

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARTS AND LETTERS

2024 Visual Arts Competition & Exhibition

The National Society for Arts and Letters along with FAR Center for Contemporary Art presents the 2024 Visual Arts Competition + Exhibition! This competition is designed to introduce emerging artists to the public.

Join us Friday March 1st for the Award Reception and see the exhibition during March's Gallery Walk in our 505 Theater. Awards and prizes announced at 5:30 pm, total prizes in the amount of \$5,600 awarded to 8 finalists. This exhibit features the work of a group of Indiana college age artists across a variety of media, the exhibition will be on view February 28 - March 7.

About the National Society of Arts & Letters (NSAL): The mission of NSAL is to identify, encourage and support artists, between the ages of 18 to 29 years, preparing for professional careers in their individual disciplines. National competitions focus on the rotating categories of visual arts, dance, theater, creative writing, music, and musical theater. The Bloomington Chapter also sponsors an outreach program to recognize young artists in area high schools, as well as a grant program for arts teachers of youth between ages of 4 and 14. The Bloomington, Indiana Chapter was founded in 1966 and has awarded more than \$650,000 to artists living and studying in Indiana. Many have gone on to distinguished national and international careers.

On View: February 28 - March 7

Gallery Walk Opening Reception & Awards Ceremony:

Friday, March 1st, 5pm - 8 pm (Awards Ceremony begins at 5:30 pm)

505 Theater @ FAR | 505 W 4th St, Bloomington, IN | thefar.org



Andreea Alunei



Prepwork, 2023
watercolor and
ink on wood panel
\$480, 11" x 5.5" x 1"

Statement

My art is an exercise in relinquishing control and finding acceptance in a complicated, ambiguous, and difficult world. It is autobiographical; a private affair made public. I grew up in post-Soviet Romania and entered adulthood in the U.S., making my identity salient and challenging me to confront questions of belonging, authenticity, and self-alienation. I just had my first baby, and I found pregnancy and early motherhood to be particularly challenging and require an immense amount of acceptance in the face of a myriad of fears and anxieties. Naturally, my work has been increasingly reflecting this new experience and has become more naïve in style. I have been thinking about the connection between my childhood and the childhood I am hoping to provide for my daughter, as well as the idea of being a "good mother" and actively building a "good home" for her. But what is a home and in what ways does a mother determine it? And can one really be prepared for parenthood or know whether they are doing a good job of it?

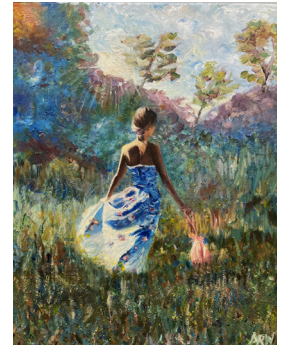
Bio

Andreea Alunei is a Romanian-born multimedia artist who is pursuing an MFA in Studio Art at the Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture + Design at Indiana University. She graduated from Beloit College in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a minor in Studio Art. In 2020, she earned her master's degree in Social Psychology from Texas A&M University. Her MFA emphasis is in figurative painting, and she is particularly interested in water media as a way to investigate themes of intimacy, identity, and being in the world.

Anna Woodhouse

Bio

Anna Woodhouse is a 21-year-old artist and fashion design student at Indiana University. While primarily focusing on fashion design at the moment, in her spare time she paints, draws, alters her own clothes, and reads. Her favorite medium to work with is acrylic paint.



Meadow by Morning, 2021
Acrylic paint
\$750, 20" x 16" x 1"

Austin Clark



Statement

I've Never Really Liked Fruit are large scale inkjet prints (12" x 50") of stitched together flatbed scans picturing my nude body from head to toe pressed against the scanner glass. Replicating a crucifixion scene, this work references my upbringing in the Church, specifically Southern Baptism (the Black Church), while also mimicking lynched, Black bodies hanging from a tree. Through the work, I ask my viewer to consider multiple connotations of Blackness and pose lynchings as a modern crucifixion, as they were forms of public executions to humiliate the individual before being brought to death. Black people die as unjust reminders of the ultimate sin, slavery, just as Jesus died for the sinners of his world. However, the main difference between the two is Jesus died for the divine will of his father (and was graciously resurrected) whereas Black people were lynched to reinforce the power imbalance of the United States.

Bio

Austin Clark is currently pursuing his B.F.A. in Photography and B.A. in Art History at Indiana University Bloomington. His work has exhibited across the states at the Anderson Ranch Art Center and MassArt x Sowa Gallery. He uses photography as a spiritual practice to document performances that explore his African ancestry.

I Never Really Liked Fruit, 2023
Archival Inkjet Print
NFS, 12" x 50"

Avery Martin Smith



Cliffs, 2023
Photography
\$250, 24 x 32 x 1 in

Statement

Cliffs is one photo out of my ongoing series "TalkinBlue". I chose "TalkinBLUE" instead of "Talking Blue" because I feel like I haven't had the emotional vocabulary needed to progress forward as a person. "TalkinBlue" is a visual representation of me working through my own relationship with generational trauma. With my father suffering from PTSD (from experience in the military) and Alcoholism, we as a family never learned how to communicate such abstract things as our own feelings. I feel a sense of responsibility to progress emotionally, to play an active role in my own future, and most of all, to make this body of work.

Bio

Avery Martin Smith (b. 2001) is currently an artist and student in Indiana University's BFA program. Smith feels that the rural Indiana landscape in which he grew up has shaped his artistic practice. This practice is reflective of the socio-economic and geo-political landscape of Indiana itself. Smith believes the visual language of photography is at the center of his practice and cites his father as a key inspiration to developing his photographic eye. However His multidisciplinary art practice includes photography, painting, and sculpture, believing the relationship between these mediums allows him to approach visual narrative more holistically.

