



2018

2018 Artist in Residence Biennial (Exhibition Catalogue)

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*ARTIST
N
RESIDENCE
BENNIAL*

DANA DEGIULIO
EZRA TESSLER
CLARE GRILL
CAITLIN CHERRY

EWING GALLERY

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THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE 
KNOXVILLE

WORKS ON EXHIBITION

Ezra Tessler: Courtesy of the artist.

Dana DeGiulio: Courtesy of the artist.

Clare Grill: Courtesy of the artist and Horton Gallery, New York, NY.

Caitlin Cherry: Courtesy of the artist.

PREFACE

The presence of acclaimed artists—who have lived and worked in major cultural centers across the country—enhances the educational opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the University of Tennessee School of Art. With daily contact over the course of a full semester, resident artists develop a unique relationship with the student body which complements the creative stimulation offered by guest lecturers and the School of Art's faculty. Representing diverse ethnic, cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds, these resident artists introduce another layer of candor and a fresh artistic standard for the students who, though early in their formal art studies, are beginning to develop their own perceptions, skills, and theories in connection with the making of art.

Although the resident artists present slide lectures during their stays, it is access to their works of art that is highly anticipated and valued by both the students and the faculty. Therefore, the Ewing Gallery has sponsored group exhibitions of these artists since the inception of the Artist-in-Residence Program in 1982. Currently held every two years, this exhibition provides a continuing dialogue between artist-teacher and student. The A.I.R. Biennial also offers our general university and regional community an opportunity to experience a provocative and often challenging exhibition of contemporary art.

Shortly after the inception of the A.I.R. Program, my late colleague Michael Brakke assumed the role of coordinator and helped to develop the program into one of national recognition. After Brakke's death, Jered Sprecher successfully oversaw the program. As of this year, Joshua Bienko has now assumed the role of coordinator for the A.I.R. Program. With other members of the painting and drawing faculty, great time and effort has been invested in coordinating the current Biennial participants. These artists bring different aesthetic orientations, skills, and backgrounds to our campus.

The collaborative relationship that has formed between the Ewing Gallery and the A.I.R. Program provides an enriched educational experience for our students and assimilates the University of Tennessee and the Knoxville region into the global art community.

Acknowledgement is given to the following: Sarah McFalls and Eric Cagley of the Ewing Gallery staff for their assistance with this Biennial. Most importantly, I would like to thank the four artists in residence — Ezra Tessler, Dana DeGiulio, Clare Grill, and Caitlin Cherry.

— SAM YATES
Director, The Ewing Gallery

INTRODUCTION

Instituted over thirty years ago, the Artist-in-Residence in Painting and Drawing at the University of Tennessee is a reminder of our commitment to an ongoing and dynamic exchange of ideas.

The Artist-in-Residence Program was initiated in 1982. Following the retirement of a full-time painting and drawing faculty member, it was decided to institute an on-going semester long visiting artist in the Painting and Drawing department. Each semester the invited resident artist works with undergraduate and graduate students in the painting and drawing curriculum. The artists invited to Knoxville represent a spectrum of current and emerging sensibilities. This edition of the A.I.R. Biennial presents the work of Dana DeGiulio, Ezra Tessler, Clare Grill, and Caitlin Cherry.

The Artist In Residence (A.I.R.) Program, in the School of Art of the University of Tennessee, provides the opportunity for an artist of rising national stature to live, work, and teach for a semester at the University of Tennessee. While in residence, the artist has a studio on campus providing them time and space to continue their own work. Each artist teaches painting, drawing, and a graduate seminar. The Artist-in-Residence is a substantial contributor to the education and progress of young artists. While at The University of Tennessee, the resident artist also gives a public lecture on her or his work. Additionally, every two years the A.I.R. Biennial is a chance to celebrate the continued contributions of the artists who have spent time working in the classroom and studio.

The longevity of the A.I.R. program is a testament to its contributions and its value to The University of Tennessee and the School of Art. Michael Brakke, Marcia Goldenstein, Whitney Leland, Tom Riesing, Clark Stewart, David Wilson, Sam Yates and more recently Joshua Bienko, Karla Wozniak, Claire Stigliani, Rubens Ghenov, and Jered Sprecher have contributed to the successful stewardship of the A.I.R. program over the years.

