

# SENIOR EXHIBITION

Department of Art, Colby College, Waterville, Maine

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## 2018 Senior Exhibition

May 10 - May 27, 2018

Opening Reception: May 10, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Colby College Museum of Art

Waterville, ME

## ART DEPARTMENT 2017-2018

### AR 401- 402 / STUDIO CAPSTONE STUDENTS

Rachel Bird / Printmaking  
Daphne Maritssa Hernandez / Painting  
Scarlet Holvenstot / Photography  
Kaci Kus / Painting  
Nathan Lee / Painting  
Jake Lester / Photography  
Amelia Patsalos-Fox / Photography  
Annie Pease / Sculpture  
Cameron Price / Photography  
Adela Ramovic / Painting  
Molly Ann Wu / Photography  
Yanlin Zhao / Painting

### AR 356 / WRITING ART CRITICISM STUDENTS

Abigael Conran  
Sara Friedland  
Nora Hill  
Austin Lee  
Emily Martin  
Nina Oleynik  
Amelia Patsalos-Fox  
Katie Ryan

### STUDIO FACULTY

Bradley Borthwick  
Bevin Engman  
Gary Green  
Amanda Lilleston  
Garry Mitchell

### ART HISTORY FACULTY

Marta Ameri  
Saskia Beranek  
Daniel Harkett  
Véronique Plesch  
Tanya Sheehan, Chair  
Ankeney Weitz

### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Kristine Johnson



## A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

The Art Department is proud of the unique partnership this catalog represents. Seniors participating in the 2017-18 studio capstone seminar, coordinated by Professor Bradley Borthwick, crafted artist statements illustrated by their artworks. Art history students taught by Professor Daniel Harkett interviewed the artists about their studio practices and responded to their work in creative texts. Although only in its second year, it is hard to imagine our curriculum without this collaboration, as it enriches the two halves of the Art Department, disseminates our students' work to a broader audience, and preserves it long after the Senior Exhibition closes at the Colby College Museum of Art.

The art faculty are grateful to the students for their dedication to this project and their willingness to take risks. Readers will find a variety of voices and writing forms on the following pages, including essays, a poem, and a dialogue. Similarly, in the space of the Senior Exhibition, visitors will encounter interactions between artistic media, experiments with nontraditional materials, inventive installations, and deep exploration of personal and contemporary concepts. As Colby works to bring together the arts and innovation, we see our students leading the way!

Special thanks go to Bradley Borthwick, who oversaw the production of the catalog and the assembling of the exhibition; Diana Tuite, Stew Henderson, and Greg Williams at the Colby Museum, who beautifully curated and installed the students' artwork; Jennifer Liese, director of the Center for Arts & Language, Rhode Island School of Design, who generously contributed her expertise in art writing through class visits this spring; and Pat Sims, who expertly copyedited the catalog.

Tanya Sheehan  
William R. Kenan, Jr. Associate Professor of Art,  
and Chair, Art Department



## Words and Images

## Rachel Bird's *Paper Dolls*

by Emily Martin

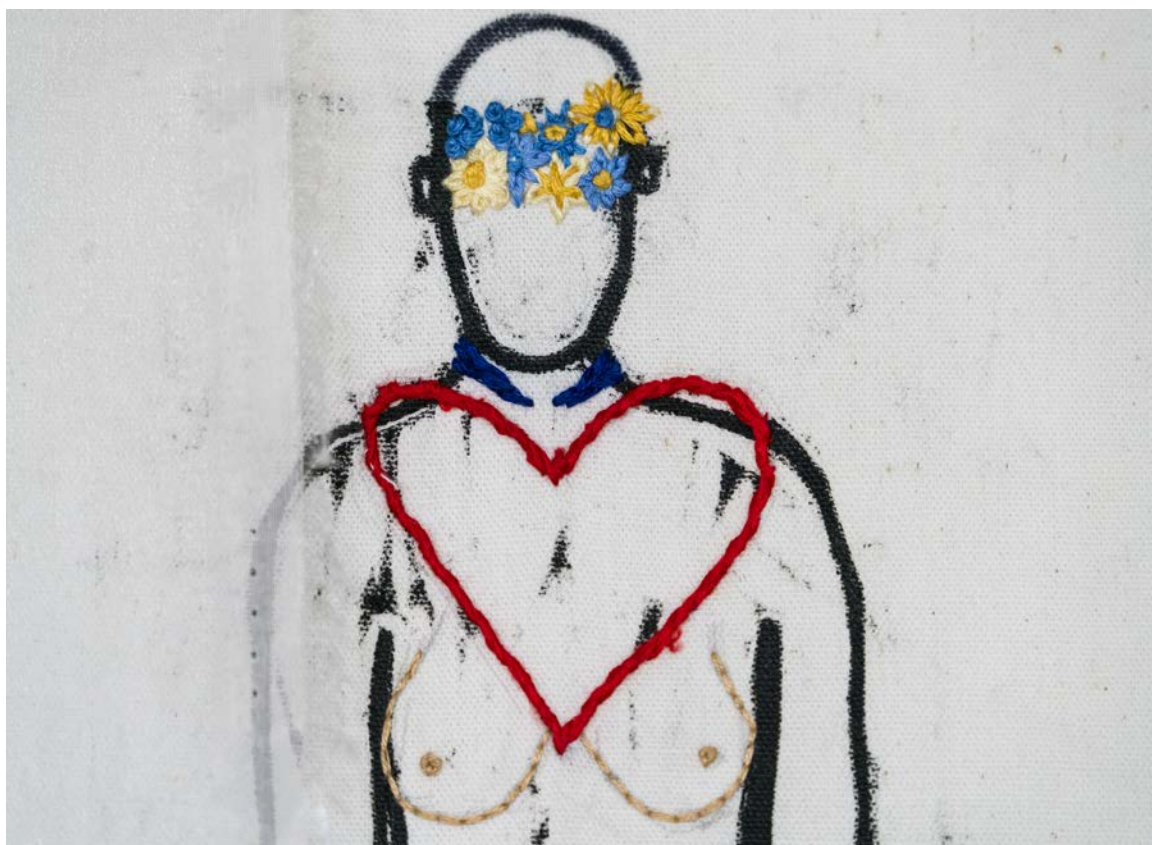
Rachel Bird tells me, “I’ve been figuring out what it means to me to have a body.” Not an easy feat for anyone, let alone a senior in her final semester of college. Most people at this tumultuous point in their lives are wrapped up in the details: where they’ll be next year, what to do in their final weeks, what impression to leave behind. But Rachel is taking a step back; she wants to think bigger.

The figure in *Paper Dolls* resembles the outlines drawn at crime scenes, but is actually what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has deemed the “ideal female body,” based on Body Mass Index standards. The white fabric the outline is drawn on points toward the normalization of whiteness that is so much a part of our culture. Rachel gave these blank—or not-so-blank—templates to important women in her life and asked them to add anything they thought identified them. Some of their marks were conceptual, like flowers in place of eyes, while others were literal, like stretch marks and scars. Rachel then embroidered these personal motifs onto the fabric.

