

Ian Gerson : *Tremble*

For the Front Gallery at Art League Houston, I will share a new series of 5 body-scale weavings made of found materials specific to Houston and the Gulf Coast region. Stemming from my encounters with (un)natural disasters, mental health struggles, and my trans journey, the work asks how a trans experience, embodying adaptability and resiliency, can be looked to as a model for surviving in precarity. I am drawn to the Front Gallery for its direct visibility from the street, allowing for a wide audience to access the work even if they do not actually enter the gallery.

This exhibition builds on my two most recent shows, *Return* (Galveston Artist Residency, summer 2021) and *Crossing* (BOX13, April 2022), in which I have been creating experimental hand-weavings using ropes culled from Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel, dried plants, mylar emergency blankets, clothing scraps, and photographs. *Tremble* furthers my investigations into ghosts of industrial landscapes, trans consciousness, and non-linear perceptions time and place.

When a viewer approaches the Front Gallery from Montrose, they will see a vertical loosely-woven tapestry hung directly inside the tall glass wall between the two front doors. This piece is similar to those seen in *Crossing*, but at a larger scale, approximately 8' x 3' and incorporating text referencing the title of the show. The text intentionally challenges and refuses easy legibility, as a metaphor for my trans experience. Once inside the Front Gallery, the viewer encounters a series of stitched sculptures supported by wooden armatures. These works are made by first weaving and tying together long tapestries to be used as yardage that I then cut and sew, like garments, into permeable flexible forms. This work differs and evolves from that in *Crossing* as these pieces are more architectural, freestanding and leaning, taking on bodily references. Collaborating with gravity, these tangled phantasms shimmer, slouch, and swoop. Disparate materials from fluorescent construction netting to moss balls form new connections, weaving together new ways of relating to place, community, and self.

Accompanying the exhibition is a publication, a limited-edition risograph or inkjet booklet, featuring images and short texts by myself and two invited critical writers. These are available by a small suggested donation and will be funded partially by either ALH (depending on funds) and/or an external grant.

*Tremble* takes its name from Edouard Glissant's use of the term, "un tremblement," of which he writes, "The thinking of trembling is not the thinking of fear. It is the thinking that is opposed to the system." Building on this idea of the trembling, I follow in Paul B. Preciado's footsteps and am fixated on how trans embodies the tremble; in the voice on T, in the refusal to conform to normative legibility, and in expanding the bounds of the possible. In addition to Glissant and Preciado, I will be thinking with Anna Tsing, Donna Haraway, and Brigitte Baptiste, as well as friends and mentors as I move forward in this body of work.

Ian Gerson : *Tremble*  
 Working Estimated Budget

Expenses Description	Estimated	Expense Stipends for Writers (2)	Commissioned text
for \$1000 publication (500 words @ \$1 per word) x 2			
Stipend for Designer Payment for one designer to help with the layout of publication	\$500		
Printing Costs* Costs of printing an edition of 100 publications	\$600		
Photography/ Documentation document work	Hiring photographer to \$200		
Installation Assistant help (\$25/hr)	28-hr days of installation \$400		
Expense Total	\$2,700		

\*May be able to get in-kind donations of paper or ink, which would lower this item.

## Artist Statement:

Ian Gerson is a queer interdisciplinary artist and educator of trans experience based in Houston, TX. Working at the intersections of sculpture, installation, and community engagement, their recent work investigates climate injustices, trans consciousness, and personal and collective healing. Ian has shared sculptures and immersive installations at art spaces in the US and Mexico including BOX13, TX (2022), Galveston Artist Residency, TX (2021), Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, NC (2020), The Bronx Museum, NY (2014), AIR Gallery, NY (2013), and Socrates Sculpture Park, NY (2010). Ian has participated in several residencies including Galveston Artist Residency (2020-21), Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, ME (2016), MacDowell, NH (2015), Millay Arts, NY (2015), Snug Harbor Artist Residency, NY (2014), and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Swing Space, NY (2011). Their work has been supported by a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship (2016), a Foundation for Contemporary Art Grant (2015), and most recently a Public Art Grant from the City of Galveston, TX (2022-23). Ian holds an MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University (2018) and a BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin (2008).

