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Fever Dreams: WWU Art Studio BFA Exhibition Catalog

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Artist

Emeline Agnew, Jesse Lee Alkire, Lindsey Hammerle, Ruby Rae Jones, Ramneet Kaur, Abigail March, Carly McCartney, Keiko Scott, Casper Truong, and Ellery Von Dassow

FEVER

vol. V

Featuring selected work from

**Emeline Agnew / Jesse Lee Alkire / Lindsey Hammerle / Ruby Rae
Jones / Ramneet Kaur / Abigail March / Carly McCartney / Keiko
Scott / Casper Truong / Ellery von Dassow**

WWU Art Studio BFA Exhibition Catalog

2018 — 2019

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Fever Dreams, the dictionary tells us, are particularly intense dreams brought on by a fever. They tend to be turbulent, even convulsive in nature, full of bizarre and unsettling imagery. Demons and uncontrollable forces present themselves. A well-known etching by Francisco Goya, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* (1799), shows menacing nocturnal creatures looming around a sleeping figure: bats, owls, a cat, and a steely-eyed lynx. These are the creatures of fever dreams. They represent “imagination abandoned by reason,” as Goya—an artist of the Enlightenment, the Age of Reason—states in a caption. But Goya’s image is profoundly ambiguous for the creatures that he has chosen see through darkness. They are, in a sense, the most enlightened of beings, capable of seeing what is only dimly perceived through reason. Goya does not renounce imagination in favor of the strictly rational. As his statement goes on to point out, imagination is “the mother of the arts and the source of wonders.”

When the BFA class of 2019 chose *Fever Dreams* as a title for their graduation exhibition, they embraced this ambiguity. For them *Fever Dreams* captures the intensity of their anxiety about the world: how are we going to get out of the impending environmental collapse? How can we escape the glamourized violence, addiction and the exploitation that we see all around us? How can we get away from the oversaturation of information, cultural disorientation and denied identities? How can we stop the “perpetual and immutable state of conflict”? These are some of the nightmarish fever dreams of a new generation. At the same time, *Fever Dreams* captures for these artists the power of art to go beyond rationalist logic and reimagine relationships and connections. Objects and ideas are recontextualized, reassociated and reconceptualized in their work. These are artists looking for “alternate endings to... bad dreams,” as one of them puts it. The wish to escape ecological degradation, aggressive confrontation and dehumanizing consumerism is not escapism. It is a search for a doorway, a way of world-making. There must be some way out of here, out of the blind alley that imperious rationality has led us into.

Not that these artists are uniform in their approaches or imagery. They are “unified in blatant contrasts,” as one of them describes their close and supportive comradeship. While one work seeks to reveal the “dirty and melancholy reality” around us, another “the dark, evil, and taboo” (presented

through “candy-like” cuteness), and a third captures a “suspended landscape of displaced anxieties, collapsed time, and ugly wallpaper,” others seek to empower and humor, for instance through a “mesmerizing collage of pulsating colors and light.”

The artists most associated with dreams are the surrealists of the early 20th century. They harnessed dreams deliberately to free themselves from the constraints of unbridled rationalism. Automatism, free associations and the technique of the Exquisite Corpse helped them circumvent the self-censorship of the conscious mind. Time-honored social mores were interrogated and shown to be nothing but the “sophistic conventions of good manners,” as the surrealist poet André Breton put it. This liberation of mental and social life has inspired artists ever since and it is alluded to in the title of the BFA exhibition. It is not the stylistic features of surrealism, though, that the BFA graduates aspire to. There are no haunted dreamscapes, melting objects or filmic dissolves here. It is surrealism as an attitude towards life that inspires. In their work, the artists harness the power of fever dreams to expose the sophistic conventions behind rationalist social precepts. Everything is called into question—“In my fictional floating world, gender is fake, money is fake, language is fake, and time is fake.” The artists are not raging against bourgeois etiquette but rather the “subconsciously developed ideologies” that prevent us as a society from seeing through the darkness and addressing the problems we face.

Hafthor Yngvason
Curator



Fictions are systematically fragmented, homogenized, and hollowed, appearing at once alien and implacably familiar.

Control Variable, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
36 x 48 inches

**EMELINE
AGNEW**

ARTIST STATEMENT

When caught in objectivity, figures are relegated to a mundane limbo. Not alive enough to be dead, they appear cold and static, taking up a liminal position akin to the forever floating Ophelia. Their everyday objects and gestures occupy a suspended landscape of displaced anxieties, collapsed time, and ugly wallpaper. In my paintings, these subjects are either viewed vicariously or warped to the point of unrecognition. The milky consistency of paint adds to an overarching sense of flatness, rendering figures stiffly inaccessible despite their large stature.

In its two-dimensional planarity, painting results in an unexpected naturalism, reflecting a world that is flattened by the oversaturation of information. Stripping content from memories, I illustrate this reality with eerily unintelligible narrative situations. Fictions are systematically fragmented, homogenized, and hollowed, appearing at once alien and implacably familiar. My inventory of shallow characters becomes the cast of a slow-burning, suburban horror film; perpetually waiting for the inciting incident to occur, they mirror their viewers.

Wihlem Scream, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
36 x 48 inches





555 Number, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
36 x 48 inches

Procedural Memory, 2018

Acrylic on canvas
36 x 48 inches



ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Emeline Agnew's series of abstracted portraits demonstrates the collapse of individual identity coinciding with the disintegration of boundaries between private and public. The individual portraits fuse into a fragmented timeline of spliced, enigmatic figures in which various cryptic realities flatten into one. Agnew's *Control Variable* blends various figures into one conglomerate body through a delicate connection of touch. Cast in shadow and nameless, the figures turn their gaze away, faces obscured and eyes covered. A denial of identity, along with a desaturated color palette of anemic grey, blue, green, and mauve, disrupts the tender exchange, which renders the scene distant. Fingers reach out from one plane, materialize in another, and freeze at the moment of contact. Tension ripples through the figures, simultaneously climaxing and terminating in a pair of hands tightly gripping a plastic toy gun. This children's toy morphs into an object of anxiety and threat as the armed figure aims resolutely at the silhouette looming ahead. Meanings excavated, the familiar is defamiliarized to the point of incomprehensibility. Agnew's work verges on voyeurism, which conjures unease through the overtly visible and jealously private.

