



Spring 2020

In-site: A New Realism - WWU Art Studio 2020 Catalog

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Western Washington University

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Western Washington University

Payton Dickerson

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Artist

Joel Aparicio, Ellie Bacchus, Shannon DeLurio, Payton Dickerson, Madison Dowling, Amanda Kartes, Sarah Kindl, Suzie Marco, Ashly McBride, and Jillian Roth

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in- site

A New Realism

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What a year! Under normal circumstances I would say the same thing, though I will emphasize it again, what-a-year! To the students represented in this catalog, I would like to say congratulations! Congratulations on the exceptional work you have produced under the most exceptional of circumstances. You have persevered through the challenges and obstacles that both the BFA program and the world have thrown at you: the numerous proposals, artist statements, critiques, late nights and long hours in the studio, and lastly a pandemic! You have found a way to stay focused and push yourself creatively under these difficult circumstances and I commend you for being able to do so.

In the future you may not have a multiplicity of “helpful” voices telling you “to experiment”, “work bigger”, “work smaller”, “make more work”, “needs more work”, “don’t over work it”, and lastly “finish it”. Your artistic voice must be the one to guide you forward as you continue to make art, and push your art practice to the next level. This year has taught you more about being a professional artist than I could have imagined, and planned for. Working with limited studio access, tools, and peer interaction is very tough, though sometimes a reality for an emerging artist upon graduation. You have all done exactly this, and have found a way to complete your projects given new constraints. Congratulations for taking that leap towards being a professional artist. I can’t wait to see what you produce in the future!

Lisa Turner

BFA Coordinator
Associate Professor, Print and Digital Media

As we navigate the COVID-19 crisis together, we long for contact with friends and family. Many of us dwell in memory, while we also dwell in possibility, considering the future and longing for (currently diminished) connection.

Before any of us had heard of this frightful virus, this year’s cohort of BFA artists in the Department of Art and Art History had begun their visual explorations of memory and identity, which thematically anchor this exhibition. What Tami Landis describes in her curatorial statement as “personal wayfinding through past and present identities,” these works deeply engage us in contemplation of different perceptions of reality and the contradictions they suggest. They serve as aide-memoire, helping us sort our own memories and deal with the dichotomies between different realities, between past and present.

This year’s collaborations—between the Western Gallery and the Department, between the BFA artists and the Art History 475 students—have posed special challenges as we practice social distancing. These restrictions have not dulled our enthusiasm, but rather strengthened our determination to see this project through and fulfill the dreams of these students to have their visual work and writing appear in an exhibition catalog and ultimately displayed in the Western Gallery. I find the dedication of the BFA artists exhilarating, as they steadfastly refused to give up on their goals for this important year. Also heartening is the 475 students’ enthusiasm to work on this project despite the limitations imposed by the crisis. You all are an inspiration!

Julia Sapin

Chair, Department of Art and Art History
Professor, Art History

The artists represented in *In Site: A New Realism* utilize diverse and deeply personal visual strategies to conjure new modes of perceiving past and present reality. This exhibition is comprised of the culminating projects created by 10 students graduating from WWU's year-long BFA program. Spanning a range of media from photography, sculpture, painting, video, printmaking, textile, and installation, each artist seeks to restructure a site or memory's realism as an investigation of history and identity.

Confronting the perceptions and understandings that experiences leave behind in the wake of their occurrences, reality becomes obscured through a selection of the exhibiting artists' practices. Suzie Marco invites us to step into the surreal room of her fabricated sperm donation center. Oversized felt soft-sculptures intersect the chairs and furniture to expose the discomfort of the represented center and ultimately it becomes an obstructed environment. This site investigation is steeped in Marco's recent personal, disorienting journey discerning what it means to be donor-conceived. Here the artist seeks an installation to probe the commercialization of the reproduction industry through conceptual strategies.

In a continuation of confronting the past, full-scale installations serve as an avenue to reimagine personal archives. Domestic childhood interiors frame the immersive installations by ceramicist Amanda Kartes and printmaker Sarah Kindl. Walking into Kartes's memorialized dining scene, scale and material are distorted to reflect the artist's fragile relationship with food and familial eating practices. At a distance the scene appears familiar, but close observation reveals oversized ceramic dining sets broken, cracked, and unusable. Stripping the functionality of the space, we are brought to Kartes's evolving unease of this childhood site.

Kindl's multi-media installation offers a glimpse into the artist's adolescent home, one that now solely exists through memory. As one encounters the recreated trailer

home, wood grain relief prints mask the walls while original and found furniture juxtapose enlarged, papier-mâché rodents and insects. A place that was once far beyond Kindl's control, this staged reality uncovers a space for reconciliation with the past.

Further siting personal spaces, painter Shannon DeLurio offers moments of her present tussled, used, unkempt bed as representations of intimate, emotional states. Serene yet chaotic, the monochromatic palette and luscious folds encase one into the familiar scene. DeLurio's selected objects of plates, wrappers, and clothes further reveal the authenticity of this domestic reality. Visually controlling these bedscapes through selected representation, the paintings constitute layers of memories and present social realities.

Pushing the boundary between idealized and lived realities, artists Payton Dickerson and Joel Aparicio expose familiar perceptions by skillfully transforming photographic practices. Empty rooms, display cases, and studios consume Dickerson's highly detailed photographs as universal yet abstract sites. Void of human presence and staged in a grid-like fashion, the captured spaces oscillate between a concrete and an elusive state. When displayed, these large-scale prints invite access to the composed sites seemingly longing for human interaction.

At a distance a painting or photograph may appear familiar but as details emerge, subtle distortions or nuances restructure our previously held insights. Manipulating a photographed site as a commentary on humanity's evolving relationship with technology and nature, Joel Aparicio redirects one's visual attention to its painterly surface. Identifying as a photographer and painter, Aparicio's pictures of Northwest landscapes exhibit layers of meticulous airbrushing to dramatize natural beauty. Commenting on the proliferation of digital images and the historic tensions between painting and photography, Aparicio continually seeks to expose and obscure the materials' limitations.

Vestiges of childhood experiences and identity formation anchor the following artists as they weave symbolism into their ongoing practice. Painter Ellie Bacchus chose the often-ignored domestic junk drawer as a portal into unresolved familial tensions. The work's playful assortment of everyday objects chaotically exposes one's progression from childhood to adulthood. Variations on the surface's texture convey new significance and add drama to an often-mundane place. Bacchus still lifes urge one to reach in and grab an object of play, function, or obscurity. The crowded and stuffed layers of objects project a personal wayfinding through past and present identities.

This approach of utilizing tactile ephemera of childhood is also explored by Madison Dowling who recontextualizes historic LIFE magazines into profound backgrounds for ad-esque screen-prints and collages. As a gesture of counter-memory, Dowling's work investigates previously held truths of familial idealism from the 1960s in contrast with the realities of alcohol addiction and recovery. Pairing a collage with a screen-print, these diptychs underpin a personal investigation into societal illusions of reality.

