

UC San Diego

Graduating MFA Exhibitions

Title

History of the Present: Artists from the MFA Program UC San Diego

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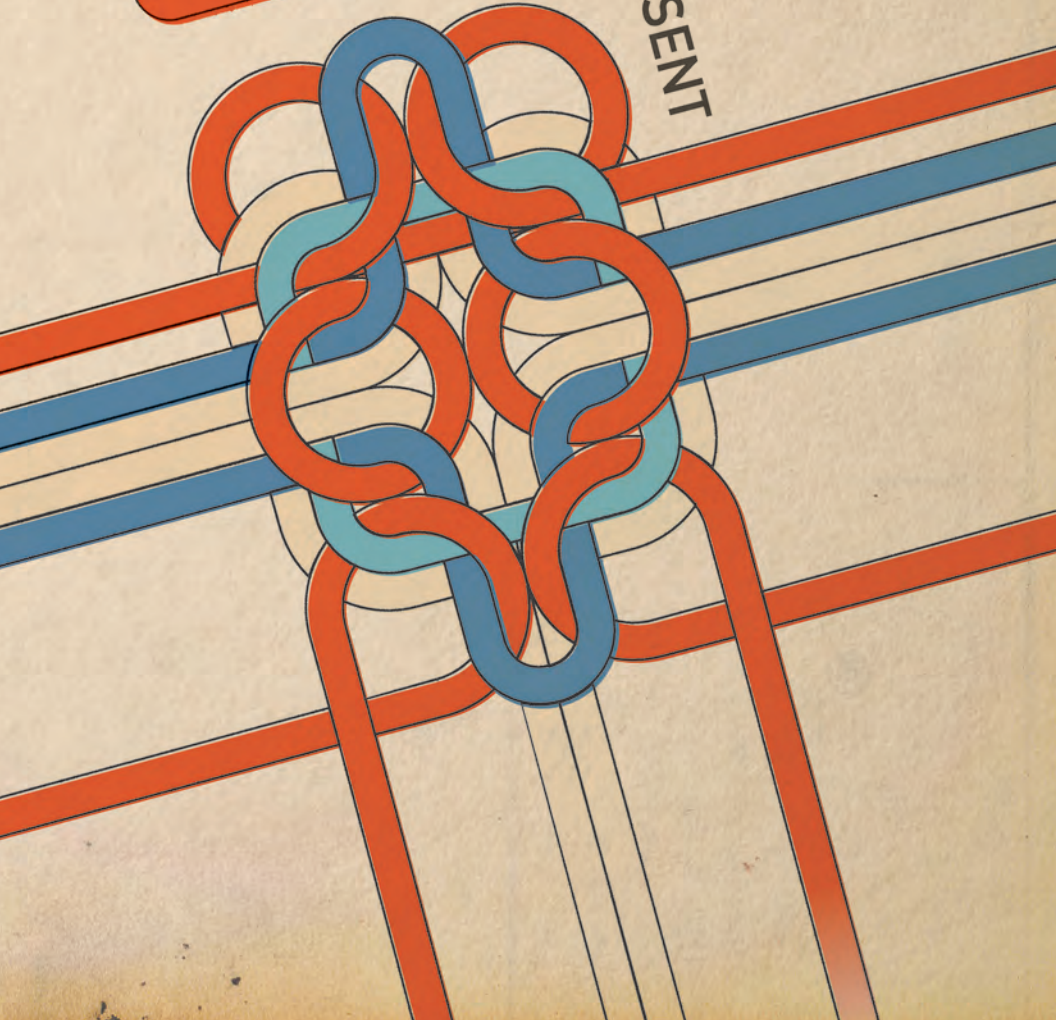
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UCSD

MFA 2020

HISTORY OF THE PRESENT

Ana Andrade
Sister Chapman
John Dombroski
Guillermo Estrada
Mateus Guzzo
Ryne Heslin
Yubin Kang
Zara Kuredijian
Asa Mendelsohn
Maya Grace Misra
Nathan Vieland
Kevin Vincent
dana washington-queen



HISTORY OF THE PRESENT

Artists from the MFA Program UC San Diego

4/18/2020-5/27/2020

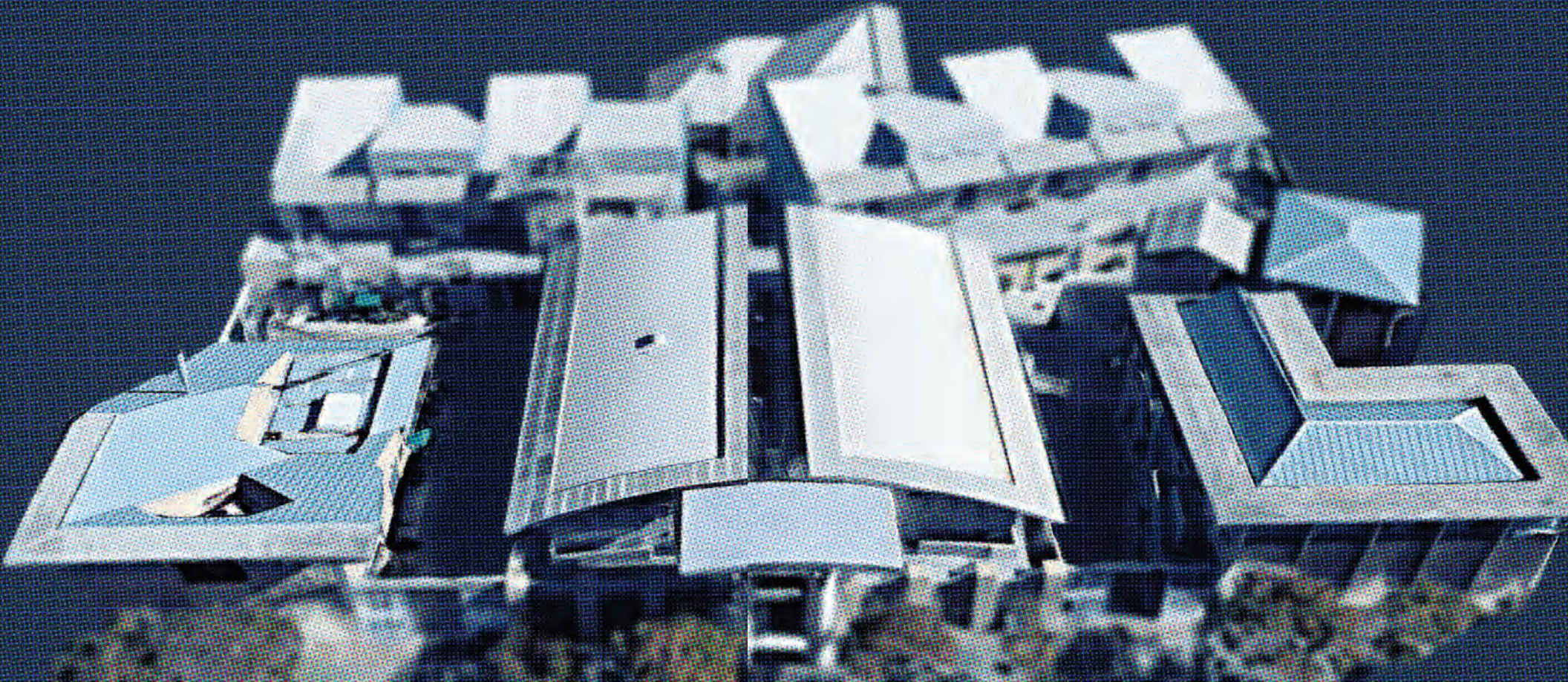
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego

