

2022

CSUN.



Graduate Exhibition

Master of Arts | Master of Fine Arts

Cover Art

Jasmeet Chatrath

Untitled, 2022

stoneware, 8" x 7" x 5"

Graduate Exhibition

Master of Arts | Master of Fine Arts

Spring 2022

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Ixchel Hernandez
Birthday Cake, 2022
oil on canvas, 36"x 40"

Being an artist takes resiliency and perseverance, and artists must separate production challenges from their desire to make. The artworks included in this Graduate Exhibition highlight this point from a variety of perspectives and material languages. The students in this graduating class have demonstrated an unmatched dedication and persistence to succeed despite the shared challenges unique to these past two years. The circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic left no aspect of academic life untouched, and this group of students and their work embody these unprecedented times, whether intentionally or inadvertently.

Attempting to create order out of chaos, art has become a way to both mark and pass time. Art is not a language that requires certainty; if it did, the museum visitor would require resuscitation from boredom, and attendance would be dreadful. Artists go from impulse to realization through a series of negotiations, making marks, clicking a mouse, forming and manipulating materials, among other actions. Art making requires a distinct engagement that provides a lifeline for the realization of ideas. For some, the ability to make meaning through their practice and display the work are metaphysical experiences.

The work in this year's Graduate Exhibition represents the artists' responses to their unique experiences, conversations, research, and histories, with the hope that these will resonate with those who experience what they've made. The transference from artist to spectator occurs through considered articulations of projected light, stamped clay, photograms, oil paint, food preservatives, graphite, ink, rubber chickens, and glossy photo paper, and these interdisciplinary works seen together have safety in numbers

as a result of the collaborative development between this community of artists and the faculty members involved.

Performing intricate watch repair on a moving boat at sea presents an exercise in futility; some may apply this dictum to writing about art. It can be challenging to accurately describe the intent and meaning of nonverbal encounters with the work. With great appreciation for the quality of the outcomes within this exhibition, I hope to provide some interpretation of and context for the work included.

Janna Avner's multimedia approaches, including image projection, and translucent and reflective surfaces, reveal surprising optical visual effects that recall her experience of the Aurora Borealis. Light as "material" provides an experience both visual and seductive that allows for new possibilities when imagining the future. Using similar, unlikely art materials, Faith Ishizuka evokes retinal pleasure with her cocktail of failed objects, animal intestines, and resin-soaked hair. Her work forms new identities for her sculptural compositions, possessing a biting wit and sense of humor in her search-and-destroy process of getting objects to do bad things. Katia Stewart comments on nature's interactions with culture, using clay, colorful Paracord, water, extension cords, microphones, and micro-video projectors. Integrating handmade objects and digital information, her installations result from studying humanity and nature's evolving functionality and potential harmony.

Craft is an ideological component in a number of students' work. Jasmeet Chatrath draws on her Sikh heritage, literally imprinting it into the surfaces of her detailed clay bodies with crocheted textures made by her mother and grandmother.

The varied forms and scale shifts reveal Chatrath's connection to clay and the skill of her hand. Mariana Reyes's labor-intensive photogram drawings of her belongings curated from ordinary yet cherished objects investigate a child-like impulse to seek happiness in everyday life. Her coded symbolism signifies the process of loving and losing, communicating optimism when facing life's inescapable dark moments. Her exacting articulation of delicate textures is completed by intricate topographical mark-making describing patterns and textures. Katherine Posada uses clay to acknowledge the passing down of shared values, beliefs, and practices. She sketches images onto porcelain Polaroids that read like a set of identity blueprints magically computed from a ceramic camera. The images' square format is akin to an Instagram post, chronicling life in the virtual realm, and the camera doubles as a fossilized artifact of pre-digital photography.

Michael Hong makes gestural sketches in clay that are scaled up to establish a conversation about his multicultural identity. The resulting abstract forms are exhibited in pairs, emphasizing the other's difference and acknowledging the nuances lost in translation from Korean to English. Identity and belonging also inform Ixchel Hernandez's work, her embroidered paintings and prints bringing order to or an understanding of the chaos of change. She explores the process of a familiar neighborhood environment becoming unfamiliar while the opportunity for a new environment is reluctantly made available. Montserrat Rangel Vergara's paintings take the form of indirect self-portraiture. Her significant personal connection with the subjects guides her mixed media approach in which everyday materials such as handwritten notes are embedded into their construction.

Removed from their environments, the expressive depictions imply a psychological state of living memoriam.

Kristine Daily manipulates the environments in her reductive drawings and paintings. Found vernacular photographs of tender, private celebrations become estranged through her extraction of visual information. Her intuitive use (or non-use) of color relates to the psyche as well as to her perception of and visual response to the event's subjects. Codruta Tolan invites viewers to discover hidden landscapes of the mind in her paintings and works on paper. Layered fluid paint in soft chromatic hues and evocative abstractions use a personal visual syntax to convey internal environments. Myung Kang leans aggressively into the pandemic by painting the individual stories that emerge while socially navigating the isolation and restriction. Kang's illustrative hand softens and evokes conflicted feelings in compositions that use traditional materials' distinct attributes to convey emotional content.