Aveyah Craver



Scarf for a Soft Speaker, 2023
Weaving
NFS, 6.25"x66"

Statement

Scarf for a Soft Speaker is a piece in my Coping Mechanisms series. This series elevates items we use in our rituals of maintaining our physical and mental health. I have always been a soft speaker, and I physically struggled to hold conversations during my first year living in Bloomington. Between the new climate and the amount of talking I had to do as a student and instructor, I was losing my voice by the end of almost every day. The phrase on this scarf commemorates the effort I put into building relationships in my new environment despite my physical discomfort. By wearing this scarf, I remind myself of how I have grown in the past year, and I am protecting my voice for the future.

Bio

Through abstraction, symbols, and prose I craft the myth of my identity. I weave and fold my story into a tangible state. I take these actions to process my experiences and to fabricate a sense of belonging to a history that extends beyond me.

I identify as being culturally ambiguous. While I often use this term jokingly, it is a genuine state of existing in a society that values clear cut identity labels which I struggle to apply to myself. I am not white, but I am too white to be black. I was born an American citizen on an island that is under two colonizing powers, and I have no claim to the cultures that influenced me the most in my childhood. While culture is a way to ground oneself in a community, cultural ambiguity is a state of lingering until someone asks you to leave.

Fabric is both an essential part of every culture and an ambassador that connects cultures together. Because of this, it is the medium through which I create and legitimize a cultural heritage for myself. I encrypt my history into fabric with symbols and phrases sourced from my journaling and doodles: activities which visibly reveal the subconscious. By enfolding my psyche into fibers, I am weaving traces of myself into the global history of fabric making and embellishment.

As long as emphasis is placed on the categorization of social identities, people will relate to the concept of cultural ambiguity. My motivation is to challenge this oversimplification: the binaries that imply us and other. I am creating a home for myself that no one can kick me out of, and my hope is viewers become more comfortable with their own states of ambiguity.

Bailee Parsons



Untitled, 2023
Relief Print
 \$300, 16 in, 20 in, 1 in

Statement

I have always been drawn to the human form and nature, especially how both overlaps. In my prints, I create imagery to portray the way I view the world and the many diversities between the body and nature. The body is ever changing, even in the same one person, similar to how nature is constantly evolving. I work to draw these connections between nature and the form through scenes of everyday moments.

Bio

Raised in an agricultural town, Bailee Parsons was always near nature, resulting in their love for being outdoors. Throughout high school, Bailee was active in FFA and forestry, which heavily inspires their work today. In 2021, Bailee taught a series of art classes in their hometown. These classes were created for anyone from 1st to 12th grade and aimed to teach core principles in art. These classes lasted until 2022 when they had to discontinue them due to college time conflicts. Currently, Bailee is a senior at IU pursuing a BFA in printmaking. They draw from their love for nature and the human form to create their works.

Ben Cooke-Akaiwa



Linked, 2023
Screenprint on paper, pine
 NFS, 32" x 24" x 24"

Statement

I am on a journey of self-reflection and reconstruction. I am coming to terms with old wounds I previously was able to ignore. This process has pushed me both personally and artistically. I have found myself exploring different materials within the same form, bricks. Through the process of this exploration, I am keeping my hands busy while giving my mind time to wander and reflect. Bricks, quite literally, are building blocks, and I am using them to show the ongoing process of reconstruction. In this work, process is the landscape where I navigate not only materiality but also the nuances of emotions and choices.

Bio

Ben is a jeweler and metalsmith in Bloomington, IN. He graduated from Indiana University in May of 2019 with his BFA in Metalsmithing and Jewelry Design. He is currently pursuing his MFA from IU. He has supplemented his education through workshops at Arrowmont Craft School, the Baltimore Jewelry Center, and an apprenticeship in Japan. He has participated in residencies at the Baltimore Jewelry Center and Arrowmont and has taught workshops at the BJC and Metalwerx. Ben has exhibited his work internationally in the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Romania, and Canada.

B Shaffer



Chemical Bonds, 2023
 Photography, Book-binding
NFS, When Opened (Inches) H: 3.5 W: 25

Statement

The work I create is a journey into the cognitive processes that shape my personality and creativity. A person is nothing but an amalgamation of all the experiences they have gone through, filtered, and processed in some way to form a unique identity. Similarly, creation takes these life experiences and combines them into something new, a reflection of the creator's self, almost a clone of them in a way.

The life experiences that most greatly affect my creative process are the mundane moments of day-to-day life. Walking to class, using the bathroom, driving, these moments allow my mind the freedom to explore itself, digging into the mechanisms that make my thoughts what they are.

This is why so much of my photography work is based on improvisation, I snap Polaroids and quickly rip them apart to cover them in chemicals. This, in combination with the more slow and thoughtful process of book-binding, allows me to inhabit two worlds simultaneously. The fragility of the fibers forces me to take my time and be careful with every stitch, while the chemical play allows me spontaneity, this gives me the opportunity to not only capture those quick day-to-day moments, but those moments then become grounded and presented in a way that allows both me and the viewer to reflect on them and rethink their meaning.

Bio

B Shaffer is a Graphic Design BFA student at IU Bloomington, they also currently work part-time as a graphic designer for IU's Office of Student Life. They are from Fort Wayne, IN, and currently live both there and in Bloomington. They utilize various mediums in their practice, often with a focus on altering physical media like pen and ink using digital programs and processes. They have exhibited in multiple shows in Bloomington and Fort Wayne, including a group show for the 2022 NSAL competition, as well as a solo show at IU's student-run Tangent Gallery. They are involved with the IU chapter of AIGA, working as their social media manager, as well as a designer for IU's Queer Student Union.

Bridget O'Brien



Oblivion Processional, 2023
 Oil on canvas
 \$630 ,14 x 32 x 1.5

Statement

With roots in the language of editorial cartooning, my paintings serve as visual accompaniments to an increasingly incomprehensible global narrative. There exists a contemporary story of the dissolution of truth. Realities of events become kaleidoscopic with rapid advances in technology and global climate shifts evaporating a sense of understood authority, systemic integrity, and ultimately, control. Life is mediated and performed through a false sense of that control: much in the same way a painting is not a static object, but a fluid expression, negotiating one world with another. Therefore I seek to present an image that is self-aware of its own absurdity, itself, an object of negotiation.