Rachel aims to make art that makes people uncomfortable. “The balance of creating something that is simultaneously beautiful and unpleasant,” she says, “is an incredible thing.” Some of the bodies produced by Rachel and her collaborators are blemished, some are broken, but all are individual and special in their own way. In the Senior Exhibition, Rachel presents her work as an installation, one that has her figures spilling over onto one another, essentially wallpapering the gallery. This idea of women breaking free from constraints—heightened by Rachel’s decision not

to frame any of her pieces—parallels the way the embroidered ladies seem to take back their own bodies.

Embroidery has historically been viewed as a women’s craft and often is left out of the category of “fine arts.” Rachel’s work embraces the connection between women and embroidery but demands it be taken seriously. Hoping to spark a conversation about Western societies’ treatment of women’s bodies, Rachel asks if I’ve ever heard the Guerrilla Girls quotation about women and museums. It reads: “Do women have to be naked to get into US museums? Less than 3% of artists in the Met. Museum are women, but 83% of the nudes are female.” While Rachel did not direct her collaborators to clothe their figures or leave them unclothed, the vast majority of them opted for naked bodies. Perhaps they had in mind the traditional female nude. They flipped the script, however. Rather than offering easy pleasure for the male gaze, these bodies command and direct the viewer’s attention. They emphasize that all of them have some type of baggage, and that this is not something that takes away from their importance, value, or worth. It’s almost as if Rachel is saying: If the only way women can get into a museum is by being naked, it’s time to break down the damn door. ✨



RACHEL BIRD / *Paper Dolls* / 2018 / woodblock print and embroidery on fabric / 8.5" x 16.5" each



## Daphne Maritssa Hernandez's *Number 1*

by Amelia Patsalos-Fox

When I asked her, “Why eyeballs?” Daphne Hernandez chuckled as if she knew it would make me uneasy to hear her explain that, “unlike any other slit in your face, eye sockets have these gelatinous things sitting in there that roll around and help you to navigate your life.” Spending last year abroad in Kyoto, she navigated a whole new place with her eyeballs.

In Japan, however, she was not painting eyes but flowers. Working with watercolor, Daphne enhanced her knowledge of color theory immensely. And those flowers were the germinal seed for her paintings of eyes. Flower petals are openings to stamens and stigmata as eye sockets and lids are openings to the eyeballs. Though completely different types of openings, it is true of both that when the light catches them, they reveal rich colors. The brightly saturated pigments in flowers also informed Daphne’s vibrant interpretation of eyes. Painting flowers, it turned out, though, was not enough. Daphne found that the opening of a flower was not sufficiently human, emotive, or intimate. She decided that what she really wanted to study was the expressive power of the flower of the face, the eyeball and its surroundings.

Daphne’s eyes as an artist, student, and world traveler have brought her to rectangular oil paintings of the eyes of the people she is closest to. She aims to paint the eyeballs of those who have steered their worlds toward hers, and has chosen people who have helped her on her own life journey. Her paintings are unique and engaging, and it is impossible to draw your eyes away from the eyes staring back. While one might expect this to

be uncomfortable, Daphne’s paintings are not unfriendly. Instead, they invite you into a rectangular sliver of the way she sees her subjects, and give you a sense of both her presence and her relationships. Smile lines and raised eyebrows suggest warm and intimate exchanges with friends.

“Why not the whole face?” I asked. She laughed again. “Because I don’t want to. I like eyes. Painting is purely selfish for me. So, honestly, why would I paint another part of the face?” Daphne paints for herself, and her friends. If others are able to find a connection to her friends’ eyes, well, that’s great too. ✨



DAPHNE MARITSSA HERNANDEZ / *Number 1* / 2017 / oil on panel / 3.5" x 11.25"

## Scarlet Holvenstot's *Inhale. Exhale.*

by Abigael Conran

In *Inhale. Exhale.*, Scarlet Holvenstot has developed a thoughtful series that provokes an equally thoughtful response from its audience. In subtle ruminations on the beauty and mystery of her own friends, Scarlet captures the twinkle in an eye and the smile tugging at the lips. She makes us wonder, What's in a look? In an expression?

In her earlier work, Scarlet took candid snapshots of the average college partygoer, but in this series she has gone from impartial documentarian to magician behind the curtain, literally. The large-format camera she employed to create her portraits required the use of a dark cloth that Scarlet would disappear under in order to set up her shots. The cloth removed Scarlet from her subjects and placed them in a direct relationship with the behemoth camera itself. With an exposure time of about six seconds, the camera required the subjects to remain still for an extended period, facing their reflections in the lens. Face-to-face with the anachronistically large camera, they were given opportunities to think. Frozen and confronted, what crossed their minds in those moments? Scarlet wonders with us. "The [photographs] I'm drawn to," she says, "[are] the ones where you're really looking into their eyes. And then you can kind of decide on your own: What is this person feeling? What are they thinking?"

In *Liv*, named for its subject, the face is utterly the focus, save for a hint of leopard fur. Scarlet rids her image of the superfluous and presents her viewers with only the essential, that which forces a response. The subject makes direct and intense eye contact with viewers in an unwinnable staring contest. The shine in

her eyes is mystifying and is further obscured by the smoke coming from her lips. We are forced to engage with her, but her stare holds us exactly where we are, resisting any sort of conclusion. Like Scarlet's other subjects, Liv is challenged by the camera, as we are by her. Nevertheless, she retains her self-possession. We may wonder about her interior life—and project our own thoughts and perceptions—but, ultimately, it is hers, not ours. Scarlet's portraits offer a choice: upon presentation of an incomplete narrative, we can search for a solution, a resolution, or accept that the not knowing is what truly captivates us. ✦



SCARLET HOLVENSTOT / *Liv* / 2018 / archival pigment print / 20" x 24"

## Kaci Kus's *Jacob*

by Austin Lee

What is the significance of a dejected face? Haunted eyes and tight lips? A stare that reaches for miles? Among other things, they insinuate a narrative—a story in the face, a reason behind those melancholic feelings. Kaci Kus's portraits convey her subjects' angst and worry, yet give us nothing as to why; we can only project and imagine.

Kus presents her young subjects in hazy yet familiar forest scenes, wandering alone past trees and brush. There is a clear sense of movement in her subjects, both physical and mental, albeit sluggish. Are they pushing forward through their isolation and anxiety? Or merely exploring it with no destination or goal? We cannot say, as we are given no beginning or end, just a snapshot of a moment.

