







# Commence |kə'mens|

*(Old French) To begin, start, set about, embark on, launch into, lead off, get underway, get going!*

It is so interesting that the end of collegiate degrees finish with a commencement ceremony. It commemorates the completion of the degree and yet the very title of the event signifies a “beginning.” It is a commencing of a new chapter in the life of the graduate.

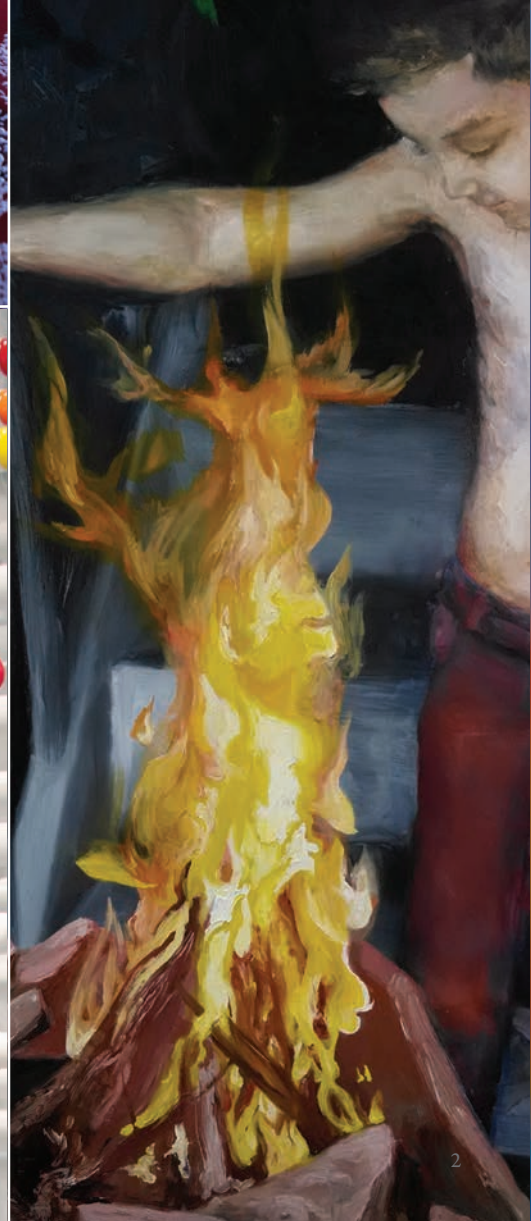
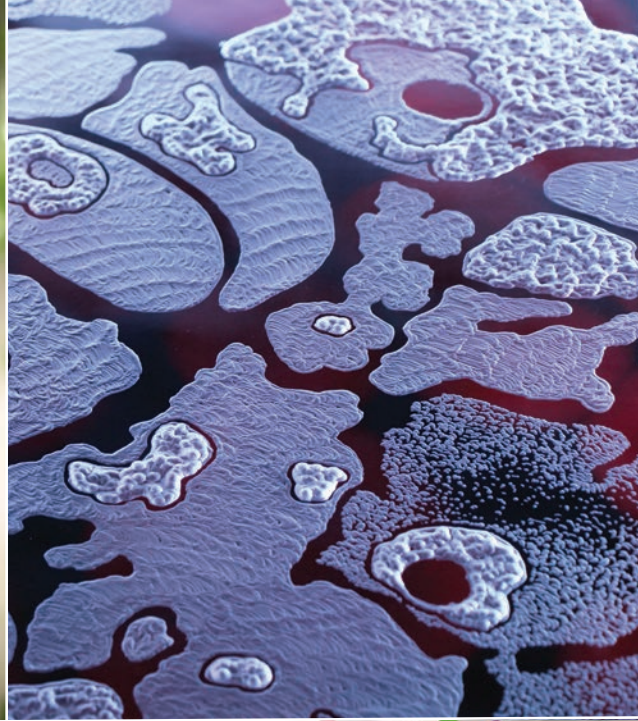
The men and women included here are embarking on an adventure that comes with a new map they have created over the course of many months of intense research, hundreds of hours of studio discipline, hearing and interpreting a myriad of critique voices and the production of an accomplished body of work.

