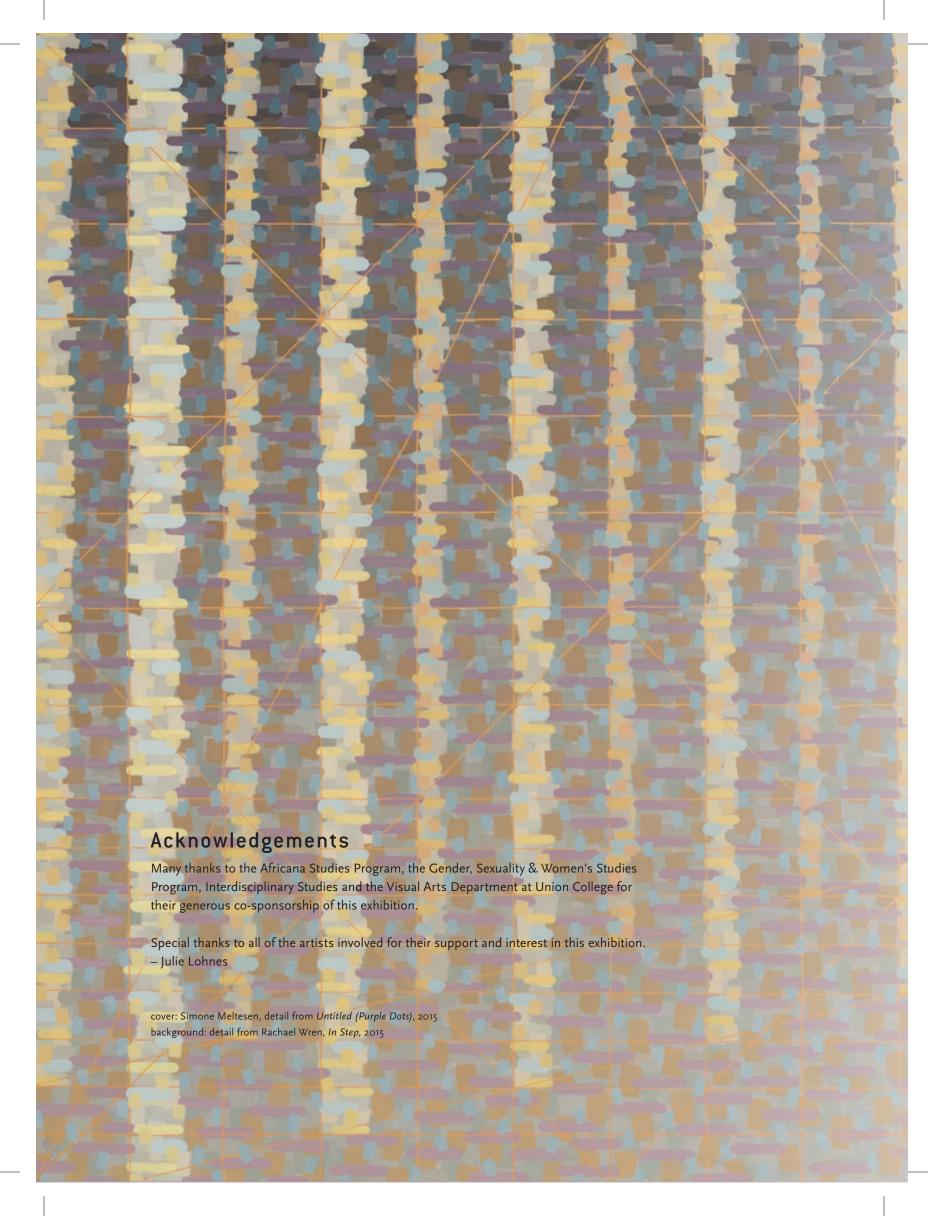
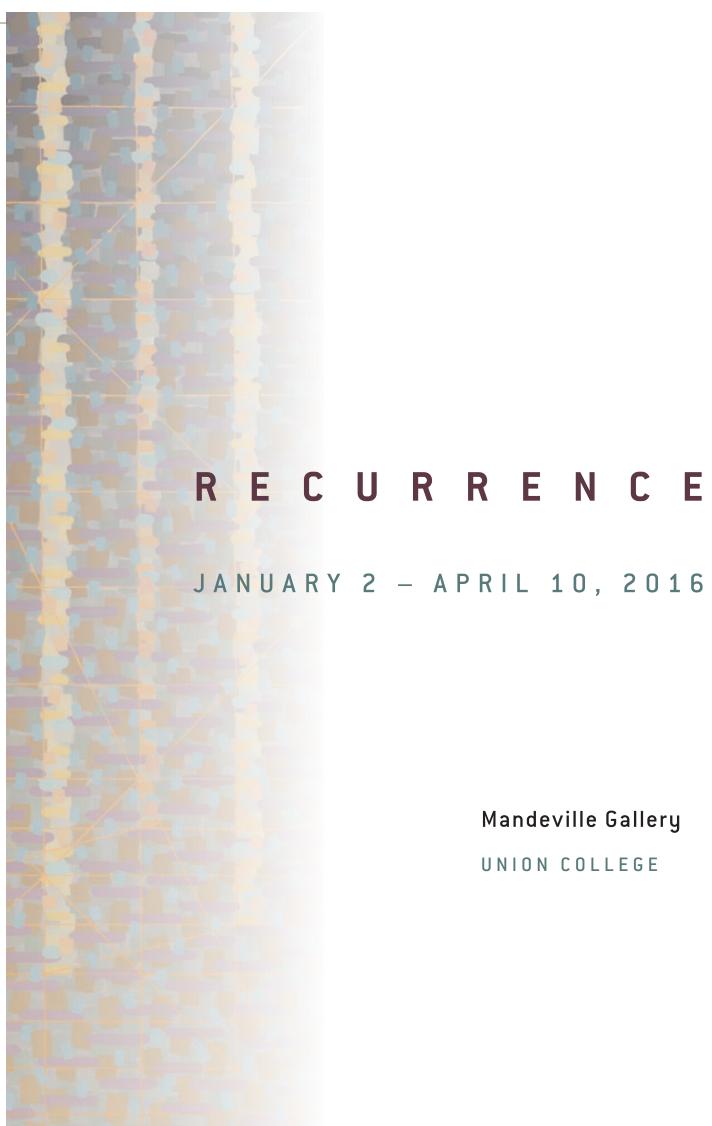
RECURRENCE