Bio

Bridget W. O'Brien (b. 1997) is an American-Canadian painter living and working in Bloomington, Indiana. She is currently an MFA candidate at Indiana University (2026). She received her BFA in painting from Indiana University-Purdue University and Seoul Women's University ROK in 2020. She loves her husband, dog, gardening, and beer. She works primarily with oil, wax, and pastel.

Cassidy Kaufman



Uncertain, 2023
Copper, Colored pencil
NFS, 2.75" x 3.5" x 3.25"

Statement

I see my work as a metamorphosis. Through the laborious and meditative process of raising vessels, I often find myself reflecting on my past. Healing mental wounds by transforming difficult memories into forms of life, movement, and growth. Each vessel becomes an abstract self-portrait. Not one of body, but of mind. With each piece, I process, I heal, I grow.

Bio

Cassidy Kaufman is a 1st year graduate student at Indiana University in the Metalsmithing and Jewelry area. She received her BFA in Craft and Material Studies with a focus in metalsmithing in 2023 from the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, MI. Using an intuitive design process and various metal forming techniques such as raising, forging, and chasing and repoussé, she creates organic forms inspired by life and movement.

Damion Pollard

Statement

My Grin from Ear to Ear

There was a time in my life when the only form of emotion I was allowed to express was "happiness". If I was angry or sad, I would get lectured for being selfish. I would be told that I had nothing to be sad about and that I could "control my emotions". I knew there was no way I could be happy all the time, so I started to mask how I was feeling. I would avoid sharing things about myself and my life with others because I saw no point. This mask is supposed to represent the pain I felt having no one to seek comfort from, the pain of being misunderstood by friends, the pain of my own self deprecation, the pain of my feelings being disregarded, the pain of being inconvenient and the overwhelming presence of depression I had to face alone.

The two layers of masks convey my journey of breaking down those barriers that I had spent most of my life forming. The outer most mask is more of a creature like figure and the one below it gets more human-like. The closer you get to the surface of my face the less of a "mask" I present and the more human I get.

Bio

Damion is a visual artist currently getting his BFA in Metalsmithing + Jewelry design at Indiana University Bloomington. He was born in Sacramento, California and has spent most of his childhood moving, but Indiana has been his longest home. Damion's work is often horror inspired and a reflection of emotions that identify situations from his past. He creates a sense of harmony in the contrasts between sharp and smooth textures in his pieces. Although he loves horror in all of its grotesqueness and flaws he is able to refine his pieces to establish a more high end look. His attention to detail and dedication to the process of making drive him to further explore new techniques. Through this process of exploration he is able to bring new ideas into his practice that both challenge and satisfy his need to make. His work shows different motifs of skulls, faces, and creatures to reflect his style and narratives. He uses different techniques and metals to emphasize this need for high contrast, like copper, brass, silver and occasionally steel. He also uses different patinations such as liver of sulfur, and heat to imitate flesh and/or "murkiness". Damion's work can be very whimsy and striking the viewers with sensation.



My Grin, 2023
Metal -- copper, brass, leather, nickel
NFS, 9.5" x 6" x 3.5"

Danielle Shum



Welcome Tidings, 2024
 Fine silver, recycled silver, enamel,
 precious stones, patina
 NFS, 8.5cm x 8.2cm x 0.9cm

Statement

I participated in a collaborative art project and received the randomly generated prompt, “Welcome Tidings”. I found in my research that “tidings” was an archaic word for a group of magpies. I used Japanese enamel and cloisonné to depict a magpie. I was inspired to fabricate a nest-like setting after participating in Radical Jewelry Makeover, which emphasized sustainable practices like recycling silver. I forged the nest out of recycled silver, and sought silver scraps and repurposed stones from my peers to add treasure-like elements which magpies would typically collect. Although mythology states that one magpie indicates sorrow, this piece indicates a sense of home through discarded, then rediscovered objects.

Bio

Danielle Shum is a third-year BFA candidate in Metalsmithing + Jewelry Design at Indiana University. Her work explores body dysmorphia, clashing cultural narratives, and transformations in the natural world. She utilizes transformative techniques including enameling and forming and creates powerful, illustrative narratives which invite reflection on identity and self-image.

Emmie Tallman

Play (but not) Pretend, 2023
 Box: Copper, powder-coat.
 Band-aids: Copper mesh, embroidery thread, felt
 NFS, Box: 1.25” x 2.5” x 2.5” Band-aids: 2.5” x 0.75”



Statement

Art is created to fill gaps, connect dots, and bind wounds. Inspired by the creation of handmade objects used to communicate concern and elicit comfort, Play (but not) Pretend captures the meaningful sentiments and emotions tied to simple or ephemeral acts of care, such as a parent putting a bandage on their child’s finger. Embodying the idea of dressing a wound but unable to accomplish it in a literal sense, these rings are meant to “heal” the injuries endured throughout life that remain unseen but deserved to be acknowledged.

Bio

Emmie Tallman received her BFA in Studio Art concentrating in Jewelry, Metals and Enameling from Kent State University in 2022. Tallman is now a second-year graduate student studying Metalsmithing + Jewelry Design at Indiana University. Working in metal, enamel, fibers, plastic and found materials, Tallman creates sculpture for the body that playfully engages with themes of nostalgia, memory, connection, and community, through an exploration of natural relationships and personal narratives.

Eric Agyemang-Dua



I'll Love You Forever, 2023
Acrylic on Canvas
NFS, (24 x 36 x 2) X3 (triptych)

Statement

The title of the painting follows a story of the same name, by Robert Munsch, about the growing and evolving relationship between a mother and his son - from the time the son was born, to when he become a parent himself, and come to understand life's amazing gift of love and family. The artist with his platform refining and uplifting black manhood and black fatherhood, present an alternate to this story, following the relationship of a black father and his black son, in a similar, and resolving manner.

