

MILLS COLLEGE
ART MUSEUM

PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

Jayna Swartzman-Brosky

Mills College Art Museum

(510) 430-3340 or JSwartzmanbrosky@mills.edu

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Shelf Life: 2019 Mills College MFA Exhibition

May 5–June 2, 2019

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 4, 2019 | 6:00-8:00 PM

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Oakland, CA—March 25, 2019. Mills College Art Museum (MCAM) is pleased to announce [Shelf Life: 2019 Mills College MFA Exhibition](#), on view from May 5–June 2, 2019. The annual MFA exhibition presents the work of graduating MFA candidates from Mills College's esteemed Studio Art program. This year's featured artists are Wyatt Hall, Lacey Johnson, Daniel Lulu, Harlee Mollenkopf, Michael Pedersen, Sarah Player Morrison, Claire Rabkin, Lindsay Rothwell, Zack Sumner Schomp, Katie Swan, Tashi Wangdhu, and Rebekah Wilson Smith.

Presented as a group exhibition in MCAM's historic main gallery, *Shelf Life* showcases a final body of work from each graduate, curated by museum director Stephanie Hanor and Mills College's distinguished studio art faculty. Commanding a range of strategies—photography, sculpture, installation, performance, video and more—these emerging artists venture into fresh conceptual and material terrain, confronting critical subjects such as spirituality, identity, memory, technology, and power.

THE ARTISTS

Wyatt Hall

Wyatt Hall presents a sequence of photography, appropriated images, and creative writing. The installed works investigate personal narrative and authorial voice through romantic symbolism and allegory. Using a variety of display strategies, Hall questions the presence of images and objects in relation to and association with the viewer.

Lacey Johnson

As Above, So Below is an installation comprised of music videos exploring the artist's belief systems. Queer Elders become divinity, a Magic 8 Ball toy becomes a divination tool, and a karaoke sing-a-long invites participation in an incantation spell.

Daniel Lulu

Using digital drawings, animations, and live performance, Daniel Lulu explores lineage and cultural hybridity through a dualistic lens of nature and technology. Through the accrual and overlapping of artistic influences, cultural traditions, and personal and collective histories, Lulu contextualizes his own lineages within a contemporary setting.

Harlee Mollenkopf

Harlee Mollenkopf approaches skin as a site for reconciling the division between body and mind. She experiments with figuration by tracing perceptual drift, recording the shedding of both panties and skin peels, and distorting images of her body. By representing herself through various levels of abstraction, she reveals her process of existential self-discovery.

Michael Pedersen

Michael Pedersen uses seemingly fantastical technology to present the mundane, and uses mundane objects to enter fantastical worlds. Pedersen explores the fuzzy area between virtual spaces and physical places and where the lines between them collapse.

Sarah Player Morrison

Sarah Player Morrison uses photography and video to examine the codes of gender performance in specific spaces. She is interested in the gestures, postures, and clothing that make up a legible identity and how these can be disrupted and refigured.

Claire Rabkin

Claire Rabkin gathers people and stories to perform collective experiences of desire, shame, and power. Symbolism, allegory, myth and poetry are organizing frameworks for building simple choreographies that interact with sculpture and site to tell timeless stories about urgent forces.

Lindsay Rothwell

Using the language and tools of architecture, Lindsay Rothwell explores the passage of time and our relationships to the spaces where our lives unfold. Rothwell considers the room as an extension of the self and the architectural model as a container for human memory.

Zack Sumner Schomp

Zack Sumner Schomp is interested in the image's ability to compress, expand and transmit time through a frozen moment. Moving between isolation and a willingness to share, Sumner Schomp believes that within this world of chaos, there are moments that remind us we are not alone.

Katie Swan

Katie Swan uses materials to feel the passing of time and draw us into the physicality of the present moment. Her work is a reflection and meditation on the marks we leave behind as we seek a greater understanding of the cyclical and futile nature of materiality and life itself.

Tashi Wangdhu

Tashi Wangdhu makes process-based abstract painting to explore his personal experience of contemporary political realities, such as the current refugee crisis, to heighten awareness—his own and ours—of the urgent situation happening around us.

Rebekah Wilson Smith

Rebekah Wilson Smith creates sculptural assemblages from found objects to examine working-class white nostalgia and domestic culture, playing with down-home, religious and capitalist values. Transforming craft supplies, “grandma sweaters”, and homey decor through occult tropes, she calls attention to the frightening dimensions of seemingly benign things, intentions, and affects.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Visit mcam.mills.edu for details.

2019 Mills College MFA Exhibition Opening Reception

Saturday, May 4, 2019 | 6:00-8:00 pm

Join us in celebrating the opening of *Shelf Life*. Congratulate the MFAs on their tremendous accomplishment and wish them well on their artistic journey after graduation. Refreshments will be served.

Katie Swan | *Steel Benders: We move into the present.*

Wednesdays, May 8, 15, 22, 29

4-5pm, Graduate Studios: Ceramics 175

[Facebook](#)

Circle as ever changing. Circle as direction or gesture, action and in-action. Without speaking, we use body language to form steel into circle. Find your point of axis and react from there. Instead of a tug of war what if we pull from the same direction?

Lacey Johnson | *Oracle Karaoke*

Wednesday, May 8

6-8pm, Lisser 201

[Facebook](#)

A night of celestial karaoke performance with trance-inducing sing-a-longs and prophetic anthems. Some costumes provided.

Claire Rabkin | *Marching Toward Paradise*

Wednesday May 8

8-9pm, Art Museum

[Facebook](#)

Paradise is the site of desire. This performance is a collection of text and imagery about that place. *Marching Toward Paradise* assumes the formal elements of protest and parade, while considering other historical and current pilgrimages, to create a movement for collective liberation.

Michael Pedersen | *Studio Space: A Virtual Reality Experience*

Saturday, May 11

1-4pm, Graduate Studios: Hive 104

[Facebook](#)

In conjunction with the graduate Open Studios, Pedersen will debut his virtual reality project, highlighting the bodily awareness, displacement, and blindness that occurs when the technology is engaged. Upon activating Pedersen's VR headset, participants find themselves in the same space they were before but without a body, interacting with the physical world through touch and sound alone.

Daniel Lulu | *My Face Hurt from the Dust and the Wind*

Wednesday, May 15

7-8pm, Lisser Hall

[Facebook](#)

Join us on a journey through time and space. Presented for the first time in its entirety, *My Face Hurt from the Dust and the Wind* is a four-part epic performance by Danny Lulu and Paul Sakai. Exploring personal lineage and cultural hybridity through the cycles of nature, this performance looks to the microscopic dramas that occur all around us as a point of connection, in the search for guidance within the uncontrollable.

About Mills College Art Museum

Founded in 1925, 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. mcam.mills.edu

Museum hours are Tuesday-Sunday 11:00 am-4:00 pm and Wednesday 11:00 am-7:30 pm. Admission is FREE for all exhibitions and programs unless noted.

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