

WHITMAN COLLEGE
SHEEHAN AND FOUTS GALLERIES
WALLA WALLA WA 99362

Record Num. 2018
Application Label: UNDERGRADUATE

BEST
THING
SINCE
SLICED
BREAD

04/20/18

thru

05/20/18

THANK YOU!
PLEASE COME AGAIN!

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VERIFICATION

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BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD

Early on, our class developed a number of playful qualities: humor, experimentation, and an open exchange of ideas. One particularly playful occurrence took place on a late October evening during critique when an art major who had been feeling “spread thin” strolled into the gallery covered in saran wrap and butter-colored paint. Our initial confusion was quickly replaced by astonishment as she flopped to the floor and promptly wiggled about a large piece of bread-shaped butcher paper. This bread-themed performance contributed to a tone that defined the remainder of the year. When it came time to name our exhibition, the self-indulgent *Best Thing Since Sliced Bread* stood out as the obvious favorite.

First coined as an advertising slogan, the title brings ironic connotations of the commercial world to the gallery space. As soon-to-be college graduates, we are just beginning this already too familiar process of self-promotion, branding, and networking often associated with post-grad life. Why not acknowledge our inevitable fate beyond Whitman and use a kitsch ad slogan as the title for our thesis exhibition show?

While we may be toast once we enter the “real world,” boy oh boy are we fresh out the oven today, so enjoy us while we’re hot! *Best Thing Since Sliced Bread* applies the same lighthearted tone that characterized our class and tied us all together. There is no bread or explicit theme that links all the work in this exhibition, but we have influenced one another and we do love bread.

Enjoy!

Senior Art Majors
2018

WHITMAN COLLEGE
SHEEHAN AND "FOOTS" GALLERIES
WALLA WALLA WA 99362

Record Num. 2018
Application Label: UNDERGRADUATE

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TOTAL PAGES 80

04/20/18 thru 05/20/18

THANK YOU!
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APEX FOOD

Note from the Director

As this exhibition was being mounted, I realized that this year marks a significant milestone for the Studio Arts Program at Whitman College. It was ten years ago, in 2008, that the new Fouts Center for the Visual Arts was completed, and this year's graduating class of senior studio art majors marks a decade of student activity within this facility.

It has been tremendous to witness, each progressive year since the opening of the FCVA, the increasing degrees of sophistication Whitman's art students have been able to achieve translating their ideas into objects, images, and performances, as a result of the space and tools to which they have access. Not to mention, in addition to the FCVA's concrete, steel and glass, the infrastructure of an expanded studio art faculty has also visibly bolstered the creative production of successive classes of studio art majors.

Here now, at this ten-year anniversary of the FCVA, the results of Whitman's commitment to its studio art program shines so clearly. *Best Thing Since Sliced Bread*, Whitman's 2018 senior art thesis exhibition, catalogued in the following pages, lives up to its name. It is marvelous. It is collectively the best work I have seen in the twenty thesis exhibits I have facilitated for this college in its diversity of ideas and in materials.

When I walked into the Sheehan Gallery and into the gallery at the FCVA on the afternoon of April 18th, after the doors closed on the students' installations and the dust of their furious activity had settled, I was struck by something significant with this class as a whole. There was a tremendous harmony between the pieces and a great visual interplay in the displays - so much connection between all these disparate works. But more than even this, both of the exhibition spaces felt very warm and inviting. Group shows aren't always like this (thesis shows in particular). Art is often a visualization of catharsis. It is a container for processing, the embodiment of things its maker is working through. Sometimes this generates work that is barbed, sharp edged, loud, even angry. And in the years when one is in college, in my curatorial experience, these sorts of manifestations seem to be prevalent.

This year, however, these kinds of expressions were markedly absent.

Now please don't misunderstand when I say this, that I am indicating that the work of this year's seniors is benign, that it isn't potent or provocative. Nor am I saying that the work doesn't encompass a tremendous amount of feeling, that it is absent of pain, or that there is not questioning going on. Because all of these things are there in abundance. What makes this class stand out, however, is a particular maturity in the way they have addressed the ideas they're working with. They have found the means to explore and express themselves in their creative productions in a manner that beckons, that supports, that poses open-ended questions. Their work is articulate. It is challenging. But it is also generous and kind.

I don't know if part of the warmth and the sense of invitation I experienced in this year's exhibitions spaces was a sort of quiet rebellion by this group of students against what is going on in this moment outside the galleries doors: the vitriol that's dominating the news in our country and the larger world. But I can tell you how heartening their artistic approaches are to me in these complicated and increasingly polarized times. I can also say it makes me exceedingly hopeful for what this graduating class of 2018 will go on to after this exhibition. And for what they will contribute to the world in creativity and conversation in the years to come.

Daniel Forbes
Director of the Sheehan Gallery
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Art



Anna Dawson

Often, we know ourselves from an outside perspective that is grounded in how we are depicted in photographs. Photographs act as mirrors of ourselves in the form of an object, and this mirror allows us to understand how we look and how we may be perceived by others. A person's identity visually presented by their body has social and political implications, implications that don't necessitate truth. These pieces attempt to create an alternative narrative for myself and participating viewers about mixed race identity and the representational objectification of photography. The work refracts visual identity by dismantling images and rearranging them into lanterns. The lantern, an object of everyday function, of clarity, and of cultural celebration, is used as a way to reframe these fractured photos and further their visual complexities.

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Crowd of Lanterns
mixed media





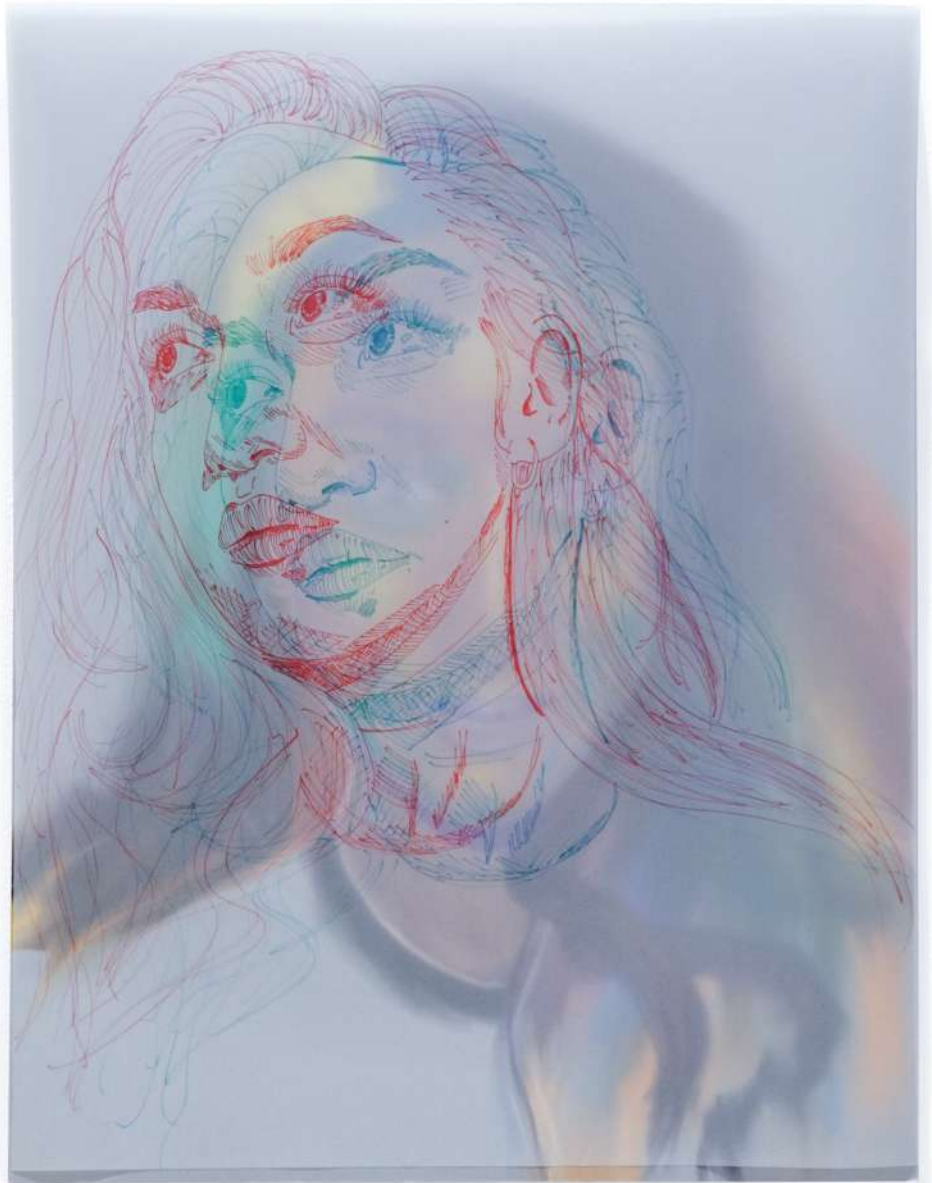
Details: *Crowd of Lanterns*
mixed media