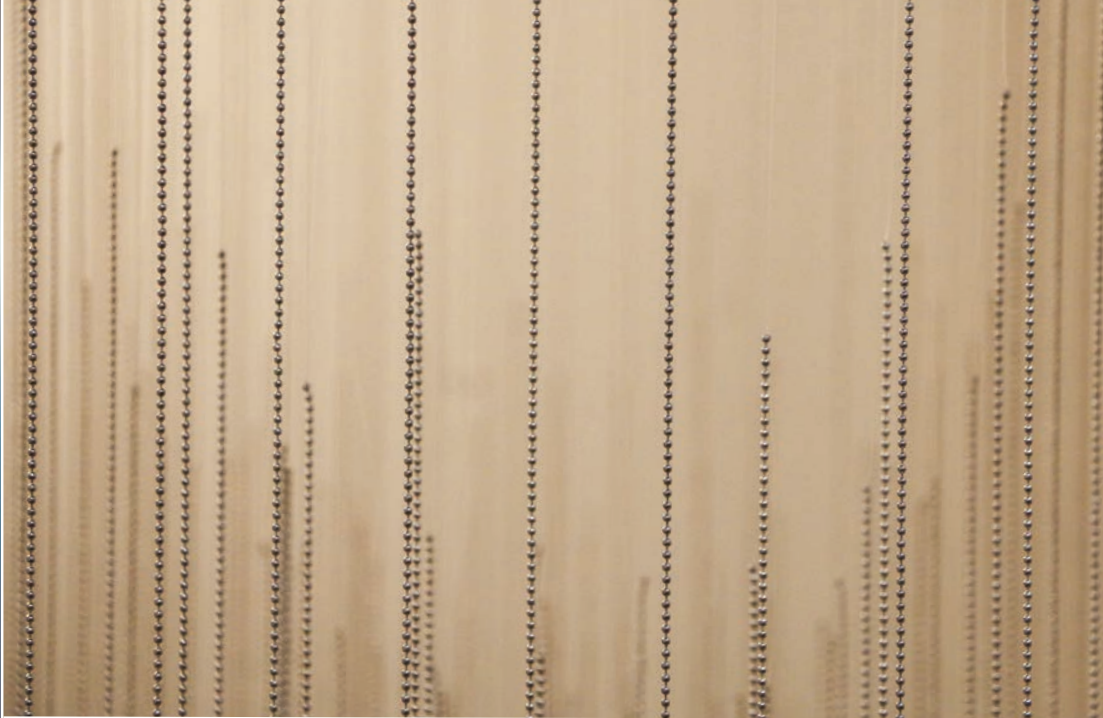
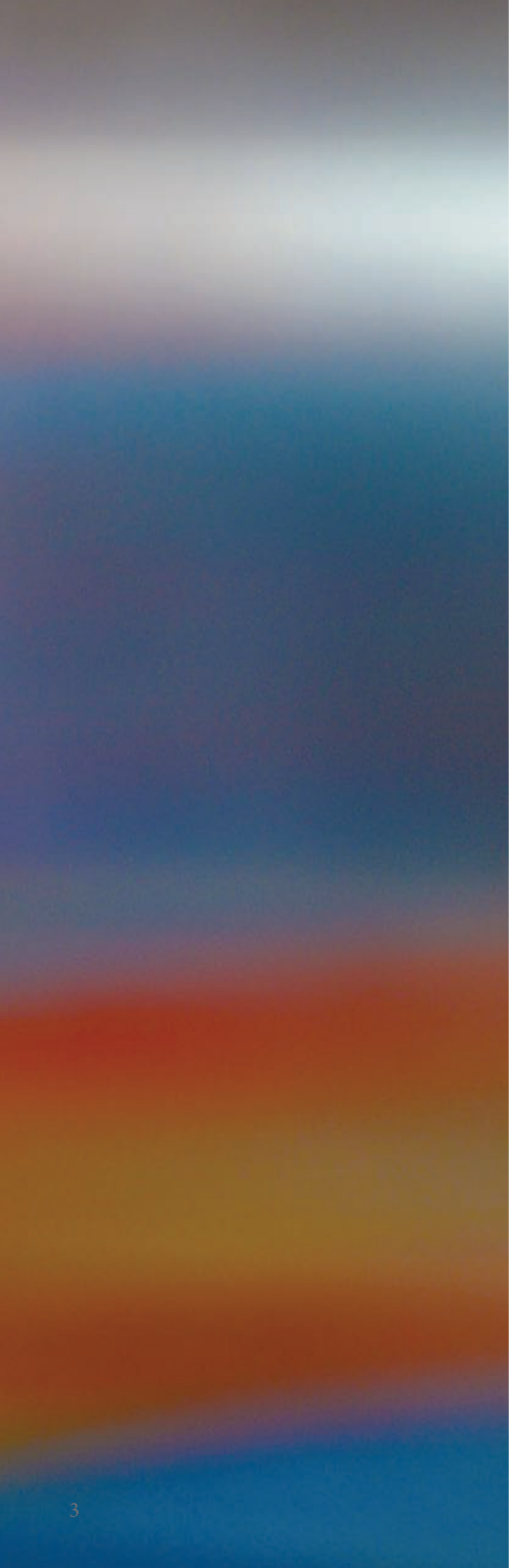
Within the pages of this catalogue are images and text from those graduating with a Master of Fine Arts degree in Visual Art. These MFA students have navigated their way through many challenges to complete this degree. But as a group they have more than met the expectations, they have fully prepared themselves for the next stage of their journey.

These graduates leave the program fully prepared and capable of being the scholars and artists they have revealed here, and bring that to the communities of learning and art making awaiting them.

It is an honor to present the graduating class of 2014!

—William Catling  
*Director, MFA in Visual Art*





# Cindy De Mesa

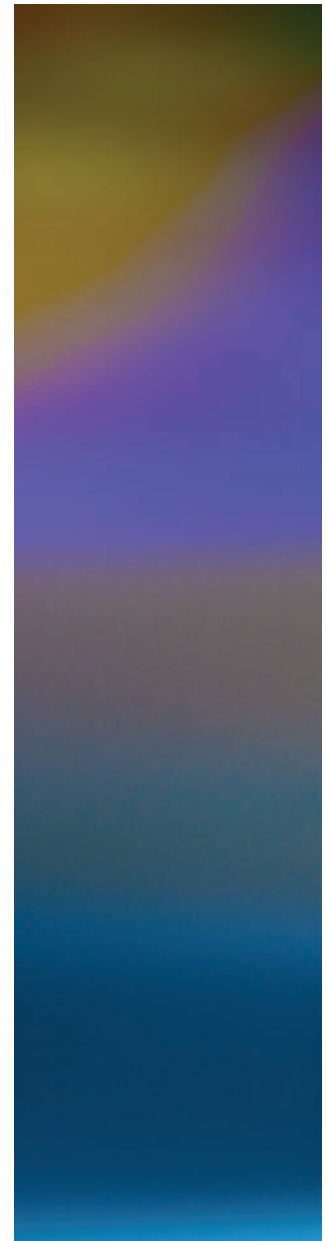
As my primary art medium, photography allows me freedom of visual expression, of which exploration will be infinite. I enjoy working conceptually, and welcome ambiguity and open-endedness. By photographing ordinary objects within my daily environment, the intention of my art is to invite viewers to arrive at a state of meditative questioning, going beyond the limits of an ordinary experience, consequently bringing enlightenment and transformation through their own internal personal reflection.

