

SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Congratulations to our graduate students in the 13th Annual Master of Fine Arts Graduation Exhibition! Since its inception, more than 100 students have been featured in this cooperative venture between the Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) and the School of Art and Art History. Students begin planning their contributions to the exhibition a year prior to the opening. They fully appreciate and value this opportunity to work with CAM's professional staff.

For at least three years, these exceptionally imaginative students have engaged our distinguished faculty and endured challenging critique sessions as well as sleepless nights preparing for semester reviews. They have stretched well beyond their initial perceptions of what art could be and its impact on an audience.

The MFA at USF is acknowledged as a premiere program among its peers nationally. Its uniqueness resides in a demanding curriculum of studio practice and research coupled with critical studies seminars in the history of art and elective courses throughout the disciplines of a major research university.

Faculty welcome the prospect to connect with our students, responding to new concepts and working as collaborators as well as guides to uncover fresh dimensions in the forms, objects, performances and images that are created. Our valued staff provides resolve and ingenuity in solving formidable problems, from bureaucratic labyrinths to one-of-a-kind projects—especially so with this eclectic group of emerging artists.

The MFA program offers every graduate student the opportunity to work in any medium or materials and to select from among our eminent faculty for directed study contracts. Virtually unheard of at other institutions, this open invitation to explore, experiment and discover, leads to startling and innovative outcomes. The fruit of this philosophy toward graduate art studio practice, along with a varied student body from throughout the nation and beyond, endows this exhibition with the delightful and provocative staging of new art.

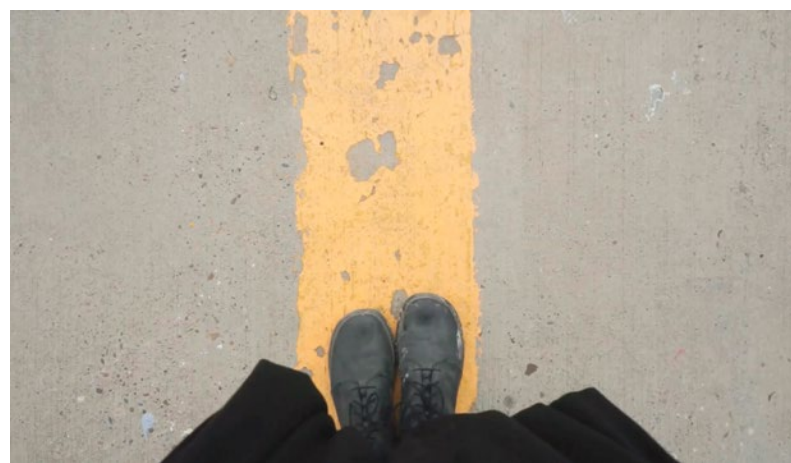
The unorthodox nature of many of the works has generated extensive consultation and cooperation between the museum staff and our students. We offer our gratitude for assisting these artists in realizing their envisioned realities and developing this exhibition.

And, again, congratulations to our graduating MFA students! The graduate studio experience affords the time and community to expand ideas about art and oneself, and the relationship of the two to the larger world. The University has benefited from your presence and we extend our sincere best wishes.

Wallace Wilson, Director and Professor
USF School of Art and Art History



James Mastroni, *Songs by Our Eldest Brother One*, 2018



Laura Kim Meckling, *here | there, apparently nowhere*, 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The USF Contemporary Art Museum is proud to present *Extra Butter*, the 13th *MFA Graduation Exhibition* to take place in its galleries. The eleven artists in the 2019 class have brought fresh perspectives and ambitious horizons to their exhibition, the culmination of their research in the three-year Master of Fine Arts program of the USF School of Art and Art History.

The annual MFA show is always a great experience for the museum faculty and staff—it is gratifying to see how the students have grown and developed in their artistic practices since they first came to USF. CAM is a platform for the artist's voice, and we work diligently to provide the students with all of the assistance they require to best achieve their artistic visions. Their work tends to be very energetic, highly experimental and risk-taking, and it is, frankly, a lot of fun to work with them and see the exciting results. In turn, in conceptualizing, planning, mounting and interpreting their installations, the students acquire valuable practical skills and an introduction to museum best practices and standards, which will serve them well in their professional careers.

The opportunity to exhibit their work in an accredited art museum is just one of the many ways in which CAM contributes to the students' learning experience over the course of their studies. Our exhibition program brings outstanding contemporary artists, curators and works of art from all over the world to campus and to the Tampa Bay area. Along with lectures, symposia, talks, publications and other related educational events presented to illuminate and expand the meanings of the exhibitions, the museum provides opportunities for research in its permanent collection, graduate assistantships and internships.

The extraordinary collaboration between CAM and the School of Art and Art History in creating this exhibition is the key to its success. My thanks to the faculty and staff of the School of Art and Art History, particularly Wendy Babcox, Associate Professor and Graduate Faculty Advisor; Julie Herrin, Office Manager; Maureen Slossen, Program Specialist and Graduate Advisor; and Wallace Wilson, Director.

The faculty and staff of the Contemporary Art Museum all contribute in vital ways to the exhibition. Tony Palms, Exhibitions Designer and Coordinator, collaborates with the students to create the overall design. Chief Preparator Vincent Kral, Curatorial Associate Eric Jonas, and staff Jessica Barber, Angel Poulos, and Annalieth Garzon work closely with each individual student to develop optimum installation strategies. Shannon Annis, Exhibitions Manager and Registrar, introduces and maintains best museum standards and practices. New Media Curator Don Fuller and Graphic Designer Marty de la Cruz guide the students in the publication process. Curator of Education Leslie Elsasser provides a forum for the artists' voices. Many thanks to Amy Allison, Program Coordinator; Events Coordinator Alyssa Cordero; Chief of Security par excellence David Waterman and



Christian Cortes, *restroom play area*, 2018

security staff Adam Bakst, Gillian Olortegui, Olivia Gasparoni, and Zoe McIlwain-Morrison; and student assistant Ashley Jablonski and interns Kayleigh Hunter and Lingyi Yang. Members of the Institute for Research in Art have also contributed to the effort: Margaret Miller, Director; Randall West; Sarah Howard; Kristin Soderqvist; Will Lytch, and Mark Fredricks.

Finally, I salute and thank the graduates Pat Blocher, Christian Cortes, Christopher Evans, Muriel Holloway, James Mastroni, Laura Kim Meckling, Carola Miles, Eric Ondina, Jason Pinckard, Taylor O. Thomas, and Jake Troyli for sharing their extraordinary research with us. We wish them every success in their surely bright futures.

Noel Smith, Deputy Director
Institute for Research in Art



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Hours: M–F 10am–5pm, Thurs. 10am–8pm, Sat. 1–4pm
CAM is closed Sundays, USF holidays, and between exhibitions.
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Extra Butter

MFA 2019



MARCH 29 - MAY 4, 2019 // USF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM

Pat Blocher // Christian Cortes // Christopher Evans // Muriel Holloway // James Mastroni
Laura Kim Meckling // Carola Miles // Eric Ondina // Jason Pinckard // Taylor O. Thomas // Jake Troyli