Gabrielle Cagley

Emeline Agnew's *555 Number* ironically evokes the iconic aesthetics and culture of 1980s suburbia through implementing popular motifs of the era's interior design such as a muted color scheme and retro corded telephone. Contemporary media commonly portray this era nostalgically, but selectively remember and reinterpret it in ways that represent it as a wholesome yet artificial time in America. This is often done through referencing the nuclear family that fit neatly into society's ideal expectations; popular sitcoms focus on superficial issues that more often than not are resolved in the end. Agnew's placement of these mundane domestic signifiers in a fractured environment dismisses this idea of resolution. Instead of a state of pleasant remembrance, we are suspended in an unsettled narrative. This work renounces our craving for the past rather than reaffirm it. Agnew uses nostalgia purely as a backdrop to exploit the ambiguous nature of multifunctional objects and faceless portraiture.

Eric Trimble



My imagery is meant to empower, humor, and canonize friends in my life who I respect and admire.

Butterfly Chanting, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
52 x 68 inches

**JESSE LEE
ALKIRE**

ARTIST STATEMENT

In the central canvas of “Butterfly Chanting,” a warrior is seated on a unicorn while below her are seated twin fairies. On the left canvas, a male angel is laughing while on the right a Madonna figure is holding her baby. Ambiguous in narrative, “Chanting” appropriates the tropes of religious iconography, the triptych configuration suggesting an altarpiece. In actuality “Chanting” is a group portrait of some of my

closest friends, a community in which we have witnessed each other’s triumphs, struggles, and transformations. Historically, portraiture has been a mode of portraying the rich and the powerful. I choose to eschew this tradition and its expectations of monumentality and grandeur by emphasizing a personal, sentimental experience. My imagery is meant to empower, humor, and canonize friends in my life whom I respect and admire.



Butterfly Chanting, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
52 x 68 inches



Butterfly Chanting, 2019

Acrylic on canvas (central canvas)
52 x 68 inches

Butterfly Chanting, 2019

Acrylic on canvas
52 x 68 inches



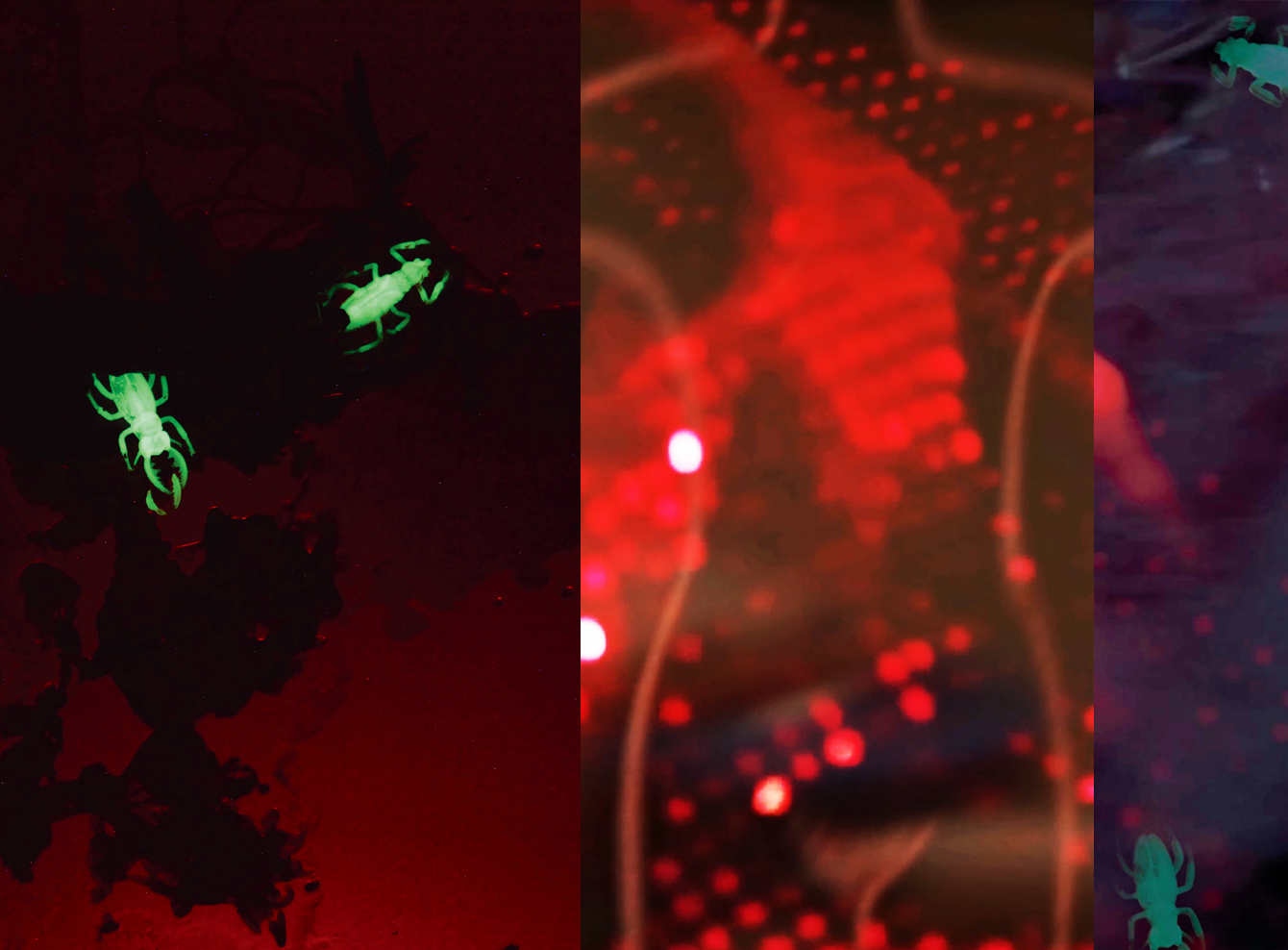
ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Hidden within the abundant green and white of the foliage sit two fairies, back to back, with their exquisite wings touching, in front of a valiant warrior. The warrior sits atop a majestic pink unicorn with their bow and arrows, ready to protect their friends. A brightly colored cloth draped over the unicorn suggests a connection to both Buddhist and pride flags. Under the calm blue sky and soaring trees, the figures sit together in a state of relaxation and kindhearted contemplation of the transformative journeys each has gone through. The sweatshirt, sneakers, and leggings of the fairies construct a contemporary experience juxtaposed with the fantastical aspects of the work. Observed is a union of past, present, fantasy, religion, and naturalism, combined into one image with elements of magical realism, in other words, the mythical presented as the real. *Butterfly Chanting* consists of three portraits, the warrior and the fairies at the center, flanked by the Madonna and her

child, and the angel in Japan, creating a triptych rich with religious connotations and subtle rebellion against accepted societal norms. The figures have faced many hardships, including their own personal journeys of self love and together they have supported one another, leading each other through the darkness of life.

