

Shane Lutzk (American, b. 1992)
Large Black and White Vessel, 2019

Stoneware

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.13

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art
Acquisition Endowment of the JCCC Foundation



Shane Lutzk develops his monumental ceramic vessels by integrating the precision and structural components found in diverse architecture. While traveling abroad, he was greatly influenced by the historical buildings in Kecskemet, Hungary. His sculptures create a spatial connection with the viewer in large works like *Blue Dripped Vessel* because of the undulating forms and anthropomorphic scale. In addition to the towering symmetrical sculptures that demonstrate the artist's wheel throwing capabilities, Lutzk builds wall installations and free-standing amorphous sculpture, and these smaller objects are also wheel thrown at first - they are created with cross sections of thrown clay. Whether they retain the wheel's geometry or they take on an elastic undulating character through manipulation, Lutzk's clay works convey a personal message: at the age of nine, Lutzk was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, and much of his work depicts his struggle with this disease. He wants to bring both the ramifications and the positive outcomes that come from diabetes to the public's attention. In this work, the blue concentric circles signify the international symbol for diabetes awareness.

Lutzk earned his MFA at Arizona State University in 2017 and his BFA in ceramics at the Kansas City Art Institute in 2014.

Kent Monkman (Canadian First Nations, Cree, b. 1965)

Sepia Study for The Deposition, 2014

Watercolor and gouache on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017



Kent Monkman's glamorous, gender-fluid alter-ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, appears in much of his work, including in this study for his painting *The Deposition*. Central to the composition is Monkman's self-portrait as Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, recognizable by the stiletto-heeled boot of the dying figure's left foot that emerges from the shroud draped across his body. In his lap, he cradles a Cubist female figure taken directly from Picasso's *Guernica*, painted in response to the devastating bombing of the Basque town during the Spanish Civil War. Like the Picasso figure, the dying Indigenous man appears to have been the victim of violence. Four young First Nations men support his limp body, shown with arms outstretched and head tilted backward. Monkman combines the tragedy of the death of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle with the religious iconography of Renaissance depictions of the deposition of Christ, while the figure draped across his lap brings to mind Michelangelo's sculpture of the *Pietà*, in which Mary tenderly holds the body of her dead son.

Kent Monkman received an Illustration Diploma from Sheridan College of Applied Art, Ontario, Canada, in 1986.

Kent Monkman (Canadian First Nations, Cree, b. 1965)

Sepia Study for Death of the Female, 2014

Watercolor and gouache on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017.27



Cree artist Kent Monkman often addresses themes of colonization, sexuality, loss and resilience in his explorations into the complexities of historical and contemporary Indigenous experience. In this figural study, Monkman relies heavily on iconographic images of art history. The central figure of the dying female immediately calls to mind the Cubist renderings of Pablo Picasso. The surrounding figures are arranged in a composition seen in paintings such as *The Death of General Wolfe*, by Benjamin West, or, moving even further back into the art historical canon, to Renaissance depictions of the deposition of Christ from the cross. The scene, created as a study for a large-scale painting, is filled with drama and intimacy. The Indigenous men attending to the dying woman bend and move with great emotion; their placement and positioning lead the viewer's eye back toward the dying woman. Although Western artistic sources influence Monkman, his subject matter is informed by the violence often perpetrated against First Nations women.

Ronald Jackson

- American, b. 1970 in Helena, Arkansas
- Studied architecture at Mission Viejo College in California
- Served in the Army for 21 years, retired in 2014
- Lives and works in Fredericksburg, Virginia



Body of Work

Ronald Jackson grew up in the rural Arkansas Delta is self-taught in art. Even though he studied architecture in college, he explained: “I realize that its more about observing things around us, whether its architecture, textures and things, or how colors collaborate together.” Fabric collage is a new aesthetic choice. He said, “I purchased a large piece of upholstery fabric [and] I was so moved by the feel of it and how it looked that I draped it on my wall, and it gave a different feeling to the room. Not just the experience of looking at the fabric, but it changed the environment of the room. And that’s a quality that the material gave to the observing experience.”

Jackson’s artwork combines fantastical elements of Realism and the emotional and psychological tropes of Romanticism. In his current work, he subtly references Arkansas rural culture and violent racist history, specifically the Elaine Massacre of 1919. He stated, “After WWI there is an incident that occurred in the small town of Elaine... The Black sharecroppers were organizing, and it was attempted to be stopped. A white man ended up getting killed, and after that point there was a mob of locals, when I say locals I mean the white population, they came from counties, from across the river, from Mississippi, and truckloads began going through and just pillaging the communities of the Blacks and it was open season to just target and violate or do whatever to the black community.” Instead of limiting himself to direct portraiture, Jackson has always felt he was able to render life-like faces, and he seeks creative departures with patterns and objects accompanying the figures. He said, “A number of my paintings incorporate foliage, or flowers, branch with leaves, particularly in the hands of young black men, [they will] have something that is considered non-threatening like rendering an extended olive branch as something that no one would find threatening in the hands of a young black man. Masks have two dual purposes; to hide/conceal or project an ideal. With the mask, I thought it would be an interesting concept to explore and present to the viewer who they are looking at and potentially the message that the portrait is giving to the viewer.”

Jackson stated, “May my work compel the viewer to reflect on their own experiences and become a catalyst to trigger the self-discovery of value, beauty, and significance among people who, in some way, may feel marginalized.” In 2010, he entered his first exhibition at the Fredericksburg Center for Creative Arts and received the Best of Show award. In 2011, he had his first solo exhibition at the Libertytown Arts Workshop in Fredericksburg. Subsequent exhibitions include the Gallery Golmok in Seoul, Korea; Elegba Folklore Society in Richmond, Virginia; Target Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia; and Galerie Myrtis in Baltimore, Maryland. His works are in national and international collections including the US Embassy in Gabon and Kenya.

Installation image: *Pulse*, 2018/2019



Ronald Jackson (American, b. 1970)

Portrait No. 4 (*Colored Folk Tales* series), 2019

Fabric, acrylic, and oil on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.12

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art

Acquisition Endowment of the JCCC Foundation



Ronald Jackson's artwork combines fantastical elements of Realism and the emotional and psychological tropes of Romanticism. In his current work, he subtly references Arkansas rural culture and violent racist history through portraits. Jackson has always felt he was able to render life-like faces, but instead of limiting himself to direct portraiture, he seeks creative departures with fabric patterns and objects accompanying the figures and often disguising them. He said, "masks have two dual purposes; to hide/conceal or project an ideal. With the mask, I thought it would be an interesting concept to explore and present to the viewer who they are looking at and potentially the message that the portrait is giving to the viewer." Jackson stated, "May my work compel the viewer to reflect on their own experiences and become a catalyst to trigger the self-discovery of value, beauty, and significance among people who, in some way, may feel marginalized." By covering the faces of his characters, Jackson offers seemingly nonthreatening interventions that facilitate and problematize viewers' relationship to Black bodies.

Now based in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Ronald Jackson grew up in the rural Arkansas Delta. He studied architecture at Mission Viejo College in California and is self-taught in art. He retired from the military in 2014 after 21 years of service. His *Profiles of Color* paintings were featured in the Nerman Museum's 2018/2019 exhibition *Pulse*.

Huma Bhabha

- Pakistani, b. 1962 in Karachi, Pakistan
- Lives and works in New York
- 1989 MFA from Columbia University in New York, 1985 BFA from Rhode Island School of Design, Providence



Body of Work

Working with found materials and constructed forms, Huma Bhabha reworks the familiarity of everyday objects into creepy inventions. Something between a primitive species and space alien, her *Untitled* is both ghastly and sympathetic. Set atop an altar-like plinth, Bhabha's figure prostrates in submissive position. Shrouded in black, hands outstretched as if in prayer, it echoes humility and reverence; its aura of calm perversely interrupted by a rigid tail trailing out from behind. To Bhabha's chagrin, the press interpreted the piece as a comment of Muslim women when it appeared in the show *USA Today* at London's Royal Academy in 2005; the artist sees the piece as sexless, clad in a body bag, not burkha, it's intended as a disintegrating monument to the hundreds of thousands dead in the Middle East.

Reviews

From the New York Times, March 2006: "Huma Bhabha has a trippy watercolor in the engaging *Exquisite Corpse* exhibition at the Mitchell Albus Gallery. The three works here move effortlessly between architecture and figurative forms, ancient and modern. Their materials are cheap and practical — mostly air-dried clay, found wood laths and pale blue plastic foam — but always subtly contrasted," *Roberta Smith*.



From a 2002 exhibition at Momenta Art, Brooklyn: "Huma Bhabha culls her sculptures from the archives of science fiction. Like a shadow of Rodin that has fallen into the gutter and reassembled itself with discarded material, Bhabha morphs mineral to vegetable to animal. These hand modeled sculptures of clay and fiberglass fused with found parts depict nearly human creatures. Construction and office refuse suggest the everyday, the known, as a source of anxiety and horror. Also on display, her finely rendered ink and colored pencil drawings depict god-like megalithic heads rising from turbulent bodies of water departing on an unknowable quest. Together, these works reference a world continually made and unmade through an emerging mythology of capital."



(2005, *Untitled*, C-print)

Her work was included in the Kemper Museum's 2016 group exhibition *A Whisper of Where It Came From*.

(2003, *International Monument*, clay, Styrofoam, chicken wire, and bone)



Huma Bhabha (American, b. Pakistan, 1962)

Untitled, 2005

Mixed media

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.68

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Huma Bhabha constructs haunting, enigmatic forms from base materials such as chicken wire, splintered wood, Styrofoam packaging, and clay. Her oftentimes charred figures have inspired comparisons to space aliens and inhabitants of a post-apocalyptic world. Bhabha's *Untitled* is characteristically disturbing: a pair of clay hands and a trail of clay dust protrude from opposite ends of a lumpy form shrouded in black plastic. While the work is often assumed to represent a burka-clad Muslim woman prostrate in prayer, Bhabha rejects this specific reference, saying, "It began as a sculpture inspired by keeping clay wet and then . . . like a conceptual golem, it soaked up my political residue." Golems are mentioned in the Talmud, the Bible, and in medieval legend as creatures created from clay and brought to life through magic or holy intervention to serve their creator. In the Talmud, Adam, the first man, is created as a golem. In *Untitled*, clay can be seen as representing the fundamental material of human form, but also, as a trail of dust, inevitable mortality and decay. According to Bhabha, "The idea of monument and death is the ultimate raw material of art." Here, the monument is suggested, perhaps, by the pristine white pedestal that the figure occupies.

Huma Bhabha received her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design in 1985 and MFA from Columbia University in 1989.

Hayv Kahraman

- Iraqi, b. 1981
- Lives and works in Los Angeles
- 2005 studied graphic design, Accademia di arte e design di Firenze, Florence, Italy; University of Umeå, Sweden



Body of Work

Raised in Baghdad, Hayv Kahraman fled the first gulf war with her family to Sweden at age eleven and started painting by age twelve. She recalls, “The main thing I can access from that time is these masses of bodies on the move, I remember seeing this constant flow of bodies from the car window, knowing that we were lucky just to have a car.” In recent works she rendered crowds of women and individual portraits in a recognizably stylized manner: curvy, pale-skinned, dark-haired women reminiscent of Botticelli’s Venus or Japanese ukiyo-e figures. Thirteenth-century manuscripts including the *Maqamat al Hariri*, created by the Baghdad school of miniature painting, inform some of her compositions, color schemes and structures, and she paints on raw linen from Belgium. Kahraman stated, “Most of my works lack background because I don’t like to define context.”

While Kahraman’s art is always intensely personal, drawing on her experience in an abusive relationship, her previous characters and their predicaments were at the same time universally and instantly recognizable, often based on researching current events on the news. She said, “These works are personal narratives, but they are also a way for me to transcribe and archive a history that I feel I am forgetting.” As a young adult she relearned how to read and write Arabic. Her recent paintings reveal the invisible and psychological confines of fear and belonging; the limits of memory and time; and how forced displacement, while harrowing, can also create a strong and vivid inner self. Her 2018 exhibition at Suzanne Vielmetter in LA was titled *Silence is Gold*. The show’s title, lifted from the popular saying “speech is silver, but silence is gold,” suggested that refugees gain currency or value for being seen and not heard. In a 2015 interview with *Guernica*, she said her art is “a way for me to justify my existence in the West. The work served as an avenue to address concerns and actively do something about it.”

Kahraman has had numerous solo exhibitions at museums and galleries around the world including Pamona College Museum of Art, Claremont, California; Jack Shainman Gallery, New York; Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis; Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha; The School, Kinderhook, New York; London, and Dubai. Group exhibitions include venues in Moscow, Russia; Gunma, Japan; Istanbul, Turkey; Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, Connecticut; Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, New York; the National Museum of Women Artists, Washington DC; The Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, Ohio; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art; Nelson-Atkins Museum; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Cantor Center, Stanford University, California; and Paul Robeson Center for the Arts, Princeton, New Jersey. Her work is included in several private and public collections.



Installation image, *Pulse* 2018/2019

Hayv Kahraman (Iraqi, b. 1981)

The Audience, 2018

Oil on linen

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.55

Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation



Hayv Kahraman's captivating oil painting *The Audience* gathers more than two dozen of her signature female figures before a spotlighted wall, against an indefinite ground of natural linen. Her figures wear weighty, nearly identical hairstyles and similarly painted, mask-like facial features. Their pale bodies are semi-transparent, some have exposed shoulders, and their sameness is only broken up by the finely painted textile designs on their garments: geometric tessellations common in Islamic art and arabesque botanical patterns akin to Persian miniature painting. The artist's experience as an Iraqi Kurdish war refugee looms large in her work. Kahraman paints the traumatic memories of displacement, the emigrant escaping conflict and the plight of the asylum seeker with an uncertain future. The women of *The Audience* bear languid, longing expressions as they face the mysterious black slot in the wall. Is this the anticipation and anxiety of a border crossing? Are they preparing to justify their asylum to border officials? The painting's tilted perspective affords a more detailed view of eight of the faces rendered with white-faced makeup and rouged lips. One of these figures, at the center of the pyramidal composition, gazes over her bare shoulder directly at the viewer. She asks us to look beyond the reductive victimhood of the displaced person to discover a powerful narrative of survival.

Hayv Kahraman studied art at the Academy of Art and Design in Florence, Italy, in 2005, and University of Umeå, Sweden, in 2006. This work and others were included in the Nerman Museum's 2018/2019 exhibition *Pulse*.

Katherine Bradford

- American, b. 1942, New York
- lives and works in New York and Maine
- 1987 MFA, SUNY Purchase; 1964 BA in art history, Bryn Mawr College
- Represented by Canada gallery, New York



Body of Work

Katherine Bradford is an artist and educator who has taught at Illinois State University, Ohio State University, College of New Rochelle and SUNY Purchase. She was a founding member of the Union of Maine Visual Artists in 1975, which among other activities mounted exhibitions that gave some members their first opportunities to show their work. Although during her early years in Maine she was producing mostly abstract paintings, by the time she had her first solo show in New York at the Victoria Munroe Gallery in Soho in 1989, her work had changed. As she explained in a 2007 interview in *The Brooklyn Rail*, “If you want to ask me point blank why I stopped being an abstract painter and reintroduced images into my work I can tell you. It was because I wanted more emotion and I wanted to tell stories.”

Bradford’s featureless characters occupy ambiguous spaces and may appear to be lost in some sort of predicament, possibly social or bureaucratic situations. The artists includes details such as power suits and ties, high heeled shoes and hijabs, which signal identity. In a 2017 interview with *New American Paintings*, she stated, “I think [we artists are] trying to speak a language, a visual language, and it takes a long time to develop a very personal vocabulary. It certainly took me years and years to find my own voice. And I wouldn’t say it has anything to do with age; it had to do with sticking to it, and doing it a lot, like an athlete. At the same time, it doesn’t mean that you know what you are doing—you just have to trust in being the blind mole...I think most people see the figures first and try and explain to themselves what’s going on, to get the sense of it, which often they don’t find. But, I think it helps if you look at it as something made... something that is built with paint. Coming at it from a more abstract point of view is helpful although not everyone can do that.”

Her works have been exhibited at The Modern Art Museum Fort Worth, Texas; MoMA PS 1, New York; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Portland Museum of Art, Maine; the Addison Gallery of American Art, Massachusetts; the Weatherspoon Gallery, North Carolina; and the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. She has been honored with an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Her work is in the permanent collections of New York City’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the New York Public Library; the Wooster Art Museum, Ohio; the Portland Museum of Art, Maine; the Portland Museum of Art, Oregon; Farnsworth Museum, Maine; Smith College Museum, Massachusetts; Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania; the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; and the University of Delaware.

Installation image, *Pulse* 2018/2019



Katherine Bradford (American, b.1942)

Green Tie, 2018

Acrylic on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D.

Cohen Art Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation



In earlier works Katherine Bradford showed plausible, if open ended, situations (a ship at sea, swimmers in the water), but her more recent canvases are surreal. A man wearing a red cape is bathed in green light, the same green as the tie that accents his business suit jacket. To the left, standing in profile to face the caped figure, are a hooded woman and a young man with a blue head and blue-black limbs. To the right, a swimming man crashes the back of his neck and shoulders directly into the caped figure, to no effect. Bradford has made many paintings of superheroes, often of Superman in flight, hovering uncertainly, almost abject. In *Green Tie*, by contrast, the heroic figure is solidly planted with both feet on the ground, apparently oblivious to the people around him. This guy in the dress suit jacket is Trumpian, full of himself yet vulnerable. It is a darker look at the hero, who now seems disinclined to help anyone. There is something pathetic in this caped crusader's disconnection from the people in whose midst he stands. This work and others were included in the Nerman Museum's 2018/2019 exhibition *Pulse*.

Katherine Bradford was born in New York and graduated in 1964 with a BA in art history from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, and in 1987 she earned an MFA from SUNY Purchase. Bradford has taught at Illinois State University, Ohio State University, College of New Rochelle and SUNY Purchase.

Till Freiwald

- German, b. 1963 in Lima, Peru
- Lives and works in Europe
- Studied at St. Etienne, France, in 1993; 1991 at Landes Baden-Württemberg, 1985-1991 studied at the Kunstakademie Karlsruhe, Germany



Body of Work

Freiwald creates huge watercolor portraits of young, anonymous men and women. These extreme close-ups of impassively staring faces are based on small studies of his subjects created over the course of several sittings, with the final watercolor painted exclusively from memory. More than mere representations of his sitters, Freiwald's portraits project the artist's perception and memory of his subjects. Freiwald's images question contemporary identity as he depicts everyday people of various ethnicities in cropped head-on portraits with minimal form and documentary detail. Freiwald's work occupies an odd space between realism and idealism. Photography, as it appears in magazines and other media, is disposable, as are the images of the people depicted: we see many pictures of people each day, but rarely engage ourselves with the people we see. Freiwald's images carve out an intimate and meditative space to explore and feel the power of the human image, but at the same time, they are oddly general, even alienating in their anonymity. The distancing of photographic representation is mirrored in Freiwald's own practice. Working directly with a sitter over many hours, Freiwald's concentrated looking and the slow accretion of the layers of watercolor refute the "truth" of the photographic moment. Freiwald's work does not disprove the photographic understanding of reality but does suggest that there are other equally "real" views. Addressing this question, Freiwald has said: "It doesn't mean that I don't like to look at photos but they're just not a source of inspiration. They don't awake inside of me any desire for painting."

Freiwald has had solo exhibitions at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City (2002); the Voss Gallery, Dusseldorf, Germany; the Boise Art Museum; Mark Moore Gallery, LA (2003); Dorsky Gallery, NY (2004); and *Sujeto*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain (2005). He is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery, NY.

(2003, *untitled 6*, Aquarell on cardboard)

(2004, *untitled 4*)

(2006, *untitled 11*, Aquarelle on paper)



Till Freiwald (German, b. Peru, 1963)

Untitled, 2004

Watercolor on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.64



Freiwald paints huge watercolor portraits of anonymous men and women of various ethnicities. These extreme close-ups are based on smaller studies of his subjects created over the course of several sittings, with the final large scale work painted exclusively from memory; in effect, they lose individuality. Instead of accurately representing his sitters, Freiwald's portraits project the artist's perception of his subjects and they become generalized, flawless faces, "untitled" instead of named. Upon first glance, several works in a series might resemble one another with identical hairstyles and seemingly identical expressionless faces, but they are not clones of one another. Rather, they all began with the same sitter, but the artist takes each creation in a different direction. Freiwald reminds us that, although we see many pictures of people each day, we rarely engage ourselves with the individuals we encounter. His process of removing the portrait from the original subject by recreating the image multiple times suggests that there are many equally "real" ways to perceive people.

Freiwald was born in Lima, Peru, grew up in Germany, and he currently lives and works in Europe. He studied at St. Etienne, France, in 1993; at Landes Baden-Württemberg in 1991, and from 1985 to 1991, he studied at the Kunstakademie Karlsruhe, Germany.

Zack Balber

- American, b.1983 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Lives and works in Miami
- University of Florida, New World School of the Arts, Miami, FL
- www.zackbalber.com



Body of Work

In his 2009 series “America’s Bulletin Boards,” Zach Balber featured outdoor advertising as his subject; the artist aimed to create a surrealist dream of what life is supposed to look like. Driving from Miami to North Carolina he gathered a small section of the outdoor advertising that people are exposed to everyday, and using candid snap shots juxtaposed against the advertising campaigns, he sought to unveil outdoor advertising as a distorted cultural language that reduces life experience to slogans and snap shots.

Using portrait photography as his vehicle over the past several years, Balber intimately uncovers the camouflaged identity of some of Judaism’s most unfamiliar Jews in *Tamim*. Earlier series featured porn stars concealed with monster make up (*Desecration of Sexuality*, 2011), prostitutes (*Window Shopping*, 2010), and random pedestrians, the homeless, and drug dealers in *My Americans* (2010 series, inspired by Balber’s obsession with people, colors, and environment as he commuted daily through Little Haiti, Overtown, and Downtown Miami, to avoid traffic and construction).

