

Minneapolis College of Art and Design

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Visual  
**Visual Storage**

Master of Fine Arts 2013  
Thesis Exhibition

Storage

VISUAL  
ARTS  
FOR  
THE

# Visual Storage

Master of Fine Arts 2013  
Thesis Exhibition

## Welcome from the Director –

The following pages feature the creative work of 23 talented artists and designers that have completed the Master of Fine Arts degree program in Visual Studies at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

These images represent the culmination of two years of rigorous studio practice, individual mentorship, research, critical thinking and intense discourse.

The interdisciplinary mix of the students and the high level of talent present in this group is exciting, relevant and accomplished.

Their work vividly demonstrates the lively and dynamic interaction of a diverse group of students, ideas and creativity that has made this a very special graduating class.

The faculty and staff are proud of these students and are honored to have contributed significantly to their education.

We wish them all great success and look forward to following their future careers.

Tom DeBiaso

Professor  
Director  
Master of Fine Arts  
Graduate Program

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# Adam

Adam Setala

Illustration  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

# 04

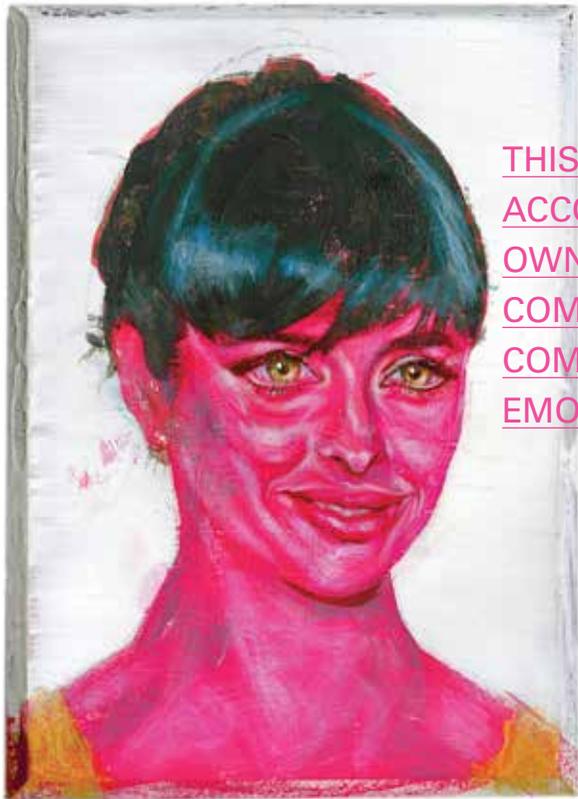


*The Way I treat Others*, 2012  
5" x 8"  
Ink

I was a shy suburban kid in the late 1980's, and early 1990's, when comic books became my escape. I was always fascinated by superhero comics such as X-MEN, due to the over inflatedness and audacity they seemed to embrace. I also marveled at the cinematic, and kinetic way in which these stories were visualized, and wanted to become the person responsible for making them. Ultimately, I wanted to be the storyteller.

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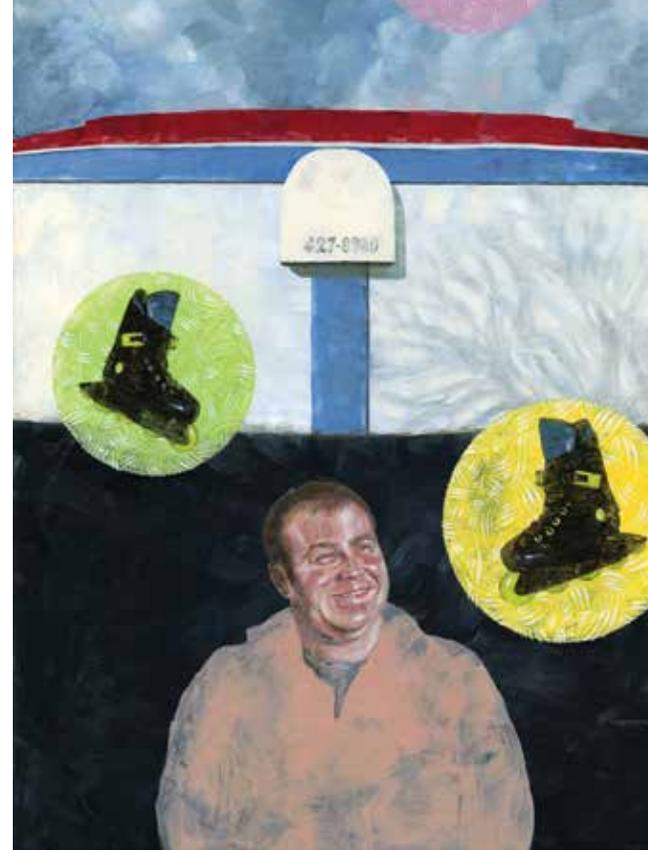


*Untitled*, 2012  
5" x 3.5"  
Acrylic Paint

THIS IS WHAT I STRIVE TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH MY OWN WORK. EMOTION THROUGH COMMUNICATION, AND COMMUNICATION THROUGH EMOTION.



*The Dripping Branch*, 2013  
8.5" x 6.5"  
Ink



*Saint Christopher*, 2012  
9" x 12"  
Acrylic Paint



*Dead Pony*, 2013  
8.5" x 6.5"  
Ink



*Painting of Boy*  
8" x 8"  
Acrylic Paint

Yet I didn't become a comic artist. As my skills as an illustrator evolved, and as I began to look at the field of illustration in general, I felt more closely bonded with editorial work. The use of visual metaphors, the communicative skills needed to be effective, the problem solving, and the constant geyser of new topics to explore were all things that meant a lot to me, and in the end turned me toward the dark side that is editorial illustration.

For example, Tove Jansson's *Moominpappa* books are some of my favorites. Her illustrations are dramatic, and beautiful, and have the ability to illicit real emotion through effective communication. This is what I strive to accomplish through my own work, emotion through communication, and communication through emotion.



# Andrew

Andrew William Allison

Painting  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

# Allison

*Untitled*, 2013  
13" x 10" x 4"  
Acrylic and joint compound  
on cut coke bottle, found  
wood, mardi gras beads and  
wire.



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I OFTEN UNCOVER  
REOCCURRING SYMBOLIC  
FORMS WHOSE CONNOTATIONS  
EVOKE CERTAIN PLACES,  
PEOPLE, OR EVENTS THAT  
I HAVE ENCOUNTERED  
THROUGHOUT MY LIFETIME.

I create collections of what I call 'visual poems,' which take the form of sculptural installations. Each arrangement combines provocative artifacts that imply events, emotions, memories or personal associations. As I work, I often set up certain shifting narrative challenges: "Can I make a piece that appears evil?" "Can I make a piece that feels like it is a part of the house I grew up in?" Other questions arise from pure material curiosities, such as asking: "Can I make a piece out of only water and vinyl?"

I often uncover reoccurring symbolic forms whose connotations evoke certain places, people, or events that I have encountered throughout my lifetime. Each association becomes a character that acts out certain ideas or narratives, like actors in a play.

EACH ARRANGEMENT  
COMBINES PROVOCATIVE  
ARTIFACTS THAT IMPLY EVENTS,  
EMOTIONS, MEMORIES OR  
PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS.



*Untitled*, 2013  
8" x 10"  
Acrylic on digital print



*Curtain*, 2013  
9" x 10"  
Folded digital print



*Palmtree*, 2013  
7.5' x 3.5'  
Acrylic on mdf

*Griffins*, 2013  
7" x 8" x 6"  
Spray paint, acrylic, grout,  
cardboard, joint compound,  
cast plaster and found  
candy box



# Arphathip

Arphathip Padhanarath

Graphic Design  
Bangkok, Thailand

# Arphathip



My intention is to convert aspects of abstract art into abstract graphic design and in doing so, represent the abstraction of sub-conscious thoughts as logical expressions. This gesture has become the essence of my project "Expressensory" (from expressive + sensory). It is important to my graphic design goals, as I would like to improve my ability to use my inner self, thoughts and senses, yet also to communicate with other people through my work, and ultimately to create something that is honest, beautiful, meaningful and thoughtful.

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HIGHLIGHT SEGMENTS IN YOUR SUMMARY OR QUOTES YOU FIND COMPELLING

My work is about embracing the irrational and nonsensical and make it appear comprehensible through the logic of the subconscious. I try different experiments with materials, such as using food colors (powder type) on toilet paper. I believe that with every experiment I have found a new set of purposes and reasons to support my notion of 'the new logic' and my job is to compose this logic in such a way that is obvious and understandable to my audience.

*Expressensory*, 2012  
36" x 46"  
Mixed-media (food colors, stencils, rub-down letters), printed on canvas. 1th edition.



I express my concepts using design, drawing, illustration, mixed media, collage, typography, and certain programs of computer-based graphics. I use bold colors, display types, and compositions in wildly expressive styles. Postmodern eclecticism also inspires me in its use of vivid colors and forms from popular culture, such as those found in the works of Gunther Kieser, David Carson, Paul Sher, and Robert Rauschenberg, my favorite designers. In addition, looking at fashion in particular has always inspired me: looking at fashion window displays makes me feel the same sensations as looking at the art work in the museums or galleries.

# Ashely Peifer

Ashely Peifer

Painting  
Dallas, Texas



My paintings are formed through my delight in material exploration, yet are nudged by my memories of places and events from my past. Instead of being rich depictions of what actually occurred, as I paint, my memories become flattened, transitioning into a low-quality image that is similar to a jpeg that has been saved over and over.

When I translate these memories into paint, I am captivated by feelings of nostalgia so the already flat imagery becomes gilded, cheery, and obviously over-beautiful. The elements within my compositions overlap, cluster, pile up, and interact. Shapes, objects, and landscapes inhabit my paintings, though they are usually abstracted beyond recognition or mostly covered over. I'm interested in the struggle between the actual (though ultimately unknowable) past versus faulty or enhanced memories of the past.

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*Laffy Taffy*, 2013  
30" x 30"  
Mixed media on panel

SHAPES, OBJECTS, AND  
LANDSCAPES INHABIT MY PAINTINGS,  
THOUGH THEY ARE USUALLY  
ABSTRACTED BEYOND RECOGNITION  
OR MOSTLY COVERED OVER.



*Sweet Sweet Fantasy Baby*,  
2013  
8" x 8"  
Mixed media on panel



*Campout*, 2013  
30" x 30"  
Mixed media on panel



*Changing Everyday*, 2013  
8" x 8"  
Mixed media on panel



*Hello Hello*, 2013  
56" x 56"  
Mixed media on panel

"THERE ARE THINGS THAT WORDS DON'T  
FATHOM. A STORE OF UNPROCESSED,  
UNNAMABLE FEELINGS REMAINS  
BEYOND LANGUAGE. GOOD PICTURES  
ADDRESS THIS REALM."  
- PER KIRKEBY



*Trapper Keeper*, 2013  
30" x 30"  
Mixed media on panel

**Roots**  
Beata Fleischmann

Furniture Design  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Visual Storage // mofa.edu



"I WANT TO ALIGN MYSELF WITH THIS CONVERSATION IN THAT DESIGN AND CRAFT SHOULD NOT BE ALIENATED FROM EACH OTHER. RELIANCE ON SIGHT WITHIN DESIGN CREATES A DISTANCE BETWEEN THE MAKER AND THE USER AND THE OBJECT, THEREFORE I WANT TO FOCUS MORE ON THE HAPTIC ASPECTS OF DESIGN TO BRIDGE THAT GAP."

