people including students, seniors, farmers, rescue operators, artists, and musicians. Unlike past YOUTunes projects, wherein the songs were written and performed live, this project spanned several months and required a different, more methodical approach to songwriting. Listening to numerous people recount their stories and describe their losses with wit, humor, sadness, and depth, Poe narrowed down a selection of conversations that later became the inspiration for songs on the commemorative album titled *Still Waters Run Deep*. The album's lyrics and music reflect the wide range of emotion and diversity of experiences around the flood. Absorbing these stories to the deepest level, Poe's personal experience from his conversations became a part of each piece.

The first song on the album, *Sugarloaf Mountain*, was inspired by Poe's interview of Sugarloaf resident Shirley Weisz at East Boulder Recreation Center. Sugarloaf, an area with a small population of people located in Boulder County between the City of Boulder and Nederland, is blessed by an intricate water supply system of natural underground springs and wells.

When the water table rose during the floods, the natural springs and source of water for the area were contaminated by the floodwaters and rendered unusable. The only source of drinking water available was at Weisz's property. The song tells the story of Weisz, working with her neighbors to provide drinking water to the community during the storm and in the days that followed.

*Jamestown* is an instrumental piece, featuring acoustic guitar and mandolin, that captures the power of nature as experienced by Boulder High School student Henry Man in the three fateful days the flood stormed through Jamestown, devastating the community to its core.

*Kickdrum Full of Mud* emulates the easy-going character of Jason Pawlina, a local musician whose interview at ReSource Boulder inspired the song's creation. The surging slide guitar stomper encompasses the story of his flooded practice room, which became his *Kickdrum Full of Mud*. This song parallels the sense of humor originally expressed by Pawlina.

*Way Back Home* encapsulates emotions echoed by many people. In a brief conversation with an anonymous man, only a few words were exchanged, but the overwhelming feeling of loss experienced during the flood resonated deeply with Poe. The song is one of hope and encouragement for this individual and for the many people whose experiences could not be easily conveyed through words. In another way, *Keep Movin' On* emphasizes grief as an emotion that binds us together and reminds us of how, through the shared experience of grief, we are part of a community. We continue on in our own ways, yet we do so together.

The concept of YOUTunes sprang from Poe's interest in songwriting, the passion for which is people sharing stories and experiences. Music has a long tradition as a form of storytelling, a presentation of oral histories often left out of history books. They tell an emotional tale, the personal and everyday stories depicting the raw emotion of a moment in time. The album produced by YOUTunes for *The Flood Project* offers this kind of story. It chronicles the personal experiences, emotions, and circumstances of the people immediately impacted by the flood. Although each story presents a unique perspective, as a whole they share a common tale. The resulting collection stands as an archive of the historical events through the vernacular of those who experienced it.





Preston Poe interviewing students at the bARTer collective and YOUTunes Boulder High School collection event, 2013. Photo: Wynn Bruce.

**Preston Poe** (b. 1970, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) is a musician and new media artist working with video, sound, sculpture, and performance art. His project YOUTunes has performed at OTO in Brooklyn, New York; The Contemporary (Museum) in Baltimore, Maryland; DigiAGoGo at Art Basel in Miami Beach, Florida in 2009; and ArtBarn at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. In 2010, he collaborated with site-specific sound artist Kianga Ford to create a soundtrack for *Cell Phone Stories*, an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California.

### ***Still Waters Run Deep***

Preston Poe on acoustic guitar, harmonica, washtub bass, and vocals. Neil Leonard on mandolin and dobro. Christina Audas on acoustic and electric guitar, charango, and vocals. Audio Production by Jeff Knauff at The Parsonage Studio. All songs written by Preston Poe.