*Jacob* depicts a young man from the waist up, back hunched and hands in the pockets of a bright yellow sweatshirt. The garment's color screams with joyful energy, and streaks of sun illuminate it further, yet everything else about the painting disagrees; his face is stoic and shadowed, bordering on disheartened, and the dark, vaguely autumnal setting is shrouded in a foggy mist. The subject's head is framed by ominously black, scantily leaved branches bearing a number of crab apples, both dead and living. A tension is apparent, deliberate, and unresolved.

Kus avoids absolutes in her work. She presents viewers with a few themes, such as youth, melancholia, and solitude, but leaves it at that. "There are no grand meanings behind what I do," she says. This exclusion is purposeful. It creates a space for us to play

around with our own meanings for her works, allowing us a chance to think about our own lives, our own times of pain, loneliness, or other perceived emotions, and where we went or will go with them. Kus only offers us prompts to engage with our perceptions.

There are stories in Kus's faces, but they do not necessarily belong to the painted figures. This touches upon a central tenet of the age-old search for meaning in art. Does what is represented actually decide meaning? Is a painting of a man near a crab apple tree really about a man near a crab apple tree? ✦





KACI KUS / *Jacob* / 2018 / oil on canvas / 18" x 24"

## Nathan Lee's *Student-1*

by Nina Oleynik

**H**e says, "I'm vulgar . . . I'm not great with words. For someone like me, there's no other way to do it."

The Artist is talking about painting. Plain and simple. It's how he shows the people in his life—the people who have had the greatest impact on him—that he appreciates them.

Even so, "vulgar" seems to be the wrong word. Is this what The Artist meant? Or something else entirely? Much like this statement, Nathan Lee's artwork is up for interpretation.

One definition of "vulgar" is *of the people*. In a way, The Artist's work fits this definition. It connects the artist and subject. It's an art of *his people*.

Nathan Lee isn't grounded in place; rather, he finds his roots in the people he surrounds himself with. Born and raised for most of his life in Taiwan, he then moved to Irvine, California, and finally here, to Colby, in Waterville. These places seemingly have little in common, which could be a reason for Nathan Lee's choice to cultivate meaningful personal relationships as a way of tying himself to the world.

The Artist, at first, is fearful when approaching painting. It is difficult. It is sensitive to texture, to color. It is permanent. The Artist is primarily an illustrator. He approaches art with exactitude and purpose, but likes the possibility of erasure that drawing allows for.

Each work here consists of a matching set of two pieces—one, an oil on Plexiglas and the other, whiteboard marker on Plexiglas.

Each is a direct reflection of the other, like a mirror. In one, the paint is thick, while in the other, the marker is fine, sketching out lines that reveal The Artist's hand. The marker can wipe off easily, an issue The Artist had to tackle when transporting the work. The paint is permanent.

In one painting, a Student gives a coy smile. Is this his true self, or the way The Artist sees him? The Artist's interpretation of how his friends truly are is what you see. Each delicate switch of emotion, from sad to sinister, is aptly captured within the brushstroke. Each change is an obsession felt by The Artist.

This project is for you, but it isn't. Unnamed, unlabeled, each of these faces could be you, but they aren't. The Artist imagines that many others might identify with the feeling of being alone, alone until you find meaningful connection.

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Having completed the project, The Artist is no longer fearful. With these artworks he has explored success and failure with paint. This will not be his last project, nor is it even the pinnacle of his work as an artist.

Nathan Lee no longer relies on others entirely. By being and feeling supported by others, he can stand on his own two feet. With this project, he honors those who have made this possible. ✨



NATHAN LEE / *Student-1* / 2018 / oil on acrylic panel / 7" x 7" each

## Jake Lester's *A Place, Shown to Me*

by Nora Hill

For Jake Lester, going to the Inland Woods Trails is an event. The seventeen acres of wilderness are about three miles from Colby's campus, just far enough that you have to drive there, that you have to carve some time out of your day. Jake first went there on runs with his brother, a senior at Colby, when he was a freshman, the older sibling sharing his knowledge and love of this special place with the younger. When Jake talks about his visits to Inland over the last four years, the bond between the two siblings and their lifelong connections to the outdoors seem wrapped up in each other.

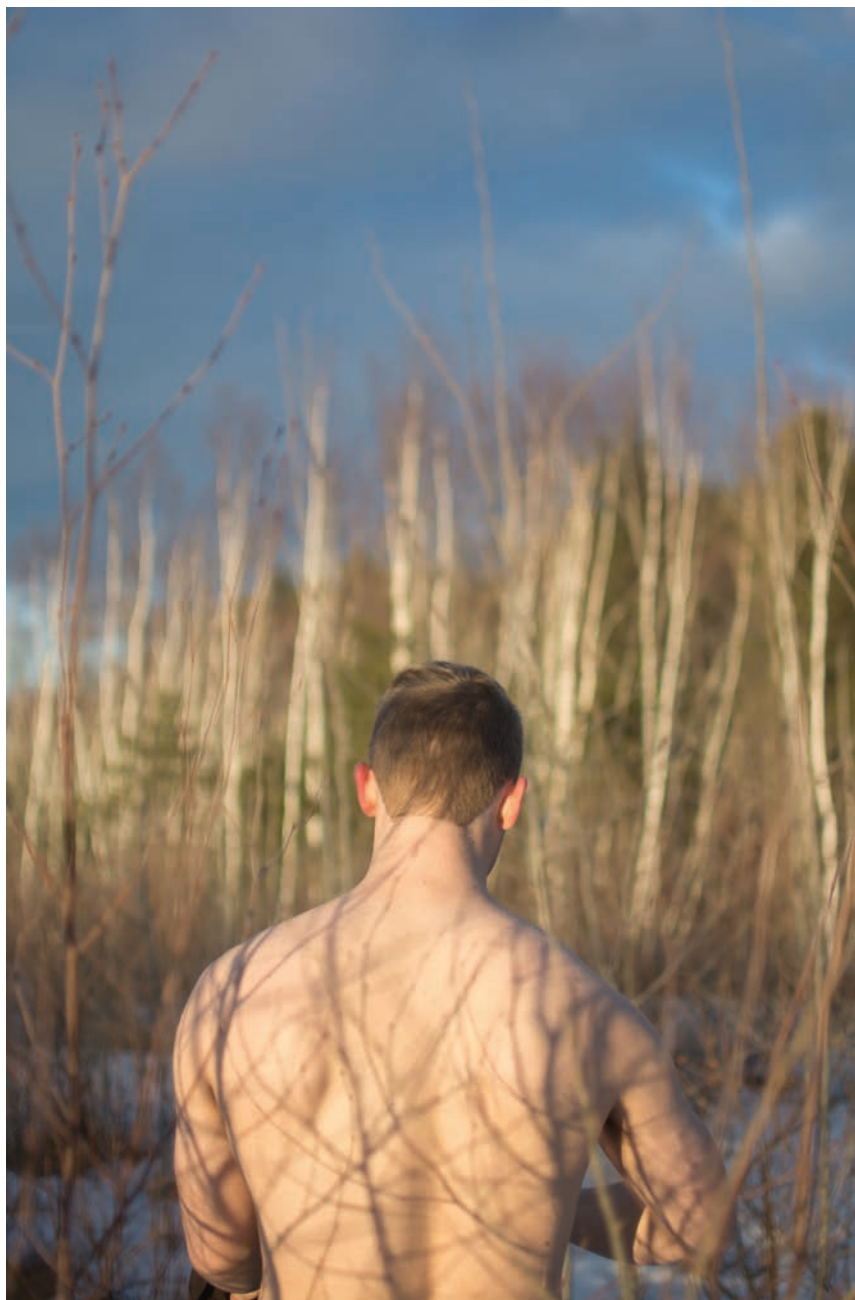
Like Jake's reminiscences, his photographs blend human with nature, relationships to people with relationships to place. All taken at Inland, they are simultaneously all portrait, all landscape, and neither. In some, small figures blend into the trees so that you hardly notice them. Elsewhere, a handful of snow thrown into the air hides a face. Warm sunlight and the sharp shadows of leaves play over a nude male torso. We glimpse a woman's face through stalks of tall grass. What the photographer captures is not so much the people or the natural elements but the relationships—between nature and the human body, between the photographer and the model, between Jake and this place.