Comparably, Jillian Roth questions societal advertising techniques by exposing the media's over-sexualization of the female body. This subject-matter is driven from Roth's personal experience waitressing at a burger drive-in recalling the lived pressures of sex-appeal in America's fast food industry. Exposing the often-overlooked visual tactics of the media, Roth's *Ultimate Burger Fantasy* utilizes real and manipulated animations of females consuming, using, or engaging physically with variations of meat products. Facing the chaotic multi-sensory installation, Roth materializes the complex sensations entwined in this perceived reality.

In a desire to connect art with current experiences, Ashly McBride wears and weaves a large tapestry into resided spaces, embodying concepts of human void and presence. Forever seeking to reimagine discarded or recy-

clered materials, McBride bridges traditional weaving and sculptural practices by constructing honeycomb cardboard into a wearable "skin." Connecting directly to personal environments, McBride's photographs portray a new reality of constructed materials in living spaces. Either standing isolated in a gallery or photographed in a domestic space, the tapestry structure invites physical interaction. Layered and repurposed, McBride's skin probes the dimensions of spaces and sites into embodied realities.

Today, our personal and lived realities continue to shift through the COVID-19 pandemic. Stepping into each of these bodies of work we are reminded of the power of revisiting sites that currently feel out of reach. Artist Jean Tinguely, a member of the New Realists, once declared that "Art is the distortion of an unendurable reality... Art is correction, modification of a situation; Art is communication, connection... Art is social, self-sufficient, and total." Respectively, each of these exhibiting artists has leveraged their practices as a means to expose new modes of remembering, enduring, and communicating realities past and present.

—

Tami Landis

Museum Educator, Western Gallery & Outdoor Sculpture Collection
Instructor, Art History

Joel Aparicio

By airbrush colorizing and “digitizing” B&W photographic prints, I want to give a sense of oversaturated HDR landscapes. While standing at a distance, where the artwork appears phone size in scale to the viewer, one cannot discern that it is no longer a pic. Neither can the algorithms driving your smartphone’s camera. The analog artifacting I create is digitally airbrushed out, dismissed by the machine.

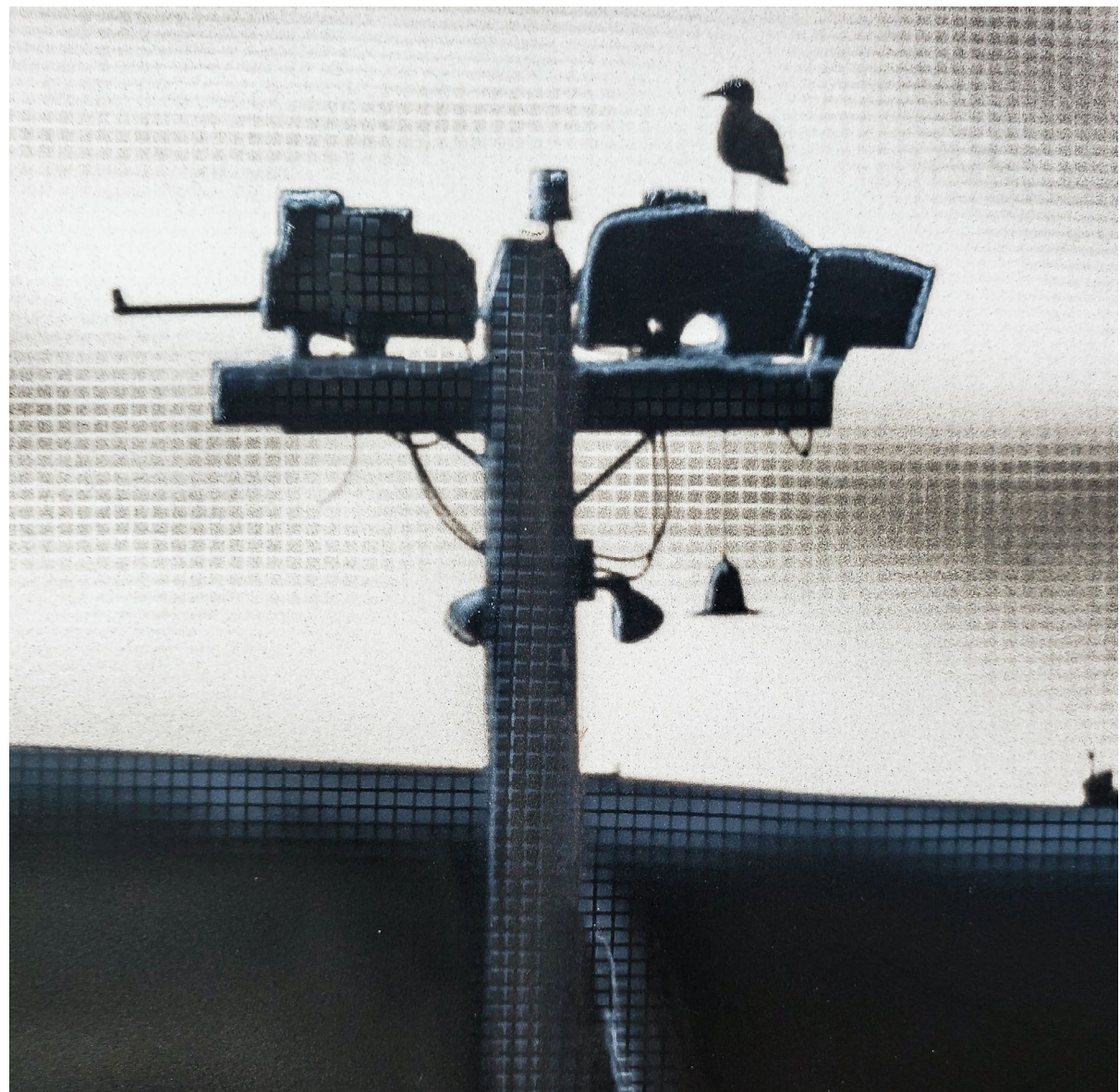
Neo-Impressionist Divisionist painters, notably Georges Seurat, upset the status quo of the “classically” trained painters who populated the Salon in the late nineteenth century. Seurat’s *Sunday Afternoon* was a labor of refined technique, and forever cemented him and his art with Pointillism. Just as the airbrush has led to my own visual aesthetic. During Seurat’s time, photography as a medium was fighting to legitimize its place in Fine Art. By being able to capture the extreme detail and accuracy that painters spent a lifetime practicing their technique to achieve, the photographer could reproduce in the “Blink of an Eye” the picturesque landscape that lay before the painter. As a photographer, I seek to capture the Pointillist painting technique with airbrushed photographs.