Casey Poe

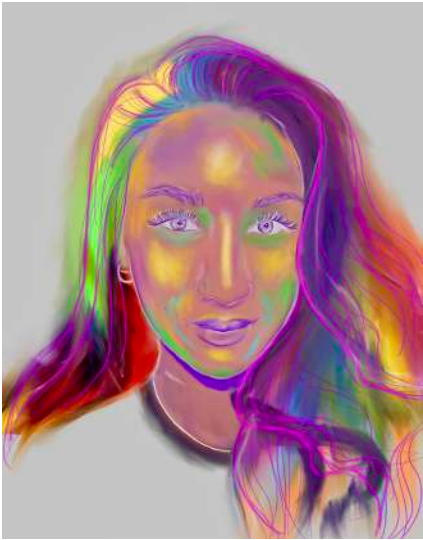
These art pieces focus on identity within family, culture, and individuality. The work focuses on the layering of materials as well as forms and context about identity not being one fixed thing, but on how one layer interacts with one another. This work is based on how different ethnicities, as well as family and cultural identities, are layers of one's identity together. These pieces are culturally and family driven. They show the connection between family and what is important to the artist. As a person with multiple ethnic identities, the artist uses family members and other people most significant in her life as the subjects of her portraiture, with an emphasis on Hawai'i and the Hawaiian culture.

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**HAWAIIAN • CHINESE • FILIPINO • PORTUGUESE • DUTCH •
INDONESIAN • SWEDISH • NORWEGIAN**
digital drawing, mylar



Top Left: *Self Portrait*, digital, 22 x 28 in
Top Right: *Who Are You?*, digital, 22 x 28 in
Bottom Left: *Oma Sokkie, Dutch Indonesian*, digital, 22 x 28 in
Bottom Right: *Mixed Plate*, digital, 22 x 28 in



Top: Tutu Lei & Papa Ronald, Hawaiian Chinese Swedish Norwegian, digital, 44 x 20 in
Bottom: January 17, 1893, digital, 22 x 28 in



Zoë Guckenheimer

Reveling in Fluid Spaces is a series of paintings which attempt to make visible the bodily acts of feminized labor that go left unseen. These canvases have been actively scrubbed with rags and sponges and volumized with a blow dryer; they are free of the mark of a paintbrush, a tool symbolic of the phallus and the historical male dominance over painting. In this work, the paint has been allowed to ooze, drip, protrude, and wrinkle on the canvas to unapologetically take up space on this white wall.

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Detail: *Reveling in Fluid Spaces*
house paint on canvas





Reveling in Fluid Spaces
house paint on canvas
54 in x 84 in (each)

Katie Zesiger

This series is inspired by real images.

Hurricane Andrew touched down in Miami, Florida in August of 1992. Over 1.2 million people evacuated the area, including the staff of Zoo Miami. The zoo animals were locked in crowded indoor spaces for days, while their caretakers fled the city.

The birds were kept in men's bathrooms. Many of the birds depicted here died due to stress in the confined space. Both flamingos and storks are migratory birds who can sense large weather systems coming days before they arrive. These birds were all capable of escaping the city on their own, yet for their 'protection' they were instead locked inside hyper-human, sterile, and angular spaces.

What dangers are wrapped up in the impulse to protect? The impulse to dominate?

Most of us accept as true that humans are different—more important than other species. Many of us also believe that this therefore gives us the right to have absolute control over non-human animals: breed them, consume them, exploit them, as well as protect them.

But this same logic is also used to justify other forms of oppression: that difference necessitates hierarchy, and that the dominant group therefore has the right to control, exploit, and protect the subjugated.

This work, based on real photographs and executed in a flat and cartoonish style, highlights the absurdity of protection through domination and suggests that we reconsider the absurdity in all kinds of normalized oppression.

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Hurricane Season
digital prints and mixed media





Hurricane Season
digital drawing

Mason Hegeman

This installation calls into question the experience of language, reading, and visual processing. The individual pieces collectively create an unconventional library composed of cook books, atlases, gardening guides, photography catalogs, etc. The creation of each piece began with an act of deconstruction: page by page, the books were ripped, altered, and then finally re-assembled. The process of creating these pieces reflects the variety of methods individuals use to break down and absorb information. While some people can read an article and immediately digest what they encounter, others might have to read that same article multiple times or need to listen to the words out loud to obtain the same level of understanding. In particular, people with learning disabilities and processing “issues” can find performing academically in a textually-oriented system to be an uphill battle. By removing the text from the viewer’s gaze, and thus making it inaccessible, the pieces present the viewer with an altered way of “reading.” The new “text” is now legible in the texture and color relationships found in the individual pieces, as well as in the interactions between them. This space invites visitors to engage with the library of suspended objects and observe their own processing in progress.

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Details: *Rip, Crumple, Tear, Fold, Stack, String...repeat*
books, cotton cord, plywood, thread, audio file





*Rip
Crumple
Tear
Fold
Stack
String
...repeat*

books, cotton cord,
plywood, thread, audio file

Grace Pyles

This piece explores and interrogates world-building.

Humans need rules to be human.

From societies to the art and games that reflect and refract them, humans demonstrate a consistent need to make worlds and the structures that hold them up.

A prerequisite for artmaking: the world as it is now is not good enough.

Humans need rules to create.

Two opposing players in a game agree to abide by the same set of rules—even as they begin the conflict the game represents.

There is nothing physically stopping you from throwing your opponent's pieces out the window, but that isn't the same thing as winning. Games are simplified versions of life. Lives are complicated collections of rules. Sometimes these rules involve not throwing your opponent's pieces out the window.

Humans need rules to win.

A prerequisite for rulemaking: the world as it is now is not good enough.

Worlds are works in progress. Broken rules lay jagged foundations for new possibilities. The world may never be good enough, but it might be better.