Even when the focus of a photograph is the human figure, it invites us to notice details of the natural world that we might otherwise overlook. A young man's bare shoulders become a canvas for the shapes of leaves and branches, painted in shadow. This interplay draws attention to the angle of the sun and the few brave leaves that cling to their branches

late into January. At the same time, the image evokes the physical reality of being in nature. Is the young man chilly, standing shirtless and still with snow all around? Is the golden sunlight as warm as it looks? Can he feel the shapes of the leaves as spots of cold?

Four years ago, it was Jake's older brother who brought him here; now that he is a senior, Jake is the one introducing his chosen family to this place. His models are his closest friends, and there is a certain intimacy that reaches through the camera from photographer to model. We see it in the vulnerability of the figure standing shirtless in winter, in the direct gaze of a young woman whose face is half hidden by tall grass. The light in Jake's photographs is generally warm, the gentle touch of a friend on the model's skin.

"It's about me feeling like when I go here I'm a part of the place," Jake says. He doesn't appear in any of the images, but his presence is unmistakable. With his photographs, he guides you through the people and the place he loves, pointing out the minor details that catch his attention, admiring the glow of sunlight on his friends' bodies, freezing moments of connection so he can look back on them and remember later. ✦



JAKE LESTER / *A Place, Shown to Me* / 2018 / archival pigment print / 14" x 21"



## Amelia Patsalos-Fox's *Locked Out*

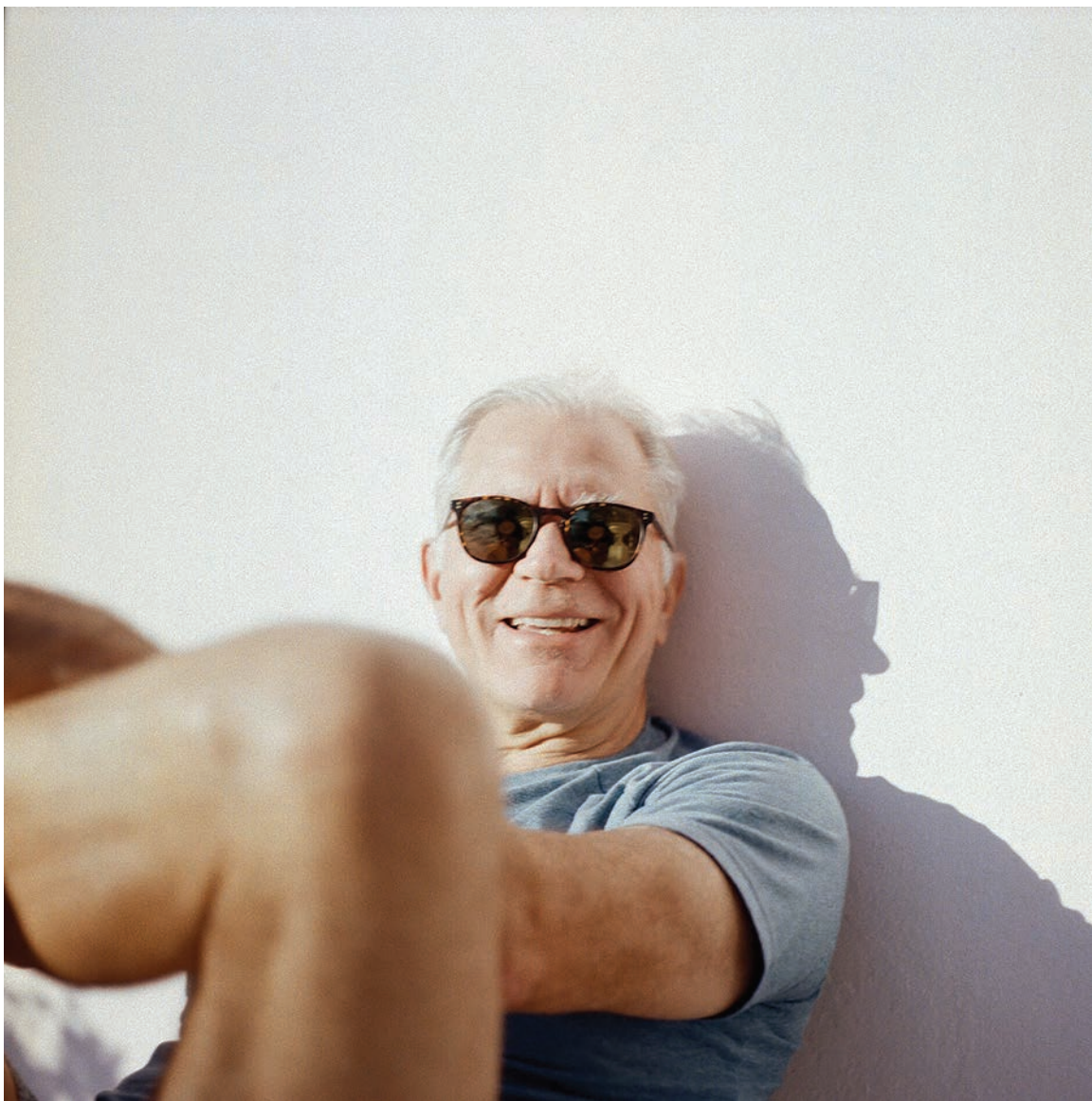
by Katie Ryan

Amelia Patsalos-Fox isn't trying to sell you anything earth-shattering with her photographs. She doesn't show you the milestones of her life, or try to make any existential proclamations. Instead, she brings you into the everyday by capturing moments of happiness with the people she loves. Amelia hopes this series is a reminder to "stop and look up and appreciate" in an age when "it's really easy to get lost." She reminds us of all the little things that go right in our lives. It's moments like the one we see in *Locked Out* when she and her father weren't able to get into their vacation house. The colors are bright and lifelike, and there's a strong presence of light and dark as his smiling face is illuminated and his dark shadow is cast onto the white of the house. This photo exemplifies Amelia's ability to balance color, light, and composition while capturing feelings that range from contemplation to elation. By bringing a sense of tangibility to fleeting emotions, Amelia reveals the beauty in the mundane. She has been shooting scenes like *Locked Out* all her life, but in this new series Amelia approaches the prosaic with a new method.