Jesse Alkire portrays his close friends in his grand portraits, embedding sentimentality and nostalgia within his work. His work proclaims the significance of people who are underrepresented in art and the natural diversity of people within the world. Jesse's work connects people to one another and reminds you to think of those closest to you and to be grateful for all you've accomplished in life.

Madeline Billings



Drag allowed me to examine the performative aspect of my personality, specifically the personification of division and opposition.

***Perishables*, 2019**

Digital video, banana skin, thread
(Video stills)

**LINDSEY
HAMMERLE**

ARTIST STATEMENT

This work is a translation of confrontation and contradiction within myself. Through the lenses of gender, sexuality, and performance, I create a system of symbols to question my subconsciously developed ideologies.

During adolescence I was constantly told what to do with my body. I was told to be skinny, to be clean, to not show too much skin, that I was too young to wear red lipstick or use tampons, and if I didn't join track and field I would regret it later in my old age. Since I was born in a female body these stereotypes were forced onto my identity.

Rebellion became my form of resistance and my relationship with my body became performative. Wearing more and more outlandish outfits, I was drawn toward

my presentation and fashion, eventually discovering a local group of drag performers who became my community. Drag allowed me to examine the performative aspect of my personality, specifically the personification of division and opposition.

This work likewise is divided in two parts that exist in a constant binary. The video projection of soft lights and sensual textures is juxtaposed with rat sculptures, stitched-together assemblages of dried fruit. Connecting them is a constant lulling soundscape of pulsing bass, rustling fabric and distant voices. The inner conflict of conditioned and conscious roles becomes a discourse of opposite media, an interplay that refuses to harmonize.

***Perishables*, 2019**

Digital video, banana skin, thread
Installation with sculptures and
projection 1





***Perishables*, 2019**

Digital video, banana skin, thread
Installation with sculptures



Perishables, 2019

Digital video, banana skin, thread

Left: Video still

Right: Installation with sculptures
and projection 2

ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Like a mortician, Lindsey Hammerle ventures to mend the dead, but rather than beautify cadavers, she embraces and accentuates death. Bloody entrails spill from decomposing rat carcasses; their silhouettes sway in light wind. A flood of sensual red light subsumes the lifeless rats, causing an array of shadowy figures to appear. Moving images of clenched bedsheets disrupted by haphazard, grimy dissections are physically projected onto the rats' bodies. Like miniature black holes, the rats absorb everything that is cast upon them. After overcoming an initial sensory overload, the viewer approaches the installation to find that the rats are less naturalistic than they appear.

Lindsey uses unconventional media in her art as a way to explore her own nonconformist self-identity and ideology. The videography within the installation helps encapsulate the dynamism of Lindsey's personal character. Simultaneously, Lindsey's unique use of fruit to create rat-like figures plays on the traditional trope of equating feminine qualities with consumable, natural objects. Spoiled fruit acts as a rejection of this objectification, symbolizing instead Lindsey's redefined vision of femininity—unorthodox, deglamorized, and independent of the socially presumed expectation of feminine expression.

Hannah Meiner



Eschewing the concept of an externalized nature and challenging humanistic associations with motherhood, my work highlights kinship with other forms of life.

Oddkin, Compost, 2019

Clay, soil, wood, fungi, aluminum,
coyote and possum bone, hair
84 x 42 x 18 inches

**RUBY RAE
JONES**

ARTIST STATEMENT

In sculptures and installations, I use cast human body parts in combination with the forms of other-than-humans. Each mélange repositions the human as one component of an ecosystem, giving and receiving in acts of radical collaboration with companion species. I utilize subdued color palettes and a range of materials, wherein the natural properties of each physical component have presence and identity, allowing for them to participate in the meaning of the work. In conversation with one another, the materials begin to embody the complexity and cooperative nature of an ecosystem. The large scale and physicality of my sculptures are reflections of my own body and the way it moves through space.

Oddkin creates a site to process, grieve, and contend with the reality of ecological degradation across the globe, and the major extinction event that we are now experiencing. It opens a conversation about how material technology has shaped our environment since the emergence of human culture and how it has altered our relationships to all other living beings. The

materials I employ—clay, cast metal, wood, and plaster—speak to that history and collapse it into a rich present.

The concept that there is a limitless and pristine resource called “nature” which exists outside the human world allows the global capitalist-imperialist system to flourish, compelling societies to exploit and consume to the point of genocide and environmental collapse. Eschewing the concept of an externalized nature and challenging humanistic associations with motherhood, my work highlights kinship with other forms of life.

I dedicate this body of work to Poppy and Gry, my grandparents and dearest friends, who were responsible for planting the seeds of curiosity in my chest and the stone in my spine. Although you have both joined the realm of the ancestors, I will continue to carry with me your insatiable appetite for learning, your dedication to community (both human and other-than-human), and your love of wild places. I am so grateful to have known you.



Oddkin, *Compost*, 2019

Clay, soil, wood, fungi, aluminum, coyote and possum bone, hair
84 x 42 x 18 inches



Oddkin, Compost, 2019

Clay, soil, wood, fungi, aluminum,
coyote and possum bone, hair
84 x 42 x 18 inches



Oddkin, Brood, 2019

Bronze, clay, fallen apple tree, chicken wire, plastic, straw, seaweed, found objects
72 x 72 x 144 inches



ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Ruby Jones's *Oddkin* series expresses an urgent attempt to reconcile the relationship between humans and the environment. Showcased are three pieces that push you to confront distressing facts about ecological degradation and consider a more expanded sense of community. Each piece uniquely relates to its own natural element — *Brood* to air, *Cradle* to water, and *Compost* to earth — and describes a moment of interaction between humans and other species. Through her work, Jones asks us to shift away from the idea that humanity should be the ultimate priority. What she presents are optimistic scenes of cohabitation that may be achieved through a more equitable ecological existence. While this series brings pointedly to our attention the devastating degradation of our environment, Jones reminds us that the prospect of recovery is not lost.

Brood is a human-sized nest constructed of branches, fibers, chains, moss, and plastic. The interior of the nest is an assemblage of ceramic eggs and a dismembered bronze cast of the human body. This nest displays the collaboration between two species nurturing each other through their grief. A mother bird grieves for the increasing loss of her habitat as she constructs a cradle for her young out of alien, synthetic materials.

Cradle showcases a human figure nursing a baby seal. Surrounded by shells and oozing thick black oil, the piece sparks a discourse on ocean acidification and the drastic effects that fossil fuels have on the oceanic species that support our entire ecosystem. This piece reflects Jones's interdisciplinary studies in environmental science and

social justice, bridging the gap between her two passions by converting environmental research into visual forms that are both intimate and engaging.