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GLITCHES(S)
mixed media







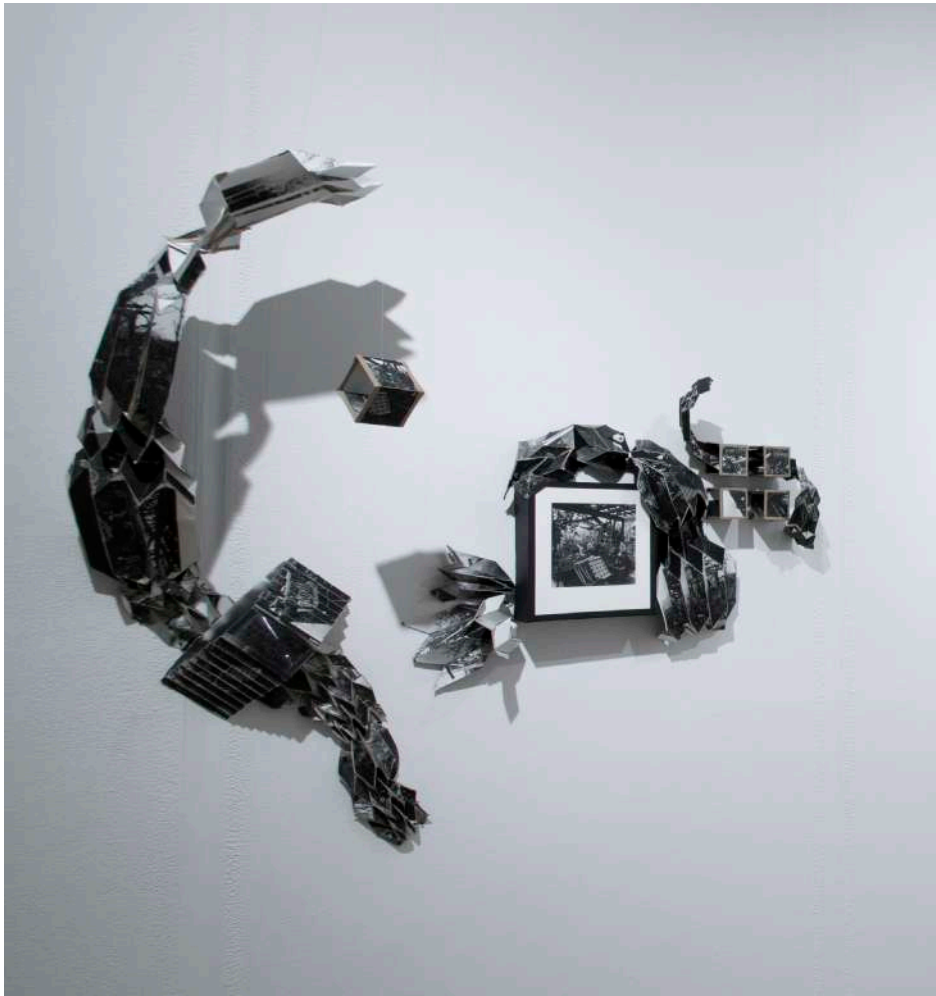
Ally Knivila

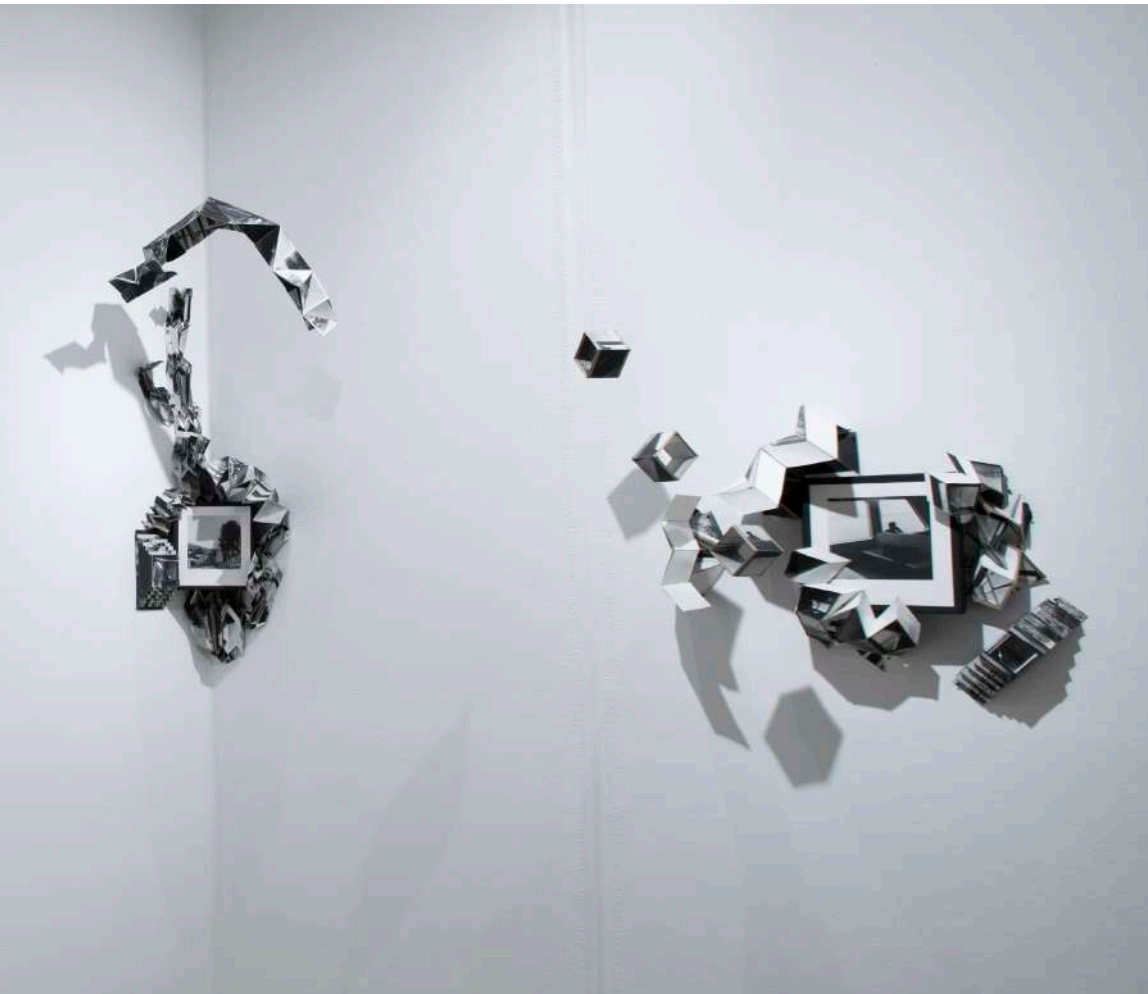
Born out of frustration of the disconnect between the photograph and the lived experience, *Optical Realism* is my attempt to represent visual truth. Constructed from photographs taken at three different locations, the piece works to recreate my experience within each of these places: my neighbors yard, a ferry to Seattle, and a gas station in Big Sur. When taking these photos, I felt limited by the two dimensional medium of photography. I worked to build an installation that changes depending on the perspective of the observer, mimicking how we experience visual space. This spacial representation is contrasted by a single photograph, highlighting the many things that are left out of the frame of a traditional image. As the viewer moves through the space, some photographs become hidden while others are accentuated. Utilizing perspective, depth, and movement, this is my attempt to provide a more accurate visual experience than a single photograph could.

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Details: *Optical Realism*
silver gelatin prints, paper





Optical Realism
silver gelatin prints, paper

Eric Rannestad

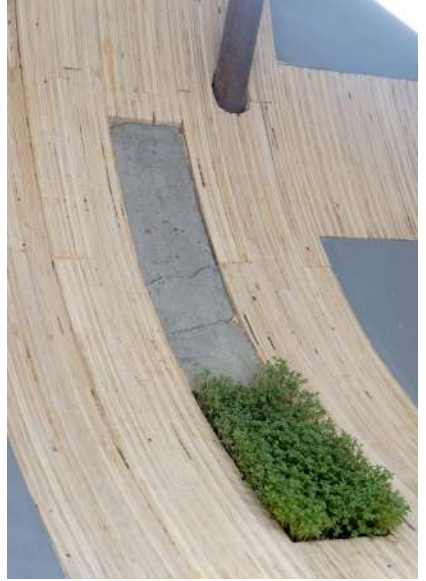
Compartmentalizing the way environments are constructed, measured, and grow, *Where the Rain Seeps Through* reflects a shifting balance between the natural world and built environment. Sections of material adopt a measured and contained aesthetic, while others resist this uniformity and reflect growth, variety, and decay. This tension characterizes the erosion and eventual failure of systems used to organize and quantify our world.

