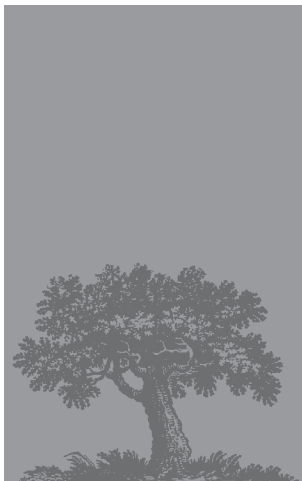


A photograph of a person's arm and hand holding a large, brown stuffed horse. The person is wearing a white shirt with red floral patterns. The background is a clear blue sky. In the distance, there are some trees and a sign that partially says "She".

Home SWEET *Home*

VICTORIA BRADBURY | 2010



Introduction

I was first introduced to Victoria Bradbury's work as a juror for the 2009 Southern Tier Biennial. For that exhibition, my co-juror Leonard Urso and I selected her captivatingly beautiful video work *Ocean of Oceans: Limbs* (2009) as the Best in Show recipient, a decision that resulted in her contributions to this solo installation.

Bradbury's work mediates the ground between history and contemporary media. Her part-sculptural, part-cinematic, part-experiential approach to artmaking weaves a narrative that simultaneously engages the past, present, and future. *Home Sweet Home*, a multimedia installation culled from digital prints, live Internet foreclosure headlines, video stills, and a handmade quilt as well as other small, embroidered pieces, employs the pioneer figure as an observer to censure the nation's current housing crisis and two of the hardest-hit states: Florida and Arizona. While these regions have been continuously weathering the impact of the housing fallout, other states like Ohio and Michigan have also been affected, despite not seeing a huge housing price increase in recent years. One can argue that, unlike past housing crises, this one is undeniably universal in nature—rendering Bradbury's work an even more effectually potent commentary.

The pioneer figure is not unfamiliar in Bradbury's work. She utilizes this figure as a sounding board to revisit regions throughout the United States. In *Pioneer* (2008), the figure wanders aimlessly throughout the modern-day Western plains searching for her horse companion and her home. However, Bradbury's most recent work leaves us questioning, is home still where the heart is?

With current headlines boasting both "crisis" and "solution," we are led to believe that the end of the current housing dilemma is near. This leaves me to wonder, is the effervescent nature of the American economy leading us to believe that the notion of "home" is also on the decline? Bradbury's work creates a space in which home is both history and memory, thwarted by insecurity and external conditions. Maya Angelou once said, "You can never go home again, but the truth is you can never leave home, so it's all right."

Holly E. Hughes

Associate Curator, *Albright-Knox Art Gallery*

**Victoria Bradbury:
Home Sweet Home**

May 29-June 26, 2010
Olean Public Library Gallery

2009 Southern Tier Biennial
Best in Show Award Winner

Home Sweet Home imagines the wanderings of a displaced Pioneer and a wayward 19th Century Magic Lantern Projectionist named Madame Blueberry. Encapsulated in these two figures are opposing ideas of itinerancy and geographic stability. The Pioneer embodies stagnation-- times when we have propelled ourselves to an unforgiving place and hope to find a way out. Through the Projectionista, I suggest the way out by exploring various forms and meanings of projection. Via electronic images and the technology inherent in their portrayal, I assert a new notion home—residing within a digital rather than a physical space.

The landscapes highlighted here are of Arizona and Florida -- two of the areas hardest hit by the current foreclosure crisis. My personal interest in these states arose when my parents moved to Arizona in 2004 and I moved to Florida from Alfred, NY in 2009. The housing developments pictured in the Arizona footage are either partially completed construction projects (Rancho Mirage) or flooded with foreclosed and "underwater" homes (Rancho El Dorado). For a 19th century American, the Projectionista's trajectory is backwards. She has reverse-traversed the U.S. -- from Arizona to Florida -- to attempt to create a sense of home. In Gainesville and Jacksonville Florida, she projects the title "Home Sweet Home" on foreclosed houses. In order to locate the properties, I navigate to

each address using a free Foreclosures iPhone App--its very availability is a sign of our intricately intertwined and unstable economic times.

Pioneer was conceived in 2005 at the height of the housing boom. As she has progressed, her exhibited actions have changed from cyclical entrapment to aimlessness to acquiescence. In **Home Sweet Home**, she begins to have a sense of place -- vacillating between actively escaping from and amicably resigning to her predicament. She confronts us by a horse monument outside of Rancho El Dorado and gallops between dirt piles in the midst of a builder's abandoned project. Pioneer is frequently finding and losing an elusive horse that is always a mirage. "Horse" and "House" are interchangeable within this world.

