Donor Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the donors whose contributions helped make this publication possible. On behalf of ECU, the MFA artists showcased in this issue, and all the people who worked to put & together, thank you again for your support.

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From the SoAD Graduate Office

We are thrilled to launch &, an annual publication to represent the collaborative, multidisciplinary community of artists we foster in the MFA program here at East Carolina. Even in these challenging, distant times, our graduate students embraced and nourished their community, creating an extraordinary bond and a powerful series of work. We hope that our project can continue to provide a venue for the world to see the fantastic work they do at the School of Art and Design.

Thank you to everyone who made this possible; the graduate students, BFA Graphic Design Seniors and their faculty mentors, and our donors who contributed generous gifts towards this publication. We are grateful for your support for our students and their art.

Warmest regards,

Seo Eo
Graduate Program Director
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MFA PROGRAM

ECU School of Art and Design MFA program is an inclusive space to discuss and share ideas for graduate research in Art and Design. Our curriculum provides opportunities to collaborate, demonstrate, and critique across disciplines. The School of Art and Design graduate program offers highly specialized media-based curricula as individual concentrations for the degree. Our MFA community creates an interdisciplinary stage for the program-wide cohort, emphasizing the community-based critical discourse and engagement relevant to the current thinking in visual culture.
Adam is an MFA Candidate in the printmaking program at East Carolina University. Originally from Florida, he received his BFA from the University of North Florida after gaining sobriety in his early thirties. A chef by trade and an artist by passion, Adam enjoys making prints that focus on botanical beauty, as well as the culinary uses of plants we might often overlook. As he begins his second year at ECU, he plans to continue his research on the concepts of plant blindness, ethnobotany, and how ethnocentrism has played a role in the shaping of what modern society thinks of plants. Adam loves hanging out with his sweet girl River, taking naps, eating pizza and making things.
This body of work is a visual notebook or an artistic field guide, reflecting the natural world as observed; a journey into the investigation and understanding of the world around us. My artistic research is educational, though the intent is not always blatantly obvious to the viewer. The exploration of botanical families aids in the identification of individual plant species and exhibits the connection between individual species and their origins, cultivation, and historical context. Each full sheet print varies slightly in aesthetics but are all made from the same set of matrices, averaging forty hours of labor each. The development of these largescale photolithographic works will encourage the immersive education of the viewers, while simultaneously expanding my own research. I hope the work can serve as a starting point for recognizing the importance of common plants in a local and regional setting.

“The exploration of botanical families aids in the identification of individual plant species and exhibits the connection between individual species and their origins, cultivation, and historical context.”

Cover: Astor Family, 2020
Cyanotype & Lithography 44"X30"

L / R: Mint Family, 2020
Intaglio and lithograph 44"X30"
Adam Berman

Left: Pea Family, 2020
Lithography 44" X 30"
Right: Mint Family, 2020
Intaglio and lithograph 44" X 30"
Anthony Naimo is a multidisciplinary found object artist working in digital collage and mixed-media sculpture. His art deals with the perceived value of found materials in an exploration of self-identity and community. A theme throughout his art is that of coalescence: the act of independent units unifying or coming together in one body or mass. This phenomenon of transcendence through togetherness is the essence of his artistic process. Naimo received his bachelor’s degree in Studio Photography at Northwest Missouri State University and studying as an MFA candidate in Metals Design at East Carolina University.
I come from a lineage of hoarders. My grandmother is a magpie, and my father is a packrat, and I have inherited their stewardship of found and discarded objects. The excitement of discovering preciousness in mundane materials is what compels me to utilize found material. I love to imagine my materials for what they could be, rather than what they are. I turn junked materials into depictions of used-future technologies: dinged-up spaceships, plasma rifles built from scrap, robots. With this depiction of used-future technologies, I advocate for sustainable solutions in engineering and conservation to preserve the future of our planet. I invite you to consider solutions at home for repurposing waste products, to give them a secondary or tertiary life and purpose. This work is as much a condemnation of capitalist greed as it is a celebration of every person’s ingenuity and make-do sensibilities. Though my artworks found-object components may be readily identifiable, these materials surrender their autonomous forms and meaning to generate a new collective identity when presented together. To build a new tomorrow, we must implement the wisdom of yesterday with the materials of today.