Downtown

1001 Kettner Blvd.

San Diego, CA 92101

Art History, Theory and Criticism PhD Students Tiffany Beres and
Alexandra Nicholls with MCASD Associate Curator Anthony Graham



The History of the Present

by Tiffany Beres and Alexandra Nicholls

I would like to write the history of this prison, with all the political investments of the body that it gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present – Michel Foucault

What does history have to do with contemporary art? When artists use history as part of their art making process, it encourages audiences to confront the idea that history is a construction. When artists reconsider past events, they're not so much returning to another time and retrieving material or events. Instead, they are restaging those events in the here and now in order to think about the present.

This group exhibition of artists graduating from the UCSD MFA program takes its title from philosopher Michel Foucault's expression "history of the present," which appears in the first chapter of *Discipline and Punish* (1975). In this seminal text, Foucault proposes a history of the Western penal system, illuminating the relevance of studying the past to understanding present power relations and politics. Foucault points out that the past can become a lens to better understand the present—that exploring historical trajectories allows for a better understanding of the contingencies of the present. This is also true for the history of art. A critical analysis of this history, as it is constructed and researched, can alter our observations of contemporary phenomena, opening our eyes to hidden facets of history previously overlooked and taken for granted. Paying particular attention to troublesome, underrepresented and forgotten pasts, these artists are linked by an overarching social agenda: to identify and transform engrained social systems by developing or revising historical concepts. Falling into three distinct categories of historical inquiry, each artist employs a unique strategy for understanding major issues and developments in contemporary life.

ARCHIVAL PROCESS

One category of historical inquiry that brings together several artists in this show is the archival process or more specifically, the way in which

artists research, catalog, and examine historical materials as a fundamental part of their artistic practice. Mateus Guzzo, for example, is interested in organizational structures. As a kind of meta-analysis, Guzzo documents the planning and organizing this exhibition by systematically creating a newspaper of how it came together using the text and image artifacts of this show's development. Working with both photography and ethnography, Yubin Kang researches the interconnectedness of the world by visually archiving milk production and consumption between the US and China. By physically going to these places and visually documenting the repercussions of these networks through her camera, Kang sheds light on a history that most are oblivious to. Maya Grace Misra traces the violent histories that affected the foods we eat today. Her archaeological process of dredging up the often-neglected past is reworked into a eye-opening retelling of food culture. Ryne Heslin is interested in exploring museum philanthropy and the topic of private vs. public funding. He researches and displays the resumes of Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD) board members as a way of refocusing attention to how public institutions are funded. By looking to research-based strategies to unearth historical phenomena that often go unseen, this group of artists make the archaeological process a fundamental part of their work. With each systematic investigation, these artists uncover hidden conflicts and contexts of the past as a means of reevaluating the contemporary experience.

VIOLENCE AND POWER

Mechanisms of power are important considerations in identifying and analyzing histories of bodies, class, governing structures, and social struggles. Several artists in this exhibition confront the violence enacted on certain peoples via various social, political, and economic systems. Kevin Vincent employs both organic and industrial materials, looking to the body as a site where violence occurs. Using severed tree trunks as representations of corporeal forms, these objects are bound by rope and other materials, restricting and obstructing their exterior. Referencing the human form as a key point of speculation for corresponding acts of violence and power. Continuing with the body as a point of critical speculation, Asa Mendelsohn looks to the ways in which human bodies are socially and culturally constructed. His three-channel, silent video

installation describes an encounter with a skinhead-narrated via subtitles from three different perspectives. Exploring the intersection between white supremacy and masculinity, Mendelsohn addresses ideas of “passing” and how the presence and absence of the human voice relates to perceptions of whiteness and masculinity. Also taking into consideration perceptions of the human form, Sister Chapman looks to the transgender body as a source for historical and contemporary contemplation. Her looped video references a scene from the 1992 film *Basic Instinct*, showing the artist uncrossing her legs, at which moment a small mirror is revealed. Through this gesture, Chapman reclaims gendered dichotomies of concealing and revealing. This work confronts underlying harmful perceptions that are placed on the trans, feminine body by implicating the viewer and their expectations. Delving into constructs of violence and power on a broader scale, Nathan Vieland takes up the topic of war and militarism as historical entities of power. Using the medium of animation to illustrate the gruesome effects of battle, his looping video speaks to war as a never-ending historical tool for obtaining and maintaining power, and points to the use of video games as recruiting platforms, in which the game itself transforms into a source of control. In order to illuminate aspects of race, gender, and representation, and how such topics are affected and influenced by histories of cultural oppression, Dana Washington-Queen explores the intersections between experimental film, documentary practices, and theoretical writing. For example, her work *Untitled (I Know The Lord Will Make A Way, Oh Yes He Will)* uses performance in the form of a gospel blues composition, organized in a poetic structure to emphasize utopian wishes. By mining histories of violence and power, these artists create outlets for deconstructing said histories, and provide opportunities for breaking away from harmful cycles of oppression that occur within the present.

