

USF MFA 2016

With essays by students in the graduate Art History program
University of South Florida School of Art and Art History <art.usf.edu>

Published on the occasion of *Only the Tip: 2016 MFA Graduation Exhibition*
April 1 – May 7, 2016, USF Contemporary Art Museum <cam.usf.edu>



Foreword

by **Wallace Wilson, Director and Professor, USF School of Art and Art History**

This compendium features the collaborative efforts of the graduating Master of Fine Arts students and the Master of Arts students in Art History at the University of South Florida's School of Art and Art History. It is indicative of the emphatic commitment to transdisciplinary research and learning in the College of The Arts and throughout the University.

The students self-selected the pairings of one studio graduate with one art history student based on writing preferences and research backgrounds. Once decisions were made, the artist and scholar shared dialogue, studio visits, written drafts, and edits – back and forth – until the final artworks and essays reached the ideal form and tenor. A final polish was achieved through cooperation with USF's Writing Studio.

The MFA at USF is acknowledged as a premiere program among its peers nationally. Students create artworks that embrace a vast range of materials and diverse, innovative conceptual strategies.

The USF MA program in Art History is unique in that the curriculum is based exclusively on small, writing-

intensive seminars. Students engage in advanced research on current issues in art history.

Our eminent faculty in both disciplines are internationally distinguished for their scholarly and creative research achievements and as notably outstanding, inspiring teachers.

Sincere appreciation is extended to publication designer Don Fuller and to the generous donors who made the endeavor possible. The catalogue is the result of a cooperative enterprise between our graduate student organizations: MFAO (Master of Fine Arts Organization) and WHAT (Writing, History, Art, & Theory). The two fundraising projects were a silent auction in the student gallery and a social media crowdfunding campaign.

Congratulations to our incredibly dedicated, gifted and talented graduate students for the entire production – from the original inception to this dynamic record that you hold in your hands!

ARTISTS

- 06 **Sasha Adorno**
Written by **James Cartwright**
- 10 **Merritt Fletcher Evripidou**
Written by **Ashley Williams**
- 14 **Craig Hanson**
Written by **Marlena Antonucci**
- 18 **Tamesha Kirkland**
Written by **Andrea Johnson**
- 22 **Jenn Ryann Miller**
Written by **Laura Colkitt**
- 26 **Leslie Reed**
Written by **Shanna Goodwin**
- 30 **Gary Schmitt**
Written by **Alexandria Salmieri**
- 34 **Elizabeth Schneider**
Written by **Tracey Cole**
- 38 **Princess R. Smith**
Written by **David Q. Loisel**
- 42 **Matthew Drennan Wicks**
Written by **Amanda Preuss**

The Unseen Narrative

By James Cartwright

Combining a lifelong interest in storytelling and a scientific interest in biological organisms, artist Sasha Adorno gives material form to the unseen characters that compose the foundation of our existence. Her artwork recalls atoms, particles, and cells, but Adorno draws upon these forms to create new, scientific-seeming symbols instead of copying existing forms. This interest in a biological narrative is rooted in the artist's personal experiences; she battled cancer at age fourteen and was the primary caregiver for a grandmother with Alzheimer's disease. Adorno's early encounter with the possibility of death hastened her understanding of the world around her and catapulted her out of childhood. These experiences made Adorno aware of the fragility of life and she realized that the unseen and unexplored parts of life are more important than its ending. This concern for the relevance of each finite being that constitutes the entirety of existence is communicated in her explorations of life's unseen spaces.¹

Primarily translating her ideas into sculptural forms, Adorno incorporates materials that recall cellular bodies, imbuing her creations with a materiality that suggests a living specimen. Adorno aims to convey a lack of permanence, reflecting on the fragile nature of life and capturing her forms in the process of creation. Materials like glass or clear substances are utilized due to their associations with concepts of light, purity, and weightlessness, which relate to Adorno's interest in the ephemeral and fragile quality of life. Plastic and glass materials are particularly appealing due to their translucency and ability to capture and create layers, which Adorno applies to her sculptural work as visual metaphors for organic tissue. These types of transparent materials also allow for more interaction with light and reflection, which can create movement in something that is relatively static and offer the viewer a glimpse into the inner composition of Adorno's organisms. Adorno's color palette is soft, with minimal, concentrated colors,

and the overall aesthetic emphasis is created around the use of light. This recent experimentation with the manipulation of light in her sculptures reflects Adorno's observation that giving light to a work is the closest thing to giving it life.²

Although Adorno's process is ultimately resolved in sculpture, the creation of a three-dimensional object is only one sequence of her narration. Numerous concept sketches, experiments in progress, and framed drawings can be found in Adorno's studio, each functioning as an individual character within a larger story. The interrelated nature of each work is readily apparent, though Adorno seizes upon the potential to realize her ideas in multiple mediums. Her drawings are rendered in a meticulous detail not easily attainable with sculpture, though this work appears more as the scientific cataloging of a biological form rather than an artist's conceptual explorations. Adorno has recently exhibited more drawings alongside her sculptures, with both mediums working together to flesh out her biological creations.

While explorations of narrative and family are integral to Adorno's work, she considers people in general to be a source of inspiration. She creates art with a sense of communal inclusiveness in mind and it is important to Adorno that her work can be understood by everyone. She forgoes any attempt to mystify her audience or celebrate her cleverness by instead focusing on establishing an earnest, visceral connection with the viewer, using light and translucent material to transform the unseen body into a tangible presence. Her explorations with art and science are made accessible with the utmost care and sensitivity by relating her microscopic forms to universal questions about how our individual lives fit within a grander narrative. Adorno hopes that through sharing her experiences with fighting cancer and caring for her grandmother, she can reach people whose lives have been touched by

similar pathologies and exchange positive thoughts and ideas that consider ailments from a different perspective. Adorno acknowledges the hard realities of these illnesses, but her message lies in overcoming negativity and finding something beautiful even in the darkest spaces.³

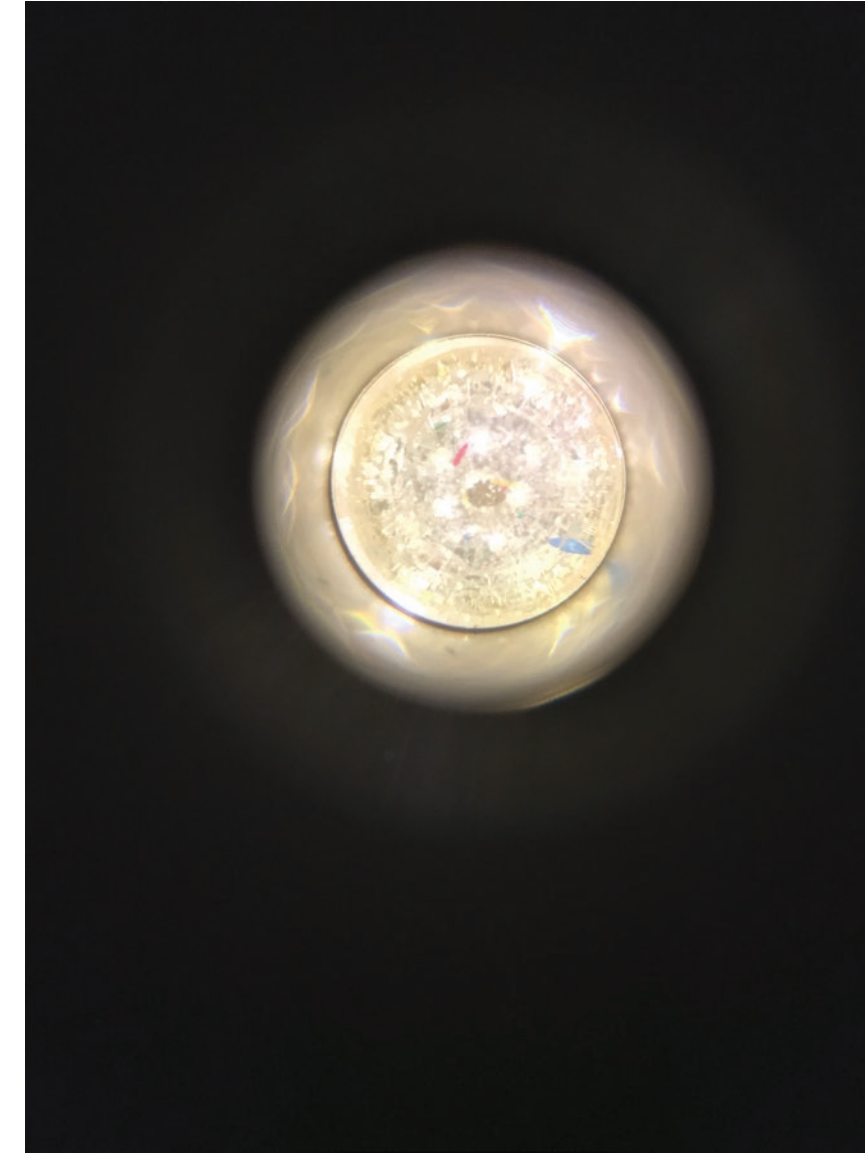
¹ Sasha Adorno, *MFA Proposal 2015*, accessed January 31, 2016.

² Sasha Adorno, Interview with James Cartwright, January 21, 2016.

³ Sasha Adorno, Interview with James Cartwright, January 21, 2016.



