re|solve showcases the thesis work of the second graduating class of OCAC MFA in Craft. The exhibited work demonstrates a vigorous search for resolution through iteration. The diverse content and media on display echo the practice of making and re-making in pursuit of creative achievement.

Congratulations to Julia March Crocetto, Sarah Eaton, Shiloh Gastello, Jennifer Jackson, Christina Kemp, Erin Martinez, Hannah Newman, Giuseppe Pellicano, and Jonathan Steele.

Karl Burkheimer
Chair, MFA in Craft
#LivingWithTheCloud, 2016
Balloons, string, paper, markers, Instagram
Dimensions variable
Hannah Newman

thesis abstract

The Impossibility of a Cloud examines digital technology as a constructed environment or framework. Beginning with my personal relationship to digital devices, my inquiry into digital culture is manifested as an inefficient, iterative process of making. Guided by concepts of the everyday, awareness and the pataphysical, the core of my work rests on insistences on uncertainty, individual agency, knowing through the body, and the conscious act of paying attention. Key to my inquiry is the work and writing of Marshall McLuhan, Maurice Blanchot, Kenneth Goldsmith, On Kawara, Ann Hamilton, Felix Gonzales-Torres, Miranda July, Ara Shirinyan, Joyce Wieland, and Marcel Duchamp.

#LivingWithTheCloud, 2016
Balloons, string, paper, markers, Instagram
Dimensions variable
Within my practice I examine digital technology and language as intangible structures that mediate our interactions with others, the world, and ourselves. I present physical manifestations of language and the digital through an interdisciplinary practice that includes installations, books, and sculptures. The physical within my work becomes a method of seeing, touching, and understanding the often abstracted experiences of language and the digital—the immaterial made concrete through acts of attention.

Driven by my research, reading is the way I understand both myself and the world, forming the basis for my studio practice. Actively sifting through my thoughts in the studio, iteration becomes a form of meditation on the concepts I've gathered while reading. The process of iteration is a way of palpably working out my thoughts; no single iteration fully answers a question, yet as iterations accumulate so, too, do cohesive thoughts.

My work is a way for me to investigate questions concerning the digital in a personal way, allowing me to ‘know’ these topics in a way that is not cerebral, but rather bodily, emotional, and experiential. The infinities of both language and the digital become constrained by the limits of my body, patience, and insistence as I work to make the abstract tangible.

**Always and Forever**, 2016
Balloons, hand-stamped ink
Dimensions variable

**Wonderlust**, 2015
Balloons, string, paper, rocks, tape, fabric
Dimensions variable
If You Don't Know Where You're Going...Any Road Will Get You There, 2016
Porcelain
Dimensions variable
The Symbolic Body And The Evocative Object investigates applications of the unconscious mind, fragility of the human body, and the fossilization of memory through the passage of time. The focus is to investigate the emotive meaning instilled in seemingly mundane objects. By enacting tea service, performance, and installation art, I form a framework of interactions between viewers and the work, offering the viewer agency to reference or construct their own associations. Research sources include artist influences (Irvin Tepper, Steven Lee, Edmund de Waal, Marina Abramovic, and Jeni Hansen Gard), literature (Lewis Carroll and Ray Bradbury), philosophy (Soetsu Yanagi and Soshitsu Sen), and psychology (Carl Jung).
artist statement

My work is inspired by the ephemeral nature of the human body and the instability of memory. Memory is vast and incalculable, prone to doing whatever it wants. Even mundane associations can become important moments when recalled through the lens of memory. Recollection of events and things in our lives can become fragile with time, slowly degrading until they no longer resemble their original context.

I actively seek to locate the emotional value of seemingly mundane objects by preserving them in porcelain. More specifically, I record the object’s form in porcelain to remove the visual associations of the object’s previous history. The work functions as a fossilized memory, a means of preservation. The original object is gone, having been fired-out in the kiln, so that only a remnant survives. My goal is to visually alter the objects and illustrate the passage of time. My greatest joy and hope is realized if the viewer is able to discover or recall something meaningful about themselves by projecting their own experiences onto the work.