Traversing the line between painter and photographer. I take landscapes of the surrounding Pacific Northwest. A critique on how easily something can be dismissed as the viewer swipes. Replicating the Screen with a screen. Creating an artwork that cannot be resolved without pause, cannot be duplicated, and certainly is not immediate. The outsider looking in, refusing to seek shelter in the familiar, or fit in the crowd. Freeing oneself of the expected, hanging on the edge of a cliff between the high and low, the liked, or dismissed.



Looking Thru A Screen III ↵

Acrylic ink airbrushed on digital inkjet print / 50 x 64 in.



↳ **Looking Thru a Screen III (Detail)**
Acrylic ink airbrushed on digital inkjet print / 48 x 62 in.



Looking Thru a Screen IV (Detail) ←
Acrylic ink airbrushed on digital inkjet print / 50 x 64 in.



↳ **Looking Thru a Screen IV**
Acrylic ink airbrushed on digital inkjet print / 50 x 64 in.

Driven by his tenacious passion to create, Joel Aparicio strives to make an unrepeatable experience with every work. By creating beautifully romanticized depictions of real scenes utilizing photographs and airbrush techniques, he is drawing attention to the idea that some things can really only be experienced in person; they simply cannot translate from real life onto a screen. Some of the works, such as *Looking Thru a Screen IV*, provide a brilliant, metaphorical social commentary on the instant gratification of social media and what it means to actually be an artist. Aparicio believes in the idea that being an artist takes hard work, attention to detail, and dedication over time. With this work, he captures the essence of nostalgia by adding texture, color and soul to a black and white photograph by painting through a screen utilizing an airbrush. This creates a familiar reality of days gone by, reminiscent of summer sunsets and cool ocean breezes glimpsed through screened windows. Art for Aparicio is a saving grace, and with the masterful techniques he employs you can clearly see the unbridled effort and care that went into every work. Aparicio accomplishes the impossible by achieving hard textures with the airbrush, creating a captivating combination of reality and his own artistic influence. Experimentation with airbrush techniques is what makes Aparicio's artwork unique and interesting to unpack. His work emphasizes the importance of not allowing technology to be a crutch and appreciating the beauty of the fleeting moments in our everyday lives.

—
Chris Adkins

Ellie Bacchus

My paintings explore themes of memory, nostalgia, childhood, and the difficulties of growing up. In the works I present a personal history, with some of my own belongings starring in the compositions alongside universal objects. A well-loved Beanie Baby lays next to an empty pack of birth control pills. A cherubic porcelain figurine is jarringly placed next to a Suboxone wrapper. I am interested in the false dichotomy between childhood and adulthood. In truth, these lines are often blurred due to premature childhood exposure to the harsh realities of the adult world, through the media or a direct lived experience. Instead of a smooth transition from childhood to adulthood, the transitions through life can leave a messy trail behind on the psyche of the still forming individual.

In my paintings, areas of thickly applied paint jut off of the surface and contrast with thin drippy rendered objects that nearly disappear into the background. Some items are believable, and others are rendered with a childlike crayon scribble. These conscious formal decisions serve as a visual exploration of memory. Our memories of our childhood and adolescence evolve as we age. When we reflect on the past, do we tend to remember the good through rose-colored glasses, or do we focus more on the traumatic? This series is an attempt to see both sides at once; the good and the bad memories, the forgotten and remembered moments, the innocent and mature, all through a carefully curated archive of personally symbolic objects.



Grieving Springtime ↵

Oil and mixed media on panel / 48 x 48 in.



↳ Miller, Marl & I
Oil and mixed media on panel / 48 x 48 in.



Cherubic Restraint
Oil and mixed media on panel / 48 x 48 in. ←



↳ **Silicone & Rotten Milk Teeth**
Oil and mixed media on panel, 48 x 48 in.

The works of Ellie Bacchus pay homage to the detritus of life that surrounds us all: discarded childhood toys, tangled jewelry, and crumpled medication wrappers lie on a smudged ground. The painted time capsules elude definitive placement in an era, but each emits a distinctive aura of nostalgia for days past. We all use objects as repositories of memory; the souvenirs of our lives accumulate around us, and Bacchus captures them like a page in an *I Spy* book. Rather than explicitly represent moments or memories from her past, Bacchus's works remind us of our own clouded histories, obscuring her identity so they may communicate a more universal sense of loss and child-like innocence. Our identities are constructed of a million tiny moments. Bacchus gathers those tiny fragments and constructs a vivid image of a hazy past, exploring the trauma and beauty of personhood.

Growing up is a fickle process, and Bacchus's works treat the messy debris of adolescence like the most elegant *nature morte*. In paradoxically grungy yet dream-like dulcet tones, she lovingly renders each sketchy outline of a cloud, every shine of the pearl bracelet. The objects seem contradictorily staged, appearing both painstakingly composed and hastily strewn across the canvas. Perhaps Bacchus lovingly selected them for depiction, or perhaps the viewer merely stumbled upon the scene in a cluttered bedroom. The cherubic doll and soiled rabbit stare past their frames, catching and holding the onlooker's gaze, asking them to remember their own growing pains.

—
Cassandra Hart

Ellie Bacchus's paintings exchange vivid and meaningful shared experiences with the viewer. The formal aspects of her paintings poignantly communicate sentiments regarding nostalgia, memories, trauma, childhood, and adolescence. A Crayola marker cuts across the corner of the first image. The linear outlines, the vivid white, and the saturated red color of the marker produce a pure and crisp aesthetic, reminiscent of opening a fresh pack of supplies on a first day of school. The paint application on the prayer-bear beanie baby is smooth and velvety, evoking a haptic and tranquil quality. Directly to the left, a pristine pearl bracelet lies haphazardly. The beads become translucent against the backdrop of the cracked and opaque iPhone. Even starker in contrast, amidst the collection of objects, Bacchus shows a condom atop its wrapper. The paint is applied thinly, dripping in a sickly pale white off the canvas. Bacchus employs color, line, and composition to kill the conceived dichotomy between the spheres of children and adults. Transitional phases of life are often infinitely more complex and individualized than a set age range or a categorical sequence of events. Bacchus's chaotic, emotive arrangements disrupt the notion of linear growth and instead opt for a more relatable, organic, albeit challenging experience. The truth of growing up, for most everyone, is that it is often messy and sometimes difficult. Bacchus expresses a more truthful narrative about coming of age for herself as well as her viewers.

—
Brielle Miller

Shannon DeLurio

In my current series of oil paintings, I portray different perspectives of my bed by utilizing a dollhouse-sized replica that I have constructed and documented. My bed has been the home of many turbulent headspaces and past traumas. By working from the model I gain back control, which allows me to navigate and understand my unruly experience. With a muted color palette and varied marks, I create images that act as transportive windows into my past emotional states. Specifically, I zoom in on details like objects, shadows, wrinkles and light and investigate the bed's absorptive role in my life.