“I love to imagine my materials for what they could be, rather than what they are. I turn junked materials into depictions of used-future technologies…”

Anthony Naimo
Left: Jack Returns from The Cold, 2020
Copper, Enamel

Center: Owl Snatching Picnic Basket, 2020
Foam, Wood, Canvas, Found Object

Right: Pig Iron, 2020
Foam, Muslin, Found Object
Briana Earl grew up in rural South Dakota. She has been interested in artmaking since she was a child, and pursued a BFA at the University of South Dakota, where she specialized in photography with interests in video, sculpture, and installation, and worked as a studio lab assistant and as a photography archive assistant at the I.D. Weeks Library. Briana is continuing to get her Masters at East Carolina University, in hopes of continuing to be a teacher. During her time at ECU, Briana has focused on digital photography processes in relationship to her thesis and works as an introduction art instructor and a graduate research assistant.
At some point in everyone’s life, they will experience nostalgia and homesickness. For me, it came when I moved from South Dakota to North Carolina for graduate school. It was the farthest I had ever been from my family, and the first time I have lived outside of the Midwest. I found myself coping by exploring my new environment and daydreaming. Exploring these new spaces, I began to photograph the place that would invoke my nostalgic memories, and through this process, I began to understand how memories always change and take a new shape.

During the pandemic, my artwork was influenced by the changing world, and our understanding of the concept of home. What do we do to consider ourselves “at home?”

“It was the farthest I had ever been from my family, and the first time I have lived outside of the Midwest.”

Cover: Untitled Chariot, 2020
Digital Photograph

Left: Summers End, 2020
Digital Photograph

Right: Untitled Chariot, 2020
Digital Photograph
1: Summers End, 2020
Digital Photograph

2: Summers End, 2020
Digital Photograph

3: Covid Chariot, 2020
Digital Photograph

4: Title Wash on Cold to Avoid Bleeding, 2020
Digital Photograph
Pikeville-based printmaker Crystal Bowers has been utilizing her skills in mixed media to further open our minds about the destruction fascism has brought to the United States. Originally a painter and graphic designer, Crystal chose to expand her artistic toolbox with the incorporation of printmaking. This trifecta brings the perfect unity to her work. Her evolution into a mixed media artist has compelled her to use her various talents to create an alternative, parallel world in which we could see ourselves. Her use of various textures, color, and a keen eye for graphic drawings gives narrative to her work. She hopes to create work that make the viewer feel as if they can place themselves in the scene.
The impact of the last year on the world has been vast and tumultuous. With voices needing to be heard, lockdowns, and frivolous leadership in the United States, I shifted my focus to the fascist manner in which our “President” was treating our country. We were supposed to be the most powerful and prosperous country in the world, an example for the rest; instead, the last year has shown that we are just as broken as anywhere else. Being a mixed media printmaker has allowed me the tools to express what has been happening around all of us through the use of texture, color, and graphic drawings. My hope is to bring the viewer out of their blind-led life and into the future.

“Being a mixed media printmaker has allowed me the tools to express what has been happening around all of us through the use of texture, color, and graphic drawings.”

Crystal Bowers

Cover: The Upgrade, 2020
Mixed Media, Linoleum Block Print
L / R: Doomsday Approaches, 2020
Mixed Media
& Crystal Bowers

Left: Trumpleforeskin, 2020
Serigraphy
Right: The Awakening, 2020
Mixed Media, Block Print
John Rhodes-Pruitt is an artist born and raised in eastern North Carolina. Since the day his grandparents first paid for afternoon watercolor lessons, John has been making art. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke with a BA in Studio Art in 2018, and a BA in Sociology in 2020. His work has been exhibited in venues both nationally and internationally. He made his first trip to Frogman’s Printmaking Workshop in the summer of 2019, after being awarded an assistantship. He is currently pursuing an MFA in Printmaking at ECU.
I incorporate visual metaphors for the Other as an identity. This stems from my status in society as a fat, gay man, and I use my personal experience in being an Other to create work that helps to both contextualize myself and offer a space of common understanding. Most people experience being the Other at some point during life, and my work uses both real and surreal imagery to connect one Other to another in the hopes of beginning a dialogue.