Everything worthwhile takes time. The progression of an artist is rarely linear, and it shouldn't be. Having initially aligned their compasses to the horizon at the start of the program, these graduates have completed the first of many steps to reaching their destination. Each student's path to the white walls of this Graduate Exhibition was distinct, and the opportunities ahead will require them to keep making. The graduates share connections to the past and to one another, and I am confident they will succeed in the challenges they face on their individual journeys.

Erik Mark Sandberg
Assistant Professor, Illustration

Janna Avner

MA Painting

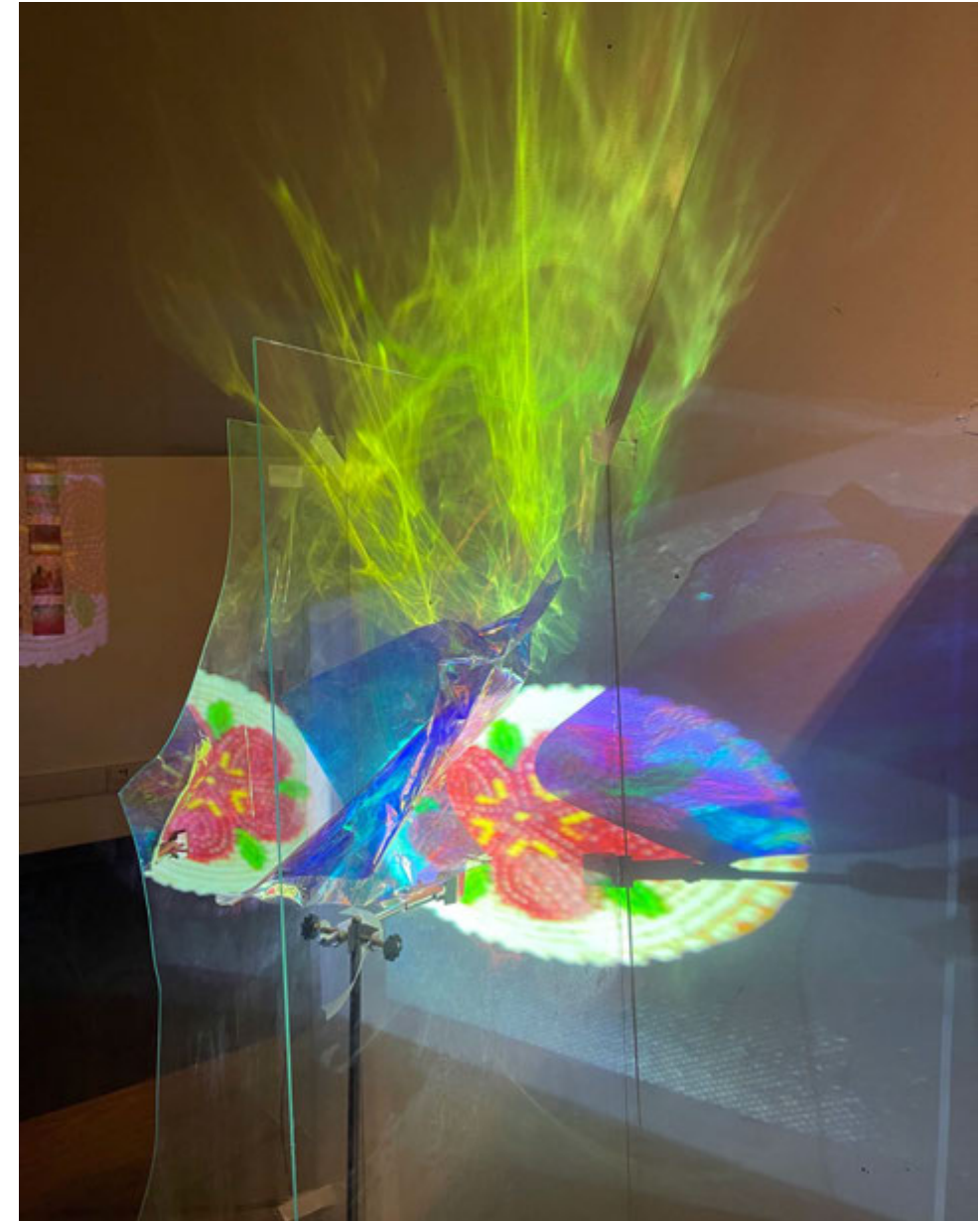
My paintings and sculptures emphasize cognition and perception. As a multi-heritage Alaska native, I document natural light in the Alaskan and Californian terrain to reimagine perception as metaphorical, personal, subliminal, and theoretical. The work insists that perception is as much a simple act as it is a subjective creation.