In my body of work I aim to convey the idiosyncratic experiences involved in varied mental states. I think of all the quiet moments in my bed, wrapped in the ambivalent embrace of my bed sheets. Invisible tears, sweat and skin are imprinted here and act as remnants of memories. This is a contradictory space of escape and comfort, an environment that shifts with my emotions. Sometimes it's neatly made, but most of the time there may be a plate buried underneath forgotten laundry and dirty sheets. My bed seems to have absorbed all of my emotions, yet appears as an unquestioning, innocent staple in the backdrop of my life.



Crumbs ↵
Oil on canvas / 48 x 48 in.



↳ **Stain**
Oil on canvas / 48 x 48 in.



Linen ↵
Oil on canvas / 48 x 48 in.



↳ **Creases**
Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in.

Shannon DeLurio depicts myriad scenes of her bed to acknowledge the ever-evolving perception of the human experience. Through visual representation of an intimate setting, the paintings highlight how our emotional responses to various circumstances influence our perception. A bed acts as a space that we continuously return to, a space that allows our mind and body to heal and thus feel rejuvenated. Yet, our bed can also perpetuate feelings of restlessness. Unable to quiet anxious thoughts, we are removed from the present moment, cultivating a falsified perception of our own reality. For the artist, the process of creating the series was significant, as it represented a type of personal transformation through which she gained back a sense of control that she previously lacked.

The miniature model of DeLurio's bed is a signature visual element of the series. Painting from reference photos of the model allowed for visual manipulation of the depicted bed scenes. The selective representation of the various scenes allowed the artist to assert her control over a previous mindset that manifested itself in a desire for escape. During this time, the bed served as temporary refuge, but also a confining space perpetuating discomfort. The choice to reproduce scenes from the model expresses the artist's engagement with her own evolving perception, while simultaneously encouraging viewers to reflect on their own. The model acts as an intermediary between DeLurio's past experiences and the canvas, allowing the series to personify a cathartic release of the artist's emotion.

—
Josephine Barbe

DeLurio's series reflects how our beds absorb the memory of our existence in them, a different kind of memory foam. Exploring the variety of emotions presented in this series, *Crumbs* and *Creases* highlight the range of emotions some viewers might experience in their own beds.

In her painting *Crumbs*, a plate is left in the crumpled bed, with crumb remnants on the plate and a few sneaking into the bed itself. Much like the bed absorbing memory, the crumbs also reflect the memory of what was.

Creases continues the theme of life's moments absorbing into the bed. The cool, unkempt sheets reveal laundry peeking out of the deep recesses of the covers. From this viewer's perspective, the dark tones of the clothing reflect the fatigue of depression, which draws us into bed. It draws us in so much that we start to become encompassed by darkness, much like the clothing being encompassed by the dark depth of the bed sheets.

When contextualizing the whole series, we see emotions that can reflect a difficult time in anyone's life. Vulnerability, comfort, growth, control (or the loss of it) encompass the emotional cycles we experience throughout our lives.

—
Stephanie Lark

Payton Dickerson

Modernism attempted to portray a powerful utopia through rigid ideals that dictated our culture. These ideals can be represented in the architecture we inhabit and the institutions we gain knowledge from, creating an illusion that the modern way is the only way. Photography in the digital age blurs the categorizations previously put in place in the modern era and assumes a post-modernist role of a democratic technology by returning to its origins as a form of documentation. By creating images using digital technologies that highlight the physical features of Western's Art Department, I recontextualize the previous model of distributing knowledge through categorized institutions in terms aligned with our current landscape.

Through appropriating modernism's use of the grid, the images function on two planes: the physical and the abstract, allowing for a dichotomy between readings that look outward to the world while also reflecting back into the frame. The physical nature of the images as uniform units of lockers and display cases represents modernity's goal in enforcing power and homogeneity, while the abstract allows for an interpretation that extends beyond the image. A reading on how these rigid ideals have dictated the spread of knowledge through formulaic institutions and what may be their future in our current time that embraces difference and fluidity. The result is an image that creates a moment of frustration by being unable to be grasped as a whole and being seen as the truth of the past, but simultaneously allowing for calmness in the reinterpretation of the past to fit the whole present.



↳ **Darkroom Enlargers, Western Washington University Art Department, Bellingham, WA**
Photographic construction / 36 x 92.5 in.



↳ Lockers, Western Washington University Art Department, Bellingham, WA
Photographic construction / 36 x 105 in.



↳ **Display Cases, Western Washington University Art Department, Bellingham, WA (Detail)**
Photographic construction / 36 x 137 in.

Mounted to the wall of Fine Arts's second-floor hallway are columns of horizontally stacked, rectangular lockers used to store art students' various materials. Compact and utilitarian, these lockers mirror the practical and aesthetic goals of the building that houses them. Such grid patterns formed by the Modern architecture of the Art and Art History Department are the subjects of Payton Dickerson's photographs. In these grids persists the Modernist perspective that prescribed a singular route for artistic success, disinterested relationships between art objects and viewers. While preserved in the physical structures of the department, however, this series of photographs challenges such prescriptions by documenting its familiar spaces through an uncategorical lens. In the nineteenth century, overlapping with the period of Modern art, photographs were considered an objective way to capture an image of the world. These photographs are an example to the contrary. As faithful reproductions of the acutely mundane, they also act as a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, for viewers to understand the photographs on their own terms. Dickerson presents his grid subjects allegorically, maintaining their functional and rectilinear forms while allowing for individual viewers to construct narratives unique to their perspective. The photographs become meta-grids, referencing their own mimicry of Modern dispassion while cultivating impressionability. The fifty-six yellow lockers are an infrastructural part of an institution established at the turn of the last century, but the artworks secured within them form the postmodern superstructure of the next, leaving uniformity behind to embrace the possibility of multiple realities.

—
Newt Warren

Soles smack linoleum, paper shuffles, locks click, doors open, close. The deceptively identical forms of crooked hinges hang loose from years of motion, the faint memory of hands that rifled through. If I don't find it, I'm going to get reamed in critique again.

The featherlight resistance of pins stabbing through fabric, fine snags of old wood as it splinters into skin, a smudged handprint against glass. The reflection of a face while hands tinker for the perfect position. Two inches to the left?

Sulfur and vinegar waft from a door nearby, fresh plastic creaks with the press of viewfinder to eye socket, and dust flutters in the air, waffling in front of the shot that still "doesn't quite work." An exasperated sigh only makes the particles dance all the more feverishly.

Dickerson presents us with composite images that are innately unnatural, the subject too wide for one snap of a shutter. They are containers waiting to be filled, a useless purgatory. A sweeping landscape taken for granted, the dirtied palette of yesteryear blending into the very walls themselves.

It seems that objects of every day frequently disappear into the blur of routine. The trappings of reality transition with something as small as a spin of a padlock. Upon examination, the concrete shell of the real smoothly glides into the skin of the unreal once the context is shed. There is a sense of vulnerability when left alone with only imagination as company.

What do we really miss on autopilot?