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Where the Rain Seeps Through
plywood, concrete, steel, florescent lights, enamel
paint, graphite, white clover, alfalfa, cress





Sabrina Salkind

Genes Are Overrated explores various relationships between humans and other animal species. Through the manipulation of images and text cut from advertisements, magazines, and newspapers, this series of collages disrupts the narrative that humans and animals are fundamentally distinct from one another. Further, this work challenges the idea that the categorization and ranking of animal bodies—human and other than human—is natural, and in doing so, questions the relationship between oppression and classification. The collages here explore how two specific structures of classification, sexism and speciesism, are embodied and promoted in a white-dominated society. By referencing the format of advertisements, this series highlights how such classifications are presented to us as consumers and encourages reflection upon the hierarchization of bodies.

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Genes Are Overrated

Genes Are Overrated
mixed media collage
42 x 60 in



Tranimal
mixed media collage
42 x 60 in



Top Left: *Process*, mixed media collage, 11 x 15 in

Bottom Left: *Best in Show*, mixed media collage, 11 x 15 in

Right: *Colorful, Beautiful, Stunning!*, mixed media collage, 22 x 30 in



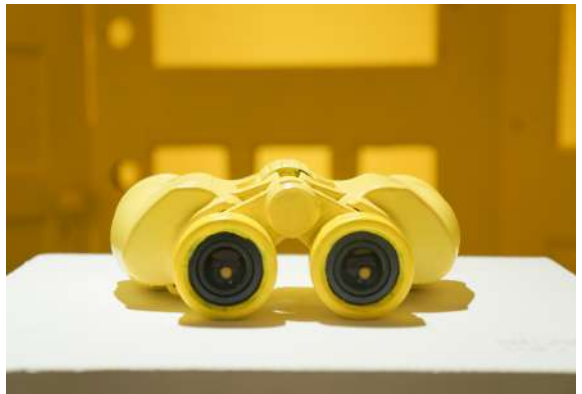
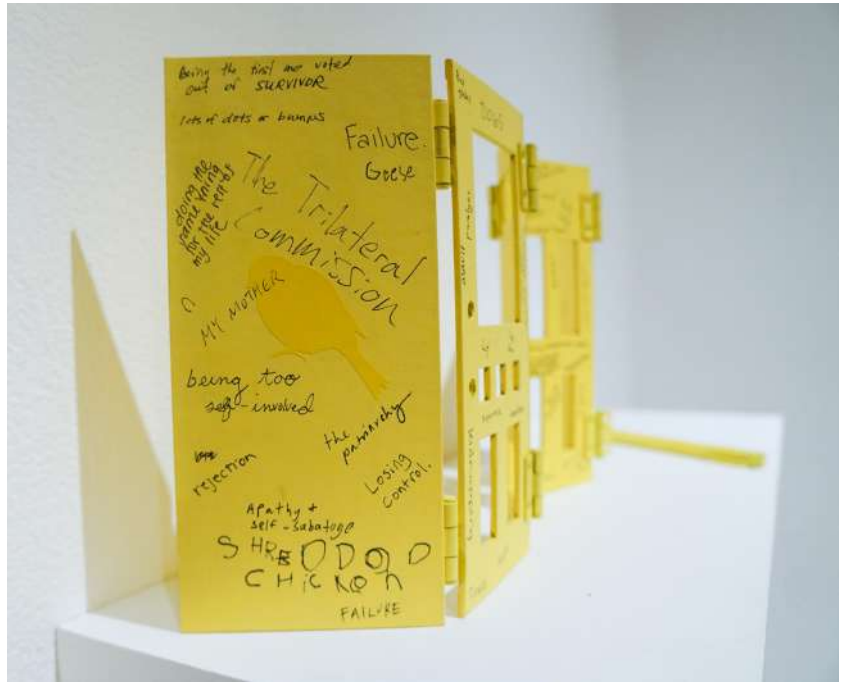
Catalina Burch

Power exploits fear, but power over fear can make fear powerful. Consider a canary in a coal mine, a yellow ball of fluff in a dark cavern. The first to detect a deadly problem, it saves the lives of others over its own. Do you think that the canary is afraid, and does it know how much power it holds by making fear a reality? Art-makers fear not making “good art.” Sometimes to get past self-doubt and indecision you just have to say, “fuck art let’s dance.”

*Please feel free to touch and pick up items in my installation. Sing and dance if so inclined. Observe and be observed. Lose your mind if necessary.

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Details: fuck art let's dance
installation, performance





fuck art let's dance
performance, video stills



Nicole Martinez

This work is as much a gathering of time as it is a show of women's strength.
Every piece contains a wealth of years and memories:

Cloth from the work shirts of a blue collar worker,
Speckled blue violets on white cotton; saved by one who struck to
unionize Vogue,
Bright solids from a determined heart - who spent years making pillows
in a cramped living room to earn a wage of her own,
Vivid blues from a full time student with three part time jobs, who
never said no to someone in need,
Warm reds from women who seek to built a community by sharing
everything they know...

All of these years are stitched together by one who has shared a part of each of
those lives.

~Please feel welcome to relax in the chair and look through the photo album at
your leisure.~

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Cosiendo Fronteras
textile, glass beads, mixed media
38 in x 72 in

Nicole Martinez





Details: *Cosiendo Fronteras*
textile, glass beads, mixed media

Jaazia Moran

This work is directly reminiscent of the years my family and I spent together making and selling piñatas as a means to get by when we first immigrated to the United States. Made only from the tools and materials available to me in the recesses of my family's basement, these parts of my past have lain unused and stored away for the past ten years, since we stopped working together.

The piñatas my family made were constructed in a series of steps. The cardboard came first: corrugated cardboard, cut into strips fashioned together with staples into a sphere. The cones were cut out of sheets of cardboard, 50 a time, laminated by the 100s, and folded into numerous stacks like party hats after being wrapped in every color of decorative aluminum paper. The wire for hanging was attached to the corrugated cardboard spheres and to those the spheres, cones, and plates, were attached. This was done in mass until there was an eight-foot stacked wall of mostly bare cardboard piñatas. Once a large number of these forms were compiled, at the tissue paper workspace, the final colors were added. Using gallons of homemade glue, hundreds of little papers, cut and folded twice into "petals" were applied, enveloping the piñatas surface and covering all the cardboard.

In the construction of each of these forms here, I worked off my memories: years of watching my family work at each stage of piñata making, both preparation and assembly. Every member of the family had a job to do in the construction process. My siblings started working with my parents when they were ages ten to fourteen and their combined efforts produced money for food, clothes, and other living expenses. As long as each family member did their part, we got by. As my siblings and I grew up and moved out of the house, producing became more difficult. Staying together became impossible and eventually we just had to stop making.

