# 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 design. Chief Preparator Vincent Kral, Curatorial Associate Eric Jonas, and Mark Fredricks. and staff Jessica Barber, Angel Poulos, and Annalieth Garzon work strategies. Shannon Annis, Exhibitions Manager and Registrar, guide the students in the publication process. Curator of Education us. We wish them every success in their surely bright futures. Leslie Elsasser provides a forum for the artists' voices. Many thanks to Amy Allison, Program Coordinator; Events Coordinator Alyssa Noel Smith, Deputy Director Cordero; Chief of Security par excellence David Waterman and Institute for Research in Art



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, Coordinator, collaborates with the students to create the overall Director; Randall West; Sarah Howard; Kristin Soderavist; Will Lytch,

closely with each individual student to develop optimum installation Finally, I salute and thank the graduates Pat Blocher, Christian Cortes, Christopher Evans, Muriel Holloway, James Mastroni, Laura introduces and maintains best museum standards and practices. New Kim Meckling, Carola Miles, Eric Ondina, Jason Pinckard, Taylor O. Media Curator Don Fuller and Graphic Designer Marty de la Cruz

Thomas, and Jake Troyli for sharing their extraordinary research with







### CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM University of South Florida

4202 East Fowler Avenue, CAM101 Tampa, FL 33620-7360 USA

Hours: M-F 10am-5pm, Thurs, 10am-8pm, Sat, 1-4pm CAM is closed Sundays, USF holidays, and between exhibitions. cam.usf.edu | (813) 974-4133 | 24-hour info (813) 974-2849 | caminfo@admin.usf.edu



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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

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### PAT BLOCHER | OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA

### B.A. (2012) University of California - Los Angeles, California

Blocher transforms tools, materials, processes and their body to describe the theatrical nature of identity. Their installation at CAM includes photography, video, sculpture, and light works made in response to and with byproducts of their experience as a sex worker.

### CHRISTIAN CORTES | UTUADO, PUERTO RICO

### B.F.A. (2016) The Art Institute of Tampa - Tampa, Florida

By blending research on queer theory, masculinity, and culture, I create collections of objects and photographs that stand in for anecdotes of my personal history. Seductive materials are intimately arranged at various scales with the intention of evoking desire and, at the same time, bringing awareness to the abstracted perimeters of gender roles. Each work puts into question the fluid ideas of sensuality, modesty, and vulgarity. I can't help but question: When does a benefit become a burden? And is the need to fit in greater than the need to express one's natural state?

My studio practice is heavily influenced by the queer experience and fueled by my own experience with gender identity and the repeated, failed attempts at measuring up to idealized masculine figures. I have developed an implicit visual language based on gender semiotics, opting against an explanatory body of work. While my content is inherently political, my means of display are intentionally pleasing, inviting, and able to sidestep overt political confrontations. This choice to artistically and personally "fly under the radar" relates to my interest in how homonormativity can allow gay men the privileges that come with the straight male stereotype.

### CHRISTOPHER EVANS | SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK M.A. (2016) University of Albany - Albany, New York

### MURIEL HOLLOWAY | OCALA, FLORIDA

### B.F.A. (2016) Ringling College of Art and Design - Sarasota, Florida

Memories are often associated with the collection, encoding, storage and retrieval of information or data that we use to navigate through life. Memories are an integral part of self. They are an enigma because they are constantly altered through the relay of information and data that we are absorbing from our ever-changing environments.

My work is about combining elements of materiality with memory. Using childhood memories as fuel, I challenge myself to confront and re-conceptualize the relationships between my memory and objects within the domestic space. While grappling with wistful memories, I attempt to fabricate hybridized objects that consist of bread, found objects and childhood detritus that coalesce past and the present.

### JAMES MASTRONI | BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

## B.S. (2016) Southern Connecticut State University - New Haven, Connecticut

My recent work addresses how sound is being used to create an image of a commodity for today's capitalistic structures. I have become concerned with how sound is being used to control people. Most of the noise we hear is generating revenue. These noises are masks hiding the truth of what is actually going on. If something is enjoyable, I question, should we enjoy it? Is there an ulterior motive behind it? This sparks several other questions. Why cover our webcams for privacy when we do not cover the microphone generate advertisements we are forced to view online in the digital realm. is our reaction. Have we thought about this? Our laughter is captured and canned to be used again. Someone's first experience with a song is through a product or advertisement, its original intent is lost. Should this bother us?

