



**Matthew Kolodziej**  
Four Corners

# Fixing Shadows: To Draw into Memory



Matthew Kolodziej brushes, pours, smears, and scrapes paint into buzzing and pulsing networks that threaten to spill beyond the edges of his deliriously tactile canvases and panels. Through all this haptic energy one catches glimpses of forms and structures derived from architecture and landscape, but the views are never static and rarely complete. Paint describes but also threatens to engulf his forms, like vines that over time wrap around and break apart a ruined building.

For the past several years, Matthew's interest in simultaneously positing and undermining perception has taken a new form. Periodically, he's been making large-scale wall drawings—still concerned with developing dynamic interplay between matter and image, yet in a quieter, more reserved register. Matthew's most recent wall drawing, *Four Corners*, was made by tracing semi-transparent acrylic paint over projected images of photo collages of buildings in various states of construction and decay. The piece is composed of four ghostly, diaphanous images of greenhouses and building facades that never quite settle into easy coherence. As illusions, the images are convincing enough to begin dissolving the gallery walls into fictive space, yet they can't do so completely. Their abstract diagrammatic character and shifting spatial perspectives prevent them from ever fully resolving. All the components of the piece—the various pale colors of the paint, the sheetrock walls, the oak floor, and the character of the room's ambient light and shadows have been calibrated to create for viewers a beautiful intermingling between the work's material, proximate reality, and the distant places and structures evoked.

*Four Corners* lends physical form to the evanescent character of perception and memory. During the Renaissance, scholars required to memorize long texts developed the concept of a “memory theater”—imaginary architectural structures upon which information



Top: Kolodziej working on installation

*Prop*, 2014  
gouache on paper, 22 x 30 in.

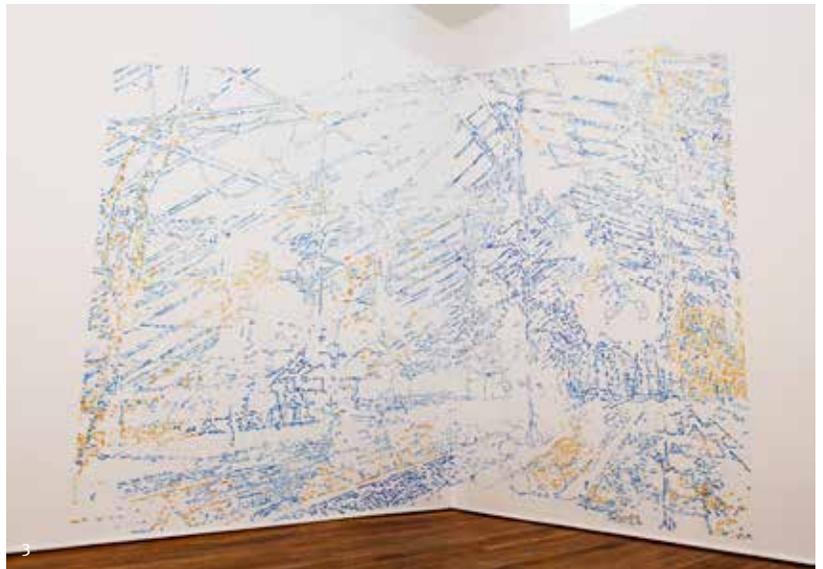
Cover:  
*Four Corners 3*, 2014  
latex on wall, 102 x 78 x 124 in

**Matthew Kolodziej**  
*Four Corners*

Mar 27–Apr 19, 2014

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was mapped and classified for later recall. The technique enabled truly prodigious feats of memory, necessary in a time when information was fragile and reliable systems for its storage and reproduction were only just developing. In our age of near instant image and data retrieval, it's possible to read *Four Corners* as a contemporary and ironic version of a memory theater—the infinite reproducibility of information has diminished and made unstable the capacity for memory.

Matthew's theater of elusive and liminal images movingly models our condition. His re/collection of place and form is flickering and fugitive, and acknowledges the inevitability of gaps and elisions. In subtle, whispered tones *Four Corners* invites us to dwell on the melancholy, poignant difficulty of drawing even fragmentary coherence from contemporary experience.

Charles Kanwischer  
March 2014



Room dimensions:  
290 x 158 x 124 in.

Diagram, *Four Corners*, 2014  
Installation view; left-to-right  
represents 1, 2, 3, 4

# Matthew Kolodziej

## Excerpts from and interview with Margo Crutchfield, Curator at Large, Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech

**Margo Crutchfield** I've followed your paintings and drawings for years and it's always been interesting how you've used photographic documentation of the site, the location of a place as the initial source of your work.

**Matthew Kolodziej** The process of defining a site is fragmentary. It is the relationships between parts that give you a sense of what happened there.

**MC** Was it a greenhouse, I understand that this was part of this installation?

**MK** I like the idea of making an enclosed space transparent and expansive. That was the impetus to use the greenhouse as a structure in the work. I figure out how to make the space breathe... I engage those places that are in a state of transition.

**MC** Is it a process of tracing?

**MK** When I go to the sites, that process of discovery I have on a walk is akin to drawing a line. The act of making a drawing is retracing that experience.

**MC** So reconstructed memory?

**MK** Yes, it's stretched, it's pulled, fragmented further, the information is translated. It's still informed by touch, because it is a line on the wall.

**MC** This piece is a sculptural experience.

**MK** Using the corner was interesting to me because, as you move from one plane to the other, the drawing itself shifts.

**MC** How does color work in the room?

**MK** Two of the drawings are grays taken from the shadow colors in the room. The red and blue ones incorporate the color of the floor. The architecture of the room is implicated in each drawing in a different way.

**MC** You were talking about movement, translucency and a transfer of energy, none of these actually start on the floor. They float on the wall.

**MK** I look at facades and things that are temporary... like spider webs.

**MC** Someone without that background might walk into this room and see it as projected data ... as opposed to poetry or history of memory?

**MK** I think that's the world we live in—in between these two dynamics.

**MC** It's almost as if there is something that has gone through the Big Bang, it's the residue that is emanating outward. I feel like it's like an ever-expanding dissolution.

**MK** It's representing something that isn't simply what you are looking at, but rather a sensation of information.



**Matthew Kolodziej** lives and works in Ohio. Kolodziej earned a BA in economics from the University of Chicago in 1988 and an MFA in painting from Rhode Island School of Design in 1993.

Kolodziej has been exhibiting his work since the mid 1980s. His work has been shown in galleries and museums around the country and abroad. Recent solo exhibitions include the College of Wooster Art Museum and The Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center. A recipient of Pollock-Krasner and Fulbright grants, his work has been represented in group shows at The Cleveland Museum of Art, the Rose Art Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland. Kolodziej is in the permanent collections of the Akron Art Museum; David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University; and the Swope Art Museum.

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*Four Corners 1*, 2014  
latex on wall, 130 x 8 x 124 in.

Special thanks to Rachel Beamer for photography and Alex Bach, Maggie Duff, and Kathryn Schultz for assistance with installation.