Born and raised in gritty inner-city neighborhoods throughout the country, both the photographer and many of his subjects were void of Jewish role models. Instead of praising their ancestry, they concealed their culture behind tattoos and vanity in a pursuit to assimilate. These men portray themselves as Bear Jews, the fighters, and the Sunday-School delinquents: they are the truly unconventional Jews.

Relocated to the close-knit Jewish community in Miami, Balber began to reconnect with his roots. During his cultural rediscovery, he encountered men who were similarly unorthodox yet retained that indefinable Jewish spark. Interestingly, when approached with the opportunity to be photographed as Jews, these ordinarily recalcitrant men let go of their powerful exteriors and embraced the vulnerability of portrait photography. When the participants donned the yarmulke that Zack Balber wore for his Bar Mitzvah, each of them expressed a spiritual reconnection to their culture, captured within these photographs. Balber’s portraits of men who are ostensibly Tamim—proud, unashamed, and whole—exquisitely reveal their insecurity, vulnerability, and fear of exposure.

Although their appearances may initially distract us from their inner reality, the tattoos and bling cannot obscure their heritage of Hebrew day school, spiritual mentors, or even the Holocaust. Through the courage and trust of both Zack Balber and his sitters, the photographer developed a rapport that catalyzed his sense of community and brotherhood. In an introspective discussion on his body of work, Balber noted, “that religion is far more than skin deep and that a connection with G-d can always be reignited.” Despite his initial rejection of Judaism, Balber’s portraits led him to rediscover the culture that is now his lifeline.

Zack Balber (American, b. 1983)

Tony (color), 2011

Lambda print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012.22



In his photographic series *Tamim*, Balber uses portrait photography to uncover the camouflaged identity of some of Judaism's most unconventional Jews. Balber, Jewish himself, connected with the men he photographed while rediscovering his own lineage. Instead of valuing their heritage, many of the men he depicted had adopted tough-guy personas and hidden behind tattoos, which are forbidden in Jewish culture. When approached with the opportunity to be photographed as Jews – wearing the yarmulke that Balber wore for his bar mitzvah – these ordinarily recalcitrant men let go of their powerful exteriors. The result was a startling series of photographs of shirtless, heavily tattooed men whose insecurities and vulnerabilities shine through. Wearing the yarmulke, the men said, made them feel a spiritual reconnection to their culture. *Tamim* is a Hebrew word that is sometimes used to denote perfection. Balber has said that he considers his subjects as "perfectly imperfect, proud, unashamed, vulnerable, scared, confident and insecure." This work and 6 others from the *Tamim* series were exhibited at the Nerman Museum in 2012.

Balber attended the University of Florida, New World School of the Arts.

Helen Hardin (American Indian, Santa Clara, b. 1943 - d. 1984)

Mimbres Mama, 1982

Acrylic on panel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.49

Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation

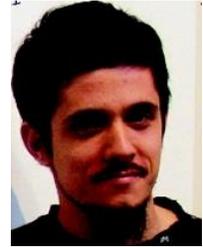


The daughter of famed Santa Clara Pueblo painter Pablita Velarde, Helen Hardin began her artistic career by emulating her mother's style; however, she eventually developed her own creative voice and became a celebrated artist in her own right. *Mimbres Mama* finds inspiration in the ancient Mimbres culture which flourished, in what would become the American Southwest, between 200 C.E. and 1450. Hardin's painting incorporates geometric patterns inspired by Mimbres pottery bowls, but here, the black and white palette of Mimbres pottery has been updated to a vibrant red and black, demonstrating that even a restricted use of colors can produce dramatic results. An intimate image of a mother playing with her child occupies the center of the composition. Although the representation of a mother and child can be found on Mimbres pottery, Hardin's daughter, Margarete Bagshaw, noted that the painting was completed just after Hardin's mastectomy. The mother's bare breast becomes a self-portrait, referencing the artist's battle with breast cancer, to which she succumbed in 1984.

Helen Hardin studied art and architecture at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, from 1961 to 1962.

Asad Faulwell

- American, b. 1982
- BA at the University of California, Santa Barbara (2005), MFA from Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California (2008)
- Lives and works in Los Angeles
- asadfaulwell.blogspot.com



Body of Work

Asad Faulwell paints decorative, floral arabesques reminiscent of Islamic art, which serve as the armature for cut-out black and white press photos of key figures within the turbulent social and political history of the Middle East. As an undergraduate, Faulwell briefly majored in Middle Eastern studies. For several years, he learned as much as he could on the region's history and twentieth-century events. When asked if his work is a study of his own identity as an American with Iranian heritage, he is hesitant to follow that route. His work, as he describes it, "challenges pre-conceived notions of nationality and cultural identity, creating an experience in which established labels become blurred and iconography from seemingly contrasting cultures occupy the same visual space. This combination leads to a simultaneous rejection and embrace of the old and the new, creating an environment that is in constant flux. Religion, politics, nationality and culture are treated as the building blocks of identity, depicted and dissected to varying degrees. Through painting and collage I examine the way in which power is gained, consolidated and communicated."

Faulwell's mix-media paintings combine the intricate patterns of Islamic art and architecture with the basic design structure of Shiite political billboards. His works are also infused with the elaborate ornamentation of Persian textiles and the principles of European Dada and American Pop collage. This combination serves as the aesthetic foundation for the meeting of various political and cultural signifiers, namely the Middle East's pantheon of historical figures. In 2008 while he was completing his MFA studies, Faulwell watched the 1966 film *Battle of Algiers* (director Gillo Pontecorvo) and found the female combatants fascinating. Through books, articles and internet-based research, Faulwell has virtually become an expert on the FLN. Before he turned his attention to this series, more prominent historical figures occupied his work. In "*Pillars – Iran (1882-1989)*" (2009) Faulwell juxtaposed former Iranian leaders such as Mohammad Mossadegh, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and the Ayatollah Khomeini in a family tree-like structure that outlines the succession of the republic's political heads. His richly textured paintings simultaneously refer to Muslim prayer rugs and Christian altarpieces. All the while, the viewer is left wondering whether the artist considers his subjects iconic or if there is an underlying critical subtext. He said, "I leave it up to the viewer to decide. There are some people in the paintings who I really dislike and others who I like a lot, but I always display them in the same way." The question is not whether Faulwell prefers one to the other. Rather, he is asking by what criteria is one deemed holy or iconic.



2012, *Les Femmes D'Alger* #16, 60"x168"

Asad Faulwell (American, b. 1982)

Les Femmes D' Alger #52, 2014-15

Acrylic, pins and photo collage on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015.95

Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation



Les Femmes D' Alger #52 is from a larger series Asad Faulwell has devoted to the Algerian women who fought in the Algerian War of Independence during the French occupation, from 1954 to 1962. Faulwell bases his images of these fighters on historical photographs. The women, whose smuggled bombs also killed or injured civilians, are surrounded by a moral ambiguity that intrigues the artist. They were tortured by the French, but often ostracized by the Algerians. Ambiguity is part of Faulwell's upbringing: The women in his family are from Iran; his father was born in the U.S. and has family roots in England and Germany. As an American of Middle Eastern descent, Faulwell has felt the ambiguities inherent in U.S. identity politics. The series *Les Femmes D' Alger* comprises over 85 paintings, some tiny and some monumental, inspired by the film *The Battle of Algiers*, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo. This large collage with acrylic paint includes photos and pins in a dense, patterned surface with references to Islamic design. The images of the women are scattered throughout, rendered in black and white, often with decorative pins streaming from their eyes, perhaps suggesting tears. The women's images become singular and iconic; some seem crowned with a halo as if they are martyrs. The Nerman Museum presented an exhibition of Faulwell's portraits *Pins and Needles* in 2013.

Asad Faulwell received his BA from the University of California, Santa Barbara, in 2005, and his MFA from Claremont Graduate University, California, in 2008.

Asad Faulwell (American, b. 1982)

Mujahidat #11, 2010

Acrylic and paper on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2011.12

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



From a distance, *Mujahidat #11* is reminiscent of the colorful geometric patterns of Moroccan textiles and mosque mosaics, yet with close examination one discerns tiny reproduced photographs around the outer frame and embedded in the circular floral patterns. The three women represented in these photos—Djamila Bouhired, Zohra Drif, and Danielle Minne—were *mujahidat*, fighters with the National Liberation Front (FLN) in the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) against France. Algerian female combatants played an important role in the conflict, yet after their country gained independence they received neither recognition nor equal legal treatment. Faulwell's paintings bring attention to these long ignored fighters, and symbolically elevate them to the status of saints. On the outer edge of *Mujahidat #11*, a news photo of Zohra Drif as she was imprisoned in 1957 is repeated to form a geometric pattern, with a halo painted above Drif's head. In the circular forms appearing throughout the canvas, Drif and Bouhired are highlighted in the middle of floral motifs, and Minne is included near the bottom center. These details, contrasted with the larger visual links to religious architecture and art, speak to the divide between the spiritual and the mundane, and celebrate the female fighters of Algeria.

Ryan Johnson

- American, b. 1978 in Karachi, Pakistan
- Lives and works in New York
- BFA, 2000 Pratt Institute, New York; MFA, 2003, Columbia University, New York



Body of Work

Ryan Johnson's sculptures combine casting tape, glass, plywood, cement, plastic, cardboard, spray paint, enamel paint, aluminum, steel, keys, fabric, and rubber. At the Suzanne Geiss Company in 2012, Ryan Johnson's exhibition *Self Storage* featured a structured installation of representational sculptures made from a variety of materials including wood, medical casting tape and sheet metal. Presented as a fictional self-storage unit, Johnson aims to blur the distinctions between the real and the imagined by conjuring a hallucinatory space where anxieties become materialized as furniture, multi-tasking figures sprout extra limbs and bicycles steer their riders. Informed by a sense of precarity and ambient instability, Johnson's sculptures foreground the liminal nature of storage, focusing on themes of transition and fundamental life decisions about relationships, work, and family.

Saatchi Gallery: Through his playful use of materials, Johnson's work creates a theatrical tension between 'stuff' and its implied function: clock faces stand in for people faces, bandages become noblesse armour, and steel rods protrude painfully as arms and legs; his battered crafty aesthetic giving all the appearance of the walking wounded.

LFL Gallery, 2005: Ryan Johnson is a sculptor whose adept draughtsmanship is in the vein of such caricaturists as George Grosz, Honore Daumier, and Ralph Steadman. It is from the medium of drawing that he lifts his primary material: paper. His confidence in the wavering structural integrity of his chosen medium leads his figurative sculpture to new heights- actually, full human height, and it is against this sense of scale that he plays his most subtle formal deceptions.

Johnson's shifting shapes and forms of painted paper set out to perform multiple realities...His fragmented figuration lends itself to color tricks and surface shifts rarely seen in sculpture, except in a grand tradition leading from Gothic sculpture through Mannerism. It is no surprise that his influences include Flemish painting, Tilman Riemenschneider, Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, and Bernini. While his work employs an obtuse if whimsical humor, it leans towards the existential.



2006 *Cart (Red)*, Plywood, acrylic paint, metal pipes; 2008, *Watchman*, Casting tape, glass, plywood, cement, plastic, cardboard, spray paint, enamel paint, aluminum, keys, fabric, rubber

Dana Schutz

- American, b. 1976 in Livonia, Michigan
- Lives and works in New York
- MFA studio program at Columbia; BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine; also studied at the Norwich School of Art and Design in England



Artist's Statement

My paintings are loosely based on meta-narratives. The pictures float in and out of pictorial genres. Still-lives become personified, portraits become events and landscapes become constructions. I embrace the area between which the subject is composed and decomposing, formed and formless, inanimate and alive. Recently I have been making paintings of sculptural goddesses, transitory still-lives, people who make things, people who are made and people who have the ability to eat themselves. Although the paintings themselves are not specifically narrative, I often invent imaginative systems and situations to generate information. These situations usually delineate a site where making is a necessity, audiences potentially don't exist, objects transcend their function and reality is malleable.

Body of Work

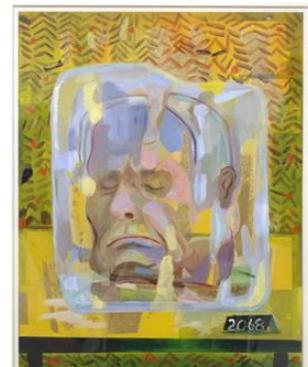
From the Saatchi Gallery: "Drawing from the trippy fashion of the seventies, Schutz weaves her own décor product, reconstituting her zany brand of surreal horror as a monstrosity of lifestyle design."



2004, JCCC Gallery of Art



(2005, *Presentation*, collection Museum of Modern Art)



(2005, *Timothy Leary's Head*, oil and gold leaf on paper)

She participated in a 2008 group exhibition in the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden (featuring *Surgery*), a solo exhibition in 2005 at Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin, and her 2011 solo exhibition featuring *Swimming, Smoking, Crying* has travelled from New York to Miami to Denver. In 2004 she had her first solo exhibition at JCCC Gallery of Art, her first one person show outside of her New York gallery. In 2005 she participated in the *Beyond Bounds: Gold Rush* fundraiser at JCCC. She is represented by LFL, Zach Feuer Gallery in New York; and Marc Foxx in Los Angeles.

Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)

Surgery, 2004

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004.15

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



Loosely brushed and radiating glowing warm colors punctuated by brilliant blues and greens, Dana Schutz's depiction of what might initially seem to be an innocent tea party or picnic reveals itself as a disquieting scene when the little girls' actions come into focus: they are performing surgery on a fragmented figure laid out on a table before them. The subject matter and composition resonate with both high art and popular cultural sources: on the one hand, paintings of anatomical lessons and surgery by such masters as Rembrandt and Thomas Eakins, and on the other hand, the children's board game Operation. We might wonder if the figure on Schutz's table is a patient or a victim, and if the standing girls mean to harm or help her. Long blades of grass separate the viewer from the operating theater-cum-Frankenstein's laboratory, and invite us to dissect the narrative for ourselves, keeping a sense of humor while questioning the sometimes brutal social dynamics of young women. The ultimate ambiguity of meaning is key for the artist, who stated, "I embrace the area between which the subject is composed and decomposing, formed and formless, inanimate and alive."

Dana Schutz earned a BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2000 and an MFA from Columbia University in 2002. In 2004 she had a solo exhibition at JCCC Gallery of Art, her first one person show outside of her New York gallery.

Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)

Swimming, Smoking, Crying, 2009

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.01

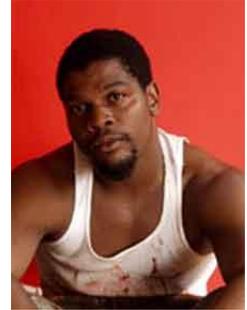
Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Dana Schutz creates fantastical dreamlands full of terror and beauty, violence and whimsy. Schutz invites the viewer to piece together a narrative within these visionary landscapes. As she says, "I don't write stories in the way a writer would; the situations are very loose. I never want the viewer to have to know the whole story to 'get' the painting." In *Swimming, Smoking, Crying*, Schutz fills the canvas with the grotesque face of an androgynous long-haired figure, presumably female, swimming in water of variegated blues. The wavering outlines of the figure's deformed eyes mirror the waves surrounding them. A bizarrely opaque white tear leaks from one eye, echoing the rigid cylinder of the swimmer's cigarette, still lit despite its evident submersion. Schutz's title and the imagery of an outsize head smoking a cigarette likely nod to painter Philip Guston's cartoonish self-portrait in bed, *Painting, Smoking, Eating* (1973), but whereas Guston's figure lies passively, Schutz's swims vigorously. Despite its open-ended story line, Schutz's image suggests a sense of disaster and despondence, as the woman surges across the canvas, weeping in despair or agony, exhaustion or fear. Like her cigarette, burning in defiance of its watery surroundings, she seems to battle the waves desperately but perhaps futilely.

Kehinde Wiley

- American, b. 1977 in Los Angeles
- Moved to Harlem, New York, to be an Artist-in-Residence at the Studio Museum
- 2001 MFA, Yale University School of Art; 1999 BFA, San Francisco Art Institute
- www.kehindewiley.com



Body of Work

Kehinde Wiley's works reference specific paintings by Titian and Tiepolo, but he incorporates a range of art historical and vernacular styles in his paintings, from the French Rococo to the contemporary urban street. He describes his approach as "interrogating the notion of the master painter, at once critical and complicit." He makes figurative paintings that "quote historical sources and position young black men within that field of 'power.'" His figures, slightly larger than life size, are depicted in poses of power and spiritual awakening. He deliberately mixes images of power and spirituality, using them as a filter in the portrayal of masculinity.

Wiley's exhibition *Infinite Mobility* recently appeared at the Brooklyn Museum in New York. He had a solo exhibition called *Rumors of War* October 2005 at the Deitch Gallery in New York, and he participated in JCCC's *Beyond Bounds* fundraiser; his *Gold Rush* drawing was from his *Passing/ Posing* series. Wiley is represented by Deitch Projects (NY), and the Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.



(2005, *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*, Oil on canvas)



Kehinde Wiley (American, b. 1977)

Alexander the Great (Variation), 2005

Oil and enamel on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.29

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



More than serving as mannequins in a fashion ad, the young black men in Kehinde Wiley's portraits participate in constructing their own identities. The artist discovers his models on urban streets and invites them to his studio, where they browse art history books and select a portrait that appeals to them. Wiley then photographs the model in the pose of the figure in the painting, but dressed in contemporary clothing of the model's choosing. Wiley portrays his black subjects as figures of privilege and power, just as European baroque and rococo portraits affirmed the importance of high-status individuals who were almost always white. In this example, against a royal blue background, a swarm of silvery sperm creates a decorative surface from which the young man's upper body triumphantly emerges, his ultra-smooth skin and glistening metallic parka meticulously rendered in a photorealistic style. Wiley's *Alexander the Great* holds a staff modeled on the French royal Hand of Justice scepter, embellished with the fleur-de-lis. The crest at the upper left also bears symbols of power including a crown and the double-headed eagle of the Byzantine, Holy Roman and Russian Empires. The ornate golden frame adds a splendid accent to this provocative fusion of the old-world past and the contemporary urban present.

Kehinde Wiley received a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1999 and an MFA from Yale University in 2001.

Kris Knight

- Canadian, b. 1980
- Lives and works in Toronto
- graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design in 2003.
- www.krisknight.com



Body of Work

Kris Knight is a portrait painter and invents young, secretive characters who are both ambiguous and androgynous in appearance. The characters he creates are influenced by grunge culture, vampires, zombies, and fur trappers. He creates forest environments for these fragile characters that show his sincere love of Canadian winter. He is represented by Katherine Mulherin in Toronto.

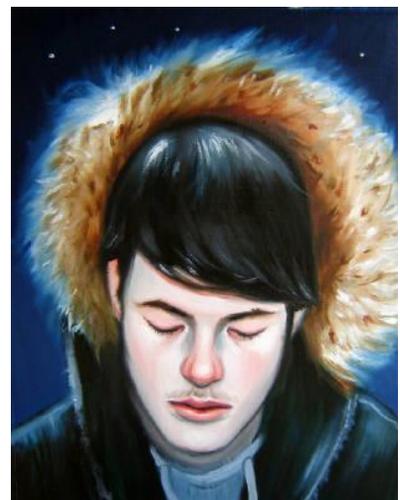
Knight presents the forest setting as refuge, “a world of secret swimming holes, comfy grottos and clandestine paths and clearings just beyond the curtain of the forest border. This is a universe untouched by the legal, social and cultural advancements of the Big City, where the toxic bigotry (to paraphrase Knight's artist statement) of the small town forces its youth into the literal margins of the forest. It's a world of teeming desire, covert and fragile, where the sweep of a pair of car headlights represents imminent danger. As this is a society that can't exist by any kind of light, be it high beams or harsh daylight, Knight's paintings are all plunged in the dark end of the spectrum: midnight blues, glossy blacks and deep forest greens. . . The characters of Knight's rural melodrama all look the same: china-doll skin, pouty scarlet lips, glassy eyes, reddened button noses. There is a kind of every-lad quality to them, lending the paintings the surreal aura of fable. That generality is one of the strengths of the work as it allows the viewer an entry into what is meant to be a private space.” (excerpt from a review of *How We Quit the Forest*, by Sholem Krishtalka, 2007)



(Sweater Girl 2, oil on canvas)



(Long Way Home for a Ghost Like You, oil on canvas)



(Fur Halo, oil on prepared paper)

Kris Knight (Canadian, b. 1980)

Tundra Boy, 2008

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.05



Kris Knight's figure paintings draw from a cast of adolescent friends and acquaintances with whom he shared a rural Canadian upbringing. Most of Knight's characters wear clothing that clearly indicates their Northern origin: flannel shirts, Nordic sweaters and fur-trimmed hats. Many of the androgynous figures communicate psychological tension that make sense within a larger body of work that frequently deals with clandestine love and the emotional and sexual vulnerability of youth. Although, like *Tundra Boy*, they are not true portraits, Knight explains, "... my narratives are rooted in my own personal stories. ... I see them as my characters and stage them within the narrative accordingly."

"*Tundra Boy*"'s pale skin, rosy flush and full, curving lips are typical among Knight's cast of painted characters. Sensuality is underscored here by the elegant curvature of the face in profile, and most particularly by the contour of the distinctive, black fur hat set against the young man's luminescent skin.

Knight is a Toronto-based artist who graduated in 2003, with honors, from the Ontario College of Art and Design. His work has been exhibited widely in Canada and in the US.

