



Jonathan B Smith
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A native of upstate New York, Jonathan moved to Oregon to study photography. With past education in philosophy, he found that the Fine Art Photography program at the University of Oregon gave him the balance of technical expertise and philosophical input he desired. After graduating in 2004, he was hired at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the UO as a museum preparator, allowing him continued contact with contemporary art and thought.

Jonathan lives in Eugene with his wife, Melissa Hart, and too many animals to mention. More of his work may be viewed at www.jonathanbsmith.org.

Exhibit: Thrown Before

Objects, things, are omnipresent in our lives - we can hardly imagine a life without objects. The Latin term "objectus" is defined as "something thrown before the mind"; an object is presented to us, and our mind makes sense of what it is and what it means.

Photography produces representations of objects, and in so doing creates another object. The photograph is the reference; the object is the referent. What is the connection between the two? Some have said a photograph can capture the essence of a thing - others believe the reference can never truly connect to the referent. Is this perhaps true of our own minds? Can we capture the essence of an object merely be

having it thrown before us? Or do we each have a different interpretation of what a thing is and means?

This collection of objects dance on the edge of description, first becoming one thing, then another. Many are perhaps identifiable, but not wholly descriptive. They are references that never quite meet their referent; they are objects with which we are viscerally familiar, yet cognitively distanced; they are a collection of references thrown before the mind. They are, as Jasper Johns said, "An object that tells of the loss, destruction, disappearance of objects. Does not speak of itself. Tells of others. Will it include them?"