Within my practice I have been focusing on the supposed 'purpose' of objects that make up our environment. This purpose I define as the point at which the use of the object and the function of an object intersect. Although use and function are interrelated, they are not necessarily the same thing.

Juhani Pallasmaa stated that it is the tactile sense that connects us with time and tradition that make up the history of purpose. Reliance on sight within design creates a distance between the maker and the user and the object, therefore I want to focus more on the haptic aspects of design to bridge those gaps. One way I express this is by making use of a material

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*Jassie*, 2012  
2'6" x 2'6" x 3'  
Felt, birch, steel

This piece is part of a window exhibition entitled *Made Here*. This display is part of an effort to revitalize Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis.





**Flux**, 2012  
10" x 4' x 18"  
Birch, walnut, felt

JUHANI PALLASMAA STATED THAT  
IT IS THE TACTILE SENSE THAT  
CONNECTS US WITH TIME AND  
TRADITION THAT MAKE UP THE  
HISTORY OF PURPOSE.



**Nest**, 2012  
3' x 2'6" x 2'6"  
Felt, carbon fiber, steel

**Ambit**, 2013  
2'6" x 3' x 6'  
Felt, birch, steel

This lounge chair was a collaboration between my mentor, George Mahoney, and I. It was selected for an exhibition in the Burnet Gallery in Minneapolis.



**Hopscotch rug**, 2013  
varies  
Felt, shearling, magnets

This is a modular rug system that can change shape and grow depending on the space it is needed for.

that lends itself to a tactile experience, such as the textile wool felt. Felt also lends itself to the idea of time, in terms of its purposes as a traditional handcrafted material. I strive for a tactile approach both in my process and in my final piece. As much as I will use the computer to work designs out digitally or create 3d models, I never let that process take the place of physically designing.

The awareness of craft came to me as I was growing up in South Africa. The mixture between Western and African cultures, whether positive or negative, is always present. I think that by embracing both in terms of design, a society can be inclusive rather than exclusive. As I move onward, I want to create pieces that show a link between craft and design by use of materiality and method. Also, I will use materials that evoke a tactile experience while at the same time elicit a story. And so, these objects will be functional but also useful and therefore have a purpose.

# Dani

Dani Wagner

Painting  
Cheraw, South Carolina

# v v a y i i u i

The application of paint can reflect and represent allusions to the human body and especially the skin in painting. The surface of the painting can act as a representation of the skin of ideas -- as a reflection of change and flux that also can happen on the skin of the body.

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Paint dries in skins or films that can mimic the shimmering view of the skin through light upon the translucent glazes of color, or through thick, chunky textures that sit on the painted surface. The skin is the threshold between the inner and outer self, and as Steven Conner writes, the skin is "proof of our exposure to visibility itself." In my works, one painted

*Breaking the Facade*, 2013  
16" x 12"  
Acrylic and staples on panel



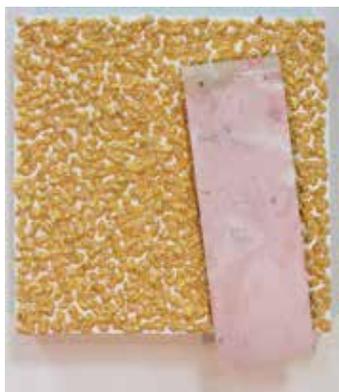
surface is erased by the next, eclipsing or destroying the previous attempt to capture this glimmering surface all in an effort to transcribe the lush vision of the "body" of a painting.

The rebirth of a painting emerging from the pentimento of erased and repainted layers can also reflect a continual process of assessment and reassessment of one's identity and life, and the uncertainty regarding a changing body and identity. Currently my works have undergone a drastic change from being traditionally formatted, rectilinear paintings, to paintings that are cut into, shredded, torn, sewn, and nailed back together. I incorporate elements such as screws, nails, staples, and even

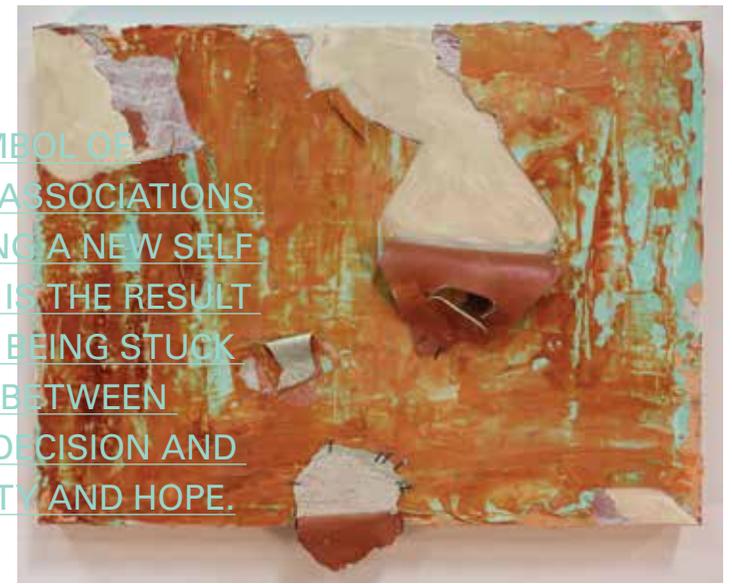
*Moment of Separation*,  
2013  
10" x 10"  
Acrylic, oil, and mylar on panel



*My Ode to Spironolactone*,  
2013  
10" x 11"  
Acrylic, oil, mylar, nails and magnets on panel



THE WORK IS A SYMBOL OF LETTING THE PAST ASSOCIATIONS FADE AND ALLOWING A NEW SELF TO COME FORTH; IT IS THE RESULT OF THE FEELING OF BEING STUCK IN AN TENSE AREA BETWEEN FEAR AND DOUBT, DECISION AND INDECISION, ANXIETY AND HOPE.



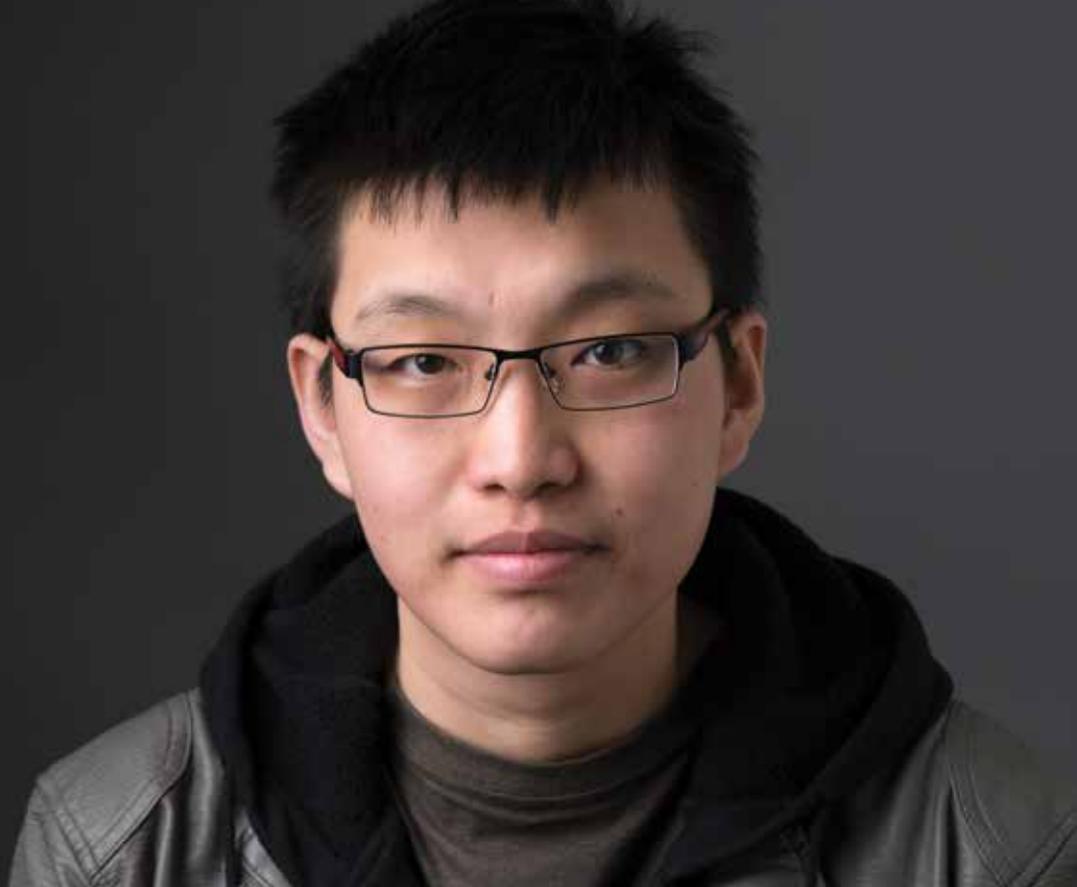
*An Excavation of Necessity*,  
2013  
16" x 13.125"  
Acrylic and staples on panel

hair. It is an attempt to move the thought of what a painting is supposed to be to a new place, which can be as challenging and complex as the bodies changing form through voluntary surgical force.

As a transgender woman, my works are deeply tied to my blossoming identity, my thoughts about the gender spectrum and gender identity, and in particular, the body in a constant state of flux, and the feelings that occur when one makes the ultimate decision to transgress these rigid boundaries.



