

University Art Museum presents  
*Well/Being: An Exhibition on Healing and Repair*  
On view Aug 4 – Dec 11, 2021

# Well / Being

An Exhibition on Healing and Repair

ALBANY, NY (June 22, 2021) — The University Art Museum is pleased to present *Well/Being: An Exhibition on Healing and Repair* featuring artwork that addresses the complexities of daily life during this pandemic era. Twelve established and emerging artists and musicians present multi-disciplinary approaches to pandemic-related issues such as kinship, chronic illness, convalescence, intimacy, the emotional costs of caregiving, and various incarnations of love and community.

Responding to the urgent need for social and cultural spaces in which to pause, reflect, and find solace, *Well/Being* includes new commissions, participatory workshops, performances, and conversations created to provide an environment in which visitors can experience forms of connection, resilience, action, and hope in turbulent times.

Several artists address the ongoing dual pandemics, acute and chronic: Covid-19 and racism. **Carrie Mae Weems's** (b. 1953, she/her) video, initially a PSA in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and made in collaboration with the New York City artist collective The Peace Poets, continues to remind viewers that many aspects of the pre-pandemic “normal” were and remain terribly unjust. With imagery drawn from the window neon of Asian American shops, **Michelle Young Lee's** (b. 1981, she/her) commissioned neon works are a memorial to the six Asian women killed in Atlanta in March and a protest against white supremacist violence and sexual fetishization.

Rituals, both celebratory and mournful, are seen throughout the exhibition. **Amaryllis DeJesus Moleski's** (b. 1985, she/her) large scale works on paper of figures who are engaged in spiritual rituals draw on Taíno

**Jeffrey Gibson***Nothing is Eternal*, 2020 (detail)

Single-channel digital video, sound, 18:14 min.

Courtesy of the artist and Sikkema Jenkins &amp; Co., New York

**Diedrick Brackens***fire makes some dragons*, 2020

Woven cotton and acrylic yarn

Hudgins Family Collection, New York

mythology, showing cultural resilience while offering futuristic visions of queer utopias. **Glendalys Medina** (b. 1979, they/them) has found solace during the pandemic through a daily practice of drawing hip-hop inflected color studies rooted in Caribbean culture (2020–ongoing). In **Sanford Biggers's** (b. 1970, he/him) video *Hip Hop Ni Sasagu* (2004) addressing spiritual ritual and identity, filmed during the artist's residency in Japan, the artist and fellow Zen practitioners meditate and ring singing bowls, several made from melted down hip hop jewelry.

Repetition has provided artists with some solace and structure during the pandemic. The colorful photographs arranged in grids in **Tanja Hollander's** (b. 1972, she/her) *Ephemera* (2020) show personal objects sent to the artist along with written descriptions of their significance by ten first-year UAlbany students and several other participants—a poignant work that grew out of the artist's remote yet nonetheless tender relationship with the participants. For her commissioned project, **Emily Daggett Smith** (b. 1987, she/her) presents a recorded performance of Andrea Casarubbio's *Amid a Place of Stone* (2020) for solo violin, composed in New York at the height of the pandemic, and will offer a series of live intimate performances throughout the course of the exhibition.

In **Jeffrey Gibson's** (b. 1972, he/him) *Nothing Is Eternal*, filmed in upstate New York shortly before the 2020 presidential election, we see local faces—each in isolation—views of rural towns, and American flags projected on bodies in a video addressing, in the artist's words, “our social collapse” but also the “reinvention of self and community.” In **Diedrick Brackens's** (b. 1989, he/him) *fire makes some dragons* (2020)—a woven textile piece drawing on both African weaving and American South textile traditions, a scene of a silhouetted figure



raising another in a martyred pose becomes emblematic of such reinventions performed by those living with HIV/AIDS. The work responds to CDC projections for future infection rates among Black and Latinx men but also offers a retrospective gaze: a reminder that Covid-19 is not our first pandemic. In the context of these works, **Scott Keightley's** (b. 1987, he/him) sculptures of music stands encrusted in chandelier crystals create both celebratory light refractions and a mournful sense of absence.

*Well/Being* also asks how do we live with chronic pain and illness? In **Panteha Abareshi's** (b. 1999, she/her) two videos about her life with sickle cell zero beta thalassemia, a blood disorder that causes debilitating pain and bodily deterioration, we see her trying to maintain a sense of self amidst constant medical monitoring of her body. A personal response to her care work for a woman living with dementia, **Odessa Straub's** (b. 1989, she/her) commissioned installation of live plants and aquariums tethered between two floors by a siphon transporting water, will be maintained by the artist throughout the exhibition offering metaphoric and literal performances of care as she replenishes the water.

## Well/Being Artists

Panteha Abareshi  
Sanford Biggers  
Diedrick Brackens  
Jeffrey Gibson

Tanja Hollander  
Scott Keightley  
Michelle Young Lee  
Glendalys Medina

Amaryllis DeJesus Moleski  
Emily Daggett Smith  
Odessa Straub  
Carrie Mae Weems



**Glendalys Medina**  
*Color Study 03.20.20, 2020* (detail)  
Oil pastel, pencil, and marker on paper  
Courtesy of the artist



**Panteha Abareshi**  
*For Medical Use Only, 2019* (detail)  
Performance for video, 8mm and hi8 film  
Courtesy of the artist

Concurrently, the University Art Museum is pleased to present *I'll Be Your Mirror* in the **UAM's new Collections Study Gallery**, featuring works from the collection by artists including Edward Steichen, Andy Warhol, and Mary Ellen Mark, in dialogue with pieces on loan by past-exhibiting artist, Dave McKenzie. In 2018 the UAM unveiled its new Collections Study Space, a multi-purpose facility that makes the museum's collection accessible to students, faculty, researchers, and the community. The Museum is proud to further this mission through the launch of the new Collections Study Gallery as well as a redesigned digital database.



**Dave McKenzie**  
*Drawing After Andy*, 2001 (detail)  
Video, color, sound  
Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles



**Andreas Feininger**  
*Woman holding miniature camera*, 1949 (detail)  
Gelatin silver print  
Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation, Gift of Estate of Gertrud Feininger

### ***I'll Be Your Mirror Artists***

Andreas Feininger  
Katria Foster  
Rachel Foullon

Jenny Kemp  
Mary Ellen Mark  
Dave McKenzie

Edward Steichen  
Andy Warhol

*Support for the University Art Museum exhibitions and programs is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, The University at Albany Foundation, and the University at Albany Alumni Association.*

*Additional support for programming is provided by University Auxiliary Services at Albany, Rose & Kiernan, Inc., and the Jack and Gertrude Horan Memorial Endowment Fund for student outreach.*

**Museum Hours:**

Tuesday through Saturday

11 am – 4 pm.

Closed Thanksgiving weekend.

For the most up-to-date information on hours and visitor guidelines, please visit our website at [www.albany.edu/museum](http://www.albany.edu/museum), or call (518) 442-4035.

**Contact:** Christine Snyder, Office and Operations Manager, [cbatson@albany.edu](mailto:cbatson@albany.edu)

**About the University at Albany:** *A comprehensive public research university, the University at Albany offers more than 120 undergraduate majors and minors and 125 master's, doctoral, and graduate certificate programs. UAlbany is a leader among all New York State colleges and universities in such diverse fields as atmospheric and environmental sciences, business, engineering and applied sciences, informatics, public administration social welfare, and sociology taught by an extensive roster of faculty experts. It also offers expanded academic and research opportunities for students through an affiliation with Albany Law School. With a curriculum enhanced by 600 study-abroad opportunities, UAlbany launches great careers.*

###