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SAM FOX SCHOOL OF DESIGN
& VISUAL ARTS

MFA

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Thesis Exhibition
May 4– May 21, 2018
Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum



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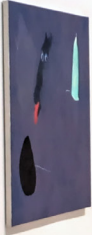
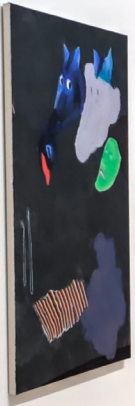








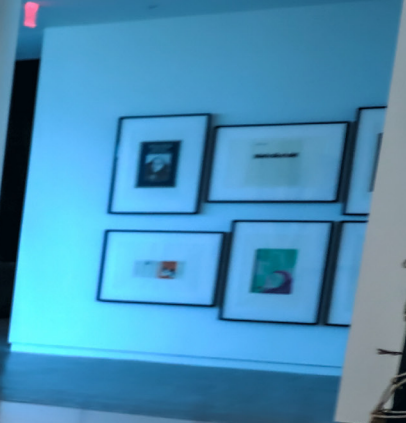


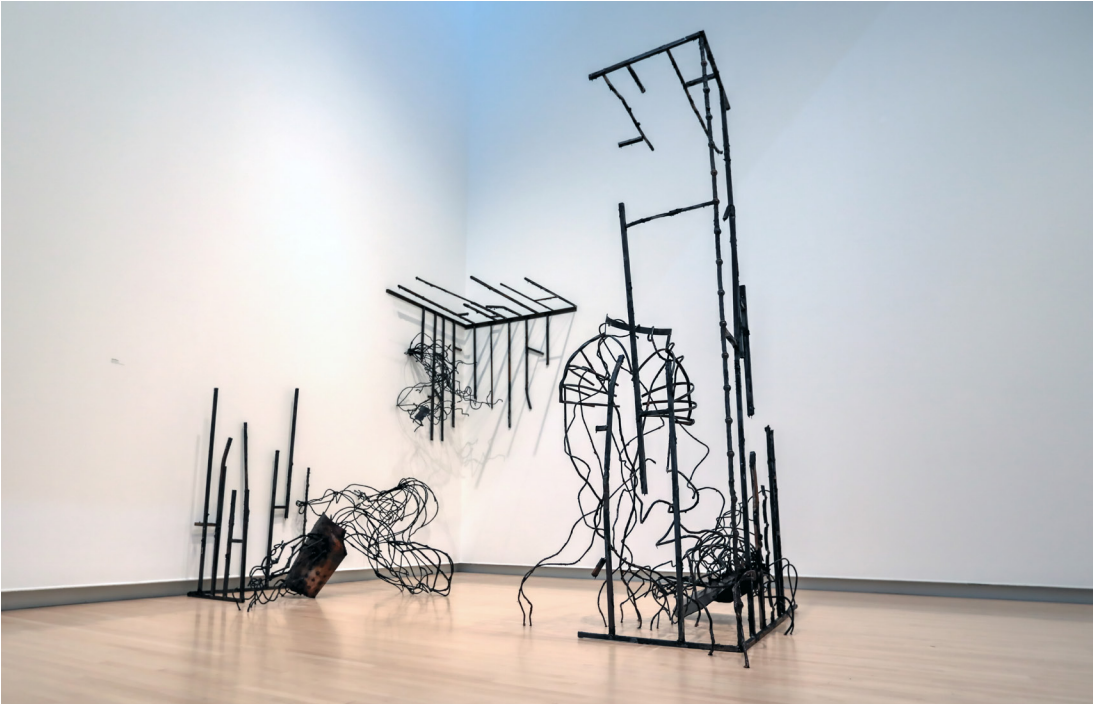






MFA B





Jenn Brown

Imagine yourself in a state of mind where you teeter on the precipice of a ledge built upon isolation and false emotions. Suddenly, every barrier you've put in place to armor yourself from the outside world is holding you in and backing you into a corner that disappears over the edge of a psychological chasm. The walls close in, forming a cage around you. The emotional barriers that once kept you safe have transformed into a horrible but beautiful thing that lets in the stuff of nightmares. It threatens to destroy you from the inside, but something about it entreats you to let it live, to live within it. Will you break free or embrace the cage you've come to know so well? My installation, *Eidola*, illustrates this state of mind. Through sculptures that depict mutated pieces of armor and sections of an unsealed cage, I question the impregnability of my own mental cage, inflicted by existential armor that I've worn for too long, and what it takes to escape it.



