

2020 Virtual Thesis Exhibition TA^S_C at DePaul University Senior Studio Seminar



Virtual

Thesis

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DePaul University
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Department of Art, Media, & Design
(The Art School)

2020 Senior Studio Seminar Thesis Virtual Exhibition

**Featuring work by : Nicolina Balazs, Shelby Beasley,
Jasper Belew, Dalton Campbell, Paige Hall-Petry,
Anna Petersen, Megan Phillips, Lauren Terranova,
Rebecca Vichi, and Francesca Vitale**

Catalog designed by Erin and Grace Carigan

**ART 392 Senior Seminar Studio Practice Faculty –
Laura Kina, Vincent de Paul Professor The Art School
and Director Critical Ethnic Studies**

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Introduction | Acknowledgements

This catalog features the work of 10 DePaul seniors enrolled in ART 392 Senior Seminar Studio Practice from Spring 2020. Our students faced extraordinary physical and emotional challenges amidst the COVID-19 pandemic to bring these creative expressions to life. Our class was held remotely online as students began their quarter sheltering-in-place across Chicago-land as well as San Francisco and St. Paul, Minnesota. Their works are a testament to this moment in history as students recorded their pain, grief, fears, and disorientation while others shared what sustains them and gives them hope. The students found socially distant ways to reach out to each other to create community and care for each other. As our class of 2020 leaves DePaul, I hope that they will continue to make art to envision, dream, and fight for a better future.

We are deeply grateful to our Mary Ann Papanek-Miller, Department Chair, and Mildred Santiago, Office Manager for prioritizing the health and well-being of our students and providing us with leadership and support during this unprecedented crisis. We also thank our studio manager Ellie Wallace who placed over 500 art supply lists during the first week of class for the department –including individualized supply lists that were shipped to each one of my students! In addition, I would like to thank my fellow faculty members for teaching and mentoring our students and advising them towards completing their projects for this class. Thank you also to Associate Professor Zack Ostrowski for overseeing the department student graphic designers, Erin and Grace Carigan, who designed this catalog.

Laura Kina, Vincent de Paul Professor in Art, Media, & Design and Director Critical Ethnic Studies

June 8, 2020

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Nicolina Balazs

Nicolina Balazs is a Chicago-based illustrator, conceptual artist, and graphic designer who studied at DePaul University with a focus on studio art and specialty in drawing and painting. She has created illustrations, logos, and merchandise for both freelance clients and volunteer opportunities. In the future, she wishes to do illustration and visual development work for publishers and entertainment studios.

Nicolina Balazs | Artist Statement

*For the music is your special friend
Dance on fire as it intends
Music is your only friend
Until the end
Until the end
Until the end*
“When the Music’s Over” The Doors

(Sweet) Music for Memory and Isolation exists as a collection of abstract representations of music from the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Growing up listening to such music because of my parents and loving it, I wanted to visualize some of my favorite songs from Journey, Fleetwood Mac, Whitney Houston, and more. During quarantine, I have been listening to music from a number of artists across multiple genres, hoping to find some sort of comfort in an intense period. Throughout the process, a few songs were chosen simply because I enjoy them, but majority of them were chosen because they make me think of a person or memory. I have not seen much of my friends or family in a while, of course, so I wanted to create something that would remind me of them while illustrating how music and memory are so intertwined. With this, I sought to create multiple, medium-sized pieces using digital media. Lyrics, mood and tone of a song, live performances, and more helped to shape the overall composition of the pieces. Working through abstraction and freedom from figuration allowed me to simplify my thoughts and feelings into fields of form.

It seems as though music not only has healing properties, but it can also aid in bringing people together. This is especially the case when a sense of isolation is so prevalent in our current lives. Often when stumbling upon a new song or artist I know friends would like, I let them know and use the opportunity to spark a conversation. During the pandemic, musicians have been doing live streamed concerts with people from all over the world watching, sometimes even pairing with charity groups, helping to create a sense of community for even just a brief moment of the day. Ultimately, it is with these works that I wish to engage with not only those within DePaul’s art community, but people who enjoy music as much as I do, or just about anyone who is willing to take a look. Like the artists previously mentioned, I also aim to echo a similar feeling of community with my own pieces. Discussions about the works or music can, too, initiate a conversation that may help to relieve the uneasiness that many may be currently feeling. In the end, it is my hope that in developing this concept into one cohesive collection of works I am not only creating something that is important to me, but fulfilling as well.

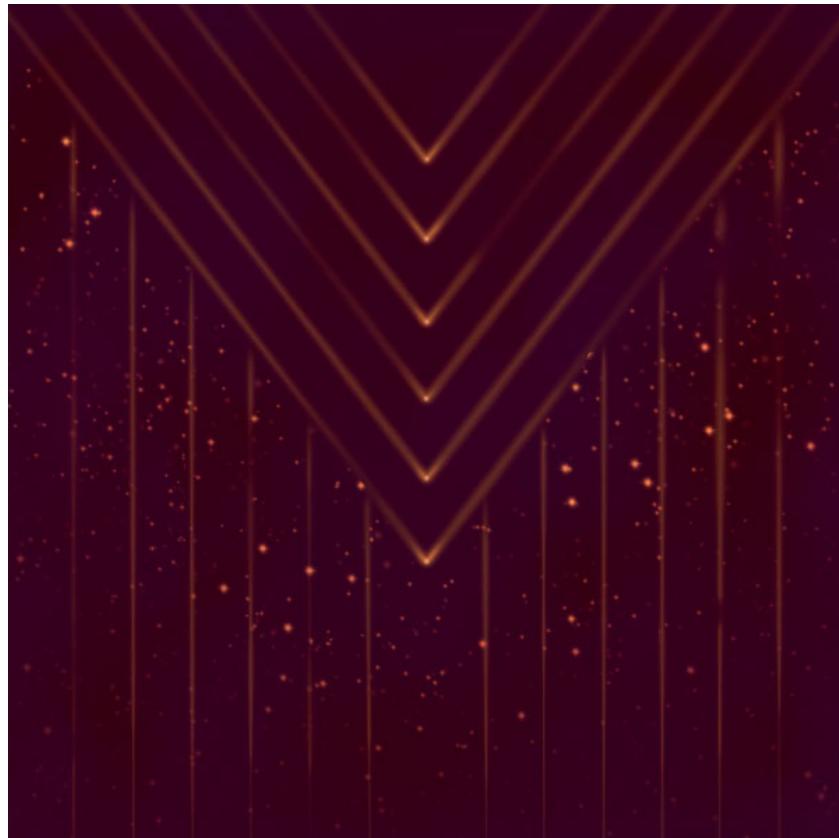
Nicolina Balazs, (Sweet)
Music for Memory and
Isolation, 14 digital
illustrations, 12 x 12 in.
each, 2020.



