

Gadus (Latin) “degree or step”

Graduate education in art at Azusa Pacific University is an advanced degree and a move towards a professional life in Visual Art. It is a rigorous program of study engaging the artist deeply in research and in studio practice. Students spend three years developing their visual voice and that results in a solo exhibition, an important step towards their future.

These pages highlight each graduating student from the class of 2012. The students are represented here with images from their culminating body of work along with a brief statement providing the reader with a glimpse of their conceptual framework. Please join me in celebrating their accomplishment as graduates who have earned their Masters in Fine Art in Visual Art diplomas. (Mortar boards are airborne.)

—William Catling
Director, MFA in Visual Art



Cabrina Alviar

The process of my work originates with memories of images and emotion. These glimpses evolve into tangible visuals that symbolize my past, present, and future. I work primarily with everyday materials, found objects, and photographs of the ordinary; these items and images let the viewer interpret and relate their own memories and experiences. Language also plays a strong role in my work, as I focus on the appropriate form of the letter and meaning of content to connect with the viewer. My design background plays a prominent part in my thinking process and the execution of my artwork.

My current work examines that one commonality shared by every single person on this Earth—we all live to die. Death is bestowed upon us all, and it is our fate and predestined fortune. Whether we have experienced the loss of a loved one or witnessed someone take their last breath, we all know one day we will face our own mortality. Humans are fascinated with the topic of death. It is mysterious, haunting, and we may all imagine it differently.

Through my work, I explore the memories and emotions of those that intersected our lives for just a moment of time. I play off of my personal experiences dealing with death and memory, as these images and visceral emotions still reside deep inside me. I hope that others may see my work as a way to deal with complex emotions and reminisce about their own memories that are instilled within.



Where we were, 2012. Chromira prints, each print is 25.5" x 38.5"

Alisa Barsegyan

Issues of personal identity seem to have become increasingly complex and critical in the realm of contemporary culture. Who we are and how we identify ourselves is of fundamental importance. These questions of self-definition have been a primary preoccupation of many contemporary artists and art currently being produced reflects significant concerns and developments in establishing one's individuality in the diversity in which we live. The notion of analyzing individual identity as it merges with cultural identity and self is being put to question. "Self" who's meaning is paradoxical in the sense that it means both sameness and distinctiveness. These contradictions multiply especially when it is applied to women and specifically to ethnically diverse women living in the United States. My lens for my art making exploration is that of an Armenian American female. I believe that it is important to include my position as both insider and outsider, not just artist and academician, but as Easterner/Western, traditional/modern, and foreign/local, which gives me a broader sphere to a more critical and reflexive approach. My art is a study; to what extent is "self" a descriptive feature of cultural experience? And how do the regulatory practices that preside over gender also preside over culturally understandable notions of identity? The structuring principles of intentionality behind image and thought, emphasized in my explorations, tend to have various levels of sight, from the possible subconscious or from pre-intentionality of the artist to the calculated subject of commodity relations and inequalities of power that shape the way we perceive what we see.



Tammy Borrero

As a native Angeleno, Tammy Borrero finds herself enamored by the city's exuberant theatricality while disenchanted by its Hollywood artifice. Mesmerized by the fantastic fabricated worlds through costuming and sets all the while yearning for the raw and authentic.

Her process, reflective of the Los Angeles paradox, begins with quotidian materials and cultural icons. She combines the forgotten with the popular. Tammy takes the everyday out of its context—playing with and manipulating it for a thorough understanding of its utilitarian value and the burdens of societal expectations and metaphor inherent in its being.

Through juxtaposition and perversion of the materials, Tammy grapples with questions of identity, victimization, and dominant culture. As Roland Barthes discussed in *Mythologies*, Tammy wants to uncover the mass-fed ideologies masked in colonization, commodification, media, and engendered roles. By subverting varying identity politics on its head, she wants to better understand how we both challenge and perpetuate the limiting boxes to which we're relegated.

Tammy seeks to explore and challenge these societal constructs in both the process and product of her work. Through her use of non-traditional art materials, Tammy further questions these roles by choosing to use unexpected items as her palette. A conceptual artist, she tackles heavy issues through dark, and sometimes seemingly twisted humor to create uncomfortable, but meaningful experiences. Her work can be strange and often disconcerting at first glance reflecting a deeper wrestling within.