—
Rae Montgomery

Madison Dowling

As an individual born in the '90s, I feel nostalgic for a time period that I have only experienced through LIFE magazines. While the '60s was a time shaped by war, sexism, alcoholism, and poverty, the advertisements in LIFE portrayed an unattainable perfection. In my current body of work, I am interested in appropriating advertisement imagery to investigate the dichotomy between reality and perceived perfection within themes of addiction and recovery.

I am using digital prints of scanned and collaged '60s imagery as a background for my silk-screened elements, which have been inspired by LIFE magazines advertisements. Each layered print is paired with a collage to emulate a magazine spread. A scale weighed down by alcohol explores the narrative of addiction, while a dead bird lies torn alongside a glistening cube of ice. This diptych represents the fine line between pleasure and destruction. Another pair shows the text "SIMPLE RIGHT" repeated on top of glasses filled to the brim, and a collage of a woman whispering layered with scenes of war, reflecting the fear and misunderstanding around alcohol. I aim to abstract the truths I have been taught about addiction and question them in the form of a propagandistic advertisement spread.



Nuclear (Detail) ↵

Screen print on digital inkjet print / 24 x 30 in.



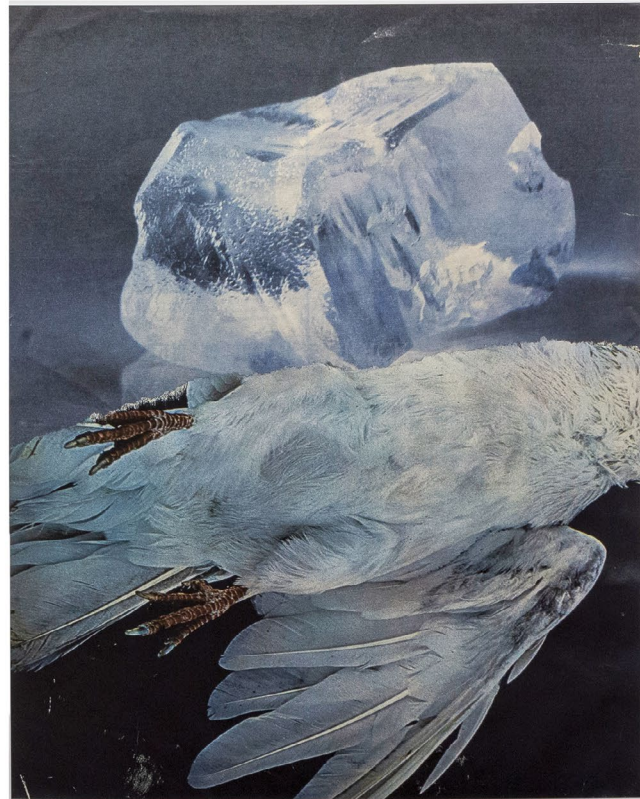
↳ **Whisper (Detail)**
Screen print on digital inkjet print / 24 x 30 in.



5 Years ↵
Screen print on digital inkjet print / 24 x 30 in. each



↳ **Weight**
Screen print on digital inkjet print / 24 x 30 in. each



Madison Dowling's work pulls you into an abstract landscape of layered mid-century imagery. A world of media culture through found images from 1960s LIFE magazines meets screen prints that guide you to a new viewpoint on society. Both stand-alone works and side-by-side diptychs nod to paper media. Calling attention to the nuclear family and the "American dream," these works produce an underlying notion that perception is not always reality. Dowling brings pieces from the façade-like media in that era to a more honest, human context—creating a contemporary narrative for reflection.

The diptychs emulate the look of a magazine spread, one side screen print and the other collage. Dowling combines iconic symbolism and imagery to create approachable layers that pose questions, such as "how do I see myself in these images?" or "how do I see these notions in today's media?" The contrasting mediums balance harsher imagery and nuanced photo fragments, as seen in *Weight*. The boldness of the weight asserts the presence of the bottle, which leads you into the opposing fragility of the dead bird. Seemingly, the work asks viewers to contemplate the relationship between the two halves, and consider the connection between substance and happiness. Dowling strips the layers of "perceived perfection" exhibited in her found images; the works point us further to the experience of addiction and other afflictions society supports. Overall, the works exhibit the timeless lure of substance and perfection, but seem to imply that not all that "shines" is good for us.

—
Merrideth McDowell

Amanda Kartes

In my world, food is not meant for the dinner table; its true home lies in the shadows under my bed or in the dimly lit kitchen while my family rests silently in their rooms. In the installation, *The Dining Room*, I have created a space that reflects my mind, crowded with the constant thought of when, where, and what I will eat next. As a child, getting caught in the act of consumption felt as though a horrible crime was being committed, the climax of a horror movie where the worst of someone had been discovered. In the privacy of my room, there was freedom to gorge on the forbidden fruit momentarily, until the act was uncovered.

Within my multi-media installation, I confront my disordered relationship with eating, its intricate connection to societal expectations, and my family's own perception of food as it relates to body image. The paintings display the places where food was hidden, or consumed in private, and directly juxtapose with the public dining room; they question the validity of the 3D space, for they are filled with food, while the table lays bare.

Creating discomfort is the crux of my work, taking a familiar space and distorting it to contradict the preconceived emotions tied to the objects within. Contrasting a grotesque narrative with appealing aesthetics, the installation utilizes strategies of a shifted scale and a broken appearance to subliminally create a feeling of unease. It is a dining room that has no purpose, a space distant from its original role, a representation of my warped perception towards food and where it belongs.



The Dining Room (Detail) ↵

Ceramic, wood, papier-mâché / Variable dimensions



→ The Dining Room (Detail)
Ceramic, wood, papier-mâché, oil on panel, glass / Variable dimensions



↳ **The Dining Room (Detail)**

Ceramic, wood, papier-mâché, oil on panel, glass / Variable dimensions

Amanda Kartes provides a unique but relatable take on harmful relationships with food. Based on her own experiences, her multimedia installation targets her past disordered eating habits and the emotions that went with them, but also provides a familiar setting for many of us who have experienced similar behavior. The formal dining room table is daunting; it is inherently intimidating because of its formality, but the large scale, the broken dishware, and the spotlights also communicate fear and anxiety. Kartes has taken what represents a normal daily affair within upper middle class suburban families, and shaped it through the lens of what it means to live with disordered eating. The larger-than-life place settings invite a feeling of hollowness—you are expected to eat what is on your plate under this spotlight of the dinner table. The broken plates mirror the broken relationships one might have with both food and the other people watching you.

The paintings around the table illustrate the other side of disordered eating: the consumption. It is a secret affair, to finally eat without an audience, to indulge in something you both need to survive but fear all the same. By enveloping the food in light, then surrounding it in shadow, Kartes creates a contrast that draws the eye, highlighting the food as a carefully hidden treasure. Kartes has depicted the act of eating as illicit and dangerous, hiding in an act that is so commonplace for most of us that we don't even think about it.