“False light” permeates the work and, at times, appears artificial and, other times, genuine. Light itself is not objective; it bends and twists, evoking the unsolvable particle-wave paradox in quantum mechanics. This shifting and unknowable framework guides my physical and experiential image making.



I think it's the midnight sun (hangs low on the horizon line) but it could also be a mushroom cloud, 2021
oil and spray paint on panel, 11" x 14"

Using light as a material, I reclaim the romanticization of landscape imagery otherwise intended for political and economic agendas, that drive tourism, commerce, and profit, to incorporate expansive interpretations of indigeneity, perception, and the environment. As a visual metaphor, projections of indigenous beadwork and hologram recreations of the northern lights become the light that moves through everything, embodying continuity in relation to past and present technologies. If people perceive and are active participants in the creation of phenomena, my work speculatively asks what is seen when imagining the future.



Athabaskan Ghost Wave Flower Test 5 Light Sculpture, 2021
mirror, glass, Dichroic film, projector, dimensions vary

Jasmeet Chatrath

MA Ceramics

Born in New York and raised in California, I make sculptures that explore my Indian Sikh identity and acknowledge the experience of unchecked corruption. My work comprises a range of applications in clay, from elegant vases to grotesque figures, and reflects my struggle with rampant racism, sexism, and greed. Clay's unique ability to represent the figure, as well as textures, including stone, crochet, and lace, in the round make clay the ideal medium to bring these elements together; it allows for the study of patterns from architecture to textiles that otherwise deteriorate over time.

My work draws on the ancient tradition of Indian carving and removes traditional motifs from the conventional setting of temples. This rejection of superfluous religious ideations redefines and reclaims the imagery to honor all lives; the customary repetition, balance, and rich color of Indian influence remain.

The neck and narrow base of my vases create dancing silhouettes, embodying lightness and ease; the delicate ornamentation, with contrasting cutouts, suggests tension,

encouraging a moment of pause. My use of textiles expands on the investigation of identity and history. Prior to its colonization, India maintained a rich textile industry that was a prominent way of life. The female-dominant labor required for textile production is embodied in embossed textures created with crocheted works made by my mother and grandmother. This process functions as a collaboration, allowing me to connect with previous generations, while honoring their labor and redefining their traditions.

Faces, some barely human in appearance, offer alternative ways of thinking about the body and mind. Fragments and distorted figures suggest separation and unease while challenging the binary tradition of gender through androgynous depictions. I apply a model of thinking through the body in order to generate thought and self-reflection, addressing elements of mental health while penetrating the veil of dissociation and the tendency to avoid such themes. These self-destructive figures, in which private becomes public and inside becomes outside, compel the senses to connect with pain.



2020, 2021
stoneware, 10" x 9" x 7"



Untitled, 2022
stoneware, 11" x 7" x 5"

Kristine Daily

MFA Drawing/Painting

I work from found vernacular photographs of parties I've never attended. These anonymous events evoke a familiarity that allows me to manipulate and insert my own memories. By rendering candid snapshots of strangers, I am afforded a distance that enables me to overlay my own narrative and make the individuals feel recognizable. This approach frustrates the predictability of celebratory events and spaces through painted interpretations. My work investigates the disillusionment and disappointment embedded in these images that I transpose with personal memories.



Plastic Couch, 2022
oil on canvas, 48"x 60"

Unexpected compositions and saturated, analogous color make the spaces and events strange and fleshy, while ambiguous forms and purposeful voids create a psychological field. People are depicted with a sense of uneasy detachment, failing to interact with one another or with their environment. Having blurred and omitted features, the suggested facial expressions reveal an uncertain familiarity that acknowledges this mental and physical separation. The manipulation of bodies and spaces evokes discomfort and memories of shortcomings. Rendering the images by hand in drawings and paintings allows me to extract and withhold information, suggesting memory's fragmentation and re-imagining compositions in which absence communicates as much as presence.



Dance Circle Drawing, 2022
charcoal on paper, 22"x 30"



Dance Circle, 2022
oil on canvas, 48"x 60"