GEOLOGY/PLACE/SPACE

The present that we experience at any given moment does not always coincide with the present experienced by a given community or nation, and this concept is at the forefront of these artists’ minds. In order to conjure physical and theoretical conceptions of “space,” artists in this category look to geographic notions of place, delving into various cultural and biological histories of a particular region. Ana Andrade focuses on the Yucatan region of Mexico, extracting material samples from caves and bodies of water throughout the area that were created in the aftermath of a meteor. After examining these samples via microscopic technology, their structural forms

are then photographed, and a series of mappings are projected onto them, highlighting the interconnection between these spaces, and the region more broadly. Also placing an emphasis on geographic location, Zara Kuredjian’s work investigates bodily relationships to material and site. By employing geological and materialist lenses as entries into layered histories, she connects notions of physical history to contemporary culture. Using material agency as a foundation for the development of her practice, Kuredjian’s works are often multi-sensory and invite viewers to reflect on their relationships to time and place. Taking up the histories of constructed spaces, John Dombroski’s light and sound installations are informed by the vibrations and movements that occur within a location at any given moment. Using microphones and lenses, he creates interactive, site-specific systems that activate architecture and found objects. Investigating the ways in which our audiovisual and cognitive systems produce sensory experience, Dombroski excavates the social and material histories embedded in everyday experiences. Guillermo Estrada, whose work centers on a practice he refers to as “Aliendigenismo,” probes into the idea of what it means to exist in an interstitial space that is designated by national and international boundaries. Focusing on border regions between Campo/Tecate, Calexico/Mexicali, and San Diego/Tijuana, this idea of Aliendigenismo, for Estrada, is to be in multiple realms of geographical, conceptual, and cosmic frameworks simultaneously. In examining the intersection of culture and location, his work reveals the multifaceted nature of human existence more broadly. These artists recognize that “space” needs to be produced and re-enacted, not merely as a subjective experience, but as a tangible reality established alongside those who share in a particular present. Their work posits that an analysis of the present requires a dislocation from space as it is experienced—from where we are in a particular moment, and from the physical cues that define the reality we belong to.

Escaping the traps of conventional historiographies, each artist in this exhibition utilizes a visual language to explore a “history of the present” in an effort to address and transform contemporaneous realities. Scandalous, thought-provoking, humorous, and/or profound, the artists in this show regard “history” as a part of their toolbox of instruments designed as a means of working on specific problems and furthering certain artistic inquiries. Here, history is not an intellectual end in and of itself, but rather a building-block for a grand theoretical edifice for those of our present day to experience and enjoy.

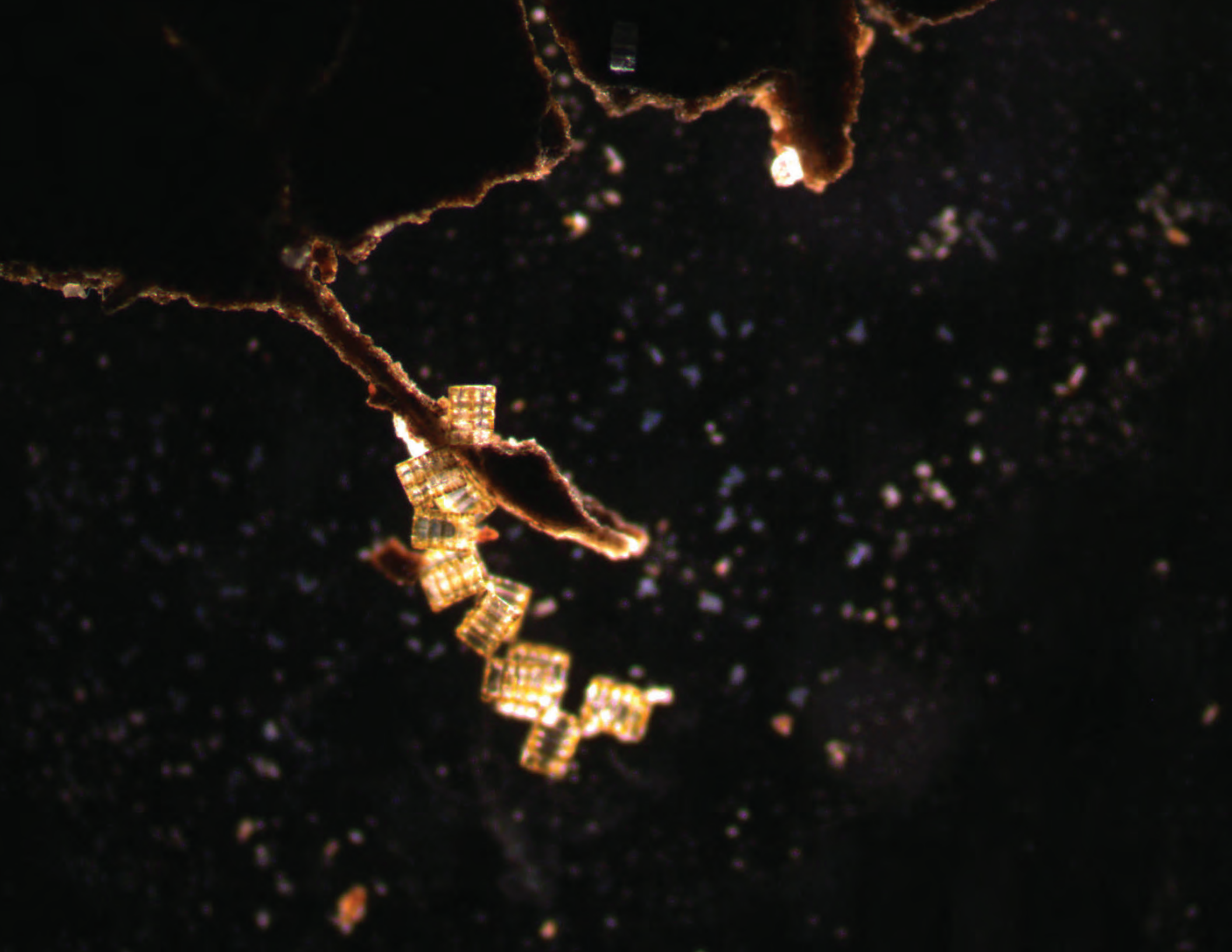
Ana Andrade
[US-MX, born 1987]



Ana Andrade uses photography, video, text and objects to document her world, which she experiences in two scales, the broad scale of the social documentary and also the micro scale beyond the naked eye. In both cases she is interested in what she calls "vital displacement" –the physical, psychological, textual, biological, geological, genealogical experience of being in our world. Her process involves a series of anthropological experiments, often utilizing scientific tools and experiments.

In *Chicxulub*, Andrade is interested in the effects of meteors, these objects from outer space that crosses the atmospheric layer towards earth. By capturing the waters of the Yucatan Peninsula where Chicxulub is known to have collapsed, her work challenges us to think about the origins of life and the reverberations of macro cosmical events on history in multiple scales, including the ancient Mayans who believe in another dimension of life after sacrifice in rock water wells that were formed after this asteroid impacted on earth.

Chicxulub, 2016 - ongoing
Digital photomicrography
39 x 24 in.