Bio

My name is Eric Agyemang-Dua Jr, owner of EA.J's Studio. I am a Ghanaian Artist specializing in Conceptual-Minimalist Storytelling, around Afrocentrism and Truth. I seek to Connect, Engage, and Inspire various aspects of Human Connection and Social Innovation within various communities.

My current platform circumvents the experiences Black Manhood and Black Fatherhood. I am using my art to identify and improve our standards and structure around what it means to be a black man in America, and what ought to be more celebrated and honored in that aspect.

I draw inspiration from mythology, theology, mental health counseling theories, sociology, multiculturalism, and more. In addition to being an Artist, I am also a master's student at Indiana University, pursuing a career as a Counseling Psychologist with research and clinical interests in Financial Wellness Counseling.

Faith Belflower

Statement

My work is an intertwined combination of ceramic instruments, installation, and performance to delve into the intricate interplay of breath, movement, and personal narrative. Through the medium of ceramic instruments, I breathe life into dormant forms by infusing them with personal experiences and emotions.

In my creative process, cause and effect emerge through deliberate actions and the rhythm of the breath. As I engage with the instruments, they become conduits for the exchange of energy, manifesting responses in sight and sound that mirror the dynamic relationship between creator and creation. Performance acts as the catalyst, forging a profound connection between myself and the instruments. In return, blurring the boundaries between the artist and object. The documentation of these performances is a subtle barrier to preserving the intimacy of the moment while inviting interpretation from the viewer through a strategically recorded viewpoint of the performed action.

My work stands as a tangible record of the transformative power forged and changed by human expression capturing the essence of relived experiences and the impact of the breath.

Bio

Faith Belflower is a dedicated artist and scholar whose creative journey has been shaped by a diverse range of experiences. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art and Art History from Stetson University in 2021, setting the stage for her artistic pursuits. Faith is in her second year pursuing a master's degree in ceramics at Indiana University Bloomington. Her profound connection to music and nature has played a pivotal role in her creative life, infusing her work with a unique perspective. Beyond her artistic endeavors, Faith has embraced her passion for nature by being an active member of the Bloomington Indiana Grotto, indulging her love for spelunking. Additionally, her musical talent shines through with over 15 years of experience playing the flute. Faith's multifaceted background and unwavering dedication to both her artistic and musical pursuits are a testament to her commitment to the arts and the natural world, which continue to shape her creative endeavors.



Do Not Resuscitate, 2023
Video Performance
NFS

Garrett Fogle



Self Portrait, 2023
Oil paint
\$1500, 42x31x0.75 in

Grace Wallstead

Statement

My work is focused on elevating everyday experiences to acknowledge how life should not be taken for granted. These experiences are represented through traditional and modern metalsmithing skills with an emphasis on stone setting, enamel, glass, and gold to reflect the beauty, fragility, and value of life. This concept became extremely important to me after going through a near death medical experience. Through the romanticization of everyday tasks, such as eating, making coffee, putting on jewelry, or taking a shower, I am asking the viewer to share my renewed, positive outlook on life so that they may find small moments to be grateful for in theirs.

Bio

Grace is a third year MFA at Indiana University- Bloomington in the Metalsmithing and Jewelry design area. She completed her BFA in Contemporary Art Metals and Jewelry, with a minor in Art History from University of Wisconsin- Stout in 2021. She has always been passionate about art and its impact and hopes to teach in the future.

Sugar Bowl and Spoon Set, 2023
Gold plate copper, sterling silver,
enamel, glass, pearls, cubic zirconia,
polylactic acid filament
NFS, (Combined) 9.5"x10"x5.25"



Hannah Toepp



Gas Stations, 2023
Photography
\$100, 12"x18"

Statement

"Gas Stations" is part of my work where I am looking at indicators of the present time. Gas stations are an indicator of time through the price of gas, cars in their parking lot, and the advertisements they show. I use vintage cameras to document the past because they capture history and are history themselves. I chose a Diana camera to take pictures of gas stations. This resulted in noticing and finding these places and an underlying theme of documenting late-stage capitalism and what I believe are places that will not exist in the future or be dramatically different. The image itself tells a story about the camera and its quirks, like the soft focus of the plastic Diana camera. This Diana camera used for "Gas Stations" has a small plastic piece missing on the edge of the film frame which marks itself on every picture taken with it

Bio

Hannah Toepp is currently studying at Indiana University Bloomington for her MFA in photography. She graduated with her BFA from Saint Mary's College, in Notre Dame, Indiana. She collects vintage cameras and has been giving these cameras a task of what they will take pictures of (such as stores, gas stations, etc.). She is also building her own pinhole cameras and if you ask her if she has one of those cameras in her pocket or bag, she probably does.

Izzy Hawes



Turmoil, 2023
Wood, nails, glue
NFS, 25" x 25" x 4"

Statement

I made six wooden frames with a wood backing and arranged them in a collection where they overlap. On the inside of the frames are different textures. I gained a lot of inspiration from the shapes of scrap wood pieces. I used some pieces of scrap wood but I cut and created more pieces when needed. The pieces are stained with a light, natural color.

When working with wood, it is hard for me to forget the environmental concerns around harvesting wood. I decided to play into these feelings by using scrap wood to prevent waste and base the textures for the frames off of my thoughts and feelings surrounding climate change. Some themes include capitalism, nature, brokenness, barren land, and feelings of unity and overwhelming. The thoughts and feelings are both positive and negative because climate change is saddening and defeating but the community of people advocating for climate action can bring feelings of community and love for nature. Although the textures represent a specific idea, the textures may provoke different emotions for the viewer.

Bio

Izzy Hawes is a junior at Indiana University studying fashion design. Izzy mainly sews but also does woodworking, welding, drawing, and painting.

