Anthropophotogenic
The Anthropocene (Age of Man) is a term proposed by Nobel Laureate Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer to designate a new age following the Holocene, a geological era that began at the end of the last ice age approximately 11,000 years ago. It has been argued that this newly proposed era has its genesis in the industrial revolution, a period in which human progress leaves an indelible mark on the fossil record. 

Kelly Jazvac’s practice often uses salvaged adhesive vinyl, a type of plastic more commonly used for billboards and vehicle wraps. Jazvac’s work incorporates plastic into her art in a way that it is no longer a throwaway, but is instead something to be cherished and appreciated. By sticking, cropping, overlaying and aggregating different sized odds and ends into strangely compelling synthetic stones, Jazvac explores not only the aesthetic potential of plastic waste, but also the potential for a new geological era to be formed. This “anthropogenic” stone is formed by the burning of plastic debris that washes up on shore and combines with natural materials such as sand, fragments of minerals, coral and wood. While plastics have only been mass-produced since the 1950s, the exact degree to which they proliferate in ocean water and sediment is not currently known. Besides the environmental concerns this raises, it also suggests that the geological period in which we live, the Anthropocene, might well be preserved as part of the geological record hundreds or even thousands of years in the future.

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In 2013, the artist partnered with geologist Patricia Corcoran, an Associate Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences at Western University, on a timely research project. Together they travelled to Kamilo Beach on the southeastern tip of Hawaii to verify a new geological discovery: an artificial stone they christened plastiglomerate. This strange new stone is formed by the burning of plastic debris that washes up on shore and combines with natural materials such as sand, fragments of minerals, coral and wood. While plastics have only been mass-produced since the 1950s, the exact degree to which they proliferate in ocean water and sediment is not currently known. Besides the environmental concerns this raises, it also suggests that the geological period in which we live, the Anthropocene, might well be preserved as part of the geological record hundreds or even thousands of years in the future.

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Kelly Jazvac’s work focuses on the relationship between the promise of commercial images and the physical reality of our times. She uses salvaged adhesive vinyl to transform the quotidian into evocatively onto the floor. Despite their slick, shiny and colourful surfaces her forms evocatively onto the floor. Despite their slick, shiny and colourful surfaces her forms instinctively think of the past, of remnants of history and experience. They remind us of the promise of the future, as well as the fragility and vulnerability of the past.

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skills are central to his practice, they do not make the work interesting. These experiences and his position as a sessional instructor at the University of Windsor have helped Moores to master casting and metal fabrication. While these skills are central to his practice, they do not make the work interesting.

Moores’ work continually grapples with the complicated legacy of Minimalism in the late 1960s, artists like Carl Andre, Donald Judd, Sol Lewitt and Richard Serra decisively32 enveloped the decorative trappings of sculpture. Collectively, they destroyed the pedestal and put sculpture on the floor. They used common industrial materials. They made piles. Stacked forms, Gravity was paramount.

Disposen is a straight up bronze cast of a wooden roadway barrier. A long beam held in place by a pair of triangular supports. The barrier is both a sign and a tool used to warn cars and pedestrians away from road repairs, construction sites and accidents. It is a simple yet essential form designed to be portable and break down easily for transport and storage. These barriers have become an ubiquitous marker that is easy to use for gathering in urban areas. Moores captures the barriers essence in bronze and rather than access he draws attention to the parity of their function. Purify is central to Moores’ work. He is attracted to the simplicity and utilitarian design of barriers, crates and boxes. His multiple bronze doors may resemble maquettes for packaging but they unexpectedly evoke nonetheless, by casting the boxes in bronze, a material generally associated with antiquities and historical monuments, he transforms those otherwise utilitarian recyclables into captivating tableaux that celebrate the discarded.

Large aluminum moving blanket evokes a similar response. Inspired by a pile of shipping blankets tossed across the floor during an installation at Stratford Gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick, Moores sealed upon the beauty of this accidental composition. His reply is an amazing draped form capturing the detail of the weave and the undulating flow of navy cloth resting on the floor. Stumped is the most recent work. It depicts three satellite dishes cast in aluminum propped atop a bronze tree stump. This juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous elements is perhaps the most overtly symbolic work in the exhibition. It is emblematic of the inevitable collision between rural and urban ecologies: culture versus nature on the wrong side of town. The ordinariness of the iconography connects with the rest of Moores’ sculpture, but Stumped feels like something new, an odd and intriguing addition to the inventory. Because he reinterprets commonly mass-produced items, Moores’ work might be likened to Pop Art, but that is an erroneous assumption. Unlike Andy Warhol’s Brillo Boxes for instance, Moores’ sculpture doesn’t celebrate consumer culture. It is safe to say it does the opposite: hold a dark mirror up to the waste and folly of consumerism. Why else make so many common objects using such labour intensive methods and costly materials? Moores’ labour questions the assumption that the mass production of cheap consumer goods leads to prosperity and fulfillment. While this notion persists it seems increasingly out of touch. From his home in Windsor, Moores can practically stand on his front porch and spy Detroit just across the river, a once mighty beacon of industry turned into a bankrupt symbol of the failing American dream. Mass unemployment, broken neighbourhoods, crumbling infrastructure and yet, culture continues to struggle and thrive there.

Moores’ work resonates because it is fundamentally honest. It is unabashed in its affection for the artisanal materials found in back alleys, garages, and if you think about it, artisanal studios. He sees value in this stuff that has been left behind, dumped or discarded. He relates to things on the periphery: building materials on job sites, crates rescued one atop another in storage, or a shipping blanket abandoned morbidly tossed onto the galaxy floor. He finds poetry in the mundane.

Zeke Moores disposed was curated by Toni Hafkenscheid and Bruce Johnson. The exhibition is organized and circulated in partnership with The Art Gallery of Windsor and The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador—with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and the City of Windsor.

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