Sister Chapman

(American, born 1995)

Sister Chapman is a Southern California-based artist who investigates notions of self as subject/object. Drawing from personal and cultural archives, her practice contemplates intimacy, desire, and relations of power through writing and film making. *The camera doesn't care about your desire* (2020) is a video piece that reframes the infamous genital reveal in the 1992 film *Basic Instinct* through a transfeminine lens. By simultaneously occupying the role of object of desire and subverting the genital reveal through the use of a mirror, the artist acknowledges the desire for transfeminine bodies while refusing to indulge the viewer's curiosity, even mocking it.



The camera doesn't care about your desire, 2020
video still

Roots growing in the pipes
Twisting around my legs in the bathtub
Smooth like intestines
Submerged
Let me be your hydroponic lover
There is mold on the tiles
Turn on the shower and watch yourself disappear in the mirror
Become entangled with me, lying here in the damp darkness

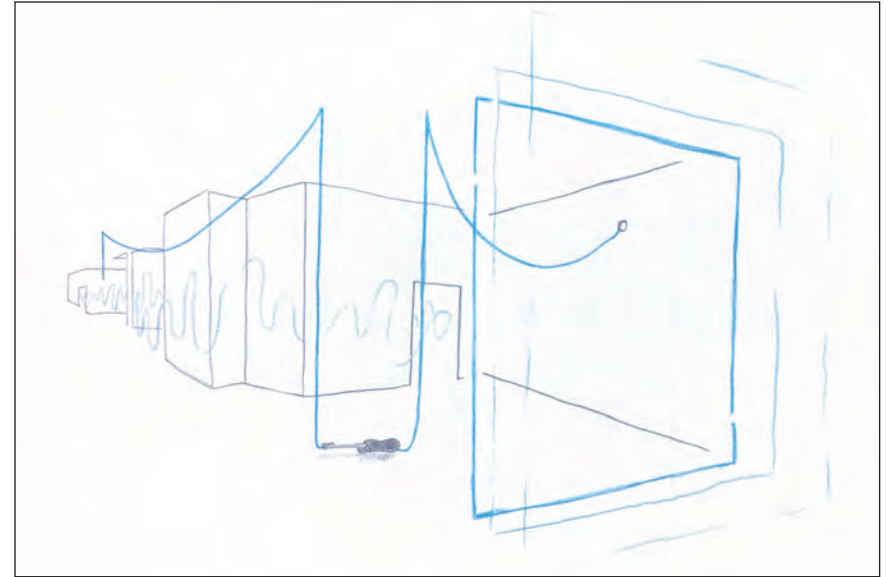
Watching the lone daffodil slowly wilt on my vanity
Will it be dead before I see you again?
The yellow becomes darker, deeper each day
Once translucent, a fragile tint
Drooping petals like the fresh, wet wings of a butterfly emerging
from her chrysalis
You smell clean, but the odor doesn't linger
I wish I could smell you on my sheets
In my hair
My bed has never felt empty before



John Dombroski

(American, born 1989)

John Dombroski works with sound and light to create experimental music and site-specific installations. Using microphones and lenses, he creates interactive physical systems that connect and activate architecture and found objects, investigating the ways in which our audiovisual and cognitive systems produce sensory experience. By reorienting sonic and visual perspectives, Dombroski highlights the social and material histories embedded in our experience of the everyday. In his piece *Sad Song, for Now*, conversations and activity in the gallery are channeled through the body of an open-tuned guitar and heard as an ever-changing song, audible both inside and outside the building. Sound from the gallery passes through a microphone and resonates the body of an electric guitar, suspended face-down, just above the floor. The guitar strings' vibrations are heard through the gallery window which is outfitted with a contact speaker, activating the glass as an audio amplifier.



Drawing for *Sad Song, for Now*, 2020

Colored pencil on paper
11 x 14 in.



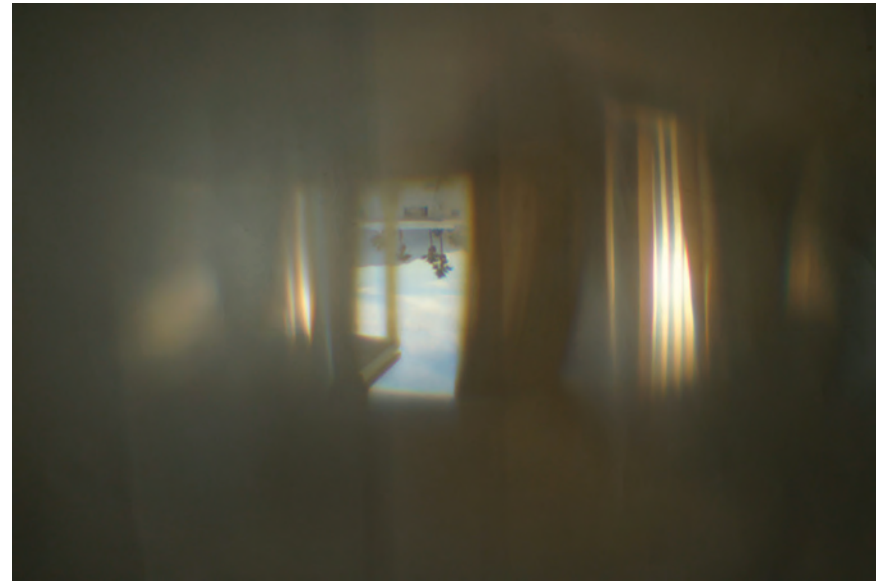
Vanishing Point #23 (2016 – 2020), 2020

Color print
18 x 14 in.



Vanishing Point #24 (2016 – 2020), 2020

Color print
18 x 14 in.



Untitled (Light Moments) Sandpiper Inn, 12/25/2017, 3:59:58 PM, 2018
Color print, 23 x 15 in.



Previous page
Drawing (After 1920), Installation detail

Window, 2018
Installation detail.



Guillermo Estrada

(Aliendigena, 1979)

Guillermo Estrada's practice combines a series of Mexican and North-American pop-cultural references with Kumeyaay and Christian mythological elements into a series of cosmic, auto-historia, trans-dimensional, multimedia objects and live music and stage act performances. These stem from an understanding of tradition as an ongoing process as opposed to a static form. In this sense, Estrada's work follows what modernist music composer Gustav Mahler said: "tradition is the handing on of fire and not the worship of ashes," and both reinvigorates and actualizes these cultural traits simultaneously, opening up possibility for an active dialogue of mutable, shared understandings across cultures, geographic regions, space, and time. For Estrada, this is an alternative way to grapple with the experience of living in the region of Campo/Tecate, Calexico/Mexicali and San Diego/Tijuana, a practice that he refers to as "Aliendigenismo," that is, to be in more that one side of geographical, mental, and cosmic limits, all at the same time. This mythology is equally as important as the factual components of traditional understandings of the history of the region. Through this practice, Estrada hopes that others may be able to recognize aspects of Aliendigenas in themselves and their personal and ancestral histories.