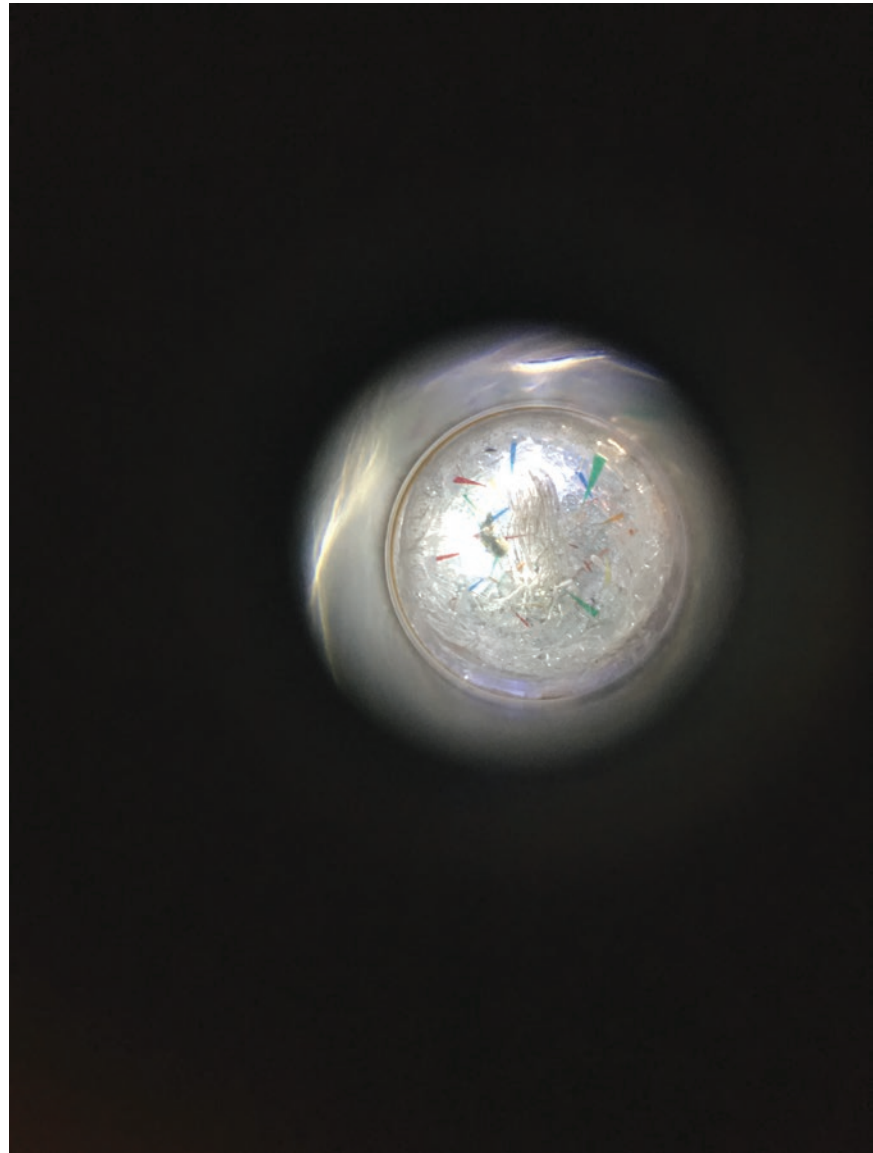
1



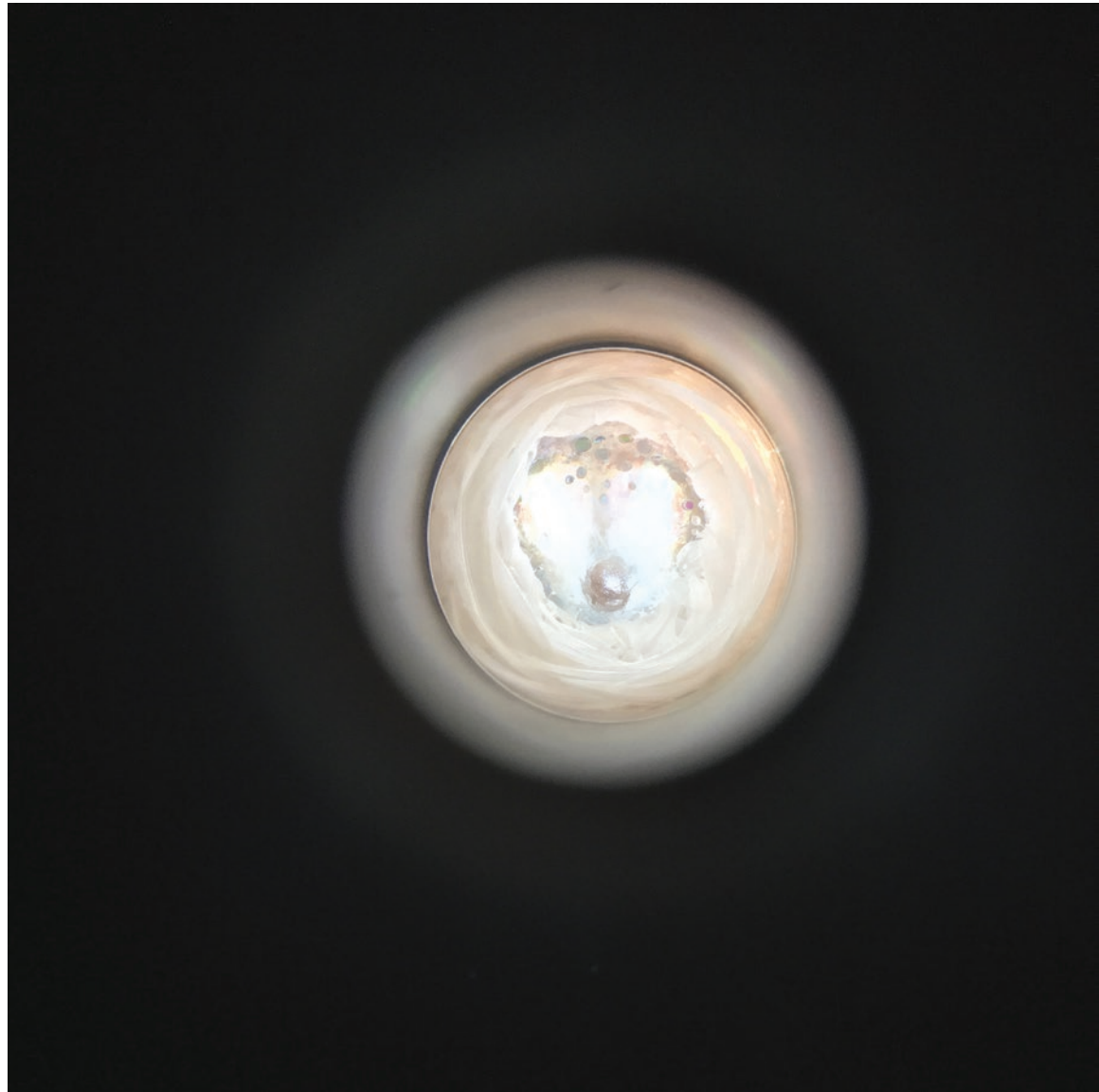
2



3



4



5

1. *Untitled*, 2016 (detail)
mixed media
13-1/2 x 13 x 23 in.
2. *Untitled*, 2016 (detail)
mixed media
13-1/2 x 13 x 23 in.
3. *Untitled*, 2016 (detail)
mixed media
13-1/2 x 13 x 23 in.
4. *Untitled*, 2016 (detail)
mixed media
13-1/2 x 13 x 23 in.
5. *Untitled*, 2016 (detail)
mixed media
13-1/2 x 13 x 23 in.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Recognizing the Unfamiliar: Merritt Fletcher's *Fertile Ground*

By Ashley Williams

“When I explore the intricate, varied, and precious patterns in our world, from the molecular to the planetary, I feel more connected to life.”¹

Growing up near the Appalachian Trail in Alabama, Merritt Fletcher was exposed at an early age to the art of nature, found in the texture of moss, in shadow patterns cast from leaves on trees, and by rocks in creek beds and waterfalls. Today, she brings together these memories and experiences of exploring ecology and art to create sculptures that push the boundaries of the decorative, challenging the viewer to engage with their content. Over the course of her career, Fletcher has explored various mediums. Trained in painting rooted in Josef Albers' color theories, Fletcher has since branched out to explore printmaking, collage, drawing, and, most recently, sculpture. Interested in the manner in which artists Eva Hess and Petah Coyne approach their materials, Fletcher invents her own formulae for approaching the materials she uses, continually pushing herself to evolve as an artist.²

Key experiences throughout Fletcher's career have helped shape her newest mixed media sculpture project, *Fertile Ground*. While working on a site-specific sculpture in Ghana and observing termite mounds, Fletcher became captivated by niche constructions, the process of an organism's modification of their environment in which they create and destroy their own niches. Fletcher then experimented with site-specific sculptures in Fort De Soto that explored the use of natural materials such as noble pen shells. The exploration of niche constructions and the incorporation of noble pen shells would continue as Fletcher began to create *Fertile Ground*.

After making these site-specific sculptures, Fletcher found herself missing the experience of working in a studio. Thus, she shifted her focus and brought her interest in materials stemming from nature, including cypress

knees, basaltic lava, and noble pen shells, into the studio. Utilizing these materials, Fletcher takes her experiences with familiar patterns found in nature, putting them through her own creative filter of memories, sexual energy, and psychological mood to create works that appear to be both familiar and unfamiliar, inviting the viewer to question their relationship to the work using their own perceptions and subconscious.³

Comprised of both free-standing and hanging sculptures, *Fertile Ground* becomes an environment for the viewer to experience. Fletcher's free-standing sculptures, *Of A Salnitre Peacock (A Bird of Paradise Dreamed)*, *We Live and We Die But Caves Don't (or maybe they do it just takes longer)*, and *Untitled (Phylogenetic Lineages)*, combine non-traditional materials such as basaltic lava rock and noble pen shells with more familiar materials including handmade paper, wood, string, and resin. Pulling inspiration from niche constructions, rock conglomerates, and cave formations, Fletcher brings an uncanny nature into the museum. Initially the viewer may recognize floral motifs or a crevice within the sculpture that may suggest a primordial substance, only to discover upon engagement with the work that it is not as familiar as it appeared, but more akin to a living body that resembles skin and bone rather than stone.⁴ Fletcher invites the viewer to walk around the sculptures, look closely into their crevices, and ponder the psychic currents running below the surface of life.