GREENE
HINOJOSA
MELTESEN
SCHIFF
VERNON
WREN





Mandeville Gallery



REPETITION

has been used as a concept in many forms of intellectual endeavor, from Freud's Repetition Compulsion theory to the Gestalt grouping principle. The arts have been no less fascinated with ideas of repetition, as heard in Bach's *Goldberg Variations* or seen in Eva Hesse's and Sol LeWitt's sculptural works.

Historically, an artwork was considered a masterpiece and one of a kind. Degas, Monet, and their contemporaries questioned this view by working serially and repeating the same theme or motif. Matisse created many versions of the *Dance* and Monet frequently painted Chartres Cathedral at varying times of the day. At the same time, the Industrial Revolution furthered conversations that questioned the uniqueness of an original by producing identical images, objects, patterns, and forms on a massive scale.

Modern philosophers such as Walter Benjamin believed in the egalitarian, modern artwork as a democratized object to be seen and used by the masses.¹ Since this time, Sherrie Levine, Jeff Koons, and other visual artists have used concepts of reproduction in a contemporary art context, turning a copy into an artwork that is intended to be viewed as an original.

In the exhibition *Recurrence*, artists Kira Nam Greene, Juan Hinojosa, Simone Meltesen, Karen Schiff, Sam Vernon, and Rachael Wren delve into the multitude of ideas surrounding repetition in the visual arts and how these different ideas are represented visually.