Jarvis Boyland

- American, b. 1995 in Memphis, TN
- 2017 BFA University of Memphis
- Lives and works in Chicago
- www.jarvisboyland.com



Body of Work

Jarvis Boyland stated, “Based on photographs—my paintings are embedded with complex sentiments, memories, essence, the figures and objects that inform my compositions become abstracted in the transcription of information. The correspondence between the two mediums, for me, expresses the awkwardness and discomfort felt in both fond and deeply intimate relationships.” Boyland came of age in the era of marriage equality but also of tragedies like the Pulse nightclub shooting and high-profile cases of police brutality. He stated, “I’m fixed on this idea of leisure and depicting the black body in repose rather than lifeless as a consequence of injustice, drugs, and disease that greatly affect black people.” His 2017 painting *Feels Like We Only Go Backwards (Pulse)* captures a moment that is both quotidian and miraculous. He said, “Pulse is me awakening to the possibilities of building a life with a queer partner in Chicago —something I couldn’t do in the South.”

Boyland had a conservative Southern Baptist upbringing and graduated in 2013 from White Station High School in Memphis, TN. While a student at the University of Memphis, he served as a 2014 Orientation Guide, Frosh Camp counselor, and Tiger Elite ambassador to name a few of many student leadership positions. In 2015 he was selected to be one of two Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial fellows at the Art Institute of Chicago, which aims to make a critical impact on American art museums by expanding the diversity of their curatorial staff. In 2016 his painting *Black Boy*, received a merit award in the annual juried student exhibition and *Girl with the Hoop Earrings* won Best in Show in the Best of Memphis Show.

His work is being exhibited at the Art Museum of the University of Memphis and has been included in exhibitions at Kohn Gallery, Los Angeles (2019); Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago (2018); Zevitas Marcus Gallery, Los Angeles (2018); and Blanc Gallery, Chicago (2018). In 2018, Boyland attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME and was recently the Artist-in-Residence for the Arts + Public Life and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics & Culture at the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL (2018-2019).



2017, *Feels like We only go backwards, (Pulse)*, oil on canvas, 72 x 96in, private collection

Jarvis Boyland (American, b. 1995)

Common House, 2019

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.08

Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation



Jarvis Boyland sees the interior living space as the foundation of social ideologies and an incubator that molds the facade of contemporary masculinity. He stated in an interview with *Out*: “Through the color, I think you're able to understand that these scenes are real, but there's a sense of idealism, there's a sense of imagination, there's a sense of time being suspended and contemplated.” Boyland’s portraits are based on hundreds of photographs, all composed and reconfigured to create an honest portrayal of queer domesticity. He highlights the nuances of complex interpersonal relationships, identities, and locales. The figures in *Common House* are all people he knows: the one in the center is a self-portrait. The other two, D'Angelo Lovell Williams and Cameron Clayborn were both resident artists at Skowhegan, Maine with Boyland. Throughout the summer he produced colored pencil and oil pastel drawings that served as studies for this work and others. He stated: “I just wanted to push against this idea of competition and rivalry, which is just the nature of this residency, and I think that can be present amongst a group of artists in this seemingly successful, popular time of making and creating, in the age of internet.”

Now based in Chicago, Boyland graduated in 2017 with a BFA from the University of Memphis.

Jonathan Lyndon Chase

- American, b. 1989 in Philadelphia
- MFA 2016 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; BFA 2013 University of the Arts, Philadelphia; AA 2010 Community College of Philadelphia
- Lives and works in Philadelphia
- www.jonathanlyndonchase.com



Body of Work

Through contorted figures and fractured compositions that float seamlessly between historical and contemporary styles, Jonathan Lyndon Chase portrays a form of self-expression that puts human touch at the forefront. His powerful figurative paintings highlight the daily lives of black queer men and the difficulties faced by defining one's identity as such in contemporary society. "Society for queer black men polices our identities in ways that are damaging and dehumanising. I want to put work that talks about the power of desire, of beauty, of touch, of tenderness spreading that to lovers, friends, and family – then being able to look in the mirror and see that within yourself," he stated in a 2018 interview with Dazed Digital. He continued, "Throughout my work, the idea of poetics, rhythm, and visceral emotion – I associate that also with history with so much energy coming towards you and maybe even a lot of systems built to dismantle or destroy you. Music and art have self-healing, reflective, and meditative properties and it's important to find a home within them." As an undergraduate student, Chase found out that he was bipolar. He said, "internally it's like a starting off point. The highs and the lows of how I see the world can be really overwhelming and then really beautiful. It is a way that helps me be sensitive to nuances in different ways."

His work has been included in exhibitions at The Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke, VA; the California African American Museum, Los Angeles (2017); Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia (2017); The Bunker, Collection of Beth Rudin DeWoody, Palm Beach, FL (2017); and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Art, Philadelphia (2016). Chase's work resides in numerous private and public collections throughout the world.



Eyes locked on jawn, 2017, oil stick and glitter on paper, 12 x 9.75"

Jonathan Lyndon Chase (American, b. 1989)

2 trade bois, 2019

Spray paint, glitter, acrylic, marker on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.11

Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation



Jonathan Lyndon Chase's interdisciplinary practice combines painting, drawing, sculpture, and collage. According to the artist, "as I continued to think about liberation and freedom, I saw the way that within a collage each piece comes from a different world or story – similar to how a body is. We are charged full of memories, experiences, and emotions, all of these things that I think a lot of times are happening all at once. Collage has helped me think about how parts of things, like memories and emotions, are not always bad: they just are." In his portraits of individuals and couples, Chase investigates how art can become a space for healing, expression, and self-actualization. As a queer black individual living with bipolar disorder, he feels that he sees the world in a sensitive way and works through dehumanizing stereotypes with his art. Chase stated, "What's at stake in my work is freedom and liberation, and then specifically: the possibility. A thought is a thought but once your options are no longer there, you're a prisoner and that's when things get really dangerous." Boundaries for race and gender are no longer set in stone, and he prefers to tackle issues of identity head on and take charge of his own narrative.

Based in Philadelphia, Jonathan Lyndon Chase graduated with an MFA in 2016 from Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and he earned a BFA in 2013 from the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. He completed his AA in 2010 at the Community College of Philadelphia.

Ramiro Gomez

- American, b. 1986 in San Bernardino, California
- attended the California Institute for the Arts
- lives and works in West Hollywood, California
- <http://ramirogomezjr.blogspot.com/>



Body of Work

Ramiro Gomez's parents were undocumented Mexican immigrant parents who have since become US citizens. He started college and then left to take work as a live-in nanny with a West Hollywood family. As a teenager he considered becoming a teacher: he helped his grandmother babysit his cousins and he volunteered in elementary schools and took classes in early childhood education. He recalled some of the experiences becoming part of a family as a nanny, and seeing other nannies in the community come and go, he wanted to address "these ephemeral moments of people who appear and disappear. Invisibility goes beyond one person. It takes on a mental state. The need to blend in and not stand out too much. You're wanting to please. You want to make sure that there are no reasons to be fired." Referring to magazines like *Architectural Digest*, he said, "the magazines looked like the very environments I was working in and I started feeling an interesting reaction to them. It was looking at these environments minus all the people I was working with. It was an erasure of us. So it became very clear what to add. It was this simple act. It was just inspired by saying, 'I'm here. We exist.'"

He stated, "*Happy Hills* [2011] is my body of work documenting the predominantly Hispanic workforce who work tirelessly behind the scenes to maintain the beautiful imagery of these affluent areas." Over the last three years, Gomez's work has caught the attention of the media, as well as the art world. No small irony, since the art world is often reflective of elite tastes, and therefore complicit in keeping the question of manual labor firmly out of public view. In 2014 during his residency at the University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities, he created blurry-faced figures painted with acrylic on cardboard, and displayed them guerrilla style along N. Beverly Dr. in Beverly Hills. For his 2016 solo exhibition at Charlie James Gallery in LA, he created large-scale works set among the high-end retail of Melrose Avenue (Fred Segal, TenOver6). "I also selectively choose the facelessness [of my figures] for a reason. Most of the people I did work with were Latino, but there were people from Pakistan and other places. Plus, this isn't just an L.A. reality. In other parts of the world, the cast is different but the reality is the same. So for people in Turkey or France or Pakistan, to see this, the issue is the same. Visualizing this labor is necessary."

In 2013 Gomez had his first solo exhibition at the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, and was also awarded with a residency to install a mural in West Hollywood Park, titled *The Caretakers*. In 2014 Gomez had a solo show at Charlie James Gallery and went on to show widely across North America. Gomez's work has been covered in the *New York Times Magazine*, the *Washington Post*, NPR, the *Los Angeles Times*, Hyperallergic, Huffington Post, and CNN. In the spring of 2016, Gomez had a show *On Melrose* at the Charlie James Gallery, and a monograph *Domestic Scene* was published by Lawrence Weschler (Abrams). Gomez was selected to participate in the Denver Art Museum's site specific installation exhibition "Mi tierra: Contemporary Artists Explore Place," in 2017.

Ramiro Gomez (American, b. 1986)

Work and Home (A Family's Daily Separation), 2017

Mixed media on cardboard

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017.18

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen

Art Acquisition Endowment of the JCCC Foundation



Ramiro Gomez focuses his work on the people who labor to clean and care for interior and exterior spaces and their inhabitants, particularly in Southern California. By painting the groundskeepers, window washers, nannies, gardeners and others who labor in low-paid jobs, Gomez lifts these workers from obscurity and social invisibility. Because these workers are mostly immigrants, and most often from south of the American border, Gomez's paintings address the socio-cultural and personal politics of this important work force. In the diptych *Work and Home*, one side portrays a worker tending to a lush, green lawn, while the other side shows what appear to be laborers returning home after a long day's work. Anyone who has performed domestic labor understands the painful sacrifice of leaving one's own family to tend to another's family. Gomez typically blurs the faces of his workers to underline their invisibility as they go about their work and care for other people's children. He has painted this scene on the cardboard of a U-Haul box, perhaps signifying the often-mobile life that immigrants may lead as they follow certain labor from town to town. The disposable cardboard may also suggest the fragility inherent in an immigrant's status.

Los Angeles artist Ramiro Gomez was born in San Bernardino, California, and he attended the California Institute for the Arts. In 2016/2017 he participated in the Nerman Museum's exhibition *Domestic Seen*.

Rick Bartow (American Indian, Wiyot, b. 1946 – d. 2014)

Alpha, 2005

Pastel on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art



Animals are recurring subjects in Rick Bartow's artworks. The birds and salmon in his paintings and wood carvings pay tribute to the wildlife of his native Oregon's central coast, while coyotes, dogs, and bears — sometimes in partly human form — appear as fearsome beasts in the midst of metamorphosis. Animals in Bartow's world may be tricksters, companions, guardians, or adversaries. They always seem to be in the act of becoming, but it's not clear whether the outcome is joy or terror, hurt or healing. The menace and humor of Bartow's art suggests that they can be all those things at once.

After graduating from college, Bartow was drafted to Vietnam in 1969. He found ways of expressing himself through art overseas, for instance, drawing in the margins of yellow notepads. He also played guitar and sang in a touring GI band, morale-boosting work that earned him a Bronze Star. When he was discharged in 1971, however, he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. He said in a 2003 interview that it was art that helped him find himself again. Bartow stated that he was always searching for metaphors, and "in the end, I'm dealing not only with part of me that's Native American but also the part of me that is a veteran. It doesn't seem like you ever get rid of that stuff."

Bartow was born in Newport, Oregon and earned a degree in secondary art education in 1969 from Western Oregon University.

Essay by Denis Neil Binon: Rick Bartow established his artistic career in the 1980s. In many ways, his work became a therapeutic practice as he recovered from the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder he suffered after his service in the Vietnam War and the effects of alcoholism. His paintings are often about the interconnections between nature, humans and the spirit, interwoven with autobiographical expressions. Bartow is a master in the use of color; his gestural painting style combines realism with abstraction, and it frequently includes haunting combinations of human and animal forms. Bartow's body of work demonstrates his close ties to his Indigenous culture while finding artistic inspiration from 20th-century masters including Francis Bacon, Robert Rauschenberg and Jean-Michel Basquiat. The painting *Alpha* incorporates many of these influences. The artist depicts a human figure with the snout and mouth of a wolf baring its bloody fangs. The left eye of this creature is fully human, creating the sense that the representation of the wolf is a mask worn by the human. The figure's body dissolves into abstraction, and the image becomes a psychological study of man's ability to transform into a predator.

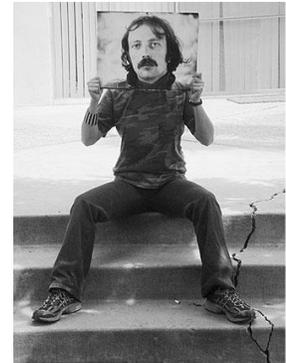
Carlee Fernandez

- American, b. 1973
- Lives and works in Los Angeles
- 1999 MFA, Claremont Graduate University, CA; 1997 BFA, California State University, Fullerton
- www.carleefernandez.com



Body of Work

The artist grew up in Holland where her father worked as a geologist. Fernandez is represented by Acuna Hansen Gallery in Los Angeles. She participated in JCCC Gallery of Art's *Borderland* exhibition in 2004. In 2007, she had a solo exhibition titled *Man*, featuring self-portrait photographs with the artist holding photographic reproductions of various male heroes, video, and sculpture utilizing natural specimen at the Platform Gallery in Seattle.



(2006, *Self-portrait as Franz West*)

(2006, *Portrait of My Dad, As Franz West, As Me*, Finger Sea Sponge, African fabric, tree branch armature, papier mache)



Artist's Quote

"This work opened a brand new direction for my art. Previously, my material of choice was taxidermy. My attraction to taxidermy was both for its formal sculptural aspects as well as its beauty. Taxidermy is simply a hollow form hidden under a wrapper of fur. Cutting open the form, I was interested in exposing the negative space of the taxidermic animal and somehow filling it. My investigations of the animals developed into sculpture by morphing buffalo and goat heads with luggage and, later, sheep and rhinos with everyday household items such as a laundry basket and a ladder. In 2002, my work moved away from the integration of man-made objects of taxidermy into something more surreal. The "Still Lives" series was the amalgamation of two natural objects into one new object that exudes something more natural than each on their own. In a sense, it becomes a second life, a new creation. It was as if I threw all the elements: taxidermed animals, branches, coral and fruit into a big caldron, stirred them up, and out came these sculptures. *Rat with Grapes*, for example, is a taxidermic rat with grapes growing in and protruding out of its body."



(2002, *White Rat with Red Grapes*, altered taxidermy and synthetic fruit)



(2004, *Borderland* installation, JCCC Gallery of Art)

Carlee Fernandez (American, b. 1973)

White Pigeon with Saffron Finch, 2004

Altered taxidermy and branch

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004.19

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Numerous contemporary artists have incorporated taxidermic animals into their sculptures, often in ways that contrast the natural existence of animals with the artificial constructions of humans. Among them is Los Angeles-based Carlee Fernandez, whose 2001 series *Friends* featured taxidermic animals fused with useful domestic items – for example, a sheep with a fur-covered laundry basket incorporated into its back. Fernandez explained that she was attracted to taxidermy “both for its formal sculptural aspects as well as its beauty. Taxidermy is simply a hollow form hidden under a wrapper of fur. Cutting open the form, I was interested in exposing the negative space of the taxidermic animal and somehow filling it.” In her subsequent *Still Lifes* series, to which *White Pigeon and Saffron Finch* belongs, Fernandez noted that her work “moved away from the integration of man-made objects of taxidermy into something more surreal. . . . the amalgamation of two natural objects into one new object that exudes something more natural than each on their own. In a sense, it becomes a second life, a new creation.” In this case, the left side of the saffron finch merges with the body of the white pigeon, whose legs are replaced by the smooth branch from which both birds appear to take flight.

Carlee Fernandez earned a BFA from California State University, Fullerton, in 1997, and an MFA from Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, in 1999. She participated in the JCCC Gallery of Art’s *Borderland* exhibition in 2004.

Laura DeAngelis

- American, b. 1973 in Chicago
- Lives and works in southern Missouri
- BFA, 1995, Kansas City Art Institute



Body of Work

Laura DeAngelis creates life-sized figurative ceramic sculpture incorporating celestial and natural imagery. JCCC commissioned her to create the eagle sculpture for the Police Academy.

She stated, “my work has evolved from a search of elements that are both specific and universal. As a starting point, mythology, natural history, and science have been of particular interest because each contains a fixed model for perceiving different aspects of our relationship to the world within itself.”

In 2006 she was the lead artist for the “Art in the Loop” public art project for Oppenstein Park at 12th and Walnut in downtown Kansas City. The ceramic tiles for the outdoor sculpture required 3,000 pounds of ceramic material and hundreds of hours of firing and glazing.

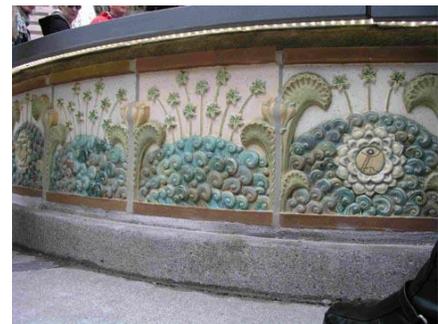
DeAngelis participated in the JCCC Gallery of Art’s *Beyond Bounds: Gold Rush* fundraiser in 2005. In addition to exhibiting her work nationwide, she actively teaches and presents workshops, and in 2004 completed a residency at the International Ceramics Studio in Hungary. She was recently the gallery director at Red Star Studios.



(2005, *Vestige*, ceramic and gold leaf)



(2008, *Celestial Flyways*, ceramic tiles, stainless steel disk, acrylic lenses, L.E.D. lights, mechanism)



(detail)

Laura DeAngelis (American, b. 1973)

Keeper, 2012

Ceramic, encaustic and fresh water pearl

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013.14



Laura DeAngelis is a Kansas City artist who now lives out in the country near the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri. Nature has always been important to her in her artwork (JCCC also owns her *Eagle* sculpture on display over by the Police Academy), and this possum is part of her new series called "Pearl Diving." She is surrounded by woods and sees creatures like deer and possum almost every day, but she is also referencing Missouri's once-thriving fresh water pearl industry, which after collapsing in the early 1900s from over harvesting and environmental pressures has made a comeback in recent years in a different form - mussel shells are now used as the irritant that stimulates oysters into producing a cultured pearl.

Laura DeAngelis received a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1995

Essay by Elizabeth Kirsch: Ceramist Laura DeAngelis is renowned for her sculptures of people and animals, which bristle with psychic energy. Her animal portraits are particularly noteworthy — she creates them to reveal “the workings of our inner worlds and in turn, the visible reflection of that which is invisible.” *Keeper* is one of the scarier examples of her art. This creature — its teeth and nails prominently displayed as it rips open a pomegranate — is undeniably menacing. DeAngelis’ expert craftsmanship lends it a disturbing realism, and with its coloration heightened by an encaustic coating, the little beast almost glows in the dark. Historically, opossums are often depicted as representations of vigilance, or during times when “sin plays dead.” Pomegranates have been portrayed in art for centuries. Archetypally they represent the life-death-rebirth cycle; in the Old Testament they symbolize righteousness, as they are thought to contain 613 seeds which correspond to the 613 commandments of the Torah. DeAngelis does not tell people what to think about her art, but she is deeply concerned with environmentalism and animal abuse. In *Keeper* numerous pearls are embedded in the fruit and the opossum’s stomach. DeAngelis writes that pearls represent “the struggles, triumphs, cruelty, and beauty that accompany this arduous seeking of the rare and the strange — gems born out of hardship.”

Aaron Morse

- American, b. 1974 in Tucson, Arizona
- Lives and works in Los Angeles
- MFA in 1998, University of Cincinnati, Ohio; 1996 BFA, University of Tucson



Body of Work

Morse paints elongated and distorted subjects in muted hues with watercolors and oil. His vision of nature combines nineteenth-century romantic epics about the wild western frontier with contemporary popular sources and a futuristic vision of reality. In *Hawkeye #2*, five elongated vertical panels present landscapes, close-ups, and abstract passages to form an action-based narrative sequence. "Pathfinder" may refer to the James Fenimore Cooper epic novel *The Pathfinder, or The Inland Sea* (1840), a naval story set on the Great Lakes of the 1750s during the French and Indian War. It was Cooper's fourth novel featuring Natty Bumppo (aka Hawkeye, Deerslayer, Pathfinder) or "Leatherstocking," a fictitious frontier hero, woodsman and champion of the Indians. The character also appeared in the 1950a TV series "Hawkeye" (1957) and the movie *The Pathfinder* (1952). In the movie, Pathfinder is a white man raised by the Mohican Indians who joins forces with the British army to avenge himself on the Mingo warriors and the French who have brought death and pillage to his people.

His works are in public collections across the nation, including the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the University of California at Berkeley Art Museum. Morse has had several solo exhibitions: *The War is Over* at Guild & Greyshkul in New York, which ended May 2006. Morse is represented by Acme Los Angeles. He recently participated in the 2005 *Beyond Bounds: Gold Rush* fundraiser at JCCC.



(2004, *Mountaineers*, acrylic & gouache on paper)



(2002, *Breaking Wave*, watercolor and pencil on paper)
(2005, *Hawkeye*, acrylic, watercolor, gold leaf and pencil on paper)

Aaron Morse (American, b. 1974)

Flight, 2006

Watercolor on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.11

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



The epic narrative art of Los Angeles-based artist Aaron Morse draws on such diverse sources as American history and politics, 19th-century Romantic literature, natural history illustrations, comic books and current events. Morse gives his watercolor *Flight* a dramatic vertical format using three sheets of paper and employs a low horizon line to emphasize the action in the heavens. Against the vast stretch of blue that shades to yellow near the horizon, the artist limns a fictional flock including ducks, geese, cranes, turkeys and even hummingbirds, all dominated by a bald eagle at the upper left. Morse arranges these various avian species in a decorative manner similar to wallpaper or a game hunter's trophy display. Here, however, the birds share the sky with an air battle. Tumbling downward in their midst is an airman whose parachute has yet to open; presumably he has ejected from the stricken World War II-era Soviet aircraft at the lower left, anachronistically paired with and perhaps defeated by World War I-era biplanes swarming against the yellow sky. The blue owl near the bottom over the patchwork of rivers and fields draws our attention to the ground far below, where another plane has already crashed and shoots up a plume of smoke.