1. *Sugarloaf Mountain*
2. *Jamestown*
3. *Way Back Home*
4. *Keep Movin' On*
5. *El Corazon es Un Reloj (The Heart is a Clock)*
6. *Country Blues #8 (Basement Full of Fish)*
7. *Rollin Down' (to Boulder)*
8. *Kickdrum Full of Mud*

## Convergence by Berger & Föhr with Shark's Ink

For *The Flood Project*, Boulder-based graphic designers and artist-duo Todd Berger & Lucian Föhr were paired with Master Printmaker Bud Shark of Shark's Ink., Lyons, Colorado, to create a limited edition lithograph commemorating the 2013 Colorado Floods and raise money for flood relief efforts.

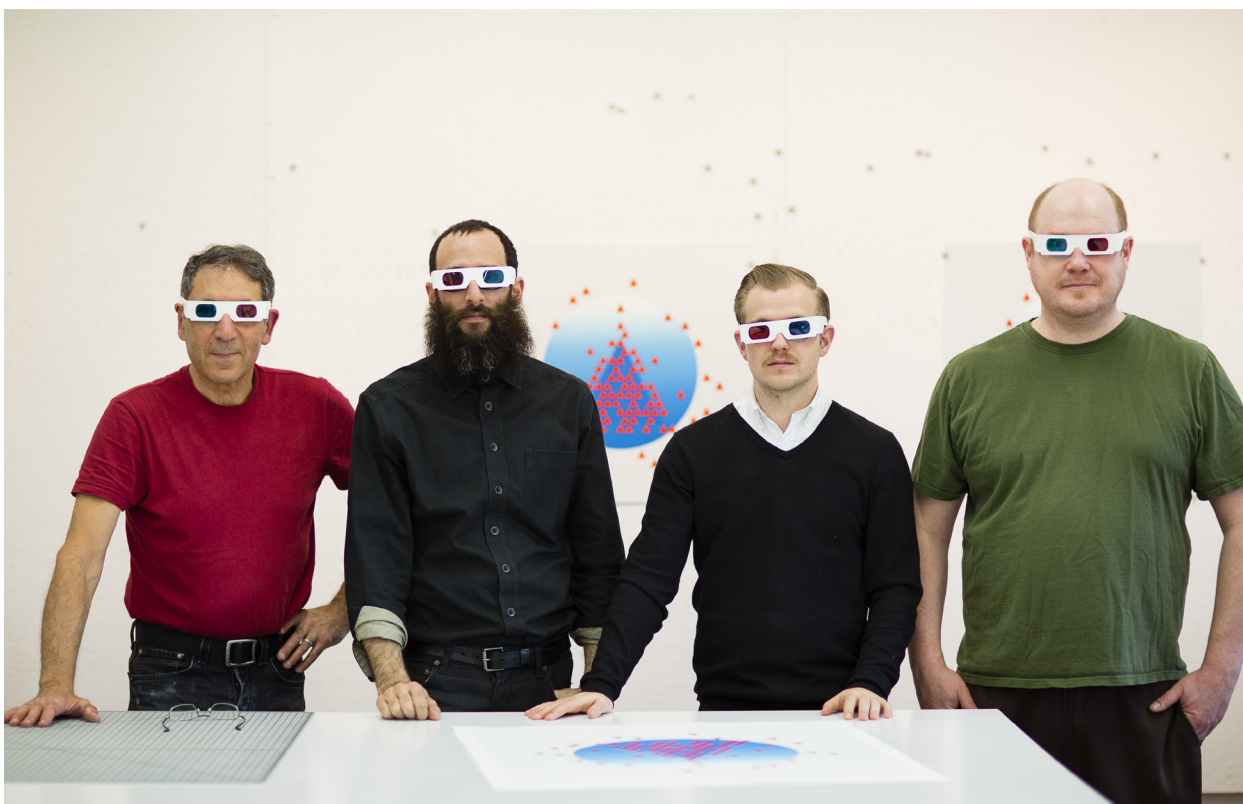
In the wake of the natural disaster, the three Boulder County residents were witness to, as well as part of, a local unification inspired by the floods. Drawn together through adversity, the men became invested in creating a print that would pay tribute to the victims of the floods and celebrate the community's resilience in a time of distress.