Christopher Evans, Some days I have no fucking clue what I am doing or

if I am even an artist, 2019

Pat Blocher, FFS Exercise I, 2019

### LAURA KIM MECKLING | SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA B.A. (2014) Florida International University - Miami, Florida

A.P.P. (2015) Film and Motion Picture University (FAMU) - Prague, Czech Republic ERIC ONDINA | TAMPA, FLORIDA Identity checkboxes: Asian-American, female, and citizen of the USA (with a valid passport). From June 01-June 15, 2018, I was privileged to walk across 44 legal points of exit and entry between the United States of America and the United Mexican States, and successfully processed through 39 US Customs and Border Patrol Stations.\* The gesture of systematically crossing the border, one by one, out and in, investigates the parameters of freedom for one individual (identity listed above), as border lines are being crossed, simply to be crossed. I walk across boundaries to engage with the reality of the individual by way of absurdity, tragedy, and humor. conditions of division, in an attempt to understand and process the physical and psychological structures of borders that govern our freedoms, and to JASON PINCKARD | PENSACOLA, FLORIDA highlight what is at stake for those who cannot move freely from here to B.F.A. (2014) University of West Florida - Pensacola, Florida there, or there to here, wherever that may be.

critiqued on your photographs, I felt conflicted that the experience was one of delight, because 'secondary' can be a moment of sheer terror for some: While trying to explain how art does not always include an object and can simply be an experience or a gesture, the border patrol agent taking notes, just below it? Our movements, speech, and surroundings are captured to stopped to ask, "How do you spell, what's that word you said, 'ephemeral'?"

### We go to performances for entertainment. They are being recorded, but so CAROLA MILES | SANTIAGO, CHILE

### B.F.A. (2010) West Virginia University - Morgantown, West Virginia

My paintings are representative of my quest to find coherence between spatial relationships, the material and the spiritual. The methodological details that give my work energy and determination allow spectators to examine my personal identity as an artist.

### B.F.A. (2013) Florida State University - Tallahassee, Florida

I see my work as a reflection, tirade, and interaction with the paradigmshifting chaos of our times. I focus on the discrepancy between the ideal of the neo-liberal democratic order vs the reality experienced by the individual. Through painting, I explore the factors which influence the individual psyche and ponder the causal relationship between the singular person and the collective. In performance, I attempt to theatrically impact

I make photographs using dust, waste, and bits of debris I find in my

\*Placed only once in what is referred to as 'secondary holding,' everyday environment. Combining these materials with multilayered where you are asked additional questions about your 'purpose' and light and appropriated imagery, I construct works in which organic and





Muriel Holloway, Untitled (Bread Body 1), 2019 (photo: Laura Kim Meckling)



Carola Miles, You never left, 2019

# Jason Pinckard, [ Zerstreuung :: Tornado on Mars ], 2018

Eric Ondina, Miss 911, 2019

**CHRISTIAN CORTES** 

don't tell, 2018

fag blooming, 2018 archival inkjet

All works are courtesy of the artists.

PAT BLOCHER Cum Shield, 2019 light stand, clamp, acrylic, projection 25 x 15 x 15 in.

FFS Exercise I, 2019 single-channel video, projection 10 x 15 x 3 in. (projection); 2 min. video loo

smart phone, tripod, power cable, projection dimensions variable

Untitled (signature), 2019 cardboard, marker, projection 13 x 9 in. yeast, flour, sugar, salt, olive oil, and wood 60 x 48 x 18 in.

> The Things I Do For Love, 2019 bread and steel 36 x 22 x 18 in.

Today.Tomorrow.Always., 2019

CHRISTIAN CORTES cont.

when he does his shaky rokin' dance

Man, I haven't got a chance, 2018

go make some "guy friends", 2018-2019

he is a biter; a pillow biter, 2018-2019 paraffin wax, silver leaf, inkjet print or canvas, vinyl fabric Songs by Our Eldest Brother Two, 2019

egg tempera emulsion on canvas 29 1/2 x 24 in. Department, 2019 egg tempera emulsion on canvas 19 x 29 1/2 in.

How to disappear completely,

here | there, apparently nowhere, 2019

Some days I have no fucking clue what I am doing or if I am even an artist, 20 This land is your land this land is my

Honey, you should sit down for this.,

**CAROLA MILES** 

Songs by Our Eldest Brother One, 2018 Mom, is that you?, 201

LAURA KIM MECKLING Breaking the 180-degree rule, June 2018 You never left, 2018 length of the US | Mexico border:

20 x 36 in. (projection); 225 min. video loop performance documentation on digit

land, this land is my land, this land is

Chris's World, 2019

egg tempera emulsion on canvas 18 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. Corinthians 7-11, 2019

**Duelism**, 2019

Hands Up, 2019

Hulofatime, 2019

egg tempera emulsion on board 24 x 36 in. The Intersection, 2019 egg tempera emulsion on board 24 x 18 in.

American Exemptionalism, 20

Copious Clouds :: Wild Dissonances inkjet print on polyester canvas 114 x 84 in.