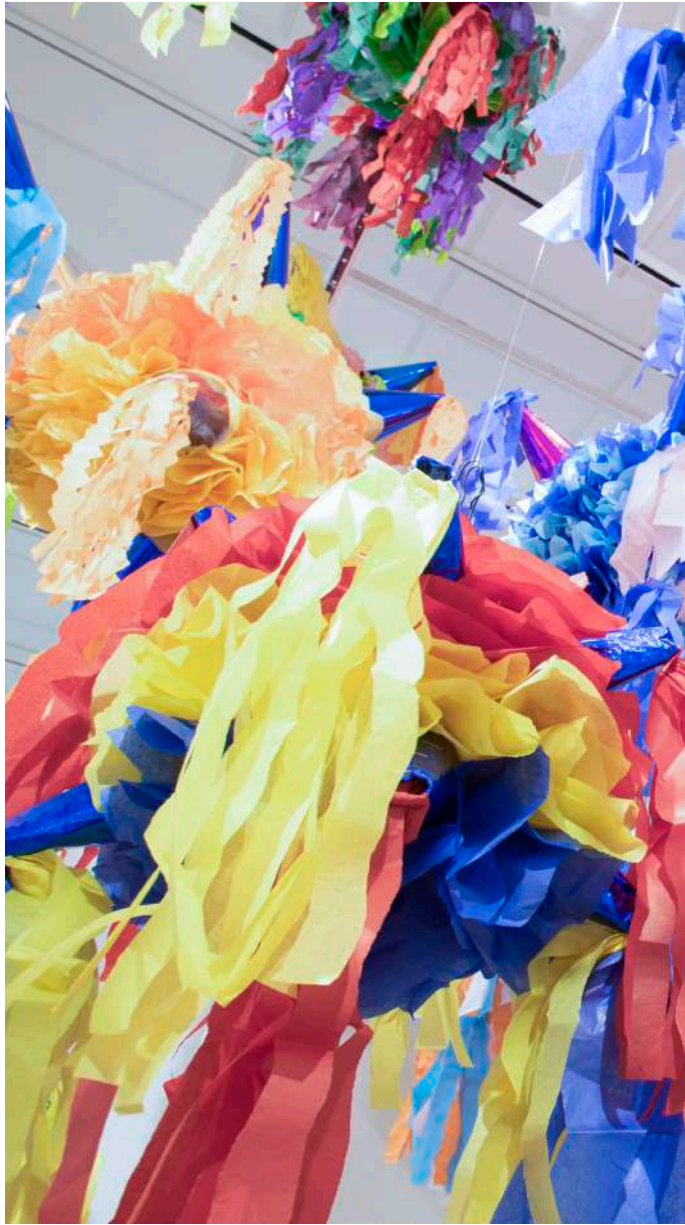
When we were in production, these piñata forms dominated the spaces of our home and many aspects of our lives. As we made these shapes repeatedly they, in turn, shaped our identity and family culture. This piñata installation expresses those connections and commemorates them. Although my family will likely never come together to make piñatas in mass again, the process of revisiting and remodeling these piñatas has helped me understand the evolution of my family and community.

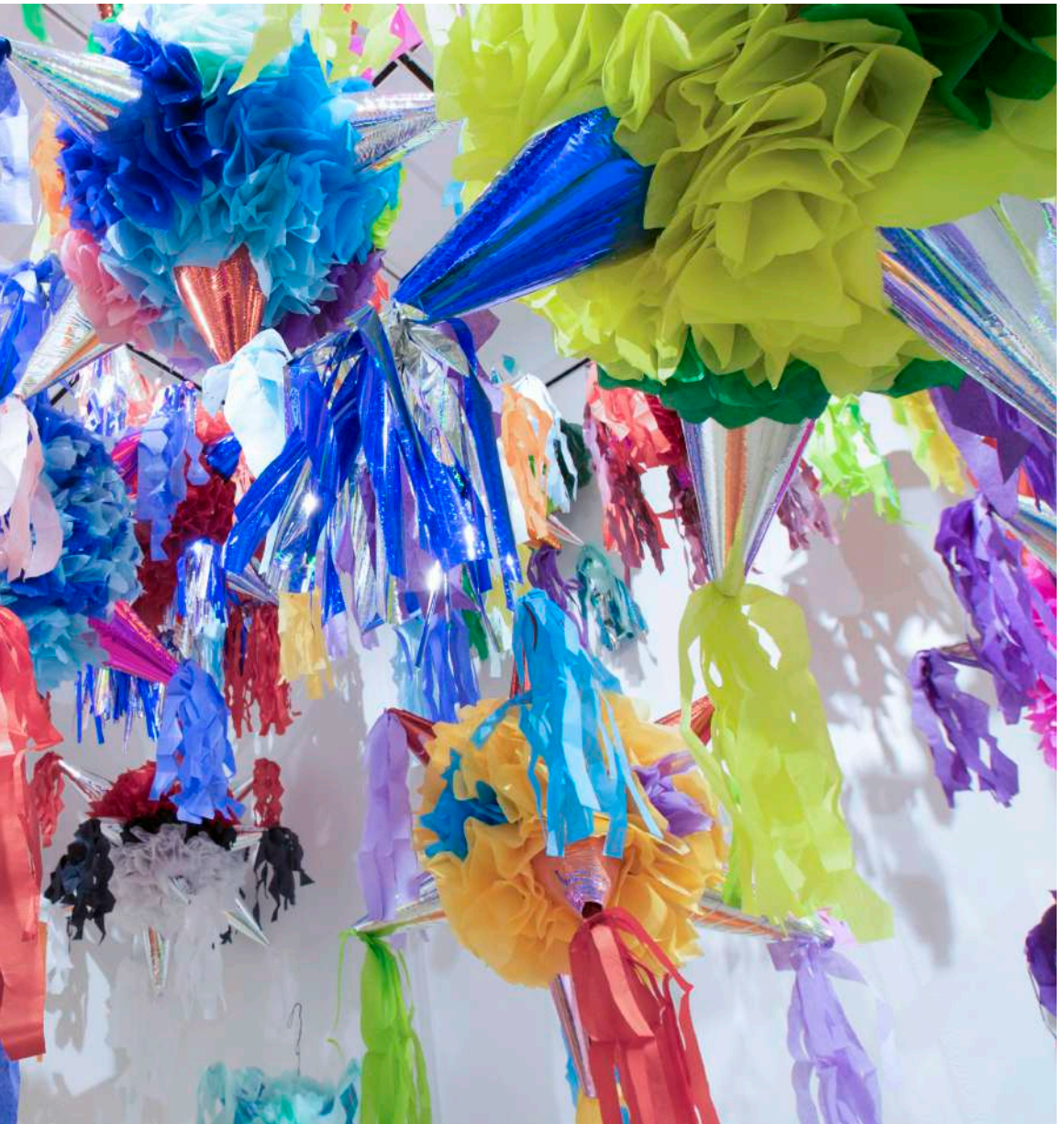
These pieces represent, for me, a portrait of our history through their forms and my recreation.

As a family, our making was structured around the expected destruction of these piñatas, understanding the freedom and revelry that is meant to accompany that process of breaking. We produced them to be sturdy enough to prolong the celebratory rupture and subsequent scattering. I invite you to use these piñatas, though in a slightly different way. Please explore the space, sit on the rug, or lay on the floor take a moment to look at these piñatas as the products of my journey. Enjoy and celebrate our memories with me through the colors and sensations hanging overhead.