-Julie Lohnes Curator of Art Collections & Exhibitions

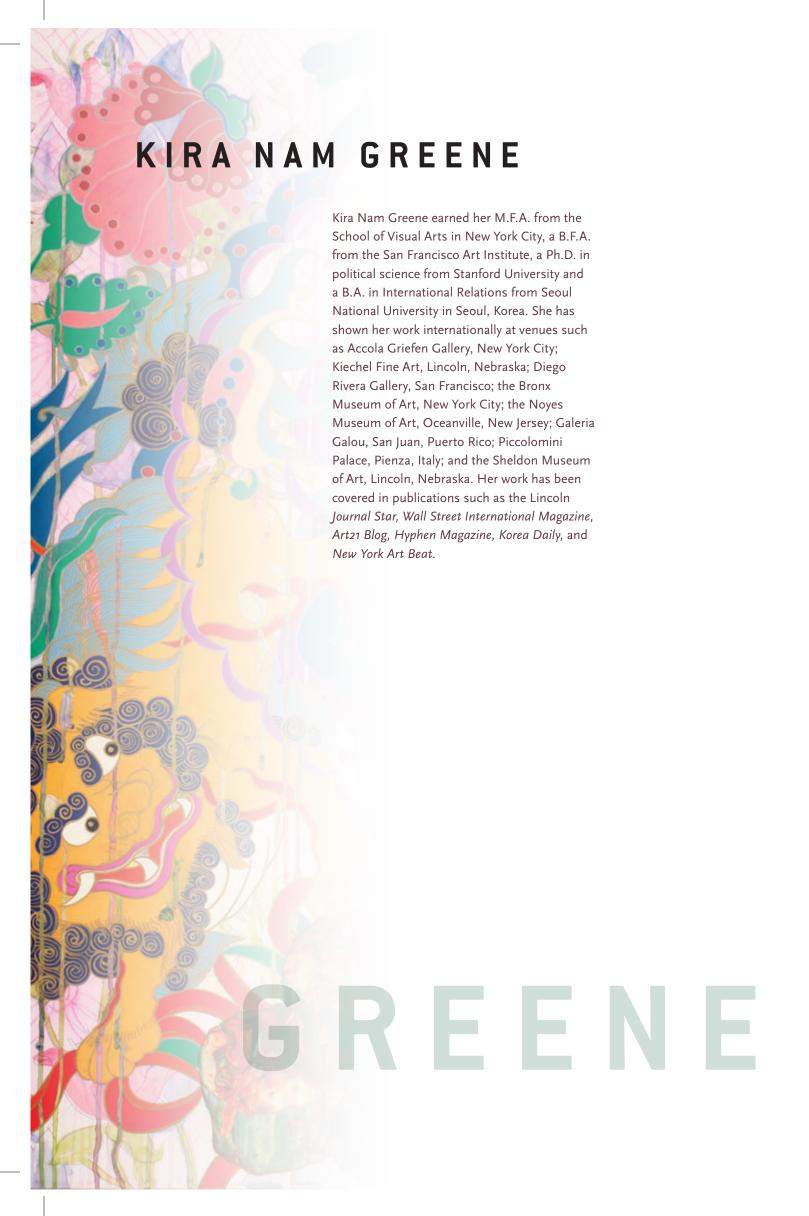
1. Walter Benjamin, Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968), 219-253.





GREENE
HINOJOSA
MELTESEN
SCHIFF
VERNON
WREN

background: Juan Hinjosa, detail from Blue Goodies, 2015





Cool as a Cucumber in a Bowl of Hot Sauce, 2013



My paintings and drawings negotiate the duality and dichotomy of my existence as an Asian immigrant woman in America. As an outsider, I am more aware of the contradictions in the plurality of cultures in American society. As a feminist, I am repulsed and demoralized by the objectification of female bodies in art history and popular culture, yet I find myself strongly attracted to the sensuality of these images. This paradox has led me to combine the rigidity of patterns with the imagery of desire in the female body. In recent work, I replace the body with the images of lusciously styled food while heightening the complexity with the mixture of patterns and icons derived from various Western and Eastern sources. The resulting images are self-portraits that represent the plurality and multiplicity of my identity as an Asian-American immigrant woman.

The patterns, signifiers for both Eastern and Western cultures, form architectural platforms that simultaneously showcase and suffocate the food. The food, both harmonious and clashing with its surroundings, is the body (literally and metaphorically) and the surrogate for desire to consume and control. Densely packed and precisely hand-painted patterns simultaneously create and interrupt the space where the still life is presented. The rhythm of the patterns is echoed in the composition of the still life and natural patterns found in the food. A complicated interweaving of foreground and background, created by patterns, icons, painterly smears and the realistic depiction of still lifes, in many different styles and mediums, generates confounding spatial ebb and flow, and increases the spatial tension.