Madame Blueberry, though still ambulatory, has a more steadfast demeanor than her Pioneer counterpart. I see both of these traits as inherent to the integration of technology into our contemporary lives. No matter how tenuous we find our physical sense of place, the computer and Internet have become our trusted stable dwellings. I blur technologies and eras within the Madame Blueberry character, but maintain the core idea that her home is the space she creates in the context of the installation itself. Just as the Magic Lantern projectionist was a roving performer, the Projectionista sets up her home each time she turns on her device to form this moment with you.

The Foreclosure Crisis in America is complex and ever-changing. In a pre-cinema, pre-television culture, a Magic Lanternist was he who would promulgate "current" events. The slides he carried were at times weeks, months, or years old. His show was adjusted upon on the availability of new images. Today, information is instantly and continuously accessible. To

illustrate this complexity, Home Sweet Home includes a live overlay of up-to-the-minute New York Times Foreclosure headlines with Henry Ingram's Magic lantern slides from the Eastman collection. Ingram's slides from the 1890s present an idyllic model of late-19th century American domestic life in the decade in which U.S. home sales information was first recorded.

Contrary to our 19th century dreams of Main Street USA, home is not a castle around a corner, but an electronic mirage. Like trying to catch a runaway horse, claim a stone stallion, or gallop on the back of a plush stick pony-- shining light onto an empty building may be an absurd endeavor. But perhaps through projection, something is revealed. Something is remembered. A house is reminded it might be a home.

Victoria Bradbury Bio

Victoria Bradbury's multimedia videos and installations are the imposition of voice through electronic puppetry. Hybridizing antiquated forms and new devices, she projects. For Bradbury, all media are visceral. With busy fingers, she weaves electronic signals and fibrous materials to create temporary abodes. Bradbury was a 2008 artist in Residence at Imagine Gallery, Beijing. She was the 2009 SUNY Fellowship for the Arts Film and Video Finalist, and was the Best in Show Winner of the 2009 Southern Tier Biennial. Bradbury holds an MFA in Electronic Arts from Alfred University and a BFA from The Maryland Institute College of Art.