“Most people experience being the Other at some point during life, and my work uses both real and surreal imagery to connect one Other to another in the hopes of beginning a dialogue.”

Cover: Patron Saint of Other, 2020
Lithography/Multimedia

Left: Familiar Spells in Daydream, 2020
Intaglio/Multimedia

Right: One-Forked Path, 2020
Intaglio/Multimedia
John Rhodes-Pruitt

Left: One-Forked Path, 2020
Intaglio/Multimedia

Right: Familiar Spells in Daydream, 2020
Intaglio/Multimedia
Josh earned his Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business from Longwood College in 1997. After eleven years in the financial services industry, he felt unfulfilled and began his second career with the United States Army, where he proudly served as a combat arms soldier until 2017 when he medically retired after being injured. Subsequently, he has followed his passion for photography, earning an Associate of Sciences in Photographic Technologies, and pursuing his Master of Fine Arts in Photography at East Carolina University, where he is on track to graduate in the Spring of 2022. After graduating he plans to teach and volunteer with veteran organizations, utilizing photography as a method of therapy for those struggling with transition to civilian life.
Most recently I have been using my work as an escape into an alternate reality—an expression of the anger and pain over friends lost to the battle with their inner demons, satirical responses to the current pandemic, or even just expressions of my own mental health struggles. Sometimes the work is fun, many times it feels like a chore to just get started, but it is always therapeutic. Regardless of the subject matter, I have always believed that it is better to find a way of expressing what you are battling in art. Hang it on the wall for others to see, examine, dissect—just get it out of your brain and share it so, that you can’t continue to hide from it. If you’re lucky you will move past it, and possibly help someone else along the way.

“Regardless of the subject matter, I have always believed that it is better to find a way of expressing what you are battling in art.”
Left: Disturbed, 2020
Digital Photography
Center: Covid Bouquet, 2020
Digital Photography
Right: Angry, 2020
Digital Photography
Julienne Beblo is pursuing an MFA in Ceramics at East Carolina University and will be graduating in Spring 2022. She has received a BS in Marine Science and a BA in Studio Art from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and a Master of Professional Science degree in Marine Conservation from the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. She is interested in using art to communicate scientific concepts and the need for conservation.
My love of being in water, my interest in understanding natural connections, and my desire to improve human impacts on the environment have led me to study both marine science and art. While these two fields are not usually considered related, I have found major connections between the two disciplines, and in many ways feel that they are dependent upon one another. As a scientist, the numerous and dynamic interactions found in marine environments are fascinating. As an artist, the colors, forms, and textures intrigue me. By going beyond understanding the science inspiring my art, I hope to use the art to captivate the attention of others regarding environmental issues. My interest in marine conservation and ceramics provides an interdisciplinary approach to communicating science, addressing these environmental issues, and highlighting applicable and feasible solutions.

"As a scientist, the numerous and dynamic interactions found in marine environments are fascinating. As an artist, the colors, forms, and textures intrigue me.”

