

FIVE YEARS OF THE MASTERS OF FINE ARTS IN EXPERIMENTAL & DOCUMENTARY ARTS

April 4–May 6, 2017

Third Friday Durham Reception: April 21, 2017, 5–8pm

There's Content: Five Years of the Masters of Fine Arts in Experimental & Documentary Arts celebrates the fifth anniversary of Duke University's MFA program with a joint exhibition at the Power Plant Gallery and The Archive of Documentary Arts in the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

The Power Plant Gallery features work made by alumni and the Class of 2017. *There's Content* includes 30 alumni – and soon to be alumni – exhibiting film/video, photographs, silkscreens, sculptures, and installations, showcasing both work made while students, and new pieces completed in the years after graduation.

The Rubenstein Photography Gallery will feature photographic and video works from the Archive of Documentary Arts' collection of alumni thesis projects. Please check the exhibition dates on the Rubenstein Photography Gallery website for their reception information.

We begin with the idea that there is always "content," whether in our admirations or in our discontents. We search out and find our content in our passing observations of the actuality within life around us. While we arrive at the subject of our expressive art with the wonder and admiration of affirming poets, we also see corners of the world that foster such discontent that we make that the partial—or maybe the entire—locus of our artistic content. Content, of course, is more than merely the subject matter of our work, though the subject matters greatly. And content is certainly more than the strictest sense of form within the work though we all labor to find just the appropriate form, a shape that is suitable to us and the world our art represents.

The work in the expansive exhibition *There's Content* comes to us through the confluence of this remarkable community of artists, the mixing waters of the experimental and the documentary, the personal and the cultural, the analog and the digital, the acts of reportage and the imagination, the focus on self and the interest in others, the ideas of home and the lure of the far away. There are no neat lines of demarcation for any of this. Our MFA|EDA ideas of the experimental range from the quest for new forms or structures to the embrace of a new medium to the inquiry inherent in acts of documentary fieldwork—a path that by its nature leads to a surrendering of control and the willingness to collaborate with what we discover.

As all documentary art is characteristically local in origin—coming from somewhere, marked however lightly or obviously by place—we find ourselves attempting to be true to the moment, knowing of the time, fully in the locale while making work that travels far, once out of our hands evolving to a life beyond original intent. The work here, representing five full and fertile years of our MFA|EDA program, is the result of this merging, these many tributaries flowing together, blending. Many of the artists who have come through this program studied the history and theory of experimental and documentary as it is found in our collective archive. They visited the riches of special collections while also taking to the streets. Most lasting, however, are ways in which the individual motivations of these artists—their impulse, agendas, and stories—have in five relatively short years deepened that growing archive, making distinctive marks on the walls of creative expression, mapping new waters of content and discontent, giving us all new windows through which to view the many places, lives, and memories that surround and sustain us.

Eudora Welty said it fully when she wrote of that "wonderful word confluence: which of itself exists as a reality and a symbol in one. It is the only kind of symbol that . . . has any weight," she continued, "testifying to the pattern, one of the chief patterns, of human experience."

Tom Rankin
Professor of the Practice of Art and Documentary
Director, MFA|EDA @ Duke



THERE'S CONTENT



List of Exhibitors (alphabetical):

- Kristina S. Baker** | Class of 2016 | *Days & Details of Death & Devils* (2016, Video)
Amanda Berg | Class of 2014 | *Something to Agree Upon* (2016, Photograph)
Marika Borgeson | Class of 2013 | *Untitled* (2016, Photographic installation)
Sarah Elizabeth Borst | Class of 2017 | *April and Declan, This is Mine, Part IV, Milk* (2016, Photograph)
Philip Brubaker | Class of 2013 | *The Fandor Video Essays* (2016, Video)
Brenda L. Burmeister | Class of 2014 | *The Rule of Capture* (2017, Video)
Roxanne R. Campbell | Class of 2016 | *The Colour Purple* (2016, Video)
Malina Chavez | Class of 2014 | *Power Lines* (2013, Photograph)
Erin Espelie | Class of 2014 | 视网膜 (A NET TO CATCH THE LIGHT) (2016, Video)
Tracy Fish | Class of 2015 | *Barren Island, Brooklyn, New York from Trees and Concrete* (2016, Photograph)
Sarah Garrahan | Class of 2014 | *Ellie & Winston* (2016, Photograph)
Qathi Gallaher Hart | Class of 2016 | *Family Portrait* (2015, GIF)
Wolfgang Hastert | Class of 2013 | *WILLI* (2012, Video)
Anna Kipervaser | Class of 2015 | *Hortus Conclusus* (2015, Video)
Aaron Kutnick | Class of 2015 | *NostalgiCam* (2016, Installation)
Elizabeth Landesberg | Class of 2013 | *Con Todo Combina* (Work-in-progress, Video)
Peter Lisignoli | Class of 2013 | *Anything You Ever Wanted, Parts 1-5* (2013, Video)
Annabel Manning | Class of 2013 | *Zuleyma* (2013-2014) (2013-2014, Photograph)
Lisa McCarty | Class of 2013 | *The Art of Mechanical Reproduction* (2014, Sculpture)
Lauren Muller | Class of 2017 | *Huro Huro* (2017, Video)
Jing Niu | Class of 2014 | *Nainai at the Dinner Table* (2015, Photograph)
Jason Oppliger | Class of 2016 | *The Free White Sea* (2016, Video)
Colleen F. Pesci | Class of 2017 | *The Flight* (2016, Video)
Mendal Diana Polish | Class of 2015 | *Albuquerque* (2015, Photograph)
John Rash | Class of 2014 | *Correct Application of the Killing Method* (2017, Video)
Anthony Dean Shafer | Class of 2017 | *UnQuieted* (2016, Video)
Jennifer Stratton | Class of 2014 | *Brine* (2015, Video)
Alina J. Taalman | Class of 2015 | *The Apollo Series* (2016, Photograph)
grant yarolin | Class of 2015 | *Untitled* (2016, Silkscreen)
Haoyang Zhao | Class of 2017 | *Tomato Republic* (2016, Photograph transparency)

