

An Illustrated Artist Talk by Jenn E Norton

The imaginative work of Jenn E Norton is not quite a surrealist dreamscape, but an actively dreamed scape, a place built with architecture of wonder and rumination. Ordinary objects and activities become strange through the bending of their longstanding expectations, often achieved through disjunctive content realistically glued together with composite editing. This uncanniness constructed through digital intervention invites new approaches and consideration to the familiar. Her cast may be her cats, inanimate objects or multiple versions of herself in situations that derive from her immediate experience, yet the formal considerations allude to greater ontological questions.

Jenn will discuss how working intimately with the technology used in the production of her practice in a DIY capacity marries intuitive and formal approaches to her creative process. Working in near isolation, honing her technical skill as an editor, animator, compositor and sound designer via online tutorials and trial and error, Jenn creates moving images outside of a rubric of traditional cinematic roles of director and producer.

Norton will also discuss the melancholy present beneath the visual glitter. Curator and artist Ufuk Gueray recalled a quote by Francis Bacon in an essay to describe Norton's work, "Even within the most beautiful landscape, in the trees, under the leaves the insects are eating each other; violence is a part of life." There is no overt violence in Norton's practice, but darkness lurks beneath the glittery surface [...].

Bio:

Jenn E Norton is a Canadian artist working with interdisciplinary media including video, installation, sound and kinetic sculpture to produce performative, critically engaged work that plays with the elastic qualities inherent of digital technologies. Themes engaged within her diverse practice include the complex relationship between artist and viewer, and how perspective and discernment of representation function in that relationship. Through this approach, Norton's practice reaches an uncanny intimacy with the subject matter of a work in a self-reflexive manner.

Recent works have decidedly delved into the intuitive, imaginative and emotive process of image making. She has been described as "a wizard of simple but magical video compositing, creating simple but brilliant collage spaces" by award-winning filmmaker, curator and critic, Chris Gehman and her recent video work as "kinetic, totally charming, magical, [and] emo-conceptual" by Border Crossings art critic, Lee Henderson.

Norton has won numerous grants, awards and scholarships, including the OCAD Integrated Media Medal for excellence in an interdisciplinary practice. She received an MFA from the University of Guelph in 2007, worked as an educator, freelance animator, painter and circus performer. 2011 brings Norton's work to Rooftop Films Summer Series in Brooklyn, NY, The Canadian Film Centre's World Wide Short Film Festival in Toronto, The Yukon Art's Centre, The Winnipeg Film Group's Cinematheque, Pleasure Dome's New Toronto Works. Norton will be also be a featured artist at CAFKA.11, where in addition to premiering her immersive, interactive, 3D video installation created during her 2011 residency at the Christie Digital there will also be a 3D animated public projection at Kitchener's City Hall (Ontario, Canada).