In her work *Compost*, Jones presents a look at what a beneficial symbiotic relationship between human beings and other creatures might look like. Lying peacefully on a forest floor amidst rich dark soil, moss, stones, and a conglomeration of fungi is a fragmented human body created in the likeness of Jones's mother. The woman's visage radiates tranquility, perhaps because she knows that through her death, she is performing a truly unselfish act. As this clay cast of Jones's mother decomposes, her body creates the perfect environment for other species to flourish. Scattered around the body are the bones of a mother opossum and her babies, as well as the skull of a mother coyote. Although the woman is dead, you can still see how gently she cradles the opossum bones in her hand. She shows that these beings who once nurtured children can nurture the Earth in a different way, fostering life through their death.

Jones challenges the human-centered notions of motherhood and the environment throughout *Oddkin*. She grieves for the depreciated environmental reality as she presents a raw maternal side of herself through these meticulous creations. Yet, the underlying message of hope, partnership, and fruitful coexistence surpasses the emotional weight that makes the initial impression.

Sophie Matthewson & Katy Caskey



This is not a success story about making it. It is about just getting to the point of a first step, a fair shot.

*The Blossoming Effect
(1), 2019*

Charred Wood
7 x 5 feet

**RAMNEET
KAUR**

ARTIST STATEMENT

The first time I experienced otherness was on a kindergarten playground. “Why are you dark?” It was only my second day at school, and I had been made aware that my skin spoke for me before I could. Growing up in a white suburban America as a daughter of first-generation Punjabi parents has left me feeling culturally disoriented. I am the middle child of generational diaspora. Stuck between the limbo of being too brown, too American, or not enough. Due to my reality of feeling misplaced during my youth, it has been important to me to bring representation into my work.

The Blossoming Effect is an installation that investigates aspects of the experience of immigration, confronting personal and larger cultural facts in a narrative format. More specifically, my work addresses the “desi” experience. Derived from Sanskrit, “desi”

means “one from our country.” It usually refers to people of Indian, Pakistani, and Bengali descent.

The Blossoming Effect (1) is a 7-foot-high charred wooden sculpture. I see this structure as a hand-dug hole, a record of labor, literally my own, and also a metaphor for my father’s struggle toward the elusive American dream. Another piece of the installation uses the faded Persian rug of my childhood for another meditation on labor and the passage of time.

This is not a success story about making it. It is about just getting to the point of a first step, a fair shot. The sculpture forbids viewers to be able to look down into the hole in a voyeuristic manner. Instead, gaps invite the public to look through and imagine.



***The Blossoming Effect (2)*, 2019**

Abraded wool rug
8 x 11 feet



The Blossoming Effect (1), 2019

Charred Wood.
7 x 5 feet





The Blossoming Effect (2), 2019

Abraded wool rug
8 x 11 feet

ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

The Blossoming Effect (1) sits as two separate objects, unified. The installation is nodding to Kaur's personal family experience and resourcefulness through an eclectic merge of monumental wooden sculpture and personal pieces from her own home. Taking influence from Ursula von Rydingsvard's massive organic wooden installations, an assembled black tower bursts from the foreground above our heads, its woody burnt layers gathered together in an atypical fashion, as if built with scraps and fragments over time. Looking inside the sculpture's small openings, one can see tallies alluding to the endurance needed to pull one's self from the earth.

The darkness of the sculpture contrasts with an abraded carpet from Kaur's childhood home. Through the process of sanding down the worn middle, Kaur made a canvas

of the excoriated center of the carpet. The words "we dig ourselves out to begin" are inscribed, a resounding and powerful articulation expressing the reality of immigration and an awareness of starting from behind. For one must construct from below in order to break America's ground.

Two worlds and cultures collide in this work, American and Desi. The classic hardwood planks on top of the sculpture echo a staple in suburban American households, and the decorative rug suggests a common feature in Desi living rooms. Kaur's work is a story of complexity and resiliency, reconstructing American immigration narratives by offering a visual interpretation of her own family's journey.

Erin Smith



While my mother falls more ill,
I attempt to connect with her
passion for quilting while keeping
closely in mind the possible bleak
consequences.

3,720, 2019

Cigarette packages and
screen print on fabric
7.5 ft x 3 ft

**ABIGAIL
MARCH**

ARTIST STATEMENT

My creative research utilizes mixed-media collage to explore themes of addiction, identity, relationships, and memory. From a distance my work displays bright colored abstract patterns arranged in a familiar quilt-like fashion. The three quilted works appear comforting, inviting, and pleasing to the eye. Upon closer look, the 'quilts' consist of non-traditional media — discarded cigarette packs and swatches of silk-screened fabric that have been sewn together with red embroidery thread. The imagery and materials reveal a more dirty and melancholy reality. The brightly seductive colored cigarette packages have been juxtaposed with lackluster or dull-colored screen-printed images of my loved ones. The photographs document their repetitive acts such as smoking or going to the doctor. By using the medium of quilting I attempt to create a bridge between the relationships made while smoking or quilting.

Through hand stitching every pack and print with vibrant red thread, the work becomes very intimate, and brings to mind the act of stitching skin in surgery and mirrors the repetitive act of smoking. With high-contrast, large-scale, and methodical patterning and repetition, my work displays obsessive tendencies to examine overwhelming feelings of guilt brought on by seeing the consequences. Images of young adults seemingly unaware of the damage being done on their bodies are contrasted with images of my mother undergoing cancer treatment. While my mother falls more ill, I attempt to connect with her passion for quilting while keeping closely in mind the possible bleak consequences.

3,720, 2019

Cigarette packages and
screen print on fabric
7.5 ft x 3 ft



3,720, 2019

Cigarette packages and
screen print on fabric
7.5 ft x 3 ft



3,720, 2019

Cigarette packages and
screen print on fabric
7.5 ft x 3 ft



ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

You're struck by the colors first. Three large quilted panels hang before you, fabricated from brightly colored rectangles that display a stunning variation on primary colors: red, turquoise, dark and light blue, gold, and yellow. After you absorb the bold colors, you take in the elements that comprise the piece: a copious number of cigarette packs, hand-stitched together with luminous red thread. Patches are seen amongst the cigarette packs; these patches are the same size and shape of the packs, but they display something other than a cigarette label. Though unclear at first, the images on these patches soon come into focus. On the patches that are within the two side panels, you can see people smoking, and within the center panel, you see someone going through

chemotherapy. You cannot help but wonder: who are these people, what are they doing now, how are they doing now? But try to empty your mind of these thoughts because it is not the artist's intention to depict a fable about the dangers of smoking. This artwork's purpose is not to exemplify risks or outcomes, and its purpose is not to shame. The purpose of this artwork is to allow viewers to open their minds and feel the experiences of others, whether those experiences are that of habit, addiction, play, or illness, whether those experiences are bad or good.