Aaron Morse earned a BFA from the University of Tucson in 1996 and an MFA from the University of Cincinnati in 1998. The Nerman Museum also owns his large 2004 painting *Pathfinder*, which is on view in the COM Dining area.

Benjamin Degen

- American, b. 1976 in Brooklyn, New York
- Lives and works in New York City.
- 1998 Cooper Union School of Art and Science BFA; 1997 Yale Norfolk Painting Fellowship



Body of Work

Narrative within an imagined world plays a part in the drawings and paintings of Benjamin Degen. Highly refined and obsessively detailed, Degen's drawings offer views of looming mountains, isolated houses and their interiors. Figures rarely appeared, and then only in pictures within the picture — a framed portrait on a wall, for example. Recently, Degen has begun to introduce the human figure, at times wholly imagined or based on friends and fellow artists. These figures are either rendered realistically or in an almost naïvely spare style, and are frequently nude and placed in nature. Degen isolates the basic elements of visual representation: people, places, things and thoughts. The individual components are stripped of specific identities and reconstituted in compositions that can simultaneously function as portraiture, landscape, still life and diagram. Referencing Greek amphorae, Minoan paintings, Navajo rugs and Chinese landscape painting, Degen composes objects that can be read in various ways. A body can be seen as a landscape or as typography. Text stripped of all meaning can begin to read like the patterns of nature. A geometric pattern becomes visual mathematics. The grain of wood can begin to read like text. The composition becomes a floating space as the specific definitions of individual elements are replaced by a relative balance.

In 2005 Degen was featured in *Greater New York* at PS1 Contemporary Art Center. In 2004 he had a solo exhibition called "LandLives and Still Scapes" at Guild & Greyshkul, New York, and in 2006 "A Tree is Falling" was shown at Kantor Feuer in Los Angeles. He also participated in a group exhibition at Galerie Rodolphe Janssen in Brussels, Belgium.



(2005, *Roost*, pencil and colored pencil on paper)



(2006, *Rust and Dusk*, Oil on canvas)



(2006, *You're The One*, Pencil & colored pencil on paper)

Benjamin Degen (American, b. 1976)

Last Taste, 2006

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.53



Referencing ancient Greek vessels, Minoan paintings, and medieval tapestries, Benjamin Degen presents highly detailed and stylized houses, fences, and figures isolated in natural settings. In this painting, a mortally wounded deer is gracefully posed on the verge of collapsing, pierced by two arrows, exposed and memorialized. A warm flamingo pink palette unifies the composition, complimented by the neutral brown and deep indigo. The faux-naïve style creates a sense of flat space with no horizon line, various patterns, and simplified anatomy. The larger horizontal brushstrokes in the background visually draw the vibrant space close to the canvas surface, while tiny pointillist dots define the tongue and nose. We see the inner layers of paint exposed where the artist scraped away the white paint of the antlers. The narrative and composition are loosely based on the 16th century Unicorn Tapestries.

Degen is a New York artist who graduated in 1998 with a BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art and Science.

Essay by Nan Chisholm: A native New Yorker, Benjamin Degen vividly remembers visiting the Cloisters as a child and being riveted by the Unicorn Tapestries. Seven detailed hangings document the sighting, stalking, capture and confinement of the mythic, noble creature. Another artwork that made a lasting impression on him was a drawing of Plains Indians killing elk. Yet in *Last Taste*, Degen chose not to emphasize the act of killing, preferring to underscore the moment in which the animal is about to become one with the universe he once inhabited. Degen believes that “all paintings come from drawings,” and he carefully plotted the colors and various patterns of *Last Taste* before beginning to paint. A myriad of tiny brushstrokes, lines and dots define separate elements of the work. By restricting the palette to a limited number of colors, Degen succeeds in accentuating the connectedness between the dying deer and its surroundings. In the stag’s last moments of consciousness, his tongue caresses the earth in a final farewell. Around 2006, the artist was immersed in the study and practice of Shaolin Kung Fu. He believes painting is a form of meditation, a way of being present, and a means to focus one’s mind rather than simply relaxing it.

Branch House, 2006, Oil on canvas, Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.27 Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer



A fascination with color and pattern characterizes Benjamin Degen's work, which is informed by a variety of influences including American folk art. The patchwork patterning of the walls and roof of the house in Degen’s *Branch House*, for example, recalls traditional American quilts. The dwelling itself, as in many untutored nineteenth-century folk renderings of barns and houses, is viewed from an oblique angle, but does not recede into space. Instead, the house continues off the left edge of the canvas and can be imagined as extending into the infinite starry sky beyond. Degen is known for constructing emotionally charged interior spaces, such as that of the wooden cabin seen here. Though the floating house appears warm and comforting against the backdrop of the dark night sky, it also has an ominous quality. No obvious light source generates the vibrantly red glow of the interior – a red mirrored by the ends of severed tree branches, visible in the framed painting adorning the cabin's wall. These maimed tree limbs appear bloodied and stump-like, begging comparison to the living trees that surround the house itself.

Misha Kligman (American, b. 1978)

The Observer, 2012

Oil and wax on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art



At first *The Observer* appear to be monochromatic abstraction, but the low contrast palette reveals a mysterious bird in the shadowy landscape, suggesting a narrative. This work is from Misha Kligman's *Threshold* series. "I want an open-endedness. I want much more of an unfinished conversation. You know, something's being said and then I stop talking, essentially," he says. "The rest is silence and the viewer has to complete the painting." His earlier artwork, mostly grisaille, deals with his own family's experiences with repression as Jews living in the Soviet Union, as well as with the Holocaust. Kligman himself was born in the Soviet Union, and his family came to the United States in 1995, settling in Cleveland. Kligman is hoping those who see a window into his history through his art will pause and think about their own histories through a realistic lens. He stated in a 2009 interview, "For me, it's being caught in between longing for the past, and knowing the past isn't all bad." He also works with graphite combined with ashes gathered from burnt books, gold leaf and other materials.

Kligman is currently Assistant Professor of Drawing and Painting at JCCC. He graduated with a BA from the Cleveland State University in 2001 and MFA in Painting and Drawing from University of Kansas in 2009. In 2015 Kligman was awarded the Charlotte Street Foundation's Visual Artists Fellowship. Additionally, he is a founding member of Plug Projects located in the West Bottoms, Kansas City.

Tom Uttech (American, b. 1942)

Backauyauh Akando, 1991

Watercolor on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art



Wisconsin artist Tom Uttech paints imaginary woodland scenes that celebrate the verdant natural world he has known since his childhood in Merrill, Wisconsin. His paintings are based on the woods of the Precambrian Shield, a stretch of land across the northern United States and South-Eastern Canada, where the ancient igneous rock is exposed, and miles of lakes, woodlands, and wildlife lie untouched by human influence. The artist stated, “It is a land of glacial lakes, boreal plants and animals, and few human inhabitants. When I am there, I feel at home, complete, and invisible. I try to have my paintings contain and communicate that feeling.” Uttech is devoted to recreating what it feels like to be in those woods at dawn and dusk, when the mystical powers of the forest and its wildlife are most evident. The effect of these detailed paintings is nostalgic and reverential—there is a familiarity, but there is also, in the abundant presence of the wildlife and the glow of the horizon, a hint of something we cannot comprehend. This sense of mystery is referenced in Uttech’s titles of the paintings—words he finds in Anishinaabe or Ojibwa language.

Tom Uttech earned his BFA in 1965 at Layton School of Art and his MA in 1976 from the University of Cincinnati. He was a professor of art at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, until 1998.

Eric Beltz

- American b. 1975 in Orange, CA
- lives and works in California
- 2004 MFA from the University of California Santa Barbara and 2000 BFA from California State University, Fullerton
- www.ericbeltz.com

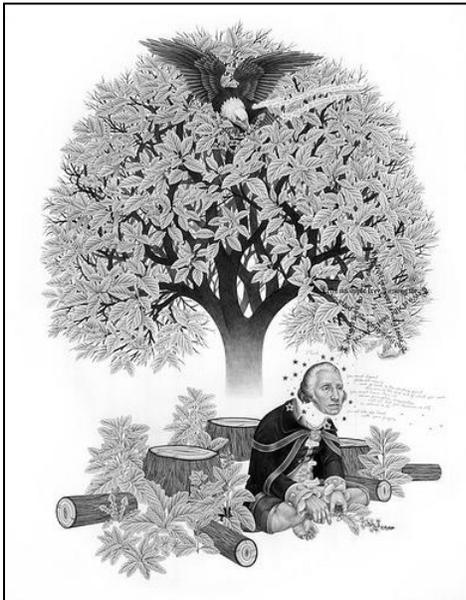


Body of Work

Beltz's highly detailed graphite drawings address America's colonial history and our lack of connection to nature. Raised by his grandparents, Beltz became familiar with first hand accounts of what life was like for farmers during the Great Depression.

His protagonists in his drawings include anonymous farmers and our founding fathers, and the narrative scenes incorporate images of medicinal plants, native animals and texts from the Bible and the Egyptian and Tibetan books of the dead. Beltz explains: "The phrases express spiritual optimism, vegetal regeneration, or a transcendent acceptance of death." Death may represent empowerment, sacrifice, violence, or epiphany.

He takes aim mainly at Americana and the foundational myths of our country. One drawing, titled with a curse directed at a tree, pictures George Washington seated on a chunk of the sawed-down tree, an allusion to the legendary felled cherry. With his right hand, Washington appears to bless a decapitated owl on the tree's stump, and toward his other side a snake coils under the words "Never Surrender". . . Throughout his work, Beltz tends to separate heads from bodies, leaving blank space where necks would be. The disconnection seems gratuitous at first, but nothing here is unintentional or arbitrary. In the image of Washington, as in others, the gap captures the idea that thought can operate independent of action, that sense often separates itself from might



(2008, *Tree of the Evil Eagle*, graphite on paper)

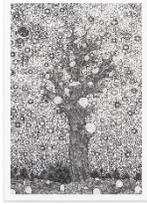
Selected solo exhibitions include *The Philosopher's Garden*, Rio Hondo College, Whittier, CA (2009); *The Good Land* at Morgan Lehman Gallery in New York (2008); *HISTROY!* at Acuña-Hansen Gallery in Los Angeles (2007); *Hypnobotany: Visions of a Field Naturalist* at Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum in Santa Barbara, California (2005).

Eric Beltz (American, b. 1975)

Tree of Radiance, 2018

Graphite on Bristol

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art



The combination of botanical rendering and kaleidoscopic abstraction transports the landscape genre toward a futuristic spiritual realm. This realm is deeply rooted in American history, however. Raised by his grandparents, Beltz became familiar with firsthand accounts of what life was like for farmers during the Great Depression. His protagonists in some of his works include anonymous farmers and founding fathers, and the narrative scenes incorporate images of medicinal plants and native animals. Some of the drawings feature words or texts from the Bible and the Egyptian and Tibetan books of the dead. Beltz explained, "The phrases express spiritual optimism, vegetal regeneration, or a transcendent acceptance of death." The Nerman Museum also owns his 2008 drawing *The Good Land* with a skull-faced farmer. In his more recent works, including *Tree of Radiance*, Beltz continued his investigation of early Christian Apocryphal Gospels in the series which he titled *Body of Adam*. Through geometric repetition, he speaks to those "who can get lost inside an image or pictorial space" and also to those who appreciate the technical level of detail. He stated, "there's an amount of love in my work and I think that people can recognize that, if you're going to make the effort to make a drawing like that, you must love it."

Eric Beltz received a BFA from California State University, Fullerton in 2000, and earned his MFA from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2004.

Eric Beltz (American, b. 1975)

The Good Land, 2008

Graphite on Bristol

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.23

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Eric Beltz's *The Good Land* presents a crisply drawn and inscribed scene of rural American nostalgia interrupted by grim reality. The artist explains: "A farmer finds himself rapt in a contemplative moment while dispatching a deer. In this metaphysical moment, the dying deer represents the passing of life, the dead rabbit half buried in snow is the end of life while the farmer is the conduit between these two states. His realization puts him into more vital relationship to the implications of life and death, the currency of a life lived off the land. The problem here is the ambiguity of revelation: how to interpret the vision, what is the Good Land, and how to achieve it." The farmer's skull head symbolically represents his attunement to death. Spiritually transformed, he engages in silent conversation with the dead rabbit, concluding that "better than the beginning of a thing is the end thereof" (Ecclesiastes 1-7). The rabbit responds simply: "Death, Death, Always Death." In this morbid exchange, Beltz seems to question slyly the destiny sought by America's religious forefathers—their desire to possess both heaven and earth. In a world where anthropocentric ends often justify questionable means, Beltz's vision of "the good land" gently prods—good for whom?

Jules de Balincourt

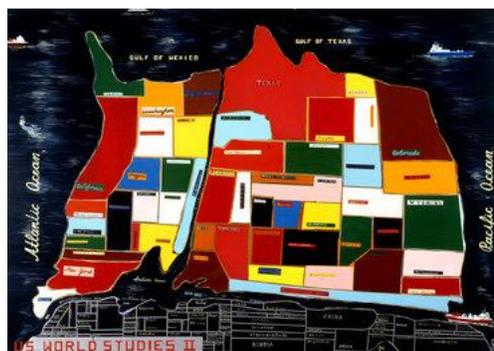
- French American, b. 1972 in Paris
- Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York
- 2005, MFA, Hunter College, New York; 1998, BFA, California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco



Body of Work

Jules de Balincourt's paintings, executed with oil, spray paint and pen on board, appear as climactic moments that are excised from a larger narrative context that is unknown to the viewer. Whether de Balincourt imagines his own stories or bases his episodes upon ready-made sources is unclear. He paints in a faux-naïf style, using highly saturated colors, flat textures, stiff lines, no modeling, and reveling in spatial recession as if he had just stumbled upon it. All of these elements give his unorthodox paintings their particular urgency, flavor and youthful exuberance.

De Balincourt draws fictional parodies of Americana that's both foreign and familiar. He invents a contemporary anthropology based on media representation, political dissent and community value. Mimicking the design of textbook illustrations, WW2 newsreel footage and 1950's film stills, De Balincourt plays on the sensational reference of government-sanctioned entertainment and its underlying uses as ideological weapons. Maps are reordered to propagate geographical ignorance, familiar typefaces spell out impending doom, and symbolic political colors shift uncomfortably between republican pride and the nostalgia of communist threat. Using techniques ranging from stenciled and sprayed designs to gestural abstraction, the qualities of outsider art become synonymous for American values, as his 'amateurish' style replicates the heritage of grass-roots enthusiasm and democratic freedom. He trades the hierarchy of painterly sophistication for homely aesthetics: bright tones, bold shapes, and cartoonish forms act as propaganda instruction for the lowest common denominator.



(2005, *US World Studies II*)



(2005, *Insiders and Outsiders*)

Since 1998, de Balincourt has had solo exhibitions in San Francisco, New York, Boston, Paris, Berlin, and Venice, and he has participated in numerous group exhibitions, including the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. He is represented by the Saatchi Gallery in London. In 2004 he participated in the group exhibition *True Stories* in the JCCC Gallery of Art.

Jules de Balincourt (American, b. France, 1972)

Remembering Our Great Dead Heroes, 2007

Oil and spray paint on panel, 36 x 48"

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017.46

Gift of Zachary Feuer and Alison Fox



By including the title in block letters on the painting itself, Jules De Balincourt makes a statement about accessibility. In the rest of the painting, viewers see looping lines and glowing specks floating over cool colors in the background; it is a non-objective composition. Nothing is necessarily recognizable, but the movement suggested with swirling brushstrokes could remind people of shooting patriotic rockets, swirling sparklers in the night, stars in the cosmos or fireflies gliding over a pool of water. The title gives the abstract elements context and functions as a sign creating imagery in the mind of the beholder. De Balincourt's folk art style is an intentionally democratic approach to imagery and narrative. He wants his artwork to be relatable and approachable for everyone, not just artworld insiders. This work was included in a 2007 solo exhibition titled *Unknowing Man's Nature* at Zach Feuer Gallery in New York, with several other mixed media paintings and sculptures touching on post-9-11 fears and bias. De Balincourt participated in the 2004 group exhibition *True Stories* in the former JCCC Gallery of Art.

De Balincourt was born in Paris and he lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. In 2005, he earned an MFA from Hunter College, New York; and in 1998, he received a BFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco.

Essay by Bill Arning: Jules de Balincourt's relationship to pure abstraction is fraught. He grew up admiring pure abstraction as the pinnacle of what artists should aspire to but felt great discomfort at making the leap himself. That discomfort is manifest in *Remembering Our Great Dead Heroes*, in which the looping, joyfully arrayed ribbons of pure delight that would be enough for most abstractions are joined by the work's title, printed like a caption in capital letters along the bottom edge of the painting. "I need images to almost act as icons, propaganda (especially at the time with the whole Bush nightmare and Iraq), or simply present open-ended stories," de Balincourt said in a 2019 email. "Well, in this case I made a very formalist painting . . . but then I needed to smack you with something that was dealing with death, unjustified wars and remembrance." Like much of the artist's best work, this unlikely hybrid is not locatable in any one time or place in history, and his handling of the text enhances the work's indeterminacy: "I decided to put the phrase in one continuous word to dilute the immediacy of the message, giving the viewer a moment before trying to decode the sentence," he said. As such, it charms like an affable ghost.

Temporary Drop Out, 2003, Oil, spray paint, pen on board, Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004.25



We peer down into a suburban valley from "look out point." A towering palm tree and telephone pole frame the stage-like scene, with the foreground figures washed on blue shadow. Beaming headlights and glowing home windows suggest a thriving night life in the yellow-brick walled neighborhood. A strip mall with Home Depot as its centerpiece sprawls across the distance. The tilted perspective creates a sense of alienation, as viewers join the crowd of deviants hanging out in their nocturnal refuge. Jules De Balincourt creates parodies of Americana in an innocent, *faux-naïf* style. His nostalgic works refer to mass media representations of politics and community, and his compositions mimic newsreel footage, film stills, and textbook illustrations from the 40s and 50s. Reinvented maps and images from government-sanctioned entertainment appear in his works, and he uses techniques ranging from stenciling to gestural painting on wood board.

Archie Scott Gobber

- American, b. 1965 in Warrensburg, MO
- BFA, 1988 Kansas City Art Institute
- www.archiescottgobber.com



Body of Work

Scott Gobber uses text in paintings, sculpture, and works on paper. In his earlier works he drew inspiration from nostalgic and iconic signage and appropriated the imagery and text of promotion, propaganda, and pinup. Recently, however, Gobber has turned his attention toward the politics of world opinion, global events, and personal conviction. The artist's messages have grown increasingly concise. While his work often comments on perceptions and responses to current events, it manages to do so in such a way that allows space for a viewer's own response and interpretation. The artist has been strategic in his appropriation and projection of voice, intentionally blurring the boundaries of authoritarian directive and internal questioning. Considerations of leadership and craftsmanship, alike, are cause for the artist to invite speculation about the way we look and listen. Ultimately, the artist reminds us that we all assume public responsibility for the choices and decisions we make as we form our opinions, develop our convictions, and move through the world.

In 1998 he received a grant from the Charlotte Street Foundation, and at the time he was the youngest artist to receive the honor. Since 2005 he has been a resident artist at Review Studios.

Artist's Statement

"Using language, I say something and nothing at once. There is power in words and suggestion as I ask the viewers to provide authorship through the filter of, their lives, beliefs and unique circumstances. Through the various meanings usages and entendres of language, I am provided infinite source material."



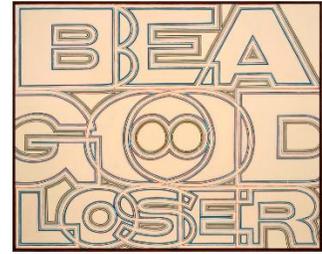
Archie Scott Gobber (American, b. 1965)

Be A Good Loser, 2010

Enamel on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.58

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



Be A Good Loser epitomizes Archie Scott Gobber's distinctive ability to "portray" words and phrases that are at once specific, personal and richly connotative for each individual who sees and reads them. Often communicating qualities of criticality and self-deprecation, Gobber's work – whether graphic, illustrational, painterly or sculptural – is also permeated by sly, deadpan humor and gamesmanship, achieving a finely tuned, ironic balance between denial and affirmation. The optical intensity and depth of this painting, achieved through Gobber's meticulous, painstaking applications of multiple layers of line and color, exemplifies his graphically precise method of pictorializing and personalizing words and phrases to dimensional effect. Gobber's choice of the slogan, "be a good loser," is at once very personal to him while also invoking a formerly ubiquitous figure of speech now supplanted by the exhortation to "be a good sport." The artist pushes the language of signage in a conceptual direction by rearranging and playfully rendering words to encourage multiple readings. For example, his intentional cropping of "GOOD" by the painting's edges implies a continuation of the word – an apt metaphor for an artistic practice Gobber describes as a connective, continuing journey.

Archie Scott Gobber earned a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1988, and in 1998 he was awarded a Charlotte Street Foundation award. In 2009 he participated in the Nerman Museum's exhibition *WORD* with Jim Sajovic and Christopher Leitch.

Dustin Pevey

- American, b. 1980 in Texas
- Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York
- attended the Academy of Art in San Francisco
- www.dustinpevey.com



Body of Work

Multi-media artist Dustin Pevey creates collage-like artworks that are self-reflective and cyclical. His physically and conceptually layered process includes images from his studio, paintings, details of paintings, photographs of digital prints of paintings, and cryptic advertisements. Running his index of images through an Epson printer onto various canvas surfaces the artist refers to as “textures,” he uses the process of overlapping to connect the imagery in his work to the context of a single piece. His large-scale drawings examine the prevailing attitudes of postmodern culture and the concept of “progress.”

In his series titled “Still Lives,” “Landscapes,” and “Meditation Paintings” compositions include advertisements, logos, graffiti, articles of clothing, cartoons, and internet images. Taken out of context, these elements overlap and obscure one another evoking the distraction, competition, and obsession of life mediated by computer windows.