A sense of perspective is tangibly sought in each artist that is invited to be an Artist in Residence. They bring different experiences, views, aesthetics, and backgrounds. This allows students to experience a wide range of perspectives to explore as they find their own voice. The resident artist is often at an "emerging" point in his or her career, where their work has begun to garner national and international attention. As practicing artists they bring different models for what one's life as an artist may look like. A common denominator among these artists is a balance of commitment, generosity, and respect.

Many of the A.I.R. have limited experience in academia beyond their degrees. This intentionally brings knowledge of various and different realms of the "art world" beyond an academic setting. These experiences help the students begin to imagine possible routes that their own lives may

take as artists and creative individuals. In looking back over the years, an unexpected and wonderful outcome has been that many past resident artists, who made their first forays into teaching while at UT, have gone on to be well-respected artist-teachers in schools and universities across the United States.

Additional thanks must be paid to David Wilson, Director of the School of Art; as well as the administration at the University of Tennessee, who continue to recognize the importance in continuing such a dynamic and successful Artist-in-Residence program. There are few programs that can compete with its success and longevity. Over 70 artists have spent time intensively working here at the University of Tennessee as a direct result of this program.

A special thank you to Sam Yates for his work to make the Artist-in-Residence Biennial a vital part of the Ewing Gallery's exhibition schedule and provide yet another teaching exhibition. Finally thank you to Sarah McFalls and Eric Cagley for all their hard work supporting programming at the Ewing Gallery at the University of Tennessee.

Jered Sprecher, Professor
Painting and Drawing, The University of Tennessee

DANA DEGIULIO, FALL 2016

Separating teaching from painting, or painting from art-making, or art-making from kissing, or kissing from riding a bike, is futile. Dana DeGiulio's approach to existing as an artist (and a thinking, feeling, human being) is guided by an intuitive, almost innate understanding of 'the right thing to do.' To quote Pina Bausch, "It is almost unimportant whether a work finds an understanding audience. One has to do it because one believes that it is the right thing to do. We are not only here to please, we cannot help challenging the spectator." To challenge a viewer one must be vulnerable, kind, generous and poetically equipped. Indeed, the work included here in this exhibit follows an impressive sequence of works created by DeGiulio that are and continue to be vulnerable, kind, generous and poetically equipped to challenge the viewer. Why one might ask? Simply because it is the right thing to do.

As is evidenced in *Grief Lessons*, DeGiulio's time with the students was devoted specifically and wholeheartedly to the students. Dana created an atmosphere of trust where students felt supported and encouraged to challenge not only themselves, but their viewers in kind.

EZRA TESSLER, SPRING 2017

If you ever have an opportunity to sit with Ezra Tessler for a minute, his questions—his sincere, skeptical, and generous *questions*—are evidence of a brilliant mind. He is a fly purposefully caught in the ointment. His work slips between foreground and background, subject and object, concealedness and revelation, ethics, social justice and Art. In an interview with Linnea West, Ezra talks about the painter's aspirations to, quite bluntly, move the viewer... whether emotionally, psychologically, spiritually or as the case may be corporeally, moving one's body in an effort to understand or see what the object in front of them is. The work included here in the A.I.R. Biennial joins Tessler's body of work in its plentiful and precise invitation to be moved.

The roots of the word skepticism (*skeptomai*), come out of motivations to search, think about, or look for. Students involved with Tessler in the Spring semester of 2017 were immersed in a world of searching, thinking about and looking for substantial questions that lead not only to potential answers, but ideally, to even better questions.

CLARE GRILL, FALL 2017

Clare Grill's paintings play between the surface and what lies beyond or inside. Initially one cannot help but be attracted to the surface. The monochrome shapes and low contrast delicacies... are, to say the very least, seductive. But our initial seduction circles back in on itself as we discover that surplus pleasures abound beyond. There is surplus *jouissance*. There are spinning colors, invisibilities, worlds, joys and toys. We keep our eyes wide, wide open like efforts to see in the dark. There are "mystical visions and cosmic vibrations." We invent colors. We invert colors. We invent shapes and entanglements, relationships and whispered compromises.

And yet, from the surface to the surplus enjoyment we loop back. We come full circle back to the surface. We are lured back to the painting and the paint itself. We relish in the beauty and compulsion of a human immersed in the powers and failures of paint. Inside of the egg, there is a toy, and inside of the toy, an egg.

Students were invited into this cyclical world in Clare's classes. Whether stretching linen canvas, sized with rabbit skin glue, or drawing that which comes before, students were and are involved in exercises that embed the end in the beginning, the intimate in the public, the quick in the slow and the beginning in the end.