Following pages:

Aliendigena 204-791-799, 2019

Duct tape, wood, Formica

48 x 42 in.

Simbolos Aliendigenas I y II, 2018

Duct tape, wood.

48 x 48 in.

Rancho Shampoo y la Alberca de Lava

Photo credit: Salvador Parada

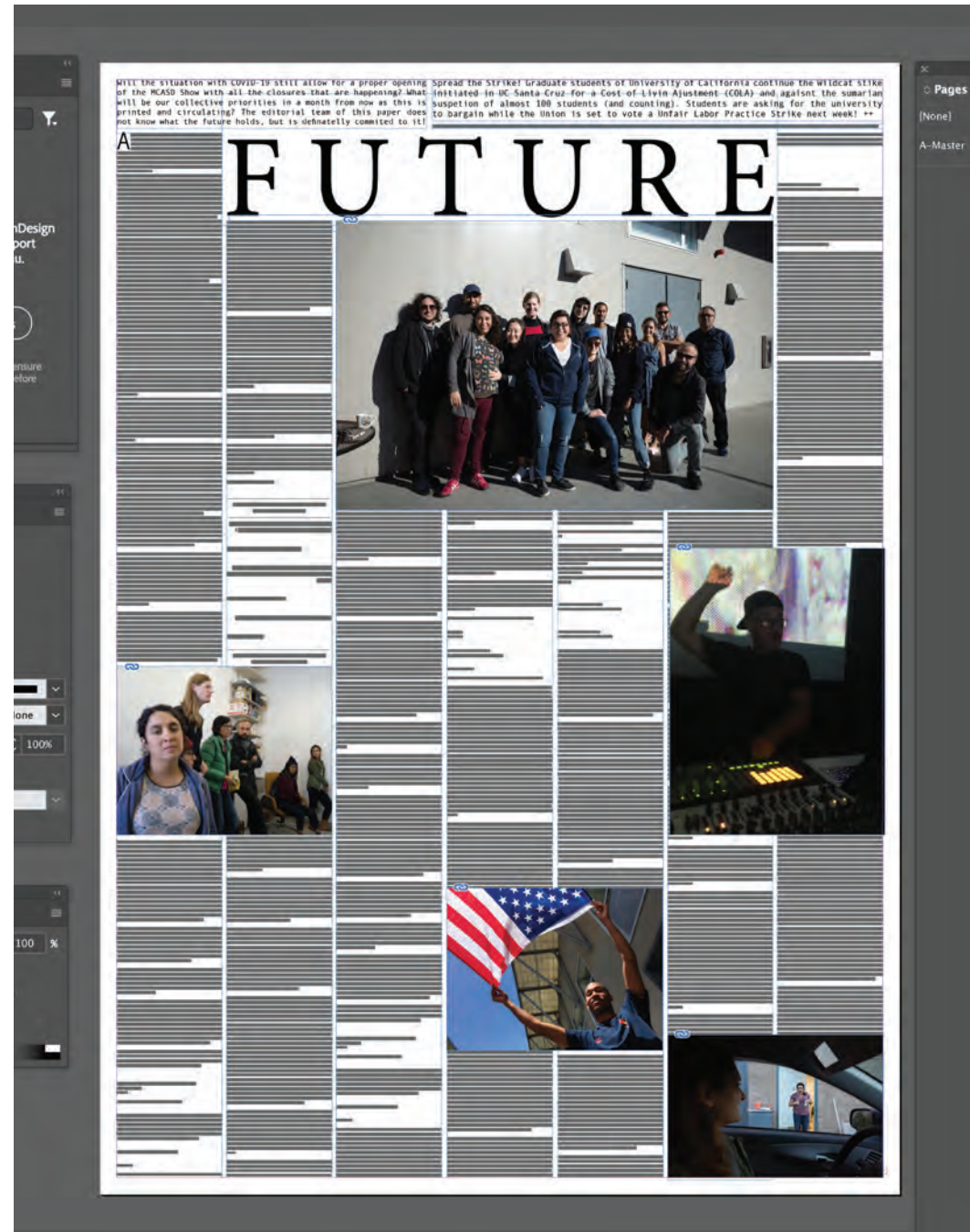


Mateus Guzzo

(Brazilian, born 1992)

Mateus Guzzo, also known as 'Gonzo', has a love/hate relationship with institutions. For this reason, his practice oscillates between the design of sociotechnical collaboration systems and tactical media production oriented towards social organizing. *Future Number 2* [working title] is a newspaper-format media apparatus that gives context to the production, interpretation and archival of the MFA 2020 Thesis Group Show. Organized text and images as metacommentary renders the conditions of production inside academia and the 'art world' visible, focusing on the distance between the fetish of the artist and the actuality of art as labor. Working as a hand-out and as public posting, the news-grid addresses the past as a question posed from the present towards a collectively imagined future.

Other works like *B.A.R. (Bureau of Artistic Research)* and *LACES(D)* conference for a Latin American Centered Speculative Design challenge the site-specific protocols of University of California San Diego, while fostering diffusion of science and public space occupation. *Third World Manager*, concomitantly, is a narrative non-fiction film about innovation cultures in the Amazon.



Bureau Of Artistic Research [B.A.R.], 2019
Community-art happening

Newspaper Design, Future Number 2, 2020
Screenshot



Third World Manager (still), 2018
 Creative non-fiction film. 70 minutes, color.



4 LACES(D) Conference poster, 2018

Ryne Heslin

(American, born 1987)

Ryne Heslin's research-based practice attempts to map the constellation of material and ideological artifacts responsible for shaping us as subjects. Working within a range of media, Heslin organizes commonly found objects, signifiers, and/or data points in ways which explore the emergent relational networks within and between the viewer, the component parts, and himself. In *Board of Trustees (Excerpt)*, Heslin focuses on the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD), highlighting the private individuals and industries that perpetuate San Diego's art world. After poring over public records, Heslin has highlighted three of MCASD's Trustees as avatars of the city's three largest industries: military, technology, and real estate. The resulting profiles serve as a microcosmic example of the public sphere's continued dependence on the patronage and interests of wealthy individuals and private industry.



