

## PPP

On the fastest route between where I work and my home, just before the 110 north freeway splits into the 101 north and 5 south, on the east side of the road under a sign that reads “Bill Keene Memorial Interchange”, (*The Four Level Interchange was the first stack interchange in the world. Its distinctive architecture has long made it a symbol of Los Angeles' post-World War II development, and it appears on numerous postcards from the 1950s and 1960s.*) there is a burnt stump of a palm tree. I have been thinking about making a sculpture from this stump for the last 6 years.



Early in the morning of December 8th, 2014 there was a historic fire in Downtown Los Angeles, adjacent to the northbound 110 freeway and just south of the 101 freeway connector. Fires are expected in Los Angeles and the state of California. We have a whole season that is referred to as “fire season” (*it mostly overlaps with the fall, or ‘autumn’*). As I write this, Los Angeles sits underneath a cover of smoke coming from fires across the whole state and the scale of devastation has pushed it into a global news story, so this is probably already known to you.

Wildfires are catching up with earthquakes to become LA's signature major adverse event resulting from natural (and increasingly unnatural) processes of the earth.



But the fire on December 8, 2014, was a different kind of blaze. At the time, the Da Vinci apartment complex was under construction and was a timber skeleton. The sprinkler system had been set up the prior week but was not yet activated. Basically, the construction site was inviting a giant bonfire. “If you build it they will come.” And early on the morning of December 8th, an antihero, armed with an accelerant, started a fire deep inside the complex that would

burn unnoticed for a couple of hours. By the time anyone *did* notice the fire, it had consumed the wooden structure and was spreading onto the freeway, looking for more material to burn. [The fire could be seen from all the points of elevation around Los Angeles.](#) Many videos were uploaded to YouTube from the point of view of [people driving alongside the flames](#) as they skirted the freeway.



Unfortunately, the Da Vinci complex was eventually built to completion and stands today -- a gross and hostile citadel erected by one of Los Angeles' most predatory villains. His name is Geoffrey Palmer. His efforts over several decades have attracted the title of Los Angeles' "worst developer" and his legacy presents itself all over the city, particularly in the vast population of unhoused residents. (For some context, Los Angeles City and county are enduring an affordable housing crisis, rendering 65,000+ of the county's inhabitants without secure shelter.) Palmer's "oeuvre" consists of several "masterpieces" -- sprawling, fortress-like apartment complexes, all fabricated in his favorite faux mediterranean style of architecture. Palmer unironically refers to the buildings collectively as the "Renaissance Collection" (he is, afterall, an art-loving LACMA trustee!). The properties have names like The Orsini, The Visconti, The Piero, The Da Vinci, The Lorenzo, The Medici -- names lifted from Italian public figures during Medieval and Renaissance eras, names Palmer derives from his embarrassing (and erroneous) understanding that Italians were the first to settle Los Angeles.

Palmer is a real piece of shit.

Initially, my idea had been to title this exhibition "Renaissance", followed up by another exhibition titled "Medieval Times", but because of a series of aligning events and coincidences I decided to call this exhibition "PPP".





In the most recent Chinese zodiac year of the rooster, I made three exhibitions titled: “P”, “p”, and “PII” -- variations on my initials as a formula for sequencing shows together. [“P” took place in New York City in the spring of 2018 and was a single large painting illustrating me walking to the store in Hollywood.](#) On and off this year I’ve been trying to write a book about my work, so I’m not going to enter into detail about the painting here because it’s not the subject of this text and it will end up in the book (if I ever finish it). [Later in 2018, the exhibition “PII” took place in Nottingham and included a black and white version of said painting in “P”.](#) Great fish & chips in Nottingham.





Last year, I started playing poker and this year it has completely absorbed me. The considerable amount of time I can dedicate to it has been enabled by the novel boredom of the last 6 months. Most of the poker I've played this year has run on an app called Pokerrrr2, which is a stupid name and I don't like the app, but like I said I am bored and Los Angelenos are still encouraged to stay home and poker has gripped my interest so I can't be picky about how it's administered. My screen name on Pokerrrr2 is "Ppp". I typed "Ppp" into my

profile without thinking about it too much when I was setting up my account. Sometimes I think I should change my screen name to something like "Asian\_Goddess".