If You Don’t Know Where You’re Going...Any Road Will Get You There, 2016
Porcelain
Dimensions variable
If You Don’t Know Where You’re Going...Any Road Will Get You There, 2016

Porcelain

Dimensions variable
thesis abstract

*Positive Disequilibrium* examines the home as photographed space through the language of silence, beauty, geography, space, psychology, color, quiet, sight as touch, and childhood imagination. The purpose of the inquiry is to investigate the language of photographic imagery, particularly the ability of a photo to objectify as well as to create symbols. The inquiry began with an exploration of psychological geography being utilized to cultivate interior landscapes by photographically appropriating others’ homes. Characteristics of the work include creating impossible rooms, curating the picture for psychical outcomes, exploring a broader language connecting film and photography, and exploring the meaning imbedded into cherished objects. The scope of the research includes writers (Terry Tempest Williams, Sal Leiter, Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Ian Bogost, Paul Rodaway, Umberto Eco) and artists (Henri-Cartier Bresson).

artist statement

‘Fictional architectures’, explores the home as reimagined curated living spaces. Panoramic images seamlessly dissected and reconfigured, appropriate new meanings between owner, photographer, the photographic image, and objects. Using the natural ability of the image to fragment and flatten a three dimensional space, I conjure the magic of childhood imagination, to suspend visual reality. I am offering a real unreality for the viewer to find secret passages, escapes, and move through impossible rooms.

Christina Kemp

*P.E. 2016 No. 2, 2016*
Archival inkjet print
18” x 48”
K.M. 2016 No. 1, 2016
Archival inkjet print
18" x 48"
thesis abstract

*The Opposite of This Inattention is Love* explores my connection between the material and the personal. In examining my assumptions about value and authority in relationships, through material, I discovered inherent contradictions—us and other, object and space, resolve and openness, institutions and individuals, making and collapsing space, pointing without creating spectacle, and the violence of grace. The physical works are artifacts of haptic engagement with these contradictions. Important touchstones are Abstract Expressionism, the Japanese minimalist movement of Mono-Ha, Theaster Gates, Amanda Ross Ho, and the writings of Anne Truitt, Simone Weil, and Flannery O’Connor.

Jennifer Jackson

*In Its Natural Habitat*, 2015
Loom waste, abandoned electrical box, wiring
Dimensions variable
artist statement

“Once one admits the existence of a thing, humans twist and make ways to convert them to one’s own desires, and the foundation of a thing’s existence is lost… what we can do is to wipe the dust off the surface of things and let the world that it is a part of appear.”
— Nobuo Sekine

I collect leftover and abandoned materials as a means of examining my own assumptions and biases about value and beauty, through material means. I hypothesize that attitudes toward objects and material are reflected in human relationships, and examine this through looking, collecting, choosing, arranging, attempting, composing, repositioning, committing. Discoveries made through these processes serve the primary intention of respecting both the stories of the materials, and the spaces the final objects inhabit.
I want to see what happens in the corner between the deliberate and the inadvertent. The physical work functions as artifacts of a haptic engagement of relational questions.

SINK OR SWIM 2, 2016
Styrofoam, beech, spray paint
48” x 23” x 23”
The Opposite of This Inattention is Love, 2015

Weather barrier, scrap wood, spray paint, graphite, thumbtacks

Dimensions variable
Untitled, 2015
Earthenware, weather barrier, industrial lining, scrap wood, water
3.5" x 24" x 18"
Trench Art I, 2016
Ceramic
8" x 16" x 16"

Trench Art II, 2016
Ceramic
8" x 6" x 6"

Trench Art III, 2016
Ceramic
6" x 15" x 15"
thesis abstract/artist statement

“The artist’s job is to be a witness to his time in history.”
— Robert Rauschenberg, veteran, U.S. Navy

