

**SENIOR
THESIS
EXHIBITION**

2018



MADELEINE AREND

RACHEL ASLAN

WILLIAM BORCHERS

KYLE COTTRELL

RACHAEL HANSEN

ADRIANA KUNSTENAAR

KASEY MINOGUE

ALICE WU

GRAPHIC DESIGN GROUP

DEREK DIGNAN

ALEXANDER DONNELLY

TATIANA DONNELLY

R FERARI

ALICEN FRANCO

MACKENZIE GIBSON

FATIMA KHAN

MADISON MUSGROVE

KAYLA PACENKA

CAROLINE PREWITT

DEVINA SHARMA

GALLERY DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As part of the Art and Art History Department curriculum, art majors have the opportunity each year to exhibit in the college's professional gallery space, the Hewitt Gallery of Art. This group exhibition features the work of 19 practice-based art majors who take their Senior Art Seminar in the fall under the guidance and mentorship of Professors Millie Falcaro, James Holl, and Beth Shipley. The exhibition presents a broad range of senior capstone projects that engage the mediums of painting, photography, sculptural projects, and graphic design. The breadth and scope of media and styles attest to the diversity of approaches and individual visions that are the hallmark of the art program at Marymount Manhattan College. Join us in celebrating our students' accomplishments.

Hallie Cohen | *Director of the Hewitt Gallery of Art*

DECEMBER 10, 2018 – JANUARY 31, 2019

MADELEINE AREND

My Father's Daughter / My Mother's Daughter

My thesis is centered around creating two surreal, digitally-manipulated self-portraits: one examining my persona as my father's daughter and the other iteration as my mother's daughter. This body of work is meant to explore the issues I have with a guarded and limited paternal relationship in contrast with the healthy and open relationship I share with my mother. The portraits employ digital collage and layering techniques using visual references, influences of contemporary cultures, art historical motifs, and feminist theory. They are a visual and metaphorical exploration of these two versions of myself, as seen through the eyes of each parent whose experiences are fundamentally different and both fixate on myopic aspects of my emotional identity.

With my mother, I feel I am able to express my emotional self with greater justice than I am able to with my father. She has seen all sides of me: good, bad, and ugly. However, I hesitate to share parts of me that are less than perfect with my father for fear of rejection or disappointment.

I'm utilizing this project as an opportunity to reconcile this schism between empty affirmation and honest presentation of the self. To play with the notions of presentation and appearance, I'm creating a digital collage with influences of surrealism and fantasy. One of my biggest inspirations for this project is Cindy Sherman, and the ways in which she manipulates physical appearance to reckon with different aspects of identity. Each portrait features prop elements that construct a visual and symbolic vocabulary.

The portraits are meant to dissect the current state of my relationship with each of my parents and to contrast the differences in each way of presenting parts or the whole of my authentic self.





My Father's Daughter
Digital Print, 17" x 22"

My Mother's Daughter
Digital Print, 17" x 22"

RACHEL ASLAN

Femininity

My project, entitled *Femininity*, brings together a group of female friends and acquaintances who were asked to define their ideas about their understanding of characteristics of femininity. This body of work evolved from a previous photographic project, which left me uncertain about the definition of this term. My goal was to explore the subjective meaning held by my peers to offset some beliefs that reinforce derogatory or stereotypical generalizations held in our culture.

During each photographic session, we discussed their ideas on the topic. Each portrait is coupled with a direct quote from the participant which is as varied as each woman. At the conclusion of the project, and having spent time with each person, I have come to understand that femininity can be thought of as a set of internal qualities that help women move towards their best selves as females and come together on common ground.





Alexis M. • Danielle • Alice • Alexis A. • Regan • Tara
Digital C-prints, 16" x 20"

WILLIAM BORCHERS

Built Environment

This work explores the relationship and juxtaposition between structures in decay and their natural surroundings. Are these buildings really so different than the trees and growth which surround them, or are they just another facet of nature's cyclical expansion and contraction?

If you have ever taken a train or car ride through the Northeast you have undoubtedly seen former industrial facilities abandoned alongside trees, rivers, and reeds. While at first glance one might look at them with disgust seeing them as ugly refuse, if you look closer some beauty may appear. Perhaps the beauty isn't found in the structures and debris, but in what they symbolize.