Developing friendships through poker is a strange set-up because the arrangement is that your friends— who are also opponents — are actively trying to take your money, and vice versa. (And it *is* more pleasurable to take money from some than others.) Poker, like sports, exists in a competitive framework that produces winners and losers. And even though luck is present via uncontrollable elements in the game, it is clear who is skilled and unskilled when you look at results over time. Though art is contested, artists are not formally designated 'wins' or 'losses'. These are abstracted into professional accolades, or implied by a market or the nodes on a CV. One can make an argument for who are the "best" artists, or most "influential" — and maybe that is somewhat measurable? — but the art industry is somewhat peculiar in that the audience and practitioners are the same group of people so anybody making qualitative claims tends to hold an investment in the conclusions of those claims. (Macaulay Culkin once made the argument to me that because his Banksy had appreciated 300% since he bought it, it qualified as important art. Was he wrong? People love Banksy.) Art is more like an ongoing contest without an endpoint. If you're an artist I guess you don't really "win", you just hope to make it to your next show.

A couple of months ago, I received a government grant administered by the Small Business Association, called the Payroll Protection Plan, or PPP. Lots of Ps. Because of the timing, the loan was used in the production of this exhibition. So, that plus what I mentioned above and you get the title of the exhibition "PPP".



Other funds to finance “PPP” were raised by the sale of a once-treasured item of clothing: a 1996 AW Issey Miyake jacket, famously worn by Robin Williams at the “Flubber” premiere ([Playboi Carti wore it in the “Magnolia” video too](#)). I had two ([one in a different colour \[vs. ‘color’ without a ‘u’ because this show is in England\]](#)) so I was happy to part with one. I nearly sold the same item last year. Good thing I didn’t because the secondary market for certain vintages of

Japanese-designed clothing has attracted a lot of new buyers in recent years and I was offered a surprising amount more for it this year compared to last. The jacket was sold to this renowned vintage menswear seller that supplies to both civilian hypebeasts and famous hypebeasts, like Travis Scott, Yachty, and Lil Uzi Vert (no stylist) etc. I knew they were buying to resell it and when I looked at their website the following day, it was being advertised at double the amount of money they’d just deposited in my PayPal account. By virtue of entering their inventory, the value of the object doubled. I suppose there is a neat symmetry with how art often assumes value – and how an artist’s prices might double the moment their work is represented by a gallery whose endorsement is seen as financially promising. So in the end I used one speculative marketplace to fund the production for another. The fashion retailer who doubled the price is called “Middle Man”. Haha.