—
Ruth Barnes

Sarah Kindl

In my mixed media installation, I am allowing the viewer to experience my childhood home as it exists in my rawest emotional memories. Wood grain relief print panels are arranged to create a theatrical backdrop for heavy metal posters and a window view looking out on a typical night in the trailer park. Papier-mâché creatures hide in corners, magnified from their actual size to illustrate the overwhelming presence these vermin had on me as a child. Personal keepsakes from my original home are juxtaposed with found objects to create a direct connection to a place that now only exists in memory.

Creating this environment allows me to address otherwise unresolved trauma. Much of my childhood consisted of unwanted sexual and emotional experiences, so recreating the setting of my childhood on my own terms allows me to write a new narrative of my personal history – one where I am in control of my sexuality, identity, and pain. Like many people, I have moments in the past that I want to both address and avoid, and in making this installation it has allowed me to reconcile those two opposing needs.



Double Wide (Detail) ↵

Collection of 35mm photographs / Variable dimensions



↳ **Double Wide (Detail)**

L: Relief print, screen print, papier-mâché, acrylic paint, found objects / Variable dimensions

R: Installation performance





↳ Double Wide (Detail)
Ink on acetate

Memories are powerful things; with them we can visit places that no longer exist, in order to remember better times or to grapple with past tragedies. Sarah Kindl's recreation of the trailer she grew up in brings forth an immediate sense of a person confronting the memories of a bygone abode. The oversized cockroaches and rats Kindl created harken back to sour memories. They creep in the corners of the installation just as haunting memories inhabit the corners of one's psyche. Even though this installation emphasizes many negative events, there still is a spark of some happier moments, such as the inclusion of items Kindl's family decided were worth keeping throughout the years. These keepsakes include a wooden clock and a pair of ceramic cats. One could take the enlarged vermin as a sign of a common human tendency to remember negative memories even worse than they were. Having the negative element become warped from reality while the positive and neutral elements remain unaltered, one can see how the bad memories have outweighed the positive ones. This installation lets viewers experience Kindl's memories as she has come to perceive them. Distorted from the reality we normally inhabit, this installation shows a new way to interpret what reality is.

—
Breana Smith

Suzie Marco

Earlier this year I found out I was conceived through a sperm donor. While I asked many questions and researched obsessively, the only thing I was able to imagine was this anonymous man, my biological father, masturbating in a doctor's office selling his sperm to my parents. I began reading about the experience of "donating" sperm and the way the fertility industry works.

Because my conception story was kept from me my whole life, I find it liberating to create unapologetically large plushy objects that expose every part of the process, even down to how much my parents paid for me.

Within the gallery space, I am recreating the waiting room and sperm donation room my biological father used. Large scale soft sculptures and crocheted porn mixed with untouched mass-produced items exist hand in hand within the sperm covered space depicting the duality of sterile and erotic that the space teeters on. This is my self-generated "memory" of my biological dad.

I use colorful and tactile textiles and fabrics as a vehicle to make my work more approachable, while the topics behind the works are rarely discussed.

The waiting room acts as a literal period of time where I am waiting for my questions to be answered. As I wait to find out about my own identity, all I have are vague clues on this lonely journey.

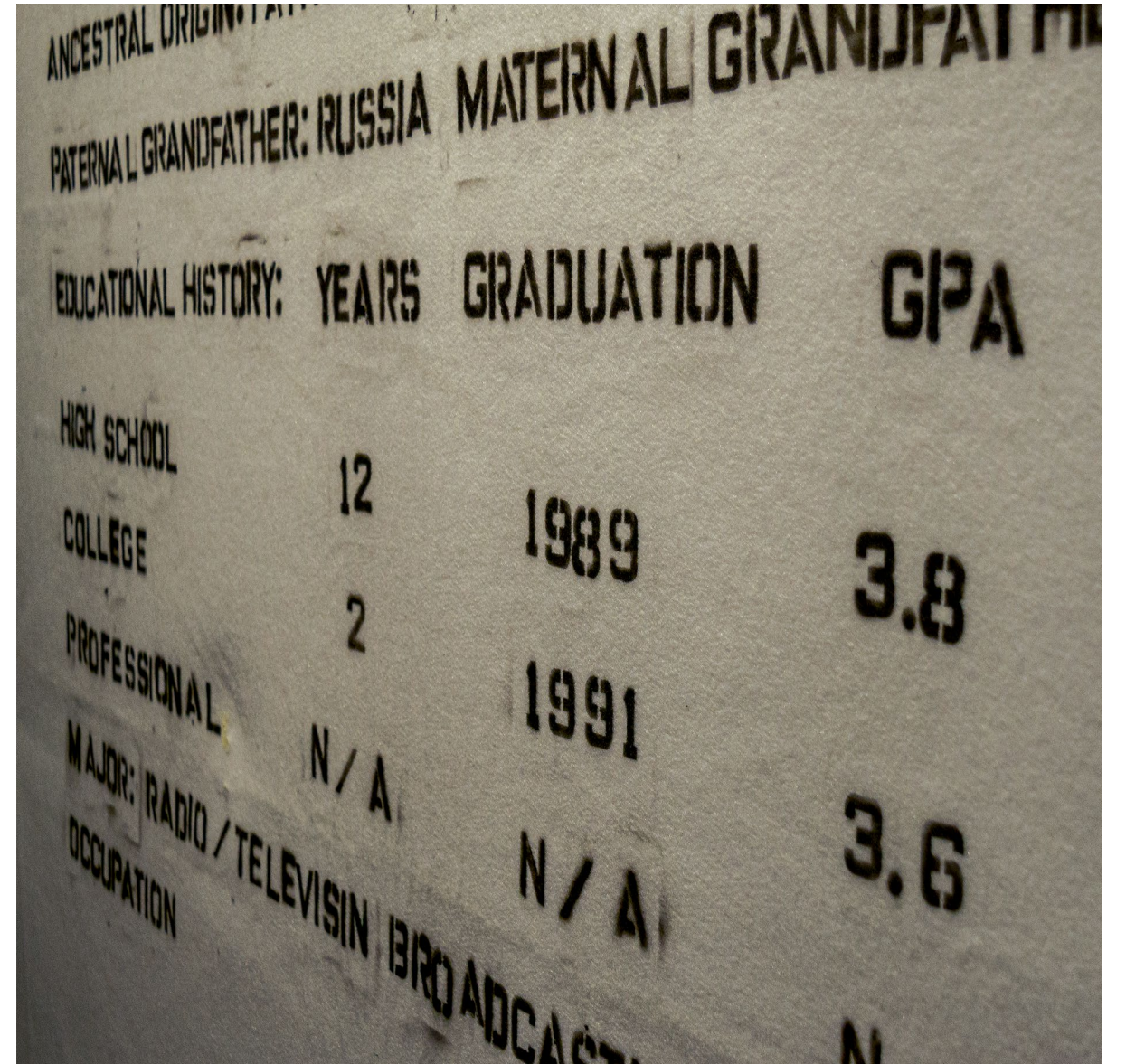


217 (Detail) ↵

Insulation foam, found photograph and Playboy magazines / Variable dimensions



↳ 217 (Detail)
Filing cabinet, insulation foam, medical sperm cups / Variable dimensions



217 (Detail) ↵
Fleece, acrylic paint / Variable dimensions



↳ **217 (Detail)**
Insulation foam, found lamp, found fabric / Variable dimensions

Suzie Marco's work utilizes texture and space in order to create what she refers to as "cultivated memories." This is the experience she imagines the sperm donor who helped conceive her participated in. Over the past year, she has been creating large plush objects as a means to convey the process and commercialization associated with sperm banks. These textile and sculptural works illustrate the sperm itself along with the money her parents used to pay for the service, forcing the viewer to see the transactional nature of sperm banks.