Crumbling Equilibrium :: Beyond Wha

inkjet print on polyester canvas 114 x 84 in. Thou Unstill :: Vortex of Drives, 2019

inkjet print on polyester canvas 114 x 84 in.

IASON PINCKARD KVI ETIMBERMAN Ceaseless Tides :: In Slow, Slow Motion, 2019

TAYLOR O. THOMAS On This Stone, I Do I Do, 2019 acrylic, pastel, and collage on canva 68 x 60 in.

Our Time as Told by Inches, 2019

acrylic, oil, oil stick, and collage on canvas canvas 72 x 60 in. 84 x 120 ir

A Splintered Light, 2019 acrylic, pastel and collage on canvas 80 x 68 in.

The next best thing to Napoleonic, 2019

Dancing Denial, 2019

Flat Lavender, 2019 Forgotten Windows, 2019

Rituals on N. Perry Ave. 20

Skins That Sag, 2019

Wading, 2019 West End's Willow, 2019

Hangman, 2019

ramed by a Flashlight, 20

verybody Glows in the Dark, 20

In Exchange for a Compliment, 2019
It Grows That Way, 2019

Room for Angels Who May Not Exist, 2019

So You Want to Be an Astronaut, 2019

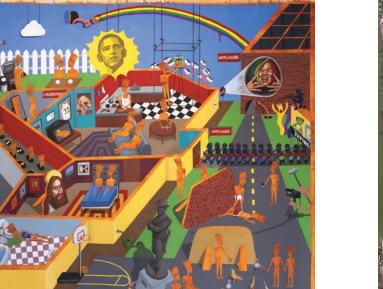
Where Sun Slipped Through, 2019

ink, oil, oil stick, pastel, pigment, and

ligh noon at Ranchland®, 20°

watercolor crayon on canvas various dimensions ranging from 10 x 8 in.

# restroom play area, 2018 Perish the Thought, 2019 Songs by Our Eldest Brother Three, 2019 24 x 36 in. paraffin wax, silver leaf, inkjet print on Chipped Companion, 201





Jake Troyli, Shhh...this is the best part!, 2018

JAKE TROYLI I SAINT PETERSBURG, FLORIDA B.A. (2013) Lincoln Memorial University - Harrogate, Tennessee My work is about (mis)representation, performance, otherness, and my

sometimes answers) that arise when we let ourselves be present.

inorganic fragments, industrial and cultural detritus, and manipulated

matter disperse and coalesce simultaneously, held in static yet energetic

tension. Through high resolution scanning I enlarge scale to move beyond

the limits of human perception, reorienting typical encounters with the

commonplace. I seek to create compositions that accentuate the colors,

marks, shapes, lines, and textures of these materials, with the hope that

viewers discover the traces of a meaningful past, present, and future

desire them to be generative, eliciting some key notions to the fore of

consciousness: vast temporality and spatial scale, shared materiality

and interconnectedness, the entanglement of matter and meaning,

the inseparability of nature and culture, the aftermath of desire and

consumption, and sheer aesthetic power. Through evoking the near and

far, the personal and impersonal, the deep past and inevitable future, I

simply search to render the fibers of collective being palpable and deepen

A painting may begin with a gesture I've borrowed from a dilapidated wall,

cracking street, draping telephone wire, or slanted pole. It then continues

based on the things that jolt my attention within my studio walls.

Exemplary contenders include my accumulating paper scraps, discarded

tape, or leaning tower of paint pints. I am mining for forms that approach

"rightness" and "wrongness" at the same time. The resulting images are

comprised of rigid layers of paint and studio residue. It is through abstract

marks that I make manifest my experience of moving-awkwardly,

and preserving tactile expressionism and mental presence amid a culture

of speed, accomplishment, and unending clicks and scrolls. Though

my works are rooted in a desire to unify self-expression with ongoing

discovery, the optical and emotive qualities of each surface are meant to go beyond my singular experience. Providing a space where the physical,

mental, and emotional meet is key to allowing others the same mind-

body connection that I depend on to create. How do we each define our

personhood? What constitutes contemporary expression and the modes

by which we achieve it? Why does the physical mark matter now? My

paintings are launching points for viewers to consider the questions (and

My practice hinges upon gestural painting as a way of extending

constantly, reflexively, and connectedly—through the world around me.

I do not aim for my pieces to convey specific ideas but

within each visible scrap, shard, and remnant.

the mystery of our quotidian experience.

TAYLOR O. THOMAS | BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

B.A. (2012) Davidson College - Davidson, North Carolina

place in the history of painting. My work is about the commodification of race, culture, struggle, outrage, and my body. Appropriating motifs from both the classical and the comic, my paintings exist in a space that defies and subverts immediate categorization. Instead, I recast uncomfortable truths with an appetizing palette, welcoming my audience in for an experience that is unexpected, but ultimately unavoidable.