



University at Albany 2020 Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition

Courtney Bernardo

Sean Corcoran

Maxwell Goodknight

Anthony Jackson (Bugzdale)

Erica Kaufman

Ya Li

Arnela Mahmutović

Meghan Mason

Anna Nina Pellicone

Tzuyun Wei

University Art Museum

2020 MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

***AN M.F.A. THESIS EXHIBITION
IN THE TIME OF COVID-19***

Here we are, together in isolation, with our heads spinning and hearts aching. This is not what you signed up for when you decided to go for your M.F.A. two years ago. Who could have imagined? Small consolation, but you now join the ranks of every American artist that persevered through trying times from the Great Depression, to the Protest Movements of the 1960s, to the AIDS crisis. This is your tribe now.

You belong to a new history. Your thesis exhibition stands light-years apart from the 56 M.F.A. thesis shows mounted at the UAM since 1984, when the M.F.A. program began. If you do the math (and we have), each one of these exhibitions featured an average of 10 artists. That's approximately 560 artists over 36 years, and never in that time did any of these artists face the challenge of realizing a thesis exhibition during a global pandemic. To say that it's a disappointment that you will not be able to show your work as planned is stating the obvious. Cold comfort for all that you have invested and envisioned. But we are beyond that now, looking back not on

the show that never happened but at the bonds you have formed with your fellow grads and your mentors, the crits in which you stood your ground, the moments that you realized you were in it for the long haul, the hours upon hours that you put in the studio, the frustrations you faced when the work wasn't happening, the exhilaration of knowing that you were onto something, that you were working it out, that you had something to say, that you were a singular voice, but also part of a larger continuum of emerging artists with so much to say—about dislocation, race, identity, trauma, a natural world on the brink, and about being human and vulnerable.

In planning for your thesis exhibition in the University Art Museum, most of you had very specific plans for a physical installation in a discrete space specifically designed for exhibiting works of art. It has been nothing short of inspiring to see how, with that rug ripped from under your feet, you have each risen to the occasion to present a version of your planned exhibition that is so much more than a compromise. Each of you has embraced the dual responsibilities to both reflect and help shape the culture in which your practice is situated, especially in times of crisis such as these. And never has your work been more prescient or compelling than in this weird and stressful collective moment. Your newly refined focus, deeply held convictions, and galvanized connections to the world outside your studio will be forever central to the arc of your artistic career. Also know that you are ready to move on. It wasn't supposed to happen this way, but it did and here you are ...

Corinna Ripps Schaming
Director/Chief Curator

Danny Goodwin
*Associate Professor
Director, Studio Art Program*

**C O U R T N E Y
B E R N A R D O**

SEAN CORCORAN

**M A X W E L L
G O O D K N I G H T**

**ANTHONY JACKSON
(B U G Z D A L E)**

ERICA KAUFMAN

Y A L I

**A R N E L A
M A H M U T O V I Ć**

MEGHAN MASON

**A N N A N I N A
P E L L I C O N E**

T Z U Y U N W E I

COURTNEY BERNARDO



Toilet paper, once called “therapeutic paper,” and now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, hoarded and scarce, has always been valuable to me since I discovered crocheting would calm me down during my panic attacks and mental breakdowns. I create installations and sculptures, often featuring crocheted toilet paper, that elucidate the mind of the emotionally unstable while exposing the human body. I also create human body hybrids, sometimes combining them with other parts of the body or with taxidermy animals as a means of connecting humans with their animalistic consciousness. My work is figural, whether the body is literally in the work or implied through craftsmanship. The internal struggle to turn away in disgust or stare in shock is evoked. I focus on the human response to reject the grotesque or to stare at the beauty of the human body and behavior. I do this to denounce the degrading stigma our culture has created around our bodies and mental health. The relationship between hybrid sculptures and crocheted toilet paper creates a chaotic environment in which they can co-exist.