*Convergence* marked the first collaboration between Berger & Föhr and Shark. Their commitment to the project forged a special bond between them, one similar to the bond felt throughout Boulder and the greater Front Range community during the floods. Putting forth their specific talents, Berger & Föhr conceived the design and concept of the work, brought to fruition through Shark's printmaking practice. Yet making a strict distinction in the artistic roles is deceiving. The laborious method involved in lithographic printmaking is as detailed an art-making process as the original design. The process informed the work, yielding to a unique collaboration from which *Convergence*<sup>16</sup> was ultimately born.

Produced at Shark's Ink. located in the small town of Lyons in Boulder County, twenty miles north of the city of Boulder, the studio's physical setting intensified the process involved in the print's creation. As a community isolated by the floods, Lyons endured extreme hardships. Evidence from the torrential rains, overwhelmed the town's infrastructure, turned roads into rivers, swept away bridges and homes, and served as a constant reminder to the artists throughout the process.

The challenge of formulating an image that relates to the flood without being too literal was overcome by Berger & Föhr's artistic philosophy, that to achieve less is more. Upholding a modernist aesthetic, the artists emphasize evocation of atmosphere and feelings over visual verbatim, a technical homage to early 20th century cubist artists. They relinquish true representation for a visual vocabulary of geometric shapes, a stylistic device rooted in early 20th century Russian avant-garde movements. Reduced to its most basic design, power is obtained in simplicity of form. The achieved simplicity, however, does not result in a diminution of visual tensions. A precise balance of shapes and colors tell the spatial and spiritual stories of the flood. The shapes become language and the assemblage of their geometric abstract idiom creates meaning.

The print embodies the productive power and destructive force of water. The image personifies the unifying influence of water within a community and the renewed strength offered to a community tested by its caustic potential. The large blue circle in the center of the print represents water and the blue gradation, especially with the contrast of red, optically denotes a moving