Sloan Brunner

In my work, I focus on the nature of familial relationships. I use the form of the domestic space to reflect the ways in which home displays and décor can function: a sanctuary, a curation of history, a space of stability, a representation of the self, a mystery. I collect found objects that are reminiscent of my grandmother's home. These objects are rearranged and reconfigured to create tactile manifestations of my memories. As I excavate my memories, there is a feeling of displaced identity and confusion. This leads to creating objects and installations that are familiar and familial, yet uncanny. My work plays in an ambiguous space between celebration and critical examination of familial relationships, as our family histories can parallel that same elusive space. Personal memories are a catalyst for my work, but I leave it open to the viewer to search for their own questions. I hope to envelop the you in an uncanny space, and allow you to inscribe your own notions of the familial.



Sam Carpenter

The art that I create is touched by my spirituality—my faith, my religion, and my relationship with God. My spirituality urges me to seek for truth in all that I do on my journey in mortality. As an artist, I search for that feeling of truth as I create. That gut feeling of truth is how I know I am on the right track, and I have learned to trust that feeling as part of my artistic process. Creating is a spiritual experience and when I get that gut feeling of truth, there comes with it an urgency to create, usually not understanding what the piece means or where it is going. My process of making is like a dance. I gather and assemble materials together, then pull back, allowing the art to speak and have a conversation to see what else it may need. It's through this dance—going back, forth and around—that I am able to find the truth that the art speaks.



Xinyue Deng

In my recent video work, I explore my position between my homeland, China, and the country I am living and learning in, America. This cultural blend affects my way of looking at things and myself through nature. A fundamental longing for nature is deeply rooted in my first culture, and it has continued to develop in me over time as I have lived in another culture. I pass through different places to explore and experience the distances, as well as the connections of nature within different cultures. The process of looking closely into nature can be a meritorious form of self-communion. There are two characters in the video: my grandfather before the camera, and me behind the camera. Through time, the two generations communicate about their lives. Through the camera, I create visual and auditory poetry to tell stories about people, solitude, clash of cultures, nostalgia for nature, and the transience of things.

On the screen in the dark I show it all.
You step into the world through my eye.



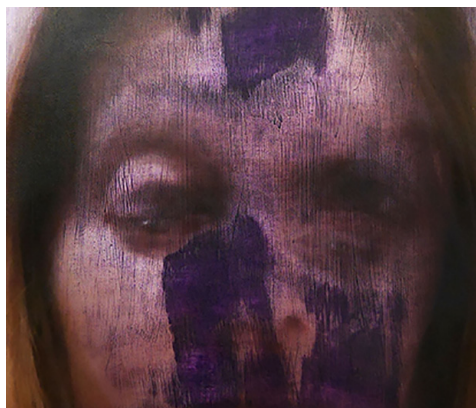
Yuxuan Ding

My work focuses on the cultural conflicts between China and America. While the internet is convenient and, for some, crucial in how we operate our social lives, it does not come without its problems. People type words without considering the consequences. I use my work to raise awareness of cyber bullying, and to prevent it from getting worse. Based on my research, I developed work combining the cultures of China and America, using old clothes to represent human presence. I tore the fabric into pieces and then reunited them as a whole to represent the psychological responses I gathered from a survey I created about cyber bullying. The fluidity of the fabric becomes both words and feelings. I hope to create a dialogue about how we can better understand each other and be more comfortable together.



Harley Eaves

My work lies in the same bedroom as the psychedelic and camp aesthetic that promote confusion while postulating equality. Along with it lie drug folklore, love, occult conspiracies, and cultural phenomena. It is as if the work were Fox Mulder, from the popular FOX network show, *The X-Files*, as an angst-ridden teenager sitting in a bedroom filled with bong smoke, Christmas lights, psychedelic posters, succulent plants, with odd ceramic sculptures littering the window sill, who is trying to impress his partner Dana Scully by playing Pink Floyd's, *Dark Side of the Moon* while the M.G.M. production of *The Wizard of Oz* plays in the background.



Cecily Ferguson

The archives of Western medical photography haunt my work. In my practice, I find, make, and remake images of fragile bodies. When I do not photograph or construct these bodies myself, I appropriate and obtain images from various collections, public and private, of historical medical photography. In my work, I crop these images closely in the attempt to raise questions and contemplation about what kinds of bodies or situations exist beyond their clean borders.