Ixchel Hernandez

MA Painting

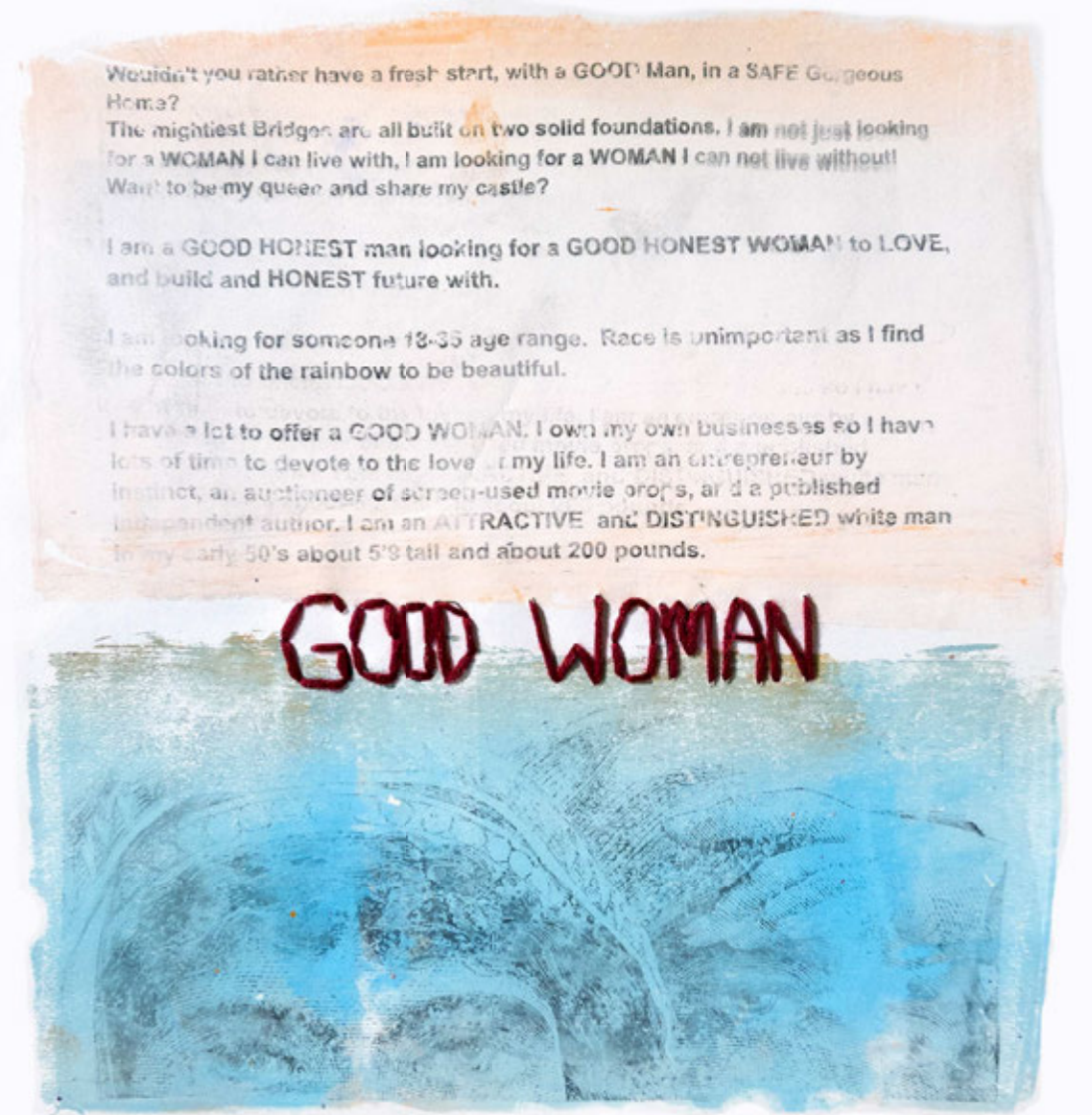
I grew up in Koreatown, Los Angeles, surrounded by diverse cultures and people from different backgrounds. My early experiences inform my work, and I use materials that connect with those experiences, including embroidery. I am fascinated by the traditions I acquired and the places I can and cannot call home. They exist as lingering feelings of wanting to keep these traditions relevant, despite desperately holding onto something that no longer exists, whether a fleeting moment or simply a memory. Acknowledging these aspects in my work functions as a reminder of routines never to be experienced again, such as walking by an empty lot that used to be the neighborhood bakery or the memories held dear that evolve into new traditions. My oil paintings and mixed media artwork embrace these thoughts about memory and tradition and draw on the subjective experience of perception. I explore my surroundings by circling back to where I came from, considering others' perceptions, and comparing them with my own observations.



Decolonize, 2021
Hand embroidery on mid-century handheld mirror, approximately 5"x10"



School Picture, 2022
oil on Canvas, 36"x40"



Good Woman, 2021
Gel plate print and stitching, 8"x10"

Michael Hong

MA Ceramics

한 (han), 2021
Clay, glaze, 8" x 13" x 7"



Untranslatable

Clay has a deep connection to the body. Humans have long interacted with the material, ranging from utilitarian to decorative purposes. I am drawn to the endless possibilities of this material and its manipulation. My work explores my multicultural identity as a Korean immigrant growing up in Los Angeles. Through a visual language informed by the materiality of clay and my own experience, I begin a conversation about the immigrant experience, including language, displacement, the fragmented consumption of culture, and identity.

눈치 (noon-chi) tact, awareness, sensitivity. This word is used to describe one's ability to read the room and act accordingly without having to be told what to do. It

also describes one's ability to tune into someone else's feelings, thoughts, and emotions, to react to a situation.

한 (han) sorrow, regret, collective sadness. The notion of 한 refers to the collective feeling of sadness and oppression that can be traced back to Korea's extensive past of invasions and foreign rule. It is understood as a collective sadness that offers solidarity amongst Koreans.