(Detail photograph from Family Portrait by Qathi Gallaher Hart)

Kristina Baker | Class of 2016

Days & Details of Death & Devils (2016,
Video)



Project Statement:

Days & Details of Death & Devils follows drug addiction in a country club community and the demise of religion in a failed Catholic school system of one of Forbes' Multi-Year Winners for Most Miserable City in the Nation.



Amanda Berg | Class of 2014

Something to Agree Upon (2016, Photograph)





Marika Borgeson | Class of 2013

Untitled (2016, Photographic installation)

Project Statement:

Calcium carbonate, failure, enamel, silver, retired miniature suns, blue light, whimsy, and time.





Sarah Elizabeth Borst | Class of 2017

April and Declan, This is Mine, Part IV, Milk (2016, Photograph)

Project Statement:

It's hard not to feel humorless, as a woman and a feminist, to recognize misogyny in so many forms, some great and some small, and know you're not imagining things. It's hard to be told to lighten up because if you lighten up any more, you're going to float the fuck away. The problem is not that one of these things is happening; it's that they are all happening, concurrently and constantly.

-Roxane Gay, Bad Feminist

When I was fourteen, I was awarded "most likely to be known for her smile while modeling for the Colgate Company," by my teachers for our middle school superlatives. I did not think I was smart, and nobody seemed to argue with me. My journey as an artist started at a young age, and I spent nineteen hours a week in a classical ballet studio, perfecting my plies and pirouettes. I remember looking in the mirror at the studio before every class and pinching the skin around my hips and pulling it back- wishing I was less curvy, wishing I was less me. At seventeen I was raped by my boyfriend, and my body continued to be abused and harassed throughout college. Upon entering graduate school, I did not plan on making this kind of work; it was born out of desperate need to share my story for my own survival.

This is Mine is a four-part project that confronts the sexualization of the female form and the proliferation of the feminine ideal. An excerpt from Part I: The Diaries, is represented in the exhibition as screenshots of facebook messages between myself and a visiting artist to my college, whom I was sexually harassed by, between 2014 and 2016. This piece lives inside a larger body of work curated from my personal archive of family photographs, love letters from boys, journal entries since middle school and interactions with social media. The Diaries serves as a prerequisite to Part II: Adult in Training, in which I have documented myself on camera since September of 2015 in moments of transition into the construct of adulthood. Sharing my own experiences



in the film is an act of justice, and through the documentation of my physical body and psyche on camera, I take the control back from the men who relentlessly dominated them in the past. In Part III: The Monologue, a short film installation, I come to terms with my personal history of rape and sexual harassment through intimately sharing stories from my past.

Part IV: Milk, is a series of photographs of mothers breastfeeding in their homes. My objective in this series is a continued investigation of, and direct response to, the feminine ideal, and its representation of the classical body vs the carnival, abject body, and further, how commodification perpetuates fetishized perceptions of what a woman is or should be. In her essay "The Other Side of Venus, The Visual Economy of the Feminine Display", Abigail Solomon-Godeau discusses the sexualization of the commodity within commodity culture, in turn inflecting the psychic structures of consumer desire. The image of desirable femininity simultaneously stands as the poster child and lure to the commodity. As the feminine image is desired and then consumed, it perpetuates the consumption by operating as a mirror of the

initial desire- and so the story goes. While the light falls in a Chiaroscuro manner in Milk, conjuring up subconscious images of women in classical painting, the photographs attempt to reveal authentic experiences as opposed to the idealistic representation we have been taught to see throughout art history and pop culture. Accessing the history of the individual or collective female experience is incredibly painful, and feminism cannot be oversimplified as an empowering mechanism that will deliver positive change without physical and emotional struggle. This is Mine is my attempt at grappling with the struggle in change—my attempt to look at my experience through a feminist lens, and to produce work motivated by my feminist values. Recognizing the work of women who come before me, and the human bodies and minds they occupy, I present you with my own. This is mine.

Philip Brubaker | Class of 2013

The Fandor Video Essays (2016, Video)
8min



Project Statement:

Video essays (known in academia as videographic film studies) have gained a toehold in recent years as a legitimate form of audiovisual critique. Cinophilia and fandom are major components of a video essay. "The Fandor Video Essays" collects several works I created for the San Francisco-based online movie-streaming service.