# IAN GERSON

[www.iangerson.com](http://www.iangerson.com)

## Education

2018 Masters of Fine Arts, Sculpture + Extended Media, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

2016 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Madison, ME

2008 Bachelors of Fine Arts, Studio Art, The University of Texas, Austin, TX

## Grants, Fellowships, and Residencies

2021-22 Galveston Public Art Grant, Galveston, TX

2020-21 Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston, TX

2019 Richmond Memorial Health Fund, HEArts Program, Richmond, VA

2016 VCU Graduate School Assistantship, Richmond, VA

2016 NYFA Fellowship in Environmental Structures, New York, NY

2015 MacDowell, Peterborough, NH

2015 Millay Arts, Austerlitz, NY

2015 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, New York, NY

2015 Bronx Museum Artists in the Marketplace Program, Bronx, NY

2014 Snug Harbor Artist Residency Program, Staten Island, NY

2013 NYFA Emergency Relief Grant, New York, NY

2012 A.I.R. Gallery Emma Bee Bernstein Fellowship, Brooklyn, NY

2012 Smack Mellon Hot Picks, Brooklyn, NY

2011 LMCC Swing Space Residency, Governors Island, NY

2010 Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, NY

## Solo Exhibitions and Performances

2022 *Invisible Landmarks* , Galveston, TX (upcoming public art project)

2022 *Crossing* , BOX13, Houston, TX

2018 *The Break* , VCU MFA Thesis Exhibition, The Anderson, Richmond, VA

2015 *Future Floor* , Tomato House, Brooklyn NY

2015 *Night Drawing* , cloyingPARLOR, Brooklyn, NY

2014 *Miles Mariner* , Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Staten Island, NY

2013 *Radio: WAVE* , Dumbo Arts Festival, Brooklyn, NY

2013 *Rock Jetty Deli & Food Corp* , A.I.R. Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

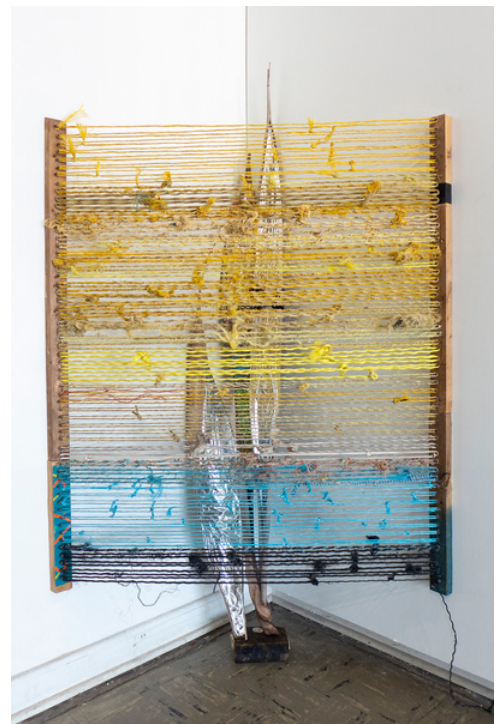
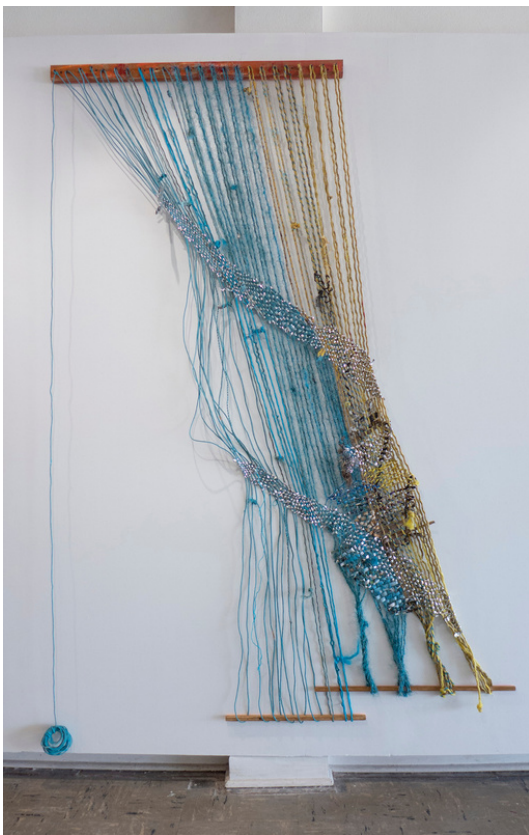
2011 *Nooten New Ground Center* , LMCC Studios, Building 110, Governors Island, NY