Michael Eaton

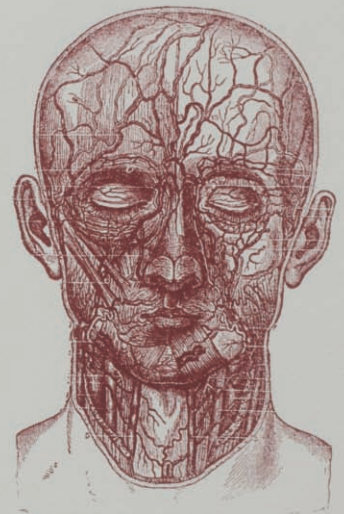
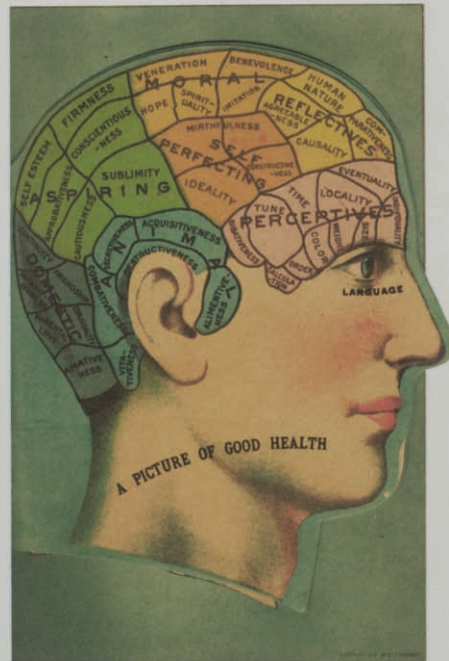
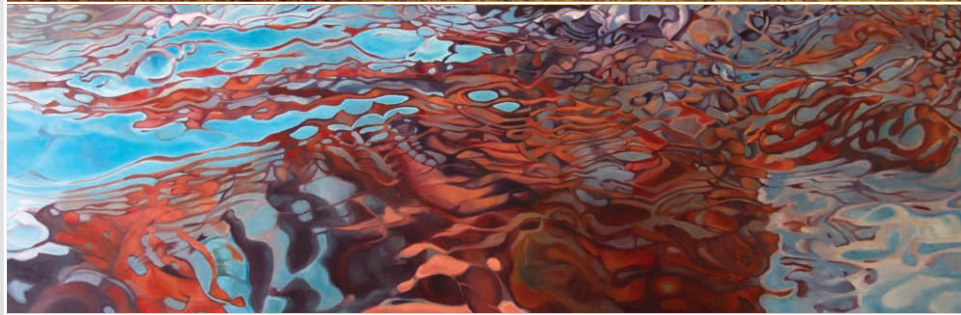
My work spans many genres of filmmaking and photography as well as object, installation and video art. It draws from decades of working in the film industry, and I have recently utilized my background in cinematography to incorporate light as a central element in my work with found objects and large scale installation, where my objective is to present the mystery of light emanating from these objects/bodies, and to hint at the spiritual connotations, the light within, that pervade nearly all religious traditions. My work often includes the essential elements of stories; a sense of place and time, a moment of conflict or cognition, and I am concerned thematically with religious and cultural traditions that inform our conceptions of relationships, labor, life purpose and truth. I strive to make films, photographs and art that engages the hearts and minds of viewers and speaks to substantive cultural, spiritual and social issues. My work can be viewed at Spalms.com and michaeleaton.com.

Sanctuary, 2012. Installation, 120 x 96 x 144 in. (304.8 x 243.8 x 365.8 cm)
Wood, paint, lights, metal, paper, computer, dimmers, cables.









Arteries and Veins of the Face and Neck.

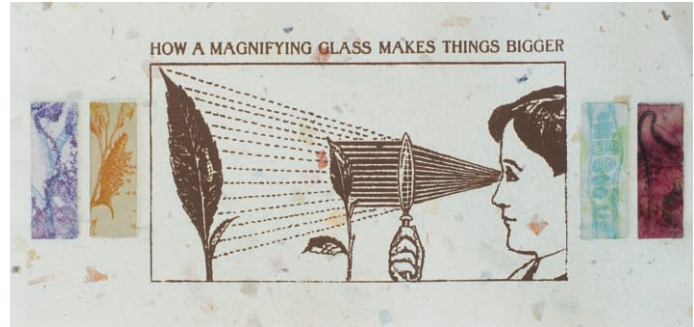
Barbara Hale

“When we have forgotten all our habits of scientific objectivity, we look for the *images of the first time.*”

—Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*

Man has often looked to nature for a sense of self through the filter of science. Even before Leonardo, Galileo, and Darwin, man has sought to understand his connection and his role in relation to the natural world through his observations, musings, scientific explorations, and imaginings. My desire through art is to express how I engage with nature and science, to reflect my capacity to wonder, to make connections, to discover new things about myself and the world, and to recreate a sense of awe from those *first times* of revelation.