*My Ode to Estradiol*, 2013  
10" x 10"  
Acrylic, oil, mylar, nails, and magnets on panel



Huan Wen

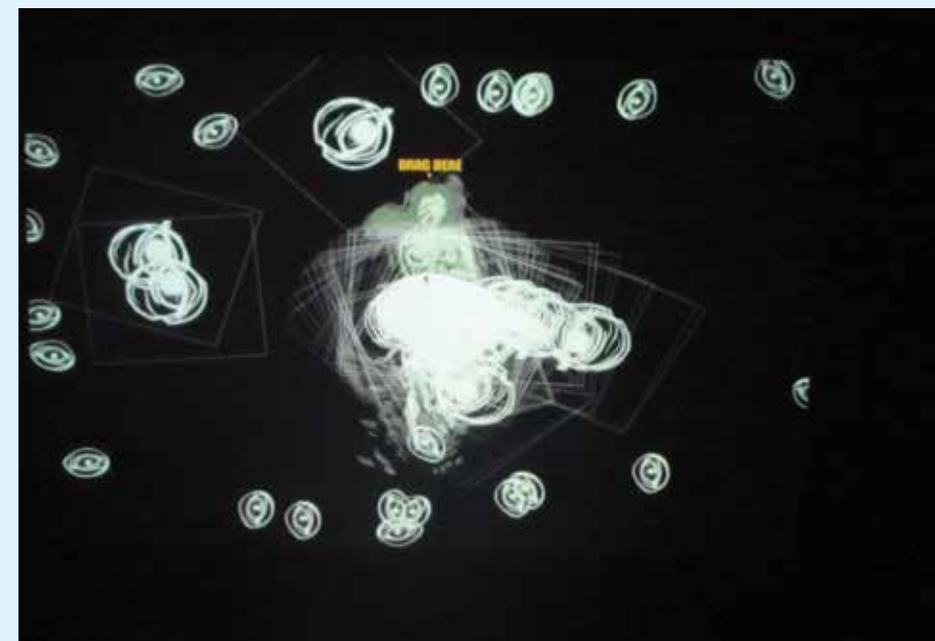
Web & Multimedia  
Harbin, China

WUUI

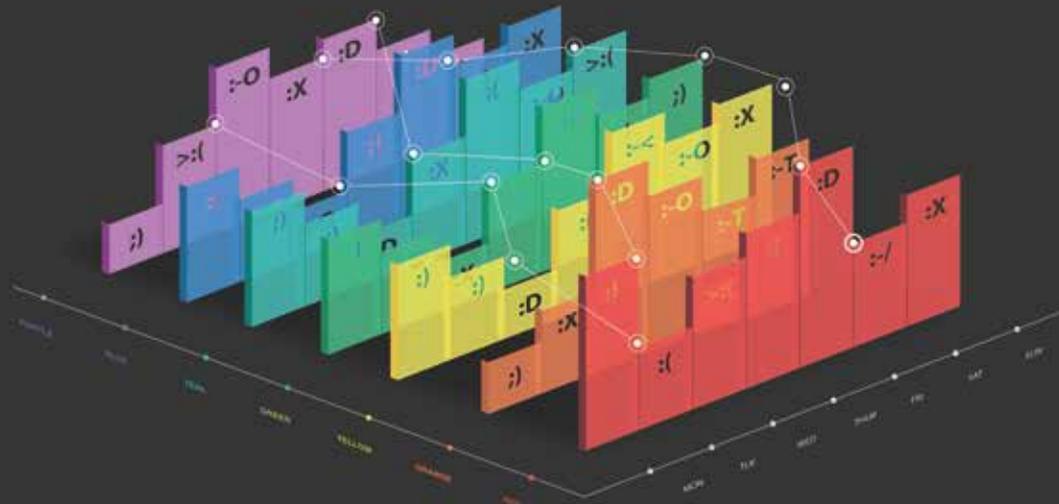
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I consider myself to be the result of a cultural cross-pollination. Coming from China, but studying and living in the United States, I have developed an extended sensibility for the nuances of the social needs of my generation. Anyone who has read the news, knows that this is a pivotal time for Chinese people, and consequently, for all people as radical changes have occurred in the global political, economic, and social categories. Because I have recognized and embraced the values of other cultures, I have developed a rich framework to better understand and respect alternative ways of approaching art, design, and life. In my work, I explore and articulate the conflicts, conditions and desires of my generation.

COMING FROM CHINA, BUT STUDYING AND LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES, I HAVE DEVELOPED AN EXTENDED SENSIBILITY FOR THE NUANCES OF THE SOCIAL NEEDS OF MY GENERATION.



Run, 2012  
800px x 600px  
Flash based interaction art



*Mood barometer*, 2013  
22" x 17"  
2D

BECAUSE I HAVE RECOGNIZED AND EMBRACED THE VALUES OF OTHER CULTURES, I HAVE DEVELOPED A RICH FRAMEWORK TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND RESPECT ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF APPROACHING ART, DESIGN, AND LIFE.

*Weary Idealist*, 2012  
800px x 600px  
Flash based interaction art



*Moodswing UI*, 2013  
38" x 26"  
2D



*Moodswing*, 2013  
9" x 13"  
Mobile app poster



# Jammo

Jammo K. Xu

Visual Storytelling  
Chengdu, China



"WE WALK THROUGH OURSELVES,  
MEETING ROBBERS, GHOSTS, GIANTS,  
OLD MEN, YOUNG MEN, WIVES,  
WIDOWS, BROTHERS-IN-LOVE. BUT  
ALWAYS MEETING OURSELVES."  
— JAMES JOYCE, PORTRAIT OF THE  
ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN.

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*International Club*, 2012  
8" x 10"  
Comic Book





**Floating Islands**, 2013  
15 inches  
diameter(maximum)  
Digital Print / Installation



Before I came to study art at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, I studied animation at the Communication University of China. I developed experience in animation, which includes movement principles, scene design, character design and animation. Additionally, I am skilled in the process of video production, including creating scripts, storyboarding, and editing, and have mastered digital tools. Moreover, I spent an expansive amount of time reading, writing, traveling, observing, and recording to enrich my experiences as well as broaden my horizons.

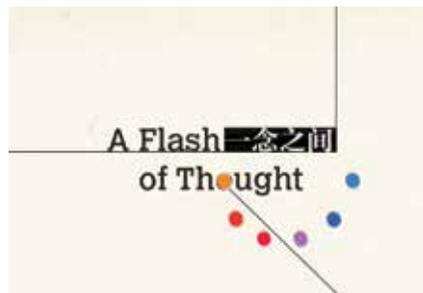
But I began to “meet myself” as a student of the Master of Fine Arts program at MCAD, where I experienced more opportunities to see and critique work from other art fields such as illustration, painting, graphic design, public art, sound art and sculpture. Some art forms drew me to study more and explore different materials and mediums in order to find my preferred way of expressing my ideas.

One sentence from Paulo Coelho’s *The Alchemist* enlightened me: “Infatuated with images and words, people forgot the language of the universe.” I discovered that the most important thing for me is not the external material forms, but my original concepts. Thus, I now recognize that the skills which I have mastered are just the tools to provide me with broader processes and perspectives to tell my stories. I decided to stop only pursuing art forms and focused more on storytelling. I started to rethink the forms of traditional storytelling and began to explore interdisciplinary projects to conjoin the connections between traditional storytelling and visual art.

I NOW RECOGNIZE THAT THE SKILLS WHICH I HAVE MASTERED ARE JUST THE TOOLS TO PROVIDE ME WITH BROADER PROCESSES AND PERSPECTIVES TO TELL MY STORIES.



**An Interview**, 2012  
6” x 6”  
Digital Print / Installation



**A Flash of Thought**, 2012  
1024 x 768  
Motion Graphic





*Fun Haus*, 2012  
9" x 14"  
Photo



*Untitled*, 2013  
215px x 300px / 9" x 12"  
CSS3 / screen print

# TRUE COLORS

*TRUE COLORS*, 2011  
Digital

Communication begins with a problem that needs to be solved. I use various processes in order to experiment with communication, often confined to specific forms or methodologies that impose given limitations; working digitally then with analog media, and finally arriving at a synthesis of both. My work has been about developing a holistic approach that utilizes a variety of media for both their limitations as well as their advantages. I learn through the products of these experiments, the failures and the relationships.

Co  
tam  
synku  
?

*Co tam synku?*, 2013  
18" x 24"  
Print/digital

# Jeongho Park

Jeongho Park

Graphic Design  
Seoul, South Korea

# MIN

I was born and raised in South Korea. I studied Mineral and Resources Engineering (BS), and worked as a designer. Throughout my work experience, I was excited about learning the practical techniques of design, and I have found that I am fundamentally interested in communication using visual language. However, most of my design experience has been on client-based projects, which have a lot of limitations. I did not want limit myself to certain 2D forms and materials; instead, I wanted to make design that remained open to all possibilities.

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**Type Capsule**, 2013  
12" x 12"  
Information graphic book

*Type Capsule* is an infographic book about typefaces based on my personal survey. This publication consists of five sections: introduction, research detail, research result, typefaces, and email comments.



TYPE IS A SERIES OF LETTER FORMS  
THAT MAKES A MESSAGE VISIBLE.  
IN THIS SENSE, TYPE IS ONE KIND OF  
VISUAL COMMUNICATION.

— DOUG NEWSOM & JIM HAYNES



**Types**, 2013  
30" x 30" x 0.75"  
Bubinga

Wood installation based on a personal survey result about typefaces, using laser engraving on wood.



After I joined the MFA program to study Graphic Design with a focus on Information Graphic at Minneapolis College of Art and Design, I explored information related to language and typefaces, while combining traditional two-dimensional informational graphics, three-dimensional installation, and animated or kinetic two-dimensional graphics.

While developing two projects that feature data about languages and typefaces, I have tried in my graduate studio work to create visual interpretations of information that maintain a balance between aesthetic form, communication complexity and visual simplicity. I plan to continue to work with the possibilities of hybrid media in my information design practice.



John  
John Keston

New Media  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Visual Storage

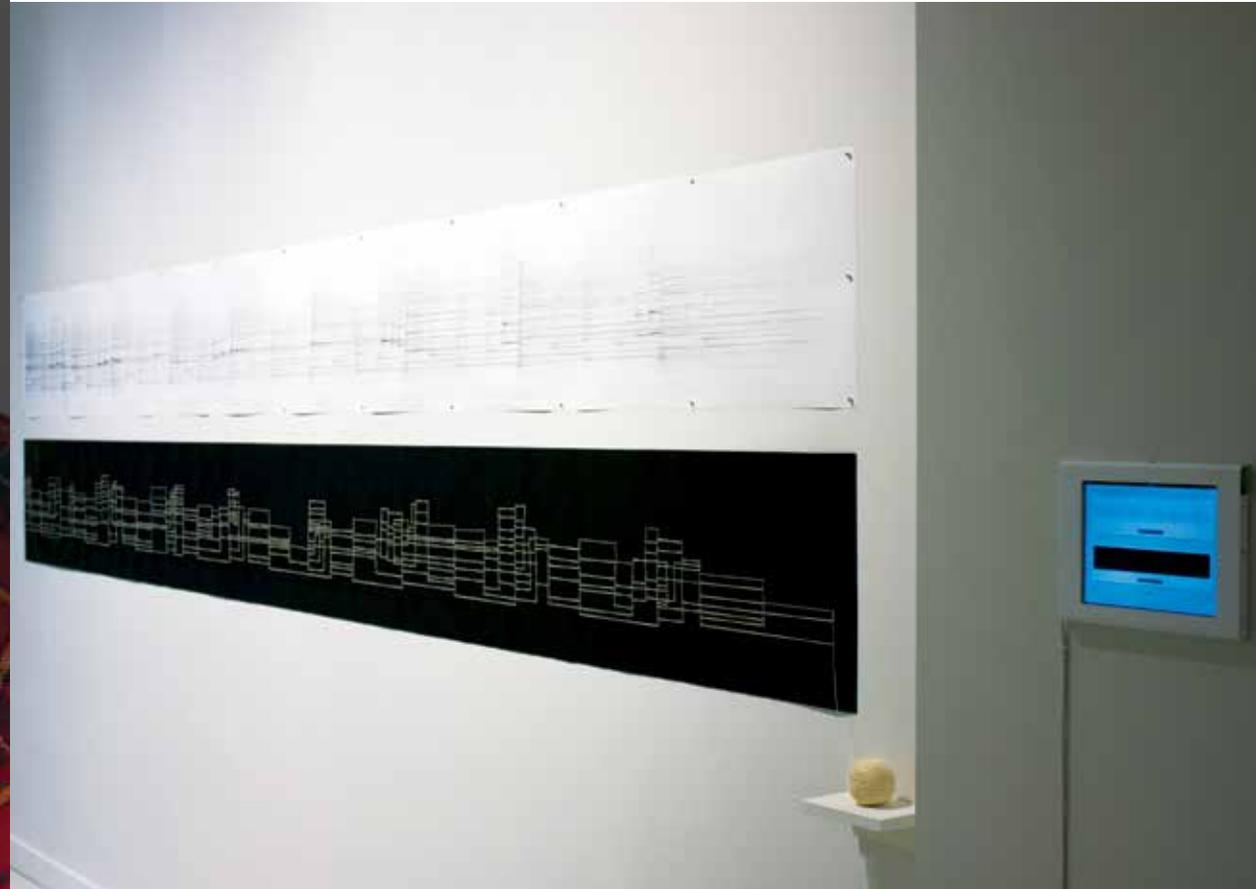
As a musician and new media artist who uses sound and performance as the primary modalities within his practice, I perform regularly around the country and was featured at the Montreal Jazz Festival, at In/Out Festival in New York, and at the Northern Spark 2012 – as well as installations that have been shown at galleries in Minneapolis including the Burnet Gallery, and on Wired.com.

