

**FIONA**

**CONNOR**

EV COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



**COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARDS**

**TEXT BY SALLY SPITZ  
INTERVIEW BY BRYN ROBERTS**



Fiona Connor's *Community Notice Boards* at first conceal themselves as artworks. Often, when people walk into the gallery, they turn around and walk right back out again. Other visitors ask if they can pin their own business cards and notices to the faux-beaten corkboard. Some think the bulletin boards have been stolen from their original, maybe functional, sites in local communities. Do not the seniors at Pan Pacific Senior Activity Center need the date and time of the International Folk Dancing class for Beginners?

What customers at Starbucks on La Brea look to the Starbucks bulletin board for pertinent information, though? This board is the mass-produced contrivance of an exploitative global corporation, which simulates a 'local' or 'neighborhood cafe' aesthetic and function. This board is unsullied, while others represented are covered in holes, scratches, and grime, wherein the artist has enacted entropy on duplicate materials.

For short periods of time, Connor might remove a community notice board of particular aesthetic interest, before meticulously reproducing its ephemera in archival materials, such as UV ink on aluminum. The artist matches fonts and re-types, in one instance, hundreds of characters from the Torah for a 'Shabbat Bulletin' seen on one board found in a synagogue. In doing so, Connor is re-performing the labor of individuals who will likely never see where their published information has disseminated.

This act of appropriation could slide into exploitative territory were it not for the attentive, respectful, nature of her approach. She takes the time to get to know her local community members, like one couple from Frogtown in Central LA, who own a corner lot. Connor found that they had taken a bathroom window of another house they own on the same block, and built a bulletin board out of it. The husband built and routed the sign, while his wife upkeeps the board. The relevance of a bulletin board in a public space is determined by communal participation and monitoring. Without this, information can become quickly outdated, irrelevant, or invisible, such as when a person covers up someone else's flyer.

Physical community notice boards have been largely replaced by online forums, organized by search rather than physical locale, and which are near-effortlessly preserved as they expand as archives.

Particularities of a physical notice board reflect the temporal and socio-economic conditions of it's surroundings. The process of re-constructing boards as art objects points to the idea that art can emblemize society of a given period, before becoming an artifact.

There is no sense of nostalgia in Connor's artworks. They belie an interestedness in the physical presence of local artistic and intellectual labor. Though she freezes the intended functionality of her source authorship, her presentation is also a new platform for visibility of forum participants. Connor's generous appropriation highlights the impotence of artworks created in isolation from prevailing social conditions and public needs.

AM/PM  
800-288-DOOR

### SHAAREI TEFILA

Shabbat Minyan with Kivlev - PARISHET TADAN

November 15, 2014

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM  
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM  
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
8:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
9:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
10:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
11:00 PM - 12:00 AM


### SHABBAT MINYAN WITH KIVLEV - PARISHET TADAN

November 15, 2014

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM  
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM  
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
8:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
9:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
10:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
11:00 PM - 12:00 AM

### ARTHRITIS EXERCISE

More Movement = Less Pain!



NEW CLASS  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
November - December  
11:30am - 12:30pm

### Shaarei Tefila Calendar - Kivlev, November - December 2014

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Shabbat																															
Minyan																															

### Shaarei Tefila Trio

## HERSHEY FELDER

## IRVING BERLIN

A musical story of America


### GEFEN PLAYHOUSE

Sunday Matinee, December 14, 2014  
Bus leaves from Shaarei Tefila at 1:00  
and returns at 5:00 pm  
Cost: \$49.00  
Includes priority seating and bus transportation  
For reservations call Bernice Golman  
323-936-7147

## DO YOU HAVE A DRUG PROBLEM?

Are you a male 18 & over?  
Are you committed to making a change?

**McIntyre House**  
A recovery home for men  
323-662-0855



### Wishare Bus Rapid Transit Project

PROJECT LISTING

Wishare Bus Rapid Transit Project is a new bus rapid transit system that will provide faster and more reliable service to the community. The project includes the construction of a new bus rapid transit line, the purchase of new buses, and the implementation of a new fare system.