Cover: Natans, 2020
Soda-Fired Porcelain with Glass
L / R: Reflected Barnacles, 2020
Soda-Fired Porcelain with Glass
1 / 2: Steel Tridacna, 2020
Soda-Fired Stoneware with Glass

3: Grey Encrustaceans, 2020
Soda-Fired Porcelain

4 / 5: Natans, 2020
Soda-Fired Porcelain with Glass

6: Barnacles, 2020
Soda-Fired Porcelain
Karena Graves (aka Kidd) is known in their community as an artist, friend, and helping hand. They were born in Greensboro, NC and grew into an artist at the Durham School of the Arts. They often find themselves in social positions that lead to their work, and hope to continue to create relationships with community leaders and art enthusiasts. They love to spend time with family, fish, and find items in the junkyard to create sculpture with. At 23, they decided to continue their artistic career at ECU to earn an MFA in sculpture. They are interested in the manipulation of ambiguous material to fit into conceptual themes that relate to their identity of being a Queer, Black, gender non-conforming woman.
This current work is an exploration of how found, handmade, and bought materials come together to share commonalities and differences. The commonalities are in the organic match, and how they are placed together; the differences usually arise from the original material. My work explores androgyny, and a balance between the organic and the industrial. This imagery is also based on my nostalgia of memories and feelings from childhood—the playfulness that comes from working with the items that I pick up and assemble together.

“...and differences.”

Cover: We Real Cool, 2020
Found Metal
L / R: Soft and Hard, 2020
Found Metal, Poly Foam, Spray Paint
& Karena Graves

L / R: River, 2020
Steel Buckets, Steel, Acrylic & Enamel
Katya Hutchinson is a process-oriented printmaker. A second year MFA candidate at ECU, her work currently revolves around the illusion and reality of self. Although her introduction to the arts was non-traditional, Hutchinson has become infatuated with the various creative process and techniques waiting to be explored and shared. When she’s not elbow-deep in etching acid, Hutchinson can be found buried in a dusty sci-fi novel.
Amidst a hostile world of unforgiving realities, it seems natural to wish for something different. During isolation, I found myself delving back into daydreaming—searching for the fantastical safe spaces I’d created in childhood. These pieces reflect that search, and the ultimate realization that no form of escapism is safe from the infiltration of reality. 

“...”
& Katya Hutchinson

Left: Tea Service, 2020
Intaglio, 12" x 16"

Center: Pheasant, 2020
18" x 24" silkscreen, 18" x 24"

Right: Psyche #5, 2020
Intaglio and monotype, 11.5" x 17"
Kerry Yichen Guan is a metalsmith and enamellist from Beijing, China. She holds a BFA in Metalwork and Jewelry Design from Indiana University, and is currently pursuing her MFA at East Carolina University. She was the co-chair and Communications Officer for the 2020 Material Topics Symposium, Contemporary Clarity.
I believe art gives people a chance to access cultures around the world, and to generate new personal connections. My current work using enamel and 3D printed objects to frame each chapter of my perception of reincarnation. I take inspiration from personal experiences and nature to create cloisonné flowers, using the colors to represent my own healing process; the muted palette in the beginning of the series transforms to brighter ones, representing my own journey to internal resolution.

“ I take inspiration from personal experiences and nature to create cloisonné flowers, using the colors to represent my own healing process.”

Cover: Repeating, 2020
China Paint Enamel on Copper, SLA 3D Print, Sterling Silver
L / R: Growth, 2020
Cloisonné enamel, sterling silver, stainless steel
Kerry Yichen Guan

1 / 2: Repeating, 2020
China Paint Enamel on Copper, SLA 3D Print, Sterling Silver

3 / 4: Fade, 2020
Cloisonné Enamel, Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel
Lauren DelBrocco is a 2nd year MFA Metal Design candidate at East Carolina University. DelBrocco grew up in little Rhode Island, where she received her BFA in Metalsmithing and Jewelry Design from Rhode Island College in 2018. She is a metalsmith and small object maker who believes that to hold an object is to truly understand its physical being in the world. She is fascinated by mechanisms and how parts fit together. Her work exercises various methods of metal fabrication, forming, and metal manipulation to create sentimental objects one can hold and interact with. While outside of the studio she takes care of her small garden and enjoys cooking and chatting with her family.
I draw my inspiration from my own memories and experiences. Currently, I’m focusing on creating sentimental dining objects; through the use of small mechanisms, moving parts, and imagery that reflects or signifies diners, the viewer engages in a sensory experience that allows them to interact with my work and understand it tactiley, as they open or turn a piece to reveal a hidden moment inside. I reference dining objects from the past, and the importance of the dining table historically—how it brought people together, and captivated diners with elaborate table pieces.