Detail: Piñatas/Process/Portraits
paper, cardboard, flour, water



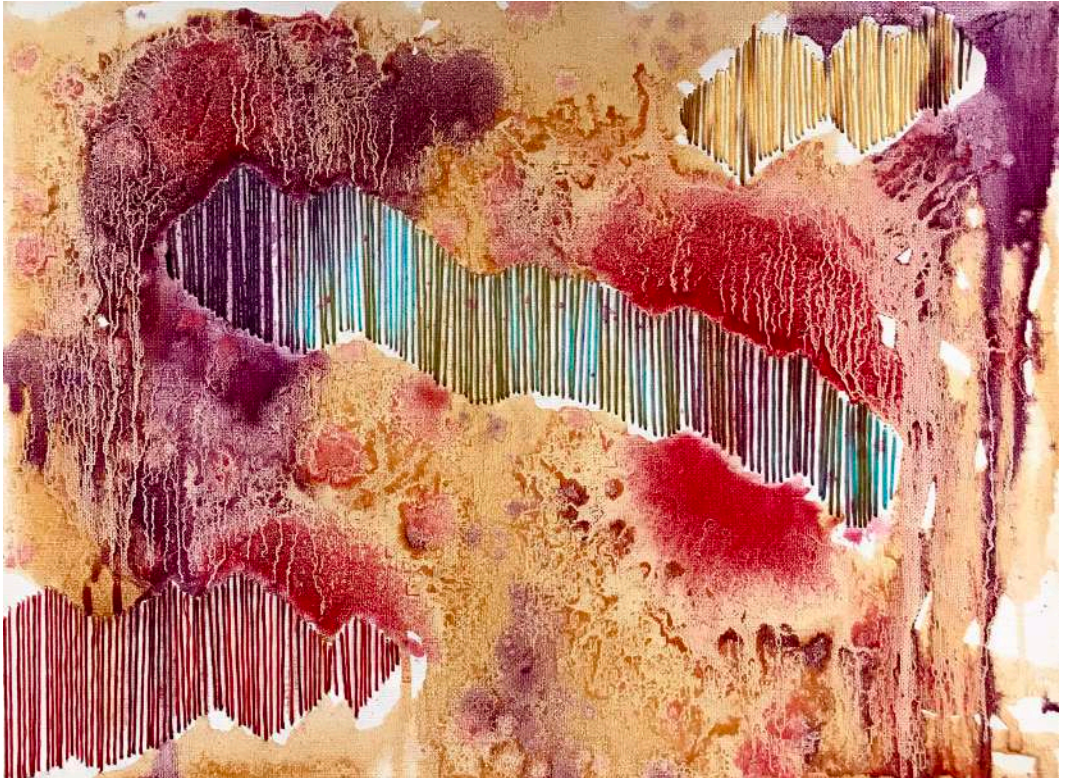


Piñatas/Process/Portraits
paper, cardboard, flour, water

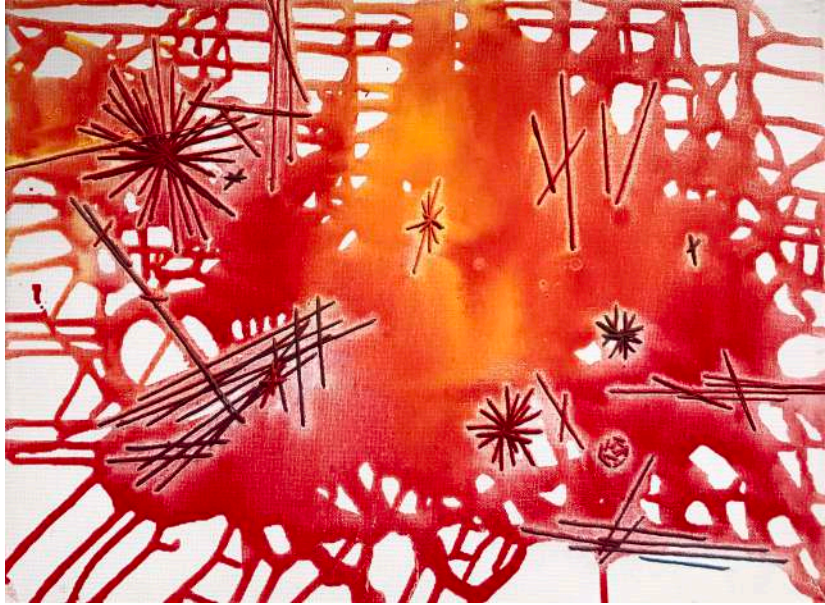
Svetlana Petrova

This work explores the degree to which an immigrant identity is a duality or a composite through the contrasting mediums of embroidery and oil paint. My craft-oriented upbringing resulted in a personal conflation of embroidery with Russian culture; in contrast, I learned most of my painting skills in America and thus associate painting with life in the United States. Combining these techniques allows me to explore the degree to which an immigrant identity is a binary, and to which degree it is a composite of places and culture just as this work is a composite of two different mediums. The textured ripples of string and smooth pools of paint add visual nuance and dimension that intermarries the two techniques, aligning intersections of art media with cultural contrast and fluidity.

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27th of May, 1703
oil paint and embroidery on canvas



Details: 27th of May, 1703
oil paint and embroidery on canvas





Kerr Ivan Cirilo

Labor/Authority is an attempt to situate myself in the world in relation to textual authority and dominant ideologies. The six prints contain photographs of street signs and scanned government-issued documents that are then overlaid with hand-written text—documents attributed to power. These texts vary from critical art theory, to the Tagalog Catholic Bible, to immigration law; i.e. written works emblematic of the rules in which one would conduct their day-to-day life. Power, in this sense, encompasses the legal, religious, theoretical, governmental and transnational implications of dominant thinking and regulated action. Through this method, the notion of text-as-power is reduced to mere noise—eclipsing the ideas it is meant to represent, the prints instead utilize an ideological hegemony as a texture or a filter through which one views the world around them.

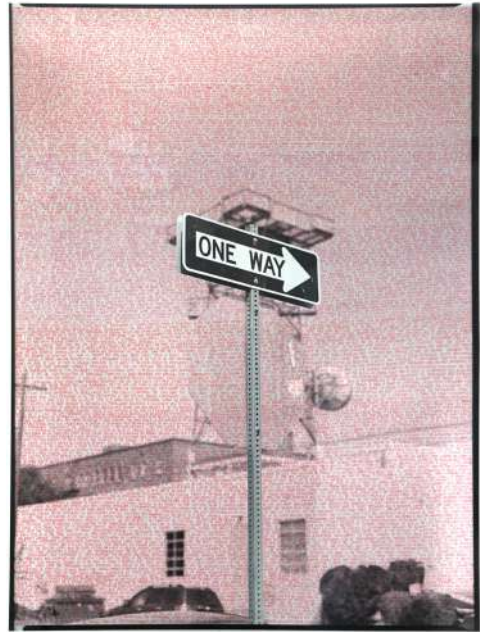
By forcing narratives together, the prints put into question the microscopic or the idiosyncratic against a more telescopic or macroscopic view, resulting in a visual interaction between the governing with regard to the individual or the governed. The process of hand-writing is ritualistic and contemplative in as much as it is laborious. Varied narratives, though personal, set up the implicit dichotomy that is present in all six prints. The historical narrative is vast, ranging from pre-colonial Philippines to contemporary scholarship. As such, some are embedded in post-colonial tensions that explore historical flows of belief systems and mandated law on transnational and global planes; others are meant to interrogate the role of art scholarship that often times muddle our own expressions, re-contextualizing the role of critical theory. They become a labored articulation and an exhaustive alteration of the original and the mundane.

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Details: Labor/Authority
ink on paper



Left Page:

Left: *Walead Beshty's Introduction: Ethics; Alain Badiou's Ethics; Giorgio Agamben's Form-of-Life; Jacques Rancière's The Distribution of the Sensible; Simon Critchley's Infinitely Demanding; Jean-François Lyotard and Jean-Loup Thébaud's Just Gaming; and Nicolas Bourriaud's Relational Aesthetics.*, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in
Right: *Susan Sontag's On Photography*, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in

Right Page:

Top Left: *Brian O'Doherty's Inside the White Cube*, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in
Top Right: *Howard Becker's Art Worlds*, 2018, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in
Bottom Left: *The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965*, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in
Bottom Right: *The Book of Mateo in the Tagalog Catholic Bible (Magandang Balita Biblia)*, ink on paper, 33 x 44 in

Taylor Johnson

Drawing has always been a sanctuary for me. Like many artists, I often lose track of time and space while working on a project in the studio. The act of drawing brings me into a state of complete absorption and focused attention, allowing me to let go of any worries or unwanted distractions, if only for a few hours.