Recent works include pieces that are meant to cause ocular confusion to provoke questions and elicit response. Although I photograph objects, the work heavily revolves around the subjectivity of the viewer, and the subconscious connections and reactions to aesthetic choices made on color, line, depth, shape and scale of the piece.

My philosophy of both life and art comes down to trust in the process and enjoying liberation of the mind through abstraction. Planned intention, as well as chance and spontaneity each play a big role in my process. As a parallel within the human experience, there is usually a plan, but always many variables and unknowns. These uncertainties may cause confusion and sometimes chaos. It is also during these moments that bring about contemplation, reflection, and transformation. It is times like these that ask you to lose yourself and detach from all familiarity of form and logic in order to once again find clarity.



*Light Echo*, 2014  
Photography, 12" x 48"



*Andromeda*, 2014  
Photography, 12" x 48"

## Katy Ann Gilmore

Over the past year, I've focused my research on theories of perception, most specifically perception aided by sight as we exist in three-dimensional corporeal form.

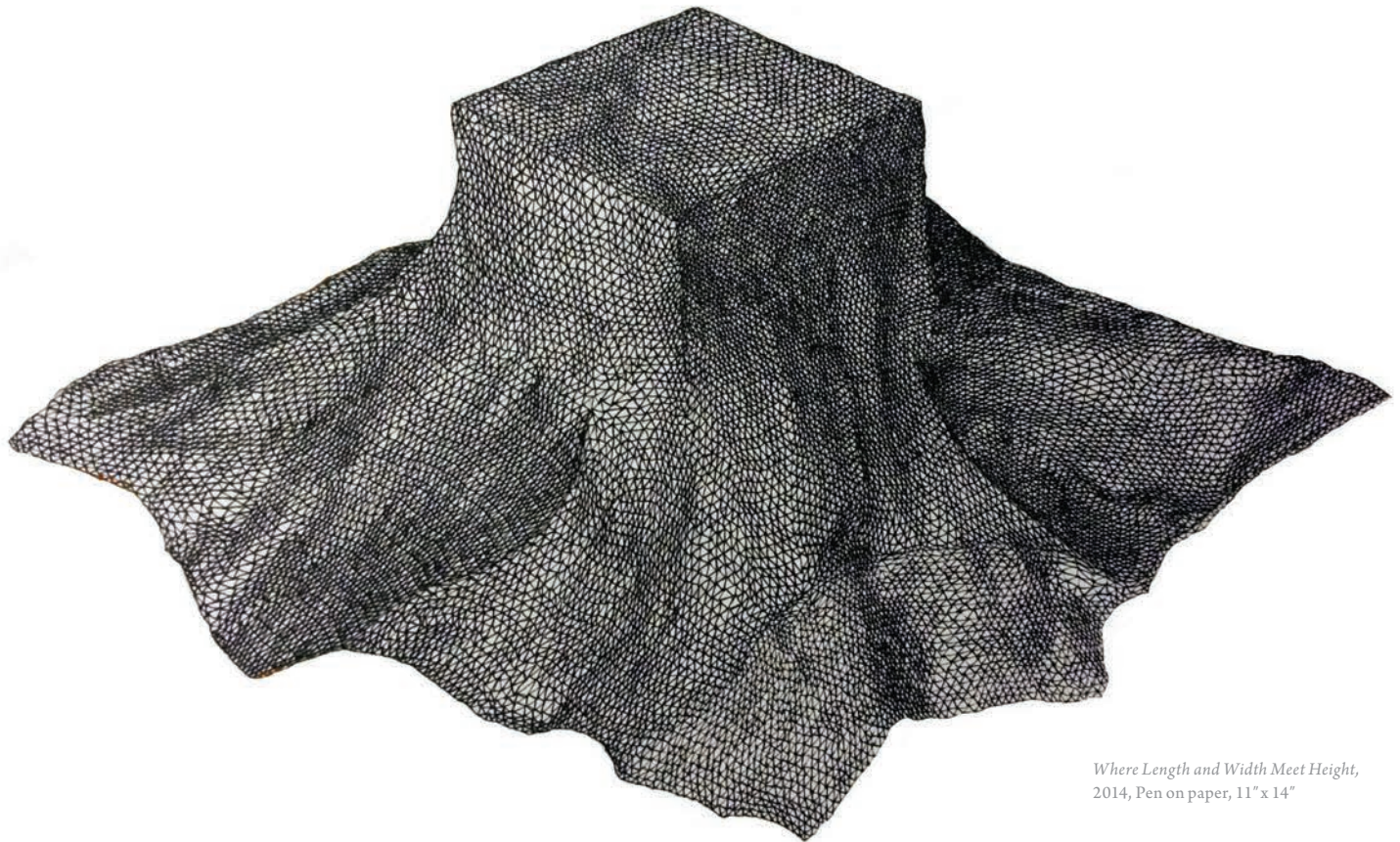
The oddities and questions about particular phenomena of perception have infiltrated my work in the year leading up to my thesis exhibition, an installation entitled "Matter and Void", in Duke Gallery.

