

TARL Is the Future

by [JEN GRAVES](#)

TARL is new. TARL doesn't stand for anything. "TARL's objectives are to provide **precision management of tasks and activities**," reads TARL's website. "Our goals are connection, communication, and filial gesture. Friendly parlor conversations dealing with serious issues. Creative assets for the next generation."

[TARL](#)
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The parlor is, in fact, friendly. So friendly that it may as well be acknowledged simply to be the living room of a Central District rental house with a misty Northwest ferry mural in the bathroom and a basement that, until now, was not offering anything to the world. Now, that basement is a gallery, and its first show is *THIS IS THE FUTURE, the Rest Is History* (through Jan 9), which includes a large and rickety plywood dinosaur skeleton, laminated collages made of cupboard liner with a wood-grain pattern, and a recording of **a computer-processed human voice approximating a dinosaur voice**, playing on an old Discman that sits on the floor under a pile of the negative plywood leavings from the dinosaur skeleton.

The show is modest, funny, and smart, the art objects exhibited loosely (the prints barely sticking by tape to the cold white brick walls) in the subdomestic milieu (also stuck to a surface: the documented maintenance history of the furnace). It's by Vancouver, BC, artists Raymond Boisjoly and Ryan Peter, who were inspired by the display of Robert Morris's classic 1961 sculpture *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* at Seattle Art Museum. The sculpture includes recordings (literally, the sound of its making), which at SAM play on a Discman that sits right out on the gallery floor—which adds to the sculpture a weird "chronological tag," as Rebar Niemi puts it, since the Discman clearly postdates the sculpture but today is obsolescent. (I asked curator Michael Darling about this: He says he's not sure whether Morris intended the sound device, originally a cassette player, to be visible, but that "it's never been a distraction to me.") *THIS IS THE FUTURE* is about the way time gets read and misread in materials.

TARL will not always be a show or always in this location. Its first event, a talk by Boisjoly and Peter, was at Western Bridge. Not just anybody gets a kickoff at Western Bridge—**TARL, while new, is not just anybody**. It's a crew consisting of Niemi, young curator Jessica Powers, and Anne Mathern, Matt Browning, and Brendan Jansen, artists from the late, great Crawl Space.

TARL isn't alone in nomadic, makeshift awesomeness: Stranger Genius Wynne Greenwood just started her own feminist/queer video screening series, **Feminist Form**. Painter Matt Offenbacher talked his way into hosting a series of shows at the Henry Art Gallery's abandoned gift shop. His motto: "Artists! You do not have to accept the context which you are given. Create your own context!" ★

TARL, 1447 21st Ave, www.tarl.us, Sat noon–5 pm or by appointment.