정 (jung) refers to the emotional bonds that one feels towards others, as well as to the collective society of Korea as a whole. It is also understood as harmony or coexistence and refers to a form of social bonding found in Korean society.

정 (jung), 2021 – Clay, glaze, 14" x 14" x 5" (left)
Affection/Connection, 2021 – Clay, glaze, 19" x 21" x 7" (right)
Installation view



Faith Ishizuka

MA Sculpture

My work functions as an anthology of discovery and failure, of the experimentation with materials. I explore the bridge between antitheses using everyday objects and ordinary elements, along with punk and goth sensibilities, to create contextual narratives. Whether I cover inflatables with animal intestines, insert resin-soaked hair into a bag of charcoal briquettes, or convert biological ingredients into plastic, my work seeks new identities for these objects in the chaos that results from opposing elements, similar to an itching mosquito bite burning the skin and becoming a beautiful blister.

Top Right

poulet noir, 2021 (detail)
gypsum bandage, joint compound, paint, rubber chicken, 5" x 4" x 2.5"

Bottom Right

a miserable pile of secrets..., 2021
Himalayan salt lick, wax, silver, plastic bottle, "authentic" vampire fangs, 8" x 3" x 4"



TEAM BUILDING!!!, 2021
hog casings, beef casings, beef bung, food dye, inflatables, scarf, approx. 40" x 34" x 34"

Myung Kang

MA Illustration

Feelings Under Pressure in the Pandemic portrays the gestures and mixed emotions people display from a variety of perspectives during difficult times. Through the pandemic experience, I found meaning despite the anxiety, fear, hope, and sadness it has brought to daily life. Rather than focusing on appearance or movement, my drawings and watercolors focus on atmosphere and the traces of individual stories in order to restore human relationships through connection and tradition. The works explore contemporary experiences of existentialism and loneliness, as well as moments of inspiration in daily life. I evoke these feelings in reductive compositions that use limited colors, proportions, and shapes. Traditional materials, including charcoal, gouache, graphite, pastel, and watercolor, as well as Sumi ink on mulberry paper, convey emotional content in their distinct applications.