DAZED AND CONFUSED



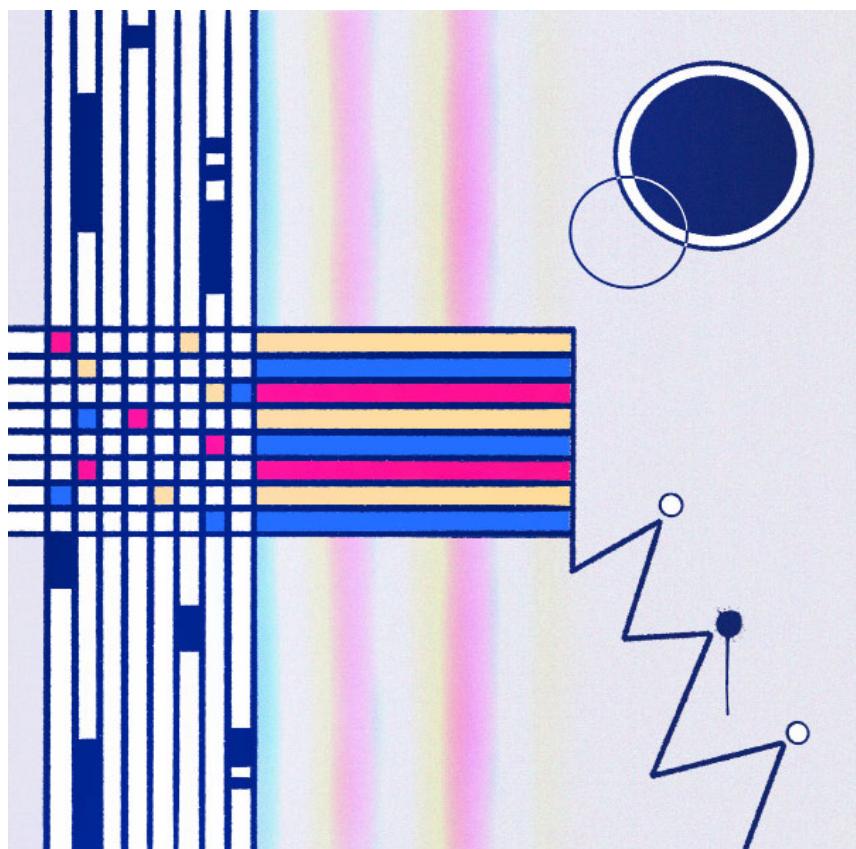
THE CHAIN



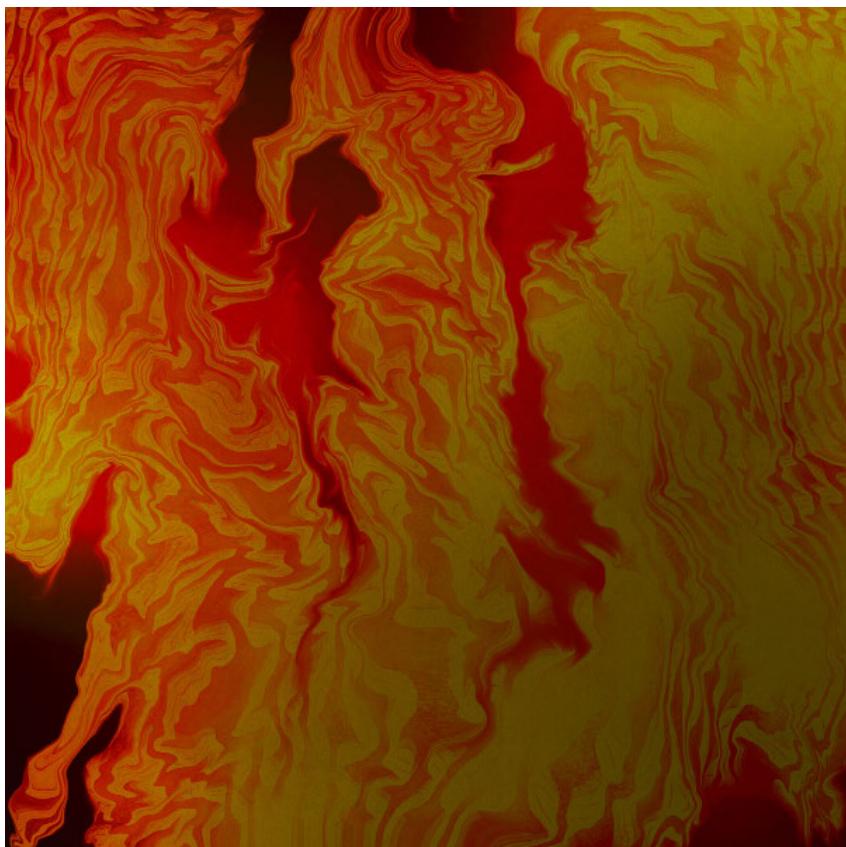
JOLENE



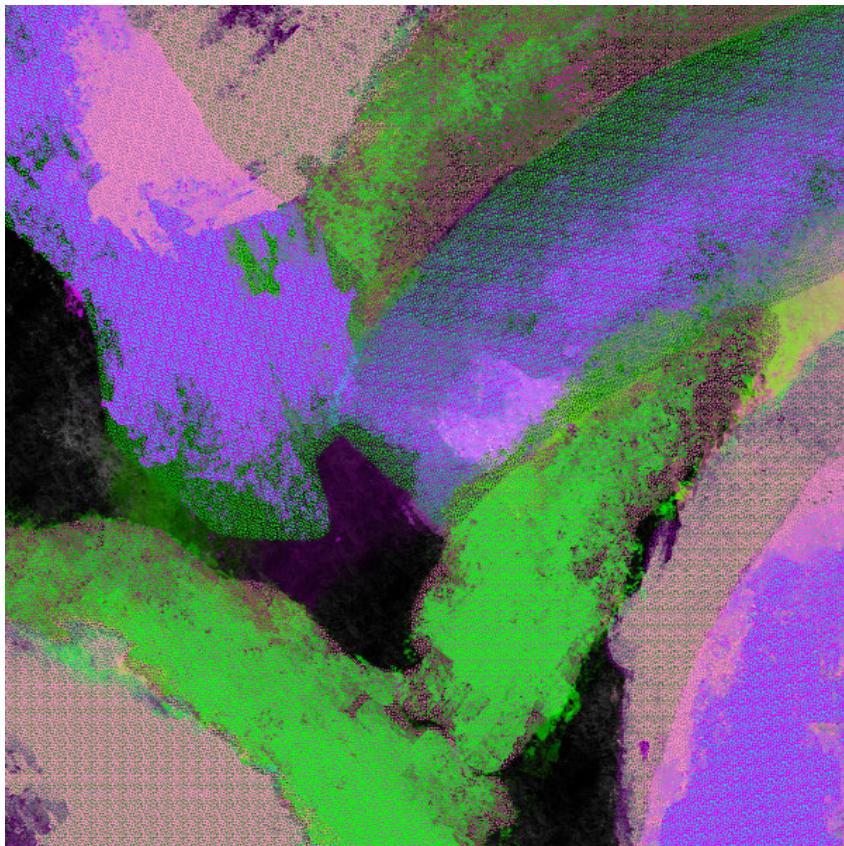
HEART OF GLASS



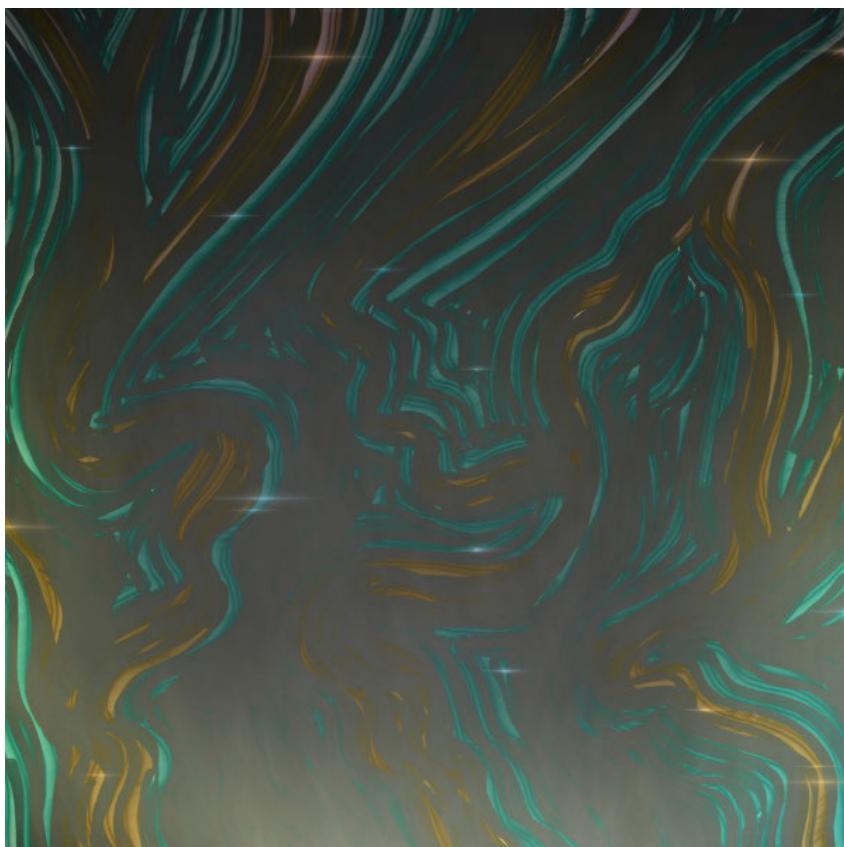
BLUE MONDAY



WAITING FOR THE SUN



WAKE ME UP BEFORE YOU GO-GO



THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC



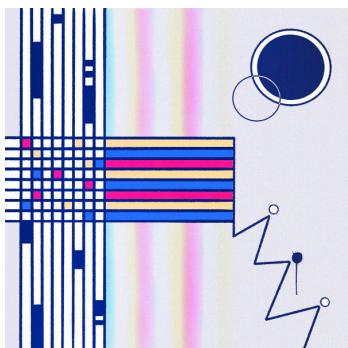
Dazed and Confused



Don't You (Forget About Me)



Heart of Glass



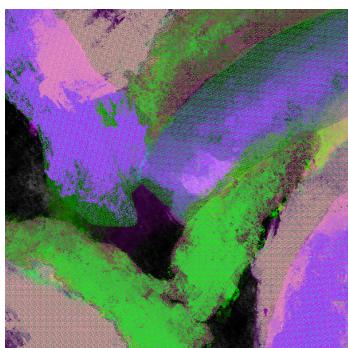
Blue Monday



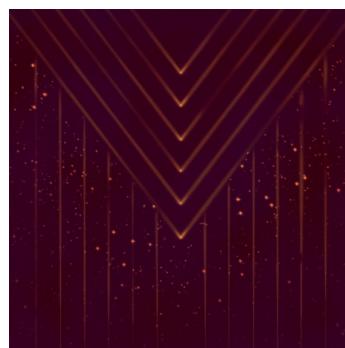
Six Different Ways



The Chain



Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go



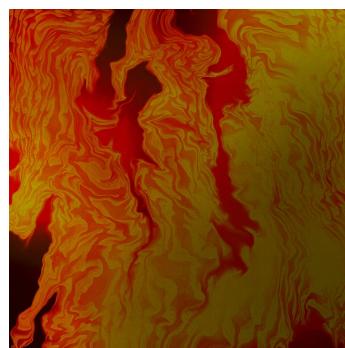
Jolene



Wheel in the Sky



I Wanna Dance with Somebody



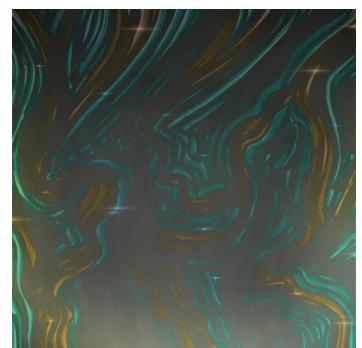
Waiting for the Sun



Money



Lean on Me



Thank You for the Music

Shelby Beasley

Shelby Beasley is a Chicago-based studio artist, currently completing a bachelor's degree at DePaul University while majoring in Art, Media, & Design, and double minoring in Communication and Media, and Women's and Genders Studies. Predominantly working with charcoal, ink, and wire, her practice spans across multiple disciplines including drawing, painting, and sculpture. Beasley's work is concerned with the complex connections between two central motifs, the Black female figure and mental illness.

Shelby Beasley | Artist Statement

We Speak the Same struggles to understand the complex odyssey of living with mental illness as a woman. It is concerned with two prominent explorations, the first being, an attempt to understand how my subconscious mind is intrinsically connected with my active psyche and additionally, how these subsequent effects manifest into palpable convictions of trauma. I emphasize the dichotomy between feeling small in a space that is overwhelmingly larger than life, making sure the feeling of claustrophobia is present.

This piece is using predominantly charcoal and ink media, which works to further emphasize the vividly dramatized forms of my subjects. By doing so, I actively highlight characteristics of humanity found within the figures themselves further associating these deceptive suppressors of the subliminal mind with palpable cognitive contexts. Concentrating on the expressive female form, I work from self-reference images of my own body and its own changes. In capturing moments of myself in deeply personal and at times, vulnerable states, I become inspired to create studies akin to self-portraiture which helps me to explore the female figure through my own conception.



We Speak the Same,
charcoal and ink on paper,
45.5 x 85 in. 2020.





Jasper Belew

Jasper Belew (b. 1998 Minnesota) is a digital artist based in Chicago, where he studies Visual Art and Spanish at DePaul University. Using flatbed scanners, 35mm film, and 3D image rendering techniques, his practice seeks to reconcile the fleshy reality of the human body with the virtual reality of the internet's pixelated landscapes. Much of his work addresses online identity construction and the warming of the offline globe.