Continuing her play on niche constructions, thirteen resin stalactite inspired forms are suspended from the ceiling in Fletcher's *Fertile Ground*, allowing the viewer to become further encapsulated in her creation. Fletcher uses rubber to cast molds of cypress knees that she then utilizes to create sculptures made from resin, wood, glitter, and paper. Fletcher creates two separate entities, an above and a below, connecting them with her various materials to form one sculpture. While each sculpture is

a different size and shape, the centers of the sculptures align to construct an abstract horizon line, creating a dialogue for contemplating and questioning: what energy lies above and below the horizon?

Each set of sculptures refers to a set of twin prime numbers, a number theory referring to a pair of prime numbers that are separated by only one number and cannot be divided by any other number, such as the set of five and seven. The set of numbers reflect each other in their connection: they are close, but always separated, and can never touch. Through this theory, Fletcher's sculptures comment on ideas of isolation and uniqueness; what is seen on the surface can only be felt by the reflection upon what lies beneath.

Fletcher's work incorporates a sensual quality that comes from a love of the process, the making of colors, and the combining of materials in unusual and unexpected ways. Fletcher encourages the viewer to look past the surface of familiarity and to unearth their relationship to nature.



1



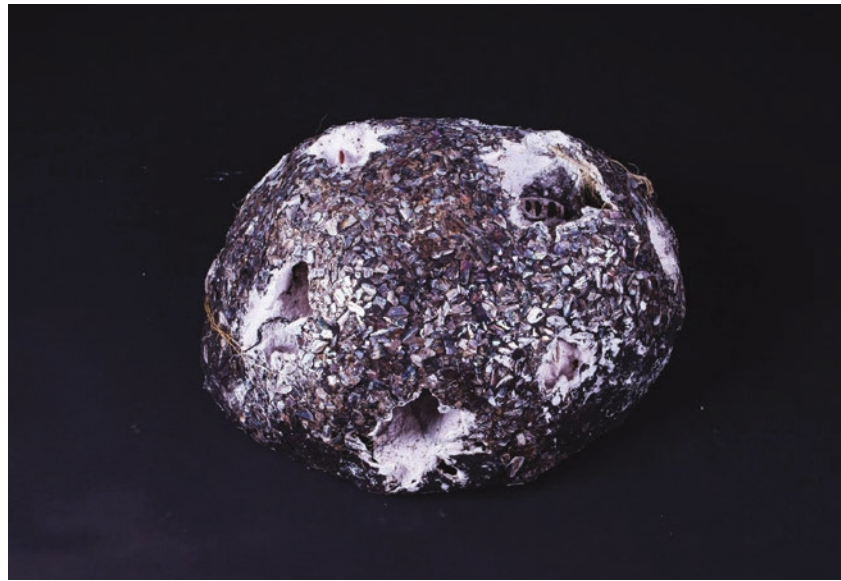
2

¹ Merritt Fletcher, "Artist's Statement," accessed January 12, 2016, <https://merrittfletcher.wordpress.com/>.

² Eva Hesse (1936-1970) was a post-minimalist sculptor who continually experimented with found objects and materials including latex and plastics; Petah Coyne (1953-) is a contemporary American sculptor known for experimenting with unorthodox materials such as silk flowers soaked in wax.

³ Merritt Fletcher, Interview with Ashley Williams, January 22, 2016.

⁴ Merritt Fletcher, Interview with Ashley Williams, January 22, 2016.



3



4



5

1. *Of A Salnitre Peacock (A Bird of Paradise Dreamed)*, 2016
paper, noble pen shells, basaltic lava
42 x 36 x 36 in.
2. *Of A Salnitre Peacock (A Bird of Paradise Dreamed)*, 2016
paper, noble pen shells, basaltic lava, resin
42 x 36 x 36 in.
3. *Untitled (Phylogenetic Lineages)*, 2016
paper, noble pen shells, basaltic lava, seed pod, rope, resin
42 x 42 x 42 in.
4. *Pleated ii*, 2015
paper, basaltic lava, balsam, seedpod
36 x 36 x 36 in.
5. *We Live and We Die But Caves Don't (or maybe they do, it just takes longer)*, 2016
paper, basaltic lava, balsam, felt, seedpod
42 x 42 x 42 in.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Untitled: A Phenomenological Meditation

By Marlena Antonucci

Blazing neon pink blending into swathes of orange and yellow pigments draw the viewer in to Craig Hanson's abstract sculptural relief, *Untitled*. From afar the large field of pulsating color evokes bright atmospheric space. Up close, the surface is gritty. The intensity of color pricks the optic nerves, prompting viewers to step away or readjust their perspective. Walking alongside the 96 inch long rectangular relief activates the work, making it a kinetic object. Scraped, sky blue ridges undulate from the top to the bottom of the work. The tactile ridges break up the color while also producing an optical effect. Depending on the direction walked along the work, its color shifts, turning predominantly pink one way, yellow the other. This lateral rhythm energizes the kinetic sculpture, recalling the ephemerality of atmospheric light diffusing during a sunset. Indeed, the sunset is a symbolic representation of material impermanence, a theme that is woven throughout Hanson's works.

While past artistic styles, such as Impressionism and Op Art, have turned to the science of optics to interrogate how we perceive, Hanson ascribes to Marcel Merleau-Ponty's theory of phenomenological perception.¹ Accordingly, the artist realizes that perception involves a physical as well as a visual response. Confronting an increasingly hyper-visual society, he creates artworks for viewers that are "observational and sensual vessels."² Through a poetic merging of mediums, Hanson's sculptures operate on multiple planes of experience. The entirety of *Untitled* cannot be contemplated all at once. Aggressive color, gritty sculptural relief, and encompassing scale destabilize viewers' sense of scale, inducing movement back, forth, and around the work. Complete realization of the object depends on this spatial investigation. Consequently, viewers experience the interdependence of their own mind and body in relation to the artwork.

The objects Hanson constructs arise out of effortful intentions and willful suspensions. His studio space is

an ecosystem of interdependent resources. Building, for him, becomes a kind of thought process. Describing this he says, "Fragments cross-pollinate amongst unfinished works," to form unified ideas.³ Hanson builds organic forms from polystyrene foam then scrapes the surfaces, carves the edges, and builds with color. Rather than construct a preconceived design, he works with surrounding materials to form a cohesive expression. However, the object is never complete. The works are constantly recycled, shaping new formal relationships.

Hanson considers the remarkably contemplative nature of the museum space as the ideal place for reception. It is a space deliberately alienated from commonplace behavior, where people become more aware of their response to visual elements and unknown histories. Hanson's objects are site-specific, confronting the unique architecture of the University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum. Organic wall-supported forms and freestanding objects are arranged in close proximity. While moving around the works, formal relationships become ever apparent as peripheral obstructions that viewers must navigate. The arrangement of his work echoes the nature of his studio as an interdependent ecosystem. Congruently, the immediate and intuitive improvisation of the artist's practice acts as a model for an ideal experience.

The dynamic engagement prompted by his sculptures recall art historian Claire Bishop's theory of heightened perception as an aesthetic category of the medium of installation.⁴ She argues that the relationship of objects in a space makes viewers aware of their already decentered subjectivity. Hanson also desires to create a sense of "presentness" through spatial relations. However, he delivers evocative content in more indirect gestures than the artists Bishop references. For example, Bruce Naumann's *Green Light Corridor* (1970-71) is a narrow passageway that is flamboyantly illuminated by green

fluorescent lights that can only be entered sideways, forcing the viewer into a dramatic and uncomfortable bodily experience with the work. The terms of engagement are so abrasive that many viewers might choose to decline participation because of frustration or claustrophobia. *Green Light Corridor* and others like it can create immobilizing sensations out of sync with the environment. While Hanson's work also employs a sense of antagonism through the application of garish color and uneven surface relief, he does so in a manner that encourages viewers to embrace an essential vigilance of their environment in order to resolve the situation on their own terms.

By choreographing a unique dance around objects, viewers become aware of their own creative potential in realizing the work. One must be physically present to appreciate a sunset; reproductions cannot capture the experience. Similarly, Hanson's work is meant to be directly experienced. Engaging with his intensity of color and intricacy of form entails conscious effort and stamina. But the exertion is worth it. Hanson's phenomenologically meditative sculptural abstractions instantiate the interdependent nature of perception, allowing viewers to bask in penetrating rays of uneasiness and admiration.

¹ Marcel Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), a French phenomenological philosopher recognized for his research on the primacy of bodily relations in understanding the world.

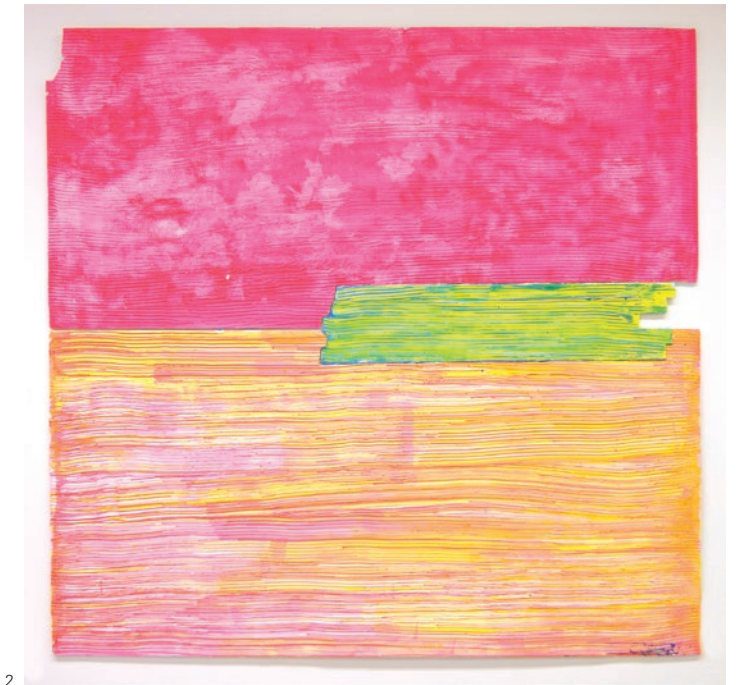
² Craig Hanson, Interview with Marlena Antonucci, January 11, 2016.