In this thesis exhibition, which is reflective of personal epiphany experiences, I have attempted to capture a sense of the emotional force of those *first times* of engagement, surprise, and connection with life. I have attempted to express the impact of my encounters with nature through layers of loosely related printed imagery combined with appropriated materials, transparency, and found objects reminiscent of the illustrative science and nature books that first engaged and informed me as a child. I have purposefully altered the filter of the original images and object's perspectives while keeping a sense of the aesthetics of the dated and often erroneous thinking of man's attempt to discern the connections and ponderings of how things work. It is an attempt to recapture and to reclaim the innocence that is expressive of man's initial curiosities, and his *beginning of wisdom.*



TOP *How a Magnifying Glass Makes Things Look Bigger.* 7.5" x 15."

Serigraph, lithographs, on handmade paper.

BOTTOM *Pencil Sharpener.* Pencil sharpener with hand-cast paper pod.

Angela Dawn Lee

My work deals with ancestry and identity within the American South and the search for a Homeplace. Home looks different for every person, but the emotional attachment is the same. No sooner than we leave, Home calls us back. Sometimes Home cannot be revisited. Perhaps Home has been destroyed, reconfigured or dramatically altered in some other way. What does the human heart do when reality does not match the memory of Home?

My family has lived in the Tennessee River Valley for more than two hundred years. My investigation into the effects of the river and the Tennessee Valley Authority on the population began with a simple family photo from the year 1920. In it, my great-grandparents, dressed in threadbare clothes, are seated with their children. Toes peek out of the shoes of patriarch Henry Grimes. Grandmother Hattie, who is one of the children in the photo, casually mentioned in 2007 that the location where they stood is now under water. That single mention became the basis of the research for my thesis show.

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) grave removal project was extensive, with a survey of 69,000 graves and the removal and relocation of 22,000 graves. TVA created a paperwork trail thousands of documents thick. I researched the original documents at the National Archives in Atlanta, Georgia. Each document represents the relationships of Home... daughter, son, mother, father, wife, husband. All are the next-of-kin who had to make a decision on the relocation of the deceased. The emotional impact of grave removal and relocation was sizeable in a society where the graveyards represented family, identity, history, and community.

Home was destroyed, reconfigured or dramatically altered for the people, both living and dead, affected by the TVA projects. Additionally, those left in situ beneath the water have been silenced and separated forever from the living. What does the human heart do when reality does not match the memory of Home?



TOP Video still from the *Stories Beneath the Water*, 2012. Video installation.

BOTTOM Video still from *Relations*, 2012. Single-channel video loop, no sound.

Angela Lister

God created a beautiful world in which to reveal Himself, and it is all around us, everywhere, if we are willing to see it. During times in life that are difficult, due to loss, suffering, and disappointment, recognizing beauty is most crucial.

I want my work to inspire creativity, reveal beauty, and reflect playfulness. I use color, form, and size to create visual impact. Life is full of beautiful moments, even if they are in random or unexpected places. Some of the moments are extremely small in reality, so painting or drawing them very large emphasizes the importance of living playfully in the moment. If you are willing to live in the present moment, and to widen your gaze, you may notice beauty in your life that you never have before.

