

ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

For Immediate Release: 15 April 2015

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More information: ackland.org/exhibition/the-land-of-no-things

***The Land of No Things* at Ackland Art Museum to Feature Work of Eleven New MFAs**

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina — The work of eleven artists completing their Master of Fine Arts degrees at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will be on display at the Ackland Art Museum from 24 April through 7 June 2015. The group show, entitled *The Land of No Things: Selected Works by the MFA Class of 2015*, is curated by arts writer and independent curator Chris Vitiello.

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, 23 April 2015, from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The reception is free and open to the public.

Included in the exhibition are works by Peter Barnett, Anna Delgado, Mijoo Kim, Katy Mixon, Naomi Elizabeth O'Donnell, Eric Pickersgill, Shane Smith, Sydney Steen, Allison Tierney, Amy White, and Gesche Wüffel. *The Land of No Things* is made possible by the Seymour and Carol Levin Foundation and proceeds from Ackland ARTINI! 2015.



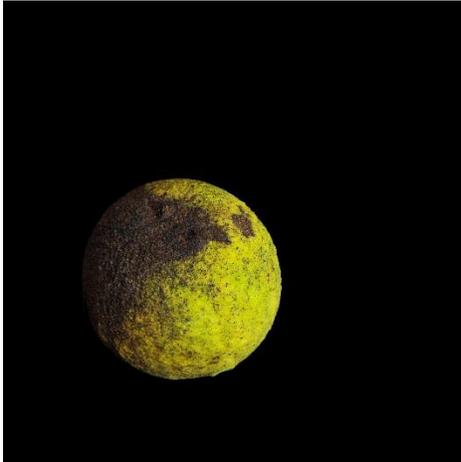
“All the artists in the 2015 UNC MFA class are deeply, even ethically aware of their role as cultural producers in an era of hyper-production, environmental exhaustion, labor virtualization and seemingly infinite commercial availability,” says Vitiello. “They are wary of objects while also being, as visual artists, individuals who express themselves by producing objects. If they could make no things, they would.”

The artists in the 2015 MFA class share this conflicted position in a variety of ways, their art taking different forms and trajectories.

Some are geographical or historical expressions, reestablishing the legitimacy of, and relationship between, places and events. In photographs of southeastern lynching sites, **Gesche Wüffel** makes history real in present-day space, while **Sydney Steen**'s layered plaster slabs and landscapes restore awe to a virtualized and branded physical world. **Mijoo Kim**'s shrouded photographic portraits and **Eric Pickersgill**'s spatial transformation of his grandfather's 8mm movies convert memory and tradition into presence.

The archeological expressions of other students use ruins or ghosts to open spaces for new ritual. Using second-hand materials, **Allison Tierney**'s assemblage paintings cast themselves in the middle of

unknowable narratives, and **Katy Mixon** scrapes paint off canvases and mills her own by-product into the surface of freshly painted work. **Amy White's** ceramic wall sculptures propose a mineral engagement by connecting the clay's crystalline forms to those in human DNA. **Shane Smith** tries to resolve identity and utility through installations recalling Ugandan community service and American Indian heritage, and **Anna Delgado** holds public rituals that launch communal ideas through shared experiences.



Other students find fecundity in overproduction and profundity amid infinite representation. **Peter Barnett** attempts to disentangle the personal from the commercial by arranging and photographing mass-produced objects. In her web-based video serial *Honey Cult*, **Naomi Elizabeth O'Donnell** revels in a farce of representations while running a situational mythology in the background.

"Ultimately all of these artists reach toward some kind of restoration through meaningful human interaction," says Vitiello. "It's likely that, in a few years, many of them will be producing very different work. Video might lead into installation. Photography might lead into performance,

documentary work or even social activism. A desire for different ends will necessitate a different means. But that's what unites this MFA class. Each of these artists only makes work for a reason."

Also on View: *Adding to the Mix 9: Marcel Duchamp's "From or by Marcel Duchamp or Rose Sélavy" (1966)*

A parallel exhibition presents a recent acquisition by the Ackland: a work that is widely considered to be a masterpiece of twentieth-century art by Marcel Duchamp. Entitled *From or by Marcel Duchamp or Rose Sélavy*, the piece is a so-called "boîte" (box) containing 80 meticulously crafted small-scale reproductions of the artist's works, from his avant-garde paintings, such as the famous *Nude Descending a Staircase* which scandalized the New York art world at the Armory Show in 1913, to his provocative "ready-mades," including the 1917 *Fountain*, an inverted urinal signed with the pseudonym "R. Mutt." One of the seminal artists of the period and a contemporary of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, Duchamp (1887-1968) decisively affected the most radical and conceptual tendencies in art of his time, offering pointed, witty, and enigmatic critiques of visual representation, the status of the work of art, the role of creativity, and the place of art institutions.

About the Ackland

The Ackland Art Museum is located on the historic campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Ackland's holdings consist of more than 17,000 works of art, featuring significant collections of European masterworks, twentieth-century and contemporary art, African art, North Carolina pottery, and folk art. In addition, the Ackland has North Carolina's premier collections of Asian art and works on paper (drawings, prints, and photographs). As an academic unit of the University, the Ackland serves broad local, state, and national constituencies.

Admission and Hours

Admission to the Ackland Art Museum is always free, with donations accepted. The Ackland is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 PM. The Museum is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Location

The Ackland Art Museum is located on South Columbia Street, just south of East Franklin Street, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Detailed directions are available at www.ackland.org or by calling 919.966.5736. Parking is available at several nearby municipal and private parking decks, and at meters on Franklin Street. Detailed parking information and a map are available at www.parkonthehill.com.

Images:

Sydney Steen, American, born 1991: *Floating Horizon*, 2014; plaster, pigment, corn starch, wire; 24 x 48 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Gesche Wüffel, German, born 1976: *Walnut (Stagville Plantation)*, from *Plantation Still Lifes/Oppressive Architecture*, 2014; archival pigment print, 8 x 8 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

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