Her new method involves taking photographs with a Rolleiflex, a large and cumbersome color-film camera. To use the Rolleiflex, Amelia holds the camera at her chest and bows her head to look into the waist-level viewfinder. According to Amelia, when you look at the photos, "You get the sense that you're literally like me because of the angle I have to hold the camera at." For both artist and viewer, the camera forces a focus on process as well as a slowing down. To get to her final selection of photographs, Amelia

took dozens of rolls of film, substituting the complexity of the Rolleiflex for the ease of the digital. By working at it, Amelia found a new comfort in shooting with this camera while embracing the different perspective and temporality it offered.

Paradoxically, the challenges of the Rolleiflex distracted Amelia in a way that allowed her to renew her confidence in her artistic instincts. In this series, Amelia gave herself the freedom to photograph whatever caught her eye. She imposed no constraints relating to abstract concepts or specific themes and felt no pressure to make deep and meaningful art. It is Amelia's lack of preoccupation with making great art that results in work that is meaningful. The viewer can relate to the honesty and the genuine feeling in the photographs, even without having a personal relationship with the subjects. By using the Rolleiflex to see the everyday again, Amelia uncovers the significance of the moments that make up most of our lives. That is a radical act. ✨



AMELIA PATSALOS-FOX / / *Locked Out* / 2018 / archival pigment print / 12" x 12"

## Annie Pease's *Palindrome*

by Sara Friedland

Annie Pease is captivated by the horizon. She finds something comforting about the stark horizontal line that is created where the sky meets the sea. More soothing yet is the feeling of reconstructing this line in her sculptures. Sweeping a paintbrush from left to right over a piece of sheet metal operates for Annie as meditation does for others. It creates a steadiness within her that is communicated through her work.

The horizon is one of the few things found in nature that is uncomplicated. A thing so simple it could have been made to counterbalance nature's complexity. *Palindrome* demonstrates how one single horizontal line can bring order to a cluttered scene. Moving back and forth between the trees and a viewing point, Annie wrapped thin strands of wool around tree trunks to form a fragmented horizontal line that connects them. It is subtle enough not to detract from the landscape but succeeds in creating the illusion of organization across the jumbled cluster of trees.

Annie is an experimenter. She plays with different combinations of materials, finding interesting ways to arrange them and use them together. Each piece of art she makes is a product of what she has learned through creating it. Her experimentation process also involves chronicling her ideas and progress in her sketchbook. It is a record of how both she and the pieces she has created have developed over time. For each project, or even idea for a project, there is a collection of notes, sketches, observations, and scribbles, all of which help her organize her thoughts and transform them into an artistic creation. In this way, Annie's sketchbook serves a purpose

similar to that of the horizon.

It is easy to imagine walking through the woods and coming across *Palindrome*. Just for an instant, at the right angle, the mess of trees begins to make sense. Right then, there is perfect alignment, but with one more step, it disappears. In a flash it becomes nothing more than a tangle of trees in a forest. Like a rainbow after a storm, or a shooting star in the night sky, it is there for a moment, you blink, and then it is gone. Annie's sculptures force us to stop and think about all of the things we disregard. They remind us to acknowledge the ephemerality of each passing moment and to enjoy its contingent beauty. ✨





ANNIE PEASE / *Palindrome* / 2018 / spun wool / 30' x 70'

## Cameron Price's *King's Road* by Emily Martin and Nina Oleynik

Against a backdrop of clear skies,  
trees, houses, trucks, and boats stand.  
stop.

stop along the road. *King's Road*.  
remap, revisit.

you've  
come

s o f a r

already.  
seeing the unseen, capturing the overlooked.  
stop.

for four years you've seen this same space, these same roads, these same images. but you've never really noticed  
them, never really cared until now.

now, when it's time to move on.  
to some, these scenes look simple, but not to you. not anymore.  
racing through life,  
looking forward and never back.  
stop.

these pictures remind you of something. home? home is a funny thing when you're on the road.

what does it mean to stop and smell the roses?

what does it mean to appreciate the little things in life?

now, you see the beauty. you appreciate what can be seen and understood in the quiet moments, if just for a moment.

what do you hope to leave behind? maybe seeing can't be taught, but rather something that comes with age.

stop.  
deep breath.

slow down. look.

four years have passed.

Stop.





CAMERON PRICE / *Red Wall* / 2018 / archival pigment print / 8" x 12"

## Adela Ramovic's *Garden of Nirvana*

by Abigael Conran and Nora Hill

In a sense, Adela Ramovic's art grew out of her grandmother's garden. She remembers spending time there as a child, watching the movement of the leaves in the wind—a dynamic activation of the space in between the plants. Her work attempts to capture that experience of being in nature, without making direct reference to the actual shapes and colors of the natural world. In *Garden of Nirvana*, her series of sculptural paintings, Adela gives you no choice but to acknowledge what cannot be seen, like the wind that moves the leaves.

Adela begins with absence, sketching the space around and between plants in various “gardens” she has encountered—from Colby's greenhouses to sites she has visited in Turkey, Amsterdam, and San Francisco. Transferred onto wood and carefully carved out with a jigsaw, these organic shapes are then rearranged on the wall. The rods that suspend them in place vary in length so that the amorphous forms overlap, cast shadows, and come together to create new shapes. Color comes last; highly saturated paints on the backs of the pieces cast subtle halos of color onto the white wall behind, begging you to step closer and peer around the edges. These projecting polychromed pieces invite their audience to explore and understand them kinetically; they are parts of a puzzle waiting to be rearranged and joined together.

The tactile quality latent in these works springs from those childhood experiences in the garden, Adela's grandmother's palms made rough by the work of tending the plants—the calluses a testament to her life and to her labor. The idea of capturing traces

of a specific place, of a specific life lived, is what inspires Adela and informs her process. She creates works that, at first glance, are whimsical abstractions, but on closer examination are an impression of a unique place and a unique moment. In one piece from the series, inspired by a visit to Istanbul, the amoeba-like forms are painted the same white as the gallery walls from which they protrude. When the work is faced head-on, the shapes seem to float in space, offset by dark shadows and an oddly warm glow. Step forward, closer, lean to the side; suddenly the illusion disappears and you see the wooden dowels that support the shapes, the vibrant orange and fuchsia that line the sides of each piece. The loss of the illusion makes the entire work more real, grounds it more in our physical space. You may find yourself fighting the urge to reach out and trace the brilliantly colored edges, twist the shapes into new patterns.