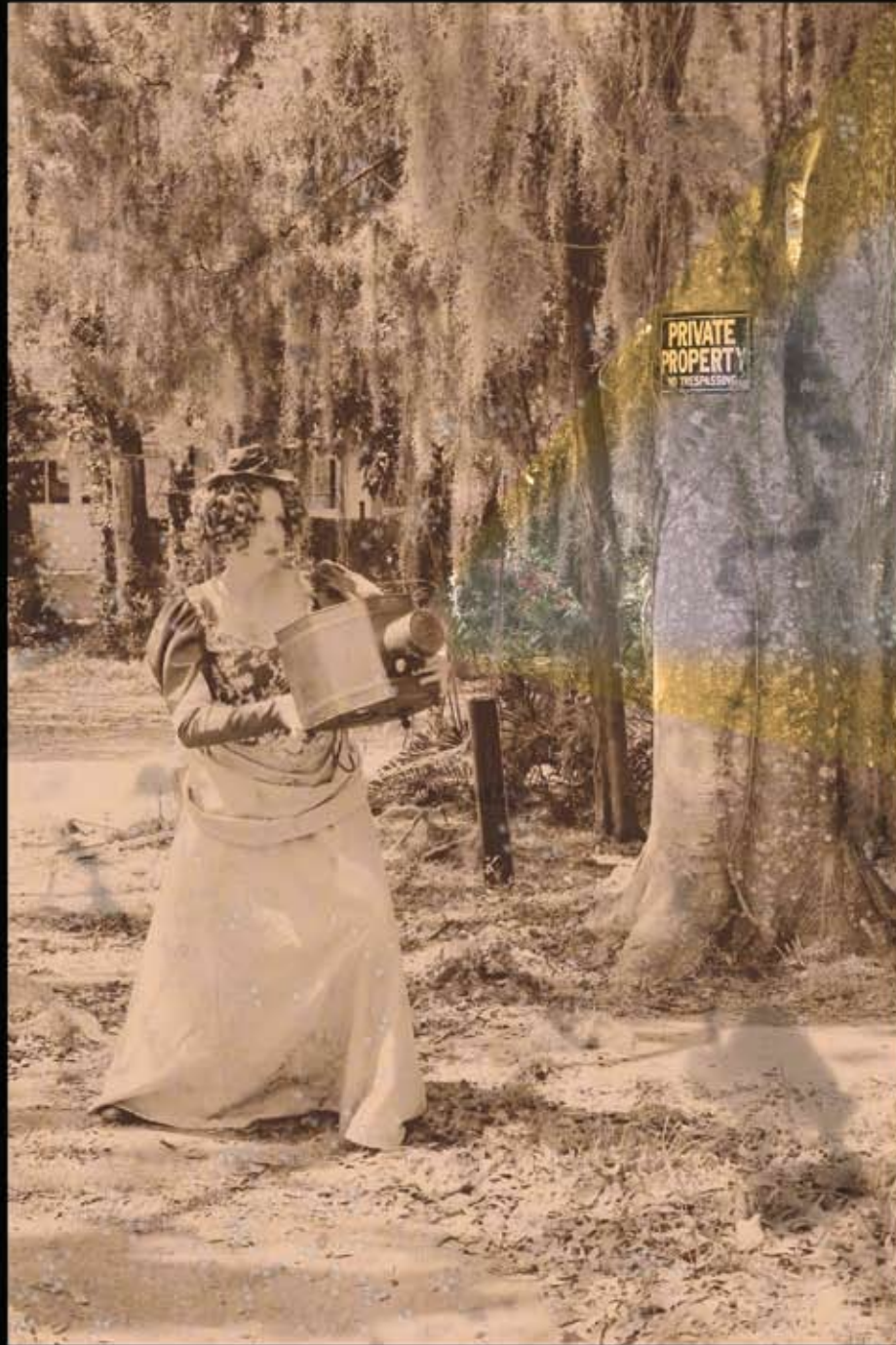
She Projects

Hand-Felted Alpaca Wool, Thread • 12" x 14"

2 • Victoria Bradbury



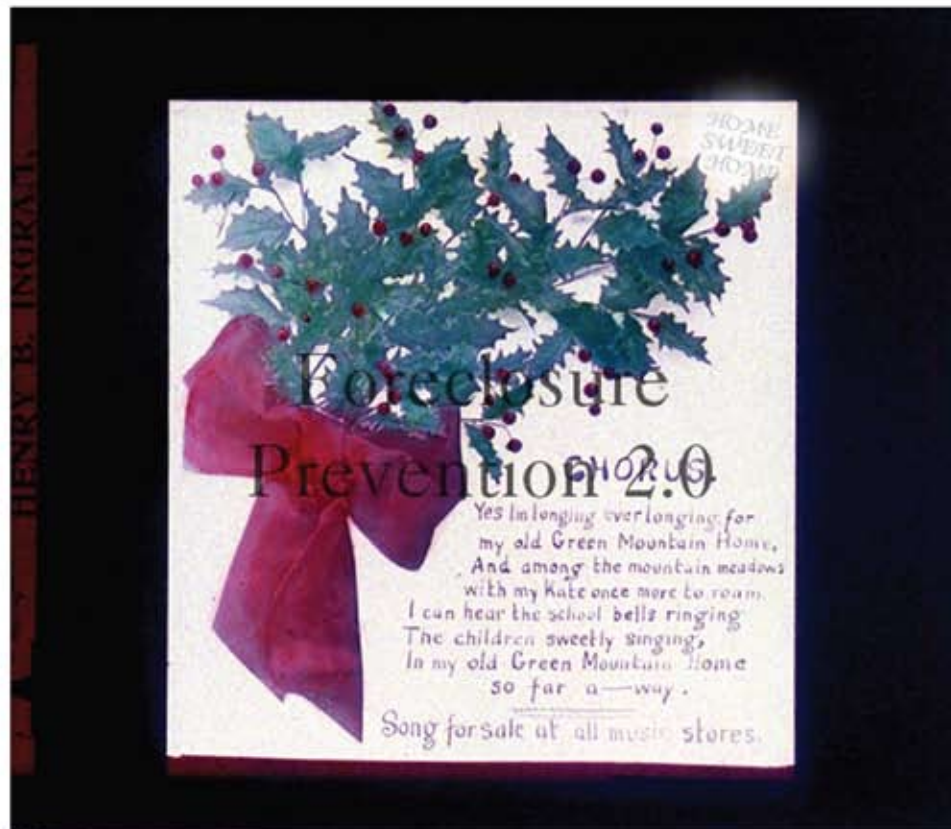
Video Still from **Home Sweet Home**



Private Property

Digital Print • 24" x 36"

