

futures

10.20.24 - 11.8.24

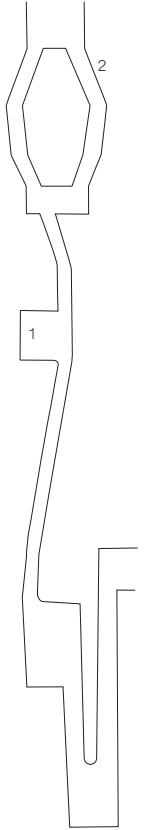
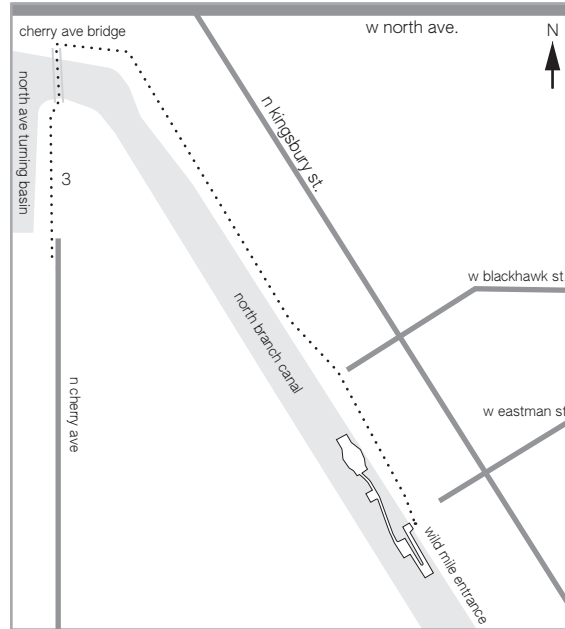
Riley Duncan (b. 1991, Virginia) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University and his Master of Fine Arts from Yale University. Recent exhibitions include *The World on Time at Someday*, New York and *Potemkin Village at Pumice Raft*, Toronto, Canada. He was the co-founder/director of *Motel* in Brooklyn, NY from 2015-2020.

My dad was an irrigation contractor, we'd be driving around, and he would stop on the side of the road, reach his hand into the ground to check a valve, before hopping back in the truck and pulling off just as quickly. These valve boxes were junctions within larger systems, paid for by schools and businesses to keep grass and flower beds green, and taken care of by my dad, who always seemed worried the sprinklers weren't synchronized correctly or that a head was malfunctioning. Constant fussing with this system was an attempt to mitigate deficiencies in natural water supply to these quasi-natural landscapes, which seemed to work, but never to his complete satisfaction.

At some point, business wasn't good and he started working as a salesperson for a company that manufactured the sprinkler heads, driving around the country to sell their brand of components to other contractors via regional distributors. I don't think he liked this as much - there was more talking and less imagining the buried circulatory systems he had obsessed over designing.

In 2008 he was laid off from the salesman job amid the greater economic crisis. Later, when I started making artwork, I noticed a metaphor, in how financial terminology often uses language evoking water - liquidity, flow, freeze - attempting to physicalize transactions that are becoming increasingly abstract

1. *poison*, 2024, bronze, patina
2. *saratoga*, 2024, plastic, paint
3. *plum*, 2024, plastic



and complicated. Economists argue that markets, like water, will find their level - I was fixated on what might be washed away in the process.

So many things are explained to us as cycles. Maybe, it's supposed to be comforting when there isn't an ending, but to begin again, replete with the same stuff you set off with. A notion that you are making a circle, though one too large to notice its curvature in any given moment. I prefer imagining many crisscrossing lines, not knowing if they intersect, depending on where you're looking at them from. This way, there's no expectation to get back to where you started. This way, you don't feel so bad if you lose everything along the way. These sculptures are about scarcity, symbols of utility rendered in memoriam, like a white bike where a cyclist was killed, a discreet monument to something senselessly lost.