Colleen Wolstenholme’s artwork evokes the encroachment of prescription medicines into our daily lives. Appropriating prescription pills as her sculptural subject matter, Wolstenholme’s work suggests the potentially detrimental side of over medication in our culture.

**Spill**

Spill is a floor-based installation consisting of twenty-three pills, each a duplicate of the pharmaceuticals BuSpar and Amitriptyline. Commonly prescribed to women to combat anxiety and depression, the work is a condemnation of the way in which women have traditionally been misdiagnosed and overmedicated by a largely patriarchal medical establishment. Furthermore, by reproducing the same shape, proportion and logo of each pill, albeit at a greatly enlarged scale, the artist challenges the multinational drug companies that design and market their products to women, and men, using upbeat slogans and polished ad campaigns.

**Xanax and Dilaudid**

Xanax and Dilaudid takes things a step further, reproducing the respective anti-anxiety medication and opioid analgesic in bronze. Bronze is a sculptural material that has traditionally been associated with monuments and public sculpture produced by men in an intensely masculine environment. By having her art cast in bronze, Wolstenholme insures the longevity of her work and pointedly positions herself within a largely patriarchal Western pantheon. She takes on the challenge of this historically loaded material while continuing to question the prescribed ideologies it has come to represent.

Colleen Wolstenholme’s most recent project, **Synaesthesiac**, was developed in collaboration with New York based artist Gillian McCain. Co-mingling cut-outs of photographs and found images Wolstenholme creates a mural-sized collage directly on the walls of the gallery. Synaesthesia is a neurological condition in which the stimulation of one sensory pathway can lead to the involuntary stimulation of another sensory or cognitive pathway, resulting in the ability to see sound for instance. Composed out of hundreds of individual images that have been meticulously stitched together, the collage evokes both the complexity and connectivity of neural pathways and the metadata that can be found in an informational tag cloud. Wolstenholme’s seemingly random mapping of images uses free association and a non-hierarchical structure to draw a parallel distinction between our perceptions of healthy and traumatized states of mind.

— Ivan Jurakic

**List of Works**

- **Synaesthesiac** (with Gillian McCain), 2011
- Wall-mounted photographs and found images, dimensions variable
- **Spill**, 2003–ongoing
- Hollow cast plaster pills, dimensions variable
- **Dilaudid**, 2011
- Cast bronze, 41 x 41 x 22 cm
- **Xanax**, 2010
- Cast bronze, 98 x 45 x 35 cm

**Artist Biography**

Colleen Wolstenholme received her BFA from the Nova Scotia School of Art and Design and her MFA from the State University of New York at New Paltz. She has exhibited her work nationally and internationally at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax; Art Gallery of Calgary; Cambridge Galleries, Cambridge; Artspeak, Vancouver; Real Artways, Hartford; and the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto. Her artwork has been featured in numerous magazines and periodicals including People, The London Sunday Times, Psychology Today, The Canadian, Le Devoir, The New York Times, and The Lancet. Wolstenholme is a member of the GDL Collective, the Artists’ Union of Nova Scotia, and the Bay City Artists Cooperative, and has received the Bay City Art award twice. She is represented by the artist-run centre, Tempo Nautico, and her website can be seen at art.nautico.com.

- Ivan Jurakic
- September 15–October 29, 2011
- Gallery One
- Laurel Woodcock
- Jump Cuts
- Gallery Two
- Colleen Wolstenholme
- **Synaesthesiac**

**SEASON TWO**
Jump Cuts
Laurel Woodcock’s work is funny. Not laugh-out-loud funny, but it prompts you to consider the absurdity of a work like a little gin that tells you most of what you need to know without making you too tipsy. Woodcock’s work involves the idiosyncratic juxtaposition of meanings, she makes smart, intellectually stimulating artworks that share an affinity with Conceptual art but approaches it with a wholly contemporary sensibility.

Conceptual art prioritized the use of ideas over crass commercial film production, while paying homage to the coincidental link between the chairs found in real life and turning it into a Barnumesque spectacle, Woodcock transports the mythical “here” and “there” to wherever the show happens to be and suggests a longing that cannot be fulfilled.

The use of the chair as a conceptual prop is executed in Only One and Three Chairs (1966), a significant work by Joseph Kosuth, an early proponent of Conceptual art. The installation features a chair displayed alongside a photograph of the same chair and a dictionary definition of words as a means to create new avenues of production. Thus Conceptual art was multidisciplinary, eschewing traditional art making practices in favour of multiple and time-based media.

Woodcock’s work effortlessly incorporates a broad range of material forms: from video to installation to fabrication-related object. Nicholas Bourdonnais observes that artists today increasingly perform forms more than they compose them: rather than transfigure a white neon, 43 x 76 cm, edition of 3 + 1 A/P, 2011.

Cloud (2008) is a large red chair stuck to the wall, an instantly recognizable symbol familiar to anyone who has ever attended school or been granted their first homework: “We are another exaggeration of syntactic and a bit bigger perhaps at Woodcock’s employment as an instructor.” It succeeds in elevating expectations to such a ridiculous degree that it conversely invokes the potential for a spectacular failure we all want to do, but can any of us measure up to this level of excellence?

If you were hope (2003/2004/2011) takes a familiar saying typically found on tourism websites and turns it into a Barnumesque spectacle, Woodcock transports the mythical “here” and “there” to wherever the show happens to be and suggests a longing that cannot be fulfilled.

Love letters (2008) the text alternately flashes between lovelorn passages: “I think you are the only person in the world who is going to understand me.” In contrast to the white walls surrounding them suggests the gallery itself is a frame or a conceptual horizon.

Cloud (2011), another work in neon, is seemingly straightforward, the sort of cartoon text one might absent-mindedly draw in a sketchbook. More recently, clouds have come to be associated with the cloud-computing platform, a network that shares electronic data, archives and MPs. On a clear day you can do lots of things. Walk your dog. Listen to music. Write a letter. Furthermore, the manner in which the four monolithic sky-blue aluminum sheets lean in contrast to the white walls surrounding them suggests the gallery itself is a frame or a conceptual horizon.

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