The disconnect between our perception of the world as consisting of solid objects and the reality of the "empty space" (that isn't exactly empty) in matter, demonstrates itself in our eyes' inability to interpret these distances accurately due to the wavelength of light. We don't see things as they actually are, only in the format permissible

by light, which interprets these non-solid objects as solid.

Intrigued by this concept, I try to imagine reality as if I could perceive these distances between atoms and interpret these voids, electric fields, and particles interacting.

My thesis exhibition, "Matter and Void", is an installation using steel ball chain and fishing line that examines these ideas of perception. I don't see art as disparate from other areas of study but instead as a method of inquiry as I sort out the ideas and theories in my head. The goal isn't that I've resolved something mystifying; I'm not thinking of readily "resolvable" issues, which is certainly the case in my questions regarding perception. I instead hope to provide a piece of insight and invoke a sense of curiosity in the viewer.



*Where Length and Width Meet Height,*  
2014, Pen on paper, 11" x 14"



# Rachel Farrington

My paintings, drawings, and mixed media work can be read like rambling, bohemian, unedited stories. Familiar objects and figures are layered with painterly landscapes and linear drawings of buildings and homes. I am interested in the specifics of place and space and how our perceptions of locational identities are altered as globalization continues to encourage transience. My process begins outside of the studio by gathering visuals through sketch and photography from personal experiences. In the

studio, I experiment by mixing laterally associated images, frequently combining wry humor with significant or dark memories. My work is informed by the art of Do Ho Suh, Peter Doig, and Laure Prouvost.

With my current body of work I have given form to my experience of dramatic spatial change through extensive travel. I intend to elucidate and conjure the ever expanding concepts of home, homesickness, and dislocation.



*Siena Homesick Blues*, 2014, Oil and Acrylic on Panel, 4' x 6'