COURTNEY BERNARDO



SEAN CORCORAN



Time dictates our understanding of everything that we encounter—from the relationships that we maintain, to the physical places that we occupy, to the objects that we've come to think we know, and to the surfaces that we plant our bodies on.

Employing a mix of analog and digital photography techniques within a single work, I rely upon the strengths of the analog process to achieve photographic veracity through visual description. From there, I toy with representation and perception to access experiences, memories, and associations of the everyday.

Each work stands as my own conscious observation made after the fact—these moments and images exist for me in a paused state where I engage in a process of looking and learning.

SEAN CORCORAN



MAXWELL GOODKNIGHT



MAXWELL GOODKNIGHT



My work is the product of experimentation with materials and images, resulting in large-scale installations that draw out conversations between accessibility and restriction in relation to mass media, popular imagery, and collective memory.

The formal qualities of each project are approached in the same manner; material, form, and content are interconnected points of reference requiring balance within their own processes. These concerns are threaded through each project's development and inform the resulting work.

My practice allows the opportunity to recognize whether the channels within one project will flow into the next. As new ideas are discovered, they become platforms to initiate the development of the next series of work.

ANTHONY JACKSON (BUGZDALE)



ANTHONY JACKSON (BUGZDALE)

Through my art, I amplify ideas of social class, race, police brutality, corrupt government, death, as well as themes related to black culture, to show that black men and women are targets. My Jamaican-American background, my community of Jamaica, Queens, old family photos, and memories all influence the way I construct a portrait.

Thinking of all the ways imprisonment is used to suppress black men and women, I explore the depth of illusion, allowing sketched and collaged figures from my everyday life, to become a gateway into another world where these figures survive, despite the fragility of the environment. I aim to spark questions about the hierarchy of images and materials used in painting by questioning the importance of the subject of an image against the background, and the materials used to explore the possibilities of constructing an image.



ERICA KAUFMAN



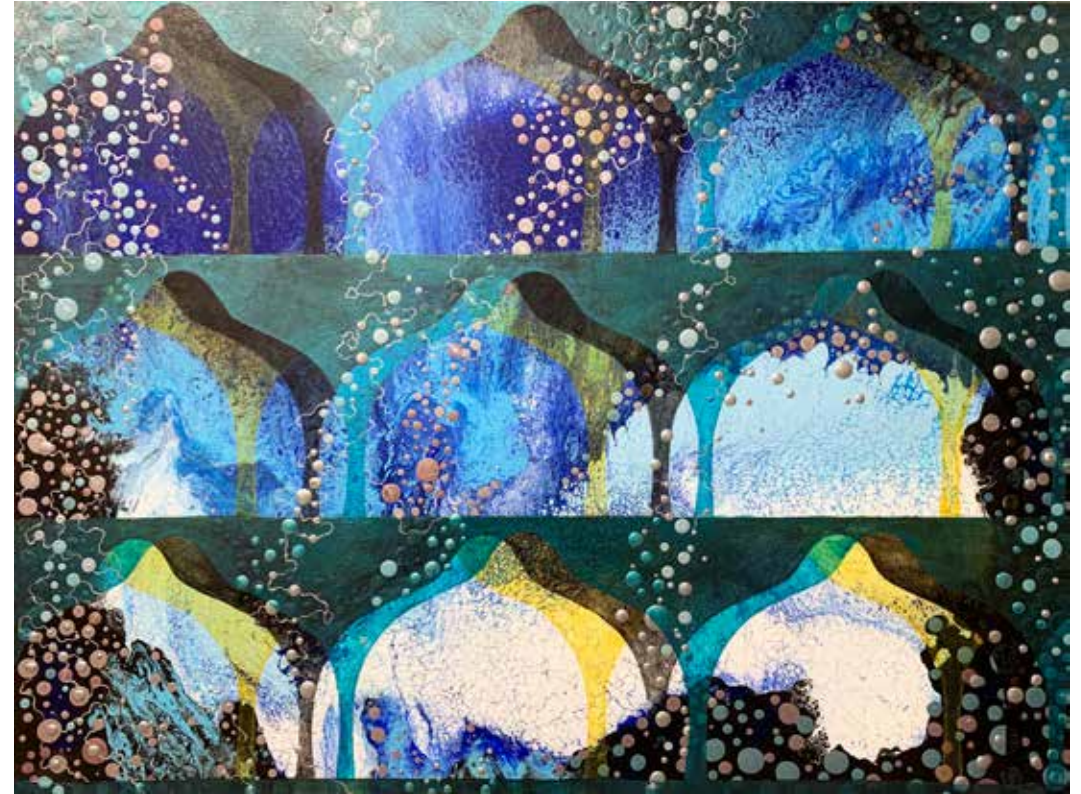
Much like the decomposition of dead organisms on the forest floor and their rebirth from the soil as something new, the forms and surfaces in my work are fluid, always changing. My sculptural installation is a living environment comprised of fabrics and other domestic objects that have a past life. Disparate histories of the people who once owned these relics are connected by my meticulous assemblage. Nature is a balance between order and chaos, and while my sculptures may be chaotic, everything has to be carefully worked in order to properly honor the narratives of the objects I'm incorporating. I do this so that rather than being forgotten, these histories are enshrined, interwoven, and allowed to grow in a symbiotic way.