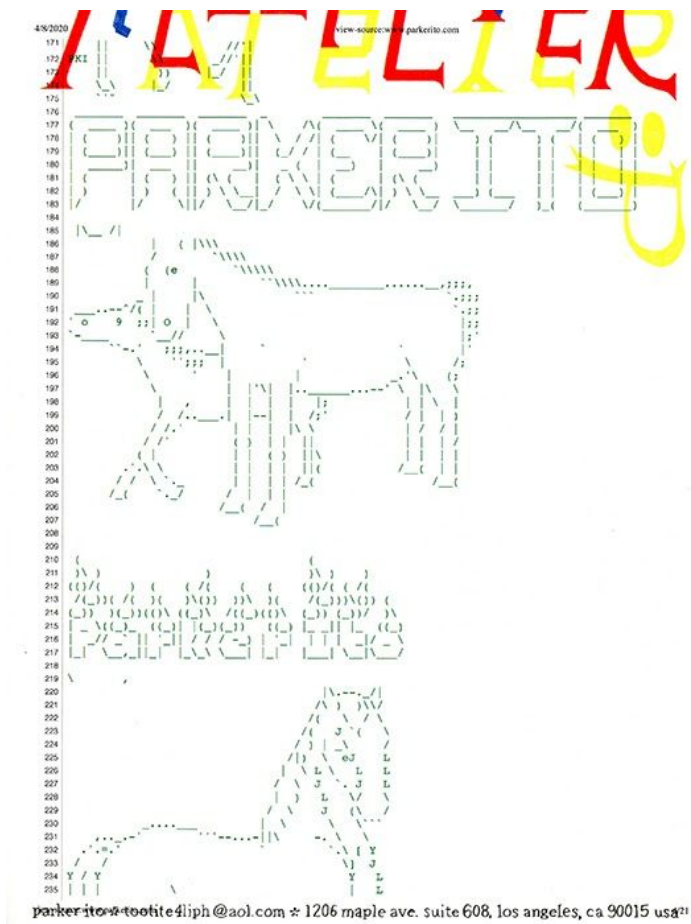
Issey Miyake AW1996 Cargo Bomber Jacket

\$6,000.00

The press image for “PPP” is a screenshot of the jacket for sale on the Middle Man website but I bought this particular Issey Miyake jacket on Yahoo Auctions.

My friend – a former Tumblr prodigy and ordained Ikebana practitioner from Sacramento – introduced me to Yahoo Auctions. It’s a Japanese-only auction site, meaning they don’t trade internationally. You have to use a proxy buyer to get the clothes (or whatever else you’re buying) shipped outside Japan. I use a proxy service called “Buyee”. Over the years, after having bought several items through this site I noticed that the clothes retained this certain scent and I became fixated on what was creating such

a consistent smell across second hand clothing that originated from the same country, but different environments. Was it a type of Japanese cardboard used in shipping supplies? Or a common laundry detergent used in Japan? Maybe it was the warehouse of the proxy buyer? For [“Longevity Buns” \(an exhibition that opened in Los Angeles in February 2020\)](#) I asked my friend ([UFO Parfums](#)) to create a fragrance based on this elusive Yahoo Auctions smell. The scent was then sprayed on a custom letterhead designed by Hugh Frost from Landfill Editions ([Hugh designed the artist book “P” that accompanied my show in Nottingham](#)). The letterhead read “Atelier P” on the frontside but if you folded the paper correctly it would reveal a hidden message that reads “yello’ fever” ([inspired by the Shorty’s Skateboards shirt that when folded correctly read “fuck you.” I think Alyx made a derivative version](#)). The paper with the scent on it was being run through sculptures that function as printers that had been covered in a marble patina using a process called [hydrodipping \(sometimes called water transfer printing or immersion printing\)](#). Printed on the scent-covered letterheads was the source code of my website [parkerito.com](#) in PDF form. The idea being everytime the marble printer sculptures are shown the source code is printed on the scented letterhead. As the source code for ParkerIto.com is constantly being updated, every time the work is shown its form is different.



My conclusion is that this confounding Yahoo auctions scent is some kind of average smell of the Japanese population. This smell is a culmination of environmental conditions, diet--things that are unique to the habits of people living in Japan and what hangs around in the air – the atmosphere. It's the same proposition as researchers in America concluding that the “thrift store smell” is just an average American human smell.

Before I shipped the Issey Miyake jacket to the buyer I scribbled a “P” on the inside of the tag in one of the pockets. You’d never know it’s there if you didn’t already know it was there. If I happen to see someone wearing this style of jacket I’ll be able to check if it’s the one that belonged to me (if they allow me to look inside

and check). When I first started writing this text the jacket was still unsold, but today I checked again and it was sold. I hope Lil Uzi Vert bought it.



The P drawing on the jacket is the first piece I finished for this show.





The covetous behavior (of mostly young men) towards streetwear has evolved into an appetite for rare vintage designer clothing. Selling any kind of rare vintage menswear is hell because unless you've created your own platform, you will most likely use Grailed.com-- perhaps the worst online community (with the obvious exception of online communities housing hate groups..) My own interactive highlights include negotiating a sale with a 17 year old in Zurich who requested I hold off on selling my jacket because he was going to ask his parents for \$3,000 to make the purchase, but he 'needed a little time.'