Adela takes vacancy and thrusts it into our space, compelling us to acknowledge and admire what usually goes unnoticed. The shapes suggest something familiar but not quite recognizable, a memory just out of our grasp. Adela has created a series that not only documents the intangible—the negative space—but reproduces it in wood and bright acrylics, forcing it into existence. ✨



ADELA RAMOVIC / *Cherry at the Bottom* / 2017 / matte acrylic on basswood / 20" x 39"

## Molly Ann Wu's *Emma*

by Austin Lee and Katie Ryan

Molly Wu's photographs do far more than hang from the walls. They confront us. They command attention and recognition of the prevalence of sexual assault. In the era of Time's Up and #MeToo, Molly's work affirms that survivors will not be silenced and addresses the harsh realities they have faced while bringing the discussion into the Colby College Museum of Art.

For her senior project, Molly photographed a number of women who have experienced this kind of trauma, the series serving as both a platform for her models to speak out and a study of the healing process. The nudity of the women in the photographs depicts the reclamation of the body after trauma and stands in opposition to the objectification associated with the historical representation of the unclothed female body. Here, the nude is not an object of lust; it is strength and repossession.

The formal compositions of the photographs vary. Some are full-body shots of models; others feature only body parts. Most of the images display lone subjects, but a few feature pairs. Some models seem to address us while others disregard our presence. Despite these differences, the photographs are united in their focus on the models. In *Emma*, the setting is the woman's bedroom, a comfortable space that she has covered with colorful representations of herself. Through her posture, her stare, and her placement at the center of the scene, she claims the room and demands that we look at her. Her connection with the viewer and the personal location of the photograph create a sense of intimacy.

The range of moods and emotions represented

in these photographs illustrates the many ways of healing and reminds viewers there's no right or wrong way to be a survivor. Some images feel defiant: in *Chloe*, a blonde woman, shown from the shoulders up, eyes closed and face turned up, basks in the light. *Bitch* conveys a sense of torture and anger. In this close-up of a woman's upper thigh, the word "Bitch" is scratched into the skin, the lasting effects of trauma made physical and palpable.

In discussing her subjects' reactions to her photographs, Molly recalls one woman saying, "I've never seen a picture of myself nude in a positive light before." This quotation illustrates the collaborative, therapeutic nature of Molly's project. She and her models worked together to determine poses and expressions. These photographs make the lasting and often invisible effects of trauma visible while also creating a physical representation of the healing process. As a display of real survivors exuding strength and solidarity while reclaiming their bodies, this series speaks to everyone affected by sexual assault. In her photographs, Molly shows women reclaiming the agency that it has taken away from them and lets all her viewers at Colby know this issue is real and cannot be ignored anymore. ✨



MOLLY ANN WU / *Emma* / 2018 / archival pigment print / 5" x 8"



## Yanlin Zhao's *Untitled*

by Sara Friedland and Amelia Patsalos-Fox

*(At Selah Tea. A pot of green tea steeps in front of AMELIA while the sand in the hourglass falls slowly as an indicator of when the tea will be ready. A spiced chai latte for SARA and the weather is gray outside. They are reflecting on a conversation they had with YANLIN about her work.)*

SARA. I was thinking about something she said about how her art relates to water: “When you are working with water you need to know how it works. It doesn’t just go whichever way you want it to go.” I liked that.

AMELIA. Didn’t you find that a little contradictory? How can you know how something works and not be able to control it? I feel like maybe a loss of control might give her a certain degree of freedom? And maybe the result of that is a work that she could never possibly have envisioned.

SARA. Well, I think that’s the point. Water can be manipulated, but only to a certain extent. It’s the same with Yanlin working with her paint. There’s always a chance it will do something unexpected, and she accepts that. The inability to envision the final product is why it’s freeing.

AMELIA. That’s so interesting, because you expect the opposite from artistic freedom. I think the way we—or most people—conceptualize that type of freedom is through absolute self-expression and control over the outcome, you know? But I see what you’re saying. It sort of relates to her process. She controls every aspect of the work until it becomes uncontrollable.

SARA. Exactly, like the thickness of the oil

paint, the support she is using, the timing of her process.

AMELIA. Her process is so specific, but also so invariable. I feel like the juxtaposition of the certainty of her process and . . . the uncertainty of the outcome lines up with how I imagine Yanlin sees the work.

SARA. Yanlin’s connection to the water seems to come from her different life experiences.

AMELIA. You’re right. When we talked to her there wasn’t just one specific draw to water. Like, she was a swimmer, she’s from a city that is surrounded by water, and she cares about the environmental impact we have on water. She feels so strongly about these ties, which is the reason her art is so interconnected with water.

SARA. Yeah, there are so many reasons she is drawn to it. And they’re all different . . . I think she wants to highlight that. Maybe on a given day she feels one way about water, and the next, that feeling changes. Her feelings about the shape it takes are invariable as well, which is reflected in her art. And maybe this is all a commentary on our own relationships with water. Like Yanlin is showing us how she sees water, allowing us to experience it in a new way ourselves.

AMELIA. Maybe . . . but maybe not. ✨



YANLIN ZHAO / *Untitled* / 2018 / acrylic on panel / 12" x 12"



## Artists' Statements

## RACHEL BIRD



I have had a body for my entire life, and I have spent most of this life trying to come to terms with that fact.

The recent #MeToo movement and the ensuing focus on sexual assault has brought bodies and (most often) women's bodies to the forefront. Even before this, I grew up in a world fixated on women's bodies: seeing them, covering them, controlling them. However, even with the insidious knowledge that the world had a predatory gleam in its eye when it looked at my body, I trusted the world and I trusted my body.

Then, at fifteen, I fell at gymnastics practice and shattered my left arm. Gymnastics is predicated on trusting your body: knowing that your hands will be there to catch you, that muscle memory will carry you through. As a gymnast, I trusted my body. Then—in a fraction of a second—I did not. I spent the next three years in and out of hospitals and surgical centers and occupational therapy, relearning how to trust a limb that felt foreign. It's been six years and I am still learning to be comfortable with this body being my new reality.

Some of my earliest child scribbles were fantastical self-portraits: me with wings, me breathing fire, me as tall as a skyscraper—me, but better. In the spirit of my childhood self-portraits, I have spent this semester exploring my own relationship with femininity, feminism, and my female body. Printmaking is a visceral art practice, and as I am carving and cutting and etching my blocks I am strengthening my body while I create.

And who knows? Maybe one day my childhood self-portrait as giant fire-breathing dragon won't be too far off the mark. As Clementine von Radics says in "A Poem for My Mother When She Doesn't Feel Beautiful": "You have survived every single day / for as long as / you've been alive. / You could spit fire / if you wanted."