Pevey is also a musician, and he previously worked in the fine art reproduction and printing industry for many years in Austin, Texas starting as a printer and then as an artist, publishing work under the pseudonym M. Drake and selling work to large corporate retailers such as Crate and Barrel, Home Goods, and World Market.

Pevey’s work has been presented in solo exhibitions at Retrospective Gallery in Hudson, New York, Marfa Book Company in Texas, and Bill Brady Miami, as well as a two person exhibition at Galeria Massimo Audiello in Mexico City. His art has also been shown in group exhibitions at Galerie Gabriel Rolt in Amsterdam, Johannes Vogt Gallery in New York, and Angstrom Gallery in Los Angeles.



2014, *afternoon stroll*, Inkjet, dirt, vinyl, acrylic on canvas

Dustin Pevey (American, b. 1980)

seduce ur followers, 2014

Acrylic, spray paint, inkjet on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015.02

Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation



This large mixed-media work on canvas contains several reoccurring elements found in Dustin Pevey's collection of imagery including photographs, advertisements, and abstraction. From his "Landscape" series, this composition includes a partially obscured fast-food logo motif, digitally printed images of trees in the background, and an obscure prophetic sign. Using his smartphone to snap photos as he was travelling across the country, Pevey created a stockpile of images that reflected his experiences, and he then recombined the flashes of memory into a cryptic projection of reality. The upside down golden arches are immediately recognizable because of the logo's color and shape that the McDonald's restaurant chain has branded relentlessly, and their physical presence includes over 36,000 locations throughout the world (with over 100 billion served among 100 countries). Featured as three separate panels in his winter 2014-2015 exhibition *Please Don't Lick: Landscape Paintings by Dustin Pevey* at Bill Brady Miami, the works are once again united, although the puzzle pieces do not all fit together. Viewers are left to fill in the gaps using a gestalt concept of closure. People have an innate desire to make sense of what we see, so they anticipate and complete the form despite missing parts.

Born in Texas, Dustin Pevey studied at the Academy of Art in San Francisco and is currently based in Brooklyn, New York. The Nerman Museum also owns an untitled painting from 2013, which is currently on view in the first-floor Regnier Center collection focus area.

Essay by Bill Arning: Dustin Pevey's large-scale painting references the American vernacular tradition of the roadside billboard, from its hand-painted glory days to today's more garish versions. In *seduce ur followers*, a mega-church solicitation and the McDonald's fast food restaurant logo become fused into one big come-on. While driving around the country, Pevey decided to make "landscape paintings" using logos, signs and disparate images from the internet. "I was putting images on a surface and letting them speak for themselves," he said. "*'seduce ur followers'* is a direct copy of a billboard I saw somewhere in the middle of nowhere countryside in Arkansas . . . the billboard was about 100 yards off the road, set back against a dense forest. It was just a weird moment. There was a McDonald's sign next to it." When he exhibited the piece in a gallery, Pevey presented the three-panel painting in three parts on different walls. But they can also be hung side by side. "When the piece is together it more or less reads 'God Is Everywhere,'" he said. "I included the trees because in my memory of that moment, the forest that started just behind the billboards was why it stood out to me. I've seen countless signs that are very similar, but there was just something about that particular one in that particular landscape. It didn't hurt that a fuzzy radio evangelist was barking God at the same time."

Brian Ulrich (American, b. 1971)

Bloomington, MN (store closing) #47, 2004

Chromogenic print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.112



Black River Falls, WI, 2006

Chromogenic print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.24



Through his series of “trash cam” portraits of people reading discarded newspapers, to scenes of slack-jawed consumers in various retail locations and overflowing thrift stores, Brian Ulrich scrutinizes social and contemporary illusions. An everyday scene at a gas station in the sunny suburbs holds a deeper message with political commentary: these people are no longer paying close attention to the world war raging across the ocean. Whoever is in charge at this station are going through the motions of placing government regulated signage in appropriate spots, but they are not following through with the daily reports. The void in the danger alert sign contrasts with the glistening sea-blue Apex washer fluid, bluer than the blue sky. Ulrich captured this image with a triptych format, the three sections of the composition further emphasizing the order in our daily lives; we may be organized and taken care of in our consumer society, yet we remain oblivious. Perpetually facing a varied and unknown public, Ulrich at once emphasized the vulnerability of this employee while simultaneously reminding us of the heightened state of awareness and fear that permeated all aspects of society after 9/11. This work and others from his *Copia* series were exhibited at the Nerman Museum in 2008.

Ulrich was born in Northport, NY. He earned his MFA in photography at Columbia College Chicago and a BFA in photography at the University of Akron. He currently lives and works in Chicago and teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kahlil Robert Irving

- American, b. 1992 in San Diego, CA
- Lives and works in St. Louis, MO
- MFA, 2017, Washington University, St. Louis; BFA in art history and ceramics, Kansas City Art Institute
- www.kahlilirving.com



Body of Work

Kahlil Robert Irving is a multimedia artist whose recent work is comprised of large sculptures that challenge the setup of traditional means of viewing and relating to sculptures and objects. He wants to address historical notions of colorism, Eurocentric analysis, structural barriers that separate communities, and objects that exist in and around the urban environment. Contrasts are integral to his message: fine china displays/trash, precious / disposable, etc. He stated in a Feb. 2017 interview with Strange Fire Collective, "I collect items, used my clothes, and studio materials to make what I call my 'remnants series.' . Within some works I wanted to conceal and reveal certain aspects of the work upfront and direct." He has studied historical objects including Sevres porcelain, garniture, water vessels and daily wares from the past 3 centuries, and he has produced hundreds of sculptures. Irving hopes to build respect among diverse audiences. He stated, "blackness is not synonymous with darkness. Within colonialism demonizing the color Black and idealizing whiteness has added a great barrier within contemporary culture....I also see my practice as a means of protesting. I am not out on the street but continuing to make my voice present within contemporary art is a way to take up room to talk about issues that are important. "

Recently, Irving was the 2017/ 2018 Alice C. Cole Fellow at Wellesley College in Wellesley, MA, where he plans to work with engineering students to build a wooden maze with thrift store objects embedded in the walls. His work has been exhibited internationally at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, in Jerusalem, Israel; The International Ceramics Studio, in Kecskemet, Hungary; and the Riga Porcelain Museum in Riga, Latvia. He has also exhibited at The Glassell School and Museum of Fine Art in Houston, TX; The Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design in Milwaukee, WI; and the Kansas City Artist Coalition in Kansas City, MO. In the summer of 2016, Irving was a resident artist at the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica in Venice, Italy. His work is in the collections of the Riga Porcelain Museum, in Riga, Latvia; The Ken Ferguson Teaching Collection at KCAI; and the Foundation for Contemporary Ceramic Art in Kecskemet, Hungary. He recently completed a Durwood Trust Provenance Research internship at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. He had a fall 2017 exhibition at Callicoon Fine Arts in New York.



Black Matter, 2017 thesis; *Seven Pack – Memorial edition*, August 2014 (RIP), 2017, glazed and unglazed porcelain and stoneware, blue slip, gravel, glass, decals, various shades of luster

Kahlil Robert Irving (American, b. 1992)

Compact Mass – News; Nation Holds Breath for Death (Pride and Protest) – ~~NO CHARGES FOR WILSON~~, 2017

Porcelain, stoneware, enamel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.10



Kahlil Irving's comfort with the ceramic medium is evident in the complexity and nuance of his pieces, although viewers should be forgiven for gravitating toward the social message of this work ahead of the artist's technical mastery. The dense, meticulously crafted sculpture is emblazoned with decals inspired by newspaper accounts of the killing of Michael Brown, an African-American teenager, in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014. The police officer who shot Brown, Darren Wilson, was not charged with any crime. While *Compact Mass* can readily function as a damning condemnation of racial profiling and police violence against Black people, the work's construction speaks to an even more pervasive injustice. Irving's skillful incorporation of finishes and materials evokes concrete buildings, pavement and streets — the urban landscape that functions as a macabre set piece for an unending cavalcade of violence against Black Americans. For the artist, the sculpture is far more than a memorial to Michael Brown. It is a reminder that violence, racism and exploitation literally built American civilization as we know it, and that despite “having so much access to things,” we still fail “to see what's right in front of us.”

Kahlil Irving earned his MFA at Washington University in St. Louis in May 2017. He completed his BFA in art history and ceramics at the Kansas City Art Institute. Irving was born in San Diego and relocated to St. Louis as a teenager. He participated in the Nerman Museum's group exhibition *Ephemera* in 2017/2018.

Nicola López

- American, b. 1975 in Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY
- Columbia University, New York, MFA 2004 and BA in anthropology 1998; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Maine, 2002; attended Escola de Artes Visuais, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1996
- www.nicolalopez.com



Body of Work

Direct exposure to different cultures and locations has been a great influence on López's work, which often focuses on how place is constructed and represented. She explores these issues through drawings, prints, mixed media collages and installations. In 2005 she had a solo show *Vertigo* at Caren Golden Fine Art, NY; and in 2003 her exhibition *Maps and Other Myths* was held at LACS Gallery at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1999 she exhibited in South America, with *Rescatando la Historia* at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo and *Transplantes* at the Taller de Manuel in Cuzco, Peru. Lopez' work was included in the exhibition *American Soil* at the Nerman Museum (2007-2008).

Artist's Statement

"I use the language of printmaking to address the processes of automation and mass production that have brought today's world into existence. The specific media of intaglio, woodblock and drawing that I choose to work with, however, are still closely linked to the artist's hand and allow the work to be about my own attempt as an individual to come up with a system of navigating this overwhelming landscape instead of simply consuming one of the pre-fabricated, mass-produced and -marketed versions, of which there are so many. . . Our world is full of the tension between just this order and disorder and my work focuses on that tension, creating images of landscapes that struggle against themselves, that strive towards order and beauty as they verge on the edge of spinning beyond control or comprehension. The maps and images that I create do not propose a clearly navigable territory or a clear destination, but ask the question of where we really are and where we might be going."



(2006, *Unnatural Disasters: The Flood* (detail), Woodblock on mylar)

(2005, *Strange Skies 1*, Woodblock, intaglio, silkscreen on paper; mylar collage)

Nicola López (American, b. 1975)

Eye of the Storm, 2006

Ink, gouache, graphite and oil stick on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.55



Eye of the Storm by Nicola López presents a stunning example of the artist's skill at expressing the uneasiness of our times. In this tightly arranged and carefully layered work, a twisting vortex of conduits, smokestack effluence, steel towers and skyscrapers spiral upward. Simultaneously, some of the tower supports have splintered, as if these structures might crash down on us at any moment, recalling the tragedy of 9/11. However, hope is not lost. López has stated, "In making an object that lives in the world, I do not just want to be exposing nightmares. In one sense, sure this can be just about global warming, but as you look, you might also find little pockets of things tied to progress and regeneration, things that might also seem hopeful." Relief from the frenetic sense of anxiety comes from a tiny patch of sky visible just beyond the tops of the buildings. Additionally, a ramshackle group of dwellings on the left side of the composition suggests the human capacity to survive, while the satellite dishes and television aerials on their roofs can be read as reminders of the need to band together and communicate.

Nicola López has exhibited her art extensively in the United States, Europe and Central and South America. She holds an MFA degree from Columbia University in New York. She participated in the Nerman Museum's inaugural exhibition *American Soil* in 2007-2008.

Whiting Tennis

- American, b. 1959 in Hampton, VA
- lives and works in Seattle
- 1984 BFA, University of Washington; 1979-81, studied at the College of William and Mary

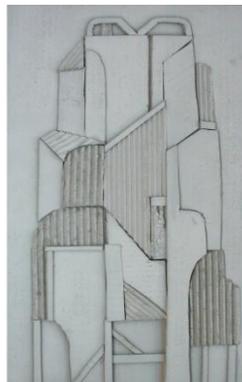


Body of Work

Whiting Tennis creates sculptures and 2-dimensional works that combine acrylic paint, collage, and block-cut prints. He often makes larger works composed of pieces of paper that are either printed on, painted on, or found collage elements. His works depict common place scenes and images, old houses, broken down buildings, trees, and suburban landscapes. After moving from Seattle to New York and back to Seattle, he finally bought an old house in Greenwood, and he found himself sympathizing with the old man who'd lived there before him, who'd died there, in fact, and who left the garage stuffed with belongings. The realtors were going to clean it all out, but Tennis insisted they leave it.

His 2006 show at the Greg Kucera Gallery included objects and ideas that were in that garage, waiting for him. Over the past five years, he's begun making not just paintings, drawings, and low-reliefs, but standalone architectural figures. Tennis finds rhythm in wood grains, the repetition of leaves in trees, in blades of grass, stacks of lumber, and walls of brick.

The JCCC painting *Sphinx* was lent to the Portland Art Museum for the 2008 inaugural Contemporary Northwest Art Award exhibition, where Tennis was awarded the first Arlene Schnitzer Prize. Tennis is represented by Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle, and Derek Eller Gallery, New York.



(2009, *Hippopotamus*, spray paint on cardboard)



(2009, *Coulda Shoulda Woulda*, mixed media)

(2007, *Model for Pharaoh*, Lath, plywood and paint)

Whiting Tennis (American, b. 1959)

Sphinx, 2007

Acrylic and collage on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.61



Whiting Tennis finds aesthetic inspiration in the rhythm of wood grain, tree leaves, blades of grass, lumber stacks and brick walls. He combines acrylic painting, collage and block-cut printing techniques on two-dimensional works, and he also produces standing wood sculpture. His pieces allude to common place scenes and images, like old houses, broken down buildings and suburban landscapes, and the titles are often ancient and mysterious. In his work *Sphinx*, we might see an unfamiliar monument of weathered wood, an imaginary patchwork construction of wooden planks or a geometric structure with a hollow interior. The orderly straight lines of the structure contrast with the swirling, organic wood grain. Outlines of red and blue volumetric forms offset the otherwise colorless composition. After living as an itinerant artist in Seattle (and New York and then Seattle again) for years, he bought an old house and was inspired by the man who'd lived there, died and left his belongings in the garage. Tennis has incorporated some of these objects in his recent installations.

Tennis was born in Hampton, Virginia, and currently lives and works in Seattle. In 1984, he earned a BFA from the University of Washington, and from 1979-1981, he studied at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Frank Magnotta

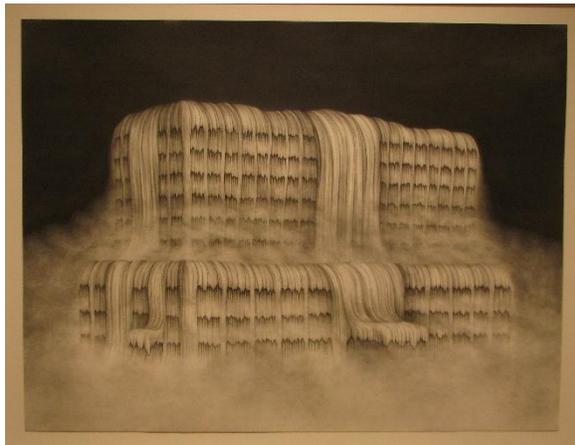
- American, b. 1970 in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York
- MFA from the University of Illinois, BFA from Hope College in Holland, Michigan
- www.fmagnotta.com



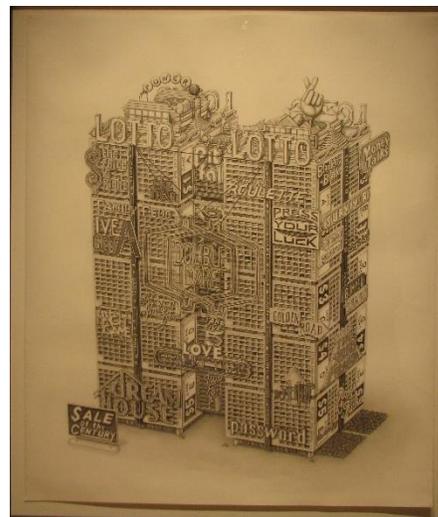
Body of Work

In his large, virtuoso graphite drawings, Frank Magnotta creates imaginary architecture, machinery, or landscapes that are either ideals or monstrosities, depending upon the degree of one's attention to consumer culture. He isolates his subjects at the center of a vast expanse of white paper, thereby heightening the singularity of these fantastic constructions. The fact that people are out of sight adds to the eeriness of his drawings.

Magnotta participated in the Nerman Museum's inaugural exhibition *American Soil* in 2007-2008. Solo exhibitions of Magnotta's work have been held at Cohan and Leslie in New York, New York and Standard Gallery in Chicago, Illinois and project rooms at Cohan, Leslie and Browne and White Columns, both in New York City. His work has been included in group shows at the Aldrich Museum of Art in Ridgefield, Connecticut; the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Arena Gallery, GALE GATES et al., all in Brooklyn, New York; Ten-in-One Gallery, the ISE Cultural Foundation, Art in General, all in New York, New York; the Macintosh Museum of Art in Glasgow, Scotland; Zola/Lieberman Gallery in Chicago, Illinois.



(2004, *Falls*, Graphite on paper)



(2003, *Lottopian I*, Graphite on paper)

Frank Magnotta (American, b. 1970)

U.N., 2007

Graphite on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.99



In his large, virtuoso graphite drawings, New York artist Frank Magnotta creates imaginary architecture, machinery or landscapes that are either ideals or monstrosities, depending upon the degree of one's attention to consumer culture. He isolates his subjects at the center of a vast expanse of white paper, or in this case, expanses of black powdered graphite, thereby heightening the singularity of these fantastic constructions. The fact that people are out of sight adds to the eeriness of his drawings. In this work showing the UN building in New York City, there is no environment, no city skyline or any other context for the skyscraper. He stated, "The drawing resides in an ambiguity, between physical and conceptual worlds. The scale creates a tension. Architecture that typically towers over us is shrunken down to human proportions. So in a way the drawings are big and small at the same time." He starts with preparatory sketches and then draws a structural framework on the paper to give himself something to manipulate. Recent works include still lifes on shelves and refrigerator interiors.

Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Magnotta received his MFA from the University of Illinois, and a BFA from Hope College in Holland, Michigan. Magnotta participated in the Nerman Museum's inaugural exhibition *American Soil* in 2007-2008.

Angelina Gualdoni

- American, b. 1975 in San Francisco and raised in St. Louis
- Lives and works in Chicago and New York
- 2000 MFA, University of Illinois at Chicago; 1997, BFA, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore; 1993-1995, attended Washington University, School of Art



Body of Work

Angelina Gualdoni uses painting to explore the conflicts and synchronicities between the built environment and landscape. One of Gualdoni's most recent bodies of work is the result of her research into utopian architecture; another series explores the phenomenon of dead malls. Gualdoni's second solo exhibition at Kavi Gupta Gallery in December 2004 included paintings of demolished buildings, churches peaking through a dirty skyline, parking garages seeping into the ground, strip malls decaying and discarded concrete barriers. These structures and symbols mingle comfortably with spills, drips, and stains on the canvas reiterating the role chance plays in all of this. While she investigates various states of ruin, some may argue Gualdoni also presents an optimistic viewpoint. Her isolated representations of city, suburban, and country structures are not just records of a declining society, they are imbued with a hopeful outlook for renewed generative life.

Gualdoni participated in the Nerman Museum's inaugural exhibition *American Soil* in 2007-2008. She has recently had solo shows at the St. Louis Art Museum, and Dogenhaus Galerie in Leipzig. Recent group shows include "Painting the Glass House" at the Aldrich Museum, and "Poets on Painters", at the Ulrich Museum. Upcoming shows include "Stalker Effect" at Galleria dell'Arco, in Palermo and Shanghai, and a solo show at Kavi Gupta Gallery.



(2005, *The Slow Continuum that Proceeds in Your Absence*, Acrylic and oil on canvas)

Angelina Gualdoni (American, b. 1975)

Slating in Suspension, 2007

Oil and acrylic on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.50



Angelina Gualdoni's paintings often contrast works of modern, utopian architecture with scenes of urban blight. In *Slating in Suspension*, the structure in the center of the composition features 90-degree angles and clean lines: low-slung walls are echoed by a flat, overhanging roof that sits perpendicular to large windows. However, this building is falling apart. Paint peels from its window frames and the glass seems to have been covered over with plywood. Bricks in the upper left portion of the wall are missing and the wall's rectangular bricks or tiles are discolored. Through the space created by the missing bricks one can see a tall pile of refuse. Another large mound of litter with tires and long strands of twisted and rusted metal occupies the left foreground of the painting. Gualdoni's painting style enhances these contradictions. She often begins by pouring acrylic paint onto raw, unprimed canvas, resulting in areas where the canvas weave can be seen among pools of pigment, such as at the top and right edges of *Slating in Suspension*. The painting appears to be disintegrating before our eyes, augmented by her frequent use of rusty colors. Ultimately, Gualdoni's work may challenge us to re-think how we view aging cities and architecture.

The artist holds an MFA degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore; she also studied at Washington University in St. Louis. She participated in the Nerman Museum's inaugural exhibition *American Soil* in 2007-2008, and JCCC also owns her 2007 painting *Pile*, which is on view in the 1st floor Regnier Center collection focus area.

Angelina Gualdoni (American, b. 1975)

Pile, 2007

Acrylic and oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.05

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Angelina Gualdoni's paintings investigate the failed utopias of modern architecture seen through images of urban decay rendered in unexpected colors that glow as if irradiated. Gualdoni begins her paintings by pouring thin paint directly onto the canvas to create organic watery stains that call to mind the work of Helen Frankenthaler. In *Pile*, part of the artist's *Radiant Half-life* body of work, a muddied neon orange and avocado green mound of glowing debris emerges from the outline of Gualdoni's stains. According to the artist, *Pile* stems from earlier paintings of abandoned malls; however, here Gualdoni focuses on the trash off-loaded into makeshift landfills by contractors seeking to avoid paying disposal fees. The aggregation of indecipherable shapes formed by bright delicate linear marks layered thinly onto darker planes of color conjures thoughts of architectural wreckage piled up after a cataclysmic event. *Pile* also suggests, says Gualdoni, "an ambiguous or flexible scale." The mound could be enormous and even provide shelter. According to Gualdoni: "That the process of making the painting – unpredictable and intuitive – aligned with my thinking about potential for construction in the discarded wasn't accidental."