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*Post-prepared Piano by John Keston and Piotr Szyhalski, 2013*  
14" x 38"  
Inkjet print, tar paper, nails, twine, iPad, headphones

*Post-prepared Piano by John Keston and Piotr Szyhalski* is an exploration of non-musical processes as methods in constructing new sounds. By juxtaposing virtuosic piano performance with crudeness of hammering nearly 800 nails, a vast territory of what

may be considered artistic practice is outlined. Discovery of new pathways in that territory lies at the heart of this project. In it's final form the work functions as a residue of an intricate process during which sound travels through multiple realms: the physical and non-physical, the high and low technologies, the sophisticated and proletarian materials. Visit <http://ppp.johnkeston.com> for audiovisual media and more information.



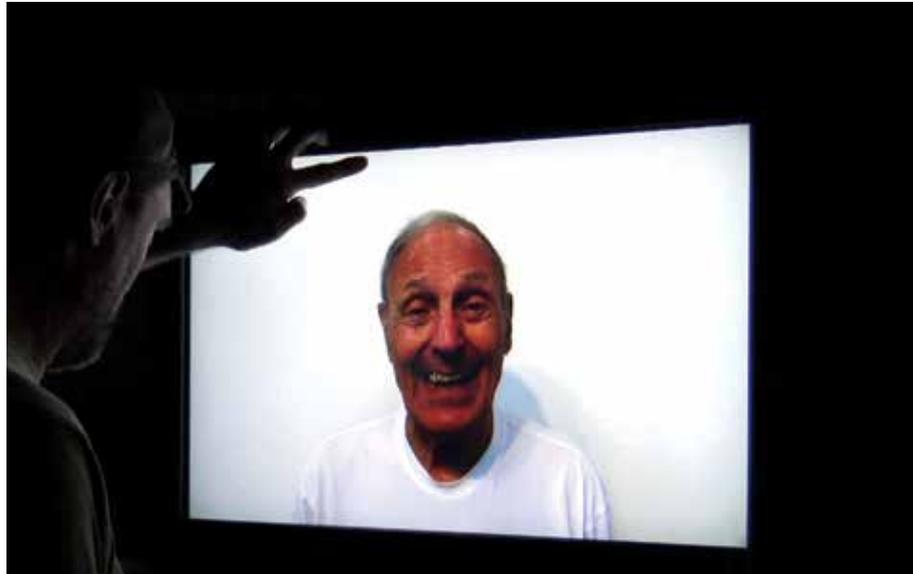
Through these various media explorations, my work explores the creation of mutable, audiovisual scores for improvised musical performances through the representation of personal perspectives, practical examples, proposed projects, and research. I believe that an audiovisual score can be a useful tool to connect improvising musicians to each other and their audiences through the insertion of a mediating audiovisual layer within the work.

These systems are used as a primary influential agent for an ensemble of improvisers, providing them with a context for a musical conversation. In contrast to traditional notation and graphic scores, audiovisual scores embrace the chaotic ambiguities of environmental influences revealing a context of the unpredictability of everyday events. Presenting an unpredictable audiovisual score parallels the indeterminate improvisation of the ensemble. It activates the last vestige of what remains immutable within traditional forms of the notation-driven performance inserting it into a mutable layer within the work.

AUDIOVISUAL SCORES EMBRACE  
THE CHAOTIC AMBIGUITIES OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES  
GIVING THE MUSIC THE CONTEXT OF  
UNPREDICTABLE EVERYDAY EVENTS.

*Voice Lessons (video still),*  
2012  
32" Touchscreen  
Interactive Video and Sound

*Voice Lessons* is an electronic, audio device that interrogates the popular myth that every musical instrument imitates the human voice. Touching the screen allows the participant to manipulate the visuals and vocalizations of the "voice teacher" as he recites vocal warm up exercises. The piece resides in the space between a musical instrument and voice lesson. Visit <http://johnkeston.com/sound/voice-lessons/> for media and more details.



PRESENTING AN UNPREDICTABLE  
AUDIOVISUAL SCORE PARALLELS THE  
INDETERMINATE IMPROVISATION OF  
THE ENSEMBLE. IT ACTIVATES THE LAST  
VESTIGE OF WHAT REMAINS IMMUTABLE  
WITHIN TRADITIONAL FORMS OF  
NOTATION DRIVEN PERFORMANCE  
INSERTING IT INTO A MUTABLE LAYER  
WITHIN THE WORK.



*Duets for Synthesizer and \_\_\_\_\_ (video still),* 2013  
27" iMac  
Interactive Video and Sound

*Duets for Synthesizer and \_\_\_\_\_*, is an attempt to join in with arbitrary environments as if they were conscious participants in an improvisational ensemble. A simple analog synthesizer is used to produce accompaniment for the locations. Binaural recording is used to enhance the experience. Visit [http://audiocookbook.org/sound\\_design/video-duet-for-synthesizer-and-the-washing/](http://audiocookbook.org/sound_design/video-duet-for-synthesizer-and-the-washing/) for media and more information.

*Does not apply,* 2012  
Performance  
Real-time video  
broadcast

The DKO performance at the MCAD MFA open studio night on December 7, 2012 used video and sound broadcast into the space in real-time as an audiovisual score. The ensemble (Jon Davis, John Keston, and Graham O'Brien) interpreted the score as they improvised. Visit <http://audiocookbook.org/music/dko-at-frank-part-2-everyday-music-2012/> for video documentation.





**Koto**  
Kate Thomas

Print Paper Book  
Los Angeles, California

**|||||**



WOMEN'S SANITY WAS SAVED BY  
BRINGING THESE HIDDEN EXPERIENCES  
INTO THE OPEN, NAMING THEM, AND  
TURNING OUR RAGE INTO POSITIVE  
ACTION TO REDUCE AND HEAL  
VIOLENCE.

- GLORIA STEINEM

My print and installation work reflects the discomfort I felt as an adolescent growing up in an ultra-conservative Christian environment. From a young age, I was taught that women were the inferior gender. The work of women was to bear children, and therefore we were overlooked for more meaningful work. Through scripture, I understood my status as an object to be owned by men: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (Corinthians 11:8-9).

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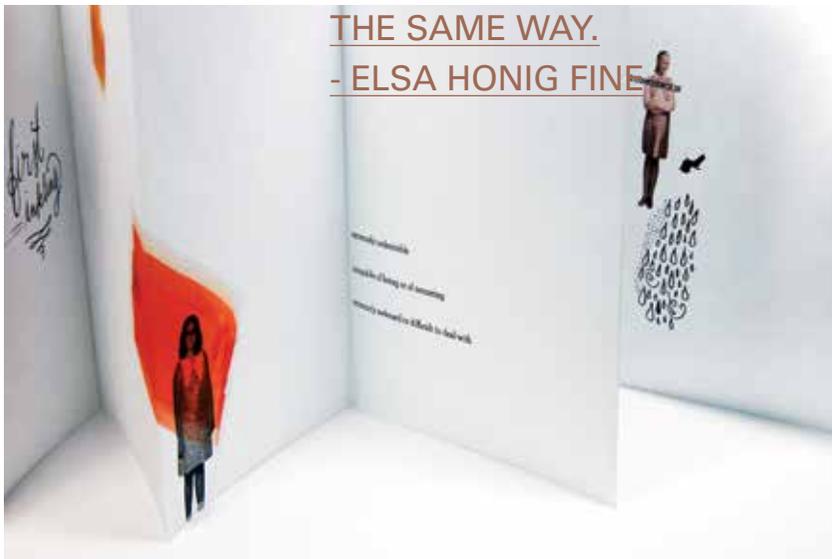


**Epilogue**, 2013  
9" x 36"  
Accordion fold book on Japanese Paper

"Epilogue" serves as a chronological documentation of my process of becoming an ex-religious fanatic.



WHILE WE ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH RECORDING A HIDDEN HERITAGE, WE ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN A REINTERPRETATION OF ART HISTORY FROM OUR NEW AWARENESS AS WOMEN. ONCE CONSCIOUSNESSES HAVE BEEN RAISED, WE CANNOT USE LANGUAGE IN THE SAME WAY.  
- ELSA HONIG FINE



**Untitled**, 2013  
1' x 4"  
Installation

I replicate elements of the biblical literature that was part of my childhood religious education and create an environment that suggest the subtle indoctrination made possible by written dogma. I want the viewer to pass through the space only barely sensing the presence of text on the walls. The subtle nature of the texts and its abstractions both highlights its power and subverts it.



My artistic investigation into the past explores the influence of the oppressive, anti-female and often outrageous aspects of my religious experience, yet I wish to present my work without making generalized, controversial statements about the sanctity of religion as a whole. I am more interested in sharing my experience with the viewer as a means to draw attention to the often hidden and stifled lives of female adolescents in this contemporary subculture.

In the process of making this work, showing, and talking about it, I have realized the value in recognizing that we are not alone in these moments. The empowering effect of this realization has happened for me and I am eager to share it with others.

# Kelli Nelson

Painting  
East Grand Forks, Minnesota

# INNOVATION



For me, painting is a vantage point: a position from which to see, contemplate, understand, and eventually create. Painting allows me to question not only myself, but also the world around me. It allows me the opportunity to negotiate preexisting and current definitions of who and what we are, and what reality is. Painting has no laws, only conventions. It is a form of negotiation, mediation, and intervention to help us discover who we are, what we are, and how we can be.

The process of painting involves a back and forth action, not unlike a dialogue or debate. Through the making and un-making of forms, I abstract from what I see, sense, or touch. Painting offers moments of convergences and points of focus when mark-making tools or brushes, loaded with paint, meet the substrate. These meeting points become thresholds between ideas and form, interior and exterior, action and response, and self and other. During this painterly dialogue, I find myself seeking a union between thought and expression.