Hannah Lewis



**I named this installation
after the inherent sanctuary
of creative resilient
potential in every person:
“Spitfire Cathedral.”**

***Nourished Effigy*, 2019**

Digital video production with
mixed-media puppet (wood,
polystyrene foam, aluminum, piano
wire, paper, fabric, acrylic paint
7 minutes.

**CARLY
MCCARTNEY**

ARTIST STATEMENT

Cradled or cradling, my kinetic light and sound sculptures need interaction to be complete. Colored light and shadows dance as you turn a larger-than-life stained glass spinner on a fulcrum of handcrafted musical instruments composed of found objects, skeletal wood and bronze fish bells. Below the spinner, viewers are dappled by its vibrant glowing pattern. Above, they are reflected by its mirror. Alongside, an immersive video projection wraps viewers, a child-size puppet and its chair in a mesmerizing collage of pulsating colors and light. Lifted from the chair or resting in your arms, the limp puppet becomes a musical instrument when you strum its strings. Its mirror mask reflects its player, who is also a canvas for the projection. Together, the sculptures and surreal video projections compose a flowing system of sound, motion and light.

I named this installation after the inherent sanctuary of creative resilient potential in every person: *Spitfire Cathedral*. Motivated by egalitarian educational pedagogy and a desire to deconstruct dehumanizing consumerism, I seek to challenge institutional confinement and make art that is accessible. The viewer is honored as an agent of self-defined meaning. We choose our tasks, tools and 'toys'. Beating a drum, ringing a bell, plucking strings, casting shadows. Frozen form sculptures are given life through interactions. Encouraging collaboration, *Spitfire Cathedral* is a gesture of empathy asking us all—including myself—to be vulnerable with one another. It invites us to connect. Through autonomous choices we build a foundational un-conditioning enabling healing through curiosity and wonder.



Nourished Effigy, 2019

Digital video production with mixed-media puppet (wood, polystyrene foam, aluminum, piano wire, paper, fabric, acrylic paint 7 minutes.



**Spitfire Cathedral:
Manifest 1, 2019**

(Bronze fish bell)
Bronze, wood, plexiglass and
colored polyester, rope, fabric,
piano wire, found objects, rawhide
7 x 6 x 9.5 inches



**Spitfire Cathedral:
Manifest 1, 2019**

(Viewer interacting with
installation)

Bronze, wood, plexiglass and
colored polyester, rope, fabric,
piano wire, found objects, rawhide.
7 x 6 x 9.5 inches



ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Color, movement, light, sound. Images projected and reflected. Surfaces glint and impressions dance over skeletal structures and organic forms, casting shadows and illuminating hidden visions. A rhythm of sensuous materials initiates action and reaction, push and pull, propelled through interactions between people, place, and object. Through these features, Carly McCartney's *Spitfire Cathedral* captivates the eye and the mind, eliciting responses both seen and felt.

From bronze-cast fish bells that flit through undulating light and shadow, to carved wood sanded into softness, McCartney spent over 200 hours meticulously crafting each component. The installation includes musical instruments, moving imagery, figural sculpture, and a variety of materials including metal, wood, and glass, creating an amalgam of interrelated elements, an abstract orchestra.

This combination leads to an inherent approachableness, a tactile character that flows from conception, to construction, to engagement and interpretation. The work encourages participation and thrives on synergy. Defined by its relation to its audience and the audience's relation to itself, meaning revolves around collaboration. In fact, the piece's function depends on shared experience and changes with the audience, engaging the entire body and people of any age.

Spitfire Cathedral stands as a testament to the power of materiality, process, and interaction. The installation acts as both a tool and a toy (if there is a difference between the two), and in this way, it is a playground for the senses. The installation provides an opportunity to appreciate art as well as a dynamic experience in creative expression through interactivity.

Cejay Johnson



With fabric and glitter and high-pitched voices, I create alternate endings to my bad dreams. A utopia/playground/safe space that, by definition, does not exist.

***Play Room*, 2019**

Installation, video and soft sculpture
163 x 164 centimeters

**KEIKO
SCOTT**

ARTIST STATEMENT

With fabric and glitter and high-pitched voices, I create alternate endings to my bad dreams. A utopia/playground/safe space that, by definition, does not exist.

Choosing fabric, cutting shapes, and sewing them into three-dimensional forms (and doing this process metaphorically for video performances,) provides more autonomy than I have ever had.

In my fictional floating world, gender is fake, money is fake, language is fake, and time is fake. As long as everything is intangible and my feet are two inches off the ground, there is no reason to fear being misgendered,

misunderstood, mistreated. I move in and out of planes of reality, sometimes as myself and other times as the sex doll Mai Li.

My head remains in Japan, not present with my body. My body, the vessel, carries a five year old (vulnerable and confused). She remembers all the times two languages weren't enough to communicate boundaries. The invisible Please Don'ts manifested a soft shell, colored and textured like Crayola Crayons and Beanie Babies. A womb like I shared with my brother, binary from birth.

I hotbox the womb to fall asleep.