I make blue-violet what once existed only in shades of yellow and grayscale. I reprint and re-bury these images of bodies in veils of graphite, pigment, and erasure in the attempt, through the gesture of drawing, to symbolically reinter them. The goal of my work is to transform these scenes of disease and physical holding between patients and caregivers—often so othered by age—from spaces to be looked at, to spaces the viewer must look into. I attempt to explore the liminal space between the medical institution that these archives of photography reveal and the outside world.



JinHee Kim

My practice of artmaking predominantly focuses on process and the meditation resulting from it. The process is executed in intricate steps that are consistent; preparing thread or yarn which is cut into lengths, priming the canvas surface with gesso or glue, laying the cut lengths onto the surface, and setting them with paint mediums. Evolving from an art therapy technique, the Winnicott Squiggle Game, I am drawn to the connections one can make with others through creating images with simple clusters of lines. These images result from intention and accident, a combination that mimics inevitable life choices. The repetitive labor of laying down thread and yarn onto the surface becomes a ritual that creates a rhythmic, serene, therapeutic space. The composition of strands of thread and yarn that are tangled together on the surface is an outcome of accident and intention—decisions made consciously with materials that I do not have full control over.

Jacopo Mazzoni

As a computer scientist turned artist, I find myself in a strange liminal space: a twilight zone, where the absurdities of both worlds are revealed. In my work, the fluid nature of technology -with its possibilities, obsolescence, and convenience -is exposed to include its sinister consequences that are often overlooked by the general public. My installations revolve around themes of ecology, integration, freedom of thought, and surveillance. My work is not a luddite manifesto against innovation, but it denounces the use of technology as a system of oppression rather than empowerment.

In the piece *Knowledge is Power*, the viewer is presented with a wall of obfuscated text and sound. A digital shadow is generated by tracking the viewers making the text readable and providing hints of its content. As the viewer approaches the wall the background sounds come into focus to reveal a voice reading the files content. The obfuscated text then disappears, revealing a surveillance feed of the viewers. In order to access this information, we are recorded and stripped of our privacy.



Andrew McIlvaine

As a second-generation Hispanic, my work is informed by my personal experience of displacement and longing, and I hope, in turn, inspires an important dialogue about place, memory, otherness and belonging. I work in a small, intimate scale that simultaneously evokes narratives of vastness yet also of solitude. In my work, the landscape and natural environment are populated by anonymous creatures, both animal and human, posed in semi-natural and semi-artificial settings. The images I produce are often tranquil and surreal, yet they are grounded in their inherent familiarity. I use paint as a language that transforms poetry into visual art. I use a poetic approach to reflect upon the so-called natural world. Frequently, I relate and even interchange animals and humans in my paintings. I propose narratives that express the problematic relationship society has with the natural world. My paintings present an invented landscape that acts as a metaphor for beings who have been displaced or uprooted from their original environments. The characters and beings that appear in my work symbolize the marginalization of life viewed as the Other.



Brent Nakamoto

In the last years of her life, my grandmother often asked if I would help her write her life story. I didn't understand then why it was so important to her. How could I help her when she was still so reluctant to talk about the past? When we found her box of old photographs, she didn't even want to see them—she didn't really want to remember.

Aside from their names, I know nothing about the men in these photographs except from what I can infer. *La Selva Beach. 1948.* Did my grandmother take these photographs? And if so, was she looking at these men in the same way that I look at them now?

I am drawn to these images as much by what I know as by what I don't know. They present both an object of desire and a reminder of trauma –of something lost –and, between the two, the possibility of the unknown.



Charis Norell

In my studio practice, I seek to collapse the distance between childhood memories, places I long to recover, and where I am now in the present. While I acknowledge the futility of this task, my fiber drawings act as my fragile attempts to pin down, tie together, and celebrate these longings into physical, knotted forms.

I find that fiber carries an inherent understanding of home, of women, and of making. Stitched material implicitly evokes the hand. I incorporate wool and other natural materials into a three-dimensional frame loom, creating large-scale fiber drawings that suggest a domestic space. My fiber drawings act as traces of thoughts, memories, and gestures—all made visible through the thread. Each pass with the fiber through of the weft strings is an effort to grasp at something just beyond my reach—as if I could affix those intimate moments into the spaces between the frames. My weavings hold within their tenuous fibers the trailings of my experiences.