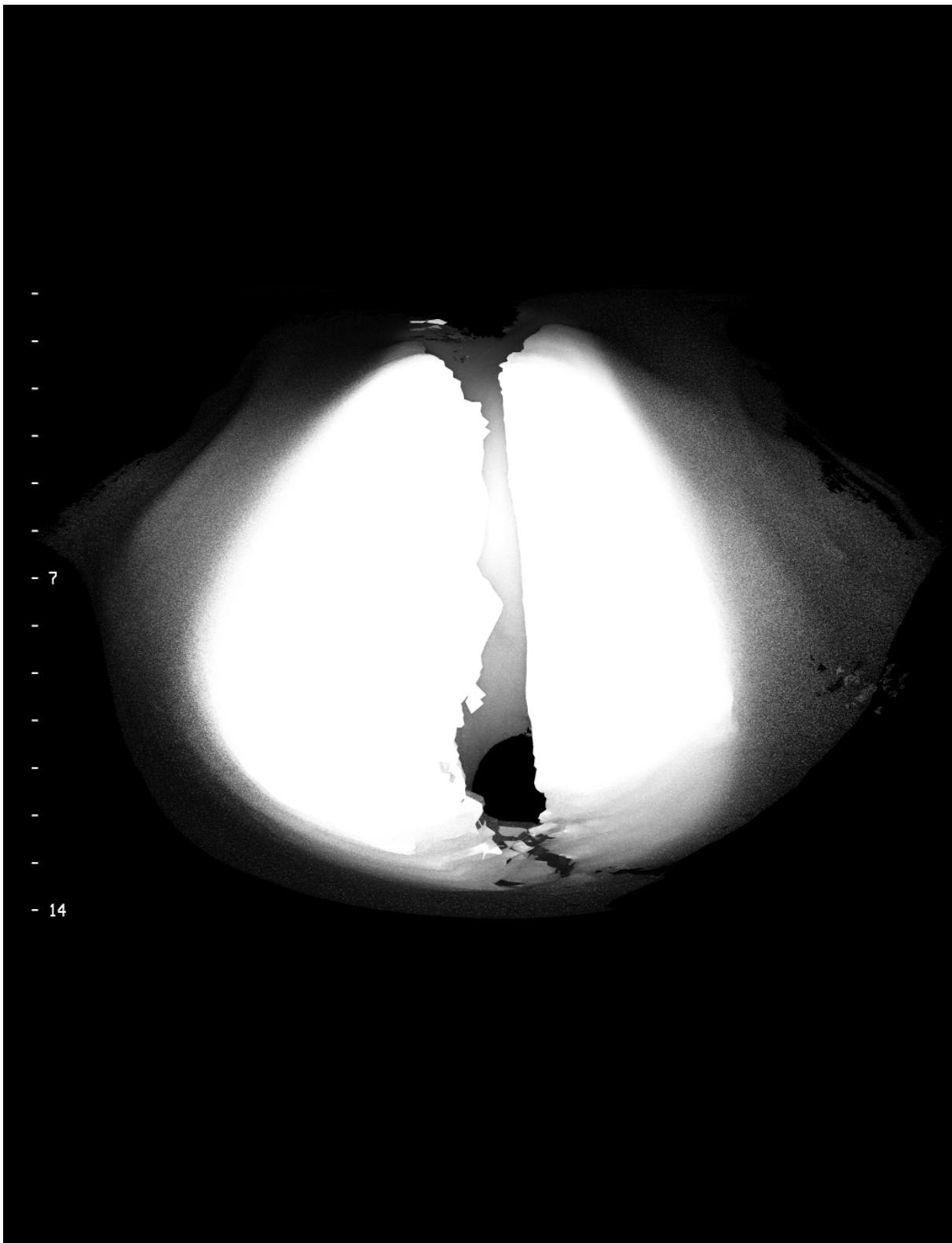
Jasper Belew (n. 1998,E.E.U.U) es un artista digital basado en Chicago, donde estudia el arte y castellano en DePaul University. Utilizando escáneres planos, películas de 35mm, y técnicos de imágenes tridimensionales, su práctica intenta reconciliar la realidad carnosa del cuerpo humano con la realidad virtual de los paisajes pixelados del internet. Su obra aborda la construcción online de la identidad, la digitalización de la naturaleza, y el calentamiento del globo desconectado.

Jasper Belew | Artist Statement

Even before we were born, our bodies were being bombarded by the vision of machines. Beginning with ultrasounds, graduating to the flashes of cameras, soon we were old enough to carry bricks made of sensors and screens. Connected, these devices could transmute the light bouncing off our bodies into reflections of our worth: social capital to be sold on the attention market, commodities to be shipped to our peers, employers, and prospective lovers.

Until recently, the photograph was one of the only filetypes that could be created and shared on a massive scale. Soon the 3D scan may become just as relevant in the digital image market as the photograph has been for the past two decades. Sculpturally convincing, this new file type will revolutionize the ways in which we construct our online presences by capturing the contours of our bodies, commodifying not just an image, but a three-dimensional topology.

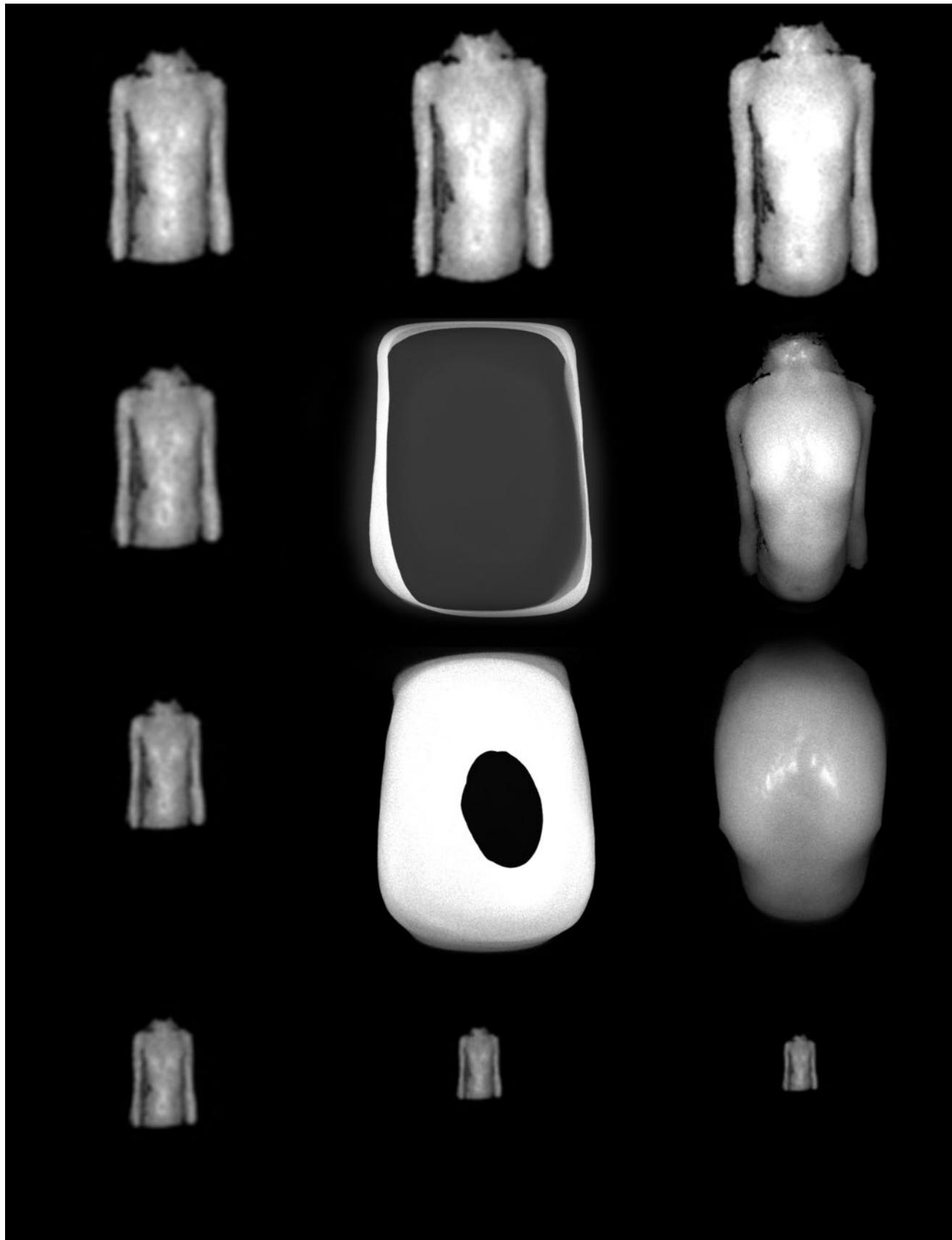
Inside these files there is nothing. Like crumpled prints, these scans only capture a kind of virtual air. Hollowed, the flesh of your body has been sensored away.



Jasper Belew, video stills from *Sensored*, 2020,
video (2:00).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=ESA6ZygzBlw&feature=emb_logo