## got ADAP?

If the answer is no ask for Juan or call  
(626) 532-3861

### Health and Wellness Project

- Are you interested in participating in a study about how we feel, act, think, and take care of ourselves?
- If you are eligible you will be interviewed 2 times over 3 months.
- Fill out a series of questionnaires.
- Provide a urine sample.
- Interested participants must be:
  - Over age 18
  - Able to speak and read English

Participants who are eligible will be paid as much as \$175 for completing the study.

This study is being conducted at California State University Los Angeles (East Los Angeles) or Charles Lewis University (South Los Angeles) and you can be seen at the site that is most convenient for you.

If you are interested in participating or have any other questions, please contact our study staff at 323-542-4889 or 323-542-5429.

\*All calls are confidential.


### MSA CENTER FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH & EDUCATION

MSA & Public Health 100-100 Los Angeles, CA 90001

MSA & Cancer Studies

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Study  
MSA & Cancer Studies is currently seeking individuals who are interested in participating in a study about HPV. The study will involve a series of questionnaires and a physical examination.

MSA & Cancer Studies is currently seeking individuals who are interested in participating in a study about cancer. The study will involve a series of questionnaires and a physical examination.



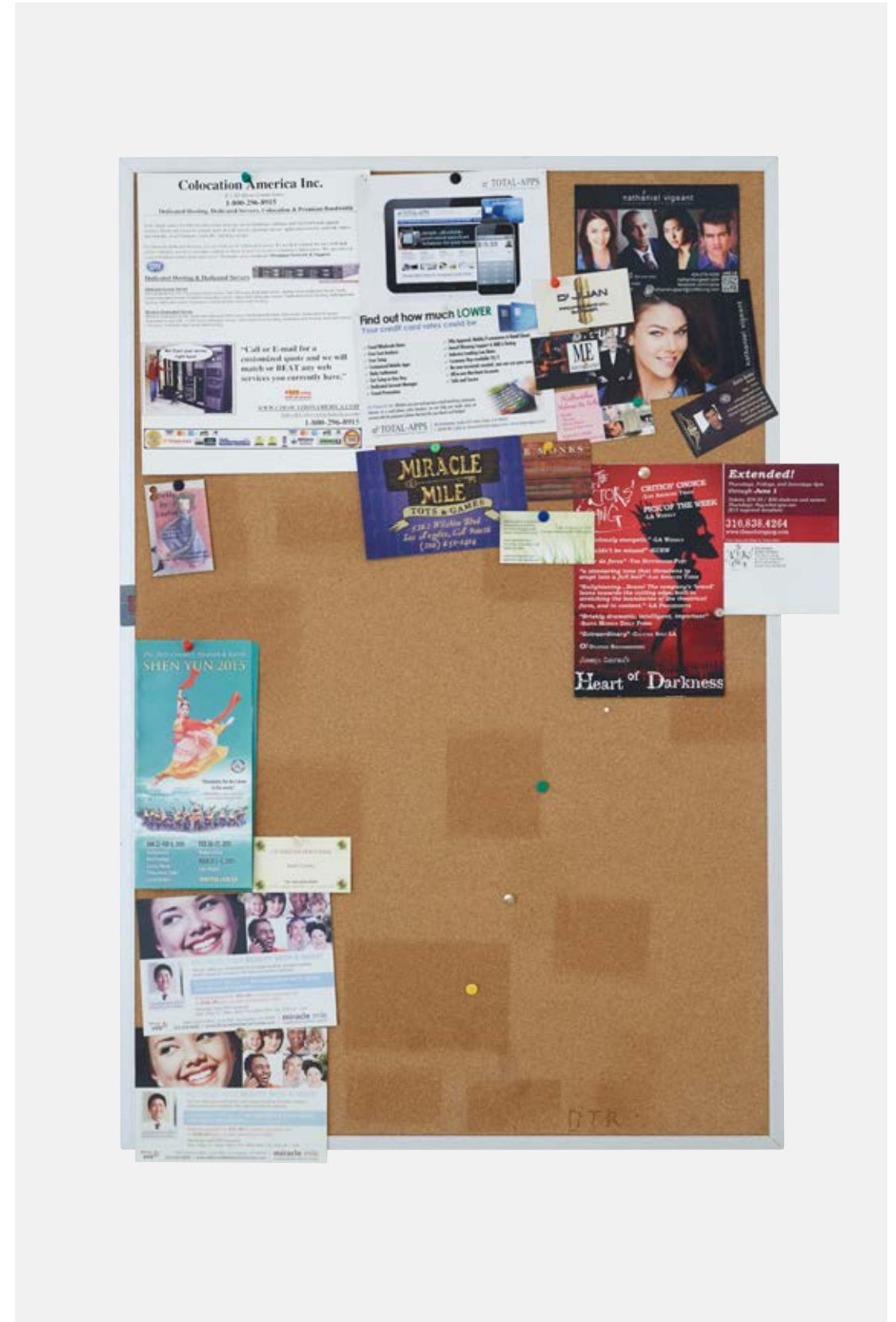
ADVANCED URGENT CARE OF BEVERLY HILLS  
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK  
(310) 652-2300