My interest in sculpture stems from my time as a soldier. These experiences lead me to search for passionate and creative means of exploring my emotions and beliefs in politics, religion, and psychological distress. I am in agreement with many artists who feel art is not meant to fix problems, but to make others aware that they exist. This awareness may lead to change or at the very least comfort and understanding through conversation. My work is created in many mediums, from ceramics, mixed media, found objects, metals, or wood and is dictated by the message I wish to share. I want an open engagement with my work in which the viewer can find commonalities between civilian and military lives. The human condition is shared by all and we are all in this together.
Center Mass I, 2015
Ceramic
24” x 20” x 2.5”
Formation, 2016
Ceramic
8" x 25" x 6"
thesis abstract

Layers of Resolution is an inquiry into contemporary formalism, inter-changeable compositions, an integration of fibers and painting, object and image, and deep exploration of translucent media. Following the parameters and actions of cutting, stretching, stitching and patchworking, this is an inquiry into the psychology of fragmentation, connectivity, and assemblage. Through expansive inventory, quick compositional studies, and a greater knowledge of materials, this generative practice highlights an evolutionary studio practice of material contemplation. Adding to a conversation of what a painting could be, the components of the work include the craft of a process, essence of material, and interplay of media. Research of this inquiry includes artists: Lee Bontecou, Lee Boroson, Angela De La Cruz, Eva Hesse, Margie Livingston, and Kathy Temin, as well as art theorists and historians: Nicolas Bourriaud, Ellen Johnson, James Elkins, Katy Siegel, and Albrecht Wellmer.
ENTRY POINT, 2016
Silk, chiffon, cotton gauze, wool, poly-organza, english netting, tulle, wood, gesso, thread, nails
78” x 42” x 3”
SUPPORT SYSTEM, 2016
Synthetic fabric, wood, cotton rope, nylon cord, yam, beaded chain, monofilament, gesso, nails
42" x 78" x 3"
artist statement

Rethinking the processes of painting and interweaving the second and third dimensions, I have explored the space between fibers and painting, object and image. Finding opportunity and liberation through interchangeable compositions, collage methods, and deep material experimentation, the capabilities and materiality of my chosen media are exposed. Highlighting the objectness of a painting, I replace traditional techniques with the actions of cutting, stitching and stretching, to manipulate materials physically. Thread becomes line, void becomes negative space, and stretched swathes of fabric become washes of paint. The support system of line, structure of canvas, and fluidity of material, gives way for layering, play, and integration.

SUPPORT SYSTEM, 2016
Synthetic fabric, wood, cotton rope, nylon cord, yarn, beaded chain, monofilament, gesso, nails
42” x 78” x 3”
thesis abstract

*Fabricating Experience and Recollection* investigates how the transformation of material can generate meaning. The arc of inquiry moved away from material exploration as connection with place became an important factor in making meaning. Methods shifted toward utilizing chance in the physicality of making to capture intangible aspects of experience and recollection. Mechanisms include the language of containment, abstraction, impression-making, mapping, chance, and time. Research includes Tim Ingold, David Pye, James Elkins, Hester Stinnett, John McQueen, Richard Serra, Richard Tuttle, Heather Watkins, and Jennifer West. An alchemical perspective balances hylomorphic art-making resulting in a collaborative relationship with materials that permits qualities of materials to impart meaning. The outcome is layered artifacts that act as vessels for emotional content.

artist statement

My ongoing inquiries revolve around the exploration of place and layers of memories, expressed with mark-making through printmaking techniques and stitching. I am curious about the overlap of systems, points of friction, adaptation, and cooperation, and the role of cloth in these relationships. Living in the Western U.S. and witnessing our fraught relationship with wilderness has influenced my creative practice; I seek the poetic conversations that can be found there. My current work investigates the physicality of making and the collaboration with materials as a means of connecting. Through wrapping, collecting, and mapping I create tangible, meaningful, physical connections with place, embracing the perceived futility of harnessing intangibles, allowing the absurd to take a role in my work.
Journal, 2016
Stitching, time, acrylic ink, dye, earth pigment, cotton
Dimensions variable
Sediment, 2016
Pigment, dye, time, stitching, silk noil
2” x 7” x 7”