While the images of the food are reminiscent of the Dutch still life tradition, the divergent styles, collage-like dissonance and the breaking of the picture plane acknowledges the practice of painting in a post-modern era. At the same time, through a labor-intensive process of hand painting, I cast a critical eye on the mechanical reproduction and proliferation of imagery in our daily lives. In more recent pieces, I am also exploring the ethical and ecological aspects of modern food consumption by juxtaposing mass-produced industrial food with organic, homemade products. Particularly, I subvert the marketing messages of famous brands by placing their advertising slogans out of context among highly crafted patterns rooted in older cultural traditions in an effort to examine the proliferation of advertising imagery and its impact on visual culture.

-Kira Nam Greene

GREENE

opposite: Kimchi Joy, 2013

JUAN HINOJOSA

Juan Hinojosa is a mixed-media artist who currently lives and works in New York City. Constructed from found objects, his complex collage-drawings, intimately challenge greed, obsessive consumption, and the social stratification of American culture. Hinojosa received his B.F.A. from Parsons School of Design, New York City, and was awarded residencies at both the Vermont Studio Center and Aljira Center for Contemporary Art, Newark, New Jersey. His acceptance into the first New York Foundation for the Arts "Artist Boot Camp" in 2010 led to an interview and photo in The New York Times. Hinojosa has exhibited in New York City at the Queens Museum of Art, in Bienal: The (S) Files 2011 at El Museo del Barrio, and in a solo exhibition at Allegra LaViola Gallery.

NOJOSA

opposite: Corner of 4th and 2nd, 2015





Spider Crest, 2015

The glamorization of wealth and power via fashion magazines and television can cast a spell on just about anyone. Growing up in a low-income family, I found that the desire to have more than we could afford became a constant struggle. This led to my obsession with high-end goods, superheroes, and geometrical symmetry. As I go around the city collecting discarded items related to these influences, I repurpose them as a tool to draw with. Drawing with found materials has changed the way I look at my own trash and trash around me. By recycling the random items I have found over the years, I am creating faux symmetrical collages and installations. Since none of these found items are ever duplicated or altered, the goal of geometrical symmetry is put to the test. As I mix high-end products with low-end goods, I am mashing up two polar opposites that do not normally go together. I, like most Americans, am conflicted with consumerism, and these works are a result of my own bad habits, desires, and greed.

