

ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

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Media contact: Emily Bowles, Director of Communications, 919.843.3675, emily.bowles@unc.edu

More information: ackland.org/exhibition/depth_perception

***Depth Perception* at Ackland Art Museum to Feature Work of Six New MFAs**

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina — Humans explore perception and identity as a lifetime practice, ruminating on their experiences, memories, space, and time as they are able to perceive them. In *Depth Perception*, six artists work through ideas of perception using different approaches to identity, communication, neurosis, power, social norms, and the ephemeral nature of time.

Included in *Depth Perception* are works by artists Erin Canady, Willie T. Jones, Alyssa Miserendino, Travis Phillips, Drew Robertson, and Saba Taj. Each of the six participating artists is a 2016 Master of Fine Arts candidate at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Perception is a process that guarantees imperfect definitions and open-ended meanings,” says guest curator Kelly McChesney, “It is this investigation of the individual and the world—a shared repeating ritual—that connects us, teaches empathy, and makes us human.”

Using graphite, paper, and water as her primary media, **Erin Canady** explores the power of artifacts as physical references to memory, language, and the passage of time. Through a continual practice of object creation and destruction, Canady records an artistic record of loss.

Classical figures like the ancient Greek poet Homer provide artist **Willie T. Jones** with a metaphorical inspiration to celebrate the power of words through textual paintings. Jones references popular hip hop songs by such artists as Jay-Z and Kodak Black, suggesting that these modern masters use their words to affect a culture and a movement.

Influenced by personal relationships and self-contradictions, **Alyssa Miserendino** delves into human psychology and neuroses as a pathway to empathetic expression. Her contrasting bodies of photographic and video work made from the archive of her estranged father’s family photos become relics that encourage the viewer to become active – and also complicit – in her personal memories.

Travis Phillips is interested in the precise moment when ideas are born and imagined, and how that initial spark becomes less clear the moment one tries to communicate the idea. He creates illusions of depth and dimensionality of visual space through a comingling and blending of paint colors and textures.

In his practices of stand-up comedy and visual art, **Drew Robertson** uses repetition to blur the boundaries of humor and discomfort, while heightening the tension between mass culture and high art. Through repetition of the same joke and the slippages it inspires, the meaning and impact of the joke’s punch line changes as the performer works through moments of wittiness, awkwardness, and neurotic delivery.

The futuristic narratives of **Saba Taj** offer a re-empowerment to types often perceived to be victims and a reexamination of the concept of the exotic “other.” Melding imagery from Islam, Afrofuturism, and popular culture, Taj imagines landscapes where power structures shift and marginalized beings survive and gain power through a hybridization of the beautiful and the grotesque.

Guest curator Kelly McChesney is director of Flanders Gallery in Raleigh. McChesney has organized over 150 exhibitions for galleries, universities, corporations, non-profits, and alternative exhibition spaces.

The exhibition will be on view at UNC-Chapel Hill’s Ackland Art Museum from 22 April through 5 June 2016.

An opening celebration will be held at the Ackland on Thursday, 21 April 2016 from 5:30-7:30 PM. The event is free and open to the public.

Depth Perception is made possible in part by The Seymour and Carol Levin Foundation and by James Keith Brown and Eric Diefenbach.

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 Sundays 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.

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