“I reference dining objects from the past, and the importance of the dining table historically—how it brought people together, and captivated diners with elaborate table pieces.”

Cover: Change and Growth, 2020  
Silver, copper, enamel, sage amethyst, wood  
L. R. Sugary Sea, 2020  
Silver, copper, brass, enamel, myrtle wood
Lauren Delbrocco

1 / 2: The Daily Doses Pepper/Pepper Flake Holder, 2020
Silver, brass, leaded enamels, black pepper, pepper flakes

3: Sugary Sea, 2020
Silver, copper, brass, enamel, myrtle wood
Lindsay Swan is an artist working in sculpture, painting, and printmaking. Steeped in the mystical, surrealistic, and animistic, she taps into her subconscious dream state to develop imagery. Swan began working with a collective of Visionary artists in Los Angeles, California. In 2011, she trained in Ernst Fuchs’ Mischtechnik, a conglomeration of 14th century painting techniques using egg tempera. Swan began her association with The Merry Pranksters in 2010, when she painted a mural on the upper deck of their Furthur Bus (and was given the nickname “Fancy Pants”). The Merry Pranksters, originally led by Ken Kesey, became well known for their “Acid Test” parties, and Swan continues to collaborate with them as a performance painter at many of their “Happenings.” Her interest in the origins of early human religion eventually led her to South America, where she studied shamanistic culture in the Amazon jungle.
My research of the shamanistic culture of Amazonian tribes has led to an understanding of myself which I translate through my art; what began as an anthropological experiment in indigenous culture grew into a deeper understanding of my own subconscious inner workings. Most of my work excavates issues regarding shame, violence, rape, and the stigmas surrounding them. As an adult survivor of early childhood abuse, my research and artwork describe both the physical acts of sexual abuse and the environmental manipulations used to maintain control, submission, and silence. I consider myself a visual documentarian of the dream world, or what Amazonian locals call jungle vision. In the frontier of my mind, I discovered power in the ability to forgive, the courage to upset the status quo, and the strength to make a stand through my art.

“In the frontier of my mind, I discovered power in the ability to forgive, the courage to upset the status quo, and the strength to make a stand through my art.”

Cover: Swan Contemplation, 2020
Ceramic sculpture 10" x 13" x 19"

Left: The Three Faces of Urcututo, 2020
Ceramic sculpture 6"

Right: The Magician, 2020
Copper etching, dry-point, mono-print
Lindsay Swan

Jackalope Tea Set, 2020
Ceramic thrown and hand sculpted
Madi was raised in a rural town of Western North Carolina, and likes to think that being from such a small town led her to the artwork she makes today. She commuted every day to college from Burnsville for two years at community college, then for two years at Mars Hill University. Leaving her small town behind after twenty-two years to come to graduate school opened her eyes to the importance of her town’s culture. Something that is so important to her town (and many others) is hunting, a sport that builds a community and makes lasting memories with family and friends. She brings that idea to her artwork, making functional ceramic wares that allows the viewer to see the connections made while hunting.
My artwork seeks to bring connection and personalization to everyday objects. I use white clay from Highwater, a neighboring town to the one I grew up in, and paint images that show the connections and moments that are made during waterfowl hunting. I paint images of the birds that help hunters identify what they are looking for to stay inside the parameters of the rules and regulations. I want viewers to understand the importance of hunting. Hunters make connections and memories with friends and family in the blind, out on the field, and after the hunt, and have been conserving wetlands for more than one hundred years. My work brings light to the values of hunt-to-table, knowing where your meat comes from, and local, sustainable, ecologically conscious meat, it reminds people why hunting is so important to our world.

“I paint images of the birds that help hunters identify what they are looking for to stay inside the parameters of the rules and regulations. I want viewers to understand the importance of hunting.”