My work always begins with the figure, more specifically the body. I use multiple figures and illusions of space to explore relationships that separate and connect the mind and body. I think of these relationships as being akin to thresholds between layers. Relationships form links and connections between the layers inside oneself and outside the body.

kellijnelson.com  
kellijnelson.com



**Shove**, 2012  
11" x 14"  
oil on panel



**Turning Point**, 2012  
11" x 14"  
oil on canvas



*Identity and Persistence*,  
2012  
48" x 60"  
oil on canvas

PAINTING HAS NO LAWS,  
ONLY CONVENTIONS.



*Enfold*, 2012  
30" x 24"  
oil on canvas

The ambiguity that forms between the liminal layers is manifested in my paintings through a process of overlapping figurative forms.

My oscillating forms make no decisive claim to being positive or negative space, rather they appear to fluctuate back and forth. The boundaries between the multiple body forms and their environment tends to collapse. In my painting it is unclear where one figure ends and another begins. This alludes to the pleasure and anxiety we struggle to balance in our psyches as two or more layers of experience converge and, as a result of this convergence, are transformed. As the individual figurative forms coalesce with each other and their ground, they metaphorically represent a sense of union. But, in their transformation, they have also lost some or all of their identity.



*Conversion*, 2012  
24" x 30"  
oil on panel

*Declivity*, 2012  
20" x 25"  
oil on panel



# Kyle Robert Harabedian

Comic Art  
Dearborn, Michigan



**Character study**, 2013  
5.5" x 10"  
Ink



**Haunted**, 2012  
4.75" x 10"  
ink and applied shading

The work I do is stylistically inspired by early 20th century newspaper comic-strips and pen and ink illustration. My ongoing investigation of historical illustration techniques has led to my current project that applies these techniques to more contemporary subject matter. While this approach could result in something simply nostalgic, my intention is to explore the connection between the past and the present. The goal is to give the work a quality of timelessness.

My interest in the use of historical style sometimes involves the juxtaposition between the style and content of the stories to create a dramatic tension. The incongruity of a contemporary subject drawn in a style identified with an earlier period can create a disorienting effect.

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*The Archives*, 2012  
11" x 17"  
Ink and applied shading

I was raised in Dearborn, Michigan the hometown of Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company. Known as the Motor City, the economy of the region continues to be dependent on the automobile industry. As a freelance illustrator, I would often work late into the night on a project in an effort to meet a challenging deadline. Early in the morning, as I was finishing up my night's work, I would hear the sounds of neighbors going out to their cars to go to work in factories and on assembly lines. I was aware that I was fortunate to be able to do a creative job and not something I would find less satisfying. This realization was accompanied by a sense of responsibility to my audience to do the best work that I could do.

MY INTEREST IN AND USE OF HISTORICAL STYLE SOMETIMES INVOLVES THE USE OF JUXTAPOSITION BETWEEN THE STYLE AND THE CONTENT OF THE STORIES TO CREATE DRAMATIC TENSION.



*Kamen Rider*, 2013  
20" x 30"  
Oil paint

*Carnacki the Ghost Finder*, 2013  
11" x 17"  
Ink



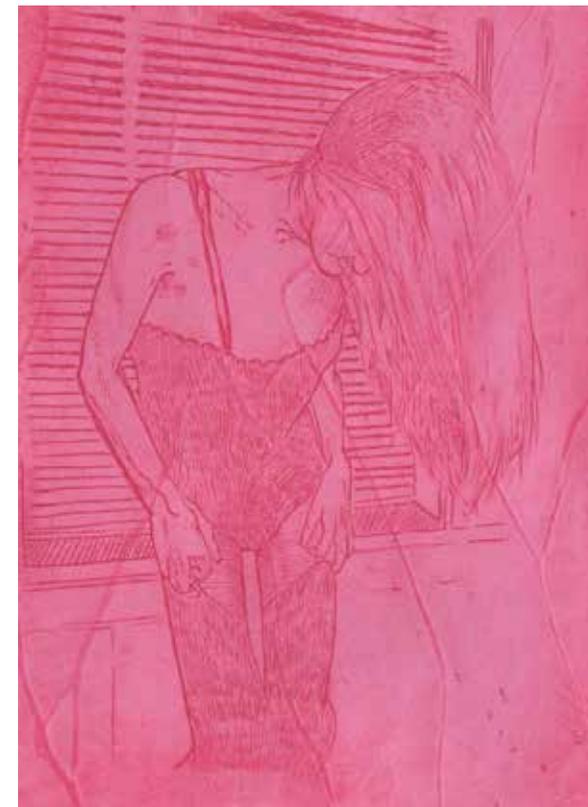
# Lauren Faith Wilcox

Painting  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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As a painter and image collector, I work with historic figures and symbols of the feminine juxtaposed with my own obsession with self-images of the feminine that are so prevalent in contemporary media. My bulk of my collection is taken from the online source of *Thinspiration* – a weight loss blog of ‘before and after’ images of women who have lost weight. They are driven by a motivation toward an ideal of thinness as a form of behavior control and the obsession to ‘see’ these images in communicating these expectations, particularly within the Internet culture.

In selecting the most visually powerful images, I find inspiration for my paintings and drawings. In particular, I seek images that represent the common visual distortion of the embodied space, and consequently,



**Window**, 2013  
10" x 10"  
Marker and Tempera on Panel



**Outlook**, 2013  
8" x 10"  
Marker, Tempera, Matte  
Medium Transfer on Panel

the distortion of a sense of the embodied self. These images attempt to elevate the abject self through a critical gaze at the highly mediated images of discrete body zones of imperfection – outsized torsos, thighs, breasts -- to reify those imperfections as a “potentially perfect” body forms, if one can just lose the weight.

My work represents the grotesque, through an uncanny combination of the imaginary visual pleasure of the imperfect body part with the abject self. This simple ‘constructed’ feminine identity is a contrast to the dangerous conformity of mediated ideal body images represented on *Thinspiration*.

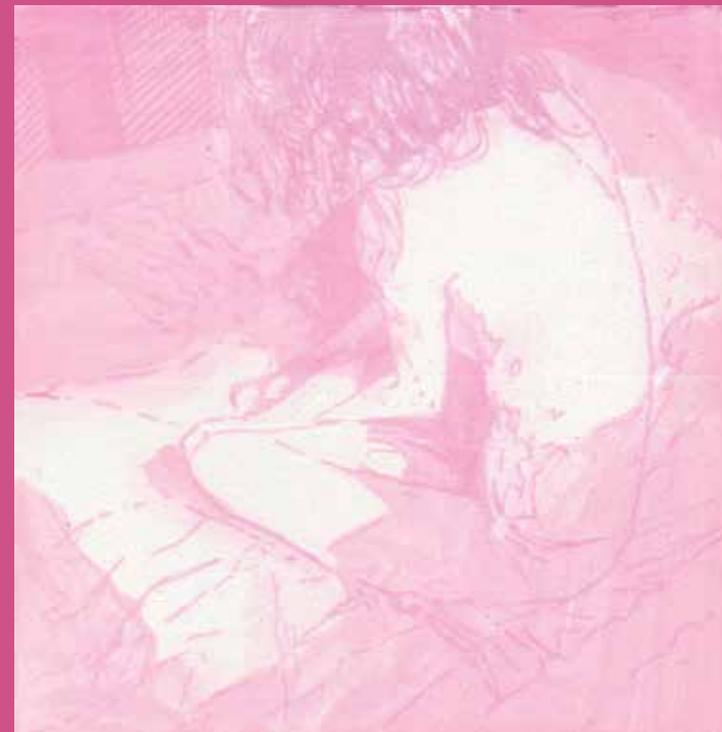
**Display, 2013**  
6" x 6"  
Chalk and Oil on Paper



**Kaleidoscope 2, 2012**  
12" x 16"  
Spray Paint, Marker and  
Tempera on Panel

SHE SEEKS IMAGES THAT ESPECIALLY REPRESENT THE COMMON VISUAL DISTORTION OF SPACE, AND THE DISTORTION OF A SENSE OF SELF, WHICH ARE A PART OF THE DRIVE TO DOCUMENT THE BODY IN THIS FASHION.

**Venetians 2, 2013**  
5" x 6.5"  
False Etching (Oil on Paper)



# Mervy

Mervy Codizal Pueblo

Public Art  
Manila, Philippines

# I UUUUU

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*Project Stone Mediation.*  
2011  
Dimension variable  
Performance/Earthwork at  
Downtown Minneapolis

IT IS NOT THE INTELLECTUAL JUSTIFICATION THAT I FOCUS ON IN MY PRACTICE, BUT RATHER MY REAL CONCERNS – NOT ACADEMICS OR ART STYLE, BUT THE INTEREST IN EXISTENTIALIST CONDITION.

Through interacting and participating in community, the developing experience brings deeper insights that foster unlimited creativity. It is not the intellectual justification that I focus on in my practice, but rather my real concerns – not academics or art style, but the interest in existentialist condition. It is about the intersubjective real – the two sides of the coin, the gray areas, the un-quantifiable, or the un-definable relation between people in terms of love, hate, fear, and courage.

Being curious about the everyday is a way of seeing how mundane objects are intertwined with the social fabric or the system of society. I think of my practice as a lay ethnographer of the contemporary culture who questions and examines how our social values are shaped by the prevailing disciplinary forces, such as family, education, society, and government.

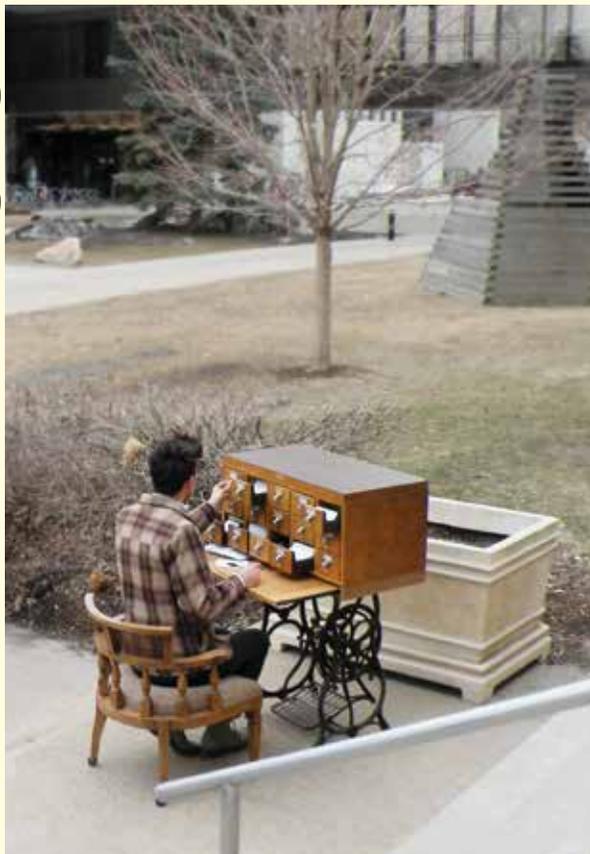


My recent work manifests the objective of my exploration, that of an 'openness' to the world, which brings a limitless potential of interrelations as a positive potential of production. I tend not to conclude meanings for my work, as I see my current practice geared more toward triangulating issues, rather than offering authoritative opinions. I claim no full understanding of what I do, as I would like to keep my options open and free, but I understand my practice as an exploration of relationships and inter-subjectivities.