**dylantorralbas (58)**  
about 3 hours ago

Lmk how that sounds cuz I'm willing to do from 3000-3200 and I pay shipping but again can't till tomorrow cuz I'll need to get the cash from my parents



**me**    
about 1 hour ago

do your parents collect contemporary art?



**dylantorralbas (58)**  
about 1 hour ago

I wouldn't say there collectors my dad has some for investments

I remember when I was 18 reading an online thread about a guy who wanted to sell his clothes because he was approaching 30 years old and wanted to start dressing more maturely. Specifically, he was talking about selling some Dior Homme pieces from the mid 2000s. I was quite enamored with these particular collections when Hedi Slimane was actually doing interesting stuff. The idea of dressing your age has never made sense to me. And I don't know if that's because I have a job, for which I employ myself to make art, that allows me to wear whatever clothes I want and am therefore less sensitive to this. But also I think that the popularity of streetwear has meant that full grown men keep dressing like 13 year olds into their 50s. So I've got that going for me. (I don't wear streetwear.)



"PPP" is part 4 in a series of exhibitions I realized this year starting with ["Longevity Buns"](#) at Chateau Shatto earlier this year. Part 2 was installed in my [dad's backyard](#) after "Longevity Buns" got shut down because of germs. [Part 3](#) was some artworks installed in my apartment during Los Angeles' most vigilant stage of lockdown. The title "Longevity Buns" comes from a Chinese dessert styled like a peach eaten during times of celebration (the peach being a symbol of a long prosperous life). I love longevity buns. My favorite ones are the custard filled ones, although this version is less common. "Longevity Buns" follows another

exhibition I did last year titled “Citron Biskvier”. [Citron Biskvier](#) is a type of Swedish dessert.



Eventually I would like to do a show titled “Sticky Toffee Pudding” after my all time favorite dessert.

I’m not even going to be in London to install this show. What a strange thing to work on a show and not even install it, let alone see it installed. It’s a bit anticlimactic. Especially a shame because I researched a [spot to do outdoor pull ups](#) right by the gallery. My travel schedule the last couple of years has made it really hard to stay consistent and reach my fitness goals (which are more motivated by aesthetics than wellness,

so should maybe just be called ‘vanity goals.’). I have no travel schedule now which has been great for exercising consistently and not eating too many desserts. I’ve even managed to reach some of my 2020 fitness goals way ahead of schedule. Handstand pushups is an exercise I have been trying to master. I always do this exercise in the same area of my apartment and it’s created this darkish spot from where my feet touch the bedroom wall and slide up and down, leaving a trace of the pigment that transfers from the fibers of my sock. I think of it as a drawing.



Artists who write a press release before they make the work: this is a category of artist, or a kind of art. It’s usually easy to spot this kind of work because you can often see the objects trying breathlessly to catch up to the discourse. This kind of work is *about* something. And these types of artists can sum it up for you in a paragraph or so. All those exercises of doing artist statements in school are paying off. These artists commonly use phrases like “I’m interested in.... Or I’m investigating”. What does that even mean? What does it mean to be interested in a specific thing? Does being interested in

something have any bearing on how effective an artwork can be? Like, if someone told me they were interested in skunks is a painting of a skunk more interesting?



'Poker solvers' are software programs developed to provide users game theory optimal (GTO) solutions to specific poker situations. Users input various scenarios from which certain actions are recommended, with the solvers sometimes suggesting plays that aren't necessarily intuitive or thought to be "standard." The software has influenced how many players approach

the game and you often see players memorizing and studying the optimal decisions suggested by the softwares and then enacting those suggestions in real life game scenarios. This is a cold and absolutist approach, one that ignores the human element of poker.

The antithesis to the GTO style of play is what is referred to as Exploitative play- an exploitative strategy is one where you identify and exploit imbalances in the strategies of your opponents. In essence you're not playing the cards, you're playing the opponent. But this can also open the door for your opponents to exploit you back.