Chris Ballantyne

- American, b. 1972 in Alabama
- Currently lives in New York
- MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2002, BA in painting from the University of South Florida, Tampa, in 1997



Body of Work

In his landscapes and cityscapes, Ballantyne eliminates detail to emphasize the subtleties of the way we experience space and containment. In mural works he expands the imagery of his paintings beyond the picture plane and onto the surrounding walls. Ballantyne accentuates the antisocial effects of our built environment with a hint of humor and ambiguity. He is fascinated with the potential of his wood panel's flat surface, and the flow of the wood grain. He paints human-made, deserted landscapes, and he seeks out the parallels between his panel and the flat earth (or asphalt, or water), which he often paints from above. He sometimes uses his untouched wood surface to evoke space, effecting lyrical, if deliciously paradoxical, confluences between flatness and depth.

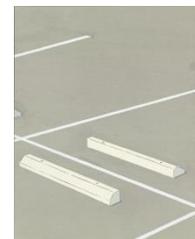
He states, "many of the paintings are combinations of places from memory or elements put together in a more surreal context. I grew up in areas surrounding cities so moving to San Francisco for school and then to New York I was really conscious of the suburban places that I had grown up in...I surfed and skated a lot which has had an influence on my work and I think I would credit skating the most for my interest in architecture and its reinterpretation." Of his murals he said "my paintings are generally on the smaller side so I like the jump in scale and the tension."

He participated in the Nerman Museum's *Faraway Nearby - Addressing Suburbia* exhibition in 2010 with a unique mural and several smaller acrylic works on paper and panel. Other recent exhibitions include the Cheekwood Museum of Art in Nashville, and "Dream of New Jersey" at the DCKT Contemporary in New York. The artist has exhibited in Los Angeles and Berlin with the Peres-Projects, and was featured in the 2006 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art.



(Untitled, *Tidal Bore (Surfer)* 8"x10" archival pigment print)

(2003, *Untitled (Parking Blocks)*, Synthetic polymer paint and pencil on paper, Museum of Modern Art)



Chris Ballantyne (American, b. 1972)

Office Tower (Citadel), 2006

Acrylic on panel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2011.28

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art

Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation



Chris Ballantyne's landscape paintings often take a bird's-eye view of human-made forms set in expansive planes of grass or ocean. Jetties, swimming pools, fences, parking lots and tract homes are common subjects; yet pools are curiously divided, fences dead-end without enclosing a yard, parking lots contain enigmatic stone forms, and houses grow into multiple wings that connect with each other at improbable angles. The familiar geometries of rooftops and parking lines are thus rendered abstract, their flat planes of color appear as both a diagram and a dream. Ballantyne's aesthetic was influenced by his family's many moves during his childhood across the southern coast of the United States for his father's work with the U.S. Coast Guard. His experience living in various suburban areas gave him a sense of the homogeneity of residential developments across the country, as well as an awareness of expanding urban areas gradually encroaching on the natural landscape and ways that suburban development is primarily determined by emphatic borders around private property. Ballantyne has been interested in creating an "uneasy sense of quiet" through paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, and murals in which an uninhabited architecture is arranged to interrogate the balance between nature and culture.

Ballantyne was born in Alabama and graduated in with a BA in painting and drawing from the University of South Florida in 1997. He earned an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2002. He participated in the Nerman Museum's *Faraway Nearby - Addressing Suburbia* exhibition in 2010 with a unique mural and several smaller acrylic works on paper and panel.

Essay by Brian Hearne: One might ask of Chris Ballantyne's precise painting of a sleek suburban office tower, "Where did all the people go?" Perched on its tiny island, surrounded by a vast moat spanned only by drawbridge or rooftop helipad, this architectural rendering of an isolated corporate stronghold has the formal beauty of a Japanese woodblock print. The drone or helicopter's eye perspective, suggesting the ascent of the capitalist surveillance state, affords an aerial view of the office island and the privileged exclusivity of accessing it. Like our planet itself, Ballantyne's picture is largely covered in water. The well-trod landmass is diminished to the edges of the panel as though sea levels were on the rise. The artist's subtle washes of diluted paint enhance the natural grain of the wood veneer, adding depth and texture to the water. Schools of fish are visible beneath its surface, as is the inscrutable façade of the building casting its ghostly reflection below. Eerily, humans are absent from the scene. There are hints of their presence — an outdoor seating area, manicured landscaping, visible footpaths on land — but no signs of life. Perhaps the humans are ensconced in the 360-degree embrace of the corporate citadel that provides for all its employees' existential needs.

Andrzej Zielinski

- American, b. 1976 in Kansas City, Missouri
- Currently lives and works in Los Angeles
- Attended JCCC in 1999; in 2002 he received a BFA in Painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; 2004 MFA Painting, Yale University



Body of Work

Zielinski first showed at Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles, in a group show in 2004, and in 2005, Zielinski participated in *Greater New York, P.S.1/MoMA*. He recently had a one-person show *Control, Option, Shift* at Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery in New York. He participated in the 2005 *Beyond Bounds: Gold Rush* fundraiser at JCCC (his work *6^5?* was auctioned and won by Marti and Tony Oppenheimer who then donated the painting to the college for the museum's permanent collection). Zielinski taught a painting class at the college in 2006, and he participated in the Gallery of Art's final exhibition *Homecoming* in 2006/2007.

(2005, *6^5?*, encaustic and gold leaf on canvas on panel)



Marc Selwyn: "In today's world much emphasis is placed on being computer literate, and much has been made of the impact of digital technology on traditional modes of art making. Andrzej Zielinski's paintings of laptops and ATMs disregard such concerns. The artist pays no attention to the intent or function of the laptop computers and ATMs that are the subjects of his paintings. He lovingly crafts machines that exist in a world of their own, with thickly applied, confectionary paint, unexpected color combinations, and eccentric distortions. His compositions have the effect of destabilizing the viewer, and allow each of the machines to hum in their own useless singularity. The life-size ATMs are painted in a shorthand style using large brush strokes with passages of the painting rendered in impasto that borders on the sculptural realm of the third dimension. The brush strokes create glare that allows the ATMs to snap and in and out of the illusion of three-dimensionality. This gives normally static machines a sense of exuberant dynamism. In both the laptop and ATM pieces Zielinski has combined the technology of the twenty-first century with a highly individual and powerful style that forces the contemporary viewer to focus on the dichotomy between the digital and the hand crafted. Zielinski explores the relationship between man and machine that has fascinated artists throughout the twentieth century. His work is a return to the traditional methods of art making, but is anything but conventional."

The museum also owns a sculpture from his student years (which is on view outside the Arts & Technology Building), a 2011 painting depicting a camera, a 2009-2010 painting *Yellow Industrial Paper Shredder* and a 2009 print of the same subject, and an untitled laptop painting from 2003

Andrzej Zieliński (American, b. 1976)

Mobile with Auto-brightness?, 2015

Westerfield steatite, Sivec marble, orange Utah alabaster, agate, copper, green ash wood, stain, and paint

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015.88



“Stone, wood, metal and plastic! Mastering these materials is an integral part of the timeline of human history. This mastery has allowed the development of the remarkable technologies we live with today, i.e., computers, satellites, mobile phones and lunar rovers. These technologies are ongoing fascinations for me,” Andrzej Zieliński stated. Known for his texture-heavy paintings of distorted laptops and paper shredders, Zieliński branched out further into the three-dimensional realm with surprising combinations of media. His sculptures became more figurative with different forms stacked vertically. In a 2015 lecture he mentioned imagery from India with an elephant at the base and layers of earth on top; in the Hindu creation myth, a tortoise supports elephants that hold up the world, and everything is encircled by the world serpent. The metal cart is a part of the sculpture, because the artist sees the metal as a desk top, like a home for the machine. This work and others were featured in his solo exhibition *Open Sourced* from October 2015-April 2016, and JCCC produced a major catalogue. The college owns eleven of his works, including an outdoor sculpture from his student years.

Zieliński was born in Kansas City, Missouri. He studied art and art history at JCCC and at the University of Kansas, and in 2002 he received a BFA in Painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In 2004 he earned an MFA in Painting from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

Andrzej Zieliński (American, b. 1976)

Green ATM, 2005

Oil on linen over panel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.35

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA



Bold organic shapes in a lush green color might at first suggest vegetation, but soon the geometric structure of the Automated Teller Machine appears and dominates the composition in its distorted glory. Zieliński created a series of ATM paintings, and he is also known for his paintings of laptops and paper shredders. On *Green ATM*, three-dimensional elements highlight the most interactive components of the machine: the buttons and screen. Consumerism, desires and needs of daily contemporary life, and modern dependence on machines may come to mind when viewers face such an image. The painter’s techniques, however, command as much attention as the contemporary subject matter. Repeated linear elements in the brushwork move our eyes throughout the composition; we can see where the artist slowly drew the bristles of the brush over the wet paint to reveal base color below. Incisions suggest the slots of a fan, and the surface of the two screens was scraped down to the stained canvas. Zieliński does not limit his creations to the 2-dimensional surface; in some instances, he may even cut into the panel itself and add layers back onto the composition.

Art Miller

- American, b. 1961 in Mission, KS
- 1983 BFA in Visual Communication from KU
- Lives and works in Kansas City



Body of Work

Issues of identity, gender, and class have been the mainstay of postmodern art for more than two decades. Kansas City artist Art Miller has focused his unwavering photographic gaze on all these contemporary issues. For over thirty years, Miller has been creating intelligent and insightful photographs for over thirty years. A keen observer of contemporary life, his meticulously crafted photographs reveal a ubiquitous landscape, clearly in view but easily overlooked.

Miller's earliest body of work, the *Architectural Series* began in 1985. In these works, he documents and expresses the unfortunate loss of community-based commercial and entertainment locations that were demolished and replaced by generic strip malls and national chain stores over the past 2 decades. His other series include *Bears* and the *Habana Series* which provide unstaged glimpses into gay subcultures in the conservative midwest.

He is represented by Sherry Leedy Contemporary in Kansas City, and he has shown with Bill Brady in both Kansas City and at the ATM Gallery in New York City. Miller's photos are in the permanent collections of Sprint Nextel Corporation World Headquarters, Overland Park, Kansas, American Century Investors Corporation, Kansas City, Missouri, The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, and DST Corporation, Kansas City, Missouri among others. He has donated works to several JCCC Beyond Bounds fundraisers.



2005 *Mission Medical Professional Building*, 2005, Gold-toned gelatin silver photograph

2014 *Faith Deliverance Family Worship Center, (former strip mall with Kroger grocery)* Kansas City, KS, 2014, Archival ink jet print mounted to archival board

Art Miller (American, b. 1961)

AT&T Corporation Cellular Tower (fabricated in the form of a Cross), First Church of the Nazarene, Springdale, Arkansas, 2019, 2019

Archival pigment print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.20

Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation



Acting much as a cultural anthropologist, Art Miller has spent more than twenty years creating several distinct bodies of work, photographing in various cities across the United States. Because of their apparently neutral stance, his photographs possess a documentary sensibility. But there is always more to Miller's oeuvre than is first apparent. Miller's picture of a local Baptist church with a cell tower belongs to the great American tradition of documentary-style architectural photography. It is a straight-on, unemotional, seemingly scientific approach to silent subject matter. But subversive undercurrents lurk in Miller's topic. He states, "In recent years, I've noticed an odd marriage (both metaphysical and substantive) between America's Christian churches and American commerce. Structures originally designed and built as commercial buildings—retail, office, and industrial—are increasingly re-purposed and transformed into church sanctuaries. Additionally, existing church steeples may now be transformed into functioning cell towers, or sometimes, cell towers, fabricated in the form of a cross, are installed upon church grounds, often towering over an existing cross atop a building's steeple." To complete the religious/commercial transformation, camouflaged cell phone towers often masquerade as steeples and bell towers. Although Miller has typically worked in black and white, here he uses color to great effect.

Raised in Mission, KS, and educated at the University of Kansas (BFA in Visual Communication, 1983), Miller is an artist and designer whose work has been exhibited frequently in the Kansas City area. He was recipient of a Charlotte Street Foundation Fellowship in 2003.

Essay by Jane Aspinwall: Art Miller first turned to photography in 1985 to document favorite buildings in danger of eventual demolition. Throughout his career, acting as a kind of visual anthropologist, Miller has explored the mundane and often overlooked aspects of our culture. In the series *Transformed*, Miller considers the sometimes conflicting concepts of consumerism and religion. Cell towers morph into crosses. Strip malls, grocery stores and former industrial buildings become sprawling churches. Each structure is a part of a cycle of decline and renewal, ultimately "saved" from demolition. Here, the addition of a cross-bar has transformed the Crown Castle Corporation cellular tower into something sacred. The cross soars high above in the blue sky, disembodied from earth. Swirling clouds reinforce the connection to the heavenly realm. Here, form and function unite to serve a single goal: a clear transmission of message readily received by a wide audience.

Lori Nix

- American, b. 1969 in Norton, Kansas
- Lives and works in New York
- 1995 MFA in Photography, Ohio University, Athens; 1993 BA in Art History and 1992 BFA in Photography and Ceramics, Truman State University, Kirksville, MO
- www.lorinix.net



Body of Work

Lori Nix is an artist who bends the line between truth and illusion in her photographs. She accomplishes this by photographing miniatures and models which illuminate her interest in the disaster movies of the 1970s and her memories of growing up in Kansas, a place that seems to attract disasters like no other.



1998, *Tornado*

In her series titled *Accidentally Kansas*, Nix creates scenes of floods, tornadoes, snow storms, lightning strikes, and insect infestations, all epic and defining events recalled from her formative years in rural Kansas. The state of Kansas is located in the middle of the United States geographically, and also represents the moral middle of the road as a state of mind where conventional family values and good citizenship go hand in hand. By linking disasters with moral imperatives Nix allows herself to question conventional codes of society at the same time as she explores the unsettling memories of her youth.

In more recent work, Nix has left Kansas behind as a subject, and, although depictions of disaster are still prominent in this new work, she has begun to explore situations that are as eerie and ominous as her former work was clear and present. This new work is charged with anxiety and uncertainty as witnesses to her previous disasters have become bystanders waiting for something to happen. Nix finished work on the series *Accidentally Kansas* well before the terrorist attacks on September 11, and also began work on a new series titled *Some Other Place* before the attacks, so a shift from natural disasters to psychological trauma began in her work before world events had a chance to influence her. As an artist in her early thirties Nix wasn't very far removed from the experiences that inform her work. Recalling a pond that froze over early in the season trapping thousands of frogs in the ice and then chipping them out to throw at her sister is a memory site that she continues to evolve as her work matures. 2001, *Elysium Fields*



Lori Nix / Kathleen Gerber (American, b. 1969)

Museum of Art, 2005

Archival pigment print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015.107

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation



Lori Nix is an artist who bends the line between truth and illusion in her photographs. She accomplishes this by photographing miniatures and models which illuminate her interest in the disaster movies of the 1970s and her memories of growing up in Kansas, a place that historically seems to attract natural disasters like no other. Nix and her partner Kathleen Gerber create models from plaster, cardboard, paint, paper and clay. The *Museum of Art* and other models from the series *The City* are much more elaborate than earlier series, so they take a longer time to make, usually months, and then several weeks to photograph with the perfect lighting. The fictional Neoclassical museum has grand arches and both Corinthian and Ionic columns, and there are circular medallions on the walls and the balcony. The repetitive hexagons in the coffered ceiling create a honeycomb effect mirrored in the massive bee structures dripping with honey. Green grassy moss spots and ferns and flowers bloom all over the floor, indicating nature has taken over the abandoned cultural institution. The monstrous bees flying around the top are about the same size as real bees, and the size and clear focus of the bees make them seem like they could come into our space.

Lori Nix was born in Norton, Kansas, and is now based in Brooklyn, New York. Nix earned an MFA in 1995 from Ohio University and a BFA in 1992 from Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri. This work and five others were featured in the Nerman's inaugural Kansas Focus Gallery exhibition in 2015. The Nerman Museum also owns her 2004 photo *Junkyard* from the series "Lost."

Sheila Pree Bright

- American, b. 1967, grew up in a military family and lived in Germany, New York, Colorado, Missouri and Kansas
- received MFA in photography from Georgia State University in 2003; in 1998 earned a BS from University of Missouri, Columbia
- lives and works in Atlanta, GA
- www.sheilapreebright.com



Artist's Statement

"In *Suburbia*, I explore suburban life within the African American culture. It is intended to contrast the American media's projection of the 'typical' African American community with a more realistic picture of normal African American life. My intent is to also explore the variations and similarities of an existence that subverts lifestyle and culture, particularly as it relates to Americanism."

Body of Work

Sheila Pree Bright's quietly observant intelligence is in the details of her photographs of African American middle class suburbia. Her enigmatically occupied spaces—faces casually obscured, bodies merely glimpsed or suggested—construct an evocative narrative of class and race in the twenty-first century. They are at once familiar and surprising. Countering the prevalent extremes of media representation, Pree Bright represents a largely invisible population of the African American middle class, the modern-day "Talented Tenth." Although "suburbia" was at one time virtually synonymous with "white flight," Pree Bright's *Suburbia* series depicts a far more complex reality. Her images are as much about the assumptions of perception as about the construction of identity, the necessity of defining one's self and one's place through the accoutrements of class and culture. Not merely a prop, *O* is the new *Ebony*: the early twenty-first century symbol of "making it," of getting over, of blurring distinctions where class trumps race. She located families via word of mouth, and she avoided staging the scenes and photographed the interior spaces as she found them. Other recent series include *Young Americans*, which explores the identities of U.S. citizens and immigrants pursuing citizenship by presenting portraits of Americans aged 18 to 25, each posing with an American flag.

Pree Bright's work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions, including *Saturday Night/Sunday Morning* at The African American Museum of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, the traveling exhibition *Reflections In Black: A History of Black Photographers 1840 to the Present*, and *Locating the Spirit: Religion and Spirituality in African American Art* at the Smithsonian Anacostia Museum in Washington, D.C., and is included in public and private collections throughout the United States. Her photographs have been published in *Reflections in Black: A History of African American Photographers* and, most recently, *Black: A Celebration of a Culture*.



2011, *Growth*, archival ink jet print, 20 x 16" donation for Nerman Museum Beyond Bounds: *Brilliant*

Sheila Pree Bright (American, b. 1967)

Untitled #40, 2009

Chromogenic print

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.17

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



The luminous photographs in Sheila Pree Bright's Suburbia series provide intimate glimpses into the homes of wealthy African Americans residing in Atlanta's suburbs. *Untitled #40* shows a well-manicured and tastefully decorated interior, presumably belonging to the figure whose leg frames the bottom left corner of the image. However, Bright obscures this person's race, gender and age – a decision that compels the viewer to turn elsewhere in the photograph for indications of identity. Glossy magazines are fanned across the marble-topped coffee table, with newly elected President Obama gracing each cover. The clarity of these details contrasts sharply with the peripheral haziness of the room. Bright directs the camera's eye as if it is our own, zeroing in on those elements that might provide clues about the racial, political and social identity of this anonymous homeowner. When seen alongside other photographs in the Suburbia series, these perceptual markers of race and class become highly charged. Bright's relatively mundane views of suburban communities, what she describes as "an alternative to photo-journalistic and psychological portrayals of white suburban lifestyles," subvert conventional assumptions about the suburbs and those who live there. Bright was one of 9 artists whose works (including this print) were included in the Nerman Museum's 2010 exhibition *Faraway Nearby: Addressing Suburbia*.

Sheila Pree Bright earned her BS from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1998 and her MFA from Georgia State University in 2003.

Echo Eggebrecht

- American, b. 1977 in Bangor, ME
- 2006 MFA Hunter College; 2000 BFA School of the Art Institute of Chicago; attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME
- Lives and works in Pittsburgh, PA, and Brooklyn, NY



Body of Work

Echo Eggebrecht's work primarily focuses on the interrelationships of objects and experiences to build symbol-based, circumstantial events and their aftermath, or consequences. From Art F City auction website: Her painstaking technique recalls Dutch genre painting and traditional still-life models in its serious precision, but it is her affinity for materials, surface quality and a love of objects – they are her main subject – that comprise the unique character of her work. The artist explains the relationship between public and private in her paintings: “Abandoned houses, rooms full of animals and girls in lingerie, hospital rooms and childhood bedrooms – the work is expansive in scope, but localized in moments of experience.”

She stated in a 2010 interview with Huffington Post: “I love the Flemish primitives, and that kind of work. The spatial history behind painting is so dense and so specific that once you get interested in something that odd, in terms of a moment in time, when that spatial history is being so defined and so visible it's so iconic. Then I think it definitely comes out.”

Eggebrecht's work has been exhibited in group and solo shows at spaces such as the Dallas Museum of Art; Ulrich Museum, Wichita, KS; Brooklyn Academy of Art; Horton Gallery and Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, Manhattan, New York; Lincoln Museum, Edinburgh; Ter Caemer Meert Contemporary, Kortrijk, Belgium; and Groeflin Maag, Zurich.



Two Rooms (2014), oil on panel, 30" x 34"

Cara Romero (American Indian, Chemehuevi, b. 1977)

Coyote Tales No. 1, 2018

Color photograph

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.13

Gift of Loren G. Lipson, M.D., South Pasadena, CA



Cara Romero uses photography to explore present-day Indigenous identity as it intersects with ancestral lore, personal experience and pop subcultures. For this work, Romero situates Coyote, the celebrated trickster of Chemehuevi lore, in a contemporary setting. Working collaboratively with friends, Romero stages her scene outside “Saints and Sinners,” an iconic drinking establishment in Espanola, New Mexico. Coyote (enacted by Derek No Sun Brown from Shoshone-Bannock and Anishinaabe) stands between two women with his back to the viewer, holding a bouquet of red roses. One woman (Dina Divore, from the Jemez and Kewa Pueblo) leans against a celebrated lowrider to Coyote’s left, while another woman (Kaa Folwell from Santa Clara Pueblo) stands to his right. Unlike Coyote, these women, dressed for a night of adventure, look directly into the camera, returning the viewer’s gaze with forthright expressions and defiant airs. Though Romero leaves her narrative open-ended, she invokes Coyote’s presence to suggest the likelihood for questionable behavior leading to fateful decisions. With humor and an acceptance of human foibles, Romero suggests Coyote’s many tales remain relevant for understanding the rich complexity of Indigeneity today.