## Selected Group Exhibitions and Performances

2022 Title TBD, USSR, Mexico City, MX (upcoming, in collaboration with Liang Xi Luscombe)  
 2021 *2020-2021 Artist in Residence Exhibition* , Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston, TX  
 2020 *DRAWN* , Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC (catalogue)  
 2020 *Geografia Relativa* , curated by Guadalajara90210, Mexico City, MX  
 2017 *SkowheganPerforms* , Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, NY (in collaboration with Junte)  
 2017 *Snakes and Ladders Activation* , The Anderson, Richmond, VA  
 2017 *JUNTE* , Mecanismos, MECA Art Fair, San Juan, Puerto Rico (curated by Carla Acevedos-Yates)  
 2017 *Night Fruit* , VCU Candidacy Exhibition, 1515 W. Broad, Richmond, VA  
 2016 *For Sale By Owner* , Madison, ME  
 2015 *Bronx Calling: Third AIM Biennial* , The Bronx Museum, Bronx, NY  
 2014 *Recuperative Tactics* , Art in General, New York, NY (curated by Lisi Raskin)  
 2013 *Bodega Night* , The Center for Strategic Art and Agriculture, Brooklyn, NY  
 2013 *Connie's Tour* , La Bial, El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY (walking performance in collaboration with w/ *Tree Analogue*)  
 2012 *Artists Respond* , River to River Fest, New York, NY (walking tour performance)  
 2012 *Shore Fruit* , Rockaway Beach Boardwalk, NY (durational performance)  
 2010 *Cityscape: Surveying the Urban Biotope* , Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, NY  
 2010 *Travel Valley* , empty Italian ice storefront, Brooklyn, NY (created and curated)  
 2009 *Polymict* , Okay Mountain, Austin, TX  
 2009 *Store* , Co-Lab, Austin, TX (in collaboration with Warren Aldrich)  
 2009 *This is the Way We Eat* , Creative Research Laboratory, Austin, TX (in collaboration with Mark Aguilar)

## Publications

Lillian Hoang, "[Imaginative Installations](#) ," Lillian Hoang, *OutSmart Magazine* , July 1, 2021  
 "Rock Jetty Deli & Food Corp.," [Rockaway Beach: Art and Adaptive Capacity Post-Hurricane Sandy](#) , Chris Viaggio, ed., RITA, 2017  
 Dan Cooper, "[A Deep-Sea Experience Comes to a Gallery in Brooklyn](#) ," *VICE* , August 10, 2015  
 John Chiaverina, "[Brooklyn, In Space and Under the Sea: Ian Gerson's 'Future Floor' Inhabits Tomato House](#)," *ARTnews* , July 21, 2015  
 Bradley Dale, "[With Spaceship Installation in Brownsville, the Art World Digs Deeper into Brooklyn](#) ," *NY Observer* , July 15, 2015  
 Molly McCommons, "[Ian Gerson at A.I.R. Gallery](#) ," *Publicide Inc.* (blog), June 21, 2013  
 Craig Hunter, "[Rock Jetty Deli Food Corp. by Ian Gerson](#) ," *Seagull Hair* (blog), June 16, 2013  
 Alison Bowen, "[Looking At, and Questioning Nature](#) ," *The New York Times* , May 1, 2010  
 Katie Anania, "[Critics' Picks](#)," *ArtForum* , 2009