Play Room, 2019

Installation, video and soft sculpture
163 x 164 centimeters





ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

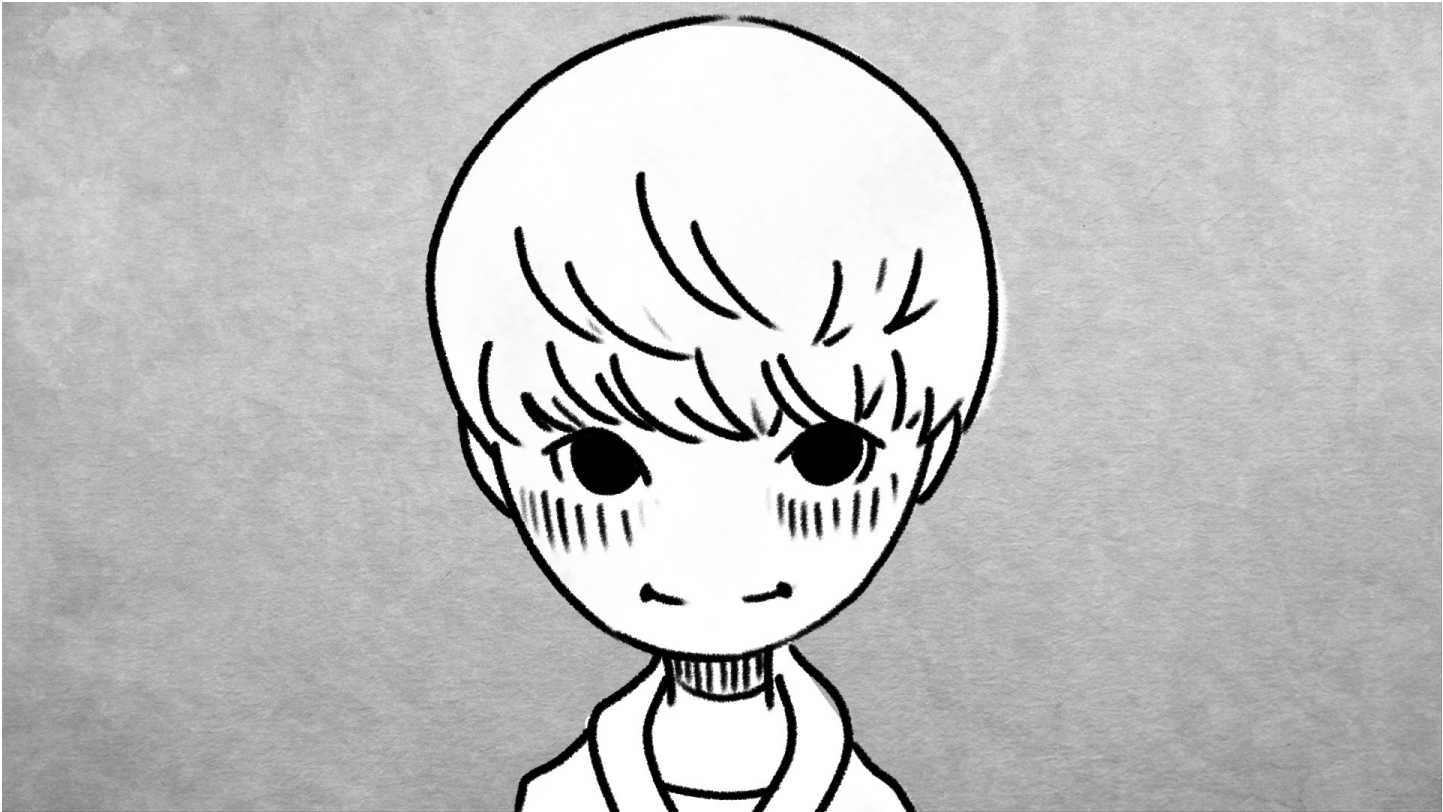
Someone's past doesn't have to define their vibrant future. Keiko Scott uses their fresh and densely saturated imagery to showcase growth through a tumultuous world. Cute objects bring life to a vivid world inhabited by symbolism and softness while Japanese onomatopoeia echoes through the air around the piece. Scott talks about issues of consumerism, the feeling of being overwhelmed, language, and traumatic experiences and pulls together these perspectives with stimuli such as bongs, fabric, and a sex doll.

The sex doll featured in the work is a catalyst for a deeper conversation about the fetishization experienced by the artist as Japanese-American and how they feel Asians are

portrayed in media and society. This stand-in figure can address ways of taking past experiences, transforming them, and moving forward with life, freeing oneself of expectations that can limit our abilities and voices.

Playing off some of the issues of consumerism in the cultures of the United States and Japan, Scott's work bombards you with information from start to end. From the colors of the fabric and sounds to the imagery, the viewer is provided a dynamic experience in this fast-paced world that, seemingly, always wants to dominate us.

Trenton Browning



Japanese comics is not just a style, it is an identity, a culture. As an artist that grew up with anime and manga, I aim to encourage the audience to view the genre not just as cartoon, but as art and cinema worthy of critical engagement.

Attempted Suicide,
2019

Digital hand-drawn and rotoscope
animation
3 minutes

**CASPER
TRUONG**

ARTIST STATEMENT

As an artist, I aim to use the anime and manga methods of representation as a guise, a lure to bring the audience into viewing narratives that they would not expect. Japanese comics and animations are capable of weaving disturbing imagery with endearing visuals that enable the viewers to enjoy the worst. I am inspired by artists such as Junji Ito and Arata Yokoyama to make art that is horrific but is also appealing to the point that viewers cannot help but enjoy them. Through the use of digital processes, I want to make high-contrast, aesthetic, candy-like illustrations and animations that are irresistible to the audience. I aim to juxtapose the innocent, the pretty, and mass appeal with the dark, evil, and taboo. Engaging with the work, viewers are invited to dig deeper, below the surface of cuteness and have the opportunity to reflect upon their own psyche.

Anime and manga deliver narrative in a distinctive way that is culturally specific. Characters with wide eyes, small noses, rounded features are created and perfected by generations of manga artists to maximize cuteness and appeal while still being capable of portraying the opposite. It is easy to brush off this representational style as nothing but kitsch, pandering to mainstream culture and entertainment, but that would do this art form a disservice. Japanese comics is not just a style, it is an identity, a culture. As an artist who grew up with anime and manga, I aim to encourage the audience to view the genre not just as cartoon, but as art and cinema worthy of critical engagement.





Attempted Suicide,
2019

Digital hand-drawn and rotoscope
animation
3 minutes





ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Imagine if your sole purpose in life were to die. While this is inevitable for all of us, what if you had to die every single day for the rest of your life? For the characters in Casper Truong's work, *Attempted Suicide*, this is their reality. The upbeat music and *kawaii* ("cute") anime style of the figures is juxtaposed with the unbearable toll taken on the character who horrifically dies in a new way each day. A gut-wrenching explosion, a merciless hanging, a fatal heart attack. The work acts as both a critique on our acclimation to violence in media and entertainment, as well as a comment on battles with mental health like depression and suicidal tendencies. By using rotoscoping

the artist can draw over real-life footage, incorporating his own self-portrait as an unwilling participant in these murders, one who does not accept this fate as the first character does. This is the artist exploring the realm of self-sabotage through the practice of killing his own art. With influences such as contemporary pop artist Takashi Murakami, new media artist Bill Viola, and conceptual artist Julian Opie, Casper Truong's work captivates audiences with popular anime style and connects to viewers through its personal vulnerability.

Brooke Iggulden



I use the formal and narrative aspects of drawing and digital media to present moments in which violence and confusion prevail, and adverse crowds collide.

Error in the Streets III:
Paris, 2019

Charcoal on paper
19 x 24 inches

ARTIST STATEMENT

I use the formal and narrative aspects of drawing and digital media to present moments in which violence and confusion prevail, and adverse crowds collide. The participants of each scene are abstracted and anonymous, with stony uniforms and bodies reminiscent of action figures or statuettes. Lacking the emotional substrates of faces, they are petrified as slabs, metallic blocks, and weathered forms defined by deformity and warpage. The riotous congregations in these drawings remind one of the extreme militance, protest, and tribalism witnessed on the street and screen.