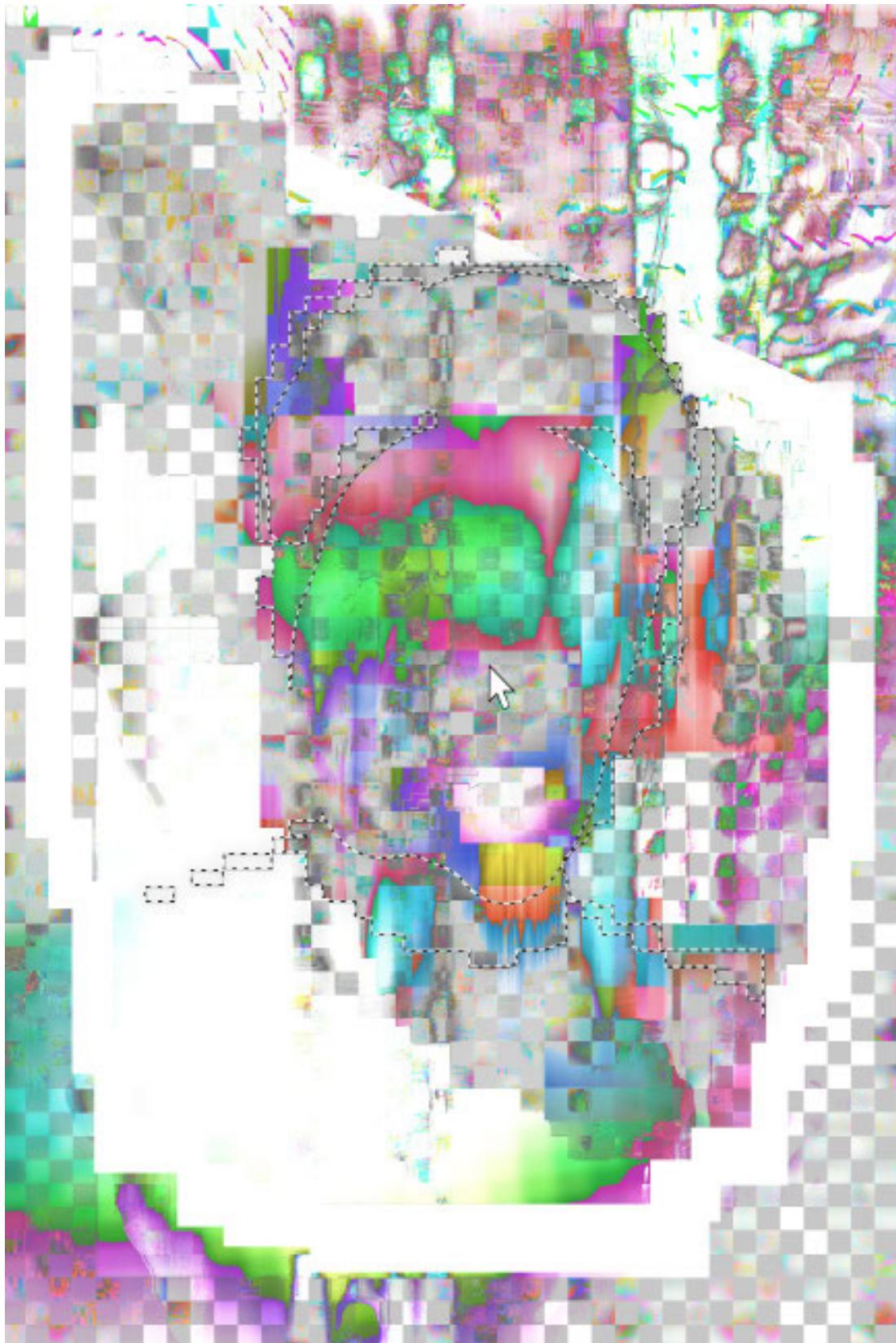
Dalton Campbell

Dalton Campbell is a multidisciplinary graphic artist from Bloomington, Minnesota and is currently based in Chicago, Illinois. He is pursuing a B.A. in Art, Media & Design from DePaul University, where he also works as a student designer. His recent digital work has explored abstraction and manipulation of form in an effort to emphasize experimentation in process and counterbalance his more commercial ventures, as Campbell continues to explore the space between artist and designer.

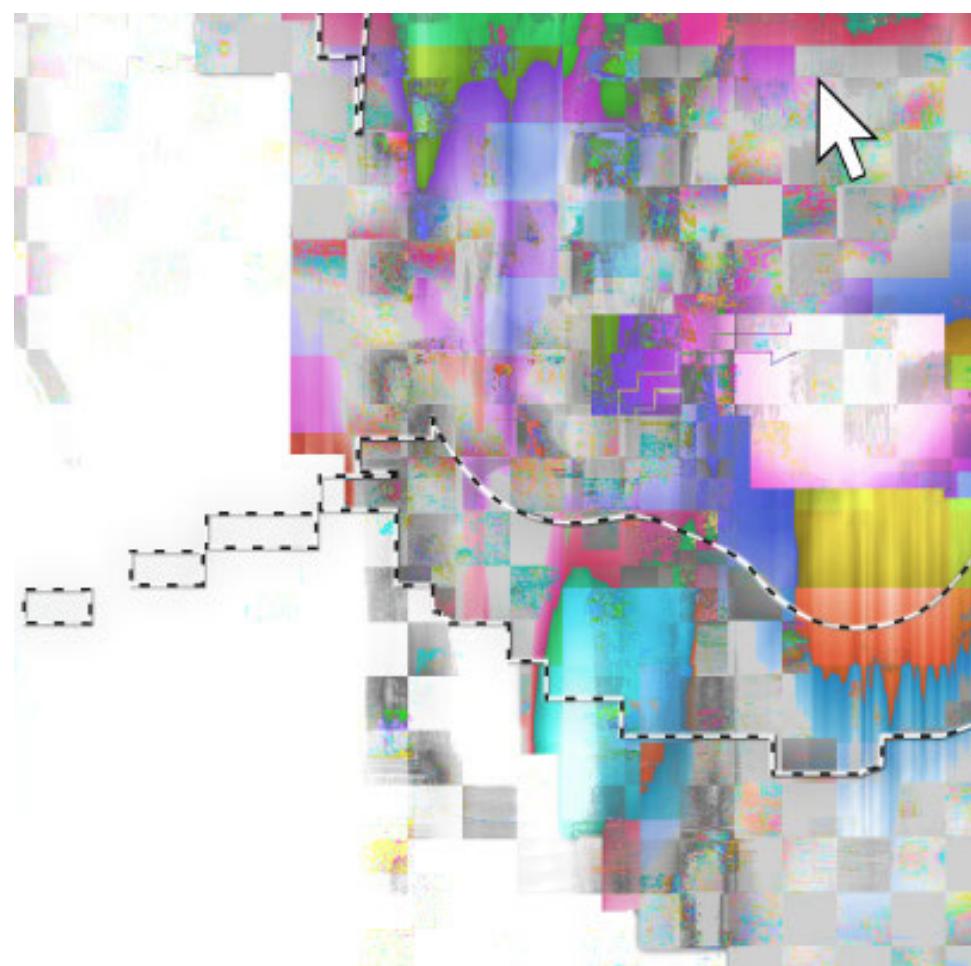
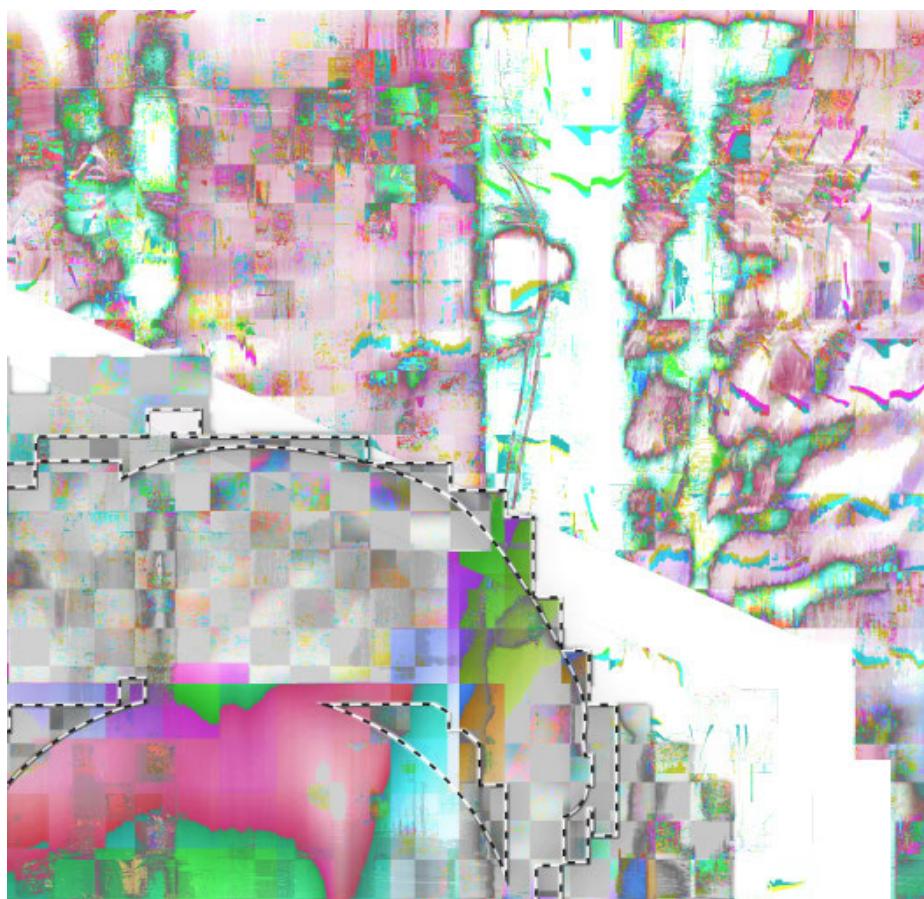
Dalton Campbell | Artist Statement

As my undergraduate career comes to a close in the midst of a global pandemic and war on police brutality, I am interested in the different ways every fiber of my reality has now disintegrated into a dependency on the web and social media. As a primarily digital artist and (remotely) working graphic designer, I've experienced a debilitating tension with the screens in my life now that I've been bound to them for far more than just creative practice. Going to the office, catching up with friends, keeping up with the news, now all just "New Windows" (⌘N) that require me to live inside my webcam and become one with the cursor.

This work explores that sensation of at once being "User" and "Used," of feeling stuck in a virtual reality that has digitized my human complexity to a mere set of pixels. Using visual cues to the net art aesthetic, and having undergone a processed translation from digital imaging to printed matter, this work will exist in a liminal, non-space—much like the one I find myself drifting through now at a time of my life that is meant to be rich with togetherness and celebration.



Dalton Campbell, *Close All Windows*,
digital imaging, inkjet print, 24 x 36
in., 2020.





Paige Hall-Petry

Paige Hall-Petry— born outside of Toronto, Canada in 1997—moved to multiple North American cities developing a reflective personal comparison between herself and the environments she found herself. Now, living and working in the city of Chicago, Illinois she finishes her Bachelor of Arts in Art, Media & Design and Political Science at the Honors College of DePaul University. Concentrating on two very independent subjects—studies of criminal law, immigration policies, justice for rape victims mixed with crafting, graphics and bookmaking— Paige demonstrates critical approaches of combining practices as a means of creative social organization. She generally uses her body of work to incorporate her personal overcomings with contemporary political messages surrounding women, their bodies, and the current sociopolitical climate in cathartic and process-oriented works.

Paige Hall-Petry | Artist Statement

In this crucial pause of the regularities of day-to-day life, a narrative of productivity arises rather than a narrative of safety, well-being, and just making it through. *Virtual Domesticity* consists of the experimentation of process as I, among all persons, learn to balance *productivity* and *distraction* in the current state of our virtual society. To manage these opposing factors, I have turned to time-intensive crafting. To disengage from the overused discourse of craft lacking depth, kitschy techniques camouflage themselves as art.