These buildings were once a product of economic expansion, but they are now no longer useful, and have slipped into ruin. This is a theme which permeates every facet of our world. Things expand and contract, grow and die. Nothing can stay intact for very long; time and entropy bring order back to chaos. This might be a frightening reality, but if we can embrace it, we might find peace in its consistency.

In order to explore this, I engaged the medium of oil painting in an approach that was both open and honest. This could also be done with photography, or a myriad of other mediums, but I feel that painting has a special playfulness that helps to express the impermanence I'm trying to capture. The result is light and airy, as if it could be lost at a moment's notice.





Self Storage Retention Pond
Oil on Canvas, 20" x 16"

Brick Factory on a River
Oil on Canvas Board, 11" x 14"

Yellow Building with Refuse
Oil on Canvas Board, 11" x 14"

Construction Project
Oil on Canvas Board, 11" x 14"

KYLE COTTRELL

Fairy Houses

Balboa Park is a unique architectural and cultural park in the center of San Diego that is filled with naturalism, museums, and is an oasis in the city. The park is home to 350 species of plants. It's the place that forged my deep connection to nature, and was a source of fantasy and play during my elementary school years.

During recess, my friends and I would explore and gather items to create fairy houses. It was this setting that nurtured a creative activity and shared experience with childhood friends that is still a source of comfort, and solidifies a relationship to both urban and naturalistic settings. My childhood experiences with nature have influenced my life today. My memories in crafting these fairy houses bring back my connection to plants, leaves, and the wide range of color in nature.

My sculptural projects reconnect to this early experience and center around the collection of natural materials including twigs, flowers, leaves, branches, and berries found in New York City parks and greenspaces. I have gotten back to my love of nature by using a hands-on manipulation of the fragile materials. Just like nature, these works are impermanent, and will age and change, becoming a metaphor for all life forms.





Fairy House
Sticks, Leaves, Acorns, 10" x 13" x 9"



Fairy House
Sticks, Leaves, Berries, 12" x 12.5" x 8"



Fairy House
Sticks, Leaves, 8" x 7" x 5.5"



Fairy House
Sticks, Leaves, Berries, 9" x 12" x 9"

RACHAEL HANSEN

To Understand This Body of Work...

Experience your first panic attack at 8 years old.

Allow your dread to creep in at night.

Act sick to catch up on sleep.

Fall behind in school.

Be labeled as “easily stressed”.

Wonder if there’s something wrong with you.

Find comfort in your mother’s arms.

Practice your deep breathing exercises.

Feel your heart beat to make sure you’re alive.

Listen to music to drown out the bad thoughts.

Begin to lose interest.

Force every movement, action and thought.

Have a hard time expressing your feelings.

Find some solace in art.

Allow your coping mechanism to become a part of your routine.

Move away from home.

Become a woman but always feel like a girl.

Feel your heart beat to make sure you’re alive.

Let yourself get bad again.

Constantly distract yourself to avoid your problems.

Get on medication.

Get off medication.

Almost drop out of school.

Allow a puppy to pull you out of a dark place.

Finally find direction.

Use surrealism to express your dispositions.

Feel your heart beat to make sure you’re alive.





Mother
Oil on Canvas, 30" x 40"



Everyday I Split My Head Open and Pull Out All The Bad Thoughts
Oil on Canvas, 24" x 18"

ADRIANA KUNSTENAAR

Music Through Visual Art

For some time now, people have asked me why I like to create art. My answer—it's the way I express myself. Very few people in my life know who I really am and know my vulnerable side; art is a way for me to show parts of myself to the world that may not be so obvious.

I am very passionate about music and how it makes me feel. In this project, I interpreted those feelings through the act of painting. I decided to study the idea of rhythm and movement in the genres of Heavy Metal and Tropicalismo. The specific songs I took inspiration from are, "Raining Blood" by Slayer and "Rie y Lloro" by Celia Cruz. I chose these musical pieces because of the deep connection with my family. My father's family is Nicaraguan, and I grew up listening to Tropicalismo music. Choosing "Rie y Lloro" was easy, it reminds me of those happy times with my family when I was a child. I titled this piece "Rie, Vive Tu Vida" which translates to, "laugh, live your life."

When I was growing up I always had a smile on my face, but now that I am older, I've lost sight of the little things that make up living life to the fullest. Paying tribute to this song through painting brings joy and laughter back into my life, like it was when I was young. Although Heavy Metal is very different from Tropicalismo, it also helped me get through some hard times; when I was in a dark head space, it helped relieve the anger that I was feeling. I titled this piece "Lacerated Sky" because when the sky was broken, I came out of a dark space filled with blood and into a new structure that made me the person I am today.

