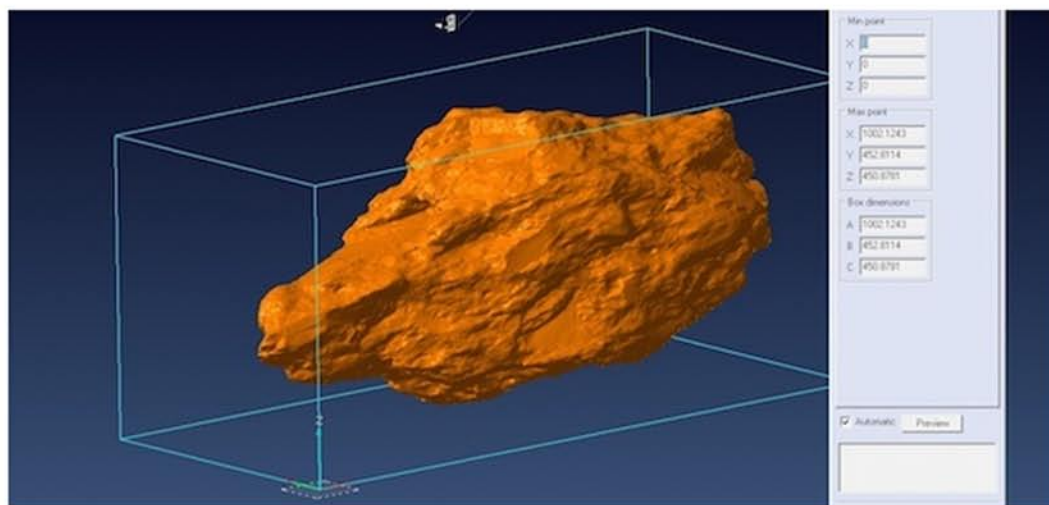


Alice Channer

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Screen grab of the stretched 3-D scan of the first rock that was milled for Alice Channer's *Rockfall*, 2015.

Bodies, absent but for the imprints they've left on sensitive materials—above all, clothing—have been a recurrent concern for the London-based sculptor Alice Channer, but lately the imprints have begun to take on architectural scale. For her first museum show in the United States, at the Aspen Art Museum from February 13 to May 31, 2015, she presents a single large outdoor piece, Rockfall, which will then travel to New York this summer for a group show organized by the Public Art Fund. A smaller, indoor version of Rockfall will be shown at Pied-à-terre, San Francisco, February 15 to March 15, 2015.

FOR A FEW YEARS, I've been collecting lumps of concrete, dug up in the London streets outside my studio, by-products of the ongoing construction boom in the city. I'm interested in the relationship of these human-made rocks to weight and (de)materiality. For *Rockfall*, which is at its simplest a sculptural work about weight, I made 3-D scans of some of these objects, none of them bigger than a human head (I had to be able to carry them back to the studio). I then stretched the 3-D scans until they were about six feet long. The stretched scans were then milled from foam, molds were taken from the foam, and I made casts from those in several very different materials: Corten steel, aluminum, and concrete—materials that I imagine as having different speeds, different weights, and different kinds of time.

Although the piece is not site specific (I would describe it as stretchy to a degree: responsive but not a response), it won't be finished until it's installed across the Aspen Art Museum's Roof Deck Sculpture Garden. And though the stretched rocks that make up *Rockfall* are cast in hard materials, I realized as I started to see them take shape that their surfaces are pleated. I've often used fabrics that have been pleated by a company that usually pleats fabric for clothing. Pleating is useful to me because it multiplies a flat surface to give it volume and body, changing its dimension and making it stretchy.

Clothes are strange, in-between, awkward things, flat and empty when disembodied, and partially contingent but impossible to objectify when embodied. They exist somewhere between the object and the subject, and my works seek to exist there too. In *Rockfall*, the pleats in the metal and concrete are made by a tool path. The tool path was designed horizontally, at my request, by the machine operator, who programmed the CNC router to cut the stretched rocks from foam, before I made molds from them. The pleats in *Rockfall* bring out its relation to other works of mine that are more explicit attempts to make objects that have the same status as clothing. As the work repeats in different locations with some elasticity, it will change slightly, expanding and contracting, but will remain recognizable as itself. The piece is a horizontal layer that will be stretched across several other pre-existing objects: the museum roof, the epic mountains around and underneath it, the vast human-made geological/commercial/social/economical/biological/political mesh that is the twenty-first century. And the body wearing it will be much, much bigger than in my previous work.

I don't understand size, but I do understand scale. My works attempt to include radically and awkwardly different kinds of scale at the same time. I think that this awkwardness threads through my work, and speaks to my experience of materiality in the twenty-first century. What are all these vast new buildings that the concrete is being dug up for, what builds them, and who are they for?

— As told to Barry Schwabsky