In the field of positive psychology, this state is described as “flow.” The particular activity that produces a “flow” state is different for each individual – it could be anything from skiing to computer programming to knitting. For me, this mindset occurs most often when I draw.

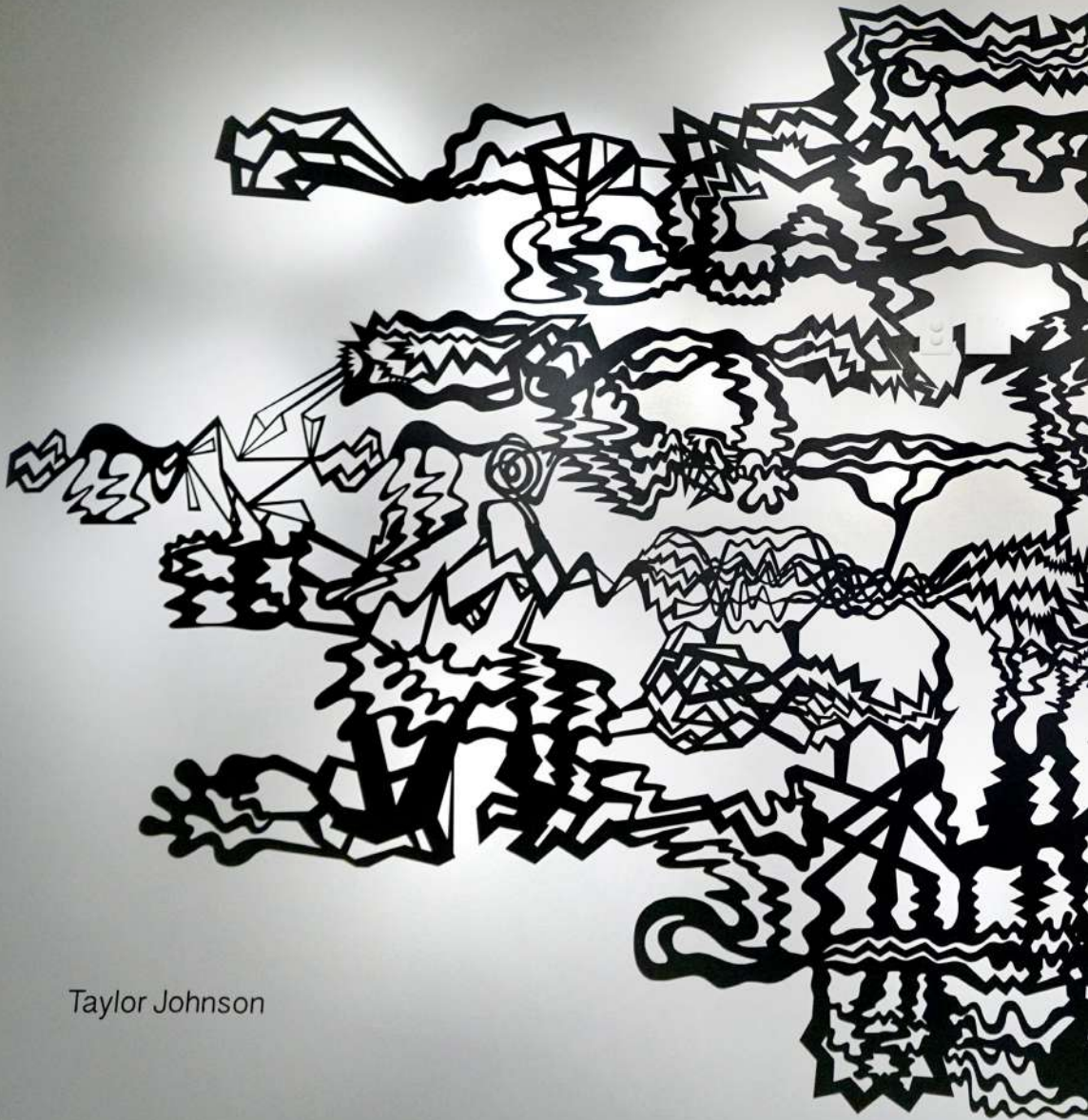
I began this work by drawing thick black lines with pen on paper. I later translated these drawings through the computer into vinyl cutouts, which I attached to the wall. In each step of this project, I lost myself in the process of making, allowing a state of flow to take over and direct my actions. The resulting drawings are a measure of the time spent in flow state, as well as a translation of that record of time into space, mapping out this experience through continuous drawings.

The completed large-scale drawing here illustrates what the internal space of “flow” feels like for me. While this work is a literal visualization of my own mental state in flow, it is also evocative of other types of flow. Like the motion of water, the changing seasons, or the mappings of scientific, mathematical, and economic phenomena, this drawing illustrates the various connections, patterns, and changes that make up all instances of flow.