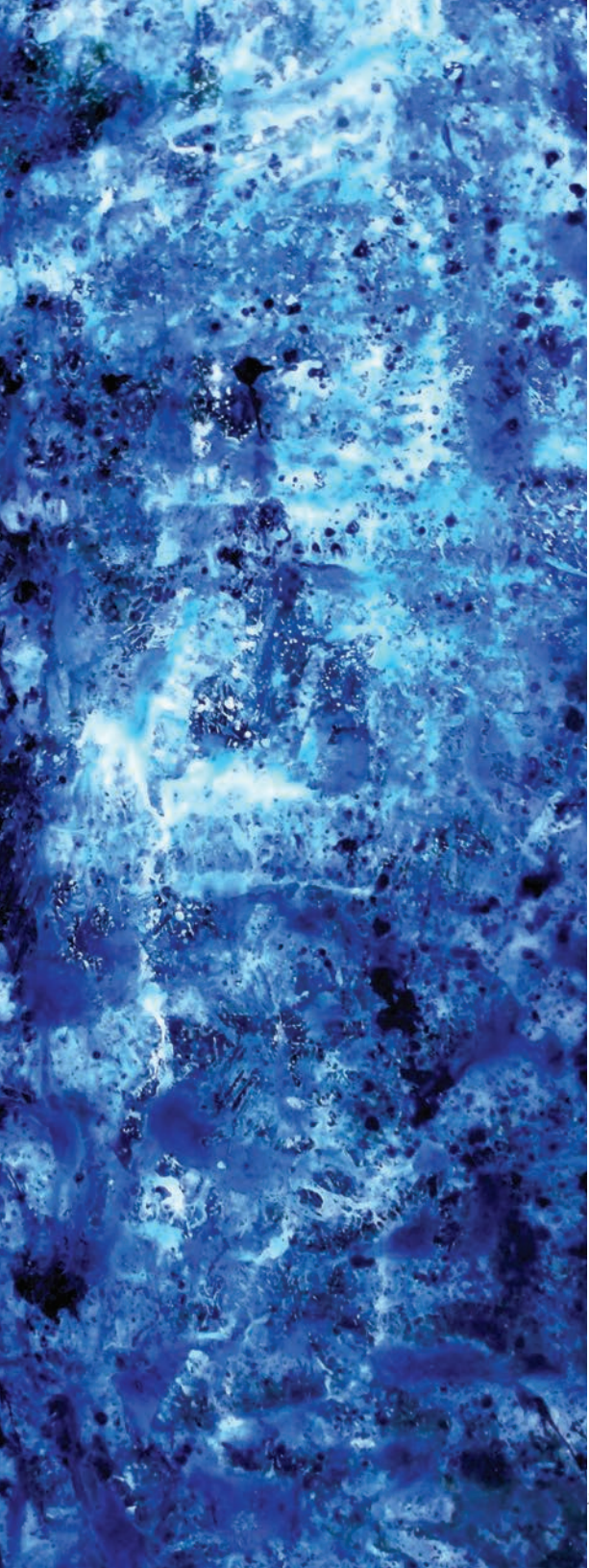
# Lucinda Hanshaw

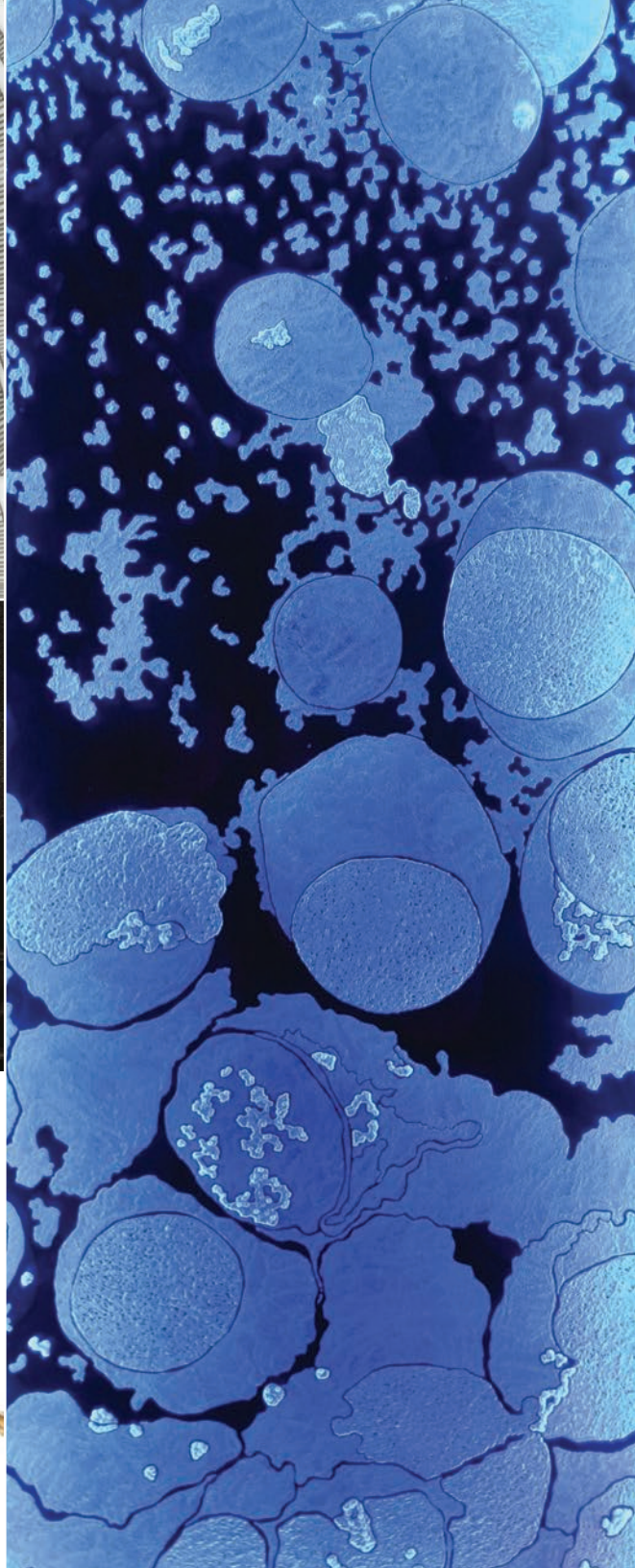
As far back as I can remember I have enjoyed being creative. It is now I understand. I am enamored not only by process, but by expression as well. In producing my body of work I combine my passion for being creative with my love of process. It reflects my inner most emotions, thoughts, revelations, and questions through the ritual act of simple repetitive mark making. It is with these rhythmic calligraphic strokes and small intricate dots that stories and memories unfold without the use of language and or text. The marks represent experiences good and bad, ideas and thoughts, profound or mundane. These strokes vary from large to small, thick to thin; they follow one another in time and space divulging to the viewer through each twist and turn the mapping of my existence.

I intentionally opt for a palette of black and white or once in a great while I will add a hint of color as an emphasis, similar to the use of a question mark and or exclamation point. An author can paint a picture utilizing black and white text for a reader to analyze and conjure up images of the story unfolding, so to do I with a variety of gentle brush strokes. The steady pattern that is created in this process invites the viewer to follow along in the narrative undulating across the panels. It is in this space, between the work I have created and the viewer's imagination where revelations take place and the language of my marks revealed. Our existences become one.



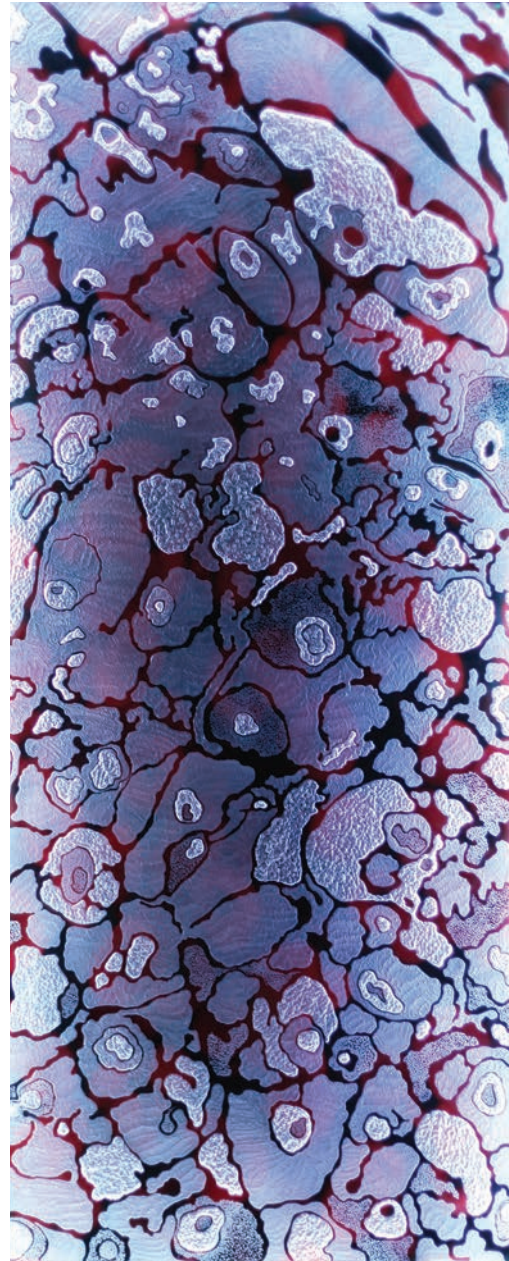
*Beauty, 2014*  
Nail Enamel on Duralar 12"x 12"