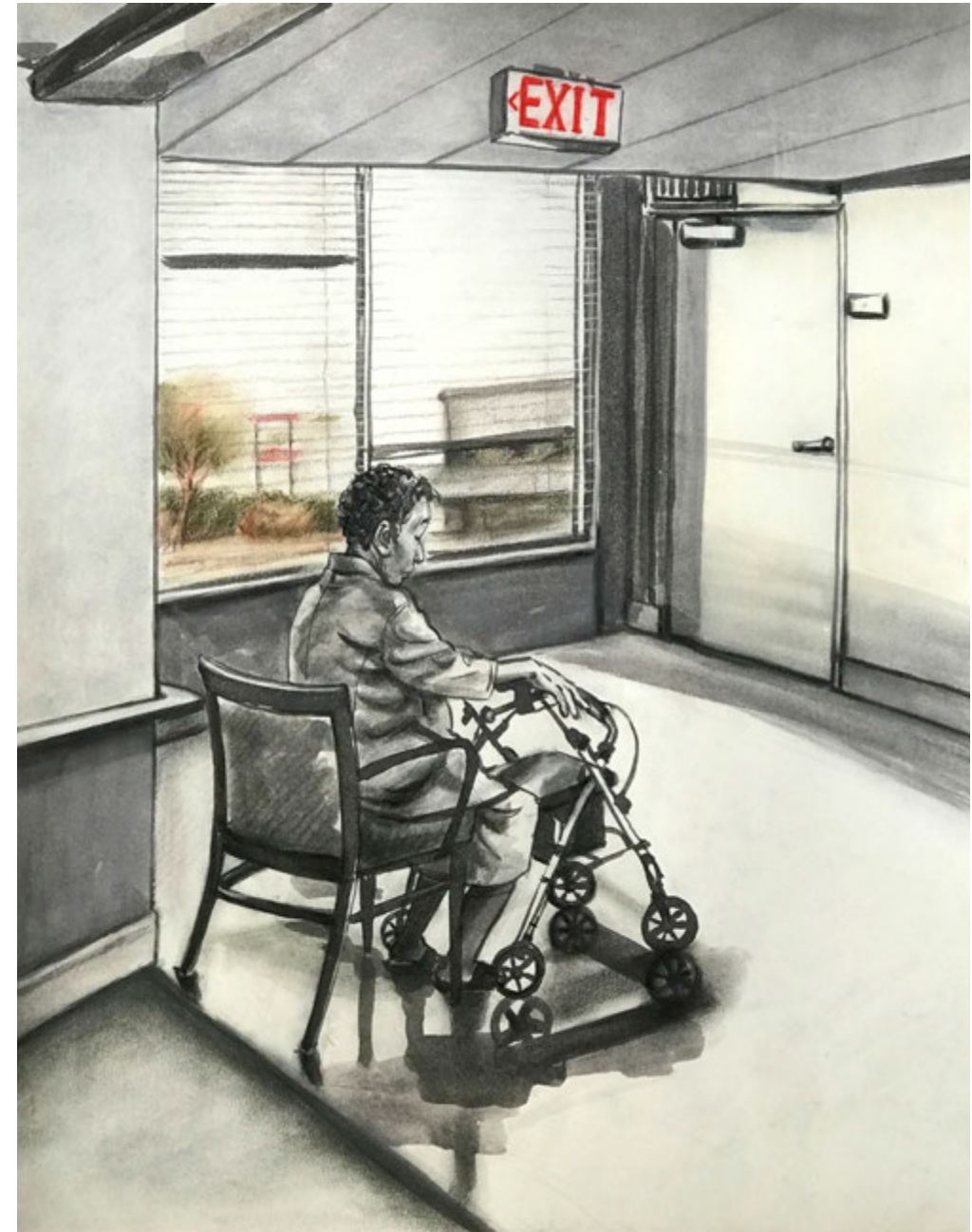
Top Right

Return-I, 2022
Gouache, Charcoal on Mulberry paper, 14.5" x 20.5"



Bottom Right

Return-II, 2021
Pastel, 19.5" x 25.5"



Untitled, 2021
Sumi Ink, Colored Charcoal Pencil, 19" x 24"

Katherine Posada

MA Ceramics

People are tied to culture through family, and identities are formed through these bonds. At one time, cultural histories were passed down through storytelling. The millennial generation shares its stories through communication tools that broaden the reach of its voice through social media. My work functions as a visual narrative of the time, place, and people that have contributed to the development of my voice. Digital footprints and ceramic objects record and share tangible narratives that will outlast my cast of characters.

The passing down of shared values, beliefs, and practices compels me to create images on clay that investigate their impact on identity. My own cultural identity is influenced by social media as well as tradition, and my drawings illustrate this by making connections between the values of contemporary society and those of my generation and cultural background.



Thee Unlucky Seventh Heaven (camera), 2021
Ceramics, 7" x 4"



Thee Unlucky Seventh Heaven (Window), 2021
porcelain sheet, 3.5" x 4"

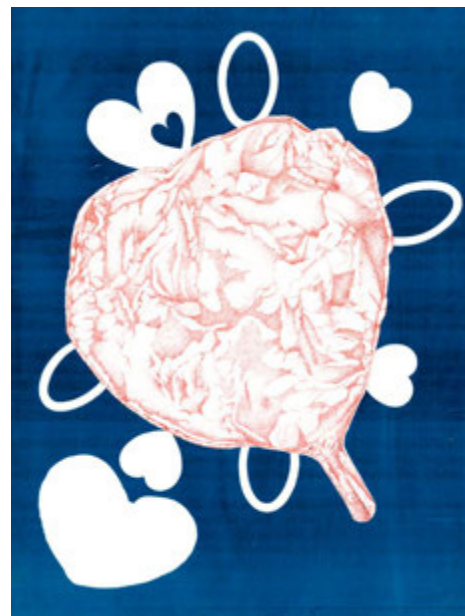


Thee Unlucky Seventh Heaven (Recovery), 2021
porcelain sheet, 3.5" x 4"

Mariana Reyes

MA Illustration

My work explores awareness and finds solace and joy in personal objects. I investigate inner-child-like desires to seek comfort and happiness in everyday life and navigate these in my interdisciplinary practice that includes drawing, printmaking, stop-motion animation, and photography. Currently, sentimental objects given by close family and friends populate my whimsical compositions and function as symbols to represent love and loss and to begin healing. My process investigates various ways of finding joy, including in the sublimity of mementos, food, faith, and the cute. The work telegraphs good vibes while acknowledging the dark moments in life and encourages engagement in a journey that may lead to finding comfort and hope.



Deflated Heart, 2021
pen and cyanotype on paper, 30" x 22"



Orange Yu Yummy, 2021
pen on paper, 18" x 24"



Blue Introspections, 2022
Graphite, pen, and cyanotype on paper, 30" x 22"

Katia Stewart

MFA Ceramics/Sculpture

When swaddled in polymers and laboratory-made conveniences, people easily forget about the omnipresent pull of gravity against the living celestial body that is the Earth. Surrounded by offices, homes, and cars, people experience a separation of space, and boundaries are drawn. Tapping and sliding fingers across the glass screens of phones and tablets counts as social interaction. It is no wonder that people believe they must try to be “closer” to nature even as the earth’s gifts are regularly harvested and consumed.