I bring this up because I think the discussion around GTO vs. Exploitative play is a good analogy for artmaking, and thus informs a way of thinking about how in art, one communicates what they are making. I should mention however that currently, most successful poker players are probably using a mixture of GTO and Exploitative play depending on the situation. It's good to be flexible.

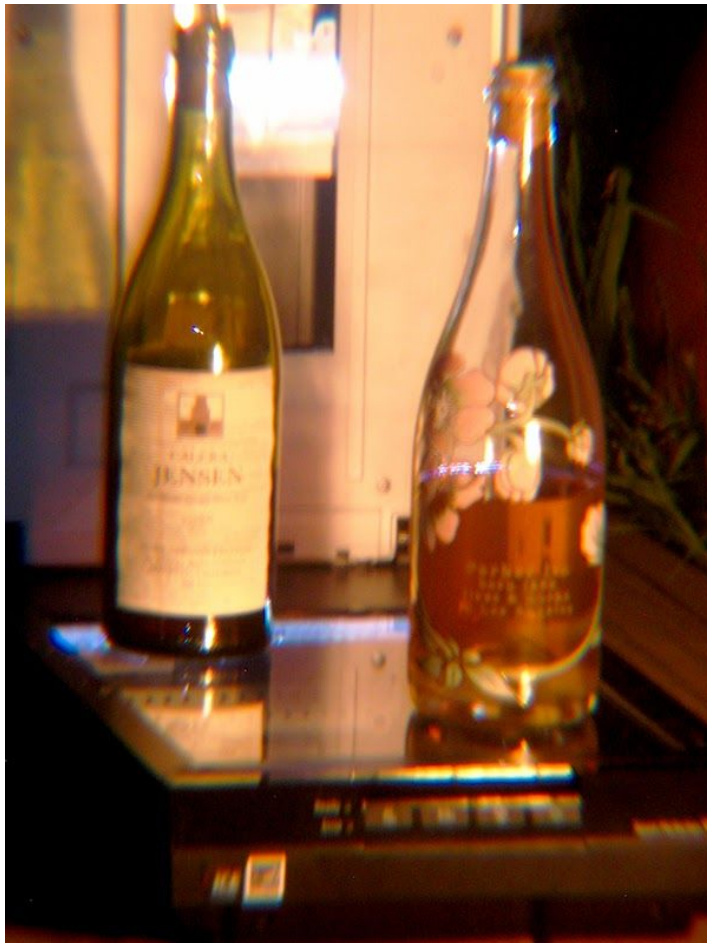


Press releases :(

It has been years since I've attached a press release to an exhibition. I don't like the idea of explaining everything in a show or having a gallery dictate to their audience how they should experience and interpret work before they encounter it. Plus, my art is not really *about* anything; it's closer to a kind of system that I put things into and other things come out of.

I don't like being attached to a CV, either. I haven't exhibited with a CV since 2015. (This means my current CV is not publicly available, although I took this approach after showing professionally already for several years so there are remains of old CVs floating on the Internet..) Maybe CVs used to be used as an index to know where to look for more materials or documentation, but my website performs this function and CVs seem mostly concerned with conveying a pedigree.

We're talking about this because "Longevity Buns" (parts 1 and 2) [featured a sculpture titled CV](#), which is what it sounds like. As the sculpture "CV" (2020) is an over articulation of a document I used to withhold, so is this press release.



"CV" consists of a modified Epson scanner with its lid open and lights choreographed to scroll in different sequences, with two bottles set on the scanner bed. One of the bottles is some wine I purchased-- a 1986 California Pinot Noir called Calera from Vineyard Jensen -- a year and varietal combination that was harder to find than expected. It's not that it's a particularly coveted wine, it's more that I wanted a wine that was produced in California (where I was born), a pinot noir (my favorite wine even though I don't really drink), made in 1986 (the year I was born). Put these elements together and let's call it a "biography wine". The wine bottle is only half full and that is because I drank half the bottle and recorked it. Each label on the wine bottle was assiduously removed, flattened and ran through my inkjet

printer. On the front label, my current CV up until the “Longevity Buns” exhibition at Chateau Shatto is printed. On the back label is a self portrait of myself I drew last year after I attended a friend's wedding. In the drawing I'm wearing the outfit I wore to the wedding, which I spent a lot of time putting together. Most of the elements of the outfit were sourced on Yahoo Auctions.