³ Craig Hanson, Interview with Marlena Antonucci, January 11, 2016.

⁴ Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (New York:Routledge, 2005), 50.



1



2



Craig Hanson



Photo: Matthew Drennan Wicks

1. *Untitled*, 2015
paint and plaster on styrofoam
89 x 112 x 11 in.
2. *Untitled*, 2015
paint and plaster on styrofoam
96 x 93 x 1 in.
3. *Untitled*, 2015
paint and plaster on styrofoam
48 x 96 x 1 in.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Tamesha Kirkland: Preserving Memory

By Andrea Johnson

While many historic buildings across Florida are being forgotten, neglected, and demolished, Tamesha Kirkland is bringing their memories back to the forefronts of our minds. Through repeated pilgrimages to different sites, where she creates her large-format charcoal collages, Kirkland forms close relationships with structures that others would easily pass by. These relationships are an important part of her practice because they compel her to convey the traces of the past residing within these dilapidated buildings. Through a combination of close observation of the buildings in situ and historical research, Kirkland is able to recreate the collective memories of her subjects. As she conducts impromptu interviews and uses online resources to amass stories and information from those who remember the former lives of these buildings, she begins to form a close connection with both the past and present of her subjects.

Like Charles Marville (1813-1879) and Charles Clifford (1820-1863), who were known for their photographs of the architectural modernization of Paris and Spain in the late nineteenth century, Kirkland catalogues an urban landscape that is rapidly changing.¹ However, she rejects photography as the most effective means of recording her dilapidated subjects. Her goal is to maintain the memory of these structures, not through the detailed record of the camera, but via the imperfect, fading memories of places—irreparably marred by their present abandonment, but brightened by their previous life. Rather than incorporating photographs from the past, which would present these buildings in pristine condition, or taking photographs in the present, which would only record the current dilapidation of her subjects, Kirkland creates compositions that preserve the composite perspectives of these structures that now reside in her memory.

Through her interactions with various abandoned buildings across the state of Florida, Kirkland illustrates

a very real connection between built structures and the way we remember them. The abandoned, decayed state of the buildings in this body of work mirrors the impermanence of these memories. As these vibrant buildings eventually lose their function, memories of their life quickly fade away, and their importance is forgotten. The collage effect, in which portions of the structure are added or inserted to the composition in-progress, reminds us of the way we shape our memories. Recollections that are incomplete or inconsequential are embellished and reshaped over time based on our perspective. Even the artist's chosen medium reflects the fading memory of buildings in many of Tampa's underserved communities. Her monochromatic palette represents a history not entirely remembered, while her hazy backgrounds highlight her subjects' slow fade into obscurity. However, it is her reductive technique that embodies Kirkland's mission to distinguish these built environments within the public memory. As she wipes away the charcoal which once covered the entirety of her drawing surface, she also wipes away the darkness that blinds us to the significance of these structures. She gives her viewer a glimpse of the history of these nearly-forgotten buildings, and replicates the way they are remembered.

Perhaps those opposed to the preservation and restoration of buildings in historic Black communities and elsewhere in Tampa Bay will be moved to appreciate the shared history of these neighborhoods as they view Kirkland's work. Through her unique perspective, those in opposition can see the beauty of the memories preserved in these structures, and come to terms with the reality of their importance. This body of work is especially timely considering the Florida Department of Transportation proposed destruction of portions of Tampa Heights to expand the highway system in that area. Kirkland's work shows that buildings, like the ones in this community, are not a nuisance to public

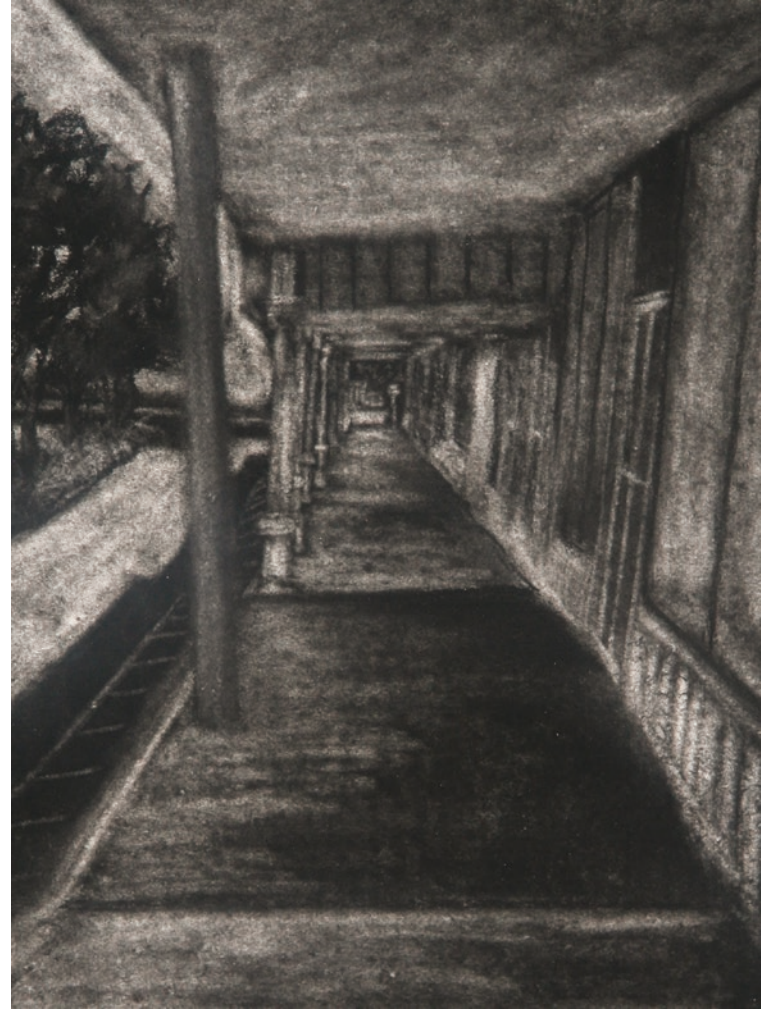
works initiatives, but are monuments to the thriving past and present of the greater Tampa area. Although the artist's subjects are currently unkempt, the solution she proposes is restoration, not demolition. Kirkland has taken the conscious first steps to preserve the characters of these important structures, and she hopes that more steps will be taken to preserve not only the essence of each building, but also the structures themselves.

¹ Claudia Heide, "The Spanish Picturesque," in *The Discovery of Spain: British Artists and Collectors: Goya to Picasso*, eds. Christopher Baker, Claudia Heide, et al. (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2009), 50-51.





2



3



4



Photo: Leslie Reed

1. *Kress Block*, 2016 (detail)
charcoal on paper
2. *St. James Church*, 2016 (detail)
charcoal on paper
3. *Busch Plaza*, 2016 (detail)
charcoal on paper
4. *The Jackson House*, 2016 (detail)
charcoal on paper

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Transcending Material Boundaries: Jenn Ryann Miller's Cerebral Exploration of Form

By Laura Colkitt

In prior generations the distinctions between sculpture, painting, and ceramics seemed easily identifiable. However, in the contemporary art world, these divergent mediums sometimes overlap resulting in multilayered aesthetic creations. Artist Jenn Ryann Miller works in this transitional space. Previously trained as a ceramicist, Miller has expanded her *oeuvre* during her three year tenure at USF, defying the boundaries of standard ceramic media. In her 2016 MFA exhibition, Miller experiments with oblique materials that subvert typical classifications. Diverging from her functional ceramics background, the artist pushes and probes antithetical media forms. She ultimately creates works that hover in a hybridized space, problematizing ceramics' traditional ontological status.

For the MFA exhibition Miller created two sets of mixed media objects consisting of eight “wall work” paintings (or reliefs) and seven free-standing sculptures respectively.¹ In each set, the object varies slightly from each other. The wall works are two foot squares that protrude three inches, ensuring their expansion into three-dimensional space. The seven sculptures play off of the wall works in terms of color and form. While each sculpture differs in size from one another, they all stand at a uniform height. This is due to the differing sized platform pedestals or plinths all created by the artist. The pedestals counteract the proportional variations, forcing the viewer to confront consistent six foot tall objects. Interestingly, the fluctuations within the sculptural forms become highlighted by the attempt to display homogeneity of scale. This gives balance to the overall design of the show and echoes the square wall works' uniformity. In the end, the paintings and sculptures highlight the importance of texture, surface, and color while simultaneously eliciting cerebral reactions from the viewer.

Seemingly incongruent, the art is both entrancing yet objectionable. The dichotomy comes from Jenn

Ryann Miller's choice of industrial art supplies and enigmatic color palette. In a contemporary postmodern understanding, she revisits a modernist dogma of materiality in her artworks. Channeling the artist Rebecca Warren, Miller utilizes materials such as spray paint and resin, which are not normally found in conjunction with ceramics. She experiments with artistic faux pas like allowing construction ribbon to show through in the finished work. Also, unique to her practice, instead of firing in kilns to produce archival objects, Miller pours resin over her ceramic looking sculptures, capturing an immediacy of process while attaining a delicate ethereal presence. Miller thereby transfigures the conventional craft, instead constructing her forms with fervor and intensity. This creates art that is part mirage, part homage, and part rebellion towards traditional ceramics.