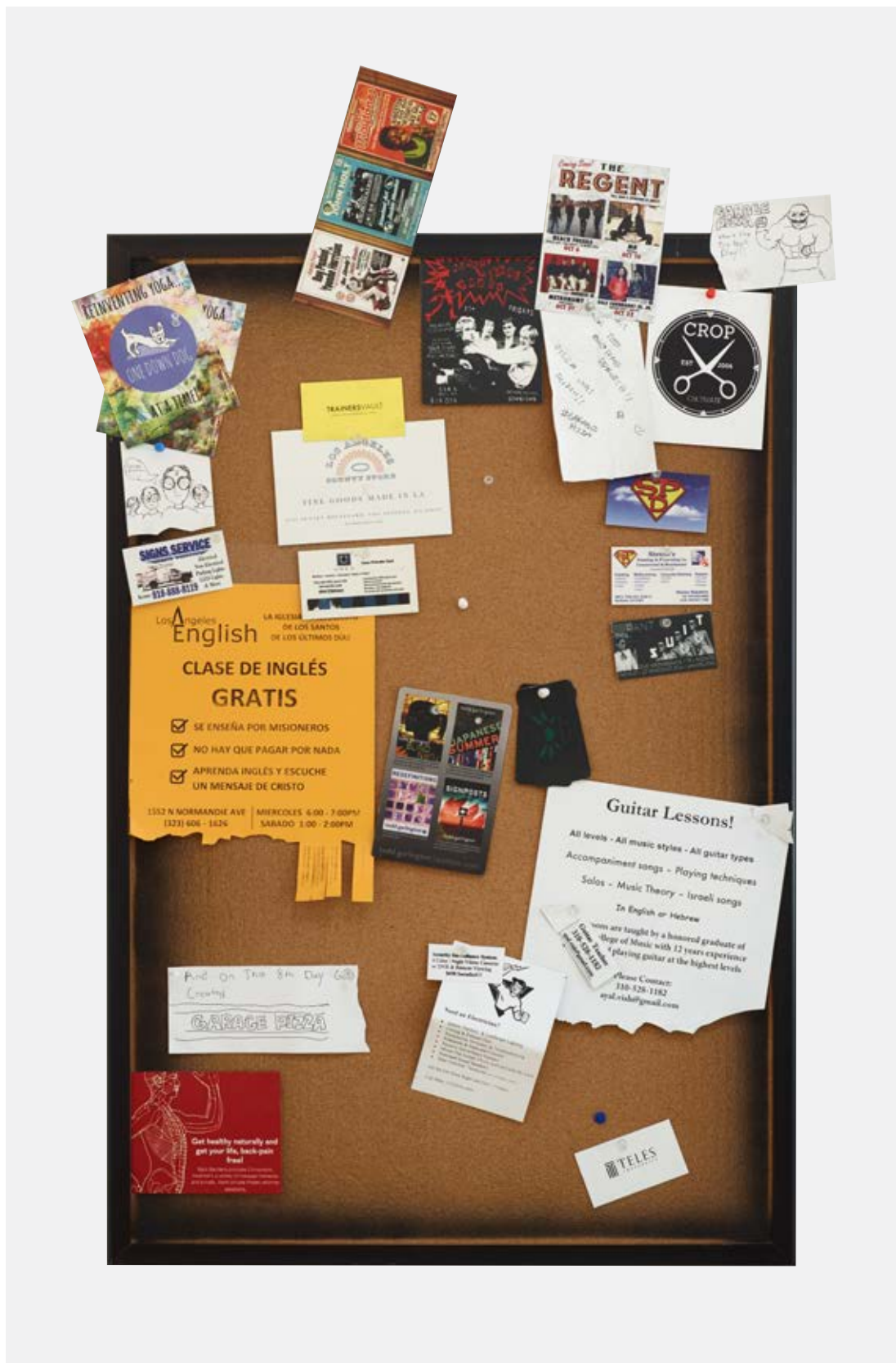


BR Fiona, tell me about your process for this project and your interest in community notice boards in general?

FC My process involved selecting bulletin boards scattered throughout Los Angeles that were used by different communities. Bulletin boards are responsive to a particular community – defined by a place where people gather for different purposes. Some bulletin boards are public, in the sense that anyone can post anything, and others are restricted, enforced by a governing body or a physical barrier, like enclosed boards that are secured by lock and key. Their content is communally composed and edited and this results in layered, cumulative compositions. Bulletin boards are hyper-responsive to time, space, and ultimately the community they serve, a physical representation of a forum or a social space. I became curious about the bulletin board, its history, and how it relates to precedents in art and image production. I replicated their physical structure and the ephemera they host at the moment of documentation. While the physical boards were made out of the same materials and manufacturing processes, the paper ephemera was translated into metal by printing their content onto thin sheets of aluminium.

BR I am interested in your choice to re-create notice boards, as opposed to using the originals themselves. Do you ever take, or is the work about replicating? An homage to the originals?





FC In general I try not to touch them, so it's all done through photography and drawing. But on the odd occasion I'd take my scanner, find a power outlet nearby, and briefly remove and scan it. That just made sense when I couldn't find the images any other way and taking photos did not work. So it was funny, I think there was a softness to the logic: in some cases the works are based on specific notice boards, but in other cases they took on their own compositions. I edited some stuff out – like a hurricane had come through and blown some ephemera around. And I got help to do some of the design work, so there's sliding scale in the process of replication.

BR So there's softness in the logic of the work, choosing community notice boards as your material. And treading softly to ensure the original object is made again, replicated in detail.

FC When I think of softness a couple of other things come to mind, one is softness around boundaries. Like how Michael Asher ran his post-studio crits: he decided to forget about the clock so that the conversation could go on as long as it needed to. So that's something I think about, and how the boundaries in art are shaped by an activity or practice as opposed to external factors. Another type of softness is something that's normally relegated to the peripheral, or the marginalised—that what's peripheral is somehow not efficient, it's messy. The way content is generated on a community notice board is a cumulative process by a group of people, linked to a site because of proximity, and the way they're made is by people trying stuff out, trying to make something visible, moving things over. Everybody's editing. It's like a messy democratic process, so I think there is a contrast with something that is more efficient, grid-like. That was part of their atmosphere that I was so excited about exhibiting in LA right now. It feels like there is always so much vying for people's attention, and not working together, so this was a kind of implicit proposal for another way of doing things.

BR But almost like a parallel—with you as an artist competing for the space to show them.