Song Park

The young girl feels that her body is getting away from her, it is no longer the straightforward expression of her individuality; it becomes foreign to her; and at the same time she becomes for others a thing: on the street men follow her with their eyes and comment on her anatomy.

—Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*.

As a visual artist, I always turn to the sense of sight in order to know something. I like to challenge myself to visualize things that do not have a visual representation. It has been very challenging for me to create images of women, and I experience a never-ending inner conflict when viewing different images of women. Art is my tool for processing this conflict. In my work, I illustrate my inner thoughts and emotions and give visual representation to something that cannot be represented. This duality can also be reversed in that I myself am influenced by the external, cultural image of the woman I am expected to be and not the woman I know I am.



Sara Weininger

The house is the structure. Within the house are rooms, spaces, hallways, and corners. In those, live the objects. The objects live on surfaces, surfaces that, much like the previous layers, are made up of many things, most certainly not one thing.

A static object may hold a series of other objects, spaces, and events. A static object may also embody the passage of time. Though one may try to hold the object at a constant, that is, to slow or even halt its motion, this task is near impossible.

Bird Box House	Ginger Ale Bottle
Bear Box Dresser	Wine Bottle
Lamp Hat	Beer Bottle
Macaroni Light Tears	Medicine Bottle
Dresser	Bagel

These objects are anything but singular. They hold many things at once. They are superpositions of everyday objects.

My accumulating marks attempt to take a physical account for this motion, the passage of time. When the object begins to grow hair, fur, or feathers, in the moment of the drawing, the painting, the bird box, the object, time stands still... just bearly.



Riley Williams

Since 2015, my work has revolved around militainment. While my work doesn't always appear to be in direct conversation with the military or the entertainment industry, the hidden agendas and symbolism of the two continue to influence my work.

I am drawn to both the formal and conceptual—the left and right pages separated by a gutter, the linking together of like ideas to encourage fluid pagination and subsequent consumption of ideas.

Once I create a composition, I consider multiple ways I can attack the same idea using similar forms. My work aims for familiarity; I intend for the viewer to understand the repetitive compositions or formal choices as recurring symbols.

My intention is not to deter from the much-needed embrace of our service members but rather, to question the way in which such definitions of glory are reflected by the entertainment industry. By referencing WWI era razzle-dazzle camouflage, military decorations, and weaponry in combination with bright colors and geometric shapes I hope to evoke a conversation regarding the contemporary cultural construct of heroism.



Taylor Yocom

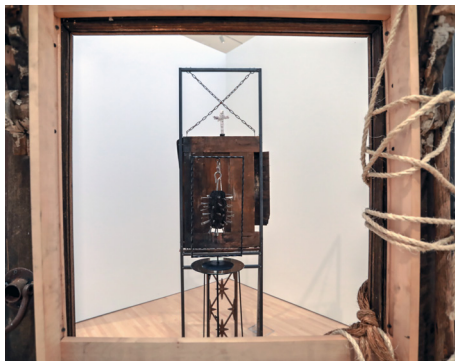
My video installations use the gender performativity (in the words of Judith Butler) of female niceness as a jumping-off point to explore gendered injustices and harassment. Using a sickly-sweet aesthetic, I speak to this social phenomenon using the visual language women are traditionally given: patterns of flowers and an overload of pink. We are taught to smile and nod. We are seen as comforters. We say "sorry" too much, and "um, this really isn't a big deal," don't we?

Femininity is equated with niceness. Niceness is being constantly agreeable and possessing low self-confidence. This version of femininity creates a world in which women are expected to put up with whatever comes their way. In my recent work, I identify instances of female niceness in shows created, written, or directed by men outed and discussed in the #metoo movement. I create a homage to these nice, feminine characters and moments while critiquing the mandate of this singular femininity and the actions of these powerful men.



Jon Young

My work performs a navigation around and through the margins of the physical and the immanent. Using the American West as an orientation point, I ground the position of my works in the histories and mythologies of new frontiers. Being sensitive to immanence, I find myself drawn to objects and symbols that appear to exist within these margins. To trust these signs is to choose a position. To give meaning to these immanent objects is my inclination. To express what I want to understand of these moments of interaction within the margins between the physical and the immanent necessitates the development of language. These moments become points of orientation, like lines drawn in the sand. They allow the work that develops to become a map. This ever-changing map is formed by objects that I produce and put out into the world. These objects do not require a specific place or time to exist; to go to where they belong remains a journey to be known.