Two raw 72" x 72" grommeted canvases depict self-reflective abstractions of time that melts away while stuck indoors in my attempt to document the current state of myself. Draping this piece over my body to sew, it becomes both a depiction of my anxieties as well as a comfort blanket. The time-sensitivity of quilting, knitting, and embroidery aid in the distraction from the constant fear accentuated through the Internet: the fear of suffering or being near suffering, inequalities, death, and my aloneness. The distractive state of sewing my needle through canvas at once is a productive trait as well as a distraction from quantifying my own efforts.

The playful qualities of color and texture demonstrate a resignation from the seriousness of the state of my life by accepting consciously the ability to revert to a child-like state of play to distract from the fears that debilitate any courage to push forward. By understanding my actions to pass time as distraction gives me agency over my productivity or lack thereof.



Virtual Domesticity, 2020, 72 x 72 in.,
acrylic, silk, yarn, embroidery, felt, marker,
pencil, and grommets on canvas.





Virtual Domesticity, 2020, 72 x 72 in.,
acrylic, silk, yarn, embroidery, felt, marker,
pencil, and grommets on canvas.



Anna Petersen

Anna is a Chicago based artist, currently attending DePaul University and will be graduating in the spring of 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts in Art, Media, & Design. Anna's work primarily deals with personal agency and how autonomy challenges the way we relate to ourselves and to our physical surroundings.

Anna Petersen | Artist Statement

Anna is a good art student. She is interested in creating work that mirrors, and lives up to the standard of good art she has been shown in school, in order to have a place in the art world once graduated. Anna craves validation. That's why she limits risk-taking and focuses on proven techniques that traditionally valued in academia. She references canonically revered artists and contemporary art world darlings in order to garner attention to her work. She focuses on 20th century modernist ideas of process and materiality, she believes paint is paint, and treats it as such. When she found out her work couldn't be displayed in a museum she wouldn't let this lack of gallery space keep her out of the eyes of potential collectors and fellow artists. Anna created her own whitewall space for her paintings to be validated and viewed as a part of the contemporary art scene.

Anna is an amalgamation of others personal taste and technique, and she really hopes you enjoy her work.

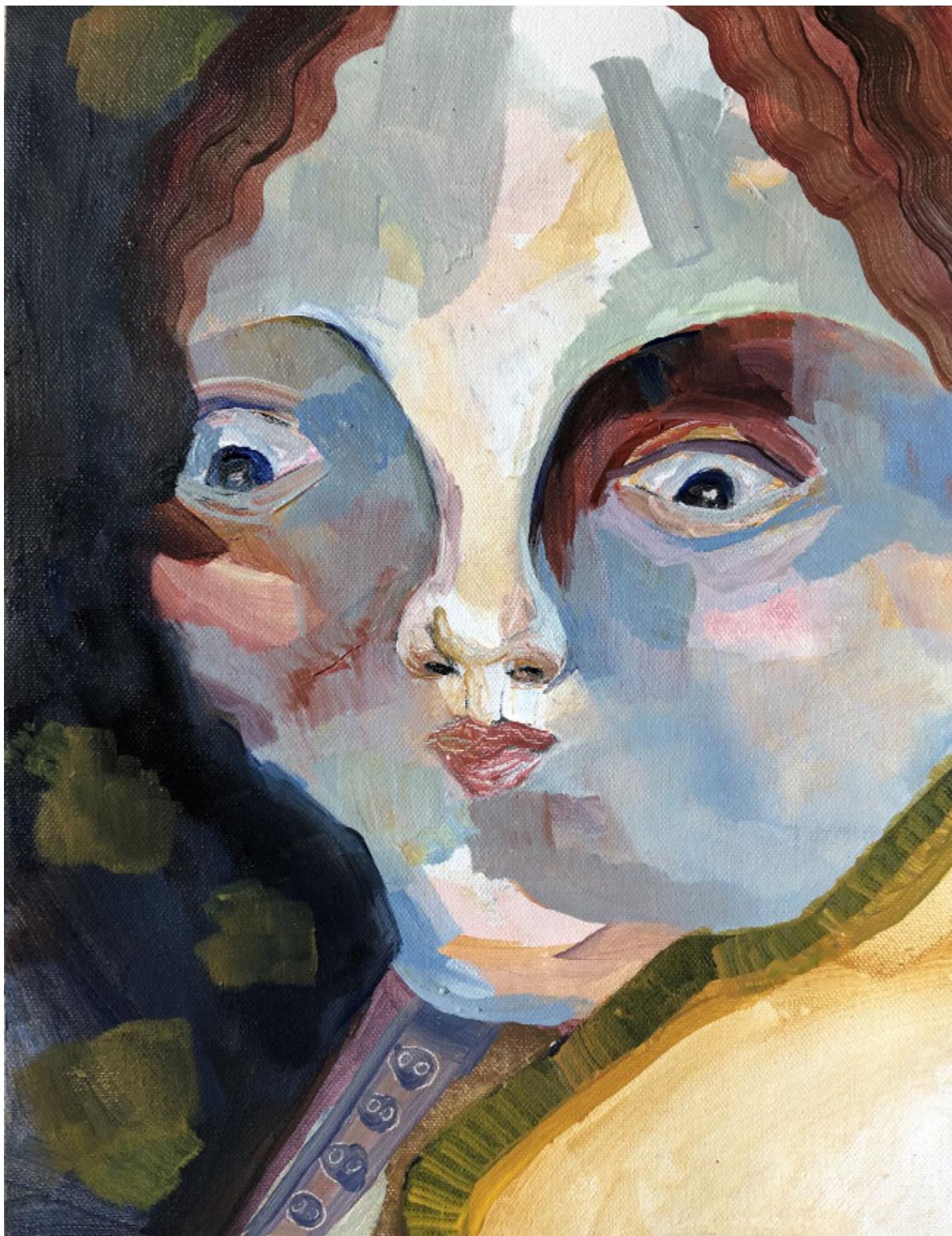
*Anna Peterson, The Young Artist Anna,
acrylic on paper, 9 x 12 in. each, 2020.*



