

## Prodigal Tongues Description

In the summer of 2012 Michael Bizon and Christian Tedeschi were invited to Pops Packing, the home of the Northwest Territories artist residency, located in Detroit, MI. Bizon and Tedeschi first met in Detroit in 2003, and are currently living and working in Los Angeles. Since they left in 2006, Detroit's economic situation has been heavily publicized as a worsening situation, to the point where Detroit has declared bankruptcy. What isn't reported is how this blight has fostered a cornucopia of opportunity for poor working artists, musicians, and architects.

Pops Packing is a good example of the afforded endeavors in these times. Graem Whyte and Faina Lerman started Northwest Territories in 2012. Having acquired an affordable building in Detroit's annual housing auction, they transformed a formerly abandoned structure into an experimental space that has become a location for residents to create interventions, installations, and performances. It is a living, ever-changing space with the contextual history of a bar, a multi-family home, and a refuge for squatters. One can trace Detroit's unique economic history through the layers of carpet, wallpaper, discarded objects and random detritus left behind by its inhabitants, both human and animal. Bizon and Tedeschi were the first artists-in-residence at Northwest Territories to deal with the challenging history of the structure as an artistic opportunity.

They began with cleaning and sorting through piles of debris, separating the materials into rooms as well as excavating and rearranging the space itself. Clothes were piled, carpets were torn, walls were removed and discarded objects were arranged into a metaphysical narrative.

This work recontextualizes the history of the building as well as Bizon and Tedeschi's personal history and artistic involvement in the Detroit community. "Prodigal Tongues" was born.