# Marco Antonio Hernández

My current body of work could be characterized as organic sculptural composites of my personal experiences and my observations in nature. I am specifically drawn to connections that underscore the essence of being. My research of biological structures of both macro and microforms provide the structural anatomy and biological inspiration for works that are metaphoric and symbolic language for the spectrum of human spirituality. I want my work to generate an out of body experience of the inner workings of the body. By displacing functions and organs from their natural bodily setting, the work creates universal narratives of contemporary human conditions. The wonderful mechanisms that are unique to specific biological structures provide me with important information that reveals links between biological and metaphysical characteristics. My investigation and research particularly in the area of microbiology has provided the greatest source of inspiration for my current conceptual framework.



HER 2+, 2014, LED Edge Lit Carved Plexi, 30" x 72"

# Nancy Hines

I am affected, at times, before I ever begin working – by a story, even a verbal quip – and I have to create it visually. I have to. A stirring of the spirit, that is what I want - my spirit... anyone's. I consider life to be a series of adventures and challenges with each artistic concept or medium adding enticement to my creative process. I have a high sense of craftsmanship tied to being a lifetime-learner that involves details such as a smoothly sanded finish, floppy mane, and hairy tail on the papier mâché giraffe that also needed to have wingtips carved specifically of dial soap to complete the crucial yet fleeting moment portrayed. The painted layers from value map, dead coloring, rendering, and glazes in my oval color portraits series that includes *Why?* and *Chapman* among others are similarly tied to issues of technical quality while the gestures and expression are vital pieces of the personalities of my subjects. The essence of identity is so often given brief exposure.

To grasp these fleeting glimpses, be they harsh, silly, sweet, or tragic, to treasure them, is to know they are part of the whole that is to be held dear. They are cherished in these portraits. My influences in the Classic tradition are Michael John Angel, Shane Wolf, Cesar Santos, Bernini, and Michelangelo among others, but I also incorporate elements of design from the contemporary sculptures of Claes Oldenburg, Tim Hawkinson, and Todji Kurtzman. The rigorous and exacting processes of traditional drawing and painting techniques enable me to produce as I envision while my three-dimensional work grows largely out of exploration and a desire to teach. I need ways to inspire others to try, so I experiment with varied approaches to subject

matter, expression, techniques, and materials. All the while, with each new challenge, communication is vital. At the very least, I must communicate with something in me, whether that is a satisfaction of seeing evidence that I understand a new technique, a tearing forth of painful memory, an acknowledgement of gratefulness... something!



*Why?*, 2014, Oil on Canvas 20" x 16"







# Liz Hogan

The forest. More specifically, live oak canopies. Their peace, their green-ness, their branching complexity, have inspired not only my art but also a nearly two decades-long search into current findings in physics and theology.

There are questions at humanity's core which inform my art:

What is this world?

Where do we come from?

Why is life more than the sum of its parts?

Are those parts valuable? Am I?

My MFA show, *Tiny Portion*, consists of a sculptural work made from close to 15,000 suspended, glass-like colored pieces, in dialogue with several large format "specimen" photographs. In them, I have explored the truth that I have come to believe: that relationship and love are as much a part of the fabric of the universe as quantum particles.



*Tiny Portion (Installation)*, 2014, Acrylic gloss varnish pieces on polyester thread, 12' x 22' x 20'

# Mary Lewis-Song

Roland Barthes, in his book *Camera Lucida*, writes about two different approaches to reacting to a photograph. In each, he leaves the final reckoning with the viewer.

“Stadium” is when a photograph’s quality is merely pleasant to look at. “Punctum” pierces the viewer, as if they are wounds that pierce. The punctum comes in many forms, and often not ever understood fully.

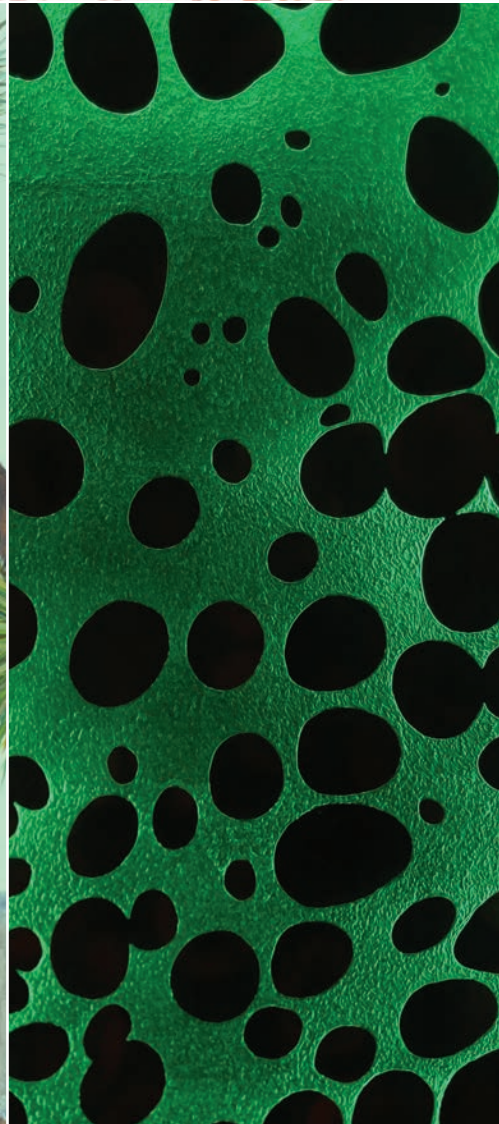
Finally, to the heart of things, Barthes writes about a mostly untranslatable world called the “noeme”. It is translated to “That-has-been.” He shows the viewer a 19th century photograph of a young man named Lewis Payne taken minutes before he was executed for conspiracy to assassinate US Secretary of State William H. Seward.