Artist Statement:

I was a graduate of the inaugural class of the MFA EDA program in 2013. My documentary work has been screened at 13 film festivals and won awards for editing and a grant from Eli Lilly. I am the co-host of a film discussion podcast called "In The Queue". Since June 2016, I have made video essays for Fandor, which I currently do full time.



Brenda L. Burmeister | Class of 2014

The Rule of Capture (2017, Video)
5min



Project Statement:

The rule of capture is the legal term which grants the rights of groundwater to land owners. But how does one find that scarce water in the unpredictable terrain of South Texas? To divine love is as much an archaic ritual as to divine water. The stop motion animation speculates on water rights and the meaning of a glance, a flutter, a text asking simultaneously "Is there water underneath?" and "How do you know if she/he likes you?" The video features hand painted 1950 4x5 photograph negatives of Texas land surveys. Water dramatically recedes. Dowsing rod images are filmed with single word text definitions defining divining rod motion like "sway, inclines, twitches, verge, plummet" with audio of lovers remember the importance of a look, a look, a call, in the early days of their romance.

Artist Statement:

Reluctant conceptual artist, devout experimental film/video maker, but above all, I am an avid metaphor maker. I hold a MFA Experimental and Documentary Arts from Duke University and a BFA from School of the Art Institute of Chicago. My films have shown at Revelation Perth, Atlanta Film Festival, Indie Grits, Experiments in Cinema, Athens International, and Experimental Film Festival Portland (awarded Director's Pick). I am also a 5th generation Texan and a single mother of three children. My artistic practice is rooted in the experimental visualization of the delicate, albeit ordinary, moments of fissures and connection within the family unit. I seek to portray these experiences with uncommon vulnerability and unflinching resolve often using text as a form of distraction and/or structure. I seek to elicit a broader conversation about intimacy and exposure. My work is made out of necessity. As I cope, consider, and create, the audience is welcome to join, and ideally meet me in a place of catharsis.



Roxanne Campbell | Class of 2016

The Colour Purple (2016, Video)
7min



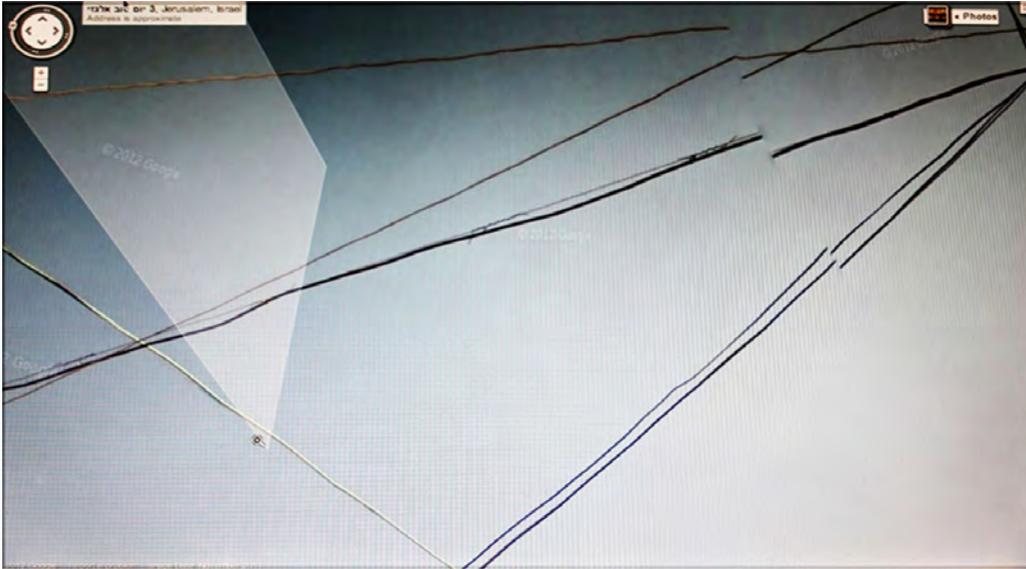
Project Statement:

The Colour Purple Exhibition includes selections from the photographic series "The Colour Purple" and a three channel video installation "There's Just Something About Death That Makes Us Dance: the revival." The images included in this exhibition are of a two-day burial ceremony of Zion Revival Churches in the vicinity of Kingston, St. Andrews and Long Coffee, Manchester on the island of Jamaica in 2015. Both projects are auto-ethnographies, exploring themes of Creolization and religious syncretism. The exhibition is a part of a larger body of work exploring the representation of Afro and Afro-Caribbean culture and identity, by presenting counter frames to the accepted narratives of the African diaspora in America.



Malina Chavez | Class of 2014

Power Lines (2013, Photograph)



Project Statement:

1949 Armistice Agreement Line is a project that examines the borders of Palestinian Territory on Google Maps street view. While the area of Gaza is completely grey with inaccessibility, there are other areas in the region on both sides of these borders that are available for street view. These areas remain contentious 'lines' drawn by Israel and its allies that keep Palestinian people shut off from any type of citizenry, advancement or national identity.