FC There's definitely a meta thing going on, where I'm thinking about them as their own architecture, framing these weird terms of competing for significance or importance. In my research, I came across *Looking at the Overlooked*, Four Essays on Still Life Painting, in which Norman Bryson writes about still life as a genre that has always been held in low regard as it simply takes normal and useful things as its subject. He goes on to describe three cultural layers that still life reveals. First, in the realm of the everyday, subject material is often domestic, used, ephemeral, and temporal. The second layer is looking at the cultural codes of the objects included, what and who they are associated with in society at the time, and then the third layer is technology – how they were made. Although this seems like a really simple way of engaging still life, I felt it clarified a lot for me.

This may have been because the conversation that Bryson formed around still life relates to conversations around site specificity, which I am much more familiar with. The fact that a still life always depicts or reflects a very specific time and place reminded me of what has been described as a limit of site-specific installation. It also made me think that while the subject matter is local and attached to a limited community, the compulsion—or commitment—to process and reflect upon the objects that surround you is a much larger idea or even some sort of life practice.

BR I want to come back to the idea of a life practice but first, I am interested in the way softness has historically and traditionally been a women's value, or expectation.

FC As a feminist action? Or is it not necessarily about gender; is it a way of holding yourself? With regards to the Community Notice Board project, someone pointed out that they are like 19th century trompe-l'oeil paintings, and I was reading about still life as being a marginalised genre, because they're about things that are often in disrepair, they're about the lived in, things that are earthly, specific—they're never going to speak of abstract totalising forms. And that was described in terms of the feminine. So I see my works relating to those kinds of sensibilities, but I don't have the language right now to talk about how they do relate, like softness, in regards to the attributes of the feminine. This category 'the feminine' is problematic in itself! Still, I'm really interested because I feel we need to develop a new language in which to talk about it on our own terms—with equal force and dignity and strength as a masculine set of ideals—like being really clear, and strong, about softness or earthly specificity. I feel that there needs to be a new language of compliments developed, for the feminine, but I don't know them yet.

BR Well yeah, the language isn't there. What we have is an essentially masculine language, where power and success are compliments and softness or otherness in general are given negative value. So if I want to compliment your attention to appreciating Still Life as a reference, I can't really. I feel like we can make assertions about language and art with a mutual understanding of a structural hegemony, patriarchy and misogyny; that men have the upper hand when it comes to taste-making, rule-making, money-making and just making. I can see ways that this inequality alters our possibilities, but in your company I feel comfortable to discuss ideas without the need to explain them with theoretical backing or hard evidence. To have someone understand what I'm seeing and not question its reality or validity is really supportive and positive. Do you feel like your work is viewed as feminine?

FC No I don't. But I think there are all sorts of things that keep my practice in a marginalised zone, and that's the area I'm interested in. There are parts of it that reinforce the marginal—like subject matter. I don't know that the





work is disadvantaged in that way, but I definitely believe in the conversation we just had about there being a whole hierarchy of thoughts. But I also feel so incredibly supported.

BR I can relate to the feeling of supported by a good community. I find it hard to make work because of what I'm interested in: administration, cooking, health, publishing. These are peripheral activities and I don't want those active parts of my life to be subject matter for an object, I want them to be valued as my practice, my life practice in the way you mentioned earlier. But making work in this way isolates me from any traditional ideas of art success or art fame. I'll probably never sell anything but I can't bring myself to make discrete objects, it would feel very fake.

FC Well that's another conversation entirely! It reminds me of this logic that as a female artist you want to present yourself as rational as possible in dress and stature because you're already presumed to be irrational.

BR It's acting. The idea that you could be convinced to act in a soft way because that is your assigned character, but maybe you'd never notice you're doing it! Gender roles are so deep-rooted it's hard to know where to start.

FC I totally agree. And you really don't have much decision over that stuff. Super, super interesting.

BR In a way what we're talking about is like your process for the project—re-creating community notice boards might be akin to thinking about what to wear to an opening, or how to act around your gallerist? You create in an appropriate style and image from research and experience.