4 • Victoria Bradbury



Foreclosure Prevention 2.0

Still from **Home Slides**

Live NY Times headline overlaid on Henry Ingram magic lantern slides



Two Lone Trees

Hand-Felted Alpaca Wool, Thread • 22" x 14"

6 • Victoria Bradbury



Video Still from ***Dirt Piles***



Video Still from ***Dirt Piles***



Video Still from **Rancho Mirage**

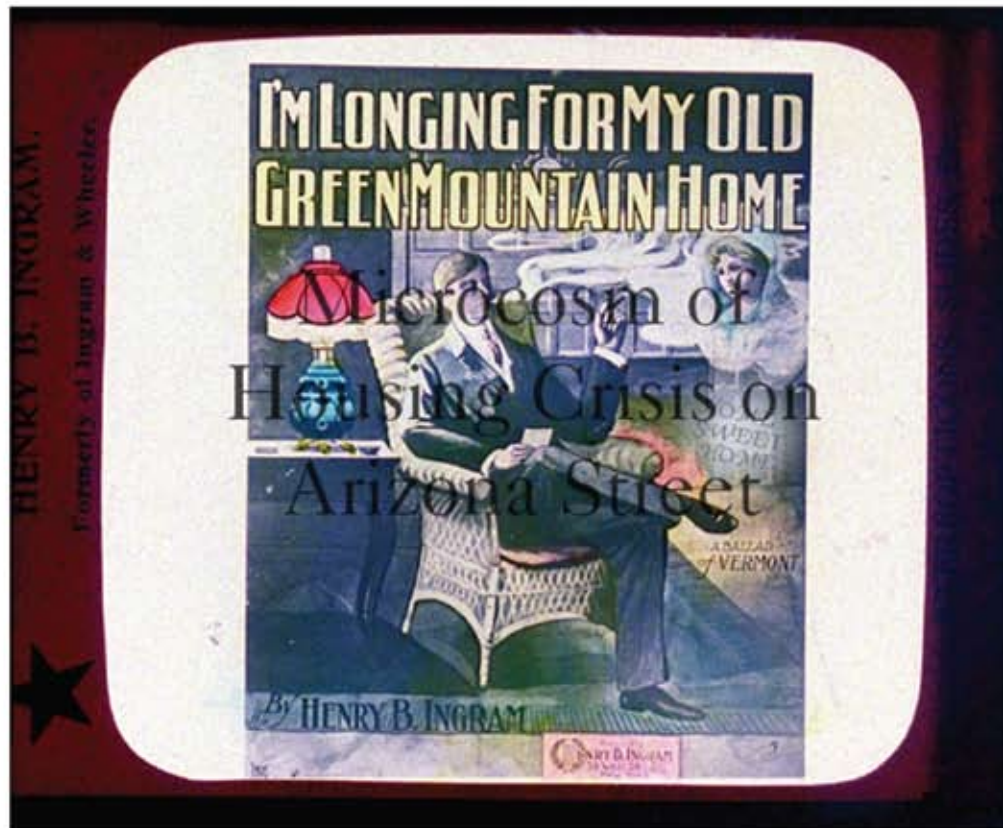


Horse Looking On

Hand-Felted Alpaca Wool, Thread • 13" x 18"