Overall, Miller's model can be described as “D.I.Y.” because the materials can commonly be found at Home Depot.² Modernist predecessors, like Jackson Pollock, also utilized industrial paints. Miller expands upon this precedent, fashioning works both grounded in uniformity and interspersed with moments of chaos. The disorderly interludes break up an otherwise monotonous flat surface, interjecting moments of humor in the often overly stoic and austere gallery space. It is in these intervals that aspects of the artist's personality becomes apparent. For example, in the wall art, some of the enamel resin surface is broken and bulbous paint pours out. The texture looks like globular biological matter, perhaps even defecation. Miller also hints at sexuality with sensual drips and abundant splatters found on phallic forms. Additionally, wit and whimsy show through in Miller's sculptures where tiny bows are cemented in place on the surface. Defying pure abstraction by including representational objects adds dimensionality and individualism to the work. These small touches differentiate the artist's works as uniquely her own, trenchant and satirical.

Furthermore, Miller's pieces display a complex understanding of color theory that pushes at the boundaries of formal experimentation. The colors have an almost “anti-aesthetic” feel to them spanning a range of kitschy associations: from shiny industrial motorcycle paint (complete with pin stripes) to the archetypal decor of a suburban 1970s home interior.³ Beige, coral, pink, foam green, and various metallic hues dominate. The “dated” colors act as an acerbic contemporary critique of past design choices. Yet, they also allow for positive acknowledgment of nostalgia for an imagined time before the artist was even born. The more time spent with the work, the more the color palette envelops the viewer, as he becomes comfortable with it. The art changes one's initial reaction causing a reconsideration of formal elements. In turn, this leads the viewer to question his own evaluation of aesthetics. Why are the color palettes oddly comforting yet disconcerting at the same time? Miller prompts us to question our internal analytical judgment.

Jenn Ryann Miller's combination works made from industrial materials oscillate between the strict delineations of ceramic, sculpture, and painting. Building upon modernist tropes, Miller creates her own post-modern voice that reflects an individualized expressive art. Ultimately, the mixed media art forces the audience to reconsider their prior understanding of crafted aesthetics.

¹ The artist refers to what sometimes might be classified as reliefs or paintings on her website as “wall works” because of their mixed media characteristics (<http://www.jrmiller.net/>).

² Jenn Ryann Miller, Interview with Laura Colkitt, January 22, 2016.

³ Jenn Ryann Miller, Interview with Laura Colkitt, January 22, 2016.





3



4



2



Photo: Gary Schmitt

1. *Flowers Are Her Fave*, 2015 (detail)
mixed media
2. *"Hi Everyone!"*, 2016
enamel and mixed media on board
24 x 24 x 2 in.
3. *Looks Like Fancy*, 2016
enamel and mixed media on board
24 x 24 x 2 in.
4. *Too Pretty To Eat*, 2015
mixed media
28 x 11 x 11 in.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Nomadic Dynamism: Experiencing Flux in Leslie Reed's *Points of Departure* Series

By Shanna Goodwin

In the series *Points of Departure*, photographer Leslie Reed advances the marriage of artistic imagination and scientific discovery. Throughout history, artists and scientists have investigated, in tandem, that which cannot be touched or seen. Visionary artists are the initial discoverers who possess the observational powers to see the world in unique ways, and it is the empirical efforts of scientists to prove the phenomena that the artist intuitively perceives. As Leonard Schlain proposes in his book *Art and Physics*, artists are the crucial visionary figures that have paved the way for subsequent scientific discoveries.¹ By producing innovative artwork that gives visual forms to the spectral forces on this earth, past and current artists have transformed perceptible reality into a digestible configuration. Continuing along this path, Reed's emphasis on continuous movement through a nomadic lens, coupled with the dynamism of scientific discoveries, propels scientific data and research into the artistic milieu.²

Operating in the realm of ArtScience, where logical reasoning and analytical skills merge with creativity and imagination, Reed accentuates the visual characteristics of quantifiable properties. These hybridized aesthetic and analytical processes unite the inquisitive nature of childhood fascination with things unknown and ushers them into a tangible realm, where imagination and aspects of nature can be studied, understood, defined, and ultimately shared in a palatable form. By transplanting empirical data into a visual experience, Reed presents the viewer with a scientific reformation where significant, but often monotonous, numerical information is reconstructed into an innovative form with the ability to captivate and inspire the average individual.

This series was contrived from a synthesized expedition known as the *Artist-At-Sea* project, which is supported by the Schmidt Ocean Institute. This venture brings together artists and scientists who strive to publicize the significance of forces like acidification and hypoxia, which

both have a profound impact on living marine resources. As part of this collaborative endeavor, Reed embarked on a weeks long journey aboard the *Falkor*, where she traveled to marvelous destinations, such as Guam and Hawaii. The real essence of this project, however, developed on the open Pacific Ocean, where she shot hundreds of digital photographs and videos as documentation, while also employing analog film to create a palpable format that elucidates the invisible forces of the sea.

The physicality and durability of the analog film made it Reed's prime choice over digital formats. By using a superannuated photographic process, the film is able to survive the chemical variations created from the application of saltwater, such as salinity and pH, which inscribe their existence onto the photograph; thereby transforming the ocean's hidden elements into a permanent visual record of their being. Reed's process, as described in her own words, "allows the saltwater to mark the film and causes color shifts and traces to appear as a reaction of a number of unseen forces, such as chemistry, salinity, and microscopic organisms. This method gives the environment a chance to play a part in creating the final image."³ By operating in this process, Reed approaches this natural entity (the ocean) with the knowledge that it is untamable, but uses her photographs and the pH process, not to tame the sea, but to better understand the forces that drive its existence.⁴

Each photograph is presented in a large format, depicting tranquil seascapes, entrancing the viewer with gossamer hues of violet, green, yellow, and blue that appears to float along the picture plane. However, the serene imagery belies the photograph's chaotic and unpredictable process of formation. This fine, filmy substance forms a semitransparent layer that is generated by immersing the photographs in samples of seawater with varying pH levels, which, along with the acidity and salinity, are manipulated by a microcosm of organisms that physically altar the analog photograph.

Forged out of unpredictability, this process mimics the natural state of the world's oceans that are inherently harsh, beautiful, untamable, and in persistent motion.

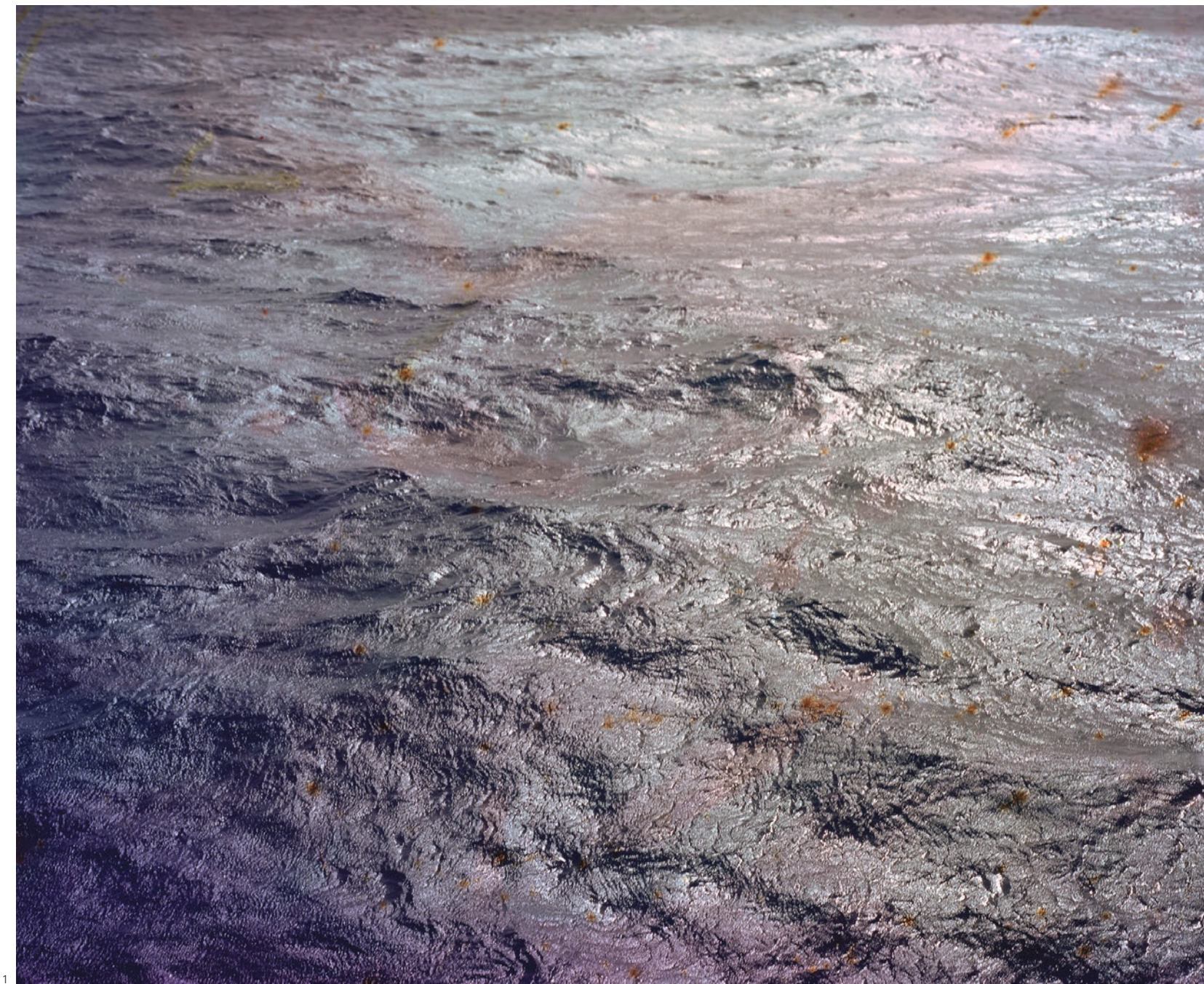
During the transit, Reed collected vials of seawater samples from the approximate site represented in the image. Specific latitudes, longitudes, dates, and times are meticulously recorded on the vial's labels. The juxtaposition of pH samples with the photographs aids in eradicating the false perception that the ocean is not a living entity and bestows the viewer with a unique glimpse of the invisible. The inclusion of the pH levels from the ocean water samples invites the viewer to engage with the scientific aspects of the artwork, and to share Reed's experience aboard the *Falkor*. This type of presentation creates a multi-layered, heuristic experience for viewers, who are given the option to choose their own depth of cognitive involvement. In doing so, Reed allows the viewers to choose their own path, one that can be viscerally aesthetic or a more conceptual absorption of scientific methodology.