**Windfield and Hyperbolic Space**, 2012  
10m x 5m x 3m  
Public art installation: Steel, resin, and faux grass

Commissioned by Ayala Museum and Alveo Land Corp.  
In collaboration with Noell EL Farol.  
Site: Fort Bonifacio High street, Taguig, Manila, Philippines



**The Cabinet of Disappointments**, 2012  
Dimension variable  
Public installation: Collected handwritten thoughts, wooden cabinet, constructed pull-out drawer, iron-cast treadle, and chair



**Expectation Kits (Asian Woman Edition)**, 2013  
Ready made  
Three dimensional works

BEING CURIOUS ABOUT THE EVERYDAY IS A WAY OF SEEING HOW MUNDANE OBJECTS ARE INTERTWINED WITH THE SOCIAL FABRIC OR THE SYSTEM OF SOCIETY.



**Expectation Kits (Social Page)**, 2013  
1024 width  
Html 5



**Expectation Kits (Asian Woman Product Page)**, 2013  
1024 width  
Html 5

# Nicholas

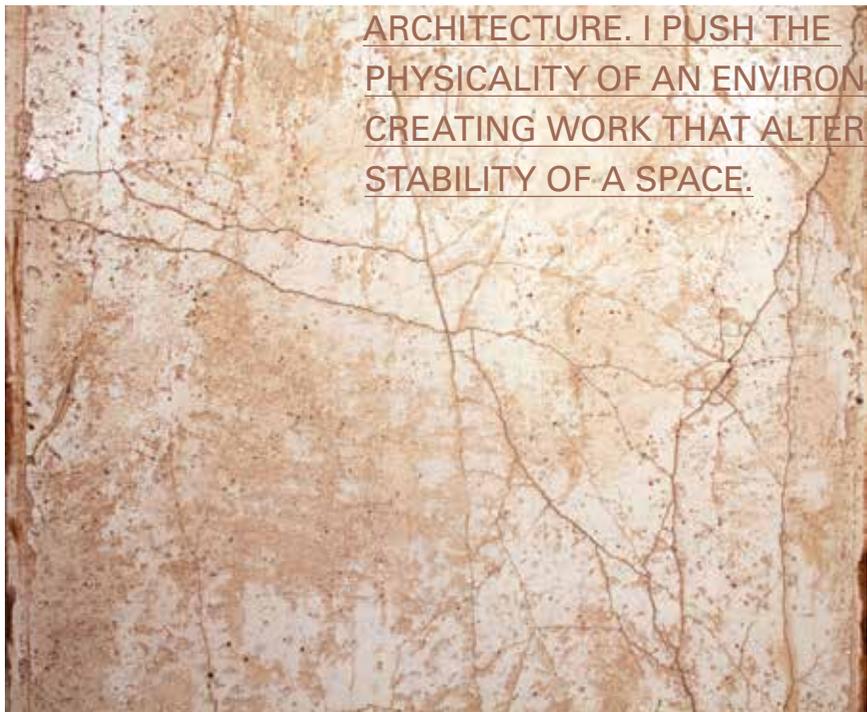
Nicholas Kovatch

Sculpture  
Hudson, Wisconsin

# INNOVATION

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THROUGH A MINIMALIST INFLUENCED  
AESTHETIC, MY INSTALLATIONS  
AND SCULPTURES MANIPULATE  
STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS WITHIN  
ARCHITECTURE. I PUSH THE  
PHYSICALITY OF AN ENVIRONMENT BY  
CREATING WORK THAT ALTERS THE  
STABILITY OF A SPACE.



*Untitled*, 2013  
252" x 220" x 96"  
Mixed media



Through a minimalist aesthetic, my installations and sculptures manipulate structural elements within an architecture pushed through the physicality of the environment creating work that alters the stability of a space.

The materials that are commonly used in my practice are resin, joint compound, sheetrock, wood, and fabric. These materials are utilized because they allow me to be flexible with the forms I create. Once the structure for a form is discovered, through experimentation and intuition, I use resin to solidify my architectural manipulation into a permanent shape.

In order to present uncanny elements within the structural elements of a space, I surreptitiously embed the sculpture within the existing space. The scale of my work varies, but each sculpture takes on the illusion of being a physical extension of the interior architecture.

Through these changes within a room, I want to create an encounter that provokes moments of recognition and contemplation about space. I strive to make an environment that is either empathetic or unsettling -- to push the boundaries of how people respond to an uncanny surrounding.



*Vacant*, 2011  
60" x 48" x 22"  
Epoxy resin, joint compound,  
fabric, dry black pigment



*Untitled*, 2012  
120" x 207" x 3"  
Epoxy resin, joint compound,  
fabric



# Dona

Peng Wu

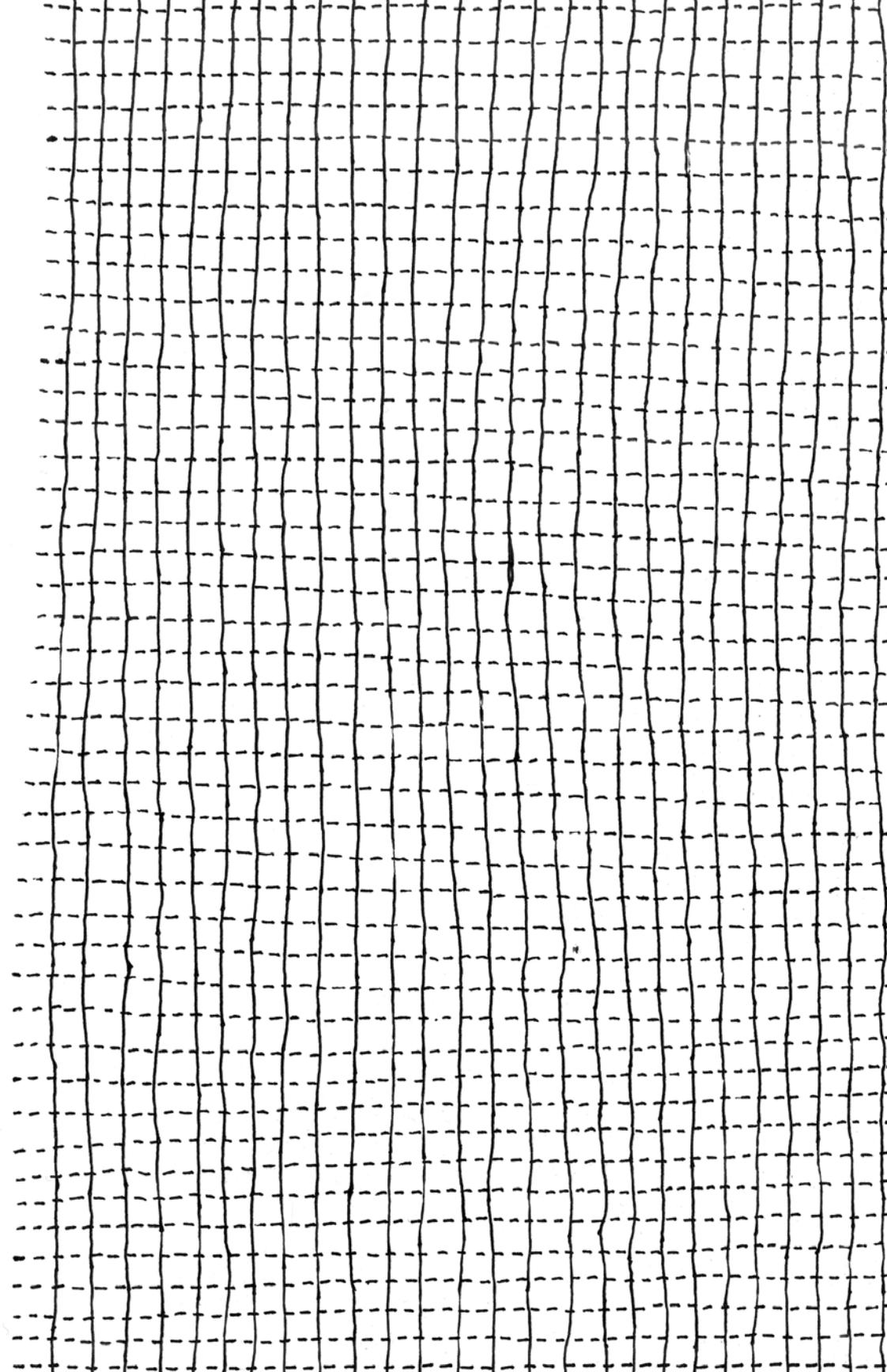
Interactive Design  
Hefei, China

# v v u

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I explore the difficult or confusing situations I personally encounter in my life – as an artist and a human being. I believe these specific situations can be bridges that connect human individuals. When people are packing their belongings for moving, they feel something. When people stand in front of a shelf in the grocery store, comparing products and trying to find what they really want, they feel something. I respond to these everyday mundane situations and mine these subtle feelings and desires as the subjects of my work.

I believe the outcomes of responding to these seemingly incidental quotidian situations can collectively depict the true image of the world we live in -- as well as my attitudes toward it. My response to such situations is meant to reveal and release the value I perceive outside the restrictions of capitalism and modernization. Primary for me in my work are the use of poetics and humor that act as subversive forces to the instrumental spectacles of contemporary society.



1. Cut the dotted lines on the other side of this page, with scissors if you like.
2. Stand somewhere high.
3. Cut the solid lines.
4. See the snow falling.





# Dina

Ping Ji

Graphic Design  
Nanjing, China



For me, design is a rational task. My approach is almost scientific, and this kind of work cannot succeed without extreme patience as well as attention to detail. Normally, I begin one project on paper, then digitize it through the use of various software. Starting this process on paper is important because it allows for less tangible meanings to layer themselves into the design, through the intuitive elements formed by haptic processes.

During my first year, I was in the process of creating a font design that can be used in both English and Chinese letterforms. The dilemma of using existing fonts for this purpose is that they do not achieve an equal level of congruence both formally or stylistically in both languages. Further, they often do not appear to be related when a Chinese letter in one font is placed next to an English letter from the same font. My font is a serif font that is designed specifically for printed text. This font prioritizes readability, and exploits decorative elements for aesthetic appeal.

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## I FOCUS ON THE CONCEPT OF CONVERSION BETWEEN TWO DIMENSIONAL AND THREE DIMENSIONAL FORM.



It, 2013  
24" x 36"  
Screen print

Another exploration is the 3D Font project, which was inspired by an experiment with a new font. After creating the letterforms for this font, I produced three-dimensional representations using fabricated and joined wood. This 3D alphabet was installed and I used lighting to cast shadows on the walls of the installation space. I positioned English words near their Chinese counterparts to illustrate the possibility of simultaneously achieving the same meaning in two languages and forms, both inherently arbitrary but also beautiful.

**Xing, 2012**  
24" x 36"  
Laser print on paper

Xing, the font that design for both Chinese and English, which is still in development, is a serif font that is designed specifically for printed text. This font prioritizes readability, and exploits decorative elements for aesthetic appeal.