Board of Trustees (Excerpt) (Detail), 2020
Acrylic Signs, Transparency

Worlding: Semiosis & Nested Reality (Detail), 2018
Installation





Yubin Kang

(Chinese, born 1992)

Yubin Kang is a research-based artist working in documentary photography. Her projects focus on place, agriculture, and resources and consumption infrastructures. Her previous projects have explored markets and farms in and around Shanxi, China, where she was raised, and in East Sussex, near where she attended university. Her work, *America's Water, China's Milk (TBC)*, uses photography to understand natural or man made "resources" that have been consumed, utilized and transformed in local and global trade. Although centered on the trade of alfalfa, a water-intensive crop exported from Southern California to Taiyuan, a city in China, it is not just about alfalfa, but the incredible amount of water that is used in its production and being virtually "sold" to China, and the requirement of fresh milk for every family in China as well. In this trade, water and fresh milk are seen as valuable resources for U.S. and China respectively, their values are profoundly measured by its local impacts. What has been overlooked, however, is how these resources can be transformed, and therefore, bring significance to the other side of the world. Viewers are encouraged to speculate regarding the fluid boundaries between the US and China that are formed by water and milk, to think about the utilization of resources with or without national boundaries, and to understand how individuals consume resources (water, labor, energy) within the environment of global trade.



Sunday afternoon, a lady refills drinkable water for her family. El Centro, California, 2018
Digital photography, 30 x 50 in.



One of 52 stores owned by Jiuniu Private Ranch selling fresh dairy products within the city. Taiyuan, China, 2019
Digital photography, 30 x 50 in.



"This amount of alfalfa can only sustain for 3 days of our farm due to the ongoing trade war". Taiyuan, China, 2018
Digital photography, 30 x 50 in.



Pouring water from a milk carton of a local dairy shop. Taiyuan, China, 2019
Digital photography, 30 x 50 in.

Zara Kuredjian

[Armenian-American, Born 1990]

Zara Kuredjian's interdisciplinary practice focuses on installation, sculpture, performance, and photography to investigate bodily relationships to material and site. She often employs geological and materialist lenses as an entry into layered histories connected to these investigations and their ties to contemporary culture. Materials, such as soil, clay, metals, glass, and water are important within her practice and material agency is a paramount consideration for how works are developed. The works are often multi-sensorial and establish platforms for a participant to wonder about one's relationship to time and place. The series Portal touches on material and perceptual relationships to the cosmological. This piece is part of a series of objects that focus on architectural openings found in monasteries spread throughout the Armenian Highlands.



Untitled 1 (Caves series), 2019
Digital Print
24 x 36 in.



Portal, 2020
Digital Print on Wood
50 x 50 in.
Sandcast zinc columns, dimensions variable



Untitled 2 (Caves series), 2019
Digital Print
24 x 36 in.

Asa Mendelsohn

[American, born 1990]

Once camera averse, over the past few years, Asa Mendelsohn has begun to embrace his phobia, by using cameras as tools for examining conditions of alienation, closeness, and liminality. *Chests* is a series of short, silent videos that explore relationships between voice and text, and dynamics of white male aggression across place and time. On-screen text recounts a shocking run-in with a skinhead at a bar in Queens, but the artist then questions what is really "shocking" about this encounter. Associational thinking unravels a complex set of identifications. Asa's moving image work and writing often focuses on personal relationships and desire as ways to navigate seemingly inaccessible infrastructure, histories, and systems of power. His process is diaristic and relational: inward and outward looking.



Chests, 2020
Still frame, 4k video, 1:32 - 2:49 minutes



Chests, 2020
Still frame, 4k video, 1:32 - 2:49 minutes



Chests, 2020
Still frame, 4k video, 1:32 - 2:49 minutes



Maya Grace Misra

[American, born 1991]

Maya Grace Misra utilizes photography, miniature painting, and video installation to investigate repressed historical narratives. Stemming from a lifelong obsession with flags, she has found that these symbols are most often a representation of the institutional framework surrounding a particular place—a design created by people in power that serves to assert or brand the idea of a place, its people, and its culture. Acting as a gross conflation of groups, flags often reduce a diverse set of values, racial backgrounds, and interpersonal experiences to a single visual form consistent with colonial control. Even when flags are not explicitly present in her artwork, they have guided Misra in considering the ways in which images serve to reaffirm dominant historical narratives, while erasing other lived realities. In her most recent project, *America's Harvest Box*, Misra uses photography, text, and video installation work to reveal the effects of United States military occupation on food practices around the world. One of the primary manifestations of this project, a series of cooking videos, situates the kitchen space within various sites around San Diego as a means of tracing a global footprint of U.S. imperialism, while at the same time tying institutional violence to the individual through questions of consumption, trauma, and consent.

Protective Retribution (Philippines, 1898–present), 2018
Inkjet Print
20 x 30 in.





Forever (Thanksgiving), 2015
Gouache on paper
1 x 3/4 in



Previous page
Nuclear Control Tactics (Marshall Islands, 1944-present), 2019
Inkjet Print
20 x 30 in.

Forever (Tule Lake Internment
Camp), 2016
Gouache on paper
1 x 3/4 in.