ERICA KAUFMAN

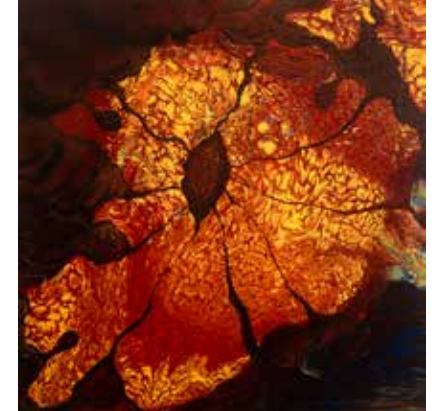


YA LI



How should humans and nature live in harmony? My work is an endless attempt to answer this question. I try to find a way to express Eastern philosophy in abstract painting. Taoism proposes that the universe operates harmoniously in its own way. In my works, all elements are meant to explore the balance between humans and nature: the shape and surface of the human body, the cells and organs, and the micro-creatures (viruses and bacteria) that can impact functions of the human body. I represent unpredictable, random combinations of cells by pouring paint. The blending of colors, the natural textures, and superimposition of patterns all represent the organic world, beyond our will and control. The central shape on the canvas is like the shelter of our homes, like a window on cultural exchanges, like a breast, cultivating generations, like a human face from a god's-eye view, a symbol of human civilization.