Such phenomena are ever-present throughout the modern history of drawing and painting, from Francisco Goya, Carlo Carrà, and Umberto Boccioni to Leon Golub and Sandow Birk. Responding to this narrative, I use antiquated rendering styles to suggest a perpetual and immutable state of conflict. Inspired by Cubist and Futurist aesthetics and the fantasy figures of contemporary video games, my images are fiction but based upon observation of real and current human struggles. Photographs and video footage of dense urban protests

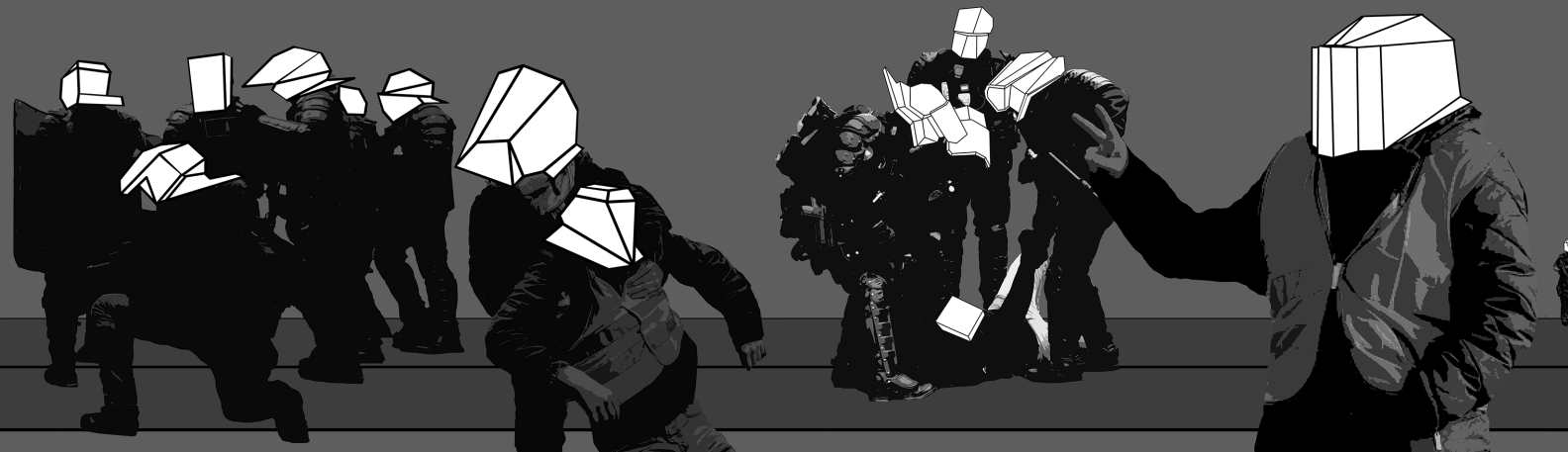
are primary references. From Caracas in 2014 to Portland following President Trump's Election or the Yellow Vests in 2019, there are copious and recurrent instances in which civilian crowds combatively encounter armed police. These are the moments and images to which I refer.

In each event, the social and political concerns of a community have stirred such enmity and fervor that aggressive confrontation becomes inevitable. For many of us who observe via screen at a remove, however, these commotions' context and power to move are greatly diminished. The complex mechanisms and frightening displays of hatred in these disputes are reduced to a high-speed storybook, the viewing of which may be distracted, cursory, and apathetic. As a spectator, I reimagine these images from news outlets and online platforms as inert sprawls of warring figurines. This objectification is put before the viewer as an invitation to consider how we receive and process imagery of human strife, abusive potential, and capacity for violence.