## Image List

1. Gerson\_01, Ian Gerson, Threshold, 2022, found ropes, dried palm fronds, mylar emergency blanket, found and hand-dyed mesh, clothing scraps, found plastic strap suspended from painted and stained poplar and pine. 56" x 36" x 2"

One in a series of 5 weavings created using ropes found along the edges of Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel. Pictured as part of *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

2. Gerson\_02, Collaboration, 2022, found ropes, dried palm fronds, live oak moss balls, mylar emergency blanket, found and hand-dyed mesh and brass suspended from painted and rusted bayou water-stained pine. 53" x 32" x 2"

Two in a series of 5 weavings created using ropes found along the edges of Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel. Pictured as part of *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

3. Gerson\_03, Ian Gerson, Survival, 2022, found ropes, mylar, five favorite t-shirts and one favorite pair of shorts suspended from walnut and painted pine. 62" x 33" x 2"

Three in a series of 5 weavings created using ropes found along the edges of Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel. Pictured as part of *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

4. Gerson\_04, Ian Gerson, In Every Direction, 2022, found ropes, mylar emergency blanket, live oak moss balls, found and hand-dyed mesh suspended from painted wood and palm stem. 52" x 35" x 4"

Four in a series of 5 weavings created using ropes found along the edges of Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel. Pictured as part of *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

5. Gerson\_05, Ian Gerson, Stolen, 2022, found ropes, mylar, clothing scraps, hand-dyed drop cloths, shoe laces, reproduction of collage from personal archives on paper, found plastic, rust pigment made with collected bayou water, driftwood, pine, and alder. 61" x 44" x 8"

Five in a series of 5 weavings created using ropes found along the edges of Galveston Bay and the Ship Channel. Pictured as part of *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

6. Gerson\_06, Ian Gerson, No Opposite Shores, 2022, found ropes, dried palm fronds, live oak moss balls, mylar, photographs from personal archives, gel medium photo transfer, rust-dyed muslin, drywall screw, acrylic paint, rust pigment made from collected bayou water, pine, and poplar. Approx. 9' x 5' x 2"

Pictured in *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.



7. Gerson\_07, Ian Gerson, Travelers, 2022, site-specific corner installation using found ropes, drywall screws, opening palm spathes, mylar, black denim, black mesh, metal ring, creosote-soaked wood with Gulf Coast oyster half shells, acrylic paint, indigo dye, rust pigment made from collected bayou water, and pine. Approx. 6' x 4' x 4'

Pictured in *Crossing* at BOX13, Houston TX.

8. Gerson\_08, Ian Gerson, Return, 2021, found and sanded cedar and pine, found ropes, styrofoam, plastic, hand-dyed fabric, mirrors, dried Sabal palmetto, sand, dried magnolia flower from the front yard of my childhood home, personal items. 21' x 22' x 11'

*Return* reflects on Galveston as an adaptive and resilient city, enduring cyclical destruction and regular flooding paired with strong endurance and determination to rebuild. I see this as a parallel for my relationship to place, home, and transitioning, my own determination to rebuild. Installed at Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston TX.

9. Gerson\_09, Ian Gerson, Return, 2021, found and sanded cedar and pine, found ropes, styrofoam, plastic, hand-dyed fabric, mirrors, dried Sabal palmetto, sand, dried magnolia flower from the front yard of my childhood home, personal items. 21' x 22' x 11'

Gathering, weaving, and knotting become metaphors for constructing a sense of self, place, and home. Installed at Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston TX.

10. Gerson\_10, Ian Gerson, Alter (in Return), 2021, found and sanded cedar and pine, found ropes, styrofoam, plastic, hand-dyed fabric, mirrors, dried Sabal palmetto, sand, dried magnolia flower from the front yard of my childhood home, avocado and homemade rust-dyed muslin, personal items. 21' x 22' x 11'

Installed at Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston TX.