–Juan Hinojosa



New York Kitty, 2015



SHE POWER!, 2014

SIMONE MELTESEN



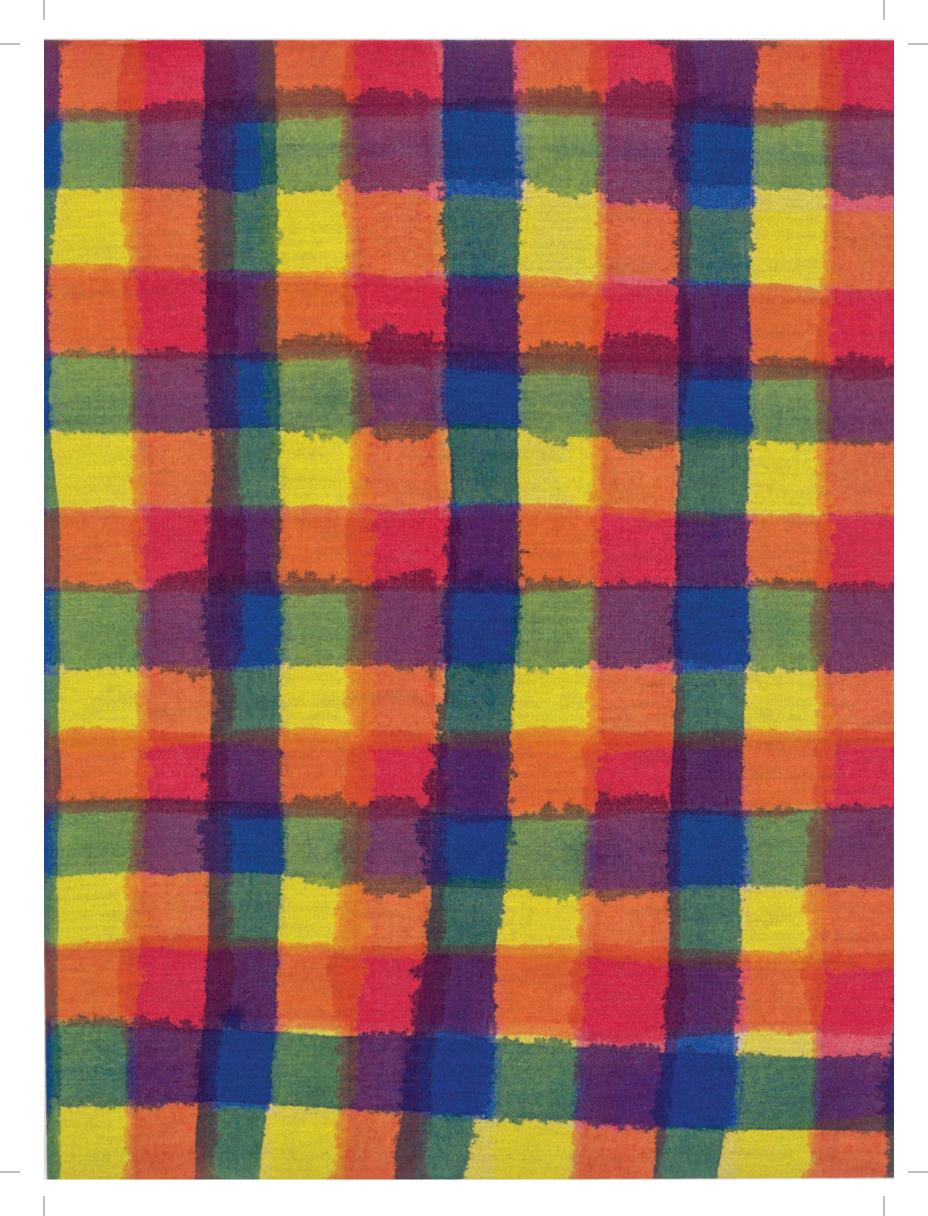
Simone Meltesen is an artist based in New York City. She was born and raised in San Francisco and has lived on the East Coast for approximately 13 years. She recently graduated with an M.F.A. in Painting from Hunter College in New York City.