CAITLIN CHERRY SPRING 2018

What if a museum had to defend itself? What does it have a lot of? It's funny! It has a lot of paintings and objects! First comes tragedy, then comedy... so it goes. When tragedy is at hand (political, personal, historical, etc.) categorizations fail to hold ground. It is similarly difficult to ideologically hold Cherry's work to a single approach. She moves effortlessly in and out of artistic disciplines, grounded in a unifying body of ideas that are at once tragic and comic. While we are yet to see what the semester holds, we can take the prophetic words of Kara Walker as guidance, who had this to say about Cherry's work... "I have a sense she will continue to break apart the rules governing painting and sculpture, and tease that unsettling sweet spot that disarms viewers' expectations." Here's to a semester of unsettling sweet spots and disarming viewer expectations! Charge!

Joshua Bienko, Assistant Professor
Drawing and Extended Media, The University of Tennessee
Coordinator, A.I.R. Program

DANA DEGIULIO



Teacher as reverse vampire saying Here is my neck Use me up and by use i mean help and by love i mean help.



LEFT: *Hurl us down something*, 2016, oil on canvas, 20" x 16"
 RIGHT: *Grief Lessons*, 2016 - 2017, each painting 20" x 16"
 with Laney Haskell, Mary-Margaret Lucas, Jade Knox, Eric Hines, Mark Bender, Michael Seagraves, Katie Miller,
 Tom Wixo, Christian Vargas, MaryAnne Carey, Austin Pratt, Katie Gentner, Johanna Winters, and Michael Tracy.

EZRA TESSLER



I hope to make paintings that resist closure - the apples in Cezanne's still life paintings offer me particular inspiration in this regard. They sit completely still, heavy matter pasted to the canvas. Yet they also roll, mischievous and alive, ready to jump off the painting's edge. These paintings capture a sense of stillness and movement. With a similar goal in mind, my recent shaped paintings fold inwards and outwards for the viewer. Their faceted surfaces challenge my own ability to produce straight lines. In the same way that a Cezanne still life offers a glimpse of the world right before as well as right after it gets constituted, I want my paintings to have that sense of coming and going, both address and invitation. This goal means trying to create generous objects that offer the words, grammar, and syntax, but not the translation.



LEFT: *A label, a background, a simulacrum*, 2016 , oil on linen on shaped wood panel, 37" x 24" x 10"
RIGHT: *Hourglass Lake*, 2016, oil on linen on shaped wood panel, 48" x 32" x 3.5"

CLARE GRILL



I don't plan paintings. They are arrived at through their making; felt, not plotted and executed. I look at my drawings or pictures or at old paintings as a starting point and as the thing gets painted I look to the subtle forms happening in the surface for guidance. I use linen for its inconsistent textures. I use natural oil and resin mediums for the same reason: for the natural, soft, dirt-like consistency that's not at all plastic-looking. I paint in my lap with my face very close to the surface. Or, if the canvas is too large to hold, I'll put it on a tabletop and move around it so I can see the raking light and shadows on the surface to respond to. I try not to back away and think too much while I paint. The tiny nuances in color and texture prompt me. I paint with rags, sandpaper, and brushes. My paintings are as much about pressing paint to linen as they are about removal and erasure. Things remain and things also fade away.

I often look at antique samplers: small, embroidered pieces of fabric made by young girls to demonstrate both proficiency in needlepoint and a strict, obedience to God. They speak of tradition and fear, of femininity and domesticity, of lost youth and the confines of a woman's sphere during the time of their making. They're serious in skill and substance, though the work of little fingers, so heavy in their smallness. They give me a mood, an entry point. My compositions are then quickly shaped by the marks and colors that surface from repeated rubbing, sanding, and dragging paint on linen.



LEFT: *Flush*, 2017, oil on linen, 50" x 63"
RIGHT: *Drift*, 2017, oil on linen, 53" x 42"

CAITLIN CHERRY



My muse is a googly-eyed Golem that I place within maquettes I make from clay and construction paper and then paint from life. My Golem is a chameleon in its environment, changing color and purpose. It stares out of the canvas, mouth open in an expression between a smile and a scream.