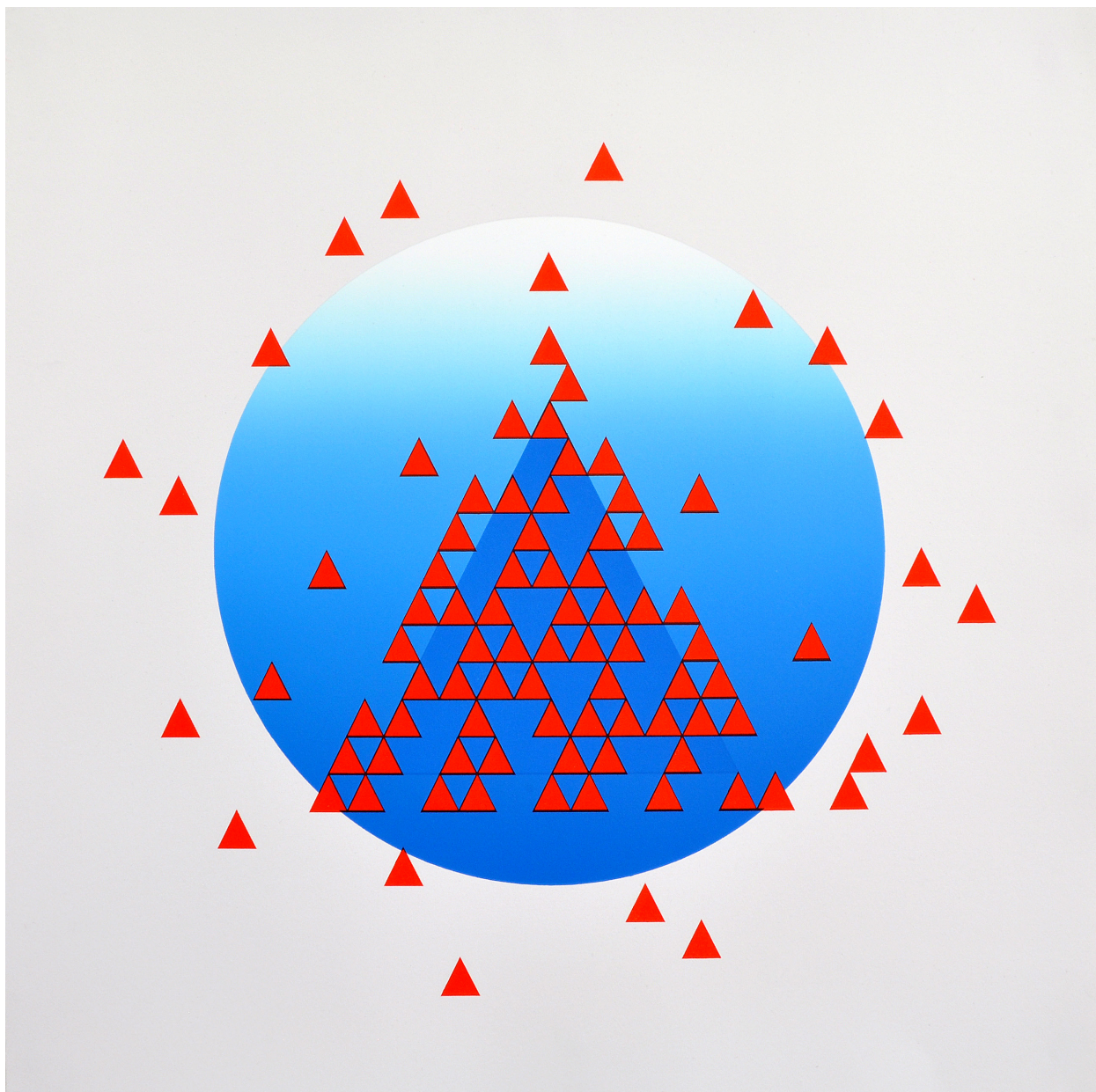

---

From left to right:  
 Bud Shark, Todd  
 Berger, Lucian Föhr,  
 and Shark's studio  
 assistant, Evan Colbert  
 with *Convergence*, 2014.  
 Photo: Jamie Kripke.

force – a force that supports the health and nourishment of the community and ecosystems, as well as holds the potential to destroy everything that surrounds it. The small red triangles across the composition, spilling over and out of the blue circle, personify the disbursement of communities disconnected by the raging waters while simultaneously symbolizing a coming together. The repetition and simplicity of the basic geometric forms instills a sense of order. The lyrical elegance with which the red triangles seem to converge represents resilience; while things may never be the same, there is nonetheless an underlying sense that order will be restored.

The work creates a visual narrative that involves the viewer. Illustrating the formal convergence referred to above, the work's aesthetic values are contingent upon the many variables that shaped the viewer's experiences of the floods. Open to interpretation, the print's success is a result of its ability to present multiple subtexts – energy inspired in equal parts by tragedy and by human potential. All at once, it represents the force of the flood in the moment of devastation, a population coming together in its wake, and a documentation of the historic event for future generations.





---

*Convergence*

Berger & Föhr with Shark's Ink

6 color lithograph from 4 aluminum plates

White Rives BFK paper

24 x 24 in

Edition of 30 prints

All proceeds from the sale of this edition  
benefit the ongoing flood relief efforts by  
Foothills United Way.



---

Print-making process  
*Convergence*, 2014.  
Photo: Jamie Kripke.