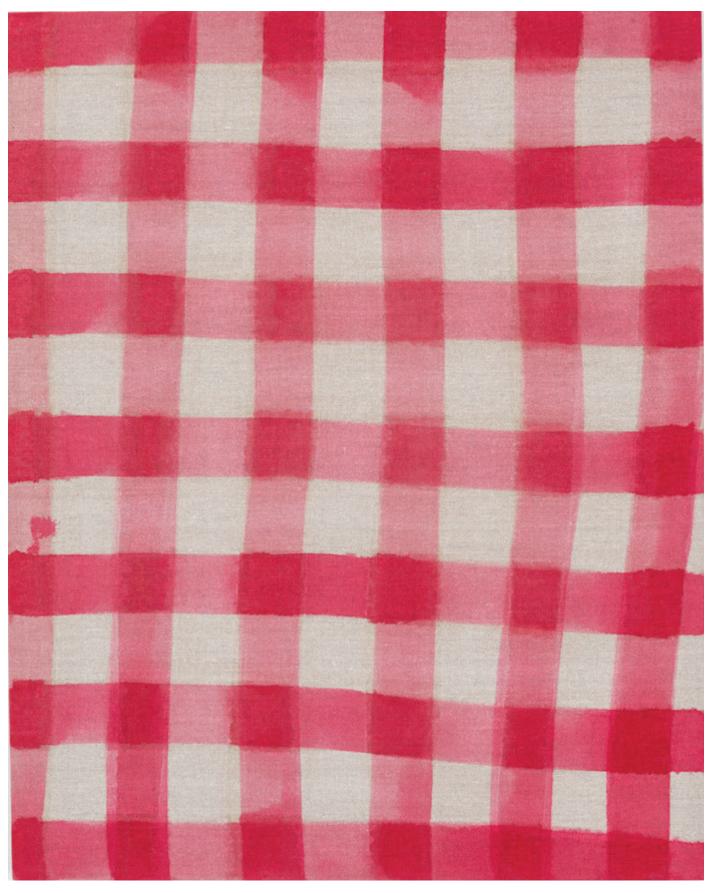


Raised Eyebrows, 2015

MELTESEN

opposite: detail from Untitled (Bauhaus Plaid), 2015





Untitled (Tablecloth), 2015

My paintings are explorations of lesbian feminist formalism. Rooted in the modernist weaving designs of the Bauhaus and the 1970s feminist reclamation of domestic patterning, my colorful, seductive, subtle, complex paintings challenge the traditional patriarchal boundaries of what kind of marks, colors, concepts, and subject positions are allowed access to a "high art" context. These paintings insist on a queer "both/and" reading, positioning the viewer as lesbian and inserting lesbian desire into abstraction. Devices such as empty horizons, blank canvas, erasures and extractions create a sense of loss or absence, and centralize the marginalized experience of the lesbian subject that is often theorized as ghostly or apparitional.

The visual motif of plaid functions as a way to insert the lesbian body and lesbian desire into abstraction. The stereotype of plaid flannel as a lesbian fashion statement functions as a sardonic in-joke in the lesbian community and as an expression of lesbian panic among straight women, and is intended as an insult when used by heterosexuals and homosexuals alike (if one is insulted by being considered sexually unattractive to heterosexual males). The line of thought from lesbian in-joke to lesbian panic is the assumption that lesbian + plaid = frumpy, unattractive (read: butch) women. Lost in these stereotypes are the possibilities of pleasure that a plaid shirt-wearing dyke can signal to another lesbian. (Is she? Could we?) After all, plaid flannel shirts conceal and reveal, touching the skin, the shoulders, the stomach, the back, the neck, the breasts of the lesbian body.

Through devices such as framing, composition, and gesture, my paintings call attention to the subject position of the viewer and raise a queer eyebrow to the modernist notion of abstraction as a higher form of art than craft, decoration, and patterning. These bright, irreverent paintings resist the heteropatriachal gaze and operate in its blind spots, engaging in the slippery no man's land between abstraction and decoration.