The second bottle on the scanner is a bottle of Perrier Jouet Champagne that I gifted to my girlfriend for her birthday one year. The champagne was drunk many years ago and now the empty bottle has been turned into a beautiful piss receptacle. The pee in the Perrier Jouet bottle is the Calera Jensen passed through my body. On this Perrier Jouet bottle I've had my biography line (the one standard for wall labels and exhibition materials), “Parker Ito, Born 1986, Lives and works in Los Angeles”, etched into the glass. (Sometimes when I am all alone in my studio I pee in bottles because I'm too lazy to go to the shared bathroom down the hall. I aim to drink 1 gallon of water a day, so lots of peeing, lots of filling up bottles. Sometimes I'd hide the bottles in the studio and then forget they were even there. I always thought the bottles looked beautiful when the light hit them the right way. I often hear stories about artists peeing in vessels in their studios. Although sometimes it's a collector who catches sight of the pee bottle and not your assistant ;) ) While these bottles sit on the scanner bed and as the scanner head changes colors and speeds, a hi-8 video camera (the same camera I used to shoot the video [“Apartment: Clippings Studio/ Effects”](#), also shown in “Longevity Buns”) sits on a tripod capturing a live view of the bottles being scanned. This visual is fed into a digital projector which sends the image onto a wall. On top of the digital projection is another projection-- a group of slides made from images I shot at the Carlsbad Flower Fields on an old cell phone. The photos were taken sometime in 2012/ 2013 and I didn't mean for them to be *art* at the time of capture but they have since found their way in. Interspersed in between the flower field slides are cropped screenshots from a NY Times article published on the day I was born. The article is about California Pinot Noirs and how they really aren't very good. (I can confirm this, the wine was unpleasant.)

“CV” is going to be installed in “PPP”, and my thinking was since I had turned my curriculum vitae, something not publicly available, into an artwork I should also make an attempt to un-reject the convention of preparing a press release for an exhibition. Maybe this press release could be considered a piece in the exhibition. Same as the “P” drawn on the Issey jacket tag -- things in orbit but not within.

So here it is. And if anyone asks for my CV in the future, they have a sculpture they can look at that will convey a lot more about my work than a list of professional engagements.



I had planned to make a letterhead as a follow up to the “yello’ fever” letterhead that would have this press release printed on it. Something gallery visitors could take away with them as a piece of the show. This time though the letterhead would read “azn pride”. I emailed a graphic designer, American-living-in-Berlin guy I went to college with about designing the letterhead but I never received a reply. I don’t know this person well but we used to get mixed up in college. I would describe him as “ambiguously asian”, like myself. For this reason I really wanted him to be the one to design the letterhead but it’s not happening. (He’s probably very busy.)



The burnt tree stump on the side of the freeway is the only physical trace that I can find that the Da Vinci fire took place. It is confusing as to why this particular stump was not removed from the site. Large amounts of money and time were spent restoring and rebuilding the site, but you leave one burnt tree stump? Maybe they meant to remove it but forgot, or maybe they thought no one would notice? I noticed. Driving by the stump almost-daily for the last 6 years I’ve thought it would be great if somehow I could get the tree stump in its entirety-- excavate the whole thing. I Imagine this would require permitting, possibly a crane, and a team of excavators. I don’t have the resources to do that, nor do I want to engage the public or private authorities that preside over the patch of dirt that holds the stump, so being pragmatic I decided I would chop off a piece of the tree stump and use this smaller piece to forge into a sculpture.