Cara Romero studied photography at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Oklahoma State University, Stillwater.

Edie Fake (American, b. 1980)

Somewhere Over (The Rainbow Room), 2016

Gouache, ink, acrylic

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017.06

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art Acquisition



Los Angeles artist Edie Fake’s gouache and ink drawings are meticulously rendered, densely packed compositions with colorfully patterned geometry. However, they are also filled with surprising humor and powerful content. Conceived as allegorical architecture representing the body (both personal and sub-culturally collective) and imagined built environments, the artist sees his drawings as “shelters for paradox” inherent to queer identity. In *Somewhere Over (The Rainbow Room)*, Fake has not recreated the iconic New York City landmark with “world class dining, entertaining and dancing,” located 65 stories above Rockefeller Center. Combined with wistful lyrics from the *Wizard of Oz*, the title of the work was imbued with a sense of longing for belonging, and the dining room has morphed into a fictional theatrical structure with a wheel. The imagery depicted in this work and others suggest stages, parade floats and art deco buildings, and they combine parts of Fake’s family history with aspects of queer history. This drawing has a geometric frame with lozenges further separating the picture plane from being a window into a space where anyone, no matter who they are, might be welcome to enter. According to the Marlborough Chelsea gallery in New York, where he had a 2016 exhibition, “These artworks are façades, in both senses of the word—marquee and mask.”

Edie Fake, born near Chicago, graduated with a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2002.

Essay by Bill Arning: After becoming celebrated as a creator of fictive worlds, Edie Fake turned his attention to the documented past. Fake exhumed and expanded on the lost histories of now-closed Chicago gay bars with evocative names such as Sappho and the Virgo Out. In works such as *Somewhere Over (The Rainbow Room)* he combined that material with a celebration of Chicago’s great architectural history and ornamented facades. Fake made better, more fabulous histories than what had existed. In Fake’s vision, the Rainbow Room becomes a bejeweled fortress. In an era when gay sex required greater skills to find, the artist’s patterned evocation of the pleasures awaiting within suggests a video game prize chamber. The work’s title conjures myths forever linked to Stonewall (an uprising that launched the gay liberation movement), and, like *Friends of Dorothy* (Fake’s other work in the Nerman Museum collection), the representation of longing in *The Wizard of Oz*. The other side of the rainbow was understood to be a future in which gays were no longer imprisoned and derided, and in many ways that future has come to pass.

Kim Dorland

- Canadian, b. 1974 in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada
- Lives and works in Toronto
- 2003 MFA, York University, Toronto; 1998 BFA, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Vancouver



Body of Work

Dorland's heavily textured paintings greet the viewer like vibrant, playful and often eerie snapshots of suburban scenarios; quiet woodland scenes and gory abstract portraits. The artist's exaggerated palette is partnered with coarse, fervent brushwork and unorthodox paint applications - acrylic, oil and spray-paint all have a home within his compositions. Thick, generously applied pigment sits abundantly upon wood surfaces, muscular mark-making describes foliage and terrain while fluorescent underpainting isolates reduced human forms and breaks up the earthy homogeneity. Dorland confidently employs these unexpected devices to generate arrangements that combine beauty with vulgarity, to depict that which is familiar.

In his recent exhibition titled *North*, Dorland turns his focus to Alberta's rural and suburban landscapes, appropriating not only its imagery, but also the colloquial textures and palette associated with it. By connecting to his place and time, Dorland challenges the notion of regional painting, and supercharges the connotations associated with "Sunday painting" as they pertain to the seriousness of a work of art. The works are a synthesis of cultural influence, reflecting a personal rebellion to prescribed ways of picture-making despite a continued fascination with its tradition. In his selection, unexpected mediums challenge the vocabulary with which a painting is generally assessed. This new series strives to register a fresh visual culture where developments come about not just from contemporary practices, but also from preceding tradition. The constructs and concerns asserted by Dorland may evoke or resemble those of current artists as well as yesteryear heroes of romance like Thomas Cole and perhaps Edward Hopper, in their close observations of the banal and peripheral.



(2008, *Bridge*, Oil, acrylic and ink on wood)

Dorland is represented by Mark Moore Gallery in Santa Monica, California. He has had solo exhibitions at Angell Gallery, Toronto; Bonelli Arte Contemporanea, Mantova, Italy; Bonelli Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA; Kasia Kay Art Projects, Chicago, IL; Skew Gallery, Calgary, Alberta; and Freight + Volume in New York - and has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards.

Kim Dorland (Canadian, b. 1974)

Untitled, 2008

Watercolor on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.13



Kim Dorland was born in Wainwright, Alberta, and for several years, he has taken suburban scenes as his subjects, painting them using a diverse range of media. Dorland refers to photographs of places on the Alberta prairie to remind him of the subjects from his childhood that he wants to paint. However, documentation seems not to be his purpose; the places he shows give only a hint of detail of the artist's suburban teenage experience. Here we see an eerily-glowing skateboarder cruising through a neighborhood of non-descript houses. The composition is framed by the skeletal branches and haunting pine trees rendered in Dorland's signature slashing expressionistic lines. The figure's position directly behind the car in the street indicates a near collision might have just taken place. As a whole, the narrative elements work together in a dreamlike manner, as if multiple scenes are combined into an impossible or improbable moment. The florescent skateboarding character also appeared among numerous paintings with thickly applied surfaces in his *Red Deer, Alberta* series from 2006-2010.

Kim Dorland received a BFA from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Vancouver, in 1998, and an MFA from York University, Toronto, in 2003. The Nerman Museum's Oppenheimer Collection includes his 2010 mixed-media painting *Crows* and his 2007 *Tree on the Corner*, which is currently installed in the first floor collection focus area in the Regnier Center.

Kim Dorland (Canadian, b. 1974)

Tree on the Corner, 2007

Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.48

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer



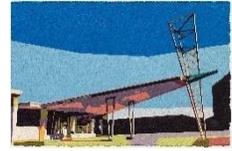
Looming in the center of Kim Dorland's painting is a tall pine tree laid down in sweeping lines of black spray paint, overshadowing the background image of a quiet single-family home resting on a green lawn. Dorland grew up in Wainwright, Alberta and for several years took suburban scenes as his subjects, painting them using a diverse range of media. However, documentation seems not to be his purpose. To contrast the black pine tree, he brightens this everyday scene and infuses it with energy through the charged slashes of dark green, black, sky blue, lime green and white impasto – paint whose thickness registers visible brush and knife marks – and the vibrant orange, pink, yellow and brown abstract shapes that overlay, underlay and overwhelm our perception of the house and tree. Dorland refers to photographs of places on the Alberta prairie to remind him of the subjects from his childhood and youth that he wants to paint. He says his use of thick impasto stems from his desire “to highlight the fact that what the viewer was looking at was painted,” and seems to deny the aggressiveness, even violence, that the slashes and unlikely colors add to his subjects.

John Ferry (American, b. 1969)

Filling Station 4, 2018

Oil on panel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.18



John Ferry's paintings are inspired by his love of architecture and his love of paint. Though his paintings, Ferry has explored the urban architecture of the cities where he has lived, places like Decatur, IL, where he grew up, also New York, Baltimore and Kansas City. In those works, the faded industrial energy of the 19th and early 20th cities, with their history of decay and renewal, inspired Ferry's vision. Over the past hundred years gasoline stations have been found in prime locations on main streets and suburban corners, including 81st and Metcalf in Overland Park. The most common post-WWII architectural style was a boxy structure with canopies projecting, folded plate roofs, or boomerang-shaped supports reflecting a pop-culture interest in aeronautics and high technology. Emblematic of the mid-twentieth century modern architecture, the building in *Filling Station 4* serves as a physical reminder of the transportation revolution and the influence of increased mobility across the region. Even without people or automobiles, this painting makes viewers think about car culture and a long-gone era of customer service. Ferry is also well known for his paintings of the old red brick buildings in Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district rendered in thick impasto.

John Ferry earned a BFA at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1992 and an MFA at the School of the Visual Arts in New York City in 1994. He currently teaches illustration at KCAI. His 2007 grisaille oil on canvas painting *West Bottoms, Kansas City*, is installed in the first floor collection focus area in the Regnier Center.

Travis Pratt (American, b. 1980)

Union Hill, 2009

Mixed media on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.23

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer



Travis Pratt washes this quiet view of a cemetery in a chalky veil of muted colors. Capitalizing on the inherent melancholy of the subject, Pratt's *Union Hill* may suggest the concentrated emotions found at this poignant locale, which appears forlorn and unkempt, with irregularly placed leaning tombstones succumbing to time and nature's energy. Established in 1857, Union Cemetery is Kansas City's oldest, the final resting place of some 55,000 people including the famous nineteenth-century painter George Caleb Bingham. Pratt's concentrated use of tan, cream, and brown renders the scene as if in a sepia-colored, nostalgic haze. The lines and shapes Pratt creates with the abstracted trees and the negative spaces between them produce an energetic visual field that complements the quiet sobriety of the tombstones. The prominent mausoleum in the middle ground of the image, with its fantastically brilliant golden door, draws the viewer closer into the picture. Like the dwelling in *Pontoon*, this Union Cemetery "home" is unconventional yet still a structure that houses individuals, in whatever form that may take. *Union Hill*, like Pratt's *Pontoon*, is devoid of visible human imagery. The scene's pathos emerges from Pratt's sensitive handling of the paint and the intensely charged subject matter.

Travis Pratt received a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2007.

Cristina Muñiz

- American, b. 1973 in San Antonio, TX
- 1993-1995 studied at Palo Alto College, 2011 earned her associate's degree in graphic illustration at San Antonio College, 2012 graduated with a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute
- lives and works in San Antonio
- www.christinamuniz.com



Artist's Statement

"My paintings contain heavily abstracted recollections of a combined past. Every work rests not entirely on a complete public understanding but a shared sense of the human experience and immersion into it. Stories relayed to me, mixed with my own first-hand memory, become personalized. The work's focus is to make these memories and stories tangible and inclusive.

"Abstractions, as the vocabulary in my painted and graphics work, are composed of shape, line and scale. There is an inventory of space in the work that, not unlike a theatrical stage, grounds my 'characters or actors.' These acting forms and shapes move through and within several picture planes and are created by conscious and unconscious performance on canvas and paper."

As Muñiz stated, "A personal script or language serves as a surrogate for memories, events or words that I have heard in my life. Through that language, repeating marks, color and scale, I push the idea that something can be abstracted and still be narrative." Oblique perspectives evoke a dream-like landscape with shifting architectural forms. Narrative settings include symbolic furniture, machinery and truncated figures. "The hands aim down at workers trying to reach up," Muñiz said. Crowns signify hope; the fist represents power.

She had a solo exhibition in 2017 *My Hand Mi Manó* at Kiosk Gallery, Kansas City, MO. In 2016 her work was featured in a solo exhibition *I Speak Everyday*, Project Project in Omaha, NE, and the group exhibitions *Geometry in the Life of Artists*, Drury University, Springfield, MO, and *Chicano Voice* at Mattie Rhodes, Kansas City, MO. She has also shown with La Esquina and Paragraph Galleries in Kansas City. In 2014, she was a



recipient of the Charlotte Street Foundation's Studio Residency program. Muñiz is a resident artist with The Drugstore studios. In San Antonio she has exhibited with High Wire Arts, Melinda Martinez Studio, Mitos Gallery and Hello Studio.

2015, *Sally was Always Tall*, marker and white charcoal on paper

The Last Time

Cristina Muñiz (American, b. 1973)

Facienda/Things to be Done with Earth and Water, 2018

Oil on linen

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.56



Facienda/Things to be Done with Earth and Water is a rough and primal abstract painting showcasing Cristina Muñiz’s skill and confidence with a brush. Like a mosaic, Muñiz’s landscape is built of interlocking blue and pink shapes arrayed beneath a large, cave-like dark void. Muñiz’s personal abstract language is premised upon spatial divisions and boundaries, which she thinks of as metaphorical fences, windows, entrances, doorways and the separation of people and their possessions. She uses this language to write down her memories in abstract form to turn old stories into painted surfaces. Given the abstract style, it’s easy to imagine this mix of blue and pink as some primordial creation scene of water and dirt being formed at the beginning of the world. In Latin, a *facienda* is a splint or support. Metaphorically, this “facienda” could be the result of a mixture of dirt and water, the creation of a living body. While gods mix dirt and spit to create the world, painters mix pigment and fluids to create their paints. In this interpretation of the title, the “facienda” is not the creation of life, but the literal frame and support that holds the canvas and pigment.

Cristina Muñiz attended Palo Alto College in San Antonio, Texas, from 1993 to 1995, and San Antonio College from 2009 to 2011. She received a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2014. Her paintings were included in the Nerman Museum’s 2018 exhibition *Anxious Abstraction*.

Nick Vaccaro

- American, b. 1931 in Youngstown, Ohio, d. 2002
- 1958 BA, University Washington; 1960 MA in Painting, University California, Berkeley
- Was based in Lawrence, KS, where he taught painting at KU

Body of Work

Nick Vaccaro was known for his paintings, drawings, prints, collages, sculptures, assemblages and boxed assemblages. Born at the height of the Great Depression in 1931, Vaccaro was the last of six children in a family of Italian immigrants. Vaccaro met his wife Luella while serving in the Air Force in the 1950s, and they went to art school together. Vaccaro relocated his wife and son Nick Jr., a toddler at the time, to Lawrence in 1963 to serve as chairman of KU's department of drawing and painting. He remained in that position for four years before returning to teaching at KU until 1995. He was a professor emeritus at the time of his death. Vaccaro produced some-130 mixed-media dioramas from the late '60s to the mid-'90s. According to his wife, there wasn't much to do in Lawrence during the early 1960s — a handful of restaurants and two downtown theaters comprised the town's entertainment industry — so the Vaccaros started venturing out to auctions and farm sales in the area.

"My art projects deal primarily with formal concerns, which I believe are the basic means to express timeless ideas and elicit human emotions. It is the search for visual truth and essence that inspires me," he said in a 1996 interview.

Vaccaro's work has been included in more than 125 exhibitions nationally and internationally as well as locally. His work has been purchased for display in museums in Tennessee, Michigan, Texas, Alabama and California.



To a Trap XV, date unknown, color metal relief print, KU Spencer Museum of Art

Dan Christensen (American, b. 1942 - d. 2007)

Cape Crozier, c. 1978

Acrylic on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.81

Gift of Marilyn Goldman, Kansas City, MO



Dan Christensen's early work was geometric and minimal, which he later abandoned for a more romantic minimalist style, using spray guns to create abstract patterns, colorful stacked shapes, loops and lines. Resembling colored pencil or pen doodles on a giant note pad, the compositions feature thin sweeping lines of primary colors sprayed on neutral grounds or bright color fields. In the early seventies he used squeegees to create solid blocks of perpendicular color on various surfaces. In this untitled work from 1978, Christensen chose an iridescent peach background. The central white shape both echoes and contrasts with the square format of the canvas. It is contained within the composition, yet seems to be undergoing a metamorphosis with the visual movement of the artist's hand. Areas of transparency indicate the artist painted the white form over a gray shadow, and a glowing reflection below the shape gives it a sense of depth. On the right side, a vertical line repeats the movement of the paint applied in the center, and the left side shows energetic diagonal splashes.

Dan Christensen was born in Cozad, Nebraska. He received his BFA in 1964 from the Kansas City Art Institute and later lived and worked in New York City.

Marc Handelman

- American, b. 1975 in Santa Clara
- Lives and works in New York
- Studied at Columbia University and earned an MFA in 2003. He earned a BFA in 1998 from Rhode Island School of Design, and he studied art history in Rome in 1997



Body of Work

Handelman's paintings explore the intersection of power, propaganda, national identity, fascism, beauty, and kitsch through subjective fantasies inspired by nineteenth century American Landscape painting. He constructs paintings that complicate the relationship between beauty and moral delusion. Drawing from sordid discourses and histories both real and imagined within a shifting visual framework at once representational, symbolic, and abstract, Handelman's paintings conflate spaces that both stabilize and disrupt recognition of his subjects.

Light is a reoccurring motif and subject in his work. From the blinding and annihilating atmosphere of 19th century Luminists' canvases to contemporary use within military intelligence operations and advertising, light functions as the entry and vanishing point of the subject.

In fall of 2006 Marc Selwyn Gallery presented *Scenes From the New Miasma*, the debut Los Angeles solo exhibition of Handelman's work. His first solo exhibition in NY opened in 2005 at Lombard-Freid Projects where he is currently represented. His work has been recently been featured in group exhibitions at Guild & Greyskul NY, Angstrom TX, Kavi Gupta IL, and Perugi Arte Contemporanea Italy and has been reviewed in publications that include *The New Yorker*, *Artforum*, *teme celeste*, and *Flash Art*.



(2005, *Vision*, oil on canvas)



(2005, *Miasma*, oil on canvas)

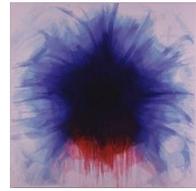
Marc Handelman (American, b. 1975)

Miasma (2), 2006

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.66

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation



Streaks of red and blue radiate from the center in an explosion of paint. As he satirizes the 19th century Luminist landscape painters, who filled their compositions with warm sunlight, Marc Handelman creates his own renditions of elemental American splendor. His paintings may evoke protesters wearing tie dye, patriots igniting fireworks, even bombs bursting and releasing poisonous gas clouds, or “miasma.” The stars and stripes become blue crashing waves and bloody drips emerging from a mysterious cavern. Issues of national identity, power, and propaganda abound in Handelman’s landscapes and abstractions. This work followed his 2005 exhibition *Scenes from the New Miasma* at Marc Selwyn Gallery in Los Angeles. One of the more abstracted works in his oeuvre, this composition is the darker, nightmarish version of the sunburst titled *Miasma* from 2005. Other works in the exhibition included *Vision* (a skyscape with the American flag diluted within a dramatic sunset), an aerial view of a violet pit titled *Gorge*, and *Only One* (the artist’s take on the Fox News logo). *Miasma (2)* combines notes of each of these earlier works into a whirling crescendo of color, open to interpretation.

Handelman was born in Santa Clara, California, and he lives and works in New York. He studied at Columbia University and earned an MFA in 2003. He received a BFA in 1998 from Rhode Island School of Design, and he studied art history in Rome in 1997.

Eric Sall

- American, b. 1977 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Lives and works in Tulsa, OK
- 1999 BA, Kansas City Art Institute; 2006 MFA Virginia Commonwealth University



Body of Work

A Kansas City native, Sall received a Charlotte Street Foundation award in 2001. He was artist-in-residence at the Roswell Museum and Art Center in New Mexico in 2003. He had solo exhibitions at Joseph Nease Gallery in Kansas City in 2000 and 2003, as well as a show at the Dolphin Gallery in 2005. Sall has contributed to the 2000 *Beyond Bounds: Off the Record!* fundraiser, the 2002 *Beyond Bounds: Shine* fundraiser, and the 2005 *Beyond Bounds: Gold Rush* fundraiser at JCCC. Another major painting by Sall, *Countdown to Tomorrow* (2002), is on view in the JCCC dining hall in the COM building. His exhibition *Darkish* was on view at the ATM Gallery in New York in the summer of 2006.



(2005, *Light Pollution*, oil, acrylic, spray paint, and gold leaf on canvas)

Artist's Quotes

"These are abstract paintings in nature that utilize a language of color, form, line, composition and surface quality that is characteristic of an 'abstract' art dialogue." On the other hand, "the images are composed and painted so as to be perceived as very tangible objects, as unique things that are believed to really exist. . . I arrive at the imagery of my paintings through a balance of making deliberate shapes and spontaneously painting gestural marks in an expressive manner. This balance of distinctive approaches to making a painting is rooted in my passion for the process of painting itself, specifically a passion for making rich fields of color, a keenness for painting straight lines, and a strong desire to 'muck' things up by pulling paint across the surface with various painting knives and brushes."



Installation view of *Homecoming* at former JCCC Gallery of Art, 2006-2007

Eric Sall (American, b. 1977)

Teeth and Tentacles, 2005

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art,
Gift of Dean Thompson, Overland Park, KS



Dramatic diagonals with sharply defined bands of color contrast with the swirling scrambled mixtures. Rainbow arcs, serrated edges, flat planes, thick blobs: opposites abound in Eric Sall's paintings. We see thick and thin, geometric and organic, pure and diluted, distinct and amorphous. Our eyes travel through various paint application processes, and we vicariously experience the creative event. The artist stated, "I arrive at the imagery of my paintings through a balance of making deliberate shapes and spontaneously painting gestural marks in an expressive manner. This balance of distinctive approaches to making a painting is rooted in my passion for the process of painting itself, specifically a passion for making rich fields of color, a keenness for painting straight lines, and a strong desire to 'muck' things up by pulling paint across the surface with various painting knives and brushes."

Born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, artist Eric Sall graduated from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1999 and completed his MFA in 2006 at Virginia Commonwealth University. He was artist-in-residence at the Roswell Museum and Art Center in New Mexico in 2003. He currently lives and works in Tulsa, OK. He won a Charlotte Street Foundation award in 2001, and he participated in the final exhibition titled *Homecoming* at the JCCC Gallery of Art in 2006 to 2007. Both of his paintings *Framebreaker* (2004) and *Countdown to Tomorrow* (2002) are currently on view in the COM Dining Area.