Julia Fegelman

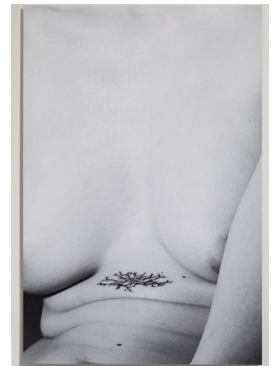
Statement

Nature and humans contain one another, and we are one in the same. I collected nature materials and abstracted tattoo designs to explore this inseparable connection between us, and what surrounds us. By tattooing a small body of nature (a piece of lichen, or *Cladonia subtenuis*, that I found at Griffy Lake) onto my torso, I created a physical embodiment of the memories and connection I feel by placing them plainly and visibly within my skin. I make my tattoos without a machine, and "handpoke" each dot and line by hand. This process is slower, requiring more thoughtful and intentional mark-making. From here, the tattoos age as our bodies do, but the memories and places never leave us. These explorations take on an organic form, one which reflects the bruises, marks, and scars of our bodies moving through life. Handpoked tattoos are grounding, and like nature, they have beautiful flaws that grow and change. Tattoos aren't about putting something new on your body, they simply reveal what was already there.

Recently, there has been a widespread emergence of queer, BIPOC, and AAPI diasporic artists changing the discourse surrounding tattooing. Tattooing is a powerful method of body-affirming care, and has become significant to modern-day identities and taking control of one's outward appearance to the world. Along with this, handpoke tattoos specifically have recently resurfaced in popularity because of their calming, gentle, and meditative qualities. As I continue to pursue my tattoo work, I am honored to share a place with the artists who are taking part in the emergence and reclamation of modern queer tattooing.

Bio

Julia Fegelman is a Chinese-American handpoke tattoo artist working and living in Bloomington, Indiana. She grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio and moved to Bloomington in 2019 to study graphic design at Indiana University. She taught herself how to handpoke tattoo as a freshman in her dorm room, and has now been tattooing for 4.5 years. Her practice focuses on human connection to nature, and she enjoys taking reference from collected nature objects, scientific illustration, and the way our bodies move through life. Since graduating with her BFA in May 2023, Julia has been working as a full-time tattoo artist out of her private studio. You can follow her work on Instagram at @pineneedle.pokes, or at her website, pineneedlepokes.com.



Cladonia subtenuis, 2022
Archival print on luster-laminated aluminum
NFS, 42"x28"x1/8"

Katie McAninch



Forgotten, 2023
Mixed Media | NFS, 6 ft, 3 ft, 2 in

Statement

What happens to images after the person in them has been forgotten? I've spent some time in thrift stores looking through donated photographs, wondering how someone could get rid of them. I believe all images hold a presence, but when I look through the boxes of photos in my parent's house, the images fail to give me any connection to my past. This feeling of distance and disconnection has led me to try and visualize this within these thrifted photographs. There is space between the image and the fabric so the viewer can get an idea of what the person looked like, but they're denied access to the details of the image. Just as I can see what the person looked like for a brief moment in their existence while realizing I'll never fully know them.

Bio

Katie McAninch is an artist based in Indianapolis, IN. She's currently studying at the Herron School of Art and Design at Indiana University, working towards her BFA in Photography. Her work focuses on familial topics, documentation, and memory, exploring the presence people leave behind after they've passed away.

Lane Grady

Statement

Gynandromorphism is when an individual animal possesses both male and female characteristics. This phenomenon is rare and mostly seen in animals with strong sexual dimorphism. The occurrence of gynandromorphism is typically the result of genetic or developmental abnormalities during the early stages of an organism's development. As a result, some cells in the organism may have a male genetic makeup while others contain a female genetic makeup.

The natural process of gynandromorphism exists in nature without human interference. This process inherently challenges traditional gender binary norms and enhances the beauty of complexity in the world around us.

Bio

Lane Grady is currently a BFA in Metalsmithing and Jewelry Design at Indiana University. His work revolves around the natural world and the often overlooked creatures that humans take for granted.



Gynandromorph Stag Beetle, 2023
Brass, Copper, Sterling Silver, Enamel
NFS, 1/2 inch, 2 inches, 7 inches long

Leni Wiegand



Statement

Active efforts are necessary to dismantle the widely accepted gender binary and promote acceptance for trans people. My work aims to educate viewers about the struggles of those living beyond the binary, demonstrated through manipulated self-portraits of my transitioning body. These images, altered through data bending and other non-traditional editing processes, symbolize the forced modification faced by those undergoing an incorrect puberty. The resulting glitches echo the trauma that dysphoria causes when forced to grow up in a body that feels unnatural and the societal pressure trans and non-binary people face to conform to a society that strictly enforces the gender binary. We must constantly adapt to avoid be erased or "fixed" like the glitches we are seen as.

Bio

Leni Wiegand is a transfeminine lens-based artist and current MFA candidate at Indiana University. She received her BA in Business Management from Benedictine University in 2022 and their Associate's Degree in Applied Science in Photography from the College of DuPage in 2020.

Self, 2023
Photography, Databending | \$600, Framed: 20.5 x 28.75 x 2

Lilah Streiff

Statement

While this sculpture is abstract in nature, I see this piece as having similar motion and form to sea coral. The name alludes to the gentle, constant movement of sea anemone in the ocean. The piece was constructed with texture and harmony of form in mind. This piece uses texture and pattern to create movement that leads the eye through the sculpture. Paint was added to emphasize the elements of texture and line.

Bio

I am a student at Indiana University Bloomington studying Visual Arts Education with the goal of becoming a secondary Art teacher. I have been making art my entire life. In my art I focus on the mediums of oil and acrylic painting as well as clay and ceramics. I make art in efforts to beautify the world and bring the joy of art to all those around me. I find art to be rich and intriguing as I explore more mediums and styles in my studies.