Cover: Point of The Hunt, 2020
White Stoneware

Left: Birds Eye View, 2020
White Stoneware

Right: Next Generation, 2020
White Stoneware
Left: Companionship, 2020
White Stoneware

Center: The American Wigeon, 2020
White Stoneware

Right: Point of The Hunt, 2020
White Stoneware
Morgan grew up as a river rat with marsh as her playground, on the east coast of Savannah, Georgia. Wanderlust led her to travel the world, but eventually she found herself back home, where she attained her BFA in photography and a minor in graphic design from Georgia Southern University. She is currently based in Greenville, North Carolina, as a first-year photography MFA candidate at East Carolina University. Morgan works in all aspects of photography, from analog to digital, making use of alternative processes and mixed media. She’s on a never-ending journey to refresh the ways people view photography.
Embracing the emotional rollercoaster of life, from the innocence and curiosity of my adolescence to the arrogance of my twenties, I now find myself barreling around a corner into what I consider to be the revelation of my thirties. I’m finally grasping the concept of time, and learning how to truly be present. My current work focuses on taking a moment and appreciating the little things. I combine the past with the present by marrying historical photographic processes with modern-day techniques. As an artist who works in the medium of photography, I ‘paint’ with light and time to provide a visual representation of this journey we call life.

“I’m finally grasping the concept of time, and learning how to truly be present. My current work focuses on taking a moment and appreciating the little things...”
Morgan Zichettella

Left: Beyond The Reeds, 2020
Lazaretto Creek salt print, cyanotype

Center: Peakaboo, 2020
Lazaretto Creek salt print, cyanotype

Right: Through The Window, 2020
Moon River salt print, cyanotype
Nicholas took his first metals and jewelry class in his freshman year of high school, which set him on the trajectory towards studying metals in higher education. He received his Associate of Fine Arts with Honors from Bucks County Community College in 2017, after which he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Metals/Jewelry/CAD-CAM from Tyler School of Art, Temple University in Spring 2020. He worked as a studio technician and teaching assistant for BCCC in their 3D arts department helping to maintain their foundry, glassblowing, and sculpture studios. He serves on the board of the Enamel Guild North East, is a member of both the Society of North American Goldsmiths and the Enamelist Society. In Fall 2020 he started at East Carolina University as a Master of Fine Arts Candidate in Metal Design.
The basis for my work is the examination of the enigma that is the human body. I look to create windows into the body, to give insight into the viewer’s own health and personal habits. Whether it be organs or bones, each part of our body is integral to our existence, yet most of the time we do not appreciate them. I want to allow the viewer to see the body as if it was x-rayed or surgically cut open, in order to bring about a clearer understanding of one’s being, to bring about a personal revelation of their own bodies and health. Using enameled metal forms, I depict the many systems that make up the human body on wearable objects. These objects give a sense of relationship to the body, and a peek into the complexity of our existence.

“The basis for my work is the examination of the enigma that is the human body. I look to create windows into the body, to give insight into the viewer’s own health and personal habits.”

Cover: Still Beating, 2020
Enamel, copper, fine silver, steel, acrylic, cord
L / R: Still Beating, 2020
Enamel, copper, fine silver, steel, acrylic, cord
Nicholas Hesson

1/2: Chest Cavity Brooch #1, 2020
Enamel, copper

3/4: Chest Cavity Brooch #2, 2020
Enamel, copper

5/6: Inhale, 2020
Enamel, fine silver, copper
Nikki Purcell is a third-year graduate student in the Metals program. She is from Houston. Nikki attended Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, and graduated cum laude with a BFA in Jewelry and Metal Design, with a minor in Geology. She spent 2016 studying enameling with Jan Harrel at MFAH’s Glassell School of Art in Houston, before moving to the East Coast in 2017 to start her graduate work at ECU. She was gallery co-chair for the Material Topics Symposium in 2019 (State of Adornment) and gallery chair in 2020 (Contemporary Clarity).
My work represents the different emotions that come out of dismantling learned value systems. I use black paint, recurring textures, and gold frames as repeating elements throughout my work. The buildup and breakdown of materials is evidence for myself and the viewer that these emotions are happening, and they accumulate over time. My goal is to explore and address values such as work ethic, success, and emotional repression, in order to determine which are worth keeping and which are better to let go.

