

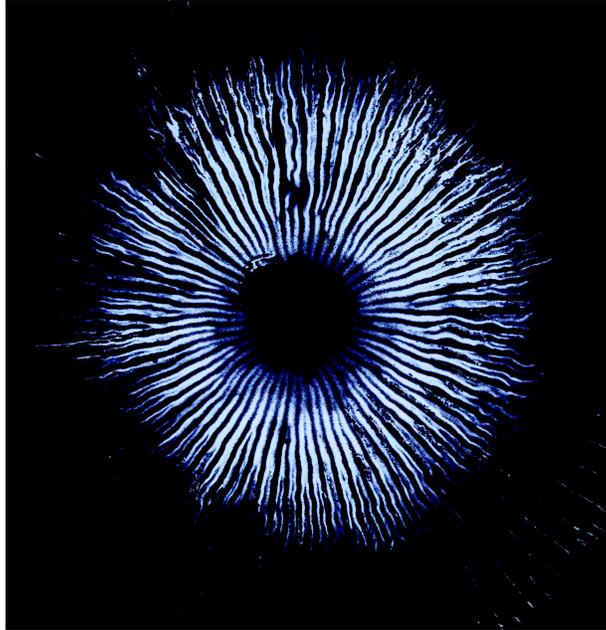
PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2013



COMPOUND VISION

Mills College 2013 MFA Exhibition

Evan Barbour, Claire Colette, Lauren Douglas, Keegan Luttrell, Nadja Eulee Miller, Barbara Obata, Meri Page, Simon Pyle, Jenny Sharaf, Kate Short, and Katy Warner

Exhibition Dates: May 5-26, 2013

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 4, 2013 | 6-9 pm

Wednesday Salon Series: May 8, 15 & 22, 2013 | 6-9 pm

Saturday Afternoon Happenings: May 11 & 18, 2013 | 1-4 pm

Oakland, CA—March 27, 2013. The Mills College Art Museum announces *Compound Vision*, the thesis exhibition for the 2013 Master of Fine Arts degree recipients, on view May 5-26, 2013.

Compound Vision is the accumulated perspective of eleven graduate students working in a diverse array of media. After two years of intensive dialogue, collaboration, and at times isolation the culmination of this process is a fresh and unique approach to art making from each participant. From traditional mediums to new technologies, the artists investigate aspects of art making, culture, psychology, philosophy, and science. Throughout the works common threads are woven, delved into from all sides, explored and enriched, or tangentially shifted.

If art is an imitation of life, then **Evan Barbour's** work mimics a hybrid life, where specimens get mashed up and revitalized as miniature sculptures.

Claire Colette works in drawing, painting and sculpture to explore the immediate and the infinite. Working with abstraction and repetitive mark making she is de-constructing experiences to explore our shifting interpretations of what is known, what is real and how we see.

Lauren Douglas works with photography and installation to explore how we perceive reality and how we operate within the constraints of the space-time continuum.

Keegan Luttrell uses installation, sculpture and photography to explore psychological responses to thrill and fear.

Nadja Eulee Miller works in sculpture, performance and collaboration to examine how rituals facilitate interaction through a given framework of trust.

Barbara Obata scavenges materials from her immediate area for inspiration. She reconstitutes rejected sticks, boards, clay and debris from a maximum distance of 100 yds from her studio and forms them into alternate objects.

Working with cyanotype, sand, salt, and raw pigments, **Meri Page** creates meticulously crafted landscapes that call into question the authentic and artificial, reality and fantasy.

Simon Pyle uses photography and video to explore digital reduction and noise inherent in today's visual technology. Through a focus on visual loss, the work considers what is discarded in a world dominated by representation and simulacra.

Jenny Sharaf explores the mythology of the California blonde through painting, video and installation. Strongly influenced by the folklore of cinema history and the vernacular of L.A., she investigates the female's relationship to the camera as it pertains to contemporary feminism.

Kate Short works with sound, space, light, and commodified objects to explore states of unrest. Through the juxtaposition of conflicting elements—imposed intimacy or deceptive seduction—she challenges the viewer to be the ultimate arbiter of their experience.

Using video, installation and performance, **Katy Warner** analyzes the human desire to find logic in an overwhelming and sometimes fictitious world.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Visit mcam.mills.edu for full details.