LEFT: *The Architect's House*, 2017, lithograph, 22" x 30"
RIGHT: *The Architect*, 2017, lithograph, 30" x 22"

DANA DEGIULIO

EDUCATION

2007 MFA, The School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL

SELECTED SOLO & TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *Queen*, With Molly Zuckerman-Hartung, Lyles & King, New York, NY
On Returning, SFMoMA Open Space, Instantiated by grupa o.k.
- 2015 *Instead of being born*, With Michaela Murphy and Ilie Paul Capriel, Illegal airbnb, New York, NY
- 2014 *Flash! Dana DeGiulio*, UCR Artsblock, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Riverside, CA
- 2013 *I Work All Day and Night*, With Eliot Porter, Night Club, Chicago, IL
Dana DeGiulio @ The Suburban, Oak Park, IL
Ruin is formal, Public sculptural intervention, Outside Pergamon Museum, Berlin, Germany

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *American Genre*, ICA at Maine College of Art, Portland, ME
Retreat, Mom's Gallery, New York, NY
BE A BODY. or its doppelgänger, Bijou Theater, Bridgeport, CT
The Dangerous Professors, Triumph, Chicago, IL
Thy Majestic Loose Eye and Only Thus, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Los Angeles, CA
Fruiting Bodies, Iceberg Projects, Chicago, IL
PDF-Objects, Traveling, Mexico City + Berlin, Germany
- 2016 *consensus*, Signal Center for Contemporary Art, Malmö, Sweden
The Cat's Away, 88 Eldridge, New York, NY
First Person, Grunwald Gallery, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN
Coperto, Skulpturinstitut, Vienna, Austria
PDF-Objects, Travelling from Mana Contemporary, Chicago, IL
- 2015 *The Suburban: 16 Years*, Mount Airy Contemporary, Philadelphia, PA
Listening and Making Sounds, Poor Farm, Manana, WI
Always Already Here, Mixtape, Ortega y Gasset Projects, Baltimore, MD
Posse, Private Residence Exhibition Space, Snowmass, CO

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2014 Fire Island Artist Residency (FIAR)
Leslie + Lohman Gay and Lesbian Museum Fellowship
Visiting Artist appointment, ACRE Residency, Steuben, WI
- 2005 Vermont Studio Center
Pleasant Rowland Foundation Fellowship

EZRA TESSLER

EDUCATION

- 2016 MFA, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
2012 MA and MPhil, Columbia University, NY, NY
2006 MPhil, Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK
2002 AB, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

SELECTED SOLO & TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *The Nervous Hand* with Fabienne Lasserre, 315 Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2016 *Ezra Tessler and Barb Smith*, Páramo Galeria, New Proposals Section of Zsona Maco Art Fair, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2014 *Rafters*, Culture Room, Brooklyn, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *Beholder's Share*, 315 Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Beach is better with Good Weather Gallery, Fringe Projects, Miami, FL
Everything Real, Hap Gallery, Portland, OR
Cold Summer, The Provincial, Kaleva, MI
Shades, The Bedfellows Club, Little Rock, AR
Broadcast from Cedarburg, New Jersey, Bannerette, Brooklyn, NY
What else is knew, 80 Vernon, Brooklyn, NY
PaintersNYC, Museo de los Pintores Oaxaqueños (MUPO), Oaxaca, Mexico
Pre-Maco, Páramo Galeria, Guadalajara, Mexico
- 2015 *Strike up the band*, Waterfront at Art/Life Institute, Kingston, NY
PaintersNYC, Páramo Galeria, Guadalajara, Mexico.
MFA Thesis Show, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Not a Painting, The Hole, New York, NY
- 2014 *Panel Discussion & Various Formats Are Appropriate*, Silvershed, New York, NY
It's a poor craftsman who blames his tools, Junior Projects, New York, NY
Skit, The Hole, New York, NY

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- 2017 Mary Beth McCauley, "New artist-in-residency to speak on empathetic art," *UT Daily Beacon* February 1.
- 2016 Rachel Miller, "See this at 315 Gallery," *Brooklyn Magazine* December 6.
Molly Gottschalk, "Ten best booths at Zsona Maco," *Artsy* February 4.
Linnea West, artist interview, *Phone Tag*, April 22.
- 2013 Chip Schwartz, "Painting's Absurdity at Fjord," *Knight Arts* June 13.
- 2012 Valerie Brennan, artist interview, *Studio Critical* October 22.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2017 Artist-in-Residence, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
2012 Ox-Bow, Fall Artist Fellow in Residence
2012 Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship
2010 SOMA Summer, Mexico City, Mexico