While developing this body of work, I gained an appreciation of the rhythm that these songs exude. Each brushstroke on the canvas expresses the lyrics of the songs and the colors relate to montage of emotions I feel when listening. When someone looks at my art, I would like that person to have an emotional connection to it and, maybe, it will bring out a vulnerability in them that this body of work brings out in me.





Lacerated Sky
Oil on Canvas, 20" x 20"



Rie, Vive Tu Vida (Laugh, Live Your Life)
Oil on Canvas, 20"

KASEY MINOGUE

Self-Titled

This body of work is comprised of six different plexi-cubes and represents a deconstructed self-portrait. These cubes contain images that relate to a sense of myself. I am inspired and influenced by what is constantly around me in my life. The music photographer, Adam Elmakias, is a master of music photography. I have taken his passion for the medium and translated it into aspects of my life. Each cube is made up of themes. Music, friends, family, pets, abstract work, and elements of childhood.

I am a musician and singer and have found music to express myself beyond words. My close friends have provided unconditional support and humor to handle the daily ups and downs. My dog, Clare, and cat, Boo, are models for amusement and spirit. My close family keeps me grounded and level. My abstract work reminds me that it's okay when total control and perfection isn't possible. The last cube represents my development from childhood to present.

Scattered throughout the cubes are fragments of a self-portrait and represent a code for the summation of my identity.

Please feel free to arrange and rearrange the cubes to explore this body of work.





Left to Right: *Music • Family • Pets • Friend • Childhood Elements • Abstract*
Acrylic Photo Cubes, 4" x 4" x 4"

ALICE WU

Skin Deep

In this body of work, I address a personal issue that affects not only myself, but also a massive group of people worldwide—acne. In fact, nearly 85% of all young adults between the ages of 12 and 24 have varying degrees of what can be a debilitating condition, containing both physical and emotional side-effects.

I have struggled with this situation since the onset of adolescence, and at times the state of my skin has been an all-consuming preoccupation. Throughout the years, I have obsessively experimented with numerous combinations of skincare products to prevent and manage breakouts. Furthermore, similar to a fine art painter, I have mastered techniques and the art of covering and compensating for imperfections.

The consequences of my skin's condition are severely intense due to my aspirations to be a fashion model, in which every aspect of my appearance is under a microscope and scrutinized by a team of creative and marketing professionals.

My two large self-portraits are different sides of the same coin, demonstrating how the impacts of mind and body cannot be separated. Both photographs reveal my bare skin in two different conditions—one exhibits my bare skin in a full eruption state, while the other presents my skin in its recovered form. Accompanying the two large portraits is a sequence of Polaroids that document my hyper-vigilant facial care regimens.

My self-portraits are intended to share my journey of hardships and milestones I have gone through with my skin. These series of photos will not only provide an idea of my skin's lowest points, but also give hope that it can and will get better to those who may suffer from this circumstance.





Purge
Digital C-print, 24" x 36"



Ritual
Polaroid Photograph Series, 2.1" x 3.4"