**Berger & Föhr** is a Boulder-based partnership between the innovative energies of Todd Berger (b. 1975, Chicago, Illinois) and Lucian Föhr (b. 1988, Boulder, Colorado). Together they have formed a team of artists, designers, brand strategists, and web planners that are commissioned to “think outside the box.” Berger & Föhr is driven by a social responsibility to culturally enhance and improve the human experience, collectively working to improve means of communicating ideas and messages to the world. Their work has been exhibited nationally and published extensively overseas. They currently reside in Boulder, Colorado.

**Bud Shark** (b. 1946, Devils Lake, North Dakota) received a BS from University of Wisconsin, Madison and an MA from University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. In 1976, he opened Shark’s Lithography Ltd in Boulder, Colorado. In 1998 the studio was relocated as Shark’s Ink. to Lyons, Colorado. Shark’s Ink. has printed and published an extensive and eclectic body of prints collaborating with over 150 distinguished and innovative contemporary American artists. Prints published by Shark’s Ink. are included in numerous private and public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, all in New York; Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, Connecticut; Art Institute of Chicago in Illinois; Philadelphia Museum of Art in Pennsylvania; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian in Washington, D.C..









Print-making process  
*Convergence*, 2014.  
Photo: Jamie Kripke.







**Community Involvement**





---

From left to right: Dan Feldheim, Scott Hoffenberg and John Smart pass sandbags as residents reinforce the dam on Seventh Street on University Hill in Boulder on September 15, 2013. Photo: Paul Aiken. Courtesy The Daily Camera from *A Thousand Year Rain: The Historic Flood of 2013 in Boulder and Larimer Counties*.



## FOTO FLOOD: Works by Boulder High School Students

December 10, 2013 - January 26, 2014

Following the 2013 Colorado Floods, Boulder High School (BHS) photography teacher David Blessing assigned all of his advance photography students a project titled "Foto Flood." Most of the students were either directly affected by the floods or had close family or friends that were impacted by the devastating events in September 2013. The assignment asked the students to express their experience of the floods. In addition, BHS creative writing teacher Carlyn Carroll asked her students to write their stories of the floods. The students used the images captured by their peers to draw inspiration for their written pieces. Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA) was so moved by the emotional response and quality of the photographs and writings produced by the high school students that the museum decided the works should be made available to a larger public.

*FOTO FLOOD* (December 10, 2013 - January 26, 2014) was an exhibition presented in BMoCA's Union Works Gallery. It showcased a selection of photographs and writings from the students. All of the photographs displayed were developed and matted by students and the written pieces presented in their original format to express the unique artistic expression of each student. In some cases the students directly documented the destruction and wreckage caused by the floods, others took a more conceptual approach, evoking the atmosphere and trauma in the wake of the natural disaster. In some instances the photographs have literally and visibly been damaged by floodwater or mud. In addition, *FOTO FLOOD* featured a series of large-format cyanotype photographs printed on sheets. The works were collaborative pieces done by the students. In the cyanotype process the images are exposed to the sun or UV rays and developed using water. The process connects back to the theme of water and the images themselves appear as if they are underwater. The opening of the exhibition coincided with the opening reception for *The Flood Project* hosted by BMoCA on December 10, 2013. For the evening, two students from BHS recited their creative writing pieces for the large number of people who turned out for the event. The response from the community that evening, as well the continued response throughout the duration of the exhibition was extremely positive. It offered a firsthand account of the physical and emotional toll of the flooding from the perspective of the local youth. Publicly archiving the voice of the youth, the exhibition provided these students an opportunity to celebrate their perseverance and resilience in a public setting.

**Creative Writing students:** Brayan Aleman Davila, Lillie Bahrami; Kelsea Dionne, Ian Dorado, Hannah Filley, Marley Frazer, Riley Grasso, Heather Greenstein, Ismael Gutierrez, Anastasia Hanson, Amber Hawk, Francis Lanzano, Christel Mensing, Sarah Petzke, Raul Rivera Ordaz, Emily Sefcik, Josiah Shafroth, Kaya Tone, Emma Vigers, and Teodor Wolter.