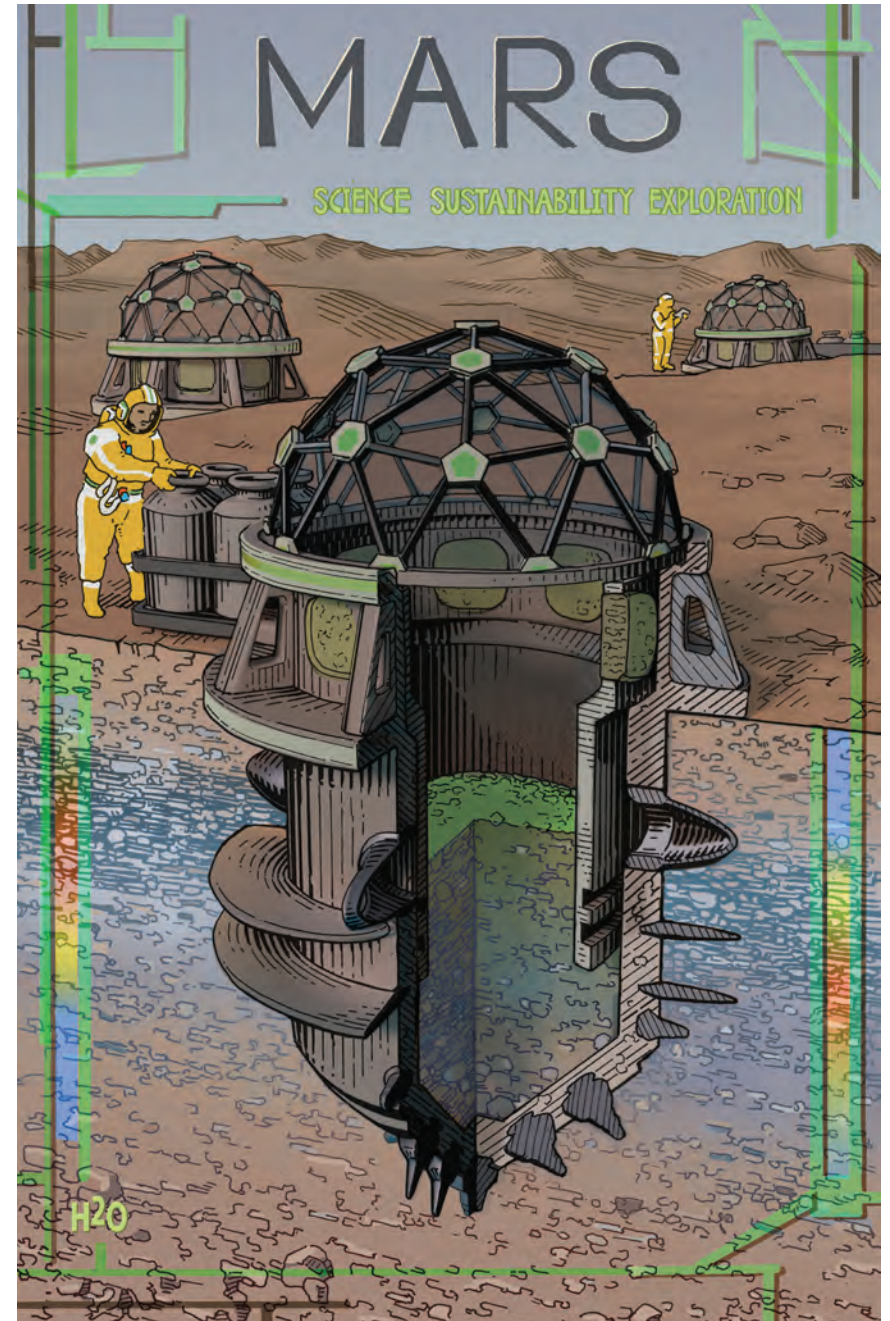
Nathan Vieland

[American, born 1986]

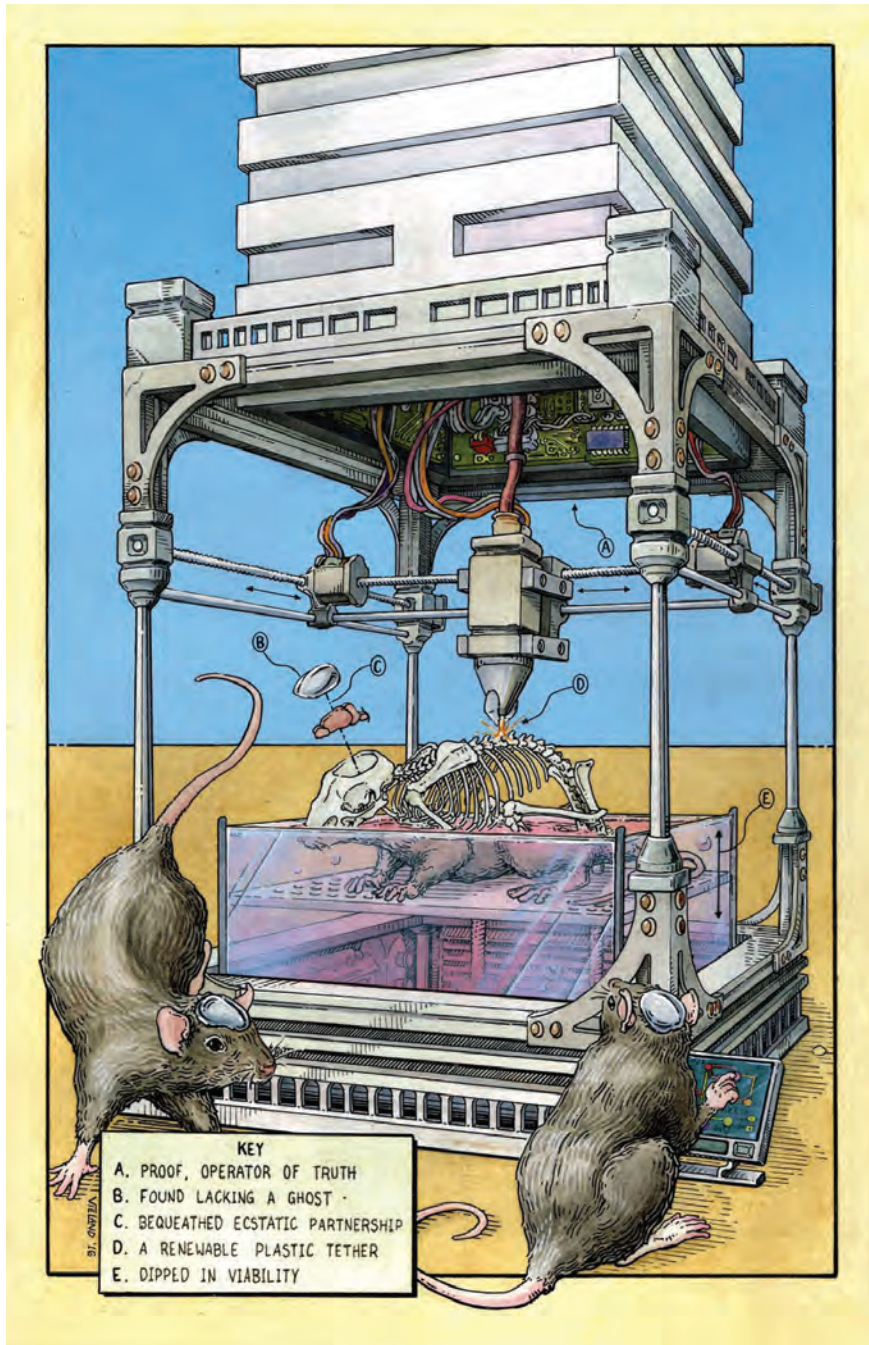
Nathan Vieland adapts stylistic elements from his former profession as a patent illustrator into his illustrations and animations. He adapts stylistic elements from Surrealism and vignette illustration into computer generated animation and virtual environments. The Sur- prefix, meaning over or above the real, is used to examine difficult issues from a playful visual realm. In his CGI animation, *War Loop*, he takes up the medium of the video game as a powerful recruitment tool and battle simulator. Establishing an allegory of the military quagmire, this work brings up topics of war, violence, and control that current history is reluctant to write of.



Warloop, 2018
Digital animation



Martian Algae Chamber, 2018
Digital and Pen Illustration
11 x 17 in.



Ecstatic Partnership, 2016
 Watercolor and acrylic on paper mounted to board
 11 x 17 in.



Service Bird, 2016
 Oil on Paper mounted to board
 11 x 17 in.