Opening Reception

Saturday, May 4, 2013 | 6-9 pm
Mills College Art Museum

Free shuttle service provided from the MacArthur Bart station. Shuttle departs for MCAM on the half hour at 5:30, 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30 pm.

Please join the graduating class of 2013 in a celebration of Compound Vision: The Mills College MFA Exhibition. Schedule of special opening night events is listed on mcam.mills.edu. Refreshments served, along with dispatches of sound and motion.

Wednesday Salon Series

May 8, 15 & 22, 2013 | 6-9 pm
Mills College Art Museum

A weekly curated series showcasing the work of Mills College MFAs in Studio Art, Creative Writing, Music and Dance. Reception to follow each program.

Saturday Afternoon Happenings

May 11 & 18, 2013 | 1-4 pm
Various Locations

Join the Mills College Studio Art MFAs on Saturday afternoons for a host of activities in the museum, graduate studios, and Lisser Theater.

About the Mills College Art Museum

Founded in 1925, The Mills College Art Museum is a forum for exploring art and ideas and a laboratory for contemporary art practices. Through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections, the museum engages and inspires the intellectual and creative life of the Mills community as well as the diverse audiences of the Bay Area and beyond. For more information, visit mcam.mills.edu

About Mills College

Nestled in the foothills of Oakland, California, Mills College is a nationally renowned, independent liberal arts college offering a dynamic progressive education that fosters leadership, social responsibility, and creativity to over 950 undergraduate women and more than 600 graduate women and men. The College ranks as one of the Best 373 Colleges in the country and one of the greenest colleges in the nation by The Princeton Review. U.S. News & World Report ranked Mills one of the top-tier regional universities in the country and second among colleges and universities in the West in its "Great Schools, Great Prices" category. For more information, visit <http://www.mills.edu>

For more information and images, contact Maysoun Wazwaz at 510.430.3340 or mwazwaz@mills.edu. Museum hours are Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-4 pm and Wednesday 11 am-7:30 pm. Admission is FREE for all exhibitions and programs unless noted.









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“Compound Vision” at Mills College, Oakland and Kate Short “Oculus: Interpretations” Sound Art Series Performance

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A few weeks ago I went to a performance at Mills College as part of the Sound Art Series in conjunction with the MFA Exhibition “Compound Vision”. The exhibition closed on May 26, and the sound piece was on a single afternoon on May 22, but I waited to release this piece for a couple of reasons: the significantly short-lived introduction of a group of artists as emblematic of a two-year process [MFA exhibition model] and I was curious about the lasting impression that sound art can achieve. In the context of an MFA exhibition, it might be relevant to note that these are a celebration of intellectual achievement and rigor; a ritualistic nod toward an academic milestone; and perhaps a small survey of who to watch in the future. Post experience, the impetus is memory. What stays with us and what evades or fades?

An overarching narrative with the work in the MFA exhibition points toward mortality and phenomenology. Within that realm, representation of landscape and dwellings locate the body in a liminal space that blurs the lines between reality and fiction. Featuring a range of genre, from sculpture to video installation, photography to collage, the work satisfies the varietal ways in which many related themes can be interpreted and that they are not contingent upon the materials, but rather the process and the ideas behind them. Overall, the objects made and the stories told are a concise and eloquent sampling of the caliber of work being generated in the program, and are very well-made and aesthetically pleasing. With that, it is also clear that there are no trouble-makers here, that the work is neither obviously or subliminally radical and the ideas are easily relatable to many viewers – simply put, this exhibition is safe. I can’t help but maybe stipulate that this is a metaphorical post-mortem as a result of the educational process. Full disclosure: I recently participated in the CCA MFA exhibition and a review of that exhibition in another local news source remarked upon an apocalyptic overarching theme.