The actual process of acquiring the chunk of tree stump was very uneventful even though I had built it up in my head. On June 30th, 2020 I drove to a spot where I knew I could access a pathway to the stump. I had spent a lot of time looking at this spot, driving by it at night to understand the activity of this interstitial space. The entrance is on a street called Temple that I like to drive down when I decide to take side streets, not freeways, home from the studio. In the middle of the day, I hopped up a wall into an area where a fence had been torn back and then climbed and walked to the stump. It was farther than I anticipated and with the weeds being overgrown and cars from the freeway honking at me it was a little bit hectic. I had

spent time on the internet researching how to cut palm trees since they are soft and stringy, not dense like hardwood. For my cutting tool, I settled on an old axe that I borrowed from my dad. The tree stump was brittle and posed none of the resistance that I'd imagined. In hindsight, this makes sense as it had been partially charred by the fire-- so it's like a giant piece of charcoal with a stringier structure. This meant that I could just pull a bit off with my hands alone -- very poetic! It makes me think of how Michelangelo said he could see David inside that giant marble block and in carving the form he was "setting David free". ("The Renaissance Collection.")



The first thing I did with the tree stump when I returned to my studio was use a piece of charcoal from the tree to draw an Amabie. Amabie is a Japanese Yokai ([folklore creature](#)) described as having long hair, a mouth like a bird's bill, covered in scales from the neck down and three-legged. It is said to have appeared in the sea May of 1846 and prophesied: "Good harvest will continue for six years from the current year; if disease spreads, draw a picture of me and show the picture of me to those who fall ill and they will be cured". I spent the month of July drawing an Amabie every day I was in my studio. Maybe a version of Amabie would have featured nicely on the "azn pride" letterhead that was never designed.

In bronze casting there is a process referred to as [direct burnout](#). There are no molds created to make wax positives, instead one puts an object (usually coated in wax) directly into a slurry of silica sand and "burns out" that object with heat once the slurry has hardened into a ceramic shell. This process only works with certain kinds of materials, typically natural materials that can be easily destroyed by heat. ([My piece of palm tree is already burnt and completely dried out, it is optimal for a direct burnout cast as moisture can create issues with the process.](#)) Because the object you're replicating is destroyed in the process, the outcome has a higher variance. Like poker, even when you do everything right, there are still uncontrollable factors. ([Pocket aces, the highest starting hand, only wins 85% of the time.](#)) Objects cast via direct burnout are always unique, singular objects, in comparison to the more common ["lost wax positive method"](#) which enables the same identical form to be repeated endlessly.

For several years I considered what I would do with this tree stump if I could get my hands on it, and then that of course turned into what I would do with a piece of this tree stump if I could get my hands on it.

Why not finish the job?

Why not burn it down, destroy the stump with fire, but transform the thing into something else simultaneously. I like this whole process because the original chunk of tree becomes this in-between-object; it's not the tree anymore when it's translated to bronze, but it sort of is-- the tree has been vaporized and now it's more permanent than it ever could have been. Maybe it's a way of safeguarding the memory of the fire should the on-site tree stump ever be removed. There is a viral video of a [geologist scooping molten lava into a bucket](#) filled with liquid. As the lava instantly cools, it creates new forms. It's the literal act of transforming landscape into sculpture.

Gating systems are used in metal casting to provide a clear pathway for molten metal filling out a form. These gates end up as wax rods attached to a wax positive, or in the case of a direct burnout, attached directly to the object being cast. Once the gated object has been slurried, the wax positive and object/positive will be burnt out. Usually the gates are cut from the final forms before they are finished. There arose a trend in late 20th century sculpture in which artists left gates on bronzes because they wanted to elevate – or idolize – the process and didn't want to conceal the mechanisms of production. “Brecht!” I think of them as the parents that save the placenta after childbirth and consume it later, maybe blended in a smoothie. They want to embrace one of the principle instruments of the process, not discard it. In resolving the stump sculpture, I also left the gates on the bronze, then I polished them so their finish is reflective and sexier than the finish of the stump, which is the focus of the work. In this questionable metaphor that I've decided on, I'm not eating the placenta, I am saving the circumcision foreskin and using it later to create stem cells for use in [aesthetic skin care treatments](#), like micro needling. While the gate is completely polished the tree stump is finished in a classic bronze patina. The meeting between these two finishes is a hard edge. The gates are like a belly button, an artefact of being born.