**Project, 2011**  
4' x 1' x 1'  
Wood

Project is an 3D Font installation, was inspired by an experiment with a new font. After creating the letterforms for this font, I produced three-dimensional representations using fabricated and joined wood. This 3D alphabet was installed and I used lighting to cast shadows on the walls of the installation space. I positioned English words near their Chinese counterparts to illustrate the possibility of achieving the same meaning in two forms, both inherently arbitrary but also potentially beautiful.



**Kraze, 2013**  
24" x 36"  
Screen print

Exploring negative and positive space in hand-drawing line.

I plan to refine my concept for a large-scale project. I'm continuing to explore the possibility of reducing the 3D Font into 2D paper form. On the other hand, I'm creating an installation that uses wood block in a three-dimensional way to generate a shadow that will create a QR code. People can use their cell phones to scan the code to visit a web page to get more of an idea about my concept of conversion between two dimensional and three dimensional forms in font design.



**12, 2013**  
24" x 36"  
Screen print

Dimensional Chinese font design. The Chinese characters in this post are twelve Chinese zodiac animals.





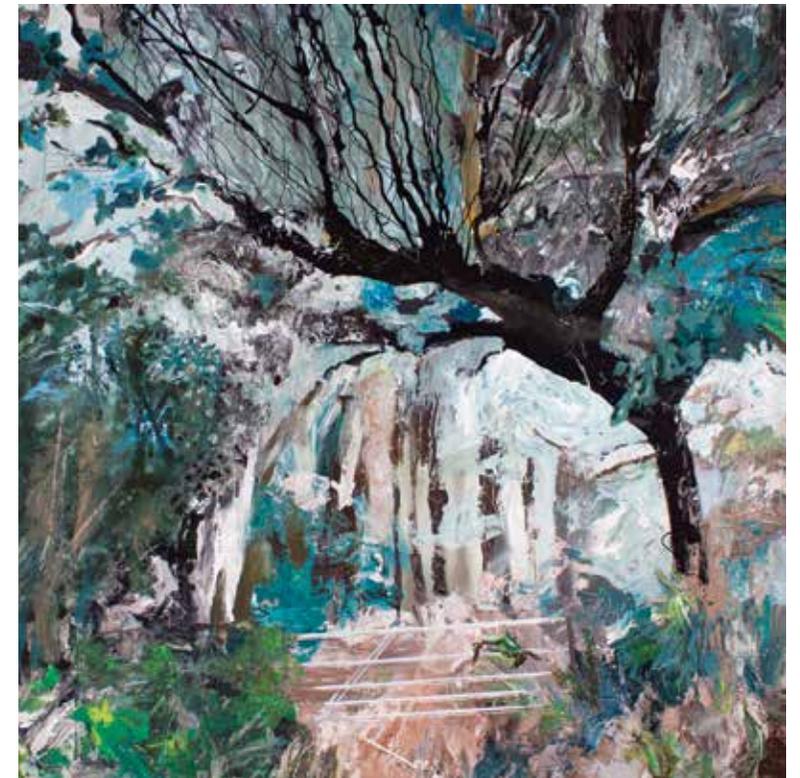
*Intervals*, 2013  
60" x 60"  
Oil on panel



*Middle of Nowhere*, 2012  
9' X 9' X 16'  
Steel, branches, wire,  
paint, chair



*Provocation*, 2013  
48" x 48"  
Oil on panel



My paintings and sculptures focus on environments and the relationship between the individual and place. The 'Middle of Nowhere' is an outdoor installation that oscillates between interior and exterior, and between public and private space.

Similarly, my abstract painted landscapes invite explorations of spaces that are complicated to physically or visually navigate, yet with the potential for discovery. Through the use of extraordinary elements and spatial confusion they examine the indeterminate, unexplainable, and unknowable. My work is both a metaphorical "call to adventure," and a means of subverting the more obvious value structures of capitalism, mass culture, and mechanized society by proposing the possibility of alternatives.

# Shannon

Shannon Ryan McCarthy

Graphic Design  
Union City, Pennsylvania

# IVICCUUITY

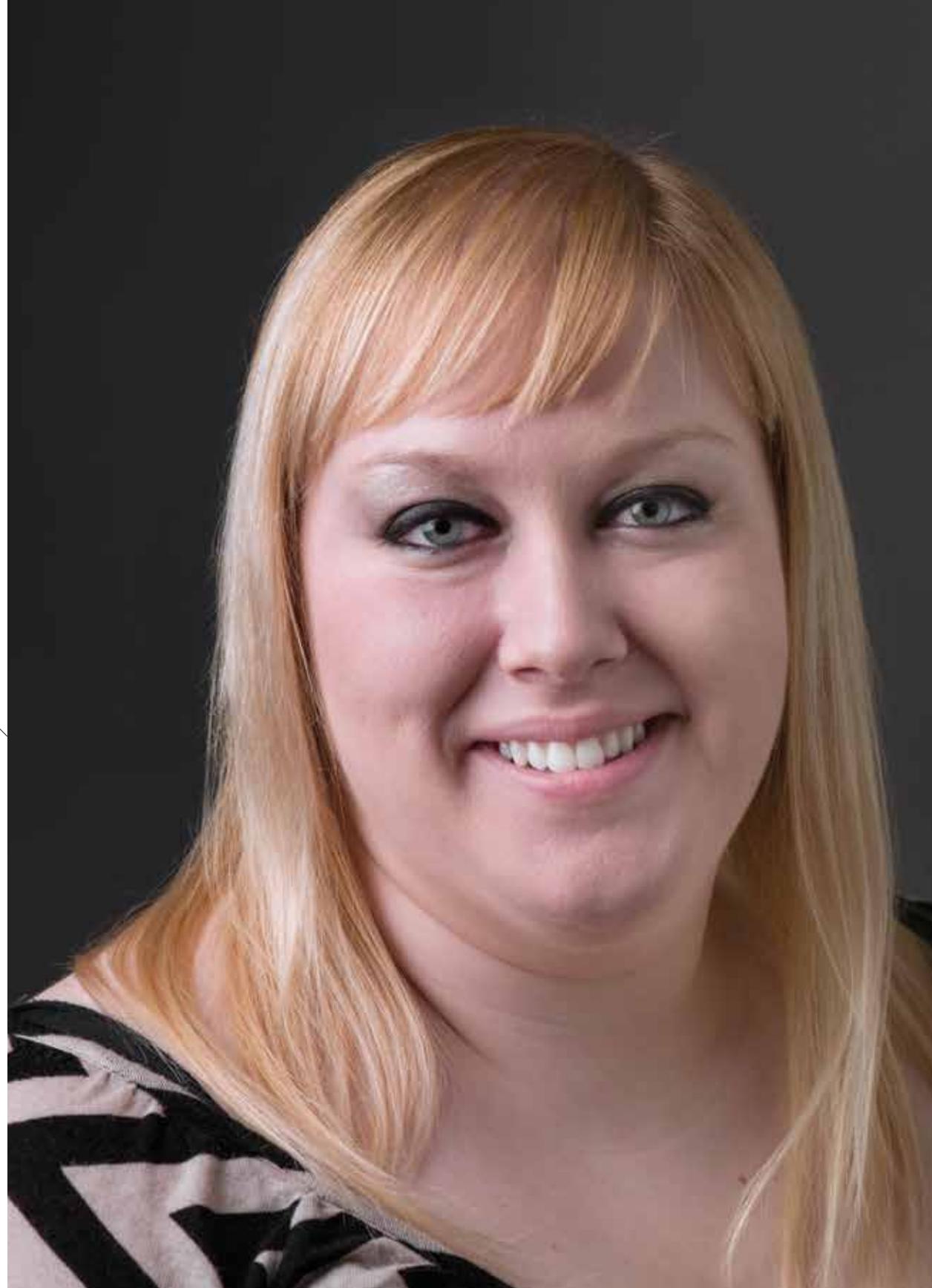
01

My design practice is largely focused on using both emerging and experimental technologies to address sustainability issues and to create social design. My work is focused on the harmful effects of disposable or single use plastics. *NO AWAY; An Awareness Campaign about Plastic Consumption* has implications for my growth and development in this area well past graduation.

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🌐 [noaway.org](http://noaway.org)

I was able to work closely with my target audience -- teenagers (ages 14 to 17) with help from the Waite House Community Center in Minneapolis. By working with the teenagers and not for them, I was able to understand what would catch their attention and possibly provoke change.

I became particularly interested in the area of plastics when I came upon the work of Chris Jordon, a photographer based in Seattle, Washington. Jordan's photographic series, *Midway: Message from the Gyre*, contains pictures of Albatross corpses with their stomachs filled with plastic bits, remnants of bottle caps and lighters. These birds were found near and on the Midway Atoll, a remote cluster of islands more than 1000 miles from the nearest continent. The images of the Albatrosses moved me and I wanted to do my part in trying to have the world become more aware of the massive amount of plastic consumption and its profound affects on not only the environment, but also marine and wild life as well as humankind.





BY WORKING WITH THE TEENAGERS AND NOT FOR THEM I WAS ABLE TO REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT KIND OF POSTER, IMAGES AND TEXT WOULD CATCH THEIR EYES AND INVOKE CHANGE- A SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO THEM.

*Working With Not For : Waite House Community Center, 2013*  
8" x 10"  
Photography



NO AWAY; AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ABOUT PLASTIC CONSUMPTION HAS STARTED OUT AS MY THESIS PROJECT BUT WILL CONTINUE TO GROW WELL PAST GRADUATION.