Eric Sall (American, b. 1977)

Magnetic Mess, 2004

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.10
Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer



In *Magnetic Mess*, Eric Sall combines hard-edged forms in flat colors with passages of thick impasto and diluted paint to create a multi-dimensional abstract composition. Both the visual elements and title suggest a powerful duality of order and chaos. In creating his paintings Sall thoughtfully considers each element, and their textures give evidence of his various processes. Here, he carefully laid down the hard lines of the central black, blue, and gray planes with the precision of a sign painter. The black U shape, suggestive of a horseshoe magnet, grounds the composition between the mottled lavender, orange and teal stains in the background and the rainbow-colored "mess" spontaneously applied with a palette knife in the lower right. Meanwhile, heavy black bands frame the bottom and right sides of the painting, emphasizing its two dimensional surface, while the space is further articulated by the broad strokes of mixed blue, green and white that zigzag over the center of the composition. Taking inspiration from architecture, computer graphics, logos, and the mass media, Sall transforms recognizable forms into abstract visions, giving hints of something familiar but leaving the paintings open to interpretation. "Ultimately," he says, "I'm looking for an image that is challenging not only for myself, but more importantly, the viewer."

Glyneisha Johnson (American, b. 1994)

The Help (2018)

Mixed media on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.11

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation



Recreating domestic spaces like her grandmother's kitchen and her mother's den, Glyneisha Johnson calls attention to the safe, secure and healing nature of these spaces for people of color. Johnson says her work "helps us envision what we are not meant to envision: complex black selves, real and enactable black power, rampant and unfetishized black beauty." In *The Help*, Johnson's compelling juxtaposition of colors and shapes conveys a metaphoric illustration of the African American experience. On the left, a somewhat ambiguous figure holding a single bottle of water seems to float from a hardwood-floored kitchen to a sparsely furnished sitting room. Combined with the room's single wooden chair and floral-patterned ceiling light, this figure, with jet black skin and wearing a red and white dress, completes a triangle of restfulness, enlightenment and replenishment. The right side of the composition presents a view into the house through a window with bars over it, a stark reminder of the dangers and cautions of urban living for people of color. The view through the bars is an empty, sparse and uninviting room, unlike the warmth, rest and refreshment of the room with the ambiguous figure. The juxtaposition of inside and outside highlights the social contrast of deep pride and even deeper privacy often present in black domestic spaces.

Glyneisha Johnson received a BFA from The Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri, in 2017.

Ben Mercer

- American, b. 1934
- Master's in Adult Education, UMKC; BS in Education and a Minor in Biology, Lincoln University
- Lives and works in Kansas City



Body of Work

Ben Mercer is a member of The Light in the Other Room, a collaborative of over 20 African American artists working in the Kansas City area. His style is distinctive because of his obsession with detail and exactness. By taking photographs, Mercer is able to freeze time and capture the full essence of the minute for drawing at a later time. Being a true perfectionist, his works are complete in his head before he presses the shutter on his camera or puts the pen to paper. While some of his work may be considered autobiographical, he responds to various cultures in his investigations of local people, places and activities. He stated, "I'm very much aware of my heritage, but I do not dwell there in my drawings."

Mercer worked for the Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Department for many years. He first got to know many Vietnamese Americans as director of Garrison Community Center on Troost and 5th. His artistic curiosity took him to markets, churches and inside homes and eventually he produced a photographic essay and series of drawings about the Vietnamese experience in and around Kansas City. These works were exhibited at UMKC's African American History and Culture House in 2005. *Ben Mercer- A Retrospective Exhibition* was presented in 2018 at the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center & Museum; this was a collection of mixed media paintings and historic Kansas City photographs. His work has appeared in several publications including *Focus Kansas City*, *Endless Journeys*, *Photographer's Forum*, *Best of Photography Annual*, and several magazine covers. He has work in the permanent collections of the University of Kansas Preservation Alliance and several private collections. Gallery showings of his art and photography include: Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, Kansas City Jazz Museum, The National Traveling Exhibit Art for Health in Washington D.C., The Portfolio Gallery and the old Court House Gallery in St. Louis, MO, The Kansas City Airport Terminal, Atlanta Life Insurance Company in Atlanta, Georgia, and many others across the nation. In the December 1993 issue of *Artist Magazine*, Mercer received the honor as one of the top 200 portrait artists out of 11, 500 artists. He has also been honored as one of the *Municipal Art Commission Talented Ten*, and he has won many awards in art and photography. Mercer has taught art in various venues and studied in Paris, France, and the Netherlands.

Notable Black Woman



The Best Modern ART ANYWHERE

original works, drawings and photographs

by ben e. mercer artist



Purvis Young

- American, b. 1943 - d. 2010 in Liberty City, FL
- self-taught

Body of Work

Purvis Young is known for his paintings on scrap lumber and plywood that he scavenged from the streets and vacant lots of Overton, the historically black neighborhood where he lived in Miami, Florida. He witnessed deterioration of the neighborhood; he moved there 15 years after the passing of the Interstate Highway Act, which confirmed the construction of a highway in the midst of Overtown and displaced countless residents from their own community. Throughout his childhood Young enjoyed drawing, and he began painting in the early 1970s. Young pursued his interest in art by studying books in his local libraries. He examined the work of Vincent Van Gogh, Rembrandt, El Greco, Picasso; his own art is often categorized as a hybrid of Abstract Expressionism and Impressionism. When he began painting, he was also inspired by the popular mural movement of the 1960s. He hung his paintings of tenement life and animals on the exterior walls of abandoned buildings in his neighborhood. Young depicted the conflicts of his time and the recent past—the Great Depression, the oppression of Native American and black families in the United States, poverty, the Vietnam War—and the brightness of hope, the power of faith, and the healing qualities of art. Contemporary themes include institutionalized racism, mass incarceration, the refugee crises, and the drug epidemic. His work includes crowds of people, frenzied bursts of color and repeated symbols — a personal iconography with horses, which, as he explained in interviews, denote freedom; and round blue shapes, sometimes coalescing into eyes that denote an all-seeing establishment.

When Young began to sell his paintings, his earliest customers were white tourists. Bernard Davis, then the owner of the Miami Art Museum, eventually became a patron. In 1999, so did the Rubell family, purchasing the entirety of Young's studio with nearly 3,000 pieces, and later donating pieces to institutions around the country. Young began to receive local recognition in the 1970s, exhibiting his paintings by the hundreds in abandoned buildings in Overtown. His local success eventually led to national and international recognition with exhibitions throughout the U.S. and in Europe. His works are held in the collections of the Bass Museum in Miami, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, the High Museum in Atlanta, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the American Folk Art Museum in New York, and the de Young Museum of Art in San Francisco, among others. *Untitled*, 1985-1999, Paint on wood, Rubell Collection



Purvis Young (American, b. 1943-d. 2010)

Untitled (Angel Carried by Trailer), c. 1990

House paint on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.54

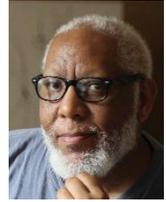


Purvis Young is known for his paintings on scrap lumber and plywood that he scavenged from the streets and vacant lots of Overton, the historically black neighborhood where he lived in Miami, Florida. He witnessed deterioration of the neighborhood; he moved there 15 years after the passing of the Interstate Highway Act, which confirmed the construction of a highway in the midst of Overtown and displaced countless residents from their own community. As an emerging artist Young hung his paintings of tenement life and animals on the exterior walls of abandoned buildings in his neighborhood. He sometimes depicted his surroundings literally, but other times he painted what he saw with his "inner eyes"—and transcended the misery that surrounded him. He once stated, “I painted a lot of angels back there. God sends angels to try to clear up some of this trouble on Earth. I don’t listen to the Man, I look up to heaven. It’s a habit I got.” His work features writhing calligraphic lines often with repeated symbols; his personal iconography includes horses, which denote freedom; angels denote good people and the possibility of goodness in a strife-riven world. Young painted dreams and struggles, protests and prayers.

Purvis Young was a self-taught artist.

Harold Smith

- American, b. 1962
- M.A.T, Webster University; B.S., computer science, Union College; A.A., Kansas City Kansas Community College
- lives and works in the Kansas City area
- www.haroldsmithart.com



Body of Work

Harold Smith works primarily in acrylics and mixed media. His paintings focus on the American black experience, and he is known for his dynamic expressionist paintings of figures and the themes of music and current or historical events. Smith stated, "My work is influenced by the jazz and the jazz dynamic in life." He describes his *Men of Color* series as his "personal exploration of the complex, chaotic, and multilayered experience of men of color in America." His expressionistic vocabulary reflects his self-study of artists including Henri Matisse, Emil Nolde and Joan Mitchell; the content stems from his desire to celebrate the contributions of black culture and push back against racism. He said in a 2017 interview with KC Studio: "I think the media sometimes creates polarizing imagery of black men. Either you are an Obama or you are a thug. In my opinion, regular, hard-working, simple, black men are an ignored group. They are the new 'invisible man.'"

Smith is a member of the African American Artist's Collective, Black Space Black Art and The KC Black Arts Network. He is a community activist, and he also writes poetry and make films, including a documentary on poet Glenn North. He teaches game design at the Manual Career and Technical Center in Kansas City, MO, and he worked for years as a computer programmer.

Smith's work has been collected worldwide, and he has produced numerous online publications, from "UrbanKore" to catalogs of his work. Selected exhibitions include Black Space/Black Art, Traveling Exhibit in Kansas City; Stella Jones Gallery, New Orleans; Le Moulin du logis, Angouleme, and Cognac Blues Passions, an annual blues festival in Cognac, France; University of Maryland, David Driskell Center; Montana ro Gallery, Rhode Island; Nobis Gallery, Newark; Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba, New York; American Jazz Museum, Box Gallery, Faso Gallery, Kansas City; Kansas City, KS Public Library; and Johnson County Public Library, Shawnee Mission.



"Arm of Democracy" (2001) is one of a series of early works in which Smith confronted an American life "fragmented with problems."

Harold Smith (American, b. 1962)

Self Portrait in D Minor, 2015

Acrylic, spray paint, oil marker on watercolor paper, 22 x 30"

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.04



“Artists are here to disturb the peace,” James Baldwin famously wrote in the 1960s, and Harold Smith’s paintings do that beautifully. A polymath who teaches computer game design and is a filmmaker and published writer, Smith is also well known for his dynamic, expressionist, full frontal portraits of black men. Many of Smith’s works have focused on jazz musicians and athletes; the Nerman Museum’s work, *Self Portrait in D Minor*, is personal. The key of D Minor has been called “the saddest of all keys,” and music historian Wanda Waterman writes that it has “long been associated with a rich ‘Lady’s Got the Blues’ kind of sadness, and a sense of impending death.” With his slashing brushstrokes and heated palette, Smith unequivocally evokes what he describes as “my personal exploration of the complex, chaotic, and multilayered experience of men of color in America.” This piece is both forbidding and mournful, gorgeous and powerful. It is at once a portrait of the artist as well as of a community of men with whom he identifies.

Harold Smith received an AA from Kansas City Kansas Community College, a BS from Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, and a MAT from Webster University in St. Louis.

Fritz Scholder

- American, b. 1937 in Breckenridge, Minnesota, d. 2005
- 1964 MFA University of Arizona, Tucson; 1960 BA Sacramento State College
- www.fritzschoolder.com

Body of Work

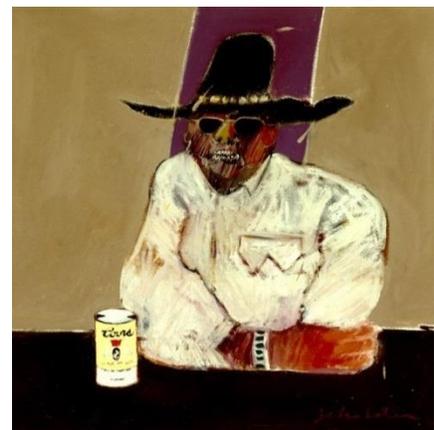
Fritz Scholder was one-quarter Luiseño, a California Mission tribe, but he grew up in the American Midwest without identifying himself as an American Indian. What set him apart from his predominantly white peers in public school was his desire to be an artist. As a high school student he lived in Pierre, South Dakota, and in the summer of 1955, Scholder attended the Mid-West Art and Music Camp at the University of Kansas. In 1956, Scholder graduated from Ashland High School in Wisconsin and took his freshman year at Wisconsin State University in Superior. In 1957, Scholder moved with his family to Sacramento, California where he studied and exhibited with pop artist Wayne Thiebaud. Scholder soon had a solo exhibition at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento. His work was being shown throughout the region. He met Cherokee designer, Lloyd Kiva New and studied with Hopi jeweler, Charles Loloma. After receiving a John Hay Whitney Fellowship, Scholder moved to Tucson and became a graduate assistant in the Fine Arts Department. After graduating, in 1964 Scholder accepted the position of instructor in Advanced Painting and Contemporary Art History at the newly formed Institute of American Indians Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and he taught there until 1969. He was considered a major influence for a generation of American Indian artists.

Scholder always worked in series of paintings. In 1967, his new series on the American Indian, depicting the "real Indian," became an immediate controversy. Scholder was the first to paint American Indians with American flags, beer cans, and cats. His target was the loaded national cliché and guilt of the dominant culture. Scholder did not grow up as an American Indian and his unique perspective could not be denied.

His first exhibition of photographs was shown at the Heard Museum in Phoenix in 1978, and a book *Indian Kitsch* was published by Northland Press. A miniature book of Scholder's poetry was produced by Stinehour Press in 1979. In 1980, Scholder was guest artist at the Oklahoma Art Institute, which resulted in a 1982 PBS film documentary *American Portrait*. In 2008, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian organized two exhibitions— one in New York and one in Washington, DC — both called *Fritz Scholder: Indian/Not Indian*. That same year in Santa Fe, the IAIA Museum organized an exhibition titled *Fritz Scholder: An Intimate Look*.



1968, *Monster Indian*



1969, *Indian with Beer Can*

Fritz Scholder (American Indian, Luiseño, b. 1937 - d. 2005)

Blessed Indian, 1967

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.40

Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art

Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation



Fritz Scholder became known as a leader of the New American Indian Art movement of the 1970s, influencing generations of Native American artists.

Heavily influenced by his studies with artists Wayne Thiebaud, Tarmo Pasto and Raymond Witt, *Blessed Indian* relies on a modernist aesthetic that includes abstraction, bold brush strokes and a bright palette. In this painting, Scholder's subject holds a peace pipe in his left hand; a quilled or beaded bag hangs from his left wrist and he wears a hairpipe choker. While these accoutrements identify him as an Indigenous man, his abstracted facial features painted in shades of orange, lavender, magenta and turquoise demonstrate the influences of contemporary Western art. The iconographic Plains Indian headdress, so typical of Indigenous representation, has given way to radiating lines of orange and black that burst forth from his teal blue hair. "My work startled many people," Scholder once said, "because I, part-Indian, treated the Indian differently, not as the 'noble savage' endlessly portrayed by white painters, and also because my technique was non-Indian." This work and others were included in the 2016 solo exhibition *Super Indian: Fritz Scholder 1967-1980* at the Nerman Museum, organized by the Denver Art Museum, curated by John Lukavic.

Fritz Scholder received his BA from Sacramento State University in 1961 and his MFA from the University of Arizona, Tuscon, Arizona, in 1964.

Norval Morrisseau (Canadian First Nations, Anishinaabe, b. 1931- d. 2007)

Child with Friend, 1977

Acrylic on board

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016.08

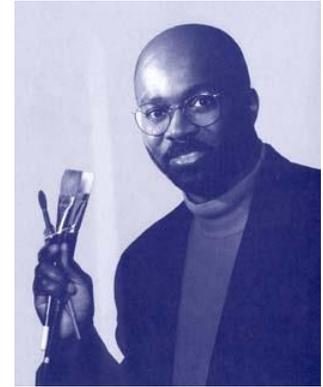


Norval Morrisseau is considered by many to be the grandfather of contemporary Indigenous art in Canada. The creator of the Woodland School style, he was a prominent member of the Indian Group of Seven, an artist cohort formed by First Nations artists in 1973. The group wanted to shift the artistic dialogue, and they hoped their art would alter perceptions of their paintings from Indigenous-centered to recognition for its aesthetic value. The Woodland style includes several distinct characteristics including a predominant black formline, X-ray perspectives and a system of interconnecting lines that indicate sacred power. Morrisseau and his contemporaries painted using vivid, sometimes garish colors. *Child with Friend* is indicative of the Woodland style. Morrisseau's black formline designs incorporate positive and negative design elements, and X-ray perspectives of red and blue outline the skeletal structures of both the child and the fowl, whose beak extends toward the child's nose. The figures float against a vibrant orange background. These design elements transformed Indigenous art in Canada, causing a paradigmatic shift in the mainstream art world, which previously excluded First Nations art from the art historical canon.

Norval Morrisseau is a self-taught artist.

Jonathan M. Knight

- American, b. 1959 in Daytona Beach, FL
- Lives and works in Kansas City and Florida
- 1999 honorary doctorate of humane letters degree from the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale
- www.jmknight.com



Body of Work

Jonathan Knight is an accomplished artist in watercolors, oils, pastels and printmaking. Early in his career he worked as an artist, corporate recruiter and creative researcher for Hallmark Cards, Inc. for a number of years prior to becoming a full-time fine artist. Two of his paintings were exhibited at the Studio Museum in Harlem - In addition, those paintings are now included in the published book, *Black Romantic*.

He states, "My paintings are allegorical in nature, and I am continuously inspired when they emotionally touch a viewer; that in combination with a few other positives makes creativity the ultimate joy. In my paintings, I am continuously observing and visually expressing life, people, objects and their surrounding energies."

He was featured in and on the magazine covers of *Watercolor*, an American Artist Publication (Fall, 1999 issue), as well as the cover of the Winter, 1995 issue. Other publications include Artist's Magazine, ARTnews, American Visions Magazine, American Art Review, Flash Art International n ° 225-Italy, Daytona Beach News Journal, Décor Magazine and IRAAA. He has been featured in newspaper articles such as the Boca News, Kansas City Star, Orlando Sentinel, Palm Beach Illustrated, Fort Lauderdale's Westside Gazette, and other media. Dr. Knight's paintings are in the collections of JM Family Enterprises, Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL; Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art, St. Joseph, MO; Artist Showcase of the Palm Beaches, the Historic Jenkins House Multicultural Art Museum, West Palm Beach, FL; Overland Park Convention Center Fine Art Collection, Overland Park, KS; Sprint Corporate Fine Art Collection, Overland Park, KS; Palm Beach International Airport Collection, Palm Beach, FL; Anheuser Busch Corporate Collection, St. Louis, MO; Crescent Company, Wheeling, IL; U.S. Industries, West Palm Beach, FL and Hallmark Fine Art Collections, Kansas City, MO. Knight's paintings have been featured in over 200 solo exhibitions. In July of 2002, Knight was included in a three-man exhibit at the Historic Jenkins House in Palm Beach, FL. In March 1998, Knight had a solo exhibition at the Governors Club of the Palm Beaches, West Palm Beach, FL. Other solo exhibitions were held at the Ormond Memorial Art Museum & Gardens, Ormond Beach, FL, in September 1997; the Armory Art Center, West Palm Beach, FL, in March 1996; the Cornell Museum in Delray Beach, FL, in September 1996; and at the Portfolio Gallery, St. Louis, MO.



Jonathan Knight (American, b. 1959)

The Letter, 1995

Pencil on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.08

Gift of Francis Family Foundation, Gregory Glore, Lee Goodman, JCCC Acquisitions Fund, Michael L. Klein, Jonathan Knight, LHD, Patrick and Dr. Catherine Lowe-Orlando, Tim and Janet Manson, Barbara Hall Marshall, Wayne and Julie McClain and Torosian Foundation



There was a time not so long ago that the words contained in a handwritten letter had the power to capture our attention and emotions unlike any digital device. Jonathan Knight's sensitively painted half-portrait of a young African American woman, rendered in pencil and nuanced watercolors, harks back to the era of peak snail mail. The figure's garments also suggest a prewar 20th-century moment. Her high-collared blouse with its stark white bodice is like a blank sheet of paper; the gray striped sleeves and black pleated skirt indicate modesty and moral rectitude. Beneath an unruly updo of black curly hair her downcast gaze focuses intently on the letter she holds carefully in both hands. Her cheeks appear flushed, her mouth pursed with concern — perhaps she reads a message from an unrequited sweetheart or a scolding guardian. Not seeing her eyes, we are drawn into her inner thoughts and feelings. The warm gray wash of the unadorned background heightens our curiosity in this naturalistic, affective scene. Reminiscent in style of works by the great African American painter Henry O. Tanner, born a century earlier, Knight's academic realism, combining skillful draftsmanship with soft brushwork, breathes intimate humanism into his figure painting.

Jonathan Knight received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale in 1999.

Leroy Allen (American, b. 1951-d. 2007)

Transitions, 2004

Watercolor

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.34



Leroy Allen's portrait of a young woman gazing longingly out the window exemplifies the artist's allegorical approach to rendering young people, focusing on their strength. He stated, "My favorite subject is the complexity of our human existence, our interaction with nature, our movement, our expressiveness, our determination, our attitudes and our beauty. I don't necessarily look for all of those elements when I paint, but I am aware of their presence. When a work of mine is publicly successful, I believe it is because I was able to put the viewer in touch with his or her awareness of my subject." The woman's rosy cheeks reflect the red brick exterior, and only minimal clues in her surrounding space indicate the contemporary setting.

Leroy Allen was born in Kansas City, Kansas. After earning a BA in design from the University of Kansas in 1977, he began working at Hallmark Cards. Other artists working there encouraged him to enroll at the Kansas City Art Institute, where he took continuing education courses in painting over the course of 10 years. He entered many juried competitions and participated in exhibitions nationwide, including at the Studio Museum in Harlem (2002). Allen followed the model for African American artists espoused by Romare Bearden, emphasizing humanity and expression in his portraits, still lifes, and landscapes.