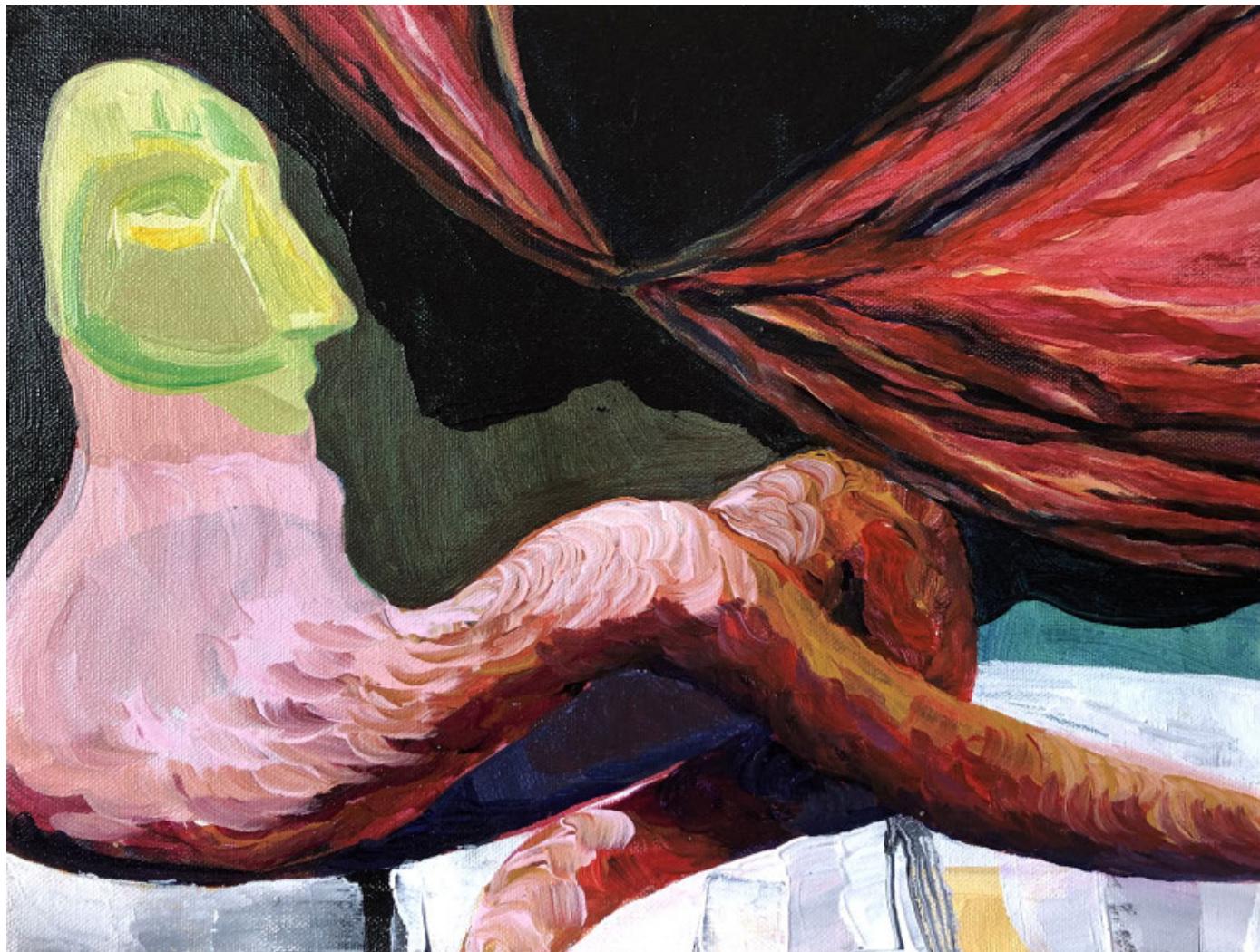
A Very Serious Portrait



Baby Mine



Just Visiting



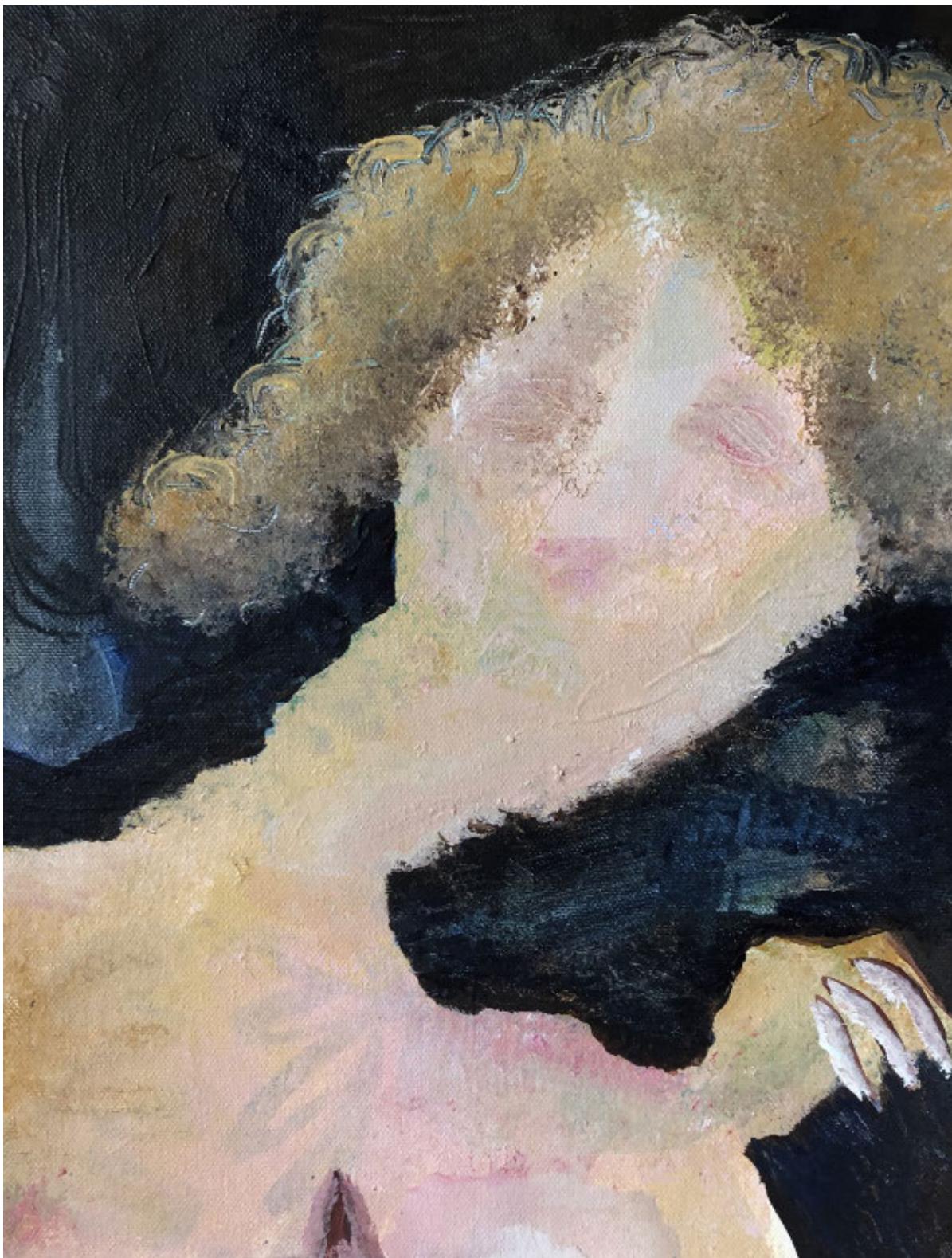
The White Couch



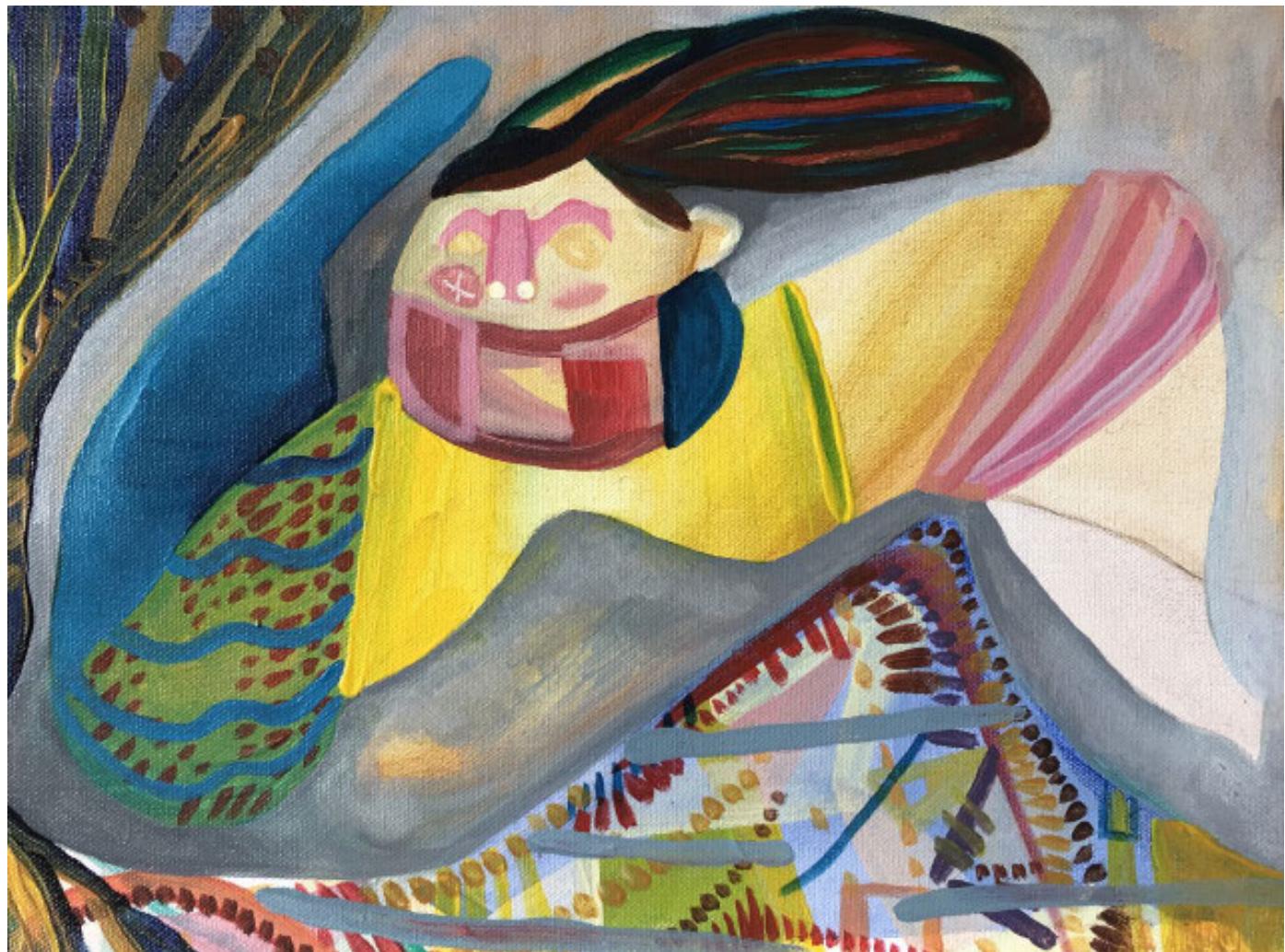
Don't Kiss Me



Two Legs



The Second Coming



She Makes Friends



More Please



34 years old

Megan Phillips

Megan Phillips is an artist and creative professional based out of Chicago, IL with strong ties to Omaha, NE where she was raised. She had an active upbringing playing sports and self identifies as an “outside kid” which is apparent in her work, which explores themes of feminine masculinity and self expression/identity. Graduating with her BA in Art, Media & Design (Graphic Art concentration) and a minor in Museum Studies at DePaul University, Phillips’ 2D graphic works detail the complexities of aesthetic visual communication. Most importantly, her current and future plans consist of (but are not limited to) professional exhibition design, event planning, and attending the Met Gala.