*I KILL, 2013*  
17" x 22"  
Photography and Digital Medium



# Stowon

Steven Alexander Listwon

Furniture Design  
Boston, Massachusetts

# LIJLVUUI

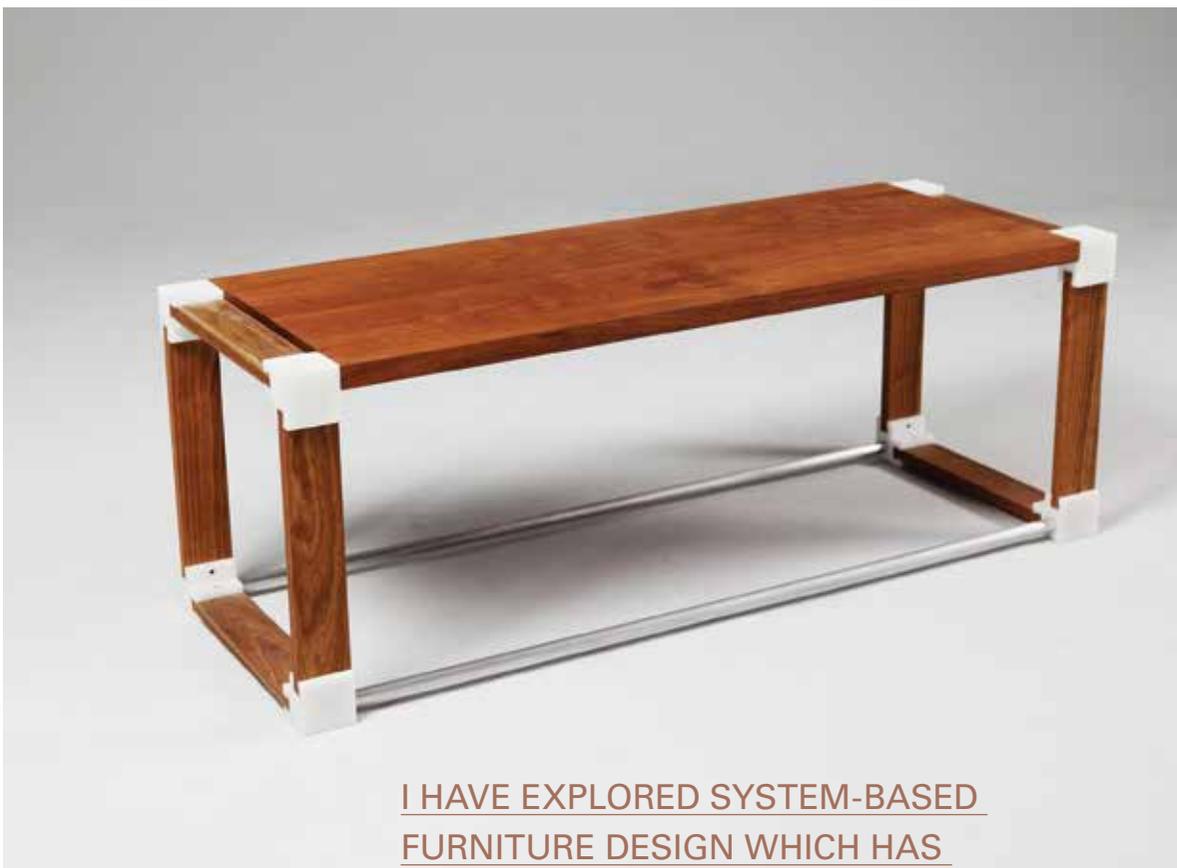
I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AMAZED BY CHILDREN'S BUILDING TOYS AND THEIR TRANSPARENT CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES. THIS IMPORTANT ASPECT ALLOWS USERS THE ABILITY TO EASILY MANIPULATE THE SYSTEMS INTO INFINITE MANIFESTATIONS.

stevelistwon@gmail.com  
stevelistwon.com



*Clutch*, 2011  
54" x 36" x 12"  
Reclaimed Pine, Resin





*Clutch 2.0*, 2012  
48" x 18" x 18"  
Cherry, Acetal, Aluminum

I HAVE EXPLORED SYSTEM-BASED FURNITURE DESIGN WHICH HAS ALLOWED ME TO EMBRACE MY HISTORICAL INFLUENCES WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY GROWING AS A DESIGNER.

My current work is fueled by many different engines; beginning with my interest in children's building toys and their transparent construction techniques, which allows the child the ability to easily manipulate the systems into infinite manifestations. As my undergraduate studies were focused within the discipline of industrial design, this fascination honed my practice by emphasizing the importance of research and concept, into a consideration of materials to produce objects of function.

I transitioned into the professional sector by obtaining a position at a furniture design firm where fabrication techniques and collaborative design were highlighted. During my seven years with Bill Bancroft Furniture Design, we produced a catalogue of site-specific furniture solutions in tandem with local architects, artisans, and designers.



*Clutch chair*, 2012  
36" x 30" x 20"  
Plywood, Fiberglass, Bronze

My decision to pursue an MFA in furniture design was one made in an attempt to harness all of these past elements and utilize them in a creative academic setting. MCAD's graduate program afforded me this creative space and the work that I have produced during the last two years serves as a strong source of pride. I have explored system-based furniture design that has allowed me to embrace historical and material-based influences while simultaneously growing as a designer.



# Ziwei

Ziwei Liu

Illustration  
Jinzhou, China

# Liu

# 09

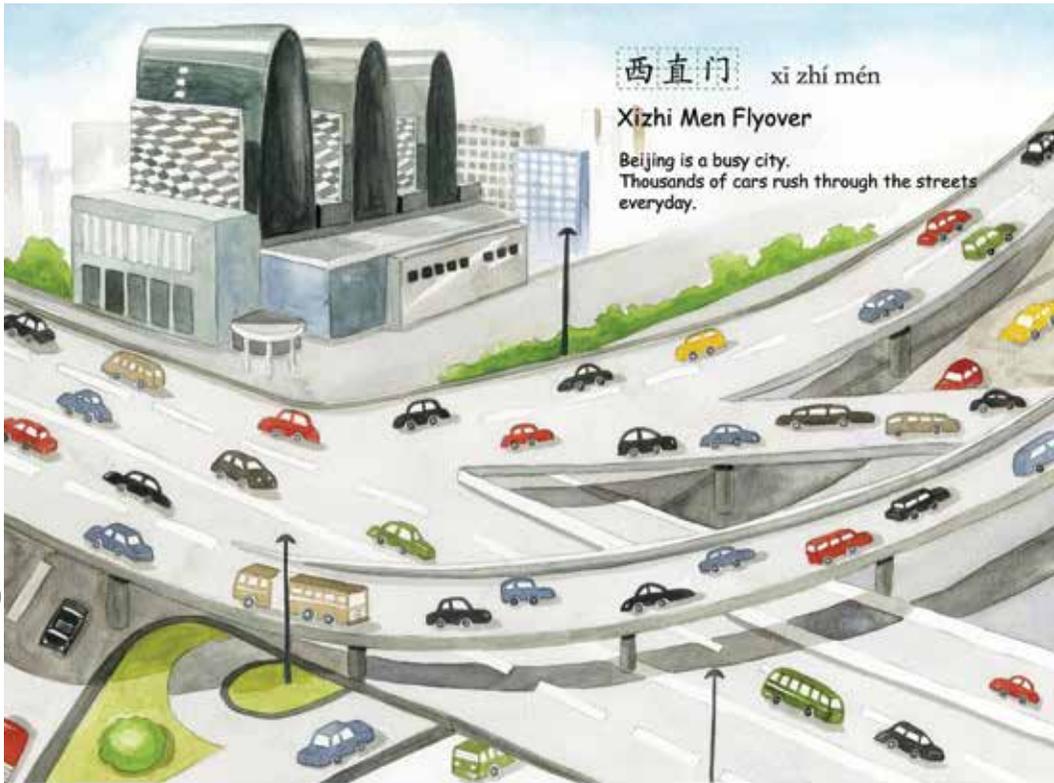
93 I was raised in China. About two years ago, I made a life-changing and fantastic decision to come to America and expand my horizons by studying abroad. I feel very lucky that I can pursue my fascination with children's illustration and children's picture book creation, while learning from my mentor Nancy Carlson.

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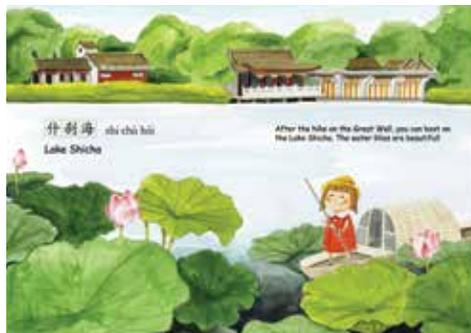
Digital Illustration, 2011  
Adobe Illustrator





*In Beijing, 2012*  
Watercolor, Photoshop

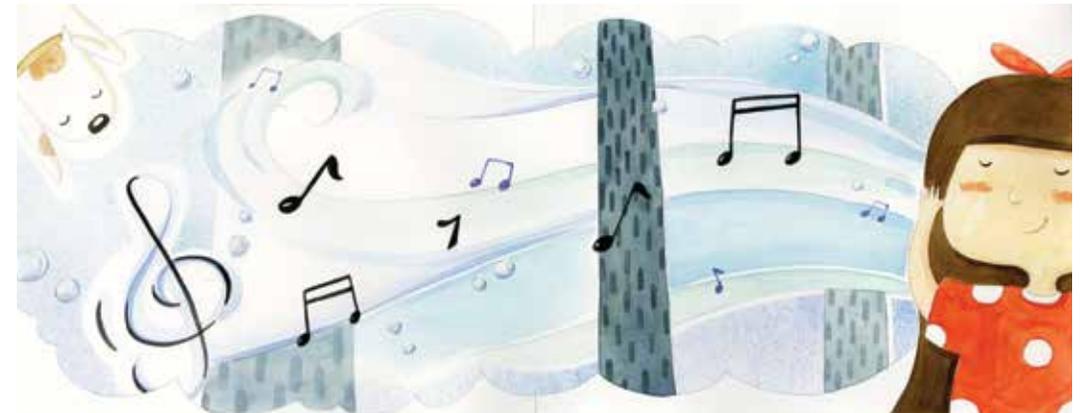
I FEEL VERY LUCKY THAT I CAN PURSUE MY FASCINATION WITH CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATION AND CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK CREATION, WHILE LEARNING FROM MY MENTOR NANCY CARLSON.



WITH FUNCTION OF MY BOOK, I ATTEMPT TO GIVE YOUNG CHILDREN AN INTERESTING AND DIFFERENT WAY TO FEEL AND LEARN BY EXPRESSING STORIES WITH WARMTH AND POSITIVE ENERGY.

I want to study children's picture book creation because of my obsession with listening to stories and drawing everything everywhere all the time when I was young. As I listened to stories, pictures would form in my mind at the same time. It became my passion to delineate the images as the stories emerged. My yearning for picture books both as a child and as an adult, have influenced my goal to be able to draw the stories that have accumulated in my head, which now I have the freedom and skill to represent in my work.

*Why Am I Here, 2013*  
22" x 8.5"  
Watercolor, Photoshop



**Minneapolis College of Art and Design**

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**Credits****Tom DeBiao**

Director // Master of Fine Arts Program

**Kiley Van Note**

Assistant to the Director

**Brent Meyers**

Creative Director // MCAD DesignWorks

**Jeongho Park**

Designer

**Rik Sferra**

Photography

**Frenchy Lunning**

Copywriter and Editor

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Recognized nationally and internationally for its innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to visual arts education, the Minneapolis College of Art and Design is home to more than 700 students and offers professional certificates, bachelor of fine arts and bachelor of science degrees, and graduate degrees.

Founded in 1886, MCAD was one of the first colleges to offer the BFA degree. The college has earned the highest accreditation possible and has the highest four-year graduation rate of all Midwestern visual arts colleges. And college facilities contain the latest in technology, with multiple studios and labs open 24 hours a day.

**Master of Fine Arts at MCAD**

The Minneapolis College of Art and Design's MFA program is a community of makers, thinkers, theorists, researchers, and creative professionals. Our student body is diverse with a robust international presence. The subject of student inquiry responds to social, cultural, and professional needs as well as to entrepreneurial opportunities, stretching across art and design practices. Students in the program pursue creative work in a mentor based, interdisciplinary environment that includes graphic design, printmaking, paper & book arts, painting, photography, illustration, sculpture, drawing, animation, interactive media, filmmaking, comic arts, furniture design, and installation art.

For more information, contact or visit the following sites:

**Admissions**

[mcad.edu/academic-programs/graduate-degrees](http://mcad.edu/academic-programs/graduate-degrees)

**Official Program Site**

[mcad-mfa.com](http://mcad-mfa.com)

**Participant Portfolios**

[mcad-mfa.tumblr.com](http://mcad-mfa.tumblr.com)



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