Ron Young

My studio practice centers on assembling disparate found objects from abandoned houses, alleyways, and antique shops—things that I scavenge from the city. A treasure trove of materials has been left behind for me to gather. Wood molding trim, chain link fences, rusty tools, chains, and bricks are among some of the objects I can reuse and repurpose at my discretion. Embedded in the narrative of these objects are the possibilities of being transformed into sculptural statements. My work transforms these discarded objects into cultural, artistic evidence that tells a story about what we value and how we treat the people that once owned and used them. The artworks I create are intentionally ambiguous and are meant to be understood when viewed as a collective. By providing just enough visual stimulation in my sculptures to create curiosity through juxtaposition, the viewer can question the original purpose of their components and how their meanings have shifted as a result of my process.

Works

Jenn Brown

Eidola, 2017–18

Steel, roofing tar, oil, and acrylic, approx. 96 x 120 x 120" (overall)

Yuxuan Ding

Inside Out, 2018

Multimedia installation with single-channel video with sound, 8:41 min., approx. 96 x 60 x 60" (overall)

Cecily Fergeson

Four Sights of the Patient (Ophelia), 2018

Mixed media on 4 inkjet prints, 53 x 34 3/4" each (framed)

Sloan Brunner

4703 Basket Factory Rd., 2018

Mixed-media installation, overall dimensions variable

Samuel Carpenter

A Consciousness Uncovered, 2018

Ceramic, steel, wax, casters, zip ties, polyester straps, wood, muslin, sisal twine, clamps, roofing brackets, and hardware, 138 x 94 5/8 x 86 1/2" (overall)

Xinyue Deng

Passages in Revisiting: I Hear Someone Playing Urheen, 2018

Single-channel video with sound, 17:11 min.

Harley Lafarrah Eaves

Hauntology and The Wizard of Oz, 2018

Acrylic and gouache on canvas, 62 x 48"

Optimistic Voices, 2018

Acrylic and gouache on canvas, 48 x 58"

Paint Me Like One of Your French Ghosts: Self-Portrait as a French Ghost, 2018

Acrylic and gouache on canvas, 56 x 72"

Untitled, 2018

Flocked corn brooms on painted wood, 56 x 33 1/2 x 11 1/4" (overall)

JinHee Kim

Diary Project: Part 2, 2018

Installation with thread, yarn, acrylic, and mixed media on canvas, overall dimensions variable

Jacopo Mazzoni

Knowledge Is Power, 2018

Interactive digital installation

Andrew McIlvaine

Never Knowing Where We're Going, or When We Will Arrive, 2018
Oil on 3 panels, 14 x 14" each

Brent Nakamoto

Donald Yamamoto, La Selva Beach, 2018 Earl Santo, La Selva Beach,
2018 Osamu Shimada, La Selva Beach, 2018
Oil on canvas, 64 x 44" each

Charis Schneider Norell

Observance | A Passage, 2018
Wool, cotton, linen, silk-wrapped paper, polyester, alpaca fibers, synthetic thread, painted wood and steel nails, and mirror,
82 x 18 1/2 x 60 1/2"

Song Park

In the shower, 2017
What did you find in the woods?, 2017
Oil on linen, 60 x 72" each

"What a day!", "Tell me about it!", 2018
Mixed-media installation with audio, 2 min.; 51 x 87 x 95" (overall)

Sara Weininger

Bird Box House, Bear Box Dresser, Lamp Hat, Macaroni Light Tears,
Dresser, Ginger Ale Bottle, Wine Bottle, Beer Bottle, Medicine Bottle,
Bagel, Tchh Tchh Tchh, 2018
Mixed-media installation, overall dimensions variable

Riley Millar Williams

For Once Chosen Now Chosen, 2018
Enamel on aluminum, approx. 240 x 96 x 12"

Taylor Yocom

for the nice girls in shows by bad men, 2018
Multimedia installation with single-channel video with sound,
8:36 min., approx. 60 x 84 x 72" (overall)

Jon Young

Waymark Margins 8 & 9 (Which Desert, Which Night), 2018
Mixed media on 2 panels, wood, sand, and lacquer, 54 1/2 x 48 x 7 5/8"
each

Ron E. Young

"In the Morning, Still I Rise", 2018
Mixed-media assemblage, overall dimensions variable

This catalog is published in conjunction with the 2018 MFA Thesis Exhibition at the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, May 4-21, 2018. The exhibition was organized by Allison Unruh, associate curator, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum.

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