“The buildup and breakdown of materials is evidence for myself and the viewer that these emotions are happening, and they accumulate over time.”
Nikki Purcell

Left: Cornered Buildup, 2020
Mixed Media

Right: Concentric Spiraling, 2020
Mixed Media
Noelle Gunn is a third-year Painting and Drawing MFA candidate at East Carolina University. Originally from the fields and forests of a small town in Virginia, she was trained in traditional painting, drawing, and printmaking at The College of William and Mary. After finishing a Master of Arts in Teaching at Christopher Newport University in 2005, she taught high school art on both coasts for nine years. Since 2018, she has been awarded three scholarships to attend residencies at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts; this year she was awarded the Hannah Graduate Award, The Claire Armstrong Scholarship, and the 2020 Purchase Award by the Friends of the Joyner Library, for the East Carolina University Joyner Library Permanent Collection. Noelle is currently enjoying being a new mom of a beautiful son and experimenting with mixed media materials to paint the lush, rich textures she experiences in life.
The work I make is a self-portrait narrative of my life experience. This specific body of work reflects the transformation that has come from doing daily work with others to be healthy. I have taken all the bits and pieces I have collected, all the trash and turmoil that once was my life and arranged and stitched it together into something new and beautiful. As someone who makes intuitively with a specific memory, experience, or vision as a springboard, I have come to learn that what was made represents the people, places, and experiences that build the ground, the solid foundation within me for a healthier life. Each are a part of me, and I am a part of them. Each share their light, teaching me the light within myself. The payoff of working with others—sharing openly and honestly with them—has, little by little, helped shed the armor. It has revealed where the enjoyment and wonder of this life is, and what is real and present for me today.

“I have taken all the bits and pieces I have collected, all the trash and turmoil that once was my life and arranged and stitched it together into something new and beautiful.”
1: Grounded Thesis Exhibition, 2021
Mixed Media
2: Grounded/First Planted, 2021
Mixed Media
3: Grounded/Floating House, 2021
Mixed Media
4: Grounded/What Grows, 2021
Mixed Media
5: Grounded/The Lights, 2021
Mixed Media
Pete Borsay grew up in the American Midwest. His family encouraged an interest in the arts and supported creative expression. Much of his youth was spent drawing, reading, and daydreaming. He’s wanted to be an artist since before he can remember.
I’m a printmaker who makes dynamic, vibrant, and semi-abstract artwork. My prints express a bizarre subconscious fusion of made-up forms and figures. Some influences include 20th century illustration, abstraction, and surreal compositions. I use a variety of printmaking methods, including screen printing, lithography, relief, digital, and hybrid techniques. Active imagination, experimentation, and novelty are all part of my creative process. When beginning a composition, I make subconscious ‘automatic’ drawings and sketches; some of those sketches and drawings get transferred into digital images, altered, and then used for matrices when printing. The intent is for the viewer to contemplate each element of the print and have a singularly unique experience in its presence.

“I’m a printmaker who makes dynamic, vibrant, and semi-abstract artwork. My prints express a bizarre subconscious fusion of made-up forms and figures.”