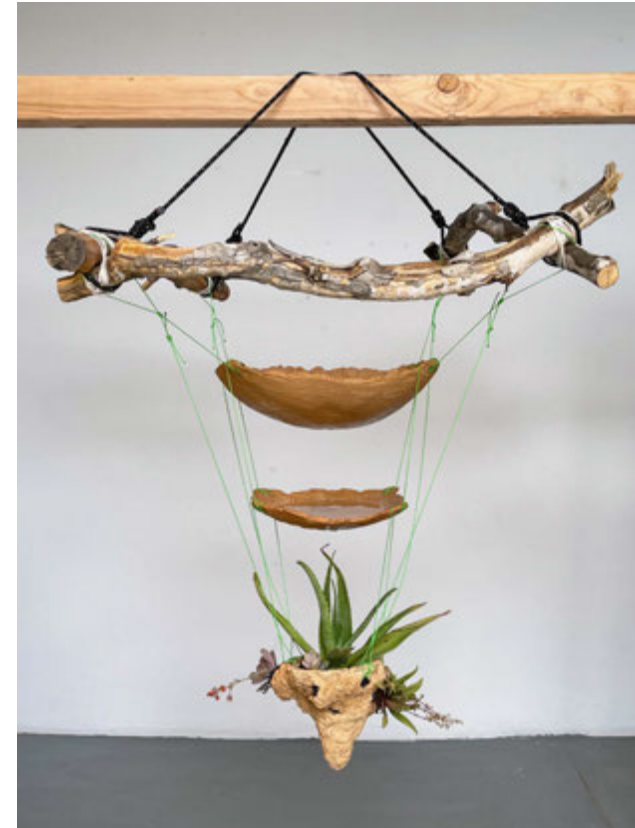
Intuition guides my aesthetic and poetic decisions, a logic developed through early and prolonged exposure to western wildernesses, from the ever-changing coastline of the pacific to the metallic-pink of desert buttes. My work conveys the gradual unveiling of beauty through the gestures of preparing materials for creative inquiry. Pushing my methods and materials beyond their breaking point, I see beauty in unlikely places.



In the Name of the Water the Mother and the Holy Spirit, 2021
glazed ceramic, 9" x 16"

Sound elements in my work are metronomic to emphasize the present moment, while video projections—distorted, layered, and looping recordings—engage memory, perspective, and attention. Realizing the imperfections and challenges of contemporary life, I use my practice to bring awareness to the moments of spirituality I find in nature, and my finished work reveals the challenge of this struggle in pursuit of balance.

As a creative field, ceramics focuses on process, craft, and utility, but also functions as a vessel for physical and spiritual nourishment for living things. My sculptural forms and installations pair opposing ideas to establish conversations between the crude allure of raw earth and the stark imposition of manufactured synthetic materials, yielding an awareness of the impact people have on the environment. The possibility of a symbiosis between humans and the rest of the natural world is the connection that must be made between these so-called opposites; this connection may be the link that encourages conservation and restoration towards a more comfortable and sustainable life on earth.



Triple Filtration, 2021
ceramic, sawdust, tent rope, soil, succulents, water, tree and its branches, 8' x 3' x 3'

Additive Formation, 2021
unfired ceramic on marble plinth with sand, rocks, twigs, and leaves from formation site, 17" x 27" x 15"



Additive Formation, 2021 (detail)

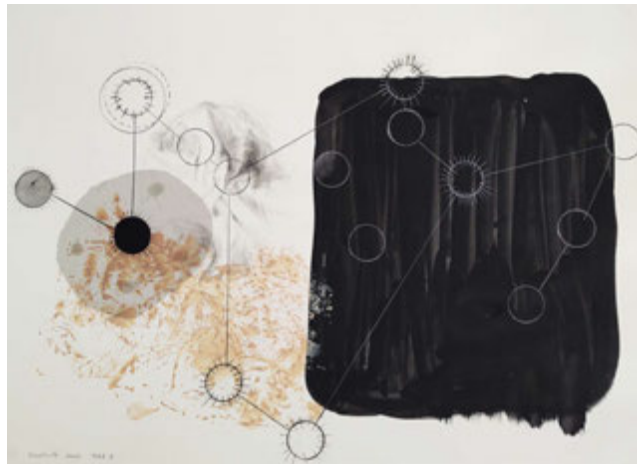
Codruta Tolan

MA Painting

My paintings evoke a sense of timelessness and become a form of visual poetry. I create psychological landscapes in which references to the human figure and natural settings are minimal, almost fugitive. Details serve to reveal gesture, process, and meaning. Chromatic effects through the use of juxtaposition, washes, and transparent fabric suggest an internal environment of emotions, moods, and feelings. Elements of the human psyche are embedded into the paintings as immaterial reality transforms into something tangible. I paint places beyond what can be seen, and painted surfaces mirror complex layers of inner being.