Erin Espelie | Class of 2014

视网膜 (*A NET TO CATCH THE LIGHT*) (2016,
Video)
8min



Project Statement:

"The light is like a spider.
It crawls over the water.
It crawls over the edges of the snow.
It crawls under your eyelids
And spreads its webs there--
Its two webs..." --Wallace Stevens



Tracy Fish | Class of 2015

Barren Island, Brooklyn, New York, from *Trees and Concrete* (2016, Photograph)



Project Statement:

"Trees and Concrete" is an ongoing body of work that currently focuses on Brooklyn, N.Y. I examine the areas of my childhood home tucked between alleyways and buildings, along the cross-streets and even the borough's outskirts, to challenge expectations of how one might imagine a metropolitan area. With a natural landscape in mind, I uncover these quiet hidden spaces that for many continue to be an unnoticed part of New York City. This work begins to break the preconceptions of what defines an urban landscape by exploring NYC's boroughs. As a Brooklyn native, I previously associated urban spaces with densely populated areas and looming buildings that reverberated the symphonic noise of the lively streets. Most city natives or even outsiders, rarely envision an open or green landscape when imagining a city. If a green-space does come to mind, it is often the locations of man-altered landscapes or areas maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation; even though historically, a thick and forested rural landscape, with areas of marshland, corn and tobacco fields existed prior to the cities urban development that we know today. Allusions to that era still exist among the concealed solitary areas, be it the remnants of the past or results of man-made landscape emerging through the city's complexity.

Artist Statement:

Tracy Fish received her MFA in Experimental and Documentary Photography from Duke University in 2015. Her photographs have been exhibited both nationally and internationally and her collaborative photographic book 'Chasing the Paper Canoe' can be found in the Library of Congress. A native to Brooklyn, N.Y., Fish currently resides in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where she teaches a range of courses in photography, video and digital art for Coastal Carolina University.



Sarah Garrahan | Class of 2014

Ellie & Winston (2016, Photograph)





Qathi Gallaher Hart | Class of 2016

Family Portrait (2015, GIF)
15sec



Project Statement:

Original Photo of Todd and Kathi Gallaher playing in a float plane pond near Steep Creek, Juneau Alaska, summer of 1976, with the Mendenhall Glacier receding in the background.

Through the creation of this animated loop I considered the slow degeneration of my relationship with my brother as we have aged. I approached glitching this photo through altering the jpeg code one character in the code per frame saved to create the animation. The characters spelled out "T O D D I S A S T U P I D B U T T H E A D" and other juvenile ruminations on the relationship I have with my brother Todd. I then compiled each image into a moving image timeline to create an animation, which was then further manipulated to create a personally satisfying loop.

Artist Statement:

Qathi Gallaher Hart, (1968, nee Kathi Gallaher), b. Seattle, Washington; BFA Contemporary Animated Arts, Pacific Northwest College of Art, (2013), MFA Experimental & Documentary Arts, Duke University, (2016).

As an experimental filmmaker I explore possibilities of moving image through animation, my work straddles a line between traditional physical actions, materials and means of animation, and exploiting digital failures of process. Based on principles of George Griffin's Concrete Animation, I relinquish control of the final artwork to the machines used to transmogrify the physical stuff of moving image art into a cyber-artifact.



Wolfgang Hastert | Class of 2013

WILLI (2012, Video)
1min30sec



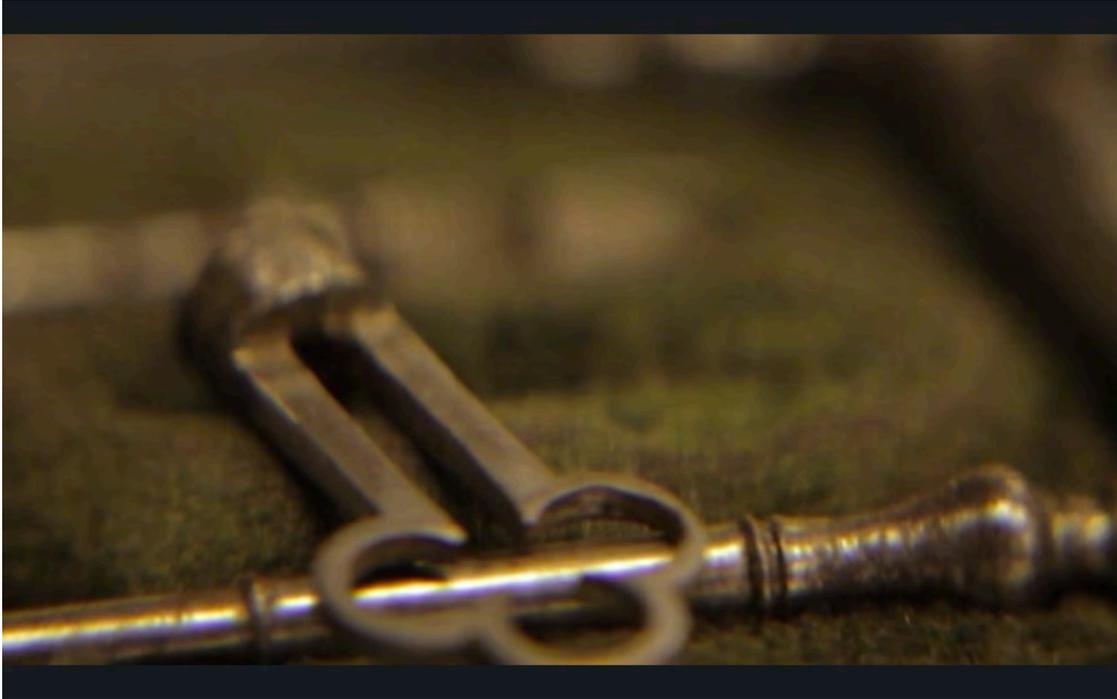
Project Statement:

Willi is my father. This film honors his spirit as we take a short walk in the snowy landscape of my home town. The film's montage of this short ongoing moment between father and son tells the story of a life that comes to an end.



Anna Kipervaser | Class of 2015

Hortus Conclusus (2015, Video)
6min45sec



Project Statement:

From the "Song of Songs": *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.*



Aaron Kutnick | Class of 2015

Nostalgicam (2016, Installation)

Project Statement:

When you press the shutter of *Nostalgicam*, two processes are set in motion. First, the image you take is indexed within an appending database of images stored onto the camera's internal memory. Second, the image is used as a search query to retrieve and display the most visually similar image from the camera's database.

The technology behind this type of visual searching is called content-based image retrieval, or reverse image search, through which images are quantified by an image descriptor – in this case a color histogram in the HSV (hue, saturation, and value) color space, which then outputs a set of feature vectors. These feature vectors are indexed and compared to the feature vectors from query images in order to retrieve the most similar image.

This photographic act shifts our temporal expectations of conventional photography; instead of rendering elements of the photographer's present, embodied environment, the camera renders temporally disjointed environments, drawing from the physical journey of the camera itself. The more the camera is used, the greater the opportunity it has to fold in on the algorithmic layers of its internal memory.



Artist Statement:

My latest work, *Docu[rhythm]*, asks what ethnographic fieldwork looks like within the virtual spaces of the internet. I have designed and constructed a series of interactive cameras, each of which employ computational intervention between the light coming through the lens, and the output image that is displayed on the screen. Through adding algorithmic functionality to traditional research tools, the cameras forge a bridge between the embodied world of the photographer and the virtual worlds of the Internet, inviting users to explore the complexity and beauty that emanates from this liminal space.



EB Landesberg | Class of 2013

Con Todo Combina (Work-in-progress, Video)

Project Statement:

"Because gold and silver has played such a part in making the Spaniards come over to these parts, little is needed to know our greed and the great longing that we have for money. And being imprisoned, Atahualpa found no better means for gaining freedom than to promise the great treasures that he had and that his captains had taken in the war of Cuzco. He told Pizarro that he would give as his ransom ten thousand ingots of gold and so many silver vessels that it would be enough to fill a large house that was there, and as long as they would set him free without causing him any more trouble or injury, he would deposit into it, aside from the ingots, a quantity of gold pieces and jewelry. ...And Pizarro promised it through the interpreters. He gave his word and the assurance that Atahualpa asked for to leave him as free as he was before he captured him if [Atahualpa] would give as much gold and silver for his ransom as he said.

...After Hernando Pizarro left for Spain, as has been related in the past chapter, Atahualpa's death came to pass, which was the most ignoble act the Spaniards have ever done in all this empire of the Indies, and as such it is condemned and viewed as a great sin. ...Because of the suit against him, the governor sentenced [Atahualpa] to be burned. He could not find a way to escape. If he believed that he could do it with more gold, he would have given them another house, even four more. ...At about seven in the evening they removed him from where he was held. They took him to where the execution would take place; Friar Vicente, Juan de Porras, Captain Salcedo, and some others went with him. On the way he kept repeating: "Why are they killing me? Why am I being killed? What have I done, and my children and my wives?" and other similar words. Friar Vicente was admonishing him to become a Christian and abandon his beliefs. [Atahualpa] asked to be baptized, and the friar did it. And then they strangled him, and to fulfill the sentence they burned some of his hair with



pieces of straw, which was another foolishness. Some of the Indians say that before they killed him, Atahualpa exclaimed that they should await him in Quito, that they would see him again in the form of a snake. These must be their sayings."

– Pedro Cieza de León (born c. 1520, Spain), *The*

"They detained Atahualpa Inca. While he was being held prisoner, Don Francisco Pizarro, Don Diego de Almagro, and all the other soldiers and Spaniards stole all his treasure from him. They also took all the wealth from the Temple of the Sun (Curi Cancha) and from Wanacauri—so many millions in gold and silver, it couldn't all be counted, for the walls, the ceiling, the floor, and the windows of Curi Cancha alone were all lined with gold. They say that the person who entered that place, with its rays of gold, looked like a corpse in the midst of the golden color. ... Atahualpa Inca endeavored to ransom his life and all his captains. He gave Don Francisco Pizarro, Don Diego de Almagro, and all the soldiers a great deal of gold. For Don Francisco Pizarro pointed out a house with his own sword and measured half way up its wall; it was eight yards long by four yards wide. It was filled with gold, and Don Francisco Pizarro, Don Diego de Almagro, and all the other Spaniards took it all. They divided up the treasure and sent it to the emperor, to Spain, and to each of their kinsmen, relatives, and friends.