Here's to women: May we spit fire if we want to.

ABOVE: *Body Catalogue*,  
2018, mixed media,  
dimensions varied



## DAPHNE MARITSSA HERNANDEZ



I like eyes. Eyes in various colors and strong contrast. I paint the eyes in photos, specifically the eyes of my friends. To zoom in on such an important part of the body. So big that eyes swell against the wood, threatening to burst. Swirling in oil. Swimming in colors. Each piece has its own colors, its own temperature linked to the person created from oil.

When it looks like they're really looking back at me, I stop. When it looks like there's a person here with me, I stop.

They're not here to scare you. Just to closely watch from a distance. Are they watching you?

Were they watching me?

Painting strangers is quiet and painting friends is a conversation. A conversation with people who aren't there, reflecting themselves on the mirror in my mind. A rather lonely conversation.

Excuse me, I'm talking to myself.

ABOVE: *Number 1.1*,  
2018, oil on panel,  
3.5" x 12"

## SCARLET HOLVENSTOT



"I just get inspired to take a picture by the beauty and vulnerability of my friends." —Nan Goldin

Inhale . . . Exhale

These portraits reveal the inner world of substance use behind closed doors. They capture the gaze of some of the most important people in my life. It is up to the viewer to decide what lies behind their eyes. I use a large-format camera with 4x5 film to show others how I see my subjects. This project comes from a place of love and curiosity, a window into a cloudy reality.

ABOVE: *Sig.*  
2018, archival pigment print,  
20" x 24"

## KACI KUS



I make realistic portraits in which I primarily try to convey emotions and atmosphere. My favorite painters are Jeremy Lipking, Casey Baugh, and Gottfried Helnwein, as I admire their fresh takes on typical subjects and the way they mix portraiture with storytelling elements. While my work sometimes addresses themes such as childhood and solitude, I try—like these painters—not to get too wrapped up in meaning while I am actually painting.

For this series, I wanted to focus on young people, primarily children, in natural settings. Most of my subjects are people whom I don't have any prior connection to, but who were kind enough to allow me to photograph them. I paint from my own photographs, so I try to find locations where there is at least one standout object—such as the curl of a branch or a dying tree—that can carry as much weight as the individual in the painting. On that note, artistically, this series has pushed me to explore landscape and how to correlate a figure with an active, dynamic background. Trying to improve my painting technique has proved to be very challenging over the course of these four paintings, but I believe what progress I have made will show in the finished products.

ABOVE: *Katie*,  
2018, oil on canvas,  
18" x 24"

## NATHAN LEE



Stepping out of the car, I faced the school buildings. The sunlight through the tree leaves and the smell of fresh air felt good, but also scary. I'd never been away for this long—heck, I'd only been away for a month at most. A wave of anxiety washed over me as I saw the car drive off, taking the only people who have known me for my whole life away. I was stranded in my own anxiety and fear. This lasted for a whole year, before I started to meet you idiots.

Friends are strange creatures, and I thank you all for being so strange. None of you ran away at my first “Fuck off,” and my dumb jokes did not bother you guys. There were some uncomfortable laughs, but I knew they were genuine through the transparency shown only to me. Through the emotions that you all shared with me, and the community I was attached to, I learned to be more in touch with my emotions. This was a group I was allowed to be emotional in front of, maybe too often.

These artworks are dedicated to everyone who helped me through my times. I hope these images will do you justice. I'm sorry that I kept saying this; I'll try to make this the last time.

I'm fine.

I'm always fine.

We are all adults, let me be real.

ABOVE: *Student-2*,  
2018, oil on acrylic panel,  
7" x 7" each

## JAKE LESTER



We all have maps in our heads. They lay out places we have been once, and places we have been a thousand times, strung together by threads of memory—a neighborhood sidewalk, an interstate. Paths scratched through the woods by feet dragging in the dirt.

My map shows me the way to class every day. It shows me to my favorite bakery back home, and takes me on a bike ride on a Sunday morning. It pulls me over streamside wooden bridges, down winding trails, and into thigh-high grass ignited by the rays of the setting sun. It takes me far away and brings me back home, and sometimes fails to do either. But getting lost, then found, on an ATV trail or a once-seen intersection adds a parcel of land to my map.

Just outside the borders, someone else's map picks up the path where mine left off. When I was small and the world so large, my family's map took me to Whale Rock for a childhood picnic extracted from a green JanSport backpack. When I got to Waterville, my brother added, piece by piece, to this extension attached to my previous life by a stretch of I-95.

Each quadrant holds a home, a pond, a stand of birches, a memory, a mystery. An emotion. A place is first shown, later known, and perhaps, through individual discovery, loved.

ABOVE: *A Place, Shown to Me*,  
2018, archival pigment print,  
14" x 21"



## AMELIA PATSALOS-FOX

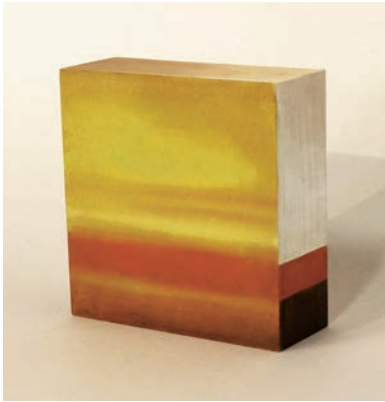


You know how sometimes it is unimaginable how anyone else could see something a different way than you because that is the way you've seen it for so long? It's not that you can't imagine feeling or seeing a different way, but you don't even stop to think that your mind and eyes might have a unique perspective. That's because the way you see things is the way it's always been for you.

Since I was young, you could not catch me without a camera. Vacations, birthdays, for as long as I can remember I've been pointing any type of lens in the face of the people and moments I cherish. It was so natural to me to always be finding the photograph, but I never considered my aesthetic sense unique. I assumed anyone could click a button; I was just the one who wanted to. When I was seventeen years old, my best friend's mother and father and I were driving to Princeton to watch her play in a lacrosse game. I sat in the back seat of the station wagon as her mother asked questions about my senior year of high school. Naturally she asked, "How's photography class?" I answered that it was good, laughed, and said, "I wish I could get similar grades in math, something that's actually important." She whipped her head around, dipping her chin to give me a disapproving look. Looking back at the road, she met my eyes in the rearview mirror. "I don't know if you should see it that way . . . your photos are important. When I'm walking down the street and it's cold, I'm all wrapped up, looking at my feet, waiting to be inside. But you . . . you look around and notice the light and the colors and how they interact with people. How wonderful is that?" In that moment, I began to understand the individuality of my perspective, and the impact it could have. I understood then that nobody sees light and the way it touches the people I love the way I do. I find joy in the golden light that flows through ordinary moments. That day, I found out that some of the world may not see it that way. Ever since, what I have aimed to do is capture that sentiment for them, through my lens.