YA LI



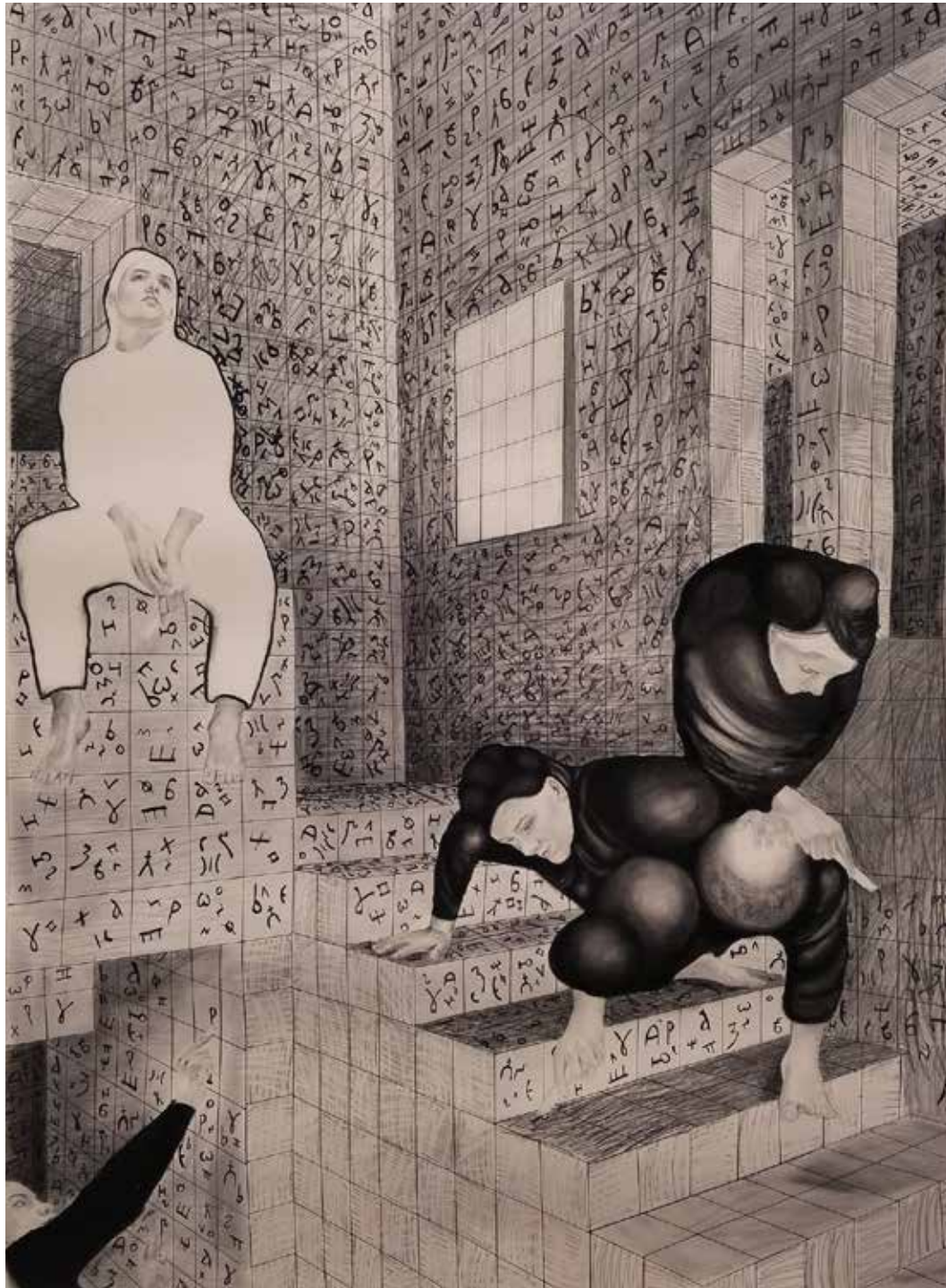
ARNELA MAHMUTOVIĆ



Drawing inspiration from old manuscripts, contemporary imagery, and my own personal history, I translate these influences through painting to elevate their significance. Analyzing my traditional upbringing as a first-generation Bosniak-American in Western society, I generate a platform for dialogue and contemplation around the experience of living between two cultures. I orient veiled forms in different environments to displace them from their origin, while alluding to the spiritual and psychological. The spaces in my paintings are the product of a distorted history, and the figures describe how one would function in a fragmented environment.