Video Still from **Villages at Rancho El Dorado**



Microcosm of Housing Crisis/I'm Longing for my Old Green Mountain Home

Still from **Home Slides**

Live *NY Times* headline overlaid on Henry Ingram magic lantern slides



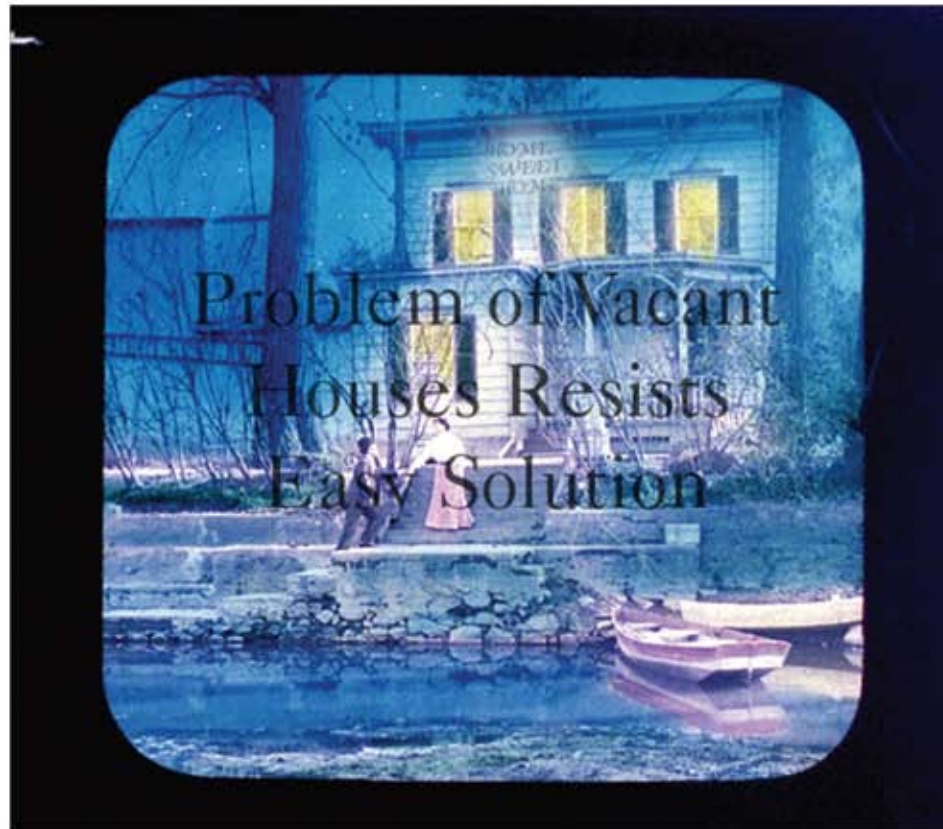
Video Still from **Villages at Rancho El Dorado**



Video Still from **Main Street USA**



Video Still from **Main Street USA**



Problem of Vacant Houses Resists Easy Solution

Still from ***Home Slides***

Live *NY Times* headline overlaid on Henry Ingram magic lantern slides



U.S. Plans Big Expansion in Effort to Aid Homeowners

Still from **Home Slides**

Live *NY Times* headline overlaid on Henry Ingram magic lantern slides



Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Digital Image

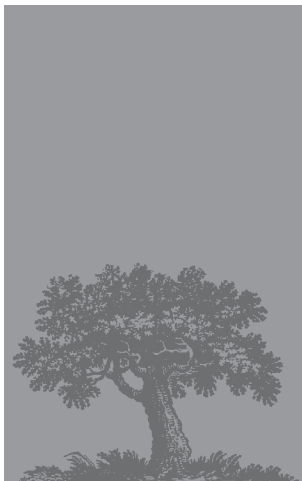
18 • Victoria Bradbury



Projectionista

Digital Print • 24" x 36"

Victoria Bradbury • 19



Southern Tier Biennial

After the tumultuous challenges of keeping the Southern Tier Biennial alive through a loss of funding in 2009, it is with great pleasure and appreciation that the Cattaraugus County Arts Council is able to present this catalog for Best of Show winner Victoria Bradbury. Victoria won that award and immediately accepted the offer of a solo show despite knowing she'd have to fund it herself, with none of the cash awards or even a catalog. Fast forward to December 2009, when we received the wonderful news of a recovered endowment fund and full funding for 2010. In other words, we would be able to produce the show to the standard which Victoria Bradbury deserves, with her cash awards and catalog intact.

The 2009 Southern Tier Biennial was juried by two prestigious members of the Western New York art community: Holly Hughes, Assistant Curator of the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, NY; and Leonard Urso, Mowris Mulligan Endowed Chair and Distinguished Professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY. They chose Victoria's work as the best of all the 300 entries on the basis of her conceptual talents, clear vision, and ability to marry mediums of all types to create artwork that is thoroughly unique, vibrant, and thought provoking. We believe the works Victoria created for this show fully affirm their good judgment.

Looking forward, the 2011 Biennial will be juried by new jurors and, therefore, the show they create will be as different in tone and scope as its predecessors, yet equally and beautifully true to the definition of "a regional survey of contemporary art." The 2011 prospectus will be mailed in the fall of 2010, and in the meantime, we hope you enjoy Victoria Bradbury's solo installation.

Anne Conroy-Baiter, *Executive Director*



Executive Director

Anne Conroy-Baiter

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The Southern Tier Biennial is collaboration among the Cattaraugus County Arts Council, Olean Public Library Gallery, and the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation through the generous sponsorship of the F. Donald Kenney Foundation.

Cattaraugus County Arts Council

PO Box 406, Olean, NY 14760 | 716-372-7455 | artscouncil@verizon.net | www.myartscouncil.net | www.routestoart.com



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