...Sentence was passed by Don Francisco Pizarro:

they were to behead Atawalpa Inca. Don Diego de Almagro and the others did not wish to sign this sentence, because Atawalpa had given them all his wealth in gold and silver, but Pizarro sentenced him. Everyone said that he should send him off to the emperor as a prisoner, so that, over there, [the emperor] might restore all the wealth of his kingdom...Atawalpa Inca was to be decapitated. He was sentenced and ordered beheaded by Don Francisco Pizarro. The Indian interpreter, Felipe, a Huancavilca native, notified him of his sentenced. This interpreter gave bad information to Don Francisco Pizarro and to the others, who were unhappy with the sentence. He did not let them know that Atawalpa had pleaded for justice and mercy, for he loved the Coya, his legitimate wife. This was the reason why they killed and beheaded Atawalpa Inca. He died a martyr; his life came to a most Christian end, in the city of Cajamarca."

- Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, (born c. 1534, Peru),
New Chronicle and Good Government (c. 1615)

Peter Lisignoli | Class of 2013

Anything You Ever Wanted, Parts 1-5 (2013, Video)
25min



Project Statement:

In an effort to better understand the expressive and critical affordances of the collage film, I culled moving-image archives to create fictional family narratives. Using allegory as a device to raise questions about authenticity and memory, my film interweaves the historical with the mythological. I use heavily degraded home video of photo slideshows, tourism footage, and intertitles to play with the mythopoeia of the American Southwest.

Artist Statement:

Peter G. Lisignoli is a multi-media artist, musician, and educator working and living in Albuquerque, NM. Currently, he teaches at the University of New Mexico and collaborates regularly with local micro-cinema and art collective Basement Films. Since the completion of his MFA from Duke University's Experimental and Documentary Arts program, Peter was worked as a freelance documentary film editor, curator for Albuquerque's "Experiments in Cinema" film festival, a guest lecturer of film criticism and history at Dongguk University, South Korea, and as a teacher of experimental film, video art, documentary production, animation, and silent film.



Annabel Manning | Class of 2013

Zuleyma (2013–2014), (2013–2014, Photograph)



Project Statement:

This photograph is part of an ongoing, traveling participatory art project —“Out of the Shadows: Undocumented and Unafraid”—by Annabel Manning, working with “undocumented and unafraid” Latino middle school, high school, and college students, and, more recently, Latino adults in Charlotte and Carrboro, North Carolina. The aim of this project is to render the participants visible in their invisibility, that is, in their predicament of feeling visible and invisible at the same time, and to complement their “coming out” of the shadows to gain the rights to fulfill their dreams.

This particular double portrait—“Zuleyma”—re-enacts an undocumented female youth’s “coming out.” On the left side of the image, while looking into the mirror, Zuleyma is visible in her invisibility, the way the rest of the world sees her (the Prussian-blue negative suggests infrared imagery of immigrants at border crossings). The unmodified image of Zuleyma in the mirror (on the right) represents the way she would like to be seen—just like anybody else, without the filter of stereotypes or being dismissed because of her ethnicity.

Most of the youth have grown up in this country, having arrived here as babies or toddlers, but they constantly struggle between two lives: one visible to their families and other Latinos, and the other invisible to the community at large, where their undocumented status is concealed.



Lisa McCarty | Class of 2013

The Art of Mechanical Reproduction (2014, Sculpture)

Artist Statement:

My practice is a process, a constant experiment, exploring photography, film, video, and vision itself, as medium and subject.

I am particularly interested in how dominant technologies and ideologies influence what is seen, what is captured, and what is saved over time. In what myriad of ways, both consciously and unconsciously, do we choose to mediate what we see? And what do such choices say about the world we live in and our desire to capture it? I seek to revive historic processes and philosophies to address such present day conditions. Ultimately, this work deals with the origins, histories, evolutions, deconstructions, and expectations of vision and images.

This practice is driven by research and requires reading, archive-digging, pilgrimages, direct and durational observation, hands-on experimentation, trial and error, wandering, imagemaking, and attentive editing. My subjects have included William Henry Fox Talbot, Eadweard Muybridge, American Transcendentalism, the Hudson River School, instant film developer, rainbows, Black Mountain College, Hollis Frampton, my bedroom window, disposable cameras, time-lapse photography, Final Cut Pro, digital image sensors, and the Hubble Telescope archive. I am on a search for structure and the sublime amidst a seemingly endless flow of images.

Over the last decade the results of these inquiries have included portfolios of photographs, 35mm slideshows, films, videos, immersive environments, exhibitions, curatorial projects, essays, printed matter, and original archival research. Regardless of media, material, or



method, my aim is to provide new forms and contexts for images, to foreground the act of perception, to prompt reflection, and to invite wonder.