ARNELA MAHMUTOVIĆ



MEGHAN MASON



MEGHAN MASON

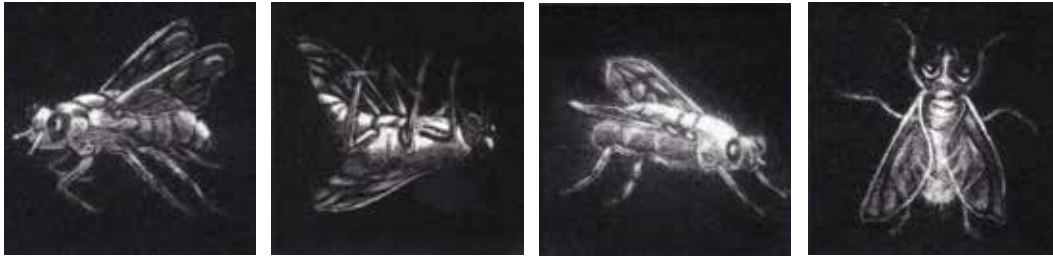


As we drift further and further away from nature in our daily lives, we have to make an effort to explore the natural world so intrinsic to our growth as humans. My artwork borrows from both of the natural and the artificial world. Thrift stores are an inspiration to me; they are an ecosystem filled with antiques and artifacts, clothing and discarded craftsmanship. Walking through a resale shop, I observe the objects and their material; I try to understand how they are made, and I consider their history and their age. I am only left with clues given to me by the object—from discoloration to scuff marks, from types of stitching or fabric material. I consider the history of the object and clues that place it into a timeline. I observe nature in the same way, picking up a branch covered in fungi, studying the form and pattern, the irregularities and shapes. I am equally interested in figuring out the history an object has in both the natural world and the human-made.

Through material, pattern, and color, I make paintings to bridge the divide between the natural and artificial. Gravity and viscosity of water or medium with ink is used to stain fabric pieces lending to a more freeform process. The fluidity of the dyes and inks creates an organic, unpredictable stain in these assemblages. The colors pool in spots, or bleed together. I paint the canvas, cut, and tear, omit and collage with a sewing machine. The painted pieces and woven thread borrows from the micro and macro scales in nature, with tiny threads running through or large swatches of paint and canvas pieces. They are not permanently formed in a definitive shape, instead they can adapt to a location, collected together to grow into larger paintings or be separated apart. My paintings embrace irregularity.



ANNA NINA PELLICONE



Through a personal excavation, I collect and repurpose intimate artifacts that have been preciously stored away. These personal relics and other mass-produced items are combined with the common housefly in portraits of significant people from throughout my life.

This installation of etchings and mezzotints examines our obsessive fascinations with objects and their associations with individual people. Layering disparate memories, emotions, and objects on top of one another within a space generates clusters of curiosity and wonder. The memories are translated through childhood imagination, adult reasoning, whimsical movements, and fantastical acts of the unknown.



ANNA NINA PELLICONE



TZUYUN WEI



Being separated from my home country, Taiwan, for the first time, I consider my personal experience in relation to that of my immigrant relatives, who have been here longer and assimilated into American life. I explore the spaces of houses—both imaginary, as in my daydreams, and real, as in the homes of my relatives. In my treatment of space, distortion is a major character in these narratives. The tilted perspective in the first series reflects my solitary life, and the shaped canvases imply my position as an outsider. The barred window, culturally significant in Taiwan, is the residual memory, covering the present. The homes my relatives build become their homeland, while their childhood memories bear the mark of infinity and linger in the immediate world.

TZUYUN WEI



EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

COURTNEY BERNARDO

Self-Reconstruction, 2020
Toilet paper
10 ½ x 28 feet

*Untitled (Stomach
Sculpture)*, 2020
Plaster bandage
67 x 40 x 9 inches

Entomophobia II, 2020
Wax, toilet paper, glue,
charcoal, and spray paint
4 x 4 x 4 ½ inches

I Get it From You I, 2020
Taxidermy deer, and wood
19 x 15 x 22 ½ inches

I Get it From You II, 2020
Taxidermy deer, wood, and
synthetic hair
30 x 13 x 22 inches

Strummer, 2020
Plaster
15 x 6 x 9 inches

*Don't Bite the Hand that
Feeds*, 2019
Plaster and taxidermy
alligator
20 x 13 x 4 ½ inches

Evicted, 2019
Plaster, toilet paper,
polyurethane foam,
and metal
68 x 28 x 19 inches

Untitled, 2019
Plaster and tanuki tail
12 x 11 ½ x 8 inches

Guardian, 2018-2019
Plaster, toilet paper,
polyurethane foam, spiders,
flowers, and spray paint
36 x 32 x 23 inches

