

MILLS

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2011

Mills College Art Museum Announces *Walking Backwards Forward* An Exhibition of New Work By Mills College Graduate Students



Exhibition Dates:

May 1–29, 2011

Opening Reception:

Sat, April 30, 6:00-8:00 pm

Artist Walk-through:

Sat, May 7, 5:00-7:00 pm

Oakland, CA—April 1, 2011. The Mills College Art Museum is proud to present *Walking Backwards Forward*, the thesis exhibition for the 2011 Master of Fine Arts degree recipients. The exhibition showcases works by a promising group of emerging artists created during their graduate program in the Mills College MFA studio program. The exhibition is curated by Stephanie Hanor, director of the Mills College Art Museum.

Walking Backwards Forward features work by Alexa Alexander, Sholeh Asgary, Sohyung Choi, Hilary Galián, Sarah Hirneisen, Amy M. Ho, Emily Hoyt, David Johnson, Danielle Lawrence, Chelsea Pegram, David Sleeth and Alexander Treu.

According to Hanor, “*Walking Backwards Forwards* demonstrates not only the high quality of the work produced by the Mills MFA candidates, but also their dedication to continually pushing themselves to stretch and test their artistic capabilities.”

[David Sleeth](#) explores his interests in archeology through experimentation with materiality and form. His aim is to manipulate the perceived context of objects allowing the viewer to re-imagine their understanding of the world around them and their place within it. Using the metaphor of a knot, [Sarah Hirneisen](#)’s sculptures explore heritage, human relationships, and memory, creating logical connections between complicated systems.

In a climate of porous borders, [Hilary Galián](#) paints real and unreal places to investigate the condition of connectedness and belonging. [David Johnson](#) wants you to know that the world is made up of all sorts of ordinary things, but most importantly, it is made up of the interactions between these things. Through various time-based methods, he examines these interactions in order to better grasp the sum and the parts of the past, present and future. [Sholeh Asgary](#) is interested in exploring how memories are a fusion of fact and subjective filter. Through memory, the abstract and representational aspects of our experiences become intertwined, and in her mixed media works, she attempts a literal representation of this phenomenon.

[Danielle Lawrence](#) playfully investigates the perception of both formal and psychological space within traditional and hybrid offerings of representation. The resulting videos, paintings and sculptures explore illusions of security in our ever-changing social and environmental landscapes. [Emily Hoyt](#) questions how we can see the world fully when our emotional perspective is constantly changing. She creates installations using light, shadow, and linear forms as a way to frame the surroundings, underscoring our limited ability to grasp them in their entirety. Through her sculptural work, [Chelsea Pegram](#) explores a visceral mode of perception in which line and space are sensed and tactilely navigated as a way to reconsider our methods of making meaning.

Re-appropriating found photography, [Alexa Alexander](#) investigates how photographs are viewed and remembered. By physically dissecting and fragmenting photographs, she redirects the viewer's focus to the act of looking while emphasizing recollection. [Amy M. Ho](#) builds video and spatial installation works that bring attention to the duality of our existence as both physical and psychological beings.

Every consumer product has a story about its origin, a story that reveals an alternative history of our lives. Through mixed media installations, **Alexander Treu** demonstrates his obsession with the food industry's manipulation of our minds and bodies. [Sohyung Choi](#)'s large-scale, multimedia installation works explore self and cultural identity.

Special Events (please visit our website for updated details):

Sat, April 30, 6:00-8:00 pm

Art Museum

Opening Reception for Walking Backwards Forward

Sat, May 7, 5:00-7:00 pm

Art Museum

Artist Walk-through moderated by Glen Helfand

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. The Mills College Art Museum is located at 5000 MacArthur Boulevard, Oakland, CA 94613. Museum hours are Tuesday-Sunday 11:00–4:00 pm and Wednesday 11:00–7:30 pm. Admission is free for all exhibitions and programs unless noted. For more information, visit <http://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>

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