Project Statement:

How many times have you wished for copies on-the-spot so that you could keep the original—and still have the fun of giving away a good picture? Now you can do just that—make copies of your Polaroid Land Pictures just 60 seconds after you have taken the original. With the new Polaroid Print Copier its fast and simple. And you'll be amazed at the quality of the copies. Often, they are even better than the original, because you can correct for exposure errors.

1) Take a picture with your Land Camera, see the results in 60 seconds. Its sharp and clear, a wonderful picture that you'd like to share- but you want to keep it yourself. Now you needn't wait for extra copies!

2) Simply slide the picture into place inside the Print Copier, slip your Land Camera into position and take a picture of it! The Print Copier has everything built in: copying lens, electric timer, and fully polarized lighting system.

3) Sixty seconds later, you open the door of your camera and pull out a sharp duplicate print!
It's that easy.

—Excerpt from the Polaroid Print Copier Model 240
Manual, 1958

Lauren Mueller | Class of 2017

Huro Huro (2017, Video)
55min



Project Statement:

HURO HURO. This once familiar sound echoed throughout the hills of Meghalaya, India. Today, it has all but disappeared. Huro means Gibbon in Garo, the language of the indigenous people of Meghalaya, and also mimics the iconic call of the exuberant primate.

Gibbons are smaller apes native to the forests of Southern Asia. Over the past several decades their numbers have decreased dramatically due to pet trade, poaching, Chinese medicine and deforestation, making them the most endangered primate species. Several conservation centers in Asia strive to protect and rehabilitate gibbons taken from the wild, but dwindling forested land makes it difficult to successfully return them to their natural environment.

Huro Huro presents three conservation centers in India, Thailand and the United States committed to preserving gibbons. The film explores their disparate perspectives on conservation and raises questions about the effectiveness of varied practices and philosophies.

Will gibbons ever be successfully reintroduced to the wild, or are they trapped in a cycle of life-long captivity under the guise of conservation?



Jing Niu | Class of 2014

Nainai at the Dinner Table (2015, Photograph)



Project Statement:

After completing an auto-biographical film about growing up in take-out restaurants in the American South, Jing set out to explore the same topic through the lens of photography. This photo is from a series of quiet, everyday scenes that explores her family's immigrant identity in the South. These snapshots reflect how immigrants bring their culture with them, (and just like food) mix their traditions in with their everyday American experiences. Many traditional Chinese families will place a photo of a deceased ancestor in their homes, offering food and spirits at each meal. In this photo, Jing's younger brother shares a meal with their recently passed grandmother.

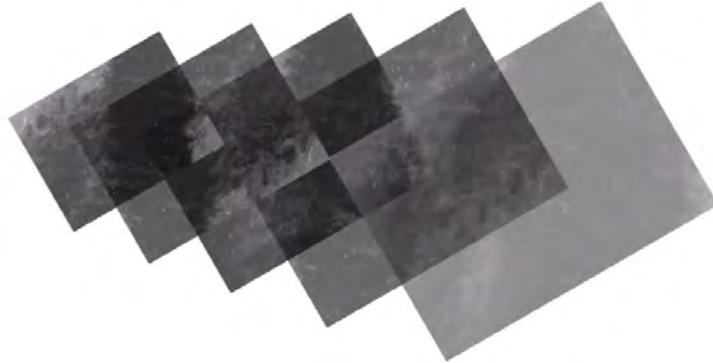
Artist Statement:

Jing made her first 16mm film at the age of eighteen with a Bolex camera, and now makes digital video- dabbling in everything from Super 8, to live-stream, to interactive 360 videos- for a living. Her work has been featured in local and international film festivals, conferences and radio stations, most notably the San Francisco Cinematheque, KPFA and the Nasher Museum of Art. She's had the privilege of working with KQED, Wired Magazine, and PBS's Independent Lens. Jing recently returned from an expedition abroad retracing the steps of an unknown Japanese woman explorer. Find out more at Jing-Niu.com



Jason Oppliger | Class of 2016

"The Free White Sea" (2015, Video)
15min



Project Statement:

For even if we have the sensation of being always surrounded by our own soul, it is not as though by a motionless prison: rather, we are in some sense borne along with it in a perpetual leap to go beyond it, to reach the outside, with a sort of discouragement as we hear around us always that same resonance, which is not an echo from outside but the resounding of an internal vibration. We try to rediscover in things, now precious because of it, the glimmer that our soul projected onto them.

Habit, after all, is a form of congealed remembering.



Colleen F. Pesci | Class of 2017

"The Flight" (2016, Video)
4min



Project Statement:

The Flight takes you to the place we go when suspended in the air, traveling from one place to the next. A conversation between two strangers about love lost.

Artist Statement:

Colleen is a photographer and filmmaker working to intersect documentary and writing in the visual form.



Mendal Diana Polish | Class of

Albuquerque (2015, Photograph)



Project Statement:

The print Albuquerque comes from a series I created while spending the fall that directly followed Grad school in New Mexico. I made portraits of a state that I was clearly just visiting. It remained unfamiliar in its barren landscape, and I was especially curious about all of the stories buried in the destruction of spaces. It felt like a mirror of colonization that the land was still undergoing culturally and spiritually, echoed back by the crumbling architecture.