In terms of building identity, Marco's work illustrates the space where her physical form was created. The plush objects disrupt the sterile space that Marco has created, suggesting her vision of a sperm bank. Here, Marco puts everything on display as a way of confronting her means of existence, by bringing up a subject that others shy away from. The plush objects and pornographic photos hanging on the walls seem to beg the viewer to look at them, to acknowledge one's discomfort in a cultivated environment. In this room there is no hiding; Marco presents the facts, acknowledges her existence, and how she truthfully and unapologetically came to be.

—
Allison Bullard

Ashly McBride

In my mixed media sculptures, I have been exploring the isolated relationship of each viewer with their individual environment, and how that relates to the viewer's personal relationship with nature. I bring traditional weaving, paper, and sculptural practices into the modern light of a world affected by climate change and abstract it in order to add to the ongoing dialogue about the environment.

I found that kozo, a mulberry bark fiber, had the most exciting history with heavily prominent roots in papermaking. Kozo consists of long fibers that can create a strong, thin paper most commonly used as washi (Japanese paper). It takes a lot of time to prepare and involves many steps such as cooking and beating.

In my current work, I have been upcycling honeycomb structured cardboard that was donated to the WWU Art and Art History Department called HexWeb® honeycomb. I cut it up into various sizes and shapes and dip these in kozo pulp. Once dry, I weave the pieces into a continuous tapestry type structure.

After creating the large structure, I spend some time photographing and filming the piece in different places I occupy, evoking my isolated relationship with this work. It's becoming an extension of myself, my second "skin" protecting me from the outside world, particularly during the chaotic current time of COVID-19. It can be a nest, or a shelter, and utilizing the work now through a performance I can reconnect myself to the natural world.

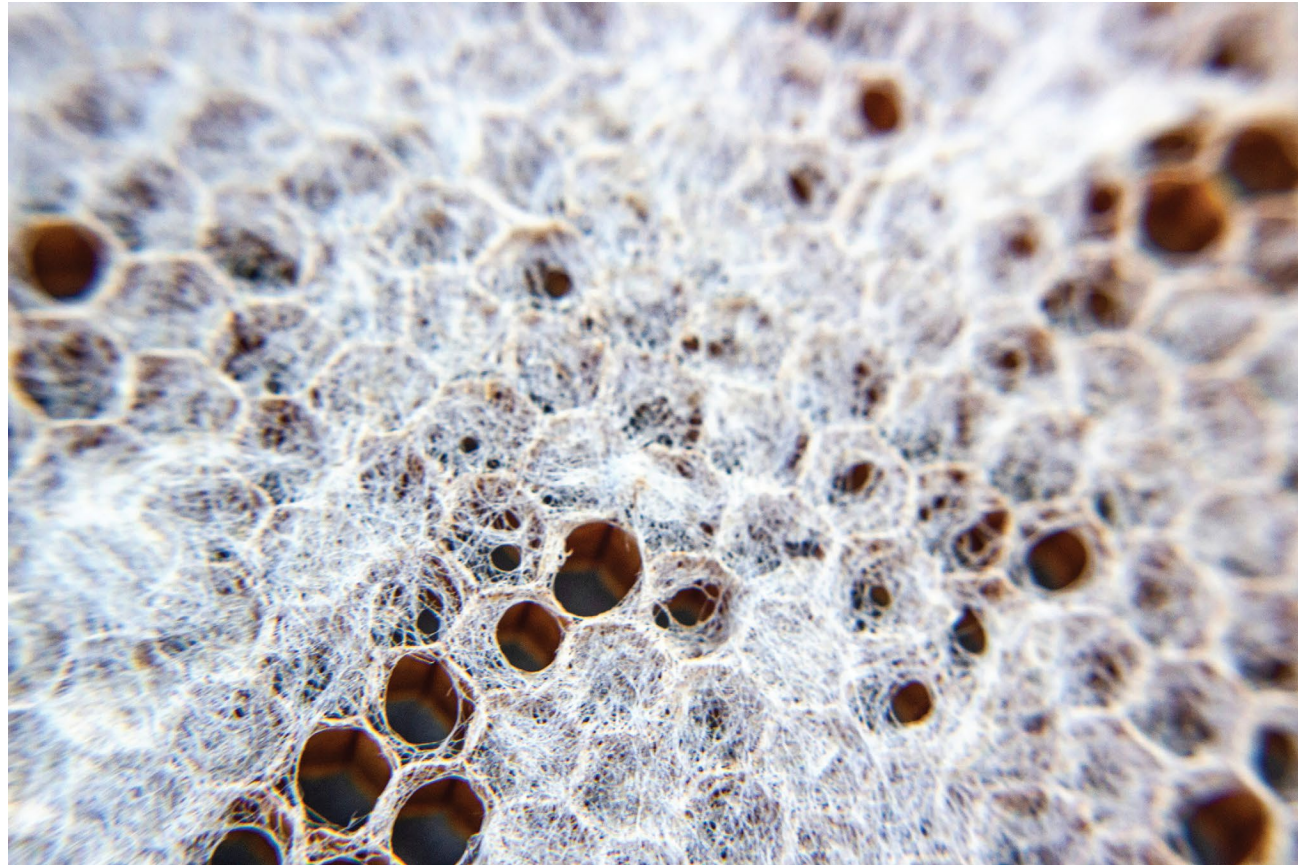


Skin (Detail) ↵
HexWeb honeycomb, kozo / 6 x 5 ft.



→ **Skin**
L & R: HexWeb honeycomb, kozo / 6 x 5 ft.





→ **Skin (Detail)**
HexWeb honeycomb, kozo / 6 x 5 ft.