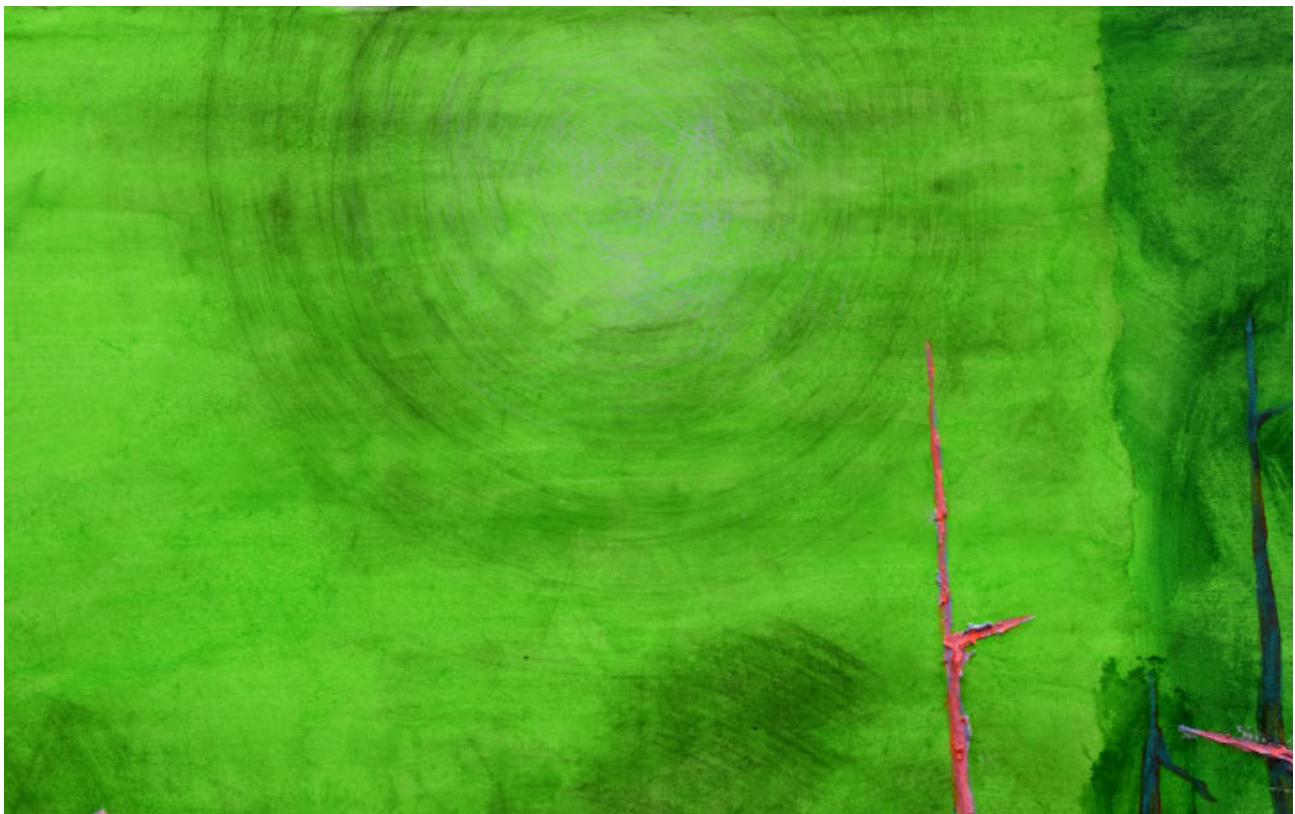
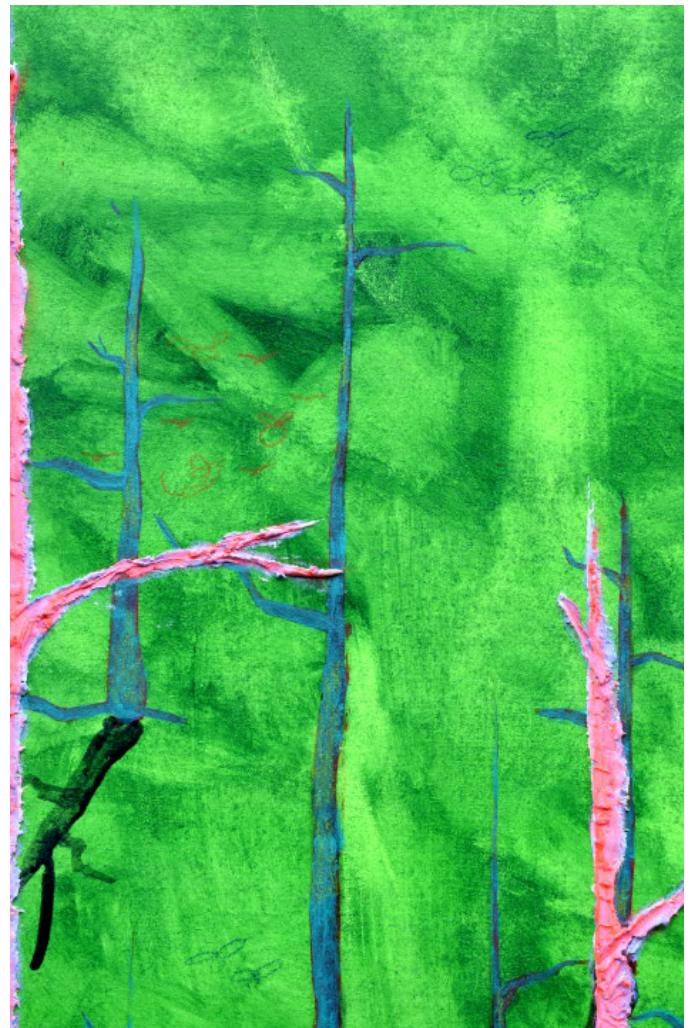
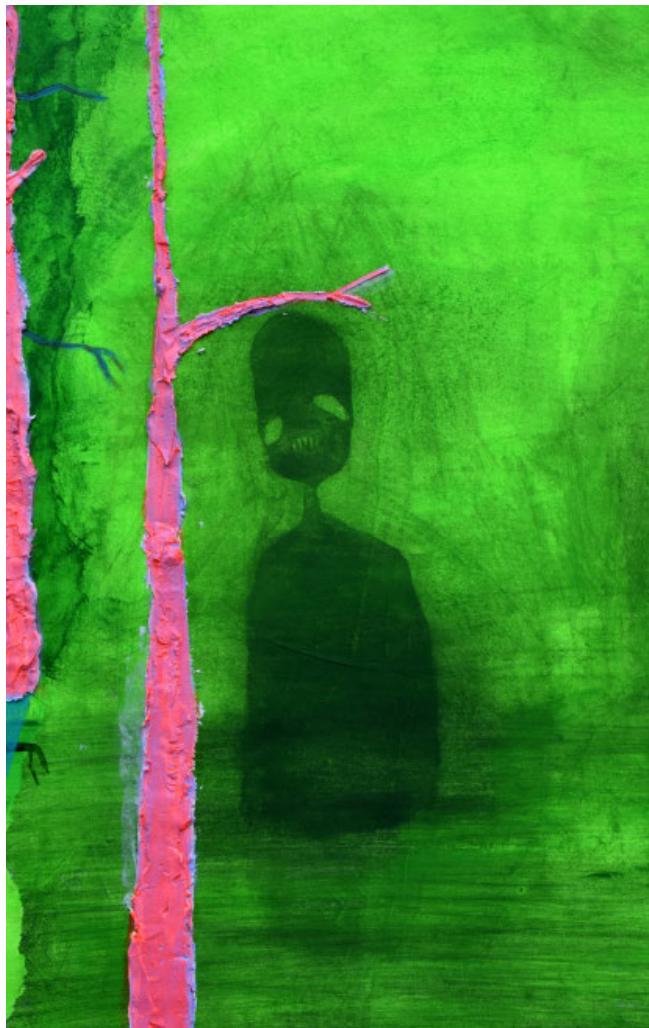
Megan Phillips | Artist Statement

Chicago-based and Nebraska-raised, my work examines my individual relationship with the outdoors and the figures that exist between my mind and the shadows (reality?). Reflecting on past experiences as growing up in Nebraska and the hundreds of hours spent outside wasting time, there were moments of confusion where shadows became indistinguishable from living beings. These disorientating situations happened in a flash, but their effect on my mental clarity was much longer. I was unable to discern if these figures were harmful, friendly, or just questioning, causing me to simultaneously be wary and intrigued, like an accident you can't look away from. I wanted to know the nature of these beings, and why they were reoccurring.

The process of drypoint etching became a vital practice to examine this, as it requires hours of uninterrupted, mindless motions; similar to the headspace of the initial visits. While this redundant process is time to reflect, it is also time to slow down my motion of making, and focus on one piece/theme/concept for longer than my gut reaction. Between the etching itself and a completely home-based printing operation without a press, these plates (depending on the size) can take from just a few hours to several weeks. The only downside is that my fish brain becomes bored and eventually uninitiated with the piece, allowing the opportunity for further exploration across different media. Drypoint then becomes a point of departure that I can build off by including other media such as paint, colored pencils, and house spackle. This process of adding new materials allows me to adjust my themes in a more fluid way, by using prints in their multiples to add or subtract from a composition and make work in a fluid way that connects more with my process of thought.



Megan Phillips, *The Visit*, drypoint,
acrylic, spackle, colored pencil on
board, 36 x 60 in., 2020.



Lauren Terranova

Lauren A. Terranova is a Chicago-based designer. While attending Gordon Tech College Prep for high school, Lauren took two years of woodworking. These years cultivated her love for building and design. She loved the idea of transforming spaces and allowing them to take on new meaning, but also loved the technical aspect to creating and building.

During her college career Lauren has helped friends and family members with design ideas ranging from color, texture, and flow. Following her graduation Lauren wants to continue her schooling to receive her Real Estate and Contracting licenses. Lauren wants to share her love for design not only on a client basis, but also through home restoration. She is excited to help change the lives of many with creating spaces that are not only functional, but also beautiful.

Lauren Terranova | Artist Statement

As the end of the school year approaches, the start of summer begins. Unlike all the previous summers this one will not be the same, not because of Covid-19 but because someone will no longer be there. *How I Spent My Summer* is a wood and resin sculpture created to capture past summer memories and, as a functional coffee table, to encourage others to gather around for new stories to begin.

The work that I find myself to be the most passionate in is when work revolves around a memory. Memories are a part of a universal language. Viewers can engage with a work that they have no connection to, but the memories of their past can resurface by the engagement with others' memories. *How I Spent My Summer* was created as an homage to my Grandpa Charlie who passed away earlier this year. My Grandpa Charlie and I connected through my woodworking projects in high school, as he himself was a skilled woodworker who built his own house, garage, and cabinets. The connection we held within the art of woodworking was something symbolic and strong in the bond we had. The memories I hold about my Grandpa Charlie revolve around Goose Pond and his love of sharing stories with others. Goose Pond is represented in the deep blue resin pour on the table top. The memories that I have stem from the pond, but are alive and supported because of the ones who I got to share the memories with. The legs on the table represent this support. Using the Roman numeral "IV" and "VII" I represented the four children my grandparents have and the seven grandchildren. Without any of these pieces the table would no longer be functional, reflecting how the memories would not have existed.

How I Spent My Summer highlights my interest in sculpture, interior design, and woodworking. The work reflects modern and natural design, by mixing the naturalness of the wood with the sharp angular cuts presented in the table legs. The two main influences for *How I Spent My Summer* were Dustin Coates and Joanna Gains. Dustin Coates' wooden bowls have influenced me on using the natural unfinished wood for a coffee table and creating something while retaining the originality and style from nature. Dustin Coates is also a New Hampshire based artist whose work I saw with my Grandpa Charlie. Joanna Gains' interior design work has been something I have admired. The way Joanna repurposes and restores furniture inspires me to not always buy new and to look for works that have character. My past work has informed this project by adding personal touches to create works instead of buying something already made. *How I Spent My Summer* reflects the importance of spending time with family and creating memories.



How I Spent My Summer, ash wood
and resin, 20 x 20 x 36 in., 2020.