For us, the “noeme” of the photograph is a man who is forever frozen, even as the real man has died and decayed into nothingness. The paper in which the photo is recorded is itself rotting; just as the materials I photograph in my own work and the paper I print on.

In my work, the “noeme” is accepting what has been, what is, and what will be. In each of my images the “noeme” is countless punctures indescribable, unknowable, yet familiar; it is a sublime reality.



*Noeme* “This-has-been”, 2014, Inkjet on Surface Gampi/Kozo rice paper, 17.75” x 35.25”





## Jordan Mullen

My work creates new, non-linear narratives based on particular experiences. These experiences are always personal and can stretch as far back to my childhood, but my present day experiences also inform my work. Repurposing the narrative allows me engage subject matter from a different perspective. I am able to approach the story from a different direction providing greater insight and a richer understanding. Subsequently this approach translates the information in a similar fashion to the viewer, providing a much more engaging experience that might otherwise have felt foreign or unfamiliar. Highlighter bright colors and figures rendered quite short of reality, the stories are never too dark.

In the case of my final thesis exhibition, the narratives are informed by my experience in interacting with street children in Nairobi, Kenya, who struggle with an addiction to huffing toxic glue. I am deeply impacted by the struggles and trials these children face on a daily basis. The exhibition serves as the telling of an unfinished story where ideas of coping, escapism, survival, and hope are all explored.



DETAIL *Lost every battle. Won the war.* 2014  
Mixed media on wood, various dimensions

# Andrew Oakes

## *Obstacles, Roadblocks and Bliss*

17th Century Japanese Poet Mizuta Masahide wrote, "Barns burnt down...now I can see the moon." I believe there is great maturity and wisdom in this statement. Often it is difficult to see the joy or goodness from trauma or sorrow. This work I have created explores the growth emerging from death, new life from ashes and the abundance of a new season as another comes to an end. To do this, I use objects and symbols that are unlikely vessels to carry the message of hope.

Experimentation, documentation and illustration are the language that I employ in trying to find meaning and clarity of the aforementioned subject matter. I believe that personal and societal trauma leaves its mark as an affect that is difficult to identify whilst in its throws, and that none of us are immune to this portion of the human condition.

Opening up a deeper dialogue in relation to trauma, and the subject of death and resurrection is analogous within my art.



ТОР *Joy Filled Whole*, 2014, Resin and Shell Casings, 48" x 48"  
БОТТОМ *Experiment I, IV, VI*, 2014, Metal, 78" x 42" x 9"

# Marissa Quinn

Trophic cascades are powerful indirect interactions that control entire ecosystems, and occur when predators limit the density and/or behavior of their prey, thereby enhancing survival of the next lower trophic level. By combining zoomorphic elements of endangered flora and fauna, I create surreal, monochromatic compositions of trophic cascades in states of transformation and/or adaptation to biospheric changes in our Earth. Each drawing contains an endangered specie or invasive specie (sometimes both), Federally listed as *Endangered* or *Threatened* specifically in California. My work blurs the

lines between growth and decay through stages of the life cycle, conjuring multifaceted emotional responses to the journey of nature both literally and within an individual. There is a thematic undercurrent of contemporary mysticism, which serves to create an aura of curiosity around the narrative of the composition. It is the connection of the cycle, the circle, the ouroboros, that serves as an ancient source of hope for humanity. Everything is connected. Trophic cascades are both literal and symbolic sources of insight into the well being of our Earth, collective self, and individual lives.



*Canis Lupus (Mirrored Animia Animus)*, 2014, Pen and ink and marker on watercolor paper, 44" x 60"