Curvy, 2018
Plaster, spray foam, and
spray paint
50 x 15 ½ x 14 ½ inches

SEAN CORCORAN

Common Surfaces,
2019-2020
Installation in 4 parts

Chipboard, 2019-2020
Archival inkjet print
55 x 44 inches

Floor, 2019-2020
Archival inkjet print,
sandpaper, and sanding
sponge
55 x 44 inches

Decking, 2019
Archival inkjet print
30 x 24 inches

Siding, 2019
Archival inkjet print
30 x 24 inches

Shadow Spaces,
2019-2020
Installation in 3 parts

Bedroom, Triptych,
2019-2020
Archival inkjet prints
30 x 24 inches each

Living Room, Diptych,
2019-2020
Archival inkjet prints
30 x 24 inches each

Office, Diptych, 2019-2020
Archival inkjet prints
30 x 24 inches each

Things Left Behind, 2019
36-page book, 36 archival
inkjet prints, hardcover
10 x 8 inches

MAXWELL GOODKNIGHT

Venus, 2020
Charcoal on newspaper
Dimensions variable

Waterfall, 2020
Charcoal on newspaper
Dimensions variable

Moon, 2020
Charcoal on newspaper
Dimensions variable

ANTHONY JACKSON (BUGZDALE)

Untitled 1-32, 2020
Heat press t-shirt transfer
paper on glass panels
8 x 10 x ¼ inches

Untitled 1-8, 2020
Inkjet prints on unstretched
canvas
60 x 30 inches

ERICA KAUFMAN

Dwelling, 2018-2020
Installation in 5 parts

*Reaching from,
reaching for*, 2020
Chair, marbles, globe,
vases, blankets, and other
domestic objects
4 x 3 ½ x 4 feet

Roundabout, 2019
Robes and antique mirror
12 x 30 x 30 inches

Strega Nona, 2019
Clothing, scarf, vase, and
nesting tables
32 x 40 x 30 inches

Stacked glass, 2019-2020
Vases and china cabinet
Dimensions variable

Pinnacle, 2018-2020
Chandelier, tablecloth,
blankets, clothing, and
other domestic objects
8 x 6 x 5 feet

YA LI

Heaven, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
36 x 42 inches

Independent, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
10 x 10 inches

Inter of body 1, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
10 x 10 inches

Inter of body 2, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
10 x 10 inches

Inter of body 4, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
10 x 10 inches

Land, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
40 x 46 inches

Nurture-1, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
24 x 30 inches

Nurture-2, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
24 x 30 inches

Nurture-3, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
24 x 30 inches

Nurture-4, 2019
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
24 x 30 inches

Womb, 2018
Mixed media and acrylic on
wood panel
48 x 36 inches

ARNELA MAHMUTOVIĆ

Mare Nostrum, 2020
Oil and graphite on canvas
46 x 34 x 2 ½ inches

Marmara, 2020
Oil and graphite on canvas
46 x 34 x 2 ½ inches

Pilgrimage (Triptych), 2020
Oil and graphite on canvas
48 ¼ x 31 ⅝ x 2 ½ inches
each

Adonis, 2019
Oil, graphite, wax crayon,
and gold leaf on canvas
46 x 34 x 2 ½ inches

Bosančica I, 2019
Charcoal, graphite,
and Sharpie marker on
Stonehenge paper
70 x 50 inches

Bosančica II, 2019
Charcoal, graphite,
and Sharpie marker on
Stonehenge paper
70 x 50 inches

Golden Lily, 2019
Oil, graphite, wax crayon,
and gold leaf on canvas
46 x 34 x 2 ½ inches

*Surrender to the Story of
your Hands*, 2019
Oil and graphite on canvas
65 x 45 x 2 ½ inches

MEGHAN MASON

Cold Water, 2020
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 2 x 2 feet

*Flower / Ember
Combination*, 2020
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 4 x 2 feet

Golden Embers, 2020
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 2 x 2 feet

*Leaf / Water
Combination, 2020*
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 4 x 2 feet

Like a Leaf, 2020
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 2 x 2 feet