Cover: Altus3, 2020
UltraChrome Pigment Print 22” x 30”

Left: Reconciliation, 2020
Hybrid Print 22” x 30”

Right: Vaxius, 2020
UltraChrome Pigment Print 22” x 30”
& Pete Borsay

Left: Solutus5, 2020
UltraChrome Pigment Print 22" x 30"

Right: Imprimere2, 2020
UltraChrome Pigment Print 22" x 30"
North Carolina-based artist Sina Bennett is a ceramic sculptor that uses the human form to express emotions. Sina started her journey in clay in 2012, and graduated from Jacksonville University with a Bachelor in Fine Arts in Jacksonville, Florida. While in Jacksonville, she was president of the Creative Arts Society, and received the Excellence Award for Ceramics. Recently Sina participated in the installation Alt-White: A Tongue in Cheek Search for Trump’s China at the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conference. Sina is currently a first year MFA candidate at East Carolina University.
My work is driven by the different relationships I have with myself and my mental health. I use the human form to demonstrate the emotions that would typically reside inside of my body and express it in physical form. This allows me to be literal, but still use abstract ideas. I find the color and texture of clay to be very intriguing, as it is both brittle and robust. I prefer not to cover the surfaces of my sculptures with glaze, but instead to let the clay’s natural surface quality shine through. Since I do not want to cover up the surface entirely, the surface treatment I currently use is a little different than traditional ceramic makers. I play with a combination of pastels, watercolors, inks, and color pencils to treat the surfaces.

“I use the human form to demonstrate the emotions that would typically reside inside of my body and express it in physical form.”
Bite Me, 2019
Clay and combined materials
Thaddeus Prevette is a nontraditional student from North Carolina. He grew up in Winston-Salem, and graduated from Western Carolina University with a BFA in 2020. While he has dabbled in painting and ceramics, he found his true calling in 3D sculpture. Wood, metal wiring and found objects are the main mediums used in his work. His work is more figurative, with subtle abstract elements of chaotic design included in the construction of the pieces. He enjoys experiencing the world through imagination and escapism, without drifting too far from the ground.
My focus is figurative sculpture that reflects my fascination with fantasies and mysticism. I strive to capture the initial elements of storytelling, which include escapism and imagination. The mythologies and cautionary tales of other cultures are a frequent source of inspiration for me; spiritual beings, fantastical creatures, deities, and representations of balance in the world are common themes in my work.

“...”

Cover: Escape, 2020
Wire & foam 3' x 4' x 5'
L / R: Object 19, 2020
Wire 2' x 2' x 3'
Thaddeus Prevette

Hydra, 2020
Wire, foam, zinc, brass 23” x 27” x 25”
Tim received his B.S. from the University of Utah in Molecular Biology and his Ph.D. in Genetics & Development from Cornell University. He moved to Greenville in 2007 and worked to become an Associate Professor in the Department of Biology. In 2017 he was accepted into the MFA program in Photography as a part-time student. His artistic practice has ranged from photographing galaxies light years away to micro-panoramas of insects. He has merged modern high precision scientific/digital photographic techniques with historical photographic methods to create unique visions of the natural world.
I am trained as a scientist—dissecting and reducing the world to bits of data, and then attempting to reconstruct the whole from these fragments of understanding. In my artistic practice I attempt to open the dialog between the historical reductionist approach to science and the visual experience of confronting nature. Using the historical wet plate collodion method merged with modern digital techniques, I explore my collection of insects. I ask questions about the past and future of these creatures as they rapidly disappear from the everyday experience of our lives.

“ I am trained as a scientist—dissecting and reducing the world to bits of data, and then attempting to reconstruct the whole from these fragments of understanding.”

Cover: Long Horn Beetle, 2020
Wet Plate Collodion

Left: Rove Beetle, 2020
Wet Plate Collodion

Right: Acorn Weevil, 2020
Wet Plate Collodion
& Tim Christensen

Left: Dung Beetle, 2020
Wet Plate Collodion

Right: Long Horn Flower Beetle, 2020
Wet Plate Collodion
COLOPHON

This book was designed by Savannah Durham (savannahdurham.graphics@gmail.com) and produced by the ECU MFA program. The work in this book belongs to the ECU MFA students (2020–2021). The concept for this book was derived using an acrylic pour technique. The colors represent different concentrations overlapping/intertwining with one another. The typeface in this book is known as “Mr Eaves San OT.”

Faculty mentor: Dan Elliott