Kevin Vincent

[American, born 1992]

Kevin Vincent is an artist working primarily with sculpture and assemblages that utilize found trees and charged materials, such as rope, leather, bone, stones, ash, and copper, to investigate the relationships between people of color and materials that have historically been used to harm or instill fear. Does reworking materials that represent aspects of this historical trauma, somehow change this relationship to violence? Vincent explores this and other questions surrounding memory, history, growth, perseverance, and integration through the physical act of combining materials that represent the body and materials that represent trauma. Each of his assemblages not only offers a unique way to visualize this trauma, but also offers a way for individuals to deal with it.



"Reconstruction" - One Whole Bush, 2020
Organic materials and Rope, Installation



"Untitled", 2020
Organic materials and Rope
60 x 36 x 36 in.



Rope Experiment Detail, 2020
Organic materials, Rope, and Spray Glue
12 x 3 x 36 in.

dana washington-queen

[Black, born 1985]

dana washington-queen is an artist whose work intersects experimental film and documentary practices, portrait photography, prose-poetry, and theoretical writing. Research interests include black feminist scholarship, black aesthetics, queer theory, and film theory to examine negotiations of race, gender, sexuality, language, and representation. Thematically, washington-queen explores narratives within black sociological histories, cultural expressions, and sites of memory and fiction.



Untitled (I Know The Lord Will Make A Way, Oh Yes He Will) is a three-channel video exploring geographic and cultural movement of song through embodied performance. The archival footage shifts between renditions of Eugene Smith's "I Know the Lord Will Make A Way, Oh Yes He Will" (1941) to emphasize performance, embodiment and meaning. The gospel blues composition follows a four-line poem structure, with a narrative hinged on utopian wishes – hope and reassurance, common motifs in black political and cultural expression. In conjunction with the video, *Untitled (Dreams Are Transitory Things)* is a custom fabric banner that explores the immateriality of anticipation through religious iconography. The text phrase derives from a comparative exegesis of Hebrews 11:1, "Kitchenette Building" by poet Gwendolyn Brooks and "Dreams" by artist Solange, each work being entangled in the intangible.

Untitled (I Know The Lord Will Make A Way, Oh Yes He Will), 2020
Digital Video
6 minutes 55 seconds



Circular Metafictions, 2020
Digital Video
Duration Variable



Untitled (Dreams Untitled (Dreams Are Transitory Things), 2020
Fabric, Rope
36 x 20 in.

MCASD CHECKLIST

MFA SHOW 2020

The History of the Present

Ana Andrade

[US-MX, born 1987]

Chicxulub, 2016 - ongoing
digital photomicrography print
39 x 24 in.

Sister Chapman

[American, born 1995]

The camera doesn't care about your desire,
2020
single-channel video

John Dombroski

[American, born 1989]

Sad Song (America Plaza, MCASD), 2020
microphone, cables, amplifiers, transducers,
electric guitar, MCASD window, and continuous
sound

Guillermo Estrada

[Aliendigena, 1979]

Aliendigena 204-791-799, 2019
Duct tape, wood, Formica
48 x 42 in.

Simbolos Aliendigenas I y II, 2018
duct tape, wood, Formica, concrete, and leather
48 x 40 in

Mateus Guzzo

[Brazilian, born 1992]

Future Number 2, 2020
newsprint

Ryne Heslin

[American, born 1987]

Board of Trustees (Excerpt), 2020
Acrylic Signs, Transparency

Yubin Kang

[Chinese, born 1992]

**Sunday afternoon, a lady refills drinkable
water for her family. El Centro, California**,
2018
Digital photography, 30 x 50 in.

**"This amount of alfalfa can only sustain
for 3 days of our farm due to the ongoing
trade war". Taiyuan, China**, 2018
Digital photograph, 30 x 50 in. each of 2

Zara Kuredjian

[Armenian-American, Born 1990]

Untitled 1 (Caves series), 2019
Digital Print
24 x 36 in.

Portal, 2020
Digital Print on Wood
50 x 50 in.

Asa Mendelsohn

[American, born 1990]

Chests, 2020
4k video, 1:32 minutes

Chests, 2020
4k video, 1:50 minutes

Chests, 2020
4k video, 2:49 minutes

Maya Grace Misra

[American, born 1991]

**Protective Retribution (Philippines,
1898-present)**, 2018
Inkjet Print
20 x 30 in.

America's Harvest Box, 2018
inkjet print
20 x 30 in., each of 3

Nathan Vieland

[American, born 1986]

Warloop, 2018
Digital animation

Kevin Vincent

[American, born 1992]

"Reconstruction" – One Whole Bush, 2020
Organic materials and Rope, Installation

"Untitled", 2020
Organic materials and Rope
60 x 36 x 36 in.

dana washington-queen

[Black, born 1985]

**Untitled (I Know The Lord Will Make A Way,
Oh Yes He Will)**, 2020
3 Channel Video, 6 minutes 55 seconds

**Untitled (Dreams Untitled (Dreams Are
Transitory Things)**, 2020
Fabric, Rope
36 x 20 in.

For the past five years, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego and the Visual Arts Department at UCSD have joined forces to mount an exhibition celebrating the MFA program's graduating cohort. The collaboration has provided an opportunity to highlight the work of each artist, representing their individual time in the program while also staging a dialogue between peers. Planning for the 2020 exhibition began late 2019. Over the following months, the curatorial team—including Art History, Theory, and Criticism PhD students Tiffany Beres and Alexandra Nicholls, and myself—met with each artist to select works and plan for the installation of the show.

The History of the Present was slated to open at MCASD Downtown in April 2020, featuring works by Ana Andrade, Sister Chapman, John Dombroski, Guillermo Estrada, Mateus Guzzo, Ryne Heslin, Yubin Kang, Zara Kuredjian, Asa Mendelsohn, Maya Grace Misra, Nate Vieland, Kevin Vincent, and dana washington-queen. In the weeks leading up to the exhibition, however, the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic caused both the Museum and University to dramatically alter daily operations and programming. On March 14, 2020, following the recommendation of the California Governor, MCASD closed its galleries to the public for an indefinite period of time, resulting in the cancellation of the show. Fortunately, this publication helps document the spirit of the exhibition and the effort of its organization, thanks to the tremendous contributions of the artists, the curators, MCASD staff, and UCSD faculty.

-Anthony Graham, Associate Curator, MCASD

This collaboration has been an exceptional opportunity for which we are truly grateful. Thank you to the staff at the MCASD and the UC San Diego Department of Visual Arts for making this exhibition possible. A special thanks to The David C. Copley Director and CEO Kathryn Kanjo, UC San Diego Visual Arts Professor Anya Gallaccio, Visual Arts Professor and Chair Amy Adler. Congratulations Class of 2020!

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