ABOVE: *A Late Afternoon Dip*,  
2018, archival pigment print,  
12" x 12"

## ANNIE PEASE



never my favorite color, it matched my walls  
It splashed delicately in the same waves  
I waded out till the rocks became sand and  
waited for my brother  
overhead it flew, eclipsing the sun  
I dove and missed  
my feet hit the bottom with my head two feet below  
my fears in order: the deep sea at night,  
~~large~~ belled buoys, being small

ABOVE: *Sunrise*,  
2018, oil on panel,  
4" x 4" x 3/4"

## CAMERON PRICE



I grew up on a winding road a mile into the woods just outside of Rutland, Vermont. A townie may be my proper title, yet the picturesque Vermont town, the old businesses and storefronts, and the quaint city streets never drew my attention. The dirt roads hidden in the mountains, the quiet and cluttered East Coast landscapes, the outdoors—these are places I always found myself wandering.

Wheelerville Road, a beaten dirt route laid on the back side of pine-covered peaks in the heart of the Green Mountains, was often where I spent time driving and exploring. Modest homes and small creeks run along this stretch in what seems like an endless network of side paths, seeming to thrive at their own slowed-down speed of time. I explored these secret spots before moving to Maine, admiring the peaceful sounds of the outdoors, not knowing if I would find a similar place where I could lose myself. A place to wander.

Looking to Stephen Shore and Robert Adams as idols and influencers, I have challenged myself to photograph the plain and somewhat desolate landscapes that seem to slow down time. The imprint left by people on the landscape who speed through it, then leave it alone. Capturing this modest collision of Maine's nature and people is fascinating to me and takes me away from the stress of competition and a daily agenda. These images represent nothing more than my love for the outdoors and the love for simplicity that only someone from the woods may understand. Every honest home, farm, abandoned property, and landscape altered by the human hand that I have photographed resonates with me through my infatuation with wandering through the slower places where I find myself peacefully alone, here in Maine.

ABOVE: *Field*,  
2017, archival pigment print,  
8" x 12"

## ADELA RAMOVIC



When I was young, I would sneak into my grandmother's garden and take vegetables and fruit. I enjoyed the warmth of the sun in her garden but, most of all, I enjoyed watching her water the vegetables and clean the surrounding grass. My childhood observations have inspired me to visit various cities and observe the environments of these different places.

At Colby, I draw negative spaces that the naïve eyes rarely see. I make the different pieces myself, with my bare hands, and assemble these pieces into larger images. First, I retrace the negative spaces into drawings, and then I cut the drawings out of paper to make templates for the actual piece. I let my body move the wood in front of me for the last detail. Lastly, I use a saw to cut the pieces out of basswood panels, and I paint these pieces with white matte acrylic or pastels, depending on my emotions. However, the backs of these pieces are painted using the colors of the country that the piece reminds me of. You will notice that these have mostly warm reflections on the wall, and that is the warmth and love of all the different people I've met, which will forever be imprinted on me. I install these with memory of the flow of the Drina River in my hometown, Goražde. My work represents negative spaces in nature. However, we do not look at the negative space and point to its beauty, because we tend to find its imperfections. For me, negative spaces can create endless beautiful forms that mimic life itself and provide us with an imaginative leap into the realm of contingency and nonexistence. That is where I've found freedom and love.

Thanks to you, my grandmother, for giving me the inspiration to borrow shapes from nature, and thanks to your beautiful hands that have raised me, which allow me to give back these installations to the people of the world to forever nurture.

ABOVE: *A Flower of My Origin*,  
2018, matte acrylic on basswood,  
20" x 20"

## MOLLY ANN WU



There are moments when it feels like nothing is right and the faults in the ground are trying to swallow you up, and in those moments, you want nothing more. You want to feel the solace of the soil hugging you and of the surrendering as something else takes control.

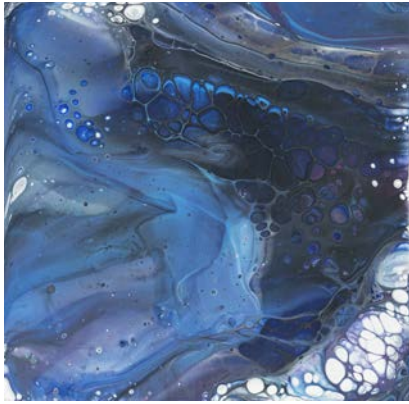
I remember walking outside and seeing two friends already sitting on the warm concrete with their knees pulled up to their chests, staring at the door, or maybe my sister and me, or maybe nothing at all, with wide eyes. We were twelve, or maybe thirteen, used to biking away the afternoons in the suffocating Houston heat. But this afternoon, we sat in a circle with our little childhood toes together in a pile while crying and consoling. We have lived on the same cul-de-sac for our entire lives, the four of us, even then acknowledging the power of female friendships.

There is something special about women helping other women. Something pure and unadulterated. Women have carried the weight of unwanted wandering hands, of being systematically silenced, of being told to do nothing but shrink into small spaces. We have been taught too often that we are not enough. We—women—have learned to become a needed, engulfing feeling of earth, the strength and the endurance and the love for each other.

ABOVE: *Bitch*,  
2018, archival pigment print,  
5" x 8"



## YANLIN ZHAO



*A great flood plagued the reign of Yao. Gun stole the self-expanding soil, Xirang, from the supreme deity to build dams and blockades. Despite toiling away for nine years, Gun failed to hold off the floodwaters, for which he paid with his life. King Yao then summoned Yü to take up the task after his father, Gun. Yü, shape-shifting into a great bear, hacked open mountains and dug waterways, channeling the floodwaters into the ocean. After thirteen years, Yü finally defeated the great flood that had lasted two generations.*

Five-year-old me met the swimming pool.

Practice was never so much preparation for a competitive sport but rather a part of my day. Growing up as a swimmer, each wave and current morphed into the length and shape of my bones. Water not only conceived the ancient city in which I was born and raised, but also created a dimension in which my spiritual habitat nestles.

Twenty-one-year-old me met the open sea.

Open-water divers trade the shelter of land for a conversation with the ocean. Plunging through the waves was starting a journey all over. I had to relearn everything, from how to breathe to how to balance. But the water remembered me. As well as it knew me back home, it would recognize me again half a world away. Inside its crystal-clear eye I saw beauty blooming and slowly disintegrating, echoing chants for life falling on many a deaf ear.

Now you are seeing an anatomy of water.

I use colors to translate the invisible textures of water's life force. Inside its movements are threads of silent musing that weave my history into those of many others. I am the dancer of its fluid choreography, the teller of its precious story.

ABOVE: *Untitled*,  
2018, acrylic on panel,  
8" x 8"

## 2018 Senior Exhibition Catalog

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