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U N I V E R S I T Y A R T M U S E U M , U N I V E R S I T Y AT A L B A N Y
M A S T E R OF F I N E A R T S T H E S I S E X H I B I T I O N

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Erin Aubeuf
I have a sick fascination with my own shallow desires. I’m needy and girly. I like pink. Infatuated with the mall rays, I objectify myself. In performance and video I find a world where I can “cut” my violent musings and confront my relationship to pop culture, self-image, and love.

Ray Felix
Disturbed by the world around me, I stare at things. If I try stare back I photograph. Existential questions about purpose, death, and salvation consume me as I contemplate the nature of reality. Searching for answers across the terrain of my environment has led me to a kind of meditation, when things overlooked or taken for granted reveal a poetic and symbolic relationship to my inner reality.

Sierra Fortwangler
The boys call me "Mad Dog Sierra." This title has been a driving force in my sculptures, in which powerful, monstrous women novel in their own grotesqueness. Obsessive craft and detail toy with my ego, even as these breasts bodies lurch forward to vomit self-loathing. The endless needlework that created these objects is, like a tattoo, I abuse; I enjoy; the work itself provokes, who I am. These installations and the identity constructed within recall a religious cult built on comic books, tattoo culture, punk rock, horror movies, taxidermy, biological illustration, and Catholic iconography. These figures are holy relics; the passage of my life is measured out in shirts.

Kathryn Bilharz Gabriel
Each of my paintings and drawings derives from an internal dialogue between hope and fear, leading to what could be certain apocalypse or eternal bliss. I submerge painting into drawing, transforming a matrix of painterly skin into a skin that reveals specific imagery or indefinable figures. The result becomes a strange world, part nostalgic post-Pop graphics and color and part romantic drawing. Sometimes the dialogue is internal or interpersonal, and at other times I ponder the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the numerous unspeakable crises here at home. I am attempting an ethical transformation, changing lawless reality into a golden image—an exorcism of sorts.

Thomas Jack Hilton
The way a distant memory looks and feels as contrived with the crispness of yesterday fascinates me. I work to explore how occurrences long past interfere with other happenings real, imagined or even overheard. I use photographic imagery because of its historic, widespread use as a documentary medium and incorporate it in constructed environments as a way to convey familiar experiences.

Doug Holst
When people ask me about my work I feel as speechless as Dorothy waking up back in colorless Kansas, unable to describe where she has been. When I tell people that I like to spend my days squeezing bright paint out of plastic bottles onto smooth surfaces, I often become painfully aware of the vast divide that exists between the adventures of painting and the limitations of words. Terms such as “imaginary landscape” or “lyrical abstraction” often come to mind, but they threaten to hamper an appreciation of my work rather than help it. Few things engage me more than arranging glossy puddles of paint into visual relationships that are both sophisticated yet simple. Painting for me is like a trip down that yellow brick road of Modernism to a place that feels familiar yet fresh, impossible yet very real. I like to lose myself in that Emerald City and to believe the image without ever paying attention to the man behind the curtain. These paintings are souvenirs from my time there.

David Kvan
My paintings develop out of physical activity, mental exertion and the drama of nature, all of which are components of my life. While pouring color puddles over large panels and accumulating competing marks, the paint seethes and spreads under the pressure of my breath forced through straws. As I paint, I’m in conversation with color. An image seems to shout at me and I respond by pouring blue on its face. This dialogue is playful, dynamic, and fantastically real. The place that grows below my feet transports me to memories of tomorrows adventure.

Nathan Meltz
Part critique, part fascination, the short films I create examine the infiltration of technology into every facet of our lives, from family and food to politics and war. Nightmarish industrial creations are set against imagery of grand mechanical constructions, an off-kilter vision of technology. In my visual vocabulary, the contemporary world of nanotechnology and genetic modification is retold with analog mechanical parts. The Captains of Industry are sadistic gods.

Sanford Mirling
By creating sexually fraught environments, real or illusory, I expose my own anxious attempts at seduction. I recontextualize human flesh through the use of leather, latticework, and synthetics. Memories of people are degraded to characters and ultimately into objects: uncanny versions of themselves.

Meredith Schwab
I transform high-fashion slickness, and its illusion of perfection, into a punk-inflected anti-chic. This love/hate relationship shows itself in gemstone reliefs and wild monochrome paintings that use hip fabric patterns unapologetically. These illusions are furthered in video loops where I exploit myself, acting out conflicted fascinations with music video visions, Baroque hipsters, and B-film fantasies.

Ben Tritt
I have designed and decorated an environment akin to a Renaissance chapel or a room in a Roman villa. Forever At War is an epic in five parts, each containing several forms of representation: painting, architecture, poetry, and film. Each of the five parts is labeled under the title of a “book” (Book 1: Creation; Book 2: The Fall; Book 3: The War; Book 4: The Flood; Book 5: Reconstruction). “Book 4: The Flood” is a series of scenes from the Biblical flood narrative, from the initial deluge to the Tower of Babel. The construction is meant to be both an independent architectural form and an integrated series of decorated panels. The intersected quality between space and surface creates a transversally or latticework of intersecting layers in fictive space. The overlapping strata create an allusive, metamorphic metamorphosis of narrative imagery, resulting in an experience both sequential and kaleidoscopic.