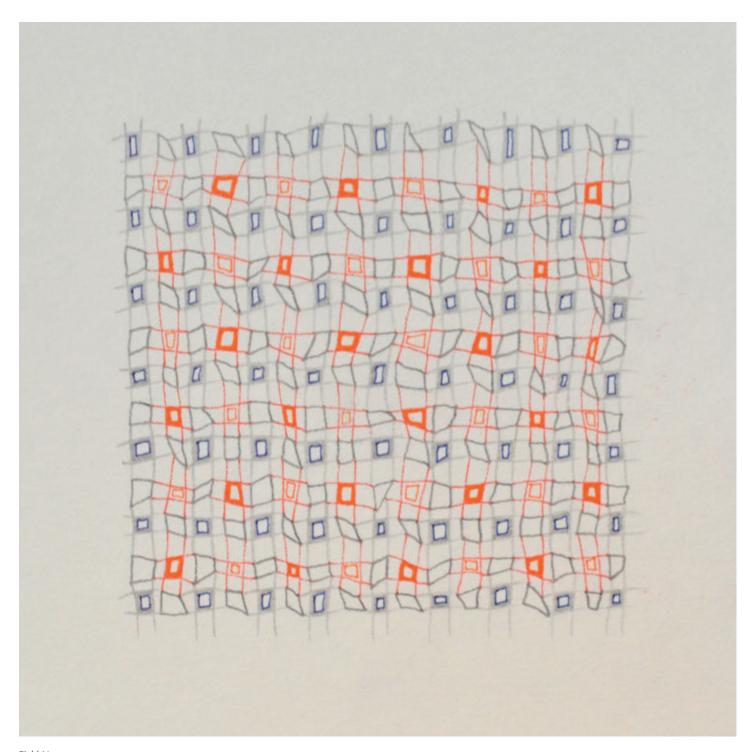
-Simone Meltesen



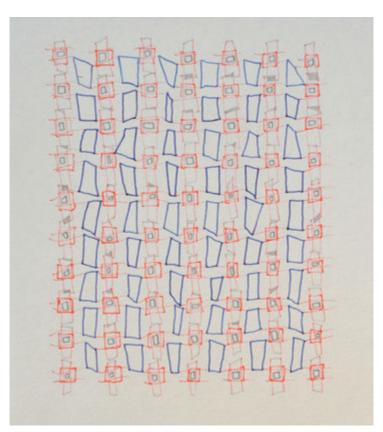
Untitled (Yellow and Purple Plaid), 2015

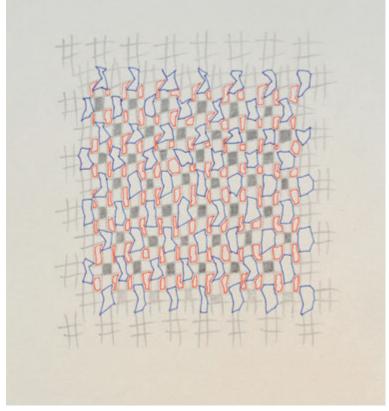
MELTESEN



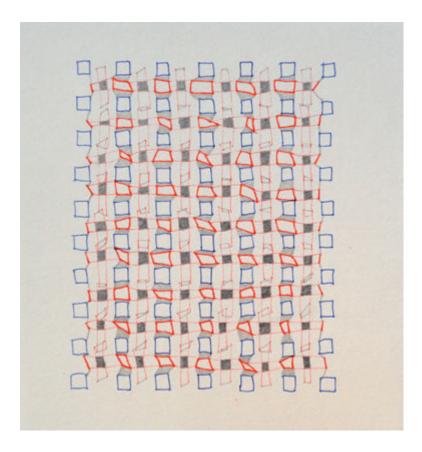


Field Notes, 2014





Field Notes, 2014



My drawings of *Fields* aim to create captivating, fluctuating spaces.

Usually, 2D renderings of 3D space try to create definite illusions, and/or mathematically precise maps. But I believe that we experience the world through a lumpy and malleable sense of space and time (which is at least 4D). Yet I don't want to create that lumpy space by making wild and random expressionist abstractions. Rather, I strive for a sense of space that is regular and structured, yet unpredictable and ever-changing. I hope these drawings flip back and forth between looking 2D and 3D, and that the spaces move toward you and away from you.

Each drawing begins with a hand-drawn grid of tic-tactoe signs. I think that hand-drawn lines help to convey the active quality of space. Tic-tac-toe symbols are a game board, and I play with the drawing like a game. But these signs also have many semantic meanings: Twitter hashtags, numbers, pounds. I like that their "meaning" is not fixed, like space is not fixed. Also, because these symbols look like mini-grids, their many meanings can easily drain out and leave a strongly visual pattern (which relates to the modernist grid). I draw over and between the signs to produce effects that will confound the eye.

In the small *Field Notes* drawings, I am trying out many strategies, media, and color combinations for the works. Many of my choices derive from my study of the geometric patterns in the backgrounds of medieval illuminations. In the large *Cosmic Field II* drawing, I'm trying to convey the vertigo of looking into outer space. The design is still based on hashtags, and I made the drawing the same way as the smaller ones: drawing the grid of symbols and looking at it until an annotation strategy suggests itself to me.

I consider a *Field* drawing successful when my automatic camera lens can't focus, and/or when I can look at the lines and spaces in so many ways that I get a bit dizzy.

-Karen Schiff

SCHIFF

SAM VERNON



Sam Vernon earned her M.F.A. in Painting/ Printmaking from Yale University in 2015 and her B.F.A. from The Cooper Union, New York City, for the Advancement of Science and Art in 2009. Her installations combine Xeroxed drawings, photographs, paintings and sculptural components in an exploration of personal narrative and identity. She uses installation and performance to honor the past while revising historical memory. Most recently, Vernon has exhibited with the Seattle Art Museum; Ewing Gallery of Art & Architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; the Emery Community Arts Center at the University of Maine, Farmington; Reginald Ingraham Gallery, Los Angeles; and the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA) in Brooklyn.