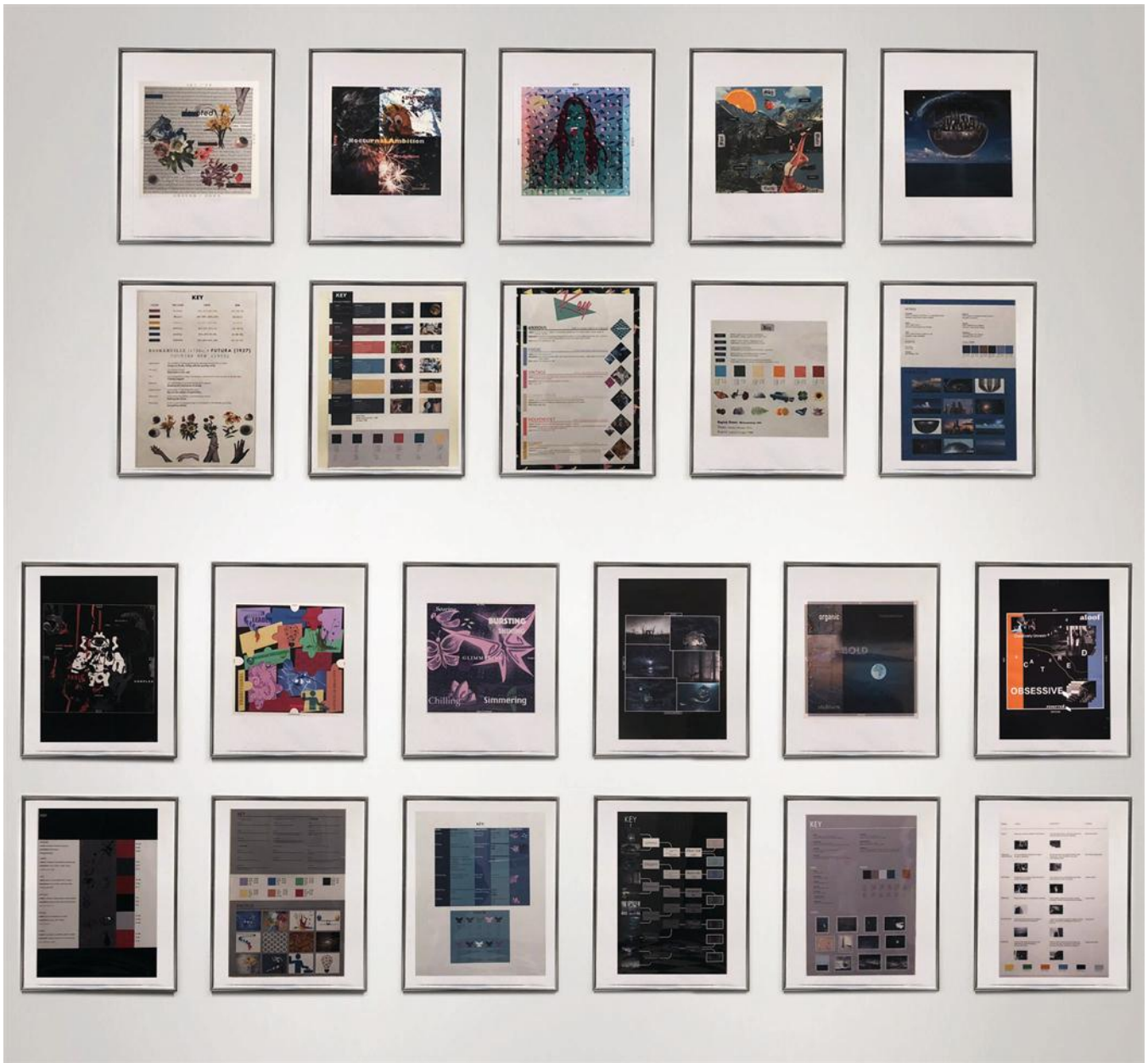
Resurgence
Digital C-print, 24" x 36"

DEREK DIGNAN
ALEXANDER DONNELLY
TATIANA DONNELLY
R FERARI
ALICEN FRANCO
MACKENZIE GIBSON
FATIMA KHAN
MADISON MUSGROVE
KAYLA PACENKA
CAROLINE PREWITT
DEVINA SHARMA

The “Self-Reflective Personality Matrix and the Key” is a Senior Art Seminar class project that parallels the methodology of corporate branding. Corporate branding delivers design solutions to content the client provides. These design solutions are realized in the applications i.e. logos/signage.

The procedures for the execution of design solutions are stated in the branding guide lines. In the “Self-Reflective Personality Matrix and the Key” the form and content are determined by the personality of each student.

This content is graphically realized within the Matrix poster. The Matrix is an enclosed square of specifically predetermined influences, i.e. up/heaven/down/hell. The accompanying Key poster is the identification and de-construction of all the graphic elements employed in the Matrix.



The Self-Reflective Personality Matrix and The Key
Digital Prints, 13" x 19"

ABOUT THE HEWITT GALLERY OF FINE ART

The Hewitt Gallery of Art, located in the main esplanade and adjacent Black and White galleries, is a laboratory for and an extension of the pedagogy of the Art and Art History Department. In addition, it is an alternative exhibition space for contemporary art of emerging, mid-career, and established artists displaying a wide variety of media and styles. The Gallery provides opportunities for art majors and minors to gain first-hand experience in exhibiting their capstone and junior work, for students to curate and organize shows in conjunction with the Gallery Director and for faculty and alumni to present current work to the community.

Hallie Cohen | *Director of the Hewitt Gallery of Art*

Catalogue design by KellyAnne Hanrahan. Photos by Jerry Speier.



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