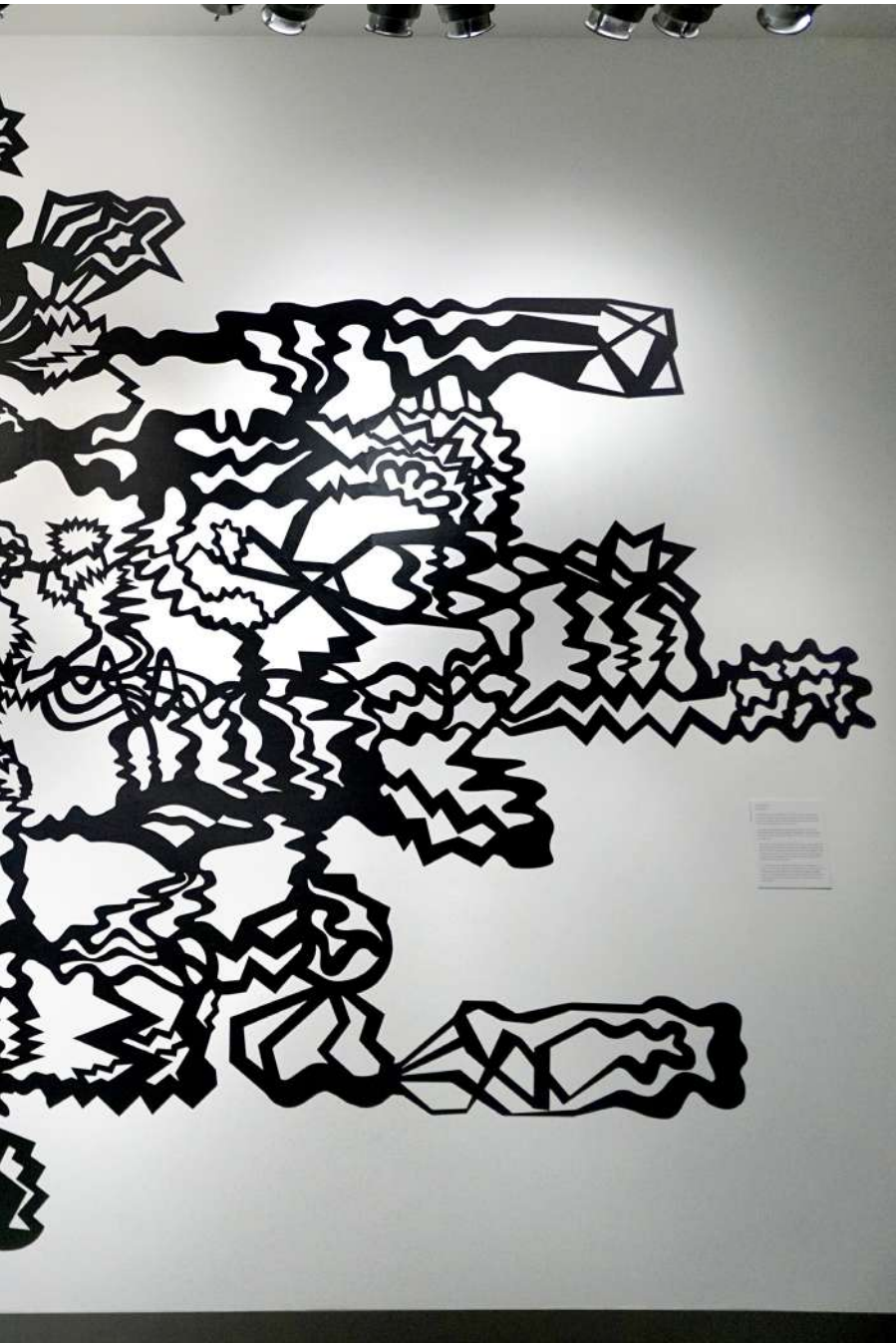
Email: johnson.taylorq@gmail.com



Flow
vinyl
204 in x 120 in



Taylor Johnson



Flow
vinyl
204 in x 120 in



Mercer Hanau

This proximity-responsive installation reimagines the aesthetic of stained glass cathedral windows with imagery of modern biology to reconcile now-polarized worldviews of human origins and our sense of entitlement regarding animal bodies. In adding videos from scientific research to the canon of human spiritual understanding, this work creates space for emotion about the natural world that is often purposely excluded from the 21st century laboratory.

There hasn't always been a sharp ideological or linguistic distinction between studying the natural world and studying religion. However, in relatively recent history—especially in the United States—many still see science and religion as competing and incompatible in the formation of worldviews. Growing up as agnostic in a household with parents of two different religions, I found a deep connection to the natural world through science rather than faith. Such longing for understanding can move people to reach out toward infinite complexity through a variety of gestures of curiosity.

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Homologospel

video projection, fabric, PVC pipes,
conductive copper tape, wire, Arduino



Details: *Homologospel*
video projection, fabric, PVC pipes,
conductive copper tape, wire, Arduino



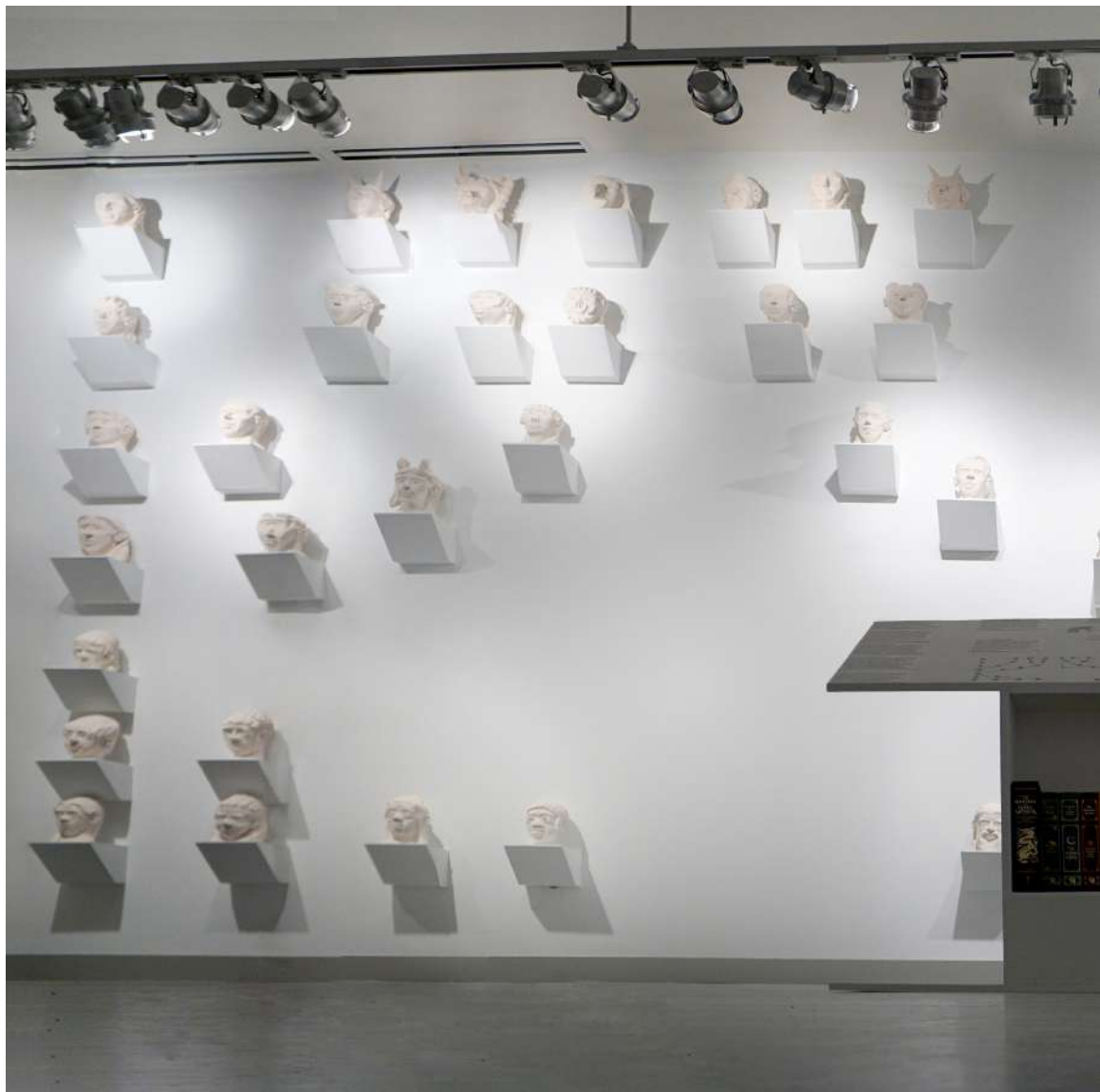
Noahlani Litwinsella

This work, constructed from clay, describes a phylogenetic tree, which explores a possible future of human evolution. Humans do not have sharp teeth, long claws, rippling coats of fur, or gleaming horns, though these are attributes that they desire. Humans have long expressed their yearning for greater strength and new traits through their myths and legends. In these writings, humans become individuals with the strength of twenty, who can run as fast as the wind, and who can thrive in the wilds. Exploring these strains of desire drawn from classical literature to contemporary stories, this work hypothesizes the relationships between the present human form and what it might evolve to be one day.

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**Details: *Evolutio Hominis:*
from *Homo sapiens* onward**
ceramics and mixed media





Evolutio Hominis: from Homo sapiens onward
ceramics and mixed media



Christopher Belluschi

The visual relationship of strayed natural materials and discarded human creations has grown steadily familiar around the world's coastlines. This work is a tribute to a hyper-enlivened stretch of land on the northern Oregon coast where marks of humanity are present in the form of eroded paths, terrestrial refuse, and seafaring debris. The perpetual tides of the Pacific Ocean consistently whirl the space's matter into a conglomerate of past and present.

Throughout my life, I have scrambled through the space and chanced upon familiar and noteworthy debris, a baker's dozen of which are hanging above. As I carry in mind past historical events, (a British ship which ran aground here in 1913, the 1941 WPA creation of the highway on the cliffs above, and the 2011 Japan tsunami, among other things...) each object is transformed into a curiosity and a deluge of questions arise:

What was the objects journey to this place?

How long has it been here?

Who last laid eyes on it?

Can I make art out of it?

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Detail: *Consumed, Assumed, Resumed*
beachwood, found objects, rope, paper





Details: *Consumed, Assumed, Resumed*
beachwood, found objects, rope, paper

Credits

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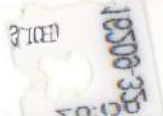
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