John Rash | Class of 2014

Correct Application of the Killing Method (2017,
Video)
4min



Project Statement:

As urban landscapes deteriorate into post-infrastructure environments these familiar crowded spaces connect us geographically yet are the least empathetic. Designed to be inhabited by humans what is to become of all of this infrastructure in the post-human world? A gaze onto the hindquarters directly ahead, a forward trajectory funnels the viewer through spaces both cavernous and claustrophobic while lacking a sense of origin or final destination.

Artist Statement:

Originally designed as a site-specific outdoor installation at the 1933 Lao Fang Chang building in Shanghai, a former slaughterhouse, this piece has since been updated for gallery exhibition or projection on the outer facade of existing structures. Somehow train stations, metro system, and airports around the world share the vocabulary of the abattoir design keeping us calm and ever marching forward.



Anthony Dean Shafer | Class of 2017

UnQuieted (2016, Video)

12min





Jenny Jacklin Stratton | Class of 2014

Brine (2015, Video)

9min



Project Statement:

1. Mix cold water, salt and sugar and stir to dissolve.
2. In a non-reactive container, immerse food (film) in brine, seal and refrigerate.

16mm footage altered by the culinary processes of brining, cold smoking and fermentation compose meditations on Maillard/chemical reactions, translations and preservations of life, food and film in this non-narrative short.

Artist Statement:

Jenny Jacklin Stratton's work often involves long-form collaborations with both people and the natural world; collectively grappling with personal ethnographies and relationships between how we see and what we know. Concurrent with making documentary art, Jenny is a photo-facilitator and researcher designing curriculum, community workshops, events and teaching courses for academic institutions, neighborhoods, non-profit and grassroots organizations. She is currently a Lewis Hine Fellow at Children's Aid and Family Services.



Alina J. Taalman | Class of 2015

"A19" – from the Apollo Series (2016, Photograph)

Project Statement:

With the naked eye we can see energy emitted within the window of RGB, a narrow range of wavelengths amidst much longer and shorter waves. Looking through this window we learn to understand our reality, in color.

Using satellite sensors, we have been able to perceive a much wider range, including the infrared and thermal layers of the spectrum, bringing "invisible" bands of energy to light.

With this extended vision, we can appreciate how bodies affect each other. We can see changes in the landscape, and isolate pollutants and other distractions that cloud our understanding. What we learn creates layers of knowledge, and becomes historical data. This information is invaluable to climate research, land-use planning, wildlife protection and environmental justice. It allows us to make informed decisions, and models of what could, and should be in the future. It helps us learn from our mistakes.

We know that climate and environmental data are vital to our survival, and we have to resist attempts to deny them.

We depend on a wide range of color, and we can't let our window get smaller again.





grant yarolin | Class of 2015

Untitled (2016, Silkscreen)

Artist Statement:

Grant Yarolin is a visual artist based in Berlin, Germany. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts in English from Reed College, he went on to study photography and sculpture at Duke University, receiving his Master of Fine Arts degree in 2015.

The questions that Yarolin asks in his work are about the mediation of perception, how visual description necessarily alters and inflects that which is described. Historically, his practice has used photography as its central tool, utilizing the formal tendencies of the camera (to flatten space, fragment a view, and change scale) to facilitate instances of distortion and ambiguity.

As time has passed, and evolution necessarily occurred, his practice has expanded to encompass new media—namely sculpture and printmaking—in order to further explore ideas of transformation, intervention, and accumulation vis-à-vis representation. These new avenues afford different, but related, opportunities to bring the unraveling inherent to reproduction to the fore.





Haoyang Zhao | Class of 2017

Tomato Republic (2016, Photograph transparency)



Project Statement:

With mural fabric prints, light box installation, metal prints and 3D prints, *Tomato Republic* is based on a series of photographic diptychs made across United States, United Kingdom, China and Singapore in summer of 2016. The title itself satirically echoes the brand "Banana Republic", because the image was made with an advertisement billboard mockup of that brand. The word *Tomato* brings viewers' attention to the photographic qualities of images: color, contrast, shapes and objects represented, while *Republic* attempts to highlight a flattened world where commercialization, development and changes are the common denominator among nation states. Re-appropriating the aesthetics of malls, display windows and commercial signage, the work explores various forms of photographic presentation and reproduction.



MFA|EDA is supported by the Department of Art, Art History and Visual Studies, the Center for Documentary Studies, the Program in the Arts of the Moving Image, the Office of the Vice Provost for the Arts at Duke University, the Power Plant Gallery, the Fredric Jameson Gallery and SPECTRE Arts.

A unique initiative, the MFA in Experimental and Documentary Arts (MFA|EDA) at Duke University couples experimental visual practice with the documentary arts in a rigorous two-year program. For more than three decades, Duke has demonstrated leadership in documentary arts, film and video, and visual studies. Drawing upon this commitment to the arts, as well as the university's existing strengths in historical, theoretical and technological scholarship, the MFA|EDA offers a distinct learning environment that sees interdisciplinary education as a benchmark for significant innovation. More information on the program, faculty, curriculum and application guidelines is available on the MFA|EDA website at mfaeda.duke.edu. Additional inquiries may be sent to mfaeda@duke.edu.

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