Having gone through the process, and seen many MFA exhibitions over the years, it is difficult to discern whether any new movements or important narratives are being made, because of the “sampling” of art that MFA shows display. And, as a writer I am compelled to connect the dots, find the links and connections – but within that process there needs to be gratifying stand-outs – something that keeps me thinking, not just something that is visually lasting. To that end, sound work tends to have a lasting impression and resonates with me when the visuals inundate or become diluted by dispersion or repetition. Describing sound work has its own limitations and challenges because its inherent nature captures or translates that which cannot be seen, but which does not always align itself with actual or audible words. The ephemerality and the intangibility of sound works by its inherent nature creates an embedded language prone to interpretations through cerebral imaginary as well as corporeal permutations taken in through the ear, and in many cases resonating throughout the body. “Oculus” by Kate Short is a compelling example. Her collaborative project, “Interpretations” was part of the Sound Art Series that took place while the Mills College MFA exhibition was on view and is testimony to the importance of collaboration and questions the use and purpose of art objects.



(http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/1.-Meri-Page.jpg)

Meri Page, “Sphere I-V”, pigment from salt chrome alum and ammonia crystals, 2013.



(http://www.gallerypauleanglim.com/Gallery_Paul)



(http://www.renabranstengallery.com/)



(http://www.brooklynrail.org/)



(http://www.dolbychadwickgallery.com/)



(http://www.hosfeltgallery.com/)



(http://www.sfaqonline.com/events/)



(http://www.asiancontemporarysf.org/acaw/)

<https://www.soex.org/index.php>



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/2.-simon-Pyle.jpg>

Simon Pyle, “The Cave”, cameras, rca cables, microcontrollers and oil lamp, 2013.



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/3.-Lauren-Douglas.jpg>

Lauren Douglas, “Eureka (1-28)” series, c-prints, video, 2013.



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/4.-Claire-Colette.jpg>

Claire Colette, foreground: “no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end”, gold and silver leaf on stone, 2013; background: (L) “Staring into the Void (day)”, (R) “Staring into the Void (night)”, graphite on paper, 2012.



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/5.-Nadia-Miller.jpg>



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/6.-Evan-Barbour.jpg>

Evan Barbour



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/7.-Katy-Warner.jpg>

Katy Warner, “Written and Illustrated by Maxine Heeding”, installation, 2013.



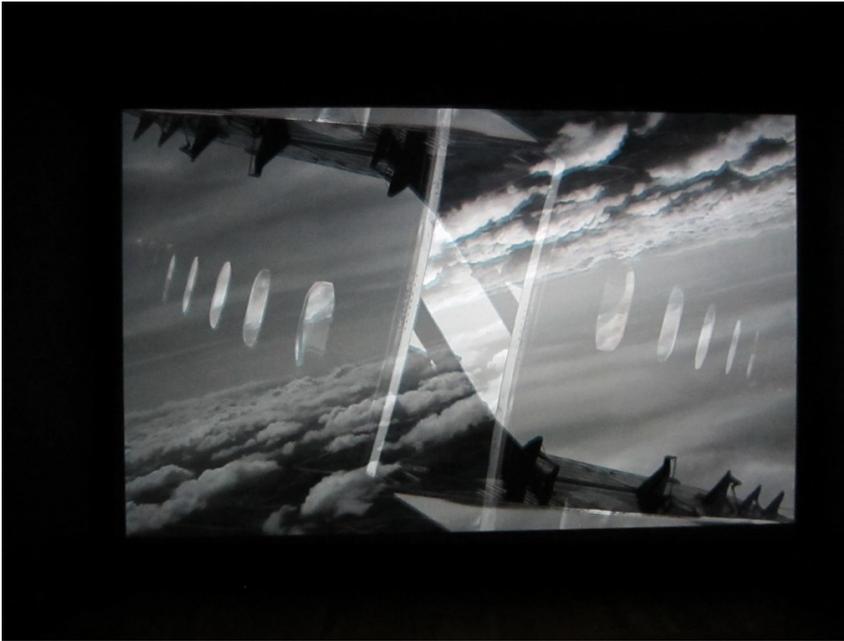
<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/8.-Jenny-Sharaf.jpg>

Jenny Sharaf, "The Blonde Experience", installation, 2013.



<http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/9.-Barbara-Obata.jpg>

Barbara Obata, "Various Sculptures and Pedestals", mixed media, 2013.



http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/9_1-Keegan-Luttrell.jpg

Keegan Luttrell, "103,000 ft.", still from video, 2013.