Tenacity, 2016
127 days, earth pigment, dye, paint, soil, stitching, silk noil
1” x 17” x 17”
Tenacity, 2016
127 days, earth pigment, dye, paint, soil, stitching, silk noil
1" x 17" x 17"
thesis abstract

*Things I Need To Understand Better: Feelings and Daily Practice* is a series of investigative vignettes that addresses labor, value, and art making as self-medication. My inquiry is concerned with the construction of identity, sadness, and subversion. Research includes Italo Calvino, Georges Perec, Albert Camus, Sophie Calle, Dan Attoe, and Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

artist statement

I am interested in finding meaning and assigning value to things through daily practice and labor. Through iterative making I investigate my relationship to craft, failure, and identity. Constructing humor out of tragedy, I am playful and subversive, questioning expectations and authority.

Erin Martinez

*He Can’t Have Nice Things*, 2015
7” x 4.75” x 1.25”
Tiny Type for Big Feelings: March 8, 2016
Letterpress on paper
Dimensions variable
I only agreed to meet up with you because I know you still have feelings for me and I like the attention.
I Lost Control; I Did Some Serious Damage, 2016
Woodfired stoneware, porcelain, earthenware, steel
7” x 26” x 6”
I stand in awe of the phenomenal world, peering into the processes that drive material interactions. I think about the largest and smallest imaginable scales of matter. I contemplate atoms, quarks, energy fields, galaxies, dark matter, light speed, and cosmic and geological time. I value wondering, and I understand myself to be part of it all. Engaging in the material processes that I ponder by setting ceramic materials into motion is foundational to me. My work is an enactment of force: the attribute or tendency toward physical action or movement of material. The practice that supports my work evokes the forces of material formation within natural and manipulated environments. I offer my viewer the awe that invigorates me. This inquiry constructs the theoretical context in which my artworks operate by investigating phenomenal matter as it relates to art (Richard Serra, Linda Swanson, Andy Goldsworthy, Bruce Nauman and Hans Haacke), philosophy (Phenomenology, Material Vitality, Taoism, and Zen), science (Quantum Mechanics and Cosmology), and my own experience of the phenomenal world.

The Gravity of the Situation I, 2016
Woodfired stoneware, porcelain, spray paint
20" x 20" x 5"
artist statement

I choose to look at the world through the lens of an artist, finding profound and poetic content in the simplest facts of nature. My work in ceramics is my engagement with material as I find beauty in observing and participating in the phenomena of the earth. It is about curiosity and the joy of wonderment in discovery. Physical accumulations and changes over time are as much my media as ceramics. I provoke sensitivity to a material dynamic that is ever present in the world, yet often goes under considered. I think of my work as providing a visual sensation as opposed to information per se. There is no decoding or understanding to be revealed by a viewer, only phenomena that can be taken in with openness toward discovering meaning.

The Gravity of the Situation I, 2016
Woodfired stoneware, porcelain, spray paint
20" x 20" x 5"
I Shrink Under Pressure, 2016
Woodfired stoneware, latex paint
9" x 55" x 2"
About the MFA in Craft
Oregon College of Art and Craft's MFA in Craft invites artists to advance their creative practice through two years of intensive study and exploration. Located in Portland, the program investigates problem solving through the manipulation of materials, taking advantage of specialized facilities in the areas of Book and Print, Ceramics, Drawing and Painting, Fibers, Metals, Photography, Wood, and Digital Fabrication. Highly skilled and motivated students work with dedicated faculty to develop their conceptual and expressive ability across diverse media. The full-time immersion program begins in January or September, and includes one mid-sequence summer term.

About Oregon College of Art and Craft
OCAC is a leading, uniquely small, mentor-based college where students are individually guided to become successful artists and professionals in the fields of creative practice, business, and industry. Students work in small classes with renowned faculty, artists-in-residence, and fellow students to explore innovative, cross-media approaches to making, experiential learning, and conceptual thinking. Located in Portland, our community reflects the ethos that values the hand-made, locally sourced, and ethically entrepreneurial. OCAC is a place where ideas are realized.

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