The bronze tree stump sits on the bed of a modified Epson scanner. The title of the piece is “Renaissance”.





In this segment of my first draft of this essay(?) I started to write about the painting in the exhibition titled “red light”. I wrote about the whole series: the process, the technologies used, how skilled hand painting and a clumsy machine that is three decades old and a poor-quality digital point-and-shoot camera bake their idiosyncratic methods of interpretation into the painting so the result is formally very simple but dense with information, blah blah blah.. But then, who cares? And my experience of people encountering these paintings does not often elicit “can you explain them to me?” The transmission happens at the site of the work and does not require much of an accompanying explanation.

An anecdote about the painting for this show:  
My assistants, who possess the technical ability to

make these paintings, have described it as a process of enhancing what comes out of the wire-jet printer, similar to how makeup is used to enhance your face, not obliterate or obscure it. This makes the actual painting process quite counterintuitive for skilled technical painters. Another analogy for this style of painting would be photo retouching in Photoshop. This kind of look is achieved more easily with certain kinds of paints-- jelly-like paints, thin, with poor quality pigments that spread and blend into the surface more effectively, versus luscious, heavily pigmented paints. A studio favorite is Daley Rowney’s Georgian “Brilliant Rose”, a shitty student-grade paint carried by one art store on the westside of Los Angeles.

In addition to the tree stump I also cast a plastic orchid tray out of stainless steel. The plastic orchid holder was actually something I collected while I was installing “Longevity Buns”, as the show included live orchids in the installation that were transported in trays. At mother’s tankstation I’ve placed the tray on a scanner and covered the stems in white bronze clips, cast from the typical plastic clips that fix orchids to their stakes. When I was making the clips I was thinking of a way to be able to make an installation anywhere, anytime, that could be easily carried in my pockets.

In “PPP” both the casts of the orchid tray and palm tree stump will be displayed on modified scanners. I use the term “display” because I think of the scanners as being like pedestals that have various different objects placed on them from exhibition to exhibition. “Longevity Buns” had scanners with a series of [stainless steel knight sculptures placed on the beds](#). The model of the scanner is the Epson Perfection V550, the scanner model I have been using in my studio for the past 7 years. I’ve hired someone to hack the Epson V550 so that I can control the color and speed of the moving scanner head. Lights in the scanner that were originally white have been replaced with a grouping of programmable RGB LEDs. Each scanner has also been hacked so that both the top scan bar and the bottom scan bar are able to move freely and simultaneously while the scanner lid is open. This simple gesture was complicated to program as the scanners have their own proprietary electrical configuration that is unlike every other scanner that is commercially produced. The end result is a scanner that can be programmed to perform intricate sequences of flashing and morphing color, while the scanner heads change speeds. Each scanner exhibited has a unique programmed cycle ranging from 15 - 25 minutes.



There is an old cliché that is often applied to conceptual art that states: a work of art is completed by a viewer. I am not sure if I believe that is a quality specific to art. Flavor only exists in food once it is tasted. Germs need a host to become disease. Applied to the scanners, the idea of art needing viewership becomes an interesting proposition, as the scanners are their own audience, they take the cliché of art needing a viewer and collapse it into one feedback loop of looking and being looked at. They become an object, it's display mechanism, and audience. (I still would like people to look at my art, though..) For me, these scanner sculptures are an analogy for

the way information and ideas are absorbed, digested, and formatted – which is to say, *scanned*. Are these machines that re-perform the hermetic dance between the creators and audiences of contemporary art?? Often, people who've seen the scanners will ask me about what is happening to the data being captured by the scanners. Data from the scanners is being captured but it is not accessible in their current configuration. Like a Sunday painter, the scanners are making pictures for themselves and putting them away never to be seen.

Parker Ito, 2020

\*updated 10-13-20