

# Measured

Georgina Bringas Marla Hlady Karen Kraven  
Kristiina Lahde Francine Savard  
Curated by Claire Christie

# DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

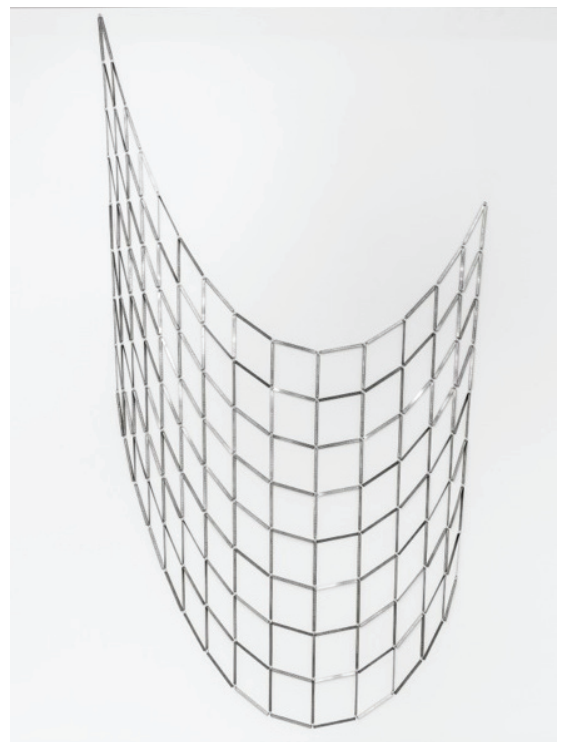
Measurement can be generally understood as the quantifying of something, expressed as a system of units. Applied as a method of describing the world we inhabit, from length to magnitude, weather to wealth, measurement is an abbreviation that is simultaneously explanatory and codified. Each of the artists in the exhibition pauses at this juncture of the abstracted and explained and, from within the range of their respective practices, proposes a kind of sensorial reading of systematized analysis.

The function of measurement is predominantly employed in a comparative field, a reference point to not only determine an observable value, but to situate that value within a larger spectrum. For Francine Savard, the subject of weather data has provided an exhaustive array for her meticulously reductive paintings. Mirroring the compression and expansion dialectic inherent in measurement, Savard plies the statistical information of weather reports, gathered from her local daily, *Le Devoir*, to visualize a given day's atmospheric conditions. Using the anecdotal shorthand common to such reports – windy, cold, cloudy – Savard textually embeds such measured descriptions into specific chromatic fields, accompanied by the newspaper's numerically represented date. The constituent works, succinct near-monochromes in temperate hues, subtly divulge the experiential measure of weather, with the combination of observed conditions and dates extending that impact to conjured memory.

While thermometers, anemometers and oktas are not remotely evident in Savard's paintings, the instruments of measurement are central to the works of Kristiina Lahde. Favouring the tools of linear measure, Lahde enlists objects such as steel straight edges and worn wooden yardsticks as drawing material or building blocks for sculptural form, often destabilizing their linearity in the process. In resolving each work, Lahde must necessarily measure and plot increments and lengths, aligning to geometry's dictates of precision, steps which seem visually controvert to the ease of the undulating lines and dimensional arcs achieved in works such as *A Series of Straight Edges* and *Slide Rule*. In her work, *One forty millionth of the circumference of the Earth*, Lahde structurally alters the straight edge to conform to a sphere, alluding to a planetary mass measured to a minute fraction of its girth, confounding the tool's purpose while proposing a relatable magnitude. With her series *Criss-Cross*, Lahde expands the notion of altered utility, surrendering the very control that governs the domain of measurement by using flexible measuring tapes as embossing material through a press. The resulting



FRANCINE SAVARD  
*Le Devoir, Montréal, vendredi 14 janvier 2000*



KRISTIINA LAHDE  
*A Series of Straight Edges*

impressions reveal intersecting lines and incidental spirals, suspending the aleatory and calibrated on a shared plane.

Georgina Bringas similarly synthesizes linear measure as part of her working methodology, propelled by measurement's promise of test and result, aligning to its scientific origins. For Bringas, measurement is consummate to understanding, to rendering visible the things that reside in empirical registers. To prepare her meters canvases, Bringas measures lengths of yarn to individual one-meter lengths, vertically stitching them at prescribed intervals across the canvas surface. With each canvas measured to a square meter, Bringas can plot varying intervals between the strands to yield their titular length – *200 meters*, *300 meters*, *400 meters*, *500 meters* – making apparent the different volumetric densities. The gradation across the grouping of works recalls a painterly formalism, and the mathematical calculation would seem to intensify that condition of austerity, but the successive lushness of the surface dislodges attention to their measured quantity, instead returning a sensory index of length and distance, a palpable "knowing."

"Knowing" is set in flux in Karen Kraven's *Jasper*, *Elizabeth*, *Wilfrid*, *Zeiss*, *William*, a suite of five inkjet prints picturing vibrant and texturally complex patterns, with distinctive, colour coded frames. Measurement is the foundation of pattern, and Kraven acknowledges this basis for structural integrity at the point of determining its failure, as she investigates the limits of recognition in software designed to thwart the replication of currency. Using Canadian banknotes in five denominations, Kraven laboriously folded each bill and scanned and enlarged them to the point that their embedded security measures were no longer perceptible to the technology. New patterns emerge as collaged algorithms, with revealed hints to their uniform beginnings as the familiar 5, 10, 20, 50, 100.

Sound presents the most elusively discernible articulation since, though there are numerous ways in which audibility can be measured, it remains an invisible quantity. Marla Hlady suggests its measure with an ongoing set of propositions to mark sound's movement through space. The immediacy of her gestures, in the form of gently curved arrows, variably clustering and dissipating on the paper's expanse, elicit thoughts of whispered entreaties, resounding bellows, and the drone of overlapping and collective utterances with, in some instances, the interpolation of a faint grid support dimensionally mapping the space that carries the sound.



GEORGINA BRINGAS  
*400 Meters*



KAREN KRAVEN  
*Jasper, Elizabeth, Wilfrid, Zeiss, William* (detail)



MARLA HLADY  
*Sound Rupture* (detail)