# Stefan Robinson

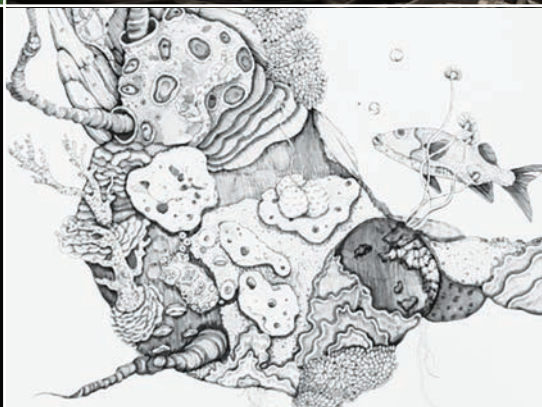
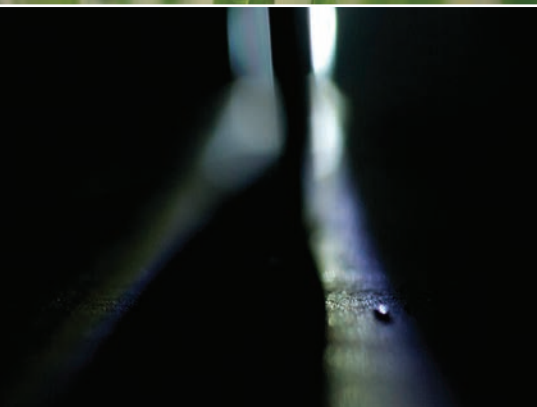
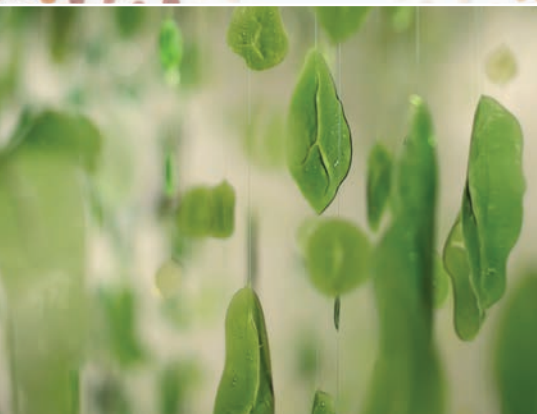
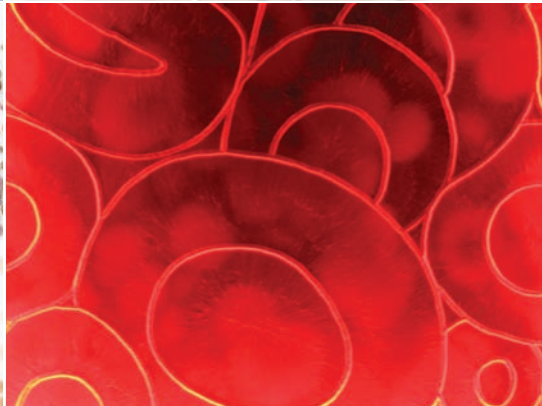
Since I grew up on the North Oregon Coast where the verdant mountains drop into the white-capped surf, epic landscape is in my blood. Each painting I did is apart of a body of work within the Alumni Hall. My vision was to make a cohesive experience rather than a just a collection of paintings. Akin to a cathedral space, I wanted to use landscape paintings to tell a narrative of what it means to be human.

Life is hard. Life is good. How do we reconcile these two? Through paint, I am interested in manifesting some of the demons, problems, and hurt we all face. Other paintings I seek to create experiences of pleasure, joy, and delight. I see some people avoid the hurt through numbing it, while other people struggle through the hurt and grow into deeper, healthier people. In these paintings I try to be human, and invite you to join me. Because like each of us, each painting has a piece of redemption, quietly waiting to be found and cultivated into growth.



*Liminal*, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 4.5' x 16'





*July 6-11, 2014*

Duke Art Gallery: **Liz Hogan**

Heritage Art Gallery: **Jordan Mullen**

Robert Bullock Art Gallery: **Mary Lewis-Song**

Exit Gallery: **Cindy De Mesa**

*July 13-18, 2014*

Duke Art Gallery: **Marissa Quinn**

Heritage Art Gallery: **Rachel Farrington**

Robert Bullock Art Gallery: **Andrew Oakes**

Exit Art Gallery: **Lucinda Hanshaw**

*July 20-25, 2014*

Duke Art Gallery: **Katy Ann Gilmore**

Heritage Art Gallery: **Nancy Hines**

Robert Bullock Art Gallery: **Marco Antonio Hernández**

Alumni Art Gallery: **Stefan Robinson**

MFA Thesis Exhibitions • July 2014

# The Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art (MFA) at Azusa Pacific University

Azusa Pacific University's Department of Art and Design prepares art students for a lifetime of artistic expression, and cultivates individual creativity through the study of history, technique, presentation and social engagement, as reflectors of the creative and transformative nature of God, the ultimate Creator.

Faculty believe that art is a socially responsible calling that empowers students to act as transformers in the world. In human history, artists have been the vessels and vehicles for spiritual, social, political and psychological definition and change. Therefore, art is presented as both a professional occupation and an essential part of liberal arts education. APU students train to continue in that artistic tradition.

The Department of Art and Design, comprised of 13 full-time faculty members, offers the Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art degree; a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Art; a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art, which offers nine concentrations; and a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design.

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Visual Art at Azusa Pacific University provides an educational context with which artists of unusual artistic promise and strong motivation explore the horizons of their talents in the midst of an intense critical dialogue of both faith and art. This dialogue is generated by students, distinguished visitors, and a faculty comprised of professional artists and designers mature in their faith and art.

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Faculty

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*New Media and Photography*

**J. David Carlson, MFA**  
Vermont College of Fine Art  
Professor of Art  
Area of specialty: *Sculpture*

**Charity Capili, MFA**  
Azusa Pacific University  
Adjunct Professor of Art  
Area of specialty:  
*Design and Sculpture*

**William Catling, MFA**  
California State University, Fullerton  
Chair, Department of  
Art and Design,  
Professor of Art  
Director of MFA in Visual Art  
Area of specialty: *Sculpture*

**Stephen Childs, MFA**  
Claremont Graduate University  
Assistant Professor of Art  
Exhibitions Director  
Area of specialty: *Photography*

**G. James Daichendt, MFA, Ed.D.**  
Columbia University  
Professor of Art  
Area of specialty:  
*Research Methods, Art Education  
and Theory*

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School of the Art Institute, Chicago  
Assistant Professor of Art  
Area of specialty: *Performance*

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Area of specialty: *Painting and  
Drawing, Interdisciplinary*

**Terry Dobson, MFA**  
Yale University  
Assistant Professor of Art  
Area of specialty: *Design and  
Narrative; Socially Interactive Play*

**Lauren Evans, MFA**  
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Area of specialty: *Sculpture,  
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**Amy Fox, MFA, MBA**  
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Area of specialty:  
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Area of specialty: *Assemblage*

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