Anemone, 2023
Clay and acrylic paint
NFS, 7.5" x 9" x 9.5"

Lillian Frazer



H2O, 2024
Silver, CZ, Pewter
NFS, 1.16" x 1.25 x 1"

Statement

My work is heavily influenced behind the play and fascination I have for science. From spending most of my undergraduate career learning aspects of neuroscience, biology, and chemistry; it has led me to develop a taste for consistent experimentation. While working in a research lab was interesting, it didn't satisfy the hunger that creating does. Metalsmithing has allowed me to consistently strengthen connections between aspects of play, learning, experimentation, and growth. While not limited to personal adornment, the tactile and personal connotation behind creating pieces to be worn, is something that I find endlessly inspiring. I also love thinking larger in the context of installation work, to ultimately connect people in ways that personal pieces can't necessarily do. My work seeks to depict the flow of energy relative to biological or chemical mechanisms. Whether it be from the molecular or cellular level; exploiting these mechanisms and properties allows for access and inspiration. Whether the viewer is immersed within a space, or it is something they could take with them, I seek to make these connections more understood.

Bio

Lillian Frazer is a sculptor and metalsmith. Heavily inspired by movement, her work aims to bring life into the environment it inhabits. Lillian graduated Westfield High School in 2020 and started college during the pandemic in 2020. She spent the majority of her undergraduate career studying Neuroscience in hopes to go into the medical field, yet realized that art is her real passion during her junior year. She is currently pursuing a BFA in metalsmithing and jewelry at Indiana University Bloomington. Lillian has had exhibited her work at the FAR gallery for the National Society of Arts and Letters, as well as the Grunwald and Tangent gallery within IU Bloomington's fine arts building.

Lily Nuest

Statement

The environments within Nuest's paintings fluctuate between spaces grounded in reality and that of her own mindscape. The figures' ambiguous ages represent conflicting attitudes toward adulthood and maturity during an uncertain and constantly changing stage of life. Nuest's paintings are an act of organization, fitting the people and places within her life into archetypal definitions. In this way, patterns in human attachment may be studied and digested by the viewer, and, as a result, recognized as shared experiences.

Bio

Lily Nuest is an artist living in Bloomington, Indiana where she is currently pursuing a B.F.A. in Painting at Indiana University.



Peering In, 2023
Oil on canvas
\$1000, 40" x 48"

Maria Ivancsics



Good Bar, 2023
Oil on canvas | NFS, 40 x 32 in.

Statement

My work starts from an interest in observation. The act of looking and painting is meditative for me and allows for me to reflect on my relationship to other people and the world around me. Mirrors, windows, reflections and shadows in the work are all reminders of the painting's role as an indirect image. With "Good Bar", I wanted to capture the peace and ambiguity darkness made in the space. It made a tea lights in a loud bar feel like votives in a quiet basilica. Glass bricks catching light off street lamps were now ancient stained glass.

Bio

Maria Ivancsics was born in South Bend, IN. She received her BFA in painting from Indiana University Bloomington in 2023. She hopes to soon pursue a MFA degree.

Marvin Hawkins

Statement

The exclusion of information and resources at an early age delays development and curiosity. Growing up within a traditional and cautious community, any questions I brought up were answered with ambiguity, silence, or God. There was suddenly a barrier in between the "right" answers and the resources to find them. The stubbornness of brass helps me communicate the frustration of having the inability to satisfy curiosity and alleviate doubt, a feeling that is experienced at any age but can be detrimental in development.

Bio

Marvin Hawkins is currently an undergraduate at IU Bloomington earning their BFA in Metalsmithing and Jewelry Design. Working primarily in metal and wood, they find passion in communicating ideas of choice, change, and accessibility. They find interest in techniques and mechanisms such as forming, pyrography, filigree, and hinges.



Find a Way, 2023
Brass, Basswood
NFS, 19 x 28 x 17.5 cm

Matthew Cortez

Statement

The titular phrase is a quote from Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy. The phrase is read by Virgil as a warning before entering the gates of hell. This phrase acts in the same way when scorched upon these canonical love-centric texts.

Bio

Matthew Cortez is a contemporary conceptual individual first and foremost. He is currently studying Art History & Sculpture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Being a Midwest native Cortez has exhibited at several midwest institutions including SAIC Galleries, Northwestern University, & Indiana University Northwest.



Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here, 2023
Branding Iron Burned Books
 \$350, Each book roughly 9 x 7 inches

Max Meier



The Solar Engine, 2023
Iron, Limestone, Bronze, Garnet
 18" tall, 20" swing of arm
 \$3500

Statement

What information is contained in an object? Throughout history, every culture has created objects that are meant to demonstrate their understanding of the universe, and their place within it - objects that today we classify as 'Art' although their makers and owners may have viewed them differently. We look at these objects today, often devoid of their context and intention, and try to reconstruct the worlds they were born into.

With this piece, I wanted to lean into this long view, and be intentional with the information that could be read from what I make. It taps into both an ancient tradition and our modern understanding of the inquiry into the nature of reality. The steam turbine is based on a design by Hero of Alexandria, a First Century Greek mathematician and engineer in the Roman occupied city in Egypt. He is famous for inventions that today we would associate with industrial processes, but at the time existed as scientific/philosophical curiosities. I've chosen to depict the central orb of his turbine as the sun, and use the motion of it to drive an arm that holds a piece of lapis lazuli representing the Earth. The Earth orbits in proportion to the rotation of the sun, completing one yearly orbit for every 30 rotations of the turbine. For practical reasons, the size and distance of the Earth from the Sun have been scaled in by a factor of 20, however the proportions still reveal a knowledge of the actual dimensions under close examination.

Beyond the system it is meant to describe, the engine devolves into a murky speculation about the limits of understanding - poorly defined figures of Titans holding up the solar system, descending into some primordial foundation. But within the boundaries of the system, it would offer a future viewer a glimpse of what its creator knew, and did not know, about our place in the universe.

Bio

Max is a metalsmith, currently a third year MFA in metalsmithing/jewelry design at IU Bloomington, and holds a BA from Earlham College.

He got his start in metalwork through blacksmithing at an early age, and has gradually focused in on finer details in his work as time has gone by. His work is influenced by a love of fantasy, as well as an interest in tools, processes, and mechanisms.