CLARE GRILL

EDUCATION

- 2011 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME
- 2005 M.F.A., Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY
- 2001 B.A., University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

SELECTED SOLO & TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Ply*, Horton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 EXPO Chicago, Chicago, IL (Horton Gallery)
Clare Grill and Aaron Spangler, Untitled Art Fair, Miami, FL
Clare Grill and Matthew Ronay, EddysRoom, Brooklyn, NY
- 2015 *The Names of Objects Might as Well Fall Off*, Freedman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, PA
Touch'd Lustre, Zieher Smith & Horton, New York, NY
- 2014 *Mary, Mary*, Diane Rosenstein Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA
Petal, Pedal, Peddle, Fred Giampietro Gallery, New Haven, CT
Comb, Soloway, Brooklyn, NY
- 2013 *Clare Grill*, Reserve Ames, Los Angeles, CA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *PaintersNYC*, Museo de los Pintores Oaxaqueños (MUPO), Oaxaca, Mexico
Real States, Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects, New York, NY
- 2015 *Double Nickels on the Dime*, D'Agostino & Fiore, New York, NY
PaintersNYC, Paramo, Guadalajara, Mexico
Homeful of Hands, Josh Lilley Gallery, London, England
Where the Trees Line the Water that Falls Asleep in the Afternoon, P420, Bologna, Italy
The Crayon Miscellaney, OMI International Art Center, Ghent, NY
Oysters with Lemon, Ventana 244, Brooklyn, NY
Transforming Accessory, LVL3, Chicago, IL

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- 2016 Yau, John, "More Than Meets the Eye," *Hyperallergic*, February 28.
- 2015 *Clare Grill: The Names of Objects Might As Well Fall Off*, The Freedman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, PA
Sharp, Chris, "Clare Grill Paints Some Pictures," *Clare Grill: The Names of Objects Might as Well Fall Off*, October 2015.
Riley-Lopez, Erin, "It's All in the Details," *Clare Grill: The Names of Objects Might as Well Fall Off*, October 2015.
Schira, Ron, "Clare Grill at the Freedman Gallery: The Power of Color," *The Reading Eagle*, September 13.
"Where the Trees Line the Water that Falls Asleep in the Afternoon," *Artviewer*, August 27.
Griffin, Nora, "Clare Grill Touch'd Lustre," *Brooklyn Rail*, April 25.
Hurst, Howard, "A Refreshing Dose of Cynicism-Free Abstraction," *Hyperallergic*, April 20.

CAITLIN CHERRY

EDUCATION

- 2012 MFA, Columbia University School of the Arts, New York, NY
- 2010 BFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2009 Yale University, Summer School of Art, Norfolk, CT

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 Hess Center for the Arts, Deerfield Academy, Deerfield, MA
- 2017 *Monster Energy*, University Museum of Contemporary Art, UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA
- 2014 *Spartan-American*, Brett Shaheen Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH
- 2013 *Hero Safe*, Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *{Objected} Shaping Sculpture in Contemporary Art*, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City, UT
- 2015 *Banksy's Dismaland Bemusement Park*, Weston-super-Mare, UK
Civilization and its Discontents: SAIC 150th Anniversary Alumni Exhibition. Selections from 1985-2015, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL
Made in N.Y., Blueshift Gallery, Miami, FL
8 Painters, Danese Corey Gallery, New York, NY
Immediate Female, Judith Charles Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 *Don't Look Now*, Zach Feuer Gallery, New York, NY
This Is What Sculpture Looks Like, Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY
Whitney Houston Biennial, DUMBO, Brooklyn, NY
- 2013 *Corpus Americus*, Driscoll Babcock Gallery, New York, NY
Recess, South Side Community Art Center, Chicago, IL

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2016 "Six Young African-American Artists to Watch in 2017", *TimeOut NY*, December 2016.
- 2015 "INSIDE 'DISMALAND,' BANKSY'S NIGHTMARISH, DYSTOPIAN DISNEY LAND", *MAXIM*, August 2015.
"Stipends for Five Emerging Artists From the Annenberg Fund", *New York Times*, April 2015.
"Artist Caitlin Cherry Wins Annenberg Fellowship", *Artforum*, April 2015.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2016 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Fellowship Residency
- 2015 Leonore Annenberg Fellowship
- 2012 Lotos Foundation Fellowship
- 2009 Ellen Battel Stoeckel Fellowship, Yale University