**Photography students who participated in the project:** Jessica Alvaro-Glantz, Bailly T Aust, Kenneth C Bellian, Zoe N Cobble, Alexander J Fox,




---

Kelly Lawson, October 2, 2013, included in *FOTO FLOOD: Works by Boulder High School Students* (December 10, 2013 - January 26, 2014), Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art. Photograph inspired Hannah Filley and Kaya Tone's poem also included in *FOTO FLOOD*.

Deric C Green, Kelly J Lawson, Vito Leccese, Gwendolyn S Leifer, Angel M Olivan Chavez, Leah P Perletz, Sydney A Quynn, Natasha M Reidenbach, Aidan E Smith, Naomi Tari, Emilia P Van Buskirk, Maxwell L Boice, Kate E Brackley, Ginalorena Cianflone, Effie F Shannon, Rachel L Burd, Calenius R Hitchcock, Lindsay B Stoner, Alyssa J Beeman, Leif C Blessing, Kaila C Coleman, Kathryn E Fitzpatrick, Sarah A Gratz, Anna L Gunderson, Wesley C Halloran, Emily L Hanson, Ashton K Hendler, Katya Lien, Benjamin J Lofstedt, Carson Rivard, Tylere Paige Rose, Amy A Sumerfield, Brianna E Treppeda, Andrew C Westfall, Leah Frances A Yee, Zoe J Auerbach Brode, Zach Baumann, Maya Z Gilady, Karl D Parsons, Keila T Roberts, Chandler M Baker, Isabelle J Burridge, William Wonnacott, and Emma Shetter.

### **Puddle Jumpers**

by Hannah Filley

We are puddle jumpers.

We are creatures of habit and searchers of soul,  
splashing and running,  
skipping rocks over roads,  
and walking on water,  
rejoicing in the wake of our hardship,  
rebuilding ourselves from the rubble.

We are mourners and weepers,  
lovers and fighters,  
hiders and seekers.  
We are torrentially emotional disasters.  
Life is a downpour,  
but we will always deserve  
to see the light at the end of our struggles.  
We won't let what destroys our city,  
destroy us.

We are likened to a sense of security and certainty,  
but the future can't be told by a weatherman--  
tragedy is not a forecast.  
This day, however cloudy,  
is a chance for recovery.  
We are a community,  
and we'll drown in our faith before we give up.

We are broken,  
but still beautiful.  
We learned that strength is summoned  
from our darkest places;  
that shelter from the storm  
only hides the pain that seeps in anyway.

We are the kind of people who take pictures and write poems.  
We look and sometimes see, we talk and sometimes say.  
We hope and pray and make believe, and tell ourselves that we'll be okay.  
We are lovers of life who are learning along the way,  
that sometimes we have to dance in the rain.

We are puddle jumpers.



### **The Power of Water**

By Kaya Tone

Cold dirt clenched under bare feet  
Droplets of rain clinging to my hair  
Pounding water inside my ears  
I can't break my stare  
I don't dare  
Look away for if I do,  
If I venture to blink,  
Would there be anything to look back to?  
Would it be gone?  
Would only water and earth remain?  
Water and Earth eating all that I know and slowly washing it away  
I'm only able to watch as water claims  
My home and everything I know  
My eyes begin to water  
I'm forced to blink  
When I open my eyes again  
Nothing has sank  
Everything is there, untouched.  
As the mighty river flows by  
My home and everything I know




---

Rachel Burd, *Flood*,  
October 13, 2013  
included in *FOTO FLOOD:*  
*Works by Boulder*  
*High School Students*  
(December 10, 2013  
- January 26, 2014),  
Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art.




---

Opening of *FOTO FLOOD:*  
*Works by Boulder*  
*High School Students*  
(December 10, 2013  
- January 26, 2014),  
Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art.  
Photo: David Blessing.