Michelle Solorzano



Plantain Power, 2023
Clay and paint
\$3500, 3ft x 28" x 28"

Statement

My work is a series of autobiographical narratives put together like a puzzle from a set of chosen symbols. Most of these elements stem from past memories growing up in the Dominican Republic that had a significant impact in my life, while others are still present in my everyday life.

As an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, my recent work delves into power dynamics symbolized in the Dominican Carnival. It draws parallels between the historical context of the Carnival and my lived experiences, constructing a surreal narrative where my heritage engages in a meaningful dialogue with my current life. The work aims to raise awareness of challenges such as the language barrier, prejudice, and the process of cultural and social assimilation. Focusing on the themes of duality and biculturalism, I explore the constant oscillation between not feeling entirely American nor Dominican, yet embodying aspects of both.

Beyond the vibrancy of theatrical performances, characters like The Devil in all its iterations, and the aesthetic of the Carnival that embraces bright colors, repetition, and maximalist adornment, what captivates me most is the temporary dismantling of social hierarchies within this cultural celebration. Through extensive research, I rediscover the historical and cultural significance of these elements. My own persona, portrayed through self-portraits, becomes a means to document and retell aspects of the Dominican Republic's cultural and political history, often misrepresented through the lens of colonized minds.

Bio

Michelle Solorzano is a figurative ceramic sculptor. Solorzano earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and Ceramics from the State University of New York at Potsdam and is currently working towards her Master of Fine Arts in Ceramics at Indiana University's Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture, and Design. Originally from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Michelle moved to New York with her family at the age of fifteen. Now residing in Bloomington, Indiana, she is focused on her studies and sharing her passion for ceramics through teaching.

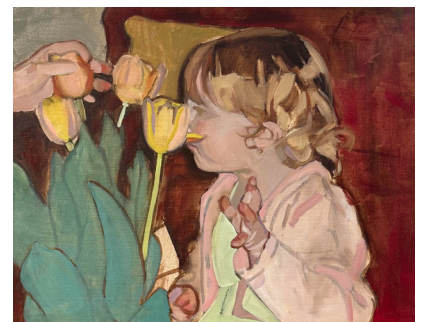
Morijah Kahl

Statement

Currently I work with oil paint and draw with graphite. When painting I keep in mind that not only the model will be represented but also the paint itself. In a piece, things are narratively important but also painterly important. My work is based on the memories and dynamics I have with my family, loss of innocence, and nostalgia. I draw inspiration from poetry, religious philosophy, and concepts surrounding life and death. My piece, "When Everything was New", is based on my childhood and discovering things for the first time. When referencing past events, I want to communicate that nostalgia is not always positive. Nostalgia can also be gut-wrenching.

Bio

Morijah Kahl is currently a third year Painting BFA student at Indiana University. She was born in Richmond, Virginia and eventually moved to Southern Indiana during the second half of her childhood, where she currently resides. Kahl is one of six children and was homeschooled alongside her siblings on their family farm. Eventually Kahl attended, and graduated from, West Washington High School.



When Everything Was New, 2023
Oil on Panel
NFS, 10 in. x 12 in.

Nathan Allen Wilkinson

Statement

The photograph is a proxy for the human body and mind – a space between constructed image and active image-maker, where the experiential precedes the representational. My interdisciplinary artistic practice uses photographic language, materials, processes, and reflective surfaces to explore the visceral physical and psychological affects of images born from light. These experiments unfold connections between the human condition, the physics of light, and the void. I am guided by fully analog camera-less processes, chemical experimentation, materiality, and irreproducibility. I find subversive irony and definitional expansion of photography by making images that cannot be replicated through photographic means. The prints' unique nature urges viewers to be physically and mentally present, calling on them to reflect on the experience of photography.

Bio

Nathan Allen Wilkinson was born in 1999 and raised in Goodyear, Arizona. He obtained his BFA in Studio Art with concentrations in photography and sculpture at Western Washington University. Wilkinson is a first-year MFA Studio Art Graduate at Purdue University, studying photography, sculpture, and installation art.



*Reflections on Photography
(Experiential Over Representational), 2024*
Silver toned silver gelatin print
\$1350, 27 x 33 x 0.625 inches

Nicole Wolz



Constructed, 2023
Photography
NFS, 13 x 19 inches

Statement

My work investigates artificial representations of botanical forms. I examine how plants intertwine reality with human artifice in curated spaces. In this work, I use screen-printed images and combine them with photographic landscape images. I am comparing, contrasting, and creating an artificial space where reality and the imaginary are combined. Using a combination of printmaking and photography, I explore how artificial representations of nature influence our perception of the landscape.

Bio

Nichole Wolz is an artist from Wyoming now living in Indiana. Her work revolves around human perceptions of nature and artificial interpretations of plants. She earned her AFA in Fine Art from Sheridan College, a BFA in Studio Art, and a BA in Art History from the University of Wyoming. She is graduating with an MFA in printmaking from Indiana University in May 2024. Her work has been exhibited internationally in the United Kingdom and throughout the USA in Wyoming, Indiana, Utah, New Mexico, Iowa and Virginia.

Olivia Trevino



Tracks, 2024
Ceramic
NFS, 9 inch x 6 inch, 6 inch

Statement

Clay exposes me. It exposes my unconscious tendencies and compulsions in a way that is beautiful to look at. Clay allows me to let go of the battle of control within myself and push it into the work. These vessels are seen as self-portraits, visual representations of the overwhelming anxiety and compulsions I feel. I take complete control of my vessels until they go into a kiln. I use atmospheric firing to release the control I feel and allow the glaze and clay to react in a way that it wants. Giving me relief to let go.

Bio

Olivia Trevino is a ceramic artist from Indianapolis. She is studying at Indiana University Bloomington pursuing a B.F.A. in Ceramics and B.A. in Journalism. She has been working with thrown vessels and atmospheric firing. She has a background in fibers and has been begun pursuing clay over the past year. Olivia has been in two Tangent Gallery shows over the past year, the Undergraduate Exhibition and Objects That Serve.