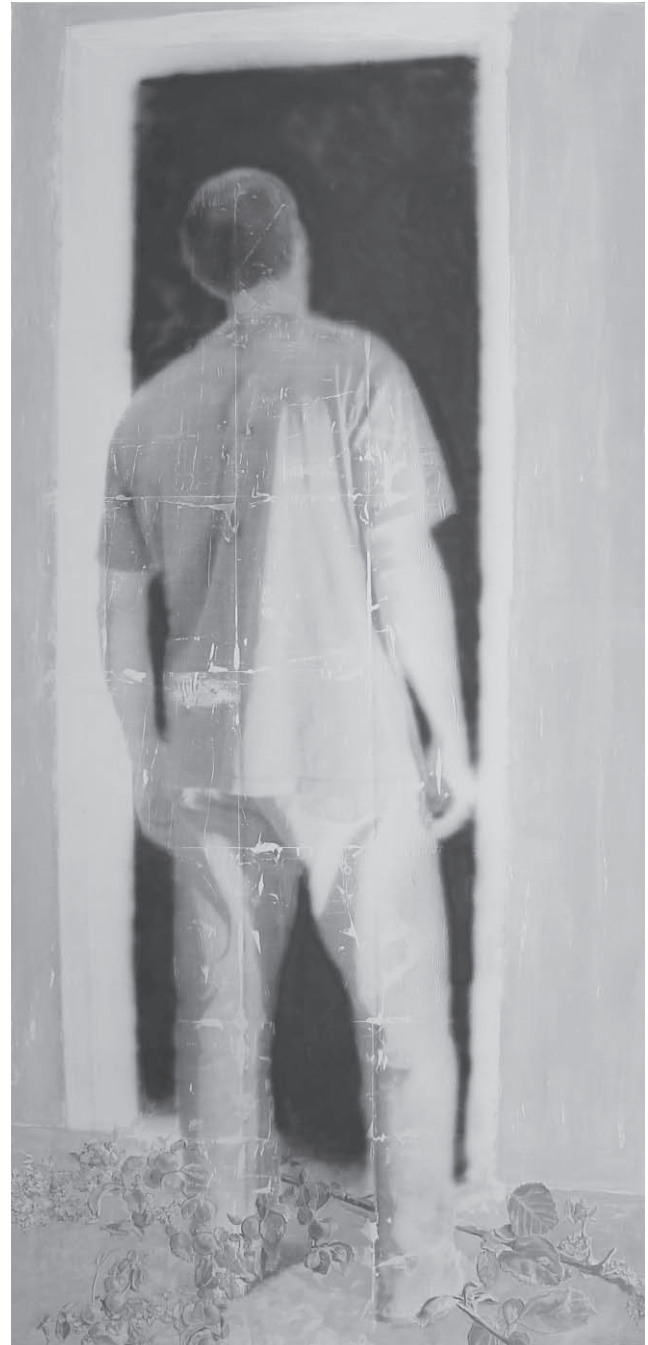


Brad Namie

Exploration of personal identity often raises more questions than answers; the concept of identity is deep and wide. Awaiting us is an ocean of discovery, but we often peer at the horizon while staying safely on the beach. Identity Vector dips a toe in the waters of finding oneself, the journey through choices and change, and the tension between spiritual pursuit and the expectations of the world.

Identity Vector is a collection of paintings and drawings based on impactful dreams and significant life events of the artist. The works seek to connect with the viewer both emotionally and intellectually, speaking through symbols that allow room for personal application. The artist's narrative attempts to provide hope for overcoming of obstacles and the realization of one's potential.

Brad uses traditional media such as paint, pencil, and ink and occasionally integrates photography into the creative process. Colleagues have described his work as ethereal and deep feeling, which is a reflection of his pursuit of an understanding of personal identity and the healing process that can come through it. His desire is to be authentic in life and art, thereby being relevant as an artist to a broken world.



Interior Passage.

Eden Ortiz

In my work, I use symbolism and create my own mythologies. From my own research I found that myths are used to explain moral, origin, deities, history and our ancestors. All cultures have had some form of mythology. Each of those cultures developed distinct mythological styles and their own system of gods and goddesses. The research I conduct helps me form concepts and also with new ideas for my work. The reason I have chosen myth-making is because for many years human beings have used myth to understand the world around them. Myth-making lets me play with many different ideas and allows my work to grow and change.



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.

MFA Program Faculty

Lynn Aldrich, MFA

Art Center College of Design
Adjunct Professor of Art
Area of specialty: *Sculpture*

Kent Anderson Butler, MFA

California State University,
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Professor of Art
Area of specialty:
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J. David Carlson, MFA

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Amy Fox, MFA, MBA

Rochester Institute of Technology
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Printmaking and Design

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Claremont Graduate University
Adjunct Professor of Art
Area of specialty: *Assemblage*

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 six 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 experienced artists and designers mature in their faith and art.

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*Design and Visual Culture;
Art and Theology*

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