Temporal Intersection, 2021
oil paint on wood panel, 20" x 20"



Bed 1, 2022
mixed media on paper, 30" x 22"



Memory Traces, 2021
mixed media on paper, 15.25" x 15"

Montserrat Rangel Vergara

MA Painting

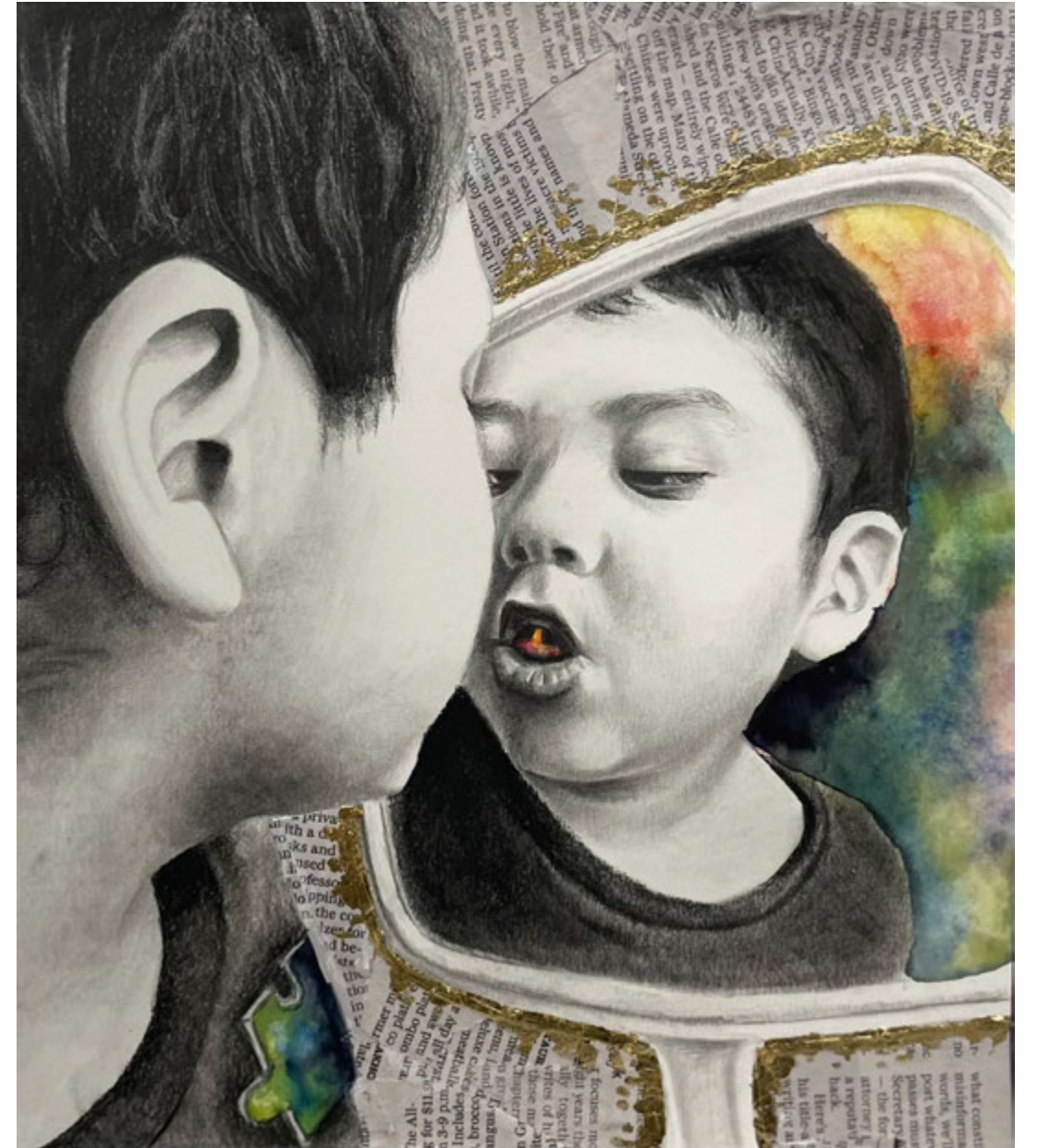
As a Mexican immigrant artist, I make paintings and sculptures that explore identity, connection, trauma, loss, love, and hope. Portraiture fascinates me, and I paint realistic representations of the people I love. Because the work I make portrays important figures in my life, I am mindful of my process and meticulously render facial features to capture their essence while maintaining an awareness of material and social conditions.

The attributes of each subject become clues to self and identity. Different media communicate diverse ideas, whether I use acrylics, watercolor, or graphite, and I add found materials to the background to reveal a deeper understanding between myself and the subject. Molding paste, newsprint, and gold leaf link each portrait to the world and to me.



Mis Pensamientos me Carcomen, 2021
acrylic, acrylic pens, molding paste, and newspaper on canvas, 16" x 20"

The process of painting portraits and exploring different materials requires a certain flexibility, and sculpting faces from clay has become an integral part of my practice. Inspired by my paintings, these sculptures allow me to expand the portraits into the realm of the uncanny and the surreal, and afford a greater psychological depth.



Alan, 2021
graphite, watercolor, newspaper, and gold leaf on nature sketch, 11" x 15"

Montserrat Rangel Vergara
Among the Flower There are Thorns, 2021
acrylic, acrylic pens, molding paste, and
newspaper on canvas, 18" x 18"



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