*Sunsets, Flowers, and
Pretty Things, 2020*
Canvas, ink, acrylic paint,
and thread
Approx. 2 x 2 feet

*Atmospheric
Imperception, 2019*
Canvas, ink,
and acrylic paint
4 x 2 feet

Hurricane Flower, 2019
Canvas
4 ½ ft diameter

ANNA NINA PELLICONE

All I see is you, 2020
Etching, mezzotint,
and collage
7 x 5 inches

Application, 2020
Love letters dipped in oil,
cards, Post-it Note, and
collaged etchings
11 x 8 ½ inches

Ego Victory, 2020
Love letters dipped in oil,
Post-it Notes, and collaged
etchings
11 x 8 ½ inches

Him, 2020
Etching, aquatint,
watercolor, gouache,
colored pencil, pearlescent
dust,
and glitter
30 x 22 inches

Props 1, 2020
Etching,
9 x 6 inches

Props 2, 2020
Etching
8 x 4 ½ inches

Props 3, 2020
Etching
5 x 3 ½ inches

Props 4, 2020
Etching
9 x 6 inches

Props 5, 2020
Etching
8 ½ x 4 ½ inches

Props 6, 2020
Etching
5 x 3 ½ inches

Return to Sender, 2020
Love letters dipped in
oil, envelopes, and collaged
etchings
11 x 8 ½ inches

Swipe Right, 2020
Love letters dipped
in oil, cards, and
collaged etchings
11 x 8 ½ inches

Untitled 1, 2020
Untitled 2, 2020
Untitled 3, 2020
Untitled 4, 2020
Mezzotint
1 ½ x 1 ½ inches

Untitled Memory 1, 2020
Untitled Memory 2, 2020
Untitled Memory 3, 2020
Etching and mezzotint
ghost print
1 ½ x 1 ½ inches

TZUYUN WEI

*Look Inside the House,
2020*
Acrylic and oil on canvas
40 x 500 inches

Cut into a Room, 2019
Oil on canvas
30 x 24 inches

House of Breath, 2019
Oil on canvas
30 x 24 inches

House Section, 2019
Oil on canvas
30 x 24 inches

Starting Over, 2019
Oil on canvas
30 x 24 inches

Subsidence, 2019
Oil on canvas
30 x 24 inches

2020 MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

University Art Museum
University At Albany
State University Of New York

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and the Ann C. Mataraso Endowment Fund, in honor of Professor
Emeritus Mark Greenwold.*

MAY 1 – 17, 2020

MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

We are pleased to present this expanded catalogue featuring the work of the 2020 Master of Fine Arts degree candidates Courtney Bernardo, Sean Corcoran, Maxwell Goodknight, Anthony Jackson (Bugzdale), Erica Kaufman, Ya Li, Arnela Mahmutović, Meghan Mason, Anna Nina Pellicone, and Tzuyun Wei. The 60-credit M.F.A. is the terminal graduate degree in studio art.

A tradition since 1984, the M.F.A. exhibition is an important way in which the University Art Museum and the Department of Art and Art History collaborate to enhance the academic environment at the University at Albany. This year, amidst the COVID-19 crisis, the exhibition will be documented in this publication and presented virtually through a dedicated website. Both of these formats represent the culmination of these students' intensive training and study in studio art practices. Despite unprecedented circumstances, these students are participating in their first professional museum experience. They are realizing their M.F.A. exhibition in a new and responsive form and we are honored to share their efforts with the academic community, alumni, audiences of the Capital Region, and beyond. We are grateful to the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, The University at Albany Foundation, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Ann C. Mataraso Endowment Fund, in honor of Professor Emeritus Mark Greenwold, for support of the exhibition and this publication. The Department of Art and Art History would also like to thank the museum staff for its hard work and dedication throughout the exhibition process.

Sarah R. Cohen, Chair, *Department of Art and Art History*
Corinna Ripps Schaming, *Director/Chief Curator, University Art Museum*