---

Cyanotype prints by Boulder High School students included in *FOTO FLOOD: Works by Boulder High School Students* (December 10, 2013 - January 26, 2014), Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (details). Photo: David Blessing.

## Endnotes

1 Jon Spayde, "Artful Relief: Artist and Disaster Recovery," *Public Art Review*, September 5, 2013, Issue 48, 30, <http://forecastpublicart.org/public-art-review/2013/09/disaster-relief/> (accessed: May 14, 2014).

2 *Reference from* Tania Bruguera, interview by Craig Dolnick, "An Artist's Performance: A Year as a Poor Immigrant," *New York Times*, May 19, 2011, sec. A.

3 While the idea is not new, the term was likely coined by bARTer collective member Nikki Pike.

4 One of the pilot projects was by Mel Chin who started the ongoing Fundred Dollar Bill Project that raises awareness about dangerous levels of lead contamination by asking children to draw their own money, which is then sent to Congress. See [www.fundred.org](http://www.fundred.org).

5 Spayde, "Artful Relief," 2013. Atlas has since been working to create an ongoing program run by artists and cultural planners – preliminarily titled Arts and Wellness Relief and Recovery Corps – that can help establish similar wellness centers in any community when disaster strikes.

6 *Quoted in:* William Kittredge, "Eating Ourselves Alive," in *Waste Land: Meditations on a Ravaged Landscape*, ed. David T. Hanson et al. (New York: Aperture, 1997), 8.

7 Many art historians would argue that the social turn begins with the early twentieth-century art movement Dada.

8 Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996).

9 Bruguera, "An Artist's Performance," 2011.

10 Viviane Le Courtois, *Rescued Memories* (Denver: Viviane Le Courtois, 2014), 2.

11 Ibid., 70

12 Ibid., 19

13 Ibid., 35

14 Ibid., 54-55

15 Wheat paste is a liquid adhesive made from different combinations of flour, water, starch, and sugar. It has been used since antiquity for various arts and crafts, which include adhering paper posters and notices to walls.

16 The original title of the work was *Nature:Nature*. The print was renamed *Convergence* after the print was produced.



Published to accompany  
the exhibition

**The Flood Project:**

**Rising Above &  
Restoring Boulder  
Through Art**

October 2013 – September 2014  
Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art

A project commissioned by Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art and the City of Boulder.

**BMoCA Staff**

David Dadone, Executive Director +  
Chief Curator

Caitlin Berube-Smith, Visitor Experience Manager  
Rachel Brand, Design and Media Manager  
Maiji Castro, Visitor Services  
Rendl Clark, Marketing Manager  
Shannon Crothers, Director of Education  
Nicole Dial-Kay, Education Coordinator  
Mardee Goff, Associate Curator  
Nora Lupi, Visitor Services  
Teri Lyshorn, Visitor Services  
Jordan Robbins, Director of Advancement  
Randee Toler, Development Associate

**Editor** Mardee Goff

**Text Editor** Christine Goff

**Copyeditors** Beth Isacke and Jordan Robbins

**Graphic Design** Berger & Föhr

**Photography** Paul Aiken, David Blessing, Rachel  
Brand, Wynn Bruce, Rachel Burd, Jessica Dory,  
Cliff Grassmick, Jamie Kripke, John King, Kelly  
Lawson, Mark Leffingwell, Ashleigh Miller, Jeremy  
Papasso, Christopher R. Perez, Nikki Pike, Tricia  
Rubio, and Randee Toler.

**General Support**

City of Boulder  
Boulder Arts Commission  
Citizens of the Scientific & Cultural  
Facilities District  
Colorado Creative Industries  
National Endowment for the Arts

**Exhibition Sponsors**

City of Boulder Arts and Cultural Services  
City of Boulder Public Works Department  
Colorado Creative Industries  
Anonymous  
City of Boulder Downtown and University Hill  
Management Division & Parking Services  
City of Boulder Human Relations Commission  
City of Boulder Community Planning and  
Sustainability