Sara Deren

Statement

I hand build sculptures that elicit the feelings of comfort I find in everyday routines and repetition. I intuitively build each form using the processes of hand building with coils and creating texture through additive techniques and stippling. I often build without a final form in mind, allowing for each decision to guide the next. This not only slows down my making but forces me to address the form in the state it is in, rather than focusing on the image of a final form.

As I am building, questions regarding balance and contour come to mind. Undulating surfaces emerge out of the intuitive and organic nature of my building and require attention to maintain a continuous contour from different angles. The final form invites viewers to shift their perspective. Negative space is utilized throughout a form to further this invitation, creating separate feet to support the piece and/or passages in which viewers can physically see through the piece. Once building is completed, I begin the process of adding texture. Coils are added to create the illusion of layers, spikes protrude from the forms in differing manners, and repetitive stippling creates variation in the surface. Together, the ever-evolving combinations of hand building and texture open the door for various interpretations and gives an opportunity to viewers to interact with the work.

Bio

Sara Deren is a ceramic artist specializing in hand-built sculpture. Born and raised in South Bend, Indiana, Sara was first introduced to clay in 2015 at the South Bend Museum of Art. From 2017 to 2022, she worked at a local paint-your-own pottery studio, The Pigeon and The Hen, teaching wheel throwing and hand building classes to both adults and children. In December of 2023, she received her BFA in ceramics from Indiana University. During her time in the BFA program, Sara found comfort in the repetitive processes of hand building and adding textures to her work. Her interests remain in hand building and intuitive building forms inspired by the organic forms and textures found in nature. Post graduation, Sara is volunteering at The Pottery House, a Bloomington pottery studio, where she hopes to continue teaching others about clay while strengthening her own practice of making.



Becoming, 2023
Soda-fired stoneware
\$450, 24", 23.5", 16"

Sarah Blackwell



Sin-eater, 2023
Video
NFS

Statement

This piece is a video diary depicting three weeks of testosterone injections. Using scans sourced from the British Library's Archives, I compare my gender transformation to the natural world. Through the interplay of my human-driven effort of transitioning and the natural cycle of the world, I recontextualize my transition into the fluctuating, ever-changing nature of creation. The ways in which meaning can be conveyed through simple icons is crucial to this work; exploring ways to portray narratives through abstract symbols. This mirrors the way I've navigated my life as a queer individual, searching for connection in the mundane. I hope that my work can both serve as a bridge for those seeking community in a world where we can often go unseen, and a point of understanding for those who are unaware of our existence and validity.

Bio

Sarah Blackwell (he/she) is a multidisciplinary artist who focuses on digital media, primarily videos and digital illustration. His work is inspired by his religious upbringing, interest in historical narratives, and identity as a queer individual. He inserts his own narratives onto historical contexts to see examples of his identity reflected on those who lived before. So often are queer stories overlooked, a fact that she struggled with as a child searching for familiarity. Sarah is currently pursuing a BFA in Digital Art from Indiana University.

Sookyung Augustin

Statement

Inner Goddess is uniquely designed with the centerpiece constructed from a single section of wire. Each subsequent link is similarly constructed with an inlaid locket hidden behind the ametrine. Inner Goddess refers to the inner goddess in all women; inspiring her in the wearer.

Bio

Sookyung Augustin is a West Michigan based metalsmith with her BFA from Grand Valley State University in Illustration. Sookyung Designs LLC was founded in 2009. She started teaching bead weaving and metalsmithing at private studios in 2011, adding lapidary in 2016. She left the position in 2023 to seek her Masters from Indiana University, Bloomington in Metalsmithing and jewelry making.



Inner Goddess, 2023
Sterling silver, ametrine
NFS, 18"x 3"x3/4"

Sydney Miller



Crown, 2023
Photography
NFS, 16.67" x 14.46"

Statement

My work has primarily focused on the visual representation of hair and hair care, explored through a variety of ways. I began this research within my own family by exploring my mother's upbringing as a black child in the 1970s. My interests were focused on my family's history, and while I was able to garner a better understanding of my mother, and her racial experiences, I began to expand my interests. I have continuously photographed strangers in an attempt to focus on the importance of hair, both to an individual, and their community. My work expanded to the point that I was interested in including people of all groups, ages, and hairstyles. However, for my work to align with my own personal connections, it needed to shift to a specific perspective.

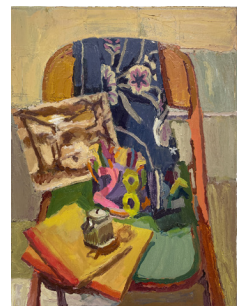
Photographing individuals in the African-American community has provided this perspective, and has given me another way to connect to my subjects. Often, the people that I'm photographing have shared their own stories with me about how their hair has changed, its importance, and oftentimes their negative experiences as children. This photograph is meant to depict and highlight the importance of hair for this individual, as well as the black community as a whole. I chose to photograph the subject's crown of their head, viewing the subject's hair in a clear visual aspect. In these ways, I am able to emphasize the interesting textures and creative styles that are seen in all facets of the African-American community. Through photographing strangers, and having the opportunity to listen to their stories, my work can support a positive representation of African-American hair.

Bio

As the daughter of two artists, Sydney Miller's early involvement in the arts has both shaped and molded her mindset. Through the different facets of her identity, specifically pertaining to the idea of visibility and invisibility, she is actively creating an photographic exhibition exploring the ideas of hair, as an aspect of African-American identity and personhood. She believes that the stories we share with others, especially in the context of identity and acceptance, shape our perspectives. By cultivating her stories, and the stories of those with similar identities, Sydney's work expands upon the notion of selfhood and minority experiences.

Tristen Demmett

28th Year, 2023
Oil on canvas
NFS, 18"x24"x 1"



Zoe Nielsen



Bio

Zoe Nielsen received her BFA in Studio Arts from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska and currently attends Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana as a MFA candidate of Studio Arts and Faculty of Record.

Scale Study, 2022
Hand-cut Collograph and Screenprinted Paper
\$1200, 27"x16"