Rebecca Vichi

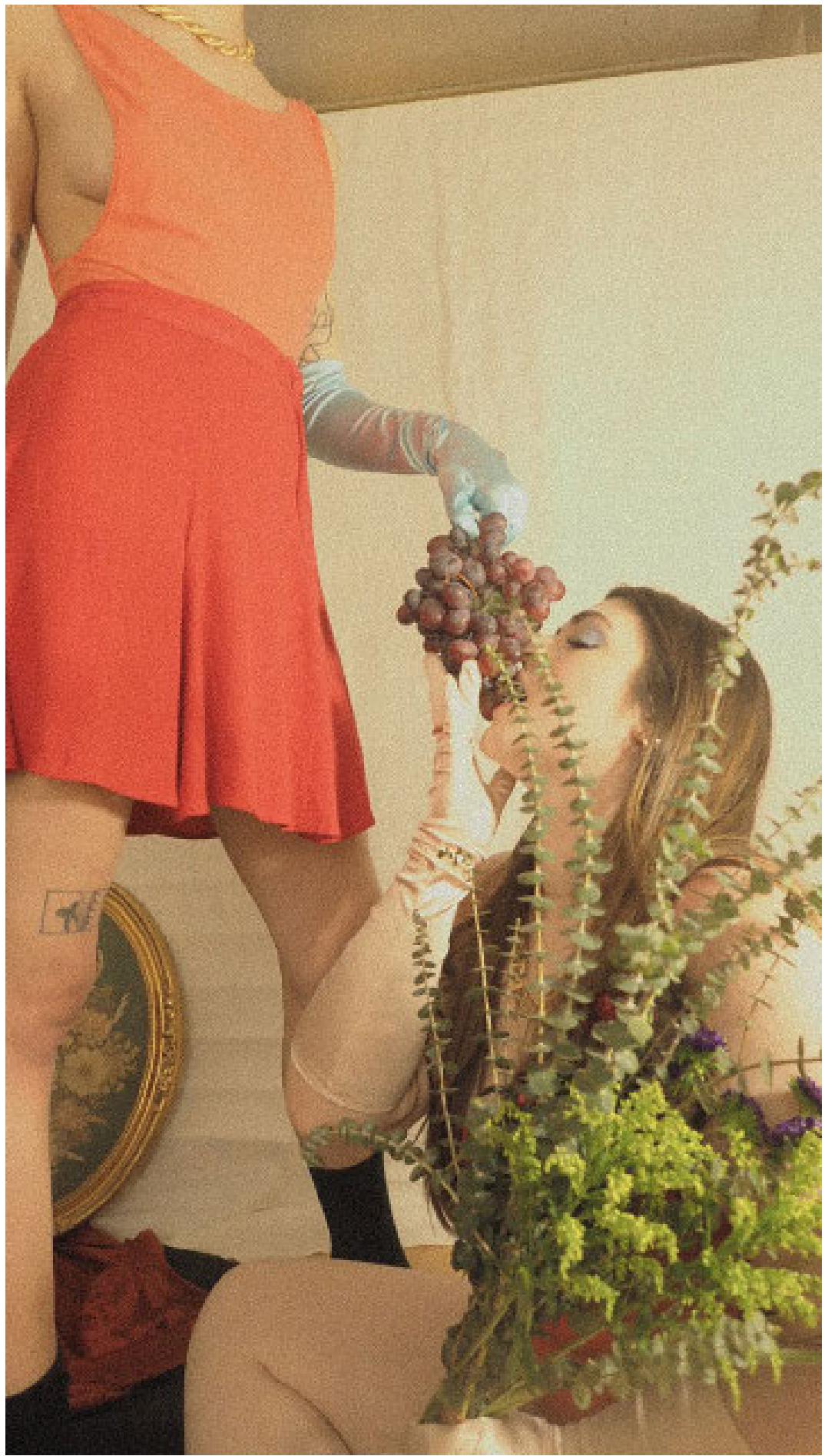
Rebecca Vichi is graduating from DePaul University with a BFA in Art, Media, & Design. Her favorite means of artistic expression include photography and printmaking. Over the course of her college career, these mediums have allowed her to be traditional and explore concepts of color, beauty and gore, while also giving her the range to be experimental. In the future, she hopes to continue her education and pursue art therapy or go into publication/editorial design.

Rebecca Vichi | Artist Statement

This series of photographs is titled *Be Still, Woman*. I wanted to set up a shoot that focused on several things. For the past several months I have been thinking about the concept of still life photography, what it means, and what it can convey. It is a unique genre and from my exploration, most of the time the subjects are simple and ordinary. This makes the genre special, because photographers are able to add life and beauty into these everyday objects. However, for my own exploration, I wanted to do something a bit different. I wanted to take standard, inanimate objects and add human interaction. I wanted to combine the notions of still life photography and add elements of portraiture.

Color was very important in relation to the theme. I paid close attention to the colors of the objects, clothing, and makeup, to create a warm vs. cool color scheme. Warm colors convey excitement and strength, while cool colors are soothing and calm. Red is appealing and beautiful, orange is vibrant and warm, but it also demands attention, and pink is feminine, tender, and delicate. Rather than contrasting these colors with cooler elements I made them work together. These colors contribute to the important themes in my photographs -powerful femininity, gender expression, sexuality, elegance, and dress-up. The series leads up to hands squishing fruit where the color darkens. It maintains a sense of intimacy while also adding an element of gore. The fruit leaves blood like stains that represent the struggles of womanhood, while also representing the power that comes with it.

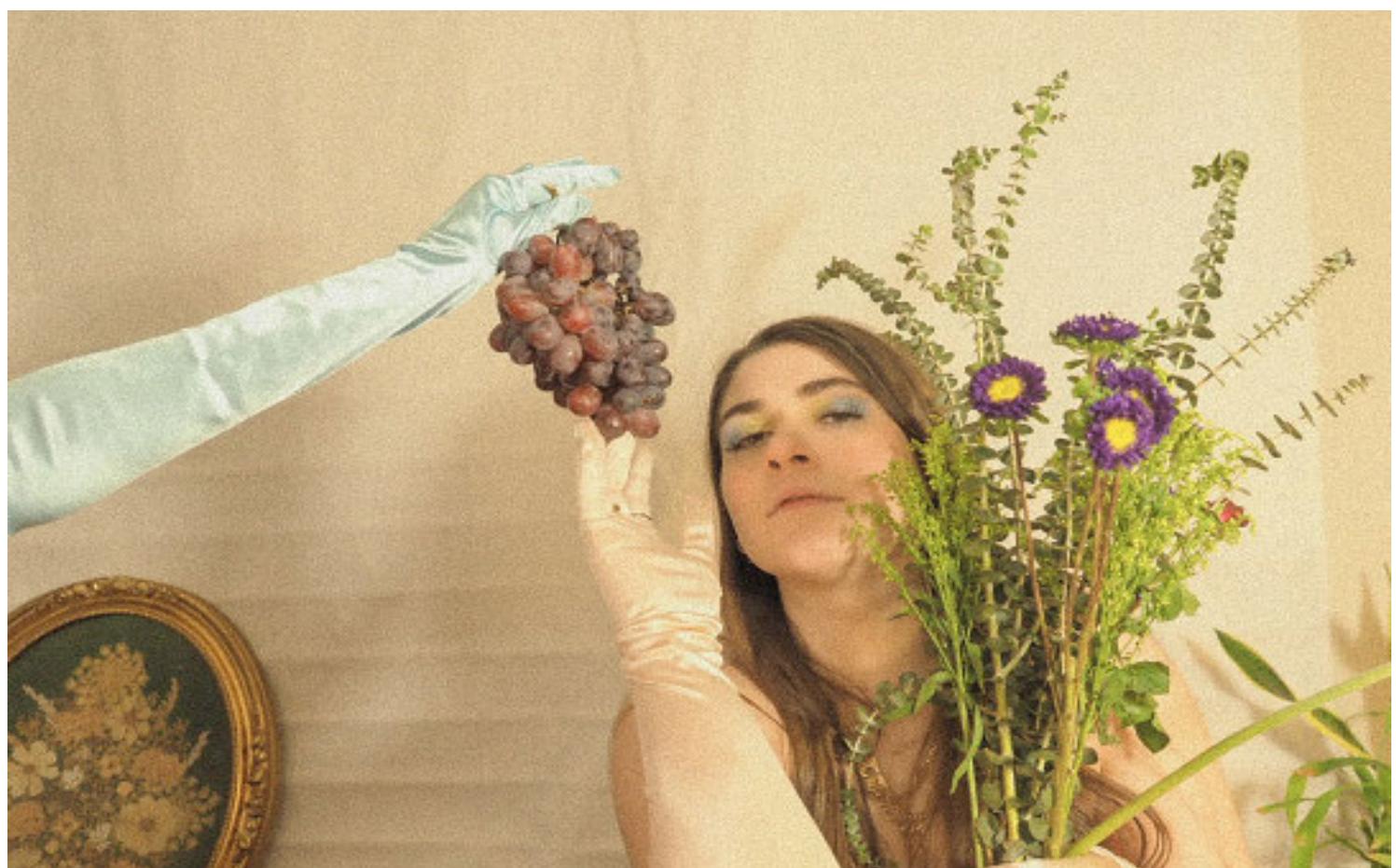
Rebecca Vichi,
Be Still, Woman,
2020.



Digital Photography, 10 x 17.777 in.



Digital Photography, 17.207 x 8.527 in.



Digital Photography, 15.043 x 10 in.



Film Photography, 42.903 x 24.819 in.



Film Photography, 42.903 x 28.444 in.



Film Photography, 42.903 x 28.444 in.



Film Photography, 42.903 x 28.444 in.

Francesca Vitale

Francesca Vitale is an artist living and working in Chicago, IL. Vitale's current work explores traditional oil painting on street signs and other found objects from the urban environment. She was born outside of Chicago and is currently a student at DePaul University graduating with an Art, Media, and Design degree. Vitale has exhibited her work in Cards Against Humanity Gallery, ARC Gallery in Chicago, IL, Compassion Factory Gallery "Expression Exhibition" in Brookfield, IL & IAMI Exhibition in Chicago, IL.

Francesca Vitale | Artist Statement

This is a product of the challenges of what the current situation has brought upon all of us. Many of us are stuck inside, the parks are closed, and we are away from loved ones. This piece is intended as an escape from this harsh reality. This landscape depicts a grand mountain towering over a cozy cabin, with smoke coming from the chimney, nestled in the evergreen trees. This scene represents tranquility and evokes a sense of warmth within the audience.

As an artist I am interested in the exploration of formal elements through taking ownership of the composition by nuancing details and activating negative spaces. I aspire to become more dynamic without losing the grandness of nature. The realistic quality encapsulates the audience to look closer.

All materials used in this piece came from the earth. The minerals in the oil paints are raw and are then crushed into powders and use to create pigments. These minerals combined with the wooden panel enhance the landscapes connection to nature. The act of painting this landscape became an act of nature. The piece is to enhance the viewers connection to nature.



Francesca Vitale, *Elsewhere*,
oil on wood panel, 30 x 30 in.,
2020.





***As of July 1, 2020, The Department of Art, Media, & Design
will become The Art School in The College of Liberal Arts and
Social Sciences at DePaul University.**