VERNON



Self Portrait with Twelve Boxes, 2015



Self Portrait with Twelve Boxes, 2015



The infusion of *Afro Deco* into my formal practice is unmodified in that I combine disparate objects and 2D media to develop a visual language influenced by pattern, graphic design, the human figure, and abstract shapes. I create Xerox drawings derived from printmaking techniques, lithography and intaglio, to construct narrative. I draw, Xerox and print at each stage of an image's evolution: deleting, adding and collaging until the image is complete. The result is subject to re-contextualization within an installation, a performance or a work to exist on its own.

I explore drawing as technology and question how the image is transformed when it is reproduced as direct digital media. The active "ghosting" of an image, copying and multiplying the original, subtly exploits the notion of a pure identification of black and white and signifies the essentialism of symbolic meaning and all its associations. In addition, the subjectivity of an otherworldly psychic state or realm comes into play.

I look to Paul Lawrence Dunbar's social lyric: "We wear the mask that grins and lies, It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes, — This debt we pay to human guile; With torn and bleeding hearts we smile, And mouth with myriad subtleties." Tapping into the power of masks, or ghosts, as a timeless art form — and then translating that spiritual information for present-day audiences is complex. The investigation of this irony fuels my work, an interdisciplinary approach fused to my meta-history, shaping a looser chronicle to explore postcoloniality and historical memory. Through site-specific, staged installations and urgent performances, my goals are towards the production of Gothic visual art in which Black narratives are included in the expanse of the genre.

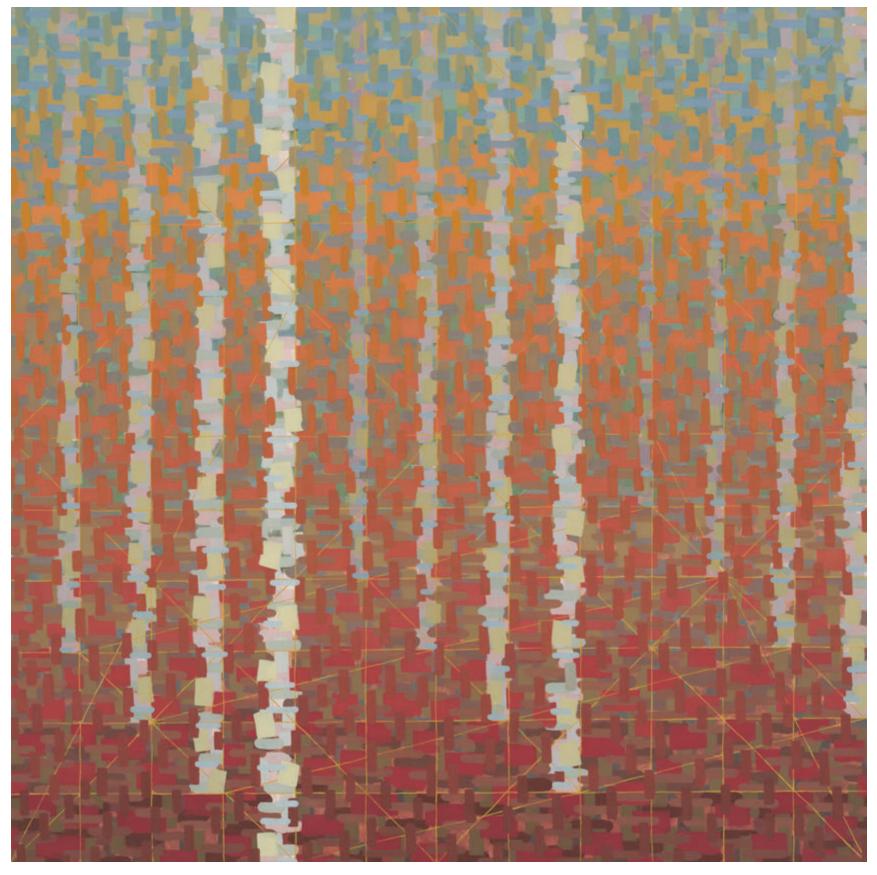
-Sam Vernon

VERNON