***Error in the Streets I:
Portland, 2017***

Charcoal on paper
19 x 24 inches



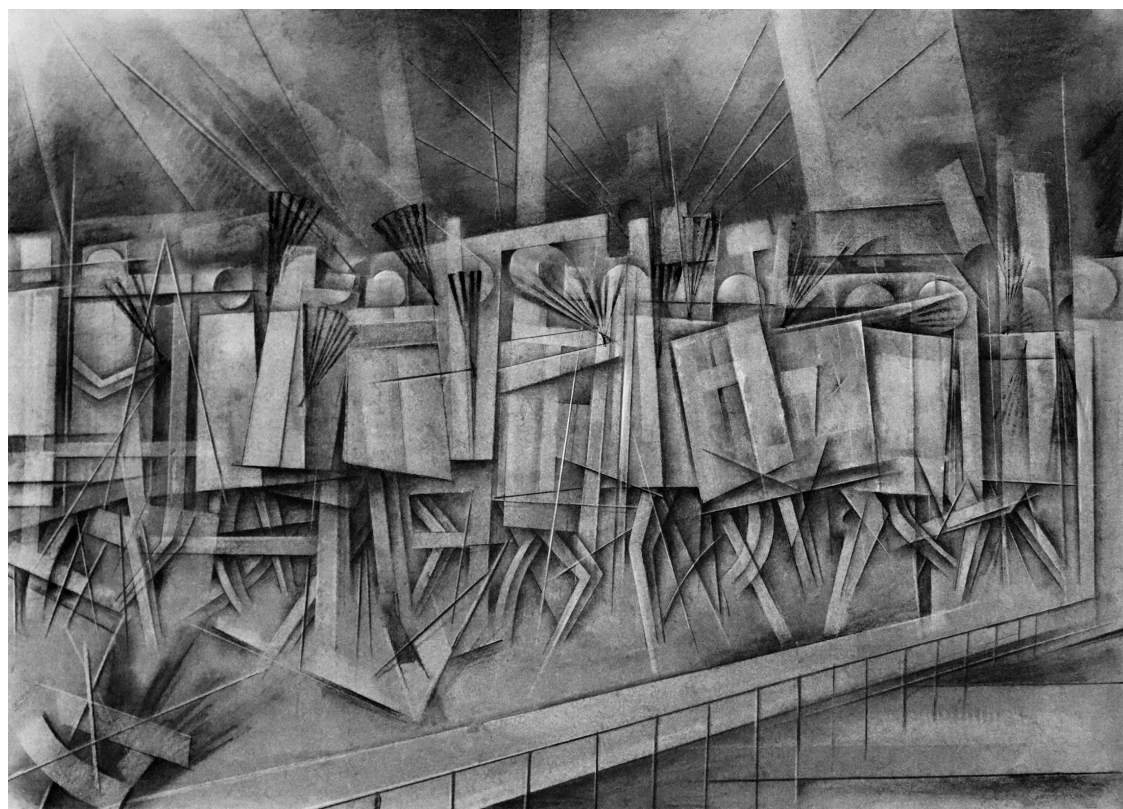


Block Party 8, 12, 2019

Photoshop CS6, Photographs
6,600 x 9,600 pixels

**Rules of Engagement
I, 2019**

Charcoal on paper
22 x 30 inches





Block Party 6, 10, 2019

Photoshop CS6, Photographs
6,600 x 9,600 pixels

ART HISTORIAN RESPONSE

Anonymous figures huddle together to create a playful yet tragic scene of anguish. *Block Party* is a digital collage of figures, made up of varied images outlined and set to grayscale. The collage depicts scenes of violence with white block headed figures, seen from afar as blobs that stick out, compared to the bodies, which blend into the background. Scenes are taken from actual photographs and mashed together to create an absurd scene unlike the original photographs. We understand they are scenes of conflict, but the abstraction leaves us room to imagine. The artist censors the faces of the figures, for spectators to create their own assumptions. The collage is easy to look at; the spectators are not controlled by the images. One can move quickly past it, stare, or go back without any consequences. Similarly, we can relate to our own real-life experiences with social media and news, always scrolling and never being satisfied, always wanting more. In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag describes a passive viewer whose act of observing is inherently distant from the traumatic experience of violence as depicted in images. *Block Party* creates and grasps this feeling of emotional detachment. Using images that don't come from the same event but come from similar riots, von Dassow blends them together to create a scene of tragic circumstances. False assumptions can come from the absurdity of the images, which seem playful but actually depict acts of destruction.

Leilana Bill

Semi-opaque polygons clash and overlap as they repeat across the breadth of the charcoal drawing. Bold rectangles form riot shields. As the keepers of the peace advance, sharp, volumetric legs pierce the picture plane. The legion of simultaneous geometry crowds to the right, piling in with knees bent. The procession is no longer an orderly march but a cacophonous crush of bodies. *Rules of Engagement* is a narrative triptych in charcoal and chalk depicting the enmity invariably present in civil unrest. Aesthetically inspired by the Italian Futurists of the early 1900s, *Rules of Engagement I* provokes consideration of our mechanized, digital world by reducing bodily form to lines and shapes. Abstraction acts as a metaphor for physical disconnection from the reality of conflict. As viewers, we perceive and process the aesthetic brutality while considering the role of modern mass media in the proliferation of violent imagery to excite interest. The high-visibility yellow chalk recalls recent protests in Paris; however, without specific context from photographs, contemporary events become synonymous with struggles of the past. The figural aesthetics of *Rules of Engagement* aim to catch the eye, hold the viewer and prompt contemplation of violent images and our reactions to them.

Jessamyn Irvine

Waking up from the fever dream of the BFA year, we look around our bedside, like Dorothy back in Kansas, and recognize many faces. Having joined us in the double life of dreaming, they are more dear to us than before.

The graduating BFA class would like to thank Hafthor Yngvason, Director of Western Gallery, for hosting the BFA exhibition and for stepping into a curatorial role to write a remarkable critical essay about the work as a whole. Expansive and synthetic, his interpretation crystallizes ideas that are newly emerged and still evolving. I expect that Hafthor's reflection will bear on these students' understanding long after graduation. We have nothing but admiration for Hunter Long, the newly-hired preparator for Western Gallery, who embraced without flinching the technical challenges of a condensed installation timeframe for this exhibition. We also appreciate the generous support of CFPA Dean Kit Spicer for the BFA exhibition reception at the culmination of Scholars Week and opening of Alumni Weekend.

We would like to thank Professor Julia Sapin, who as Chair of Art and Art History has been a stalwart advocate for the BFA program, supporting the curriculum, securing studios on campus, and facilitating funding by the Marsh endowment for the BFA catalog. As professor of Art History 475 in Spring quarter, Julia mobilized her students in the first week of classes to conduct studio visits and interview all ten of the BFA students. At a bewildering speed they wrote and she reviewed multiple drafts before our printing deadline. For their interpretive essays we want to thank the students of Art History 475: Leilana Bill, Madeline Billings, Trenton Browning, Gabrielle Cagley, Kathryn Caskey, Brooke Iggulden, Jess Irvine, Cejay Johnson, Hannah Lewis, Sophie Matthewson, Hannah Meiner, Erin Smith and Eric Trimble.

We would also like to thank Lee Plested, art historian and curator, who met with BFA students in Fall and Winter quarters. Lee challenged students to articulate their concerns and conceptualize their projects at critical early moments this year. When our BFA catalog designer, Bradlee Thielen, a graduating BFA student in Design, rolled out his concepts for the “Fever Dreams” catalog, there were chills of excitement. BFA students see in Bradlee an artist collaborator. Like Lee Plested’s clear-eyed appraisals early in the process, and Hathor Yngvason’s reflective essay at the end, Bradlee’s catalog design illuminates and elevates the work and ideas of this group of young artists.

Art Studio faculty members serve on small advisory committees for each BFA student, providing frequent interaction, supporting and challenging them at every step. BFA students would like to thank their faculty mentors: Garth Amundson, Pierre Gour, Ryan Kelly, Cara Jaye, Sasha Petrenko, Seiko Purdue, Lisa Turner, Chris Vargas, and myself, for holding them accountable and keeping faith through the ups and downs of the BFA process. They are grateful to Douglas Loewen, Instructional Technician, for his one-on-one guidance, especially in the casting and wood construction processes that dominate several bodies of work in this exhibition. We are grateful for his support of High Street Hall studios, helping students convert offices into workspaces for studio practice. We would like to thank Francis Halle, Director of Space Administration for the University, who

creatively carved out BFA studio space at High Street Hall in the first place: he must have a special place in his heart for this program. BFA students would especially like to thank staff members Glen Tobosa and Allen Frost for their extraordinary patience and care in advising and help with access to studios, equipment and resources. Students also credit Glen and Allen for “the fact that the Art Office is a place where students can go even in the most dizzyingly stressful moments and enter into a dependably calm and friendly place.”

As BFA Coordinator for the 2019 BFA class, I have tried to be a ballast for these ten students. I gave them clear, rational frameworks -- to structure their wildest dreams -- so that they might actually make them happen. At times their most skeptical critic, anxiously looking ahead at deadlines, I have also been a fervent believer and advocate. For some students the work accelerated through the year, gaining power as skills and understanding increased. For others, breakthroughs and a new level of discipline arrived just in time. Each year we survey with wonder the difference that three quarters can make in the life of an artist who goes through this program. I am amazed and gratified to see the BFA dreams come true in these last days for Emeline, Jesse, Lindsey, Ruby, Ramneet, Abigail, Carly, Keiko, Casper, Ellery. I will watch with eagerness as they build upon the discoveries they made here.

Cynthia Camlin
Professor, BFA Coordinator