Ashly McBride's work brings the everyday repetitive horrors of the COVID-19 pandemic to light. In the time of COVID-19, many people have been put in a position to limit their daily activities to similar repeated actions. Contained in their homes, unable to leave for fear of infecting loved ones with COVID-19, there is no end in sight. These individuals are trapped in a repetitive motion every day, repeating the same activities. Performing as her "skin," McBride uses a beautiful and flexible structure made of HexWeb and kozo to represent the repetitive nature of herself in the time of COVID-19. The pattern of the HexWeb is a small, repeating, honeycomb shape. The skin has the opportunity to take her places in her new repetitive reality of daily activities such as sitting on the couch, lying in bed, and driving a car. This structure truly embodies the repetitive activity that COVID-19 has inflicted on many people. Used as a representation of her essence and a second "skin" to protect her from the pandemic as well as the other catastrophes happening in the world right now, this structure is a new part of McBride, becoming a barrier between her and the rest of the world.

—
Serena Southwick

Jillian Roth

Borne out of middle-class suburbia and the predictable experiences of young adult life, my animations and sculpture are about the average Jane. Ordinary or monotonous events set the stage for comfortable narratives. With the viewer seduced and entertained, the scenes begin to change, as grotesque and disgusting possibilities unfold.

Ultimate Burger Fantasy is a rotoscope study of Carl's Junior advertisements that aired on television throughout the 2000s to present day. I combine the images of women and food visually to create a single entity, exploring the complex correlation between extreme consumerism and over-sexualization of the female body in media. I play on the irony of the glamor of beautiful women juxtaposed with meat sandwiches in the advertisements. I do so by constructing a space for the consumption of sexual images and greasy burgers, which takes the shape of a disgusting bedroom hovel. The room is dark, the only light comes from the television and the distorted shapes of the animated food-women dancing across the soiled bed.

These vignettes are based on my own experiences with food service. As a waitress at a drive-in I found myself feeling trapped in a relationship of servitude to my customers. It was necessary to appear welcoming and physically attractive to the male gaze. The nauseating mixture of sex appeal and comfort food stayed with me, a repetitive, never-ending experience of becoming objectified in order to make a living. The use of the sexualized body to manipulate desire is everywhere and as unrelenting as the greasy underbelly of our society.



Ultimate Burger Fantasy (Detail)

Ink, butcher paper, queen mattress, plastic tablecloth, projection, ceramic / Variable dimensions



↳ Ultimate Burger Fantasy (Video Still)
Rotoscope animation



Ultimate Burger Fantasy (Video Still) ←
Rotoscope animation



↳ **Ultimate Burger Fantasy (Detail)**

Ink, butcher paper, queen mattress, plastic tablecloth, projection, ceramic / Variable dimensions

In Jillian Roth's *Ultimate Burger Fantasy*, the artist places viewers in the position of passive consumers, causing them to question and confront the uncomfortable and highly sexualized false reality that commercials portray. For Roth, a viewer's placement in the role of the unaware consumer is essential, occurring literally as the installation's layout forces one to physically place themselves into the imagined environment of Roth's creation. Positioned sitting on the bed, in a dark and checkered-patterned room littered with ceramic burger-related items, the viewer has the artist's animation projected onto them. As they watch the same animation play on a TV at one end of the bed, they take on the identity of the passive consumer, watching the endless commercial.

Roth's redesign of the Carl's Jr. commercial takes the sexualized imagery the company uses to sell its product and reimagines it, blending the female form with the product. At first, the reimagined female form as a burger with arms and legs is humorous. But as the commercial plays on, the humor of the imagery falls away. The neon outlines highlight how the woman's body, just like the burger, is a commodity. The viewer watches as the once sexualized form meant to entice becomes inverted and revealed to be nothing more than an advertising technique. Left uncomfortable, the viewer must contemplate the sexist nature of everyday marketing and the false reality it produces.

—
Megan Burnett

The BFA Cohort would like to thank everyone who pushed us this year to strive for better in both our art and as individuals. Despite COVID-19 cutting our last quarter short, we can't express how much the chair, advisors, custodial staff, and, most importantly, our BFA coordinator, helped us get through this tough time. Though we would like to formally thank each person in the Art and Art History Department, faculty and our peers, we have chosen to highlight the individuals without whom we would not have been able to create our work.

Our time would not have been as fruitful without Julia Sapin, Chair of the Department of Art and Art History. She fought for us, always kept a smile along the way, and consistently provided so many resources to help us meet our goals. We would also like to give thanks to Allen Frost and Glen Tobosa for overall holding up the entire department with your positive energy and willingness to solve any problem presented before you. We would like to express gratitude for Hafthor Yngvason, Director of the Western Gallery, since he is of huge importance for our exhibition. Despite the postponing of our gallery opening, we are looking forward to whatever will happen and greatly appreciate all the work he must do to accommodate during COVID-19. We would also like to thank Huni Long, preparator of the gallery; they were attentive to every idea we had about the potential display of our pieces. We would also like to thank Tami Landis, the Western Gallery art educator, who spent time visiting us during class critiques and one on one in our studios; she gave us valuable insights into our work. We are also grateful to Laurie Ann Farrell, Senior Curator of Dallas Contemporary for meeting with us.

With our final quarter moved online, and access to the Art buildings being extremely limited, we could not have moved forward with our work without the Incident Command team, the University Police, and the student Green Coats. Specifically, we would like to thank Brian Burton, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Arielle Bons, Communications Officer for the University Police, Kit Spicer, Dean of CFPA, and Stefanie LaFave,

Operations Manager for the CFPA, who so graciously got us keys to have access to the rooms we needed to continue working. In addition, Douglas Loewen, an instructional technician for the Department, was committed to help us in any way with our projects including cutting wood, grappling with materials, and maintaining the studios. We also send our sincerest gratitude to the WWU Custodial Staff for making sure the buildings were safe, especially Sarah Hutchinson, a swing shift custodian who always sang while working and brightened our days with her smiling face. We would also like to thank our classmates in Art History 475 for interpreting what we could not say in our own words. Thank you for collaborating with us and providing such thoughtful analyses of our works. Each of us would like to personally thank the members of our committees, who gave us the best constructive criticism we didn't always ask for but nonetheless needed to hear. Thank you, Garth Amundson, Paul Bernhardt, Cynthia Camlin, Pierre Gour, Cara Jaye, Ryan Kelly, Sasha Petrenko, Seiko Purdue, Lisa Turner, and Chris Vargas.

We would like to thank our family, friends, and partners for supporting our emotional and physical wellbeing while we spent the year in a constant rampage of creating. You were there to motivate us to keep going and to let us know when we needed to give ourselves a break.

Most of all we would like to thank Lisa Turner, our BFA coordinator. She guided us through the quarters as we fundraised, experimented, created, and fought through the quarantine to come out still loving what we do. We would not have the same show without her, and we will continue to look forward to the future of it. We could not have asked for a better person to hold the cohort together.

Finally, we would like to send our greatest appreciation to Tristan Bedell, the catalog designer, for beautifully weaving our catalog into the perfect collection of all our work. At first, we all had so many ideas and our work varied. But Tristan made sure to compile all our ideas into something unique and timeless.