Visitors ascended a staircase tucked to the side of the museum entrance and entered the tower of the building where "Oculus" was installed. It is comprised of 275 speakers of differing design and eras which are installed one on top of the other to create a semi-circular room. In the center of the room was a small, vintage record player on a comfortable wall-to-wall carpet that visitors could sit on if desired. For the series, Short invited four artists to create sound works that were to be performed as audio works utilizing the technological features of the installation – some generative and some aesthetically in response to the sculpture itself. I arrived to hear Ryan Page's "Etude #7 for Oculus".

Moody and abstract, the composition is constant, and subdued. The sounds are buttery, with soft clicks and flicks of contrast that speed up at moments and then stretch. Crackles come in and mingle with raindrops, lending to a vision of a futuristic forest. Flutters that are reminiscent of winged insects are endearing until they seem to swarm, creating terror in their large quantity like an infestation of locust. Complicating matters, the noises crescendo and then spew down to silence. In stark contrast to the enveloping and roaming effects previously heard in Page's piece, Chris Duncan puts a 45 rpm record on the vintage turntable in the center of the room and white noise fills the space.

Duncan's piece, "EVERYTHING ALL AT ONCE" is the only analog contribution to the performance. The recording is pressed on only one side of a clear vinyl record. Remarking upon nostalgia and obsolete technology, it maintains aesthetic conversation with the small, almost toy-like player. The piece was made by layering 500 songs simultaneously selected from Duncan's private record collection. Knowing this, one would assume that the result would be more cacophonous, but it isn't – it's very singular and invasive. Slowly the 500 songs trickle to an end, a few lingering notes are heard that hint at the hardcore or melodic content, but are still unrecognizable. This work is a continuation of Duncan's practice as an artist and sound musician, utilizing processes of accumulation, repetition and balance. On a conceptual level, the work reiterates the futility of obsession and collapses onto itself into a realm of negation and minimalism despite the excessive piling on of information embedded in it. Following Duncan was an equally minimal, yet longer and much quieter piece by Shanna Sordahl entitled "Humming."

A dark and foreboding chord hums in with tiny chimes interjected. Long strains of monotone are pushed through by undulations that sound like one of the speakers is warbling. More tones and sequences begin to meld into the room, coming from different speakers and jump around the room from one place to the next. Muffled clicks like that of a clock or metronome keep pace and slowly accelerate before it ends. In the pause when you think it was over, a small sound similar to a fog horn suddenly comes in and then sparkles away. The piece is a collection of tuned sine and saw waves, which makes me think of the weft and warp of weavings, moving in and out, up and down, and creating various ebbs and flows, necessary but also inconsequential in the bigger scheme of things – the process merely explaining the phenomenology of the piece and its ability to create drama and tension despite its overall relaxing, orchestral composition. In contrast, Michael Mersereau's "No One is Safe From Their Wishes" creates a concise yet cinematic drama.



http://www.sfaqonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/9_2-Kate-Short.jpg

Kate Short, "Oculus: Interpretations", performance installation with Chris Duncan record player, 2013.

Beginning softly, cars driving on wet asphalt, planes flying overhead and footsteps on wooden floors start the mysterious narrative. Fragments of voices, adjustments of furniture, shuffling, and more footsteps lead us into eerie and sharp industrial noises with creepy whispering and inaudible mumbles. It feels like night, like darkness, like the quiet for only two hours between 3 am and 5 am, after all the late shifts are over and just before the early commuters begin again. In this moment, a hush like the rumble from underneath BART slowly streams by. The piece is the most immersive and loudest of the four performances, imparting a theatrical feel that compliments the content of the piece. Using audio samples from Douglas Sirk films in conjunction with environmental field recordings, Mersereau has created his own scene of a short film that is without literal visuals, but in which visuals can readily be imagined. By using the sense of hearing, the four performances in "Oculus: Interactions" do something in compelling ways that the coinciding MFA exhibition just simply cannot achieve with visual art: the ability for the listener to be left with sensations that are only felt when sound enters and moves the body. While the visual art exhibition reminds us that we are to look for these artists again in the future and watch how their practice changes or grows over time, the sound work is a different kind of hunger, one which prompts desire for more.

For more information visit [here \(http://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate/eng/programs/MFA_in_prose.php\)](http://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate/eng/programs/MFA_in_prose.php).

-Contributed by Leora Lutz

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