¹ Leonard Schlain, *Art and Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1991).

² This term is used following the nomadic philosophies of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. In their discussion, the nomad exists in a state of constant movement and is unconcerned with societal structures. The process that Reed works in, and the subject of her photographs, the ocean, simultaneously becomes the nomad in this series, both in a constant state of flux, particularly the ocean that is unyielding and never concerned with the trifles of man. This emphasis on continuous movement is reiterated by the concept of dynamism, where the artist and subject are not simply in a state of constant motion, but are typified by vigorous activity and rapid advancement within the artistic and scientific realms.

³ Taken from an interview with Leslie Reed by the author, February 1, 2016.

⁴ This type of photographic process, one that illuminates the unseen energies present within our environment, operates along the paths of artists like Hiroshi Sugimoto. In Sugimoto's series *Seascapes*, he "embarks on a voyage of seeing" by accentuating the relationship between water and air as invisible, and often overlooked, forces that "vouchsafe our very existence." For more information on this artist's series, see <http://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/seascape.html>.





2



3



4



Photo: Tamesha Kirkland

1. *Points of Departure, Falkor*, 2015
N 09°57.426, W 177°36.091, ph: 8.0477
12/30/15, 21:24
archival pigment print
40 x 50 in.
2. *Points of Departure, Falkor*, 2015
N 06°34.491, E 165°37.014, ph: 8.0350
12/26/2015, 07:13
archival pigment print
40 x 50 in.
3. *Points of Departure, Falkor*, 2016
N 13°24.064, W 171°42.950, ph: 8.0486
01/02/2016, 4:53
archival pigment print
40 x 50 in.
4. *Points of Departure, Falkor*, 2015
N 09°57.426, W 177°36.091, ph: 8.0477
12/30/2015, 21:24
archival pigment print
40 x 50 in.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Insert Catchy Title Here

By Alexandria Salmieri

Strewn about the space of Gary Schmitt's studio are an assortment of tools, materials, and a multitude of artworks that he created using a variety of media. Despite the diversity of Schmitt's work, which he attributes to the freedoms he experienced as an MFA student at the University of South Florida, there is a strong undercurrent connecting it all. Many would instantly attribute a masculine theme to Schmitt's work, which is evident in the materials and iconography he employs, as seen in his sculpture comprised of welded chains coated using automotive paint that appear to magically stand freely. However, Schmitt subverts masculine themes in art, using imagery appropriated from degenerate culture in a satirical manner that his audience may or may not be aware of. Thus, this seemingly disjunctive collection of works is actually a cohesive *oeuvre* that subtly pokes fun at itself for using such visual language.

In his work, Schmitt aims to raise materials associated with low art while dragging down the conceptualism of high art, previously reserved for the elite, to be within reach of popular culture.¹ In dealing with issues of culture and social rules, Schmitt blurs the distinction between what he sees as "cool" in terms of true "outsider" culture, and "too cool" in regards to the "rock star" aesthetic fueled by trendy stores that appropriate imagery from the tragic, pure outsider and sell it to consumers in order to fit a desirable pop-culture mold of the times.² For Schmitt, the question of where one draws the line between the true outsider and the imitating rock star becomes of utmost importance to understanding his work not only as ironic and self-aware, but also as an eternal power struggle.

Although the artist does not situate his work in an autobiographical context, aspects of his life do play into his art, such as his family's screen-printing business and their affinity for hot rods.³ One such work that

exemplifies these aspects is a triptych created using white vinyl, each panel embroidered with a single image, such as a rose. The large textured expanse of white vinyl resembles unblemished skin that has been tattooed with an embroidered design. The shape of the panels is similar to that of a tombstone turned upside down, recalling the religious imagery that appears in Schmitt's earlier work. The pure white color also contributes to religious connotations; however, the tattoo-like feature of the embroidery presents the viewer with a paradox, as tattoos are associated with degenerate culture. These contradictory visual elements comprise a work that is a joke unto itself, evocative of the clashing ideals and comedic nature Schmitt aims to express through his art.

¹ Gary Schmitt, interview by Alexandria Salmieri, January 21, 2016.

² Gary Schmitt, interview by Alexandria Salmieri, January 21, 2016.

³ Gary Schmitt, interview by Alexandria Salmieri, January 21, 2016.

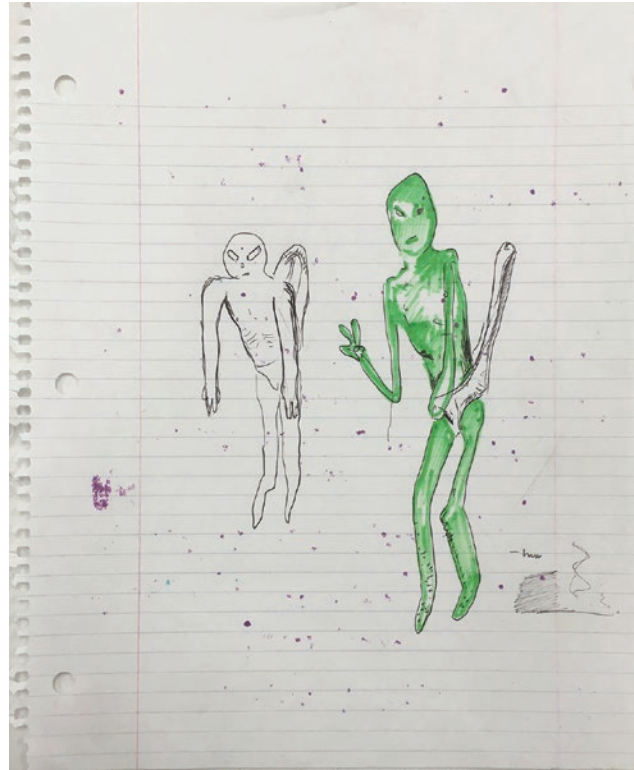


1



2

Gary Schmitt



3



3

1. *Send Me To Heaven (Triptych)*, 2016
embroidery on vinyl, wood
45 x 53 x 5 in.
(photo: Jenn Ryan Miller)
2. *Who Farted*, 2016
wood, paper, nails, epoxy resin
36 x 17 x 3 in.
3. *Wedgie (Sketch)*, 2015
8.5 x 11 in.
4. *A Place To Put The Dog*, 2016
wood, industrial foam, primer
96 x 144 x 3 in.

Artificial Truths

By Tracey Cole

Technology permeates our everyday existence. Constantly bombarded by images and distracted by emails, text messages, television, and social media, we are now a fully digital culture. There is no denying that these supposed advancements can certainly enhance our lives, but there is also a dark side to this illusion of progress in the twenty-first century. Through what Elizabeth Schneider refers to as a “cross-contaminated process,” her work responds to the effects of these new technologies by emphasizing a paradoxical notion of isolation that we experience in our digitally connected world. By fusing painting, sculpture and animation, Schneider revolts against our computer-addicted culture, ultimately confronting the blurred boundaries between illusion and reality, authenticity and artificiality.¹

At the core of Schneider’s practice is drawing and painting, but her desire to invade the viewer’s space led her to incorporate sculptural and digital aspects in her work that push the boundaries between art and the viewer. The catalyst was Nancy Rubin’s sculpture *Mattresses and Cakes* (1993), a tangled, chaotic array of 59 mattresses suspended from the ground and smeared with 299 cupcakes. Inspired by the sculpture’s ability to arouse the senses with its saccharine aroma and foreboding monumental presence, Schneider began to produce work that does more than hang on the wall.

The exploration of this idea began with a sculpture called *Crocodile Tears*, an abstracted, stuffed, fabric crocodile that was gutted and turned inside out. Eventually Schneider’s work transformed into interactive hybrid mutations that beautifully exist between painting and sculpture. For instance, some of her paintings are cannibalized, or destroyed for parts, then reconfigured and fused with metal.² This reconstruction not only disrupts the shape of the canvas, dictating new boundaries, but also invades the viewer’s space. Lines become more than markings that emphasize

flat surfaces as they transform into three-dimensional welded structures. The tactile qualities of Schneider’s hybrid sculptural paintings create a dichotomy between illusion and reality as the physical metal clashes with the constructed façade of the painting. This tension is pushed further when the paintings come to life through animations, allowing her to further explore how screens mediate our lives.

Currently Schneider’s work focuses on the interior of spaceships, taking the viewpoint of the cockpit from behind the pilot’s seat. Normally, spaceships are seen as white sterile environments; they are familiar, but foreign, even frightening, because the average person may have never been in a spaceship, let alone experienced outer space. However, there is something very beautiful about Schneider’s cockpit paintings. Inspired by Pierre Bonnard’s elusive marks, she uses bursts of vibrant pinks, purples, and blues in an attempt to reimagine his intimate domestic settings.³ In a sense, the domestication of spaceships, stereotypically seen as vehicles for grand, “masculine” explorations of the unknown, challenges cultural gender norms and power structures. These rigid manmade interiors have suddenly become intimate, but simultaneously they can also be humorous and aggressive. For example, in *Let’s Work Together*, a shark curiously resides in the rosy cockpit, bursting towards the viewer with its jaws wide open; a frantic, whimsical, scene that is difficult to decipher.

Finally, the epitome of an immersive experience is Schneider’s construction of a viewing room built to scale in the shape of a Mercury space capsule, entitled *Don’t Worry About It*. Here the viewer is invited inside to watch an animation projected above, while a second animation plays on the exterior of the capsule. The outside animation, *We’re Still Looking*, is composed of appropriated remixed footage and hand-drawn frame by frame animation, coupled with remixed audio files from

NASA and *Reckoner*, a song by Radiohead. The video starts with a close-up of a stranger’s dilating pupil. Then, the eye blinks and dissolves into a circle of synchronized swimmers while the dramatic music thumps in the background. Suddenly, we can see an astronaut in a cockpit. We can hear voices, screeches, and clashes, and see the astronaut losing all sense of control. The black and white color scheme only enhances the severity of the scene, making us feel like all hope is lost and imminent destruction is near.

By integrating digital technologies within her work, Schneider acknowledges that she is a participant within our cultural norms, but she is also aware of its downfalls. Through appropriation, remixing, and the destruction of images within her animations, her work is able to grapple with issues of compliance, regurgitation, and our society’s willingness to conform. Moreover, the cannibalistic nature of her studio highlights the fact that nothing is sacred or untouchable, ultimately responding to the disposable nature of our culture. In the end, Schneider’s work exposes our misguided desire for a “disconnected-connectivity,” as we are forced to question our own authenticity and perceptions of truth.⁴

¹ Elizabeth Schneider, *Artist’s Statement*, January 25, 2016.

² Within the history of art, *cannibalism* was a term appropriated by Brazilian modernist artists in the 1920’s in order to assert their national identity. They believed that by “devouring,” contaminating and transforming European models, they could create a unique Brazilian art form. However, Schneider uses the term *cannibalism* within her practice to describe the destruction of paintings for parts that she will use in later works.

³ Pierre Bonnard (1847-1947), a French painter associated with Les Nabis, known for his claustrophobic and highly-patterned depictions of everyday life.

⁴ Elizabeth Schneider, *Artist’s Statement*, January 25, 2016.





2

Elizabeth Schneider



3

1. *Let's work together*, 2016
oil and acrylic on canvas
64 x 74 x 3 inches
2. *We're on the same page*, 2016
oil and acrylic on canvas
64 x 74 x 3 inches
3. *We're still looking*, 2016
animation screenshots
00:00:30

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Bountiful Bodies: Renegotiating the Black Female Form in the work of Princess Smith

By David Q. Loisel

The human figure is one of the oldest and most significant motifs in art. The body is both universally familiar and innately alien; it acts as the prism through which we, as individuals, experience and understand the world around us.¹ Princess Smith uses the body in her work as a site of expression, introspection, and social critique, allowing her to navigate the complex issues facing contemporary black-American culture. Smith utilizes the female form to investigate the stigmas lurking in the female African American psyche. While Smith's portraits examine the formal nuances of the human body, they simultaneously speak to the significant imprints that gender, race, and size affix to our personal identity. Smith subtly manipulates this interrelation between the biological and the semiotic, prompting her viewers to consider where the physical individual stops and the cultural artifact begins.²

A native to South Central, Los Angeles, Smith admittedly draws much of her artistic inspiration from her personal history growing up in a community inundated by poverty and violence.³ Many of these themes re-emerge in her portrait narratives and transform her artwork into poignant commentary that examines notions of single-motherhood, colorism, black-on-black discrimination, and the sexualization of the female body. One of her most earnest series of paintings, titled *Baked and Served*, explores questions of identity and sexuality as a single-mother who came from a single-mother household.⁴

A core element in Smith's recent work, however, is observed in the deconstruction of the black female body and its historical hypersexualization throughout the western artistic cannon. Contemporary artists like Smith must create a new visual language concerning the African body by first decolonizing, diversifying, and rewriting its history.⁵ Thus, the body becomes a tool used to renegotiate typical conventions of feminine

beauty, as Smith stylistically renders her females as large, bald, naked, black women known affectionately by her as the BBBs (Big Black Bitches).⁶

The BBBs are rotund, brightly colored figures whose candid enormity functions semiotically on several levels. The bright tones and hues allude to the spiritual essence her figures attempt to emblemize as the enthusiastic colors echo early Expressionists works while responding to contemporary artists such as Chris Ofili. Smith attempts to draw out what she perceives to be the "true essence" of these figures by illuminating their natural beauty while purposely avoiding an overt emphasis on their sexuality. Stripped not only of their clothing, the BBBs are bald, disarming and critiquing the power and presence hair-culture continues to command in contemporary African American life. Freed from outward social signifiers, the BBBs are able to embrace a deeper freedom and self-generated authenticity, producing a purer, idealized conception of black femininity.

Smith alludes to the physiological objectification of the black female by engaging its puissant visual history. Each figure is imbued with an unabashed gaze that confronts the viewer directly, countering the traditions of the white heterosexual male gaze. Historical figures such as Saartjie "Sarah" Baartman also play heavily in Smith's creative impetus. Baartman, an indigenous Khoi-San woman, became known as the notorious 1814 "Hottentot Venus," as she was paraded and displayed across Europe in a human circus. Ogled as a scientific specimen, for 19th century Europe Baartman personified the black female body and served as a "counterpoint to Western ideologies of white female beauty, womanhood, morality, and civilization."⁷ The exoticization of the black physique was peddled and commoditized by colonial European photographers through colonial-era photographs and postcards, perpetuating the mythology of the "primitive" and "promiscuous African." Many

of the pernicious stereotypes proffered during the nineteenth century were used to suggest the evolutionary inferiority of African populations and are still present in popular cultural references today. Negative connotations associated with anatomical characteristics including "big butts" or "nappy hair" were born from these same ideological frameworks of conquest, colonialism, enslavement, and voyeurism centuries ago.⁸

In Smith's painting *Making Up for Lost Time*, the BBB's scars poignantly intersect Smith's personal identity as an African American artist within the larger socio-cultural framework surrounding visual representations of black womanhood. Each mark on the central figure's back functions as an index, highlighting the body's unique ability to act as a literal locus in which time and memory are concomitantly effectuated and recorded. The suffering promulgated by slavery is reimagined through the central figure's stance as she boldly gazes out toward the viewer, defiantly withstanding the multitudinous hardships that have thwarted her progress. The viewer comes to realize that it is in the vulnerability and resilience of Smith's figures that the true strength and legacy of the female form materializes, providing a tangible link to the legacy Princess Smith and her work embody.

¹ Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual art after 1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 77.

² Robertson and McDaniel, *Themes*, 79.

³ Princess Smith, interview with David Q. Loisel, January 29, 2016.

⁴ On view at Psmithart.com

⁵ Barbara Thompson, *Black Womanhood: Images, Icons, and Ideologies of the African Body* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 21.

⁶ Smith, interview, January 29, 2016.

⁷ Thompson, "The African Female Body in the Cultural Imagination," in *Black Womanhood*, 27.

⁸ Thompson, "The African Female Body in the Cultural Imagination," in *Black Womanhood*, 21.





2



3



Photo: Connie Avellino

1. *Tight Rope*, 2015
watercolor and pastel on watercolor paper
4 x 3 ft.
2. *Charge*, 2016
acrylic paint, pastels and graphite on linoleum
diptych, 6 x 8 ft. each
3. *Swing, Swing, Swing*, 2015
acrylic paint and pastel on linoleum
6 x 8 ft.

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Material World

By Amanda Preuss

The work of Matthew Wicks blurs the distinction between conventional categories for three-dimensional media, such as the divide between sculpture and craft. Traditionally considered outside the domain of high art, craft has undergone cycles of relative popularity and devaluation. Often, it is either treated as a practice with a historical tradition of working with specific materials, such as clay, or as a practice based on technical approach, but lacking in innovative concept. As art theorist Louise Mazanti writes, “the conceptual frame for craft is often seen as premised on ‘tradition,’ ‘material,’ or ‘process.’”¹ So how do contemporary artists investigate an art form fraught with tensions between utilitarian function and aesthetic appreciation? Wicks approaches art making through the exploration of process, resulting in material transformations that blur the distinction between high and low art.² Coupling traditional ceramics with contemporary materials as diverse as foam, plastics, wood, plaster, and neon lights, Wicks investigates the role of craft as commodity in the context of contemporary life.

The work Wicks has produced over the past few years has considered concepts which initially seem at odds with one other, such as integrating inexpensive material choices with luxurious detail or creating objects that simultaneously invoke attraction and aversion. In *Everything I Touch Turns To Stone* (2013) for example, a cast ceramic bunny colored with a bright gold luster rests atop a wooden pedestal draped with a velvety deer hide. The alternating textures of wood, fur, and glossy ceramic create an intriguing visual rhythm accentuated by its attractive nature as an object for material possession and desire. However, the kitschy figurine is also riddled with holes, punctures sustained from a .357 magnum gun. Our greed, our desires for this object have been shot through and shown to be hollow—much like the Midas’ mythical golden touch. No longer a pristine object, the artist has simultaneously valorized it by de-valuing it, a destructive intervention now raised up on display for aesthetic appreciation.

Matthew Drennan Wicks

42

Ceramics provides avenues for Wicks to investigate ideas surrounding beauty, kitsch and domesticity. Some of the resulting artworks bear traces reminiscent of the imaginative arrangements of *wunderkammern* or the visually exquisite presentation of material goods seen in Dutch still-life paintings. Wicks recalls memories of shared meals with his Italian family as one of his earliest exposures to ceramics. The relatively inexpensive china used for annual holiday meals were cherished, not for their monetary value, but as priceless symbols of memories made, gatherings held, and familial ritual.³ Experiences such as these are translated through Wicks’ persistent inquiry into how value is connected to our rituals in the home and in the objects we possess.

