

VITAMIN C+

NTF



COLLAGE IN CONTEMPORARY ART

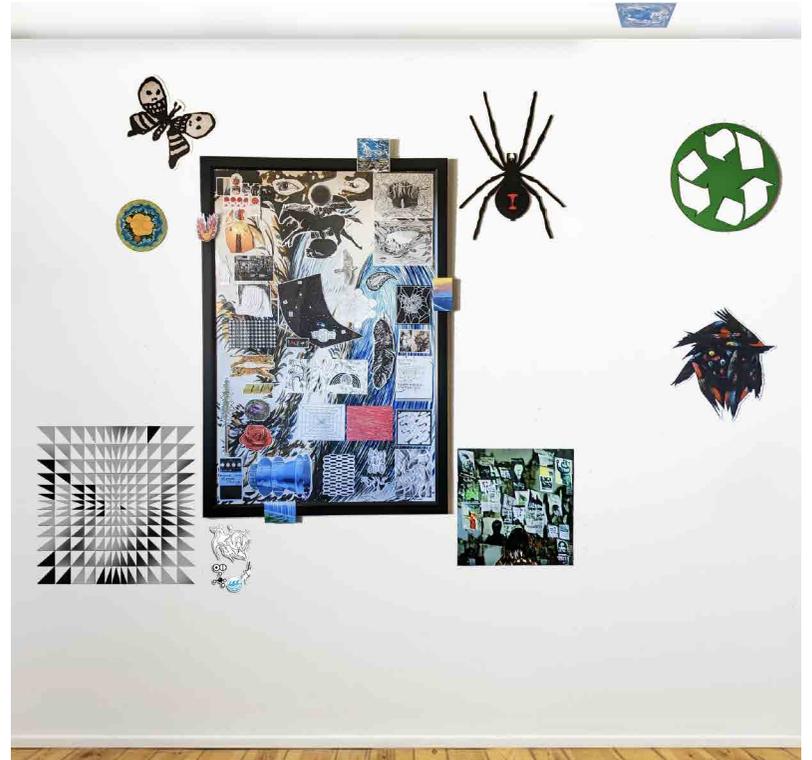
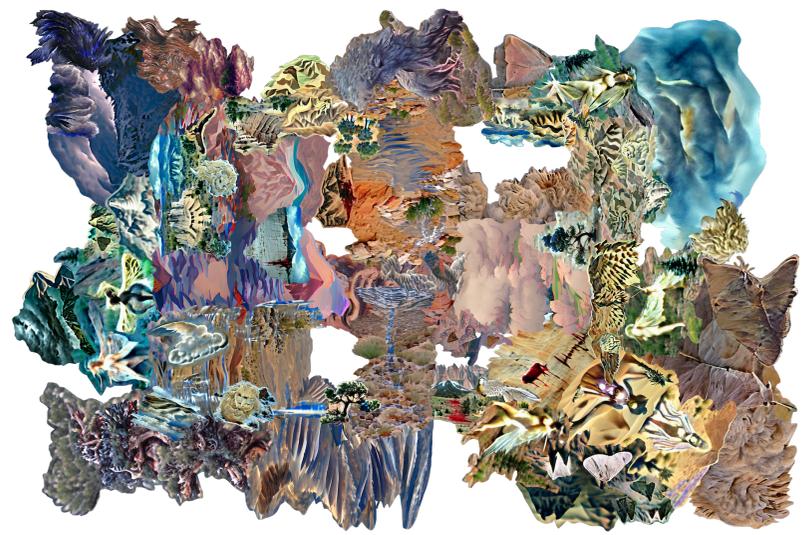
NOAH

TRAVIS PHILLIPS

Noah Travis Phillips' art enacts collage (and montage) in a range of modes and media, drawing from a private archive of "made, found, & modified" materials to develop a personal mythology. Their praxis encompasses digital and physical reproduction, video, publications, websites, and installation. Phillips creates multicentered compositions that juxtapose symbols and densely layered cultural references – which the artist poetically describes with terms like "constellations," "appendages," "covers" or "unsolicited collaborations" and even "booster shots" during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Shaped by their lower-working-class background, Phillips has a fascination with the power of images, and how their juxtaposition, sequencing, and composition amplifies and alters their meanings. He became an adult in anarchist contexts. Phillips' art praxis is deeply informed by a personal and political ideal, in which the imagery is simultaneously sovereign, speaks for itself, and creates a dynamic synergy with other media via what Arthur Jafa (by way of John Akomfrah) calls "affective proximity". Phillips wields multiple "conceptual countermeasures" such as symbolic potential/mobility, utopian plagiarism, and magical correspondences to transform images from fleeting to profound. The skillfulness and effectiveness of Phillips' collages arise from a range of sensitivities and awarenesses that the artist has cultivated, rooted in the internet's development during his formative years that paralleled his own. The Anthropocene and posthuman are perennial motifs, Phillips delves deep into ecological themes, emphasizing interconnectedness, and the significance of current global conditions. This manifests as reimaginings of interrelationships, present in *Mountain Water* (open extended). Created while artist-in-residence at the titular art, meditation, and land restoration retreat, and is representative of a recent cycle of collages made with folios generated through dialogues with GANs (text-to-image A.I.). Central to Phillips' art is allegory, the gestures between objects, and the interplay of connotation and denotation. His duet *High Tide 1 & 2* explores extreme climatic events as expressions of natural environmental disasters as well as doubles and unsolicited collaboration. *Screaming Weathers* is a folio of images cultivated in one of the artist's cycles of drawings remediated into multiple forms. Part of *Dirty Abstraction*, curated by Jennifer Lord – an exhibition of abstraction with political and critical content. Music is a key influence on Phillips' practice; it is evident in how he formats exhibitions and artworks, implementing musical tropes, references to song titles, and approaching artworks in terms of console mixing (highs, mids, and lows), and using filters as what the artist calls "meaningful effects". *Studio Corner (Summer '23) reh.* is a composite constellation and was a long-standing anchor in Phillips' studio acting as a kind of navigational panel, akin to Black Ark Studio (Lee "Scratch" Perry's (in)famous mixing console and deep space exploration tech). Phillips insists on multiplicity and simultaneity, appearing as a maximalist in works like *WATERxRIVAL*, an early digital collage epic that was included in The Wrong Biennale of 2017. In this melange of imagery viewers can navigate the website space freely as the site extends well beyond the borders of the browser window, they have agency in the narrative associations and interconnections based on how they navigate, fostering narratives that grow organically from the pieces. With *Hoody 1*, Phillips again extends their collage aesthetic, beyond, this time into the realm of fashion, engaging form, and activating the body as a space for exhibition. Phillips continues to mythologize their world (and thus ours), with music, nature, art history, and radical possibilities.

AMY THAMI

Born 1983, Washington D.C., USA. Lives and works in the Front Range of Colorado.



- ↑↑ *Mountain Water (open extended)*, 2022-3, digital collage, dimensions variable
- ↑ *High Tide 1 & 2*, 2022-3, multiple media installation (1) & digital collage (2), dimensions var.
- ↗ *Screaming Weathers*, 2012-23, multiple media (drawing folio, collage, website, video) dim. var.
- ⇒ *Studio Corner (Summer '23) reh.*, 2018-23, drawings and photomechanical reproduction 36 x 72in
- ↗ *WATERxRIVAL*, 2017, website, 10614 x 7070px
- *Hoody 1*, 2023, photomechanical reproduction on hoody, size S