His subsequent efforts were stylistically diverse, but rarely strayed far from the intersections of domestic ritual and craft. He built ceramic Greek amphoras and filled them with twisting and vibrant shards of clay like a flower vase run amok. He also created colorful yarn weavings stuffed intermittently with foil, bits of foam, and lengths of speaker wire, as if the weaver decided to randomly improvise with materials one might find scattered around the home. More recently, objects as ubiquitous as laundry baskets, bed sheets, milk jugs, and clothes hangers have made an appearance in Wicks’ studio. For example, purchased linen bed sheets are torn into strips that are stitched and woven back together into unique sculptural forms. However, many of these objects have been transformed from their original use-value through ceramics, such as a laundry basket with a curious crack along its base. In hand-making this everyday commodity, Wicks rends the original utilitarian object into an object whose function has shifted to the exchange-value of art.

In Wicks’ hands, our quotidian possessions are woven, stacked, and reshaped until they retain only impressions of their former selves. Wicks’ sculptures

therefore become engaged not only in a specific material, process, or skill, but as objects that exist in the permeable boundary between art and life. The resulting arrangements are visual and tactile, with details that invite the viewer to slow down the activity of looking in order to puzzle out the relationships between details. This renegotiation between the viewer and de-familiarized objects is the consequence of Wicks’ intervention and the indexical traces of his presence left behind in the process.

Though the history of ceramics has long been tied to utility, such as the basic usefulness of a clay pot, through Wicks’ work we are reminded of its aesthetic and conceptual potential. For Wicks, forms such as hangers are conceptually a reverse vessel, holding something on its exterior rather than the interior.⁴ While the ceramic hangers Wicks created theoretically operate on a similar level of utility, the fact that these are potentially ‘useful’ has been subverted in their reconsideration as an art object. Thus, Wicks reminds the viewer of the potential for contemporary craft to be progressive, challenging, and continually rewarding.

¹ Louise Mazanti, “Super-Objects: Craft as an Aesthetic Position,” in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*, ed. Maria Elena Buszek (Duke University Press, 2011): 59.

² Artist’s statement, taken from “Text” in *Matthew Drennan Wicks*, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.matthewdrennanwicks.com>.

³ Matthew Wicks, Interview with Amanda Preuss, January 26, 2016.

⁴ Matthew Wicks, Interview with Amanda Preuss, January 26, 2016.



1

2



43



3



4



5



1. *Untitled Vessel (Ritual)*, 2015
earthenware, glaze, gold leaf
15 x 26 x 23 in.
2. *Untitled Vessel (Ritual)*, 2015 (detail)
3. *Glint*, 2016
earthenware, luster, china-paint decals, nylon cord,
milk crates
75 x 30 x 13 in.
4. *Glint*, 2016 (detail)
5. *Cloud*, 2016
earthenware, engobe
dimensions variable

Images Courtesy of the Artist

Contributing Authors

Marlena Antonucci

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Marlena Antonucci is a Masters candidate at the University of South Florida, and a recipient of the University Graduate Fellowship. She graduated from the University of South Florida with a BA in Art History and a minor in Environmental Science in 2012. She was awarded the USF College of The Arts Talent Grant and the Victor and Lee Leavengood Award for the USF Undergraduate Research Paper Competition. Antonucci researches contemporary art, focusing on environmental and social practice art.

James Cartwright

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

James Cartwright is a first-year Masters student of Art History at the University of South Florida, and recipient of the Carolyn Wilson Fellowship. He graduated *magna cum laude* from USF with a BA in Art History in 2013. His area of focus is Islamic art, with a particular interest in manuscript albums and themes of cross-cultural exchange. He previously curated exhibitions for USF's William and Nancy Oliver Gallery, including *Environment vs. Humans* in Fall 2013 and *Also Pictured* in Fall 2015.

Laura Colkitt

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Laura R. Colkitt graduated with an MA in art history from the University of South Florida in December 2015. She received her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. Her primary focus is on contemporary art. She explores the hybridity of cultures in the global age, grounded in post-colonial theories. Recently, Laura has presented her research at University of California Santa Barbara's Fifth Biennial Borderlands Conference.

Tracey Cole

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Tracey Cole received her MA in Art History from the University of South Florida in 2015. She was awarded the Las Damas de Arte Scholarship Grant in 2014 to study abroad in Paris. Her areas of focus ranges from late eighteenth and nineteenth-century French portraiture to early twentieth-century German Expressionism.

Shanna Goodwin

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Shanna Goodwin recently graduated from the University of South Florida with a concentration in Islamic Art & Architecture, and is currently a professor at the University of Tampa. She received her bachelors in art history from Georgia Southern University, where she graduated with honors and was named Who's Who Among Students at Colleges and Universities.

Andrea Johnson

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Andrea Johnson is a Masters candidate at the University of South Florida. She graduated *summa cum laude* from Florida College with a BA in Liberal Studies in 2013. Her forthcoming thesis focuses on architect Owen Jones and British perceptions of Spain in the nineteenth century.

David Loisel

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

David Q. Loisel is a recent Masters graduate of the Art and Art History program at the University of South Florida. He received his BA in History, with honors, from the University of Michigan-Flint. Loisel was awarded the 2015 IRA Art History Award for his research on homosexuality in the early-modern Ottoman Empire. He was selected to present at the 2015 MENA graduate conference at the University of Arizona, culminating in the publication of his work in the *Zaytoon* academic journal.

Amanda Preuss

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Amanda Preuss graduated from USF with her MA in Art History in 2015, specializing in Modern and Contemporary Art. While attending USF, she was awarded the Top Graduate Art History Prize and the James Rosenquist Endowment. Preuss also presented her research at the Ohio University Graduate Art History Symposium. She currently holds the position of Gallery Director at Howard W. Blake High School and is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Tampa and the Hillsborough Community College.

Alexandria Salmieri

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Alexandria Salmieri is a Masters student of Art History at the University of South Florida. She graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of South Florida and the Honors College with a BA in Art History and minors in Criminology and Astronomy. She was recognized as an Undergraduate Scholar for her community service, undergraduate research, and international experience, and was also awarded the Undergraduate Award for the USF Art History Research Paper Competition in 2015.

Ashley Williams

SCHOOL OF ART AND ART HISTORY, MA

Ashley Williams is a Masters student of Art History at the University of South Florida. She received her BA with *magna cum laude* honors in Art History from the University of South Florida in 2015. She is the recipient of the Carolyn M Wilson Scholarship and has interned at the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Acknowledgments

by Marlena Antonucci Writing, History, Art & Theory President and MA graduate student and Elizabeth Schneider, Master of Fine Arts Organization and MFA graduate student

The publication of the 2016 exhibition catalog, *Only the Tip*, was an incredible learning opportunity that would not have been possible without the networks of supportive and dedicated people who participated in the process. This catalog was a collaborative effort, building from the foundation laid by last year's efforts. It took shape under the guidance of the faculty and staff of the School of Art and Art History.

We would like to thank the Director of the School of Art and Art History, Wallace Wilson for providing astute insight in organizing a project of this scale. Thank you to Wendy Babcox, Associate Professor, and Dr. Pamela Brekka, Assistant Professor. Also, special thanks is extended to Dr. Allison Moore whose constructive and meticulous feedback was invaluable to elevating the intellectual content of this catalog.

As this catalogue commemorates the exhibition, *Only the Tip*, we would like to thank the staff of the Contemporary Art Museum (CAM), a branch of the Institute for Research in Art (IRA), for hosting the exhibit and providing support and guidance. Thank you to Margaret A. Miller, Director (IRA), and Alexa Favata, Deputy Director (IRA), for opening their doors and allowing us this opportunity. Thank you to Shannon Annis, Exhibitions Manager/Registrar, and Anthony Wong Palms, Exhibition Coordinator/Designer, for all their work in designing and managing the exhibition. We are truly indebted to Vincent Kral, Chief Preparator, and the support staff at CAM, including Eric Jonas, Andrea Tamborello and David Waterman.

Also, we would like to extend a special thank you to the amazing Don Fuller, New Media Curator (IRA), who designed the layout for this catalogue and additional promotional materials for the exhibition. Thank you for the time and energy you put forth in making this catalog

so beautiful! Thank you also to Leslie Reed and Larissa Mueller for sharing their photographic expertise.

We are grateful for the collaborative efforts of the student organizations, Writing, History, Art, and Theory and the Master of Fine Arts Organization. They volunteered their valuable time to write, edit, organize, and fundraise for this catalog. Its success is indebted to their committed teamwork.

We owe abundant thanks to the editorial team for their painstaking attention to every detail. The lead editor was Erin Wilson and the contributing editors were Richard Ellis and Kristen Clayton. The USF Writing Studio also provided additional editing assistance.

Finally, this exhibition catalog would not have been possible without the financial backing of many. We are grateful for the support generated by the *4X4* exhibition fundraiser organized by Jennifer Miller and Gary Schmitt. Bill Faucett, Director of Development for the College of The Arts at the University of South Florida was vital in promoting the project. Also, there were many more contributions by undisclosed donors as well as those recognized on this page.

To the myriad people who helped bring the publication of the exhibition catalog *Only the Tip* to fruition, we would like to convey our deepest appreciation and gratitude.

MAJOR SPONSORS

Candice and Mark Hanson

Stanton Storer

Joanne and Douglas Colkitt

OUTSTANDING DONORS

Tobi and Bart Tesoriero

Karen A. Frank

Gregory O. Green

Colleen Caemmerer

Dan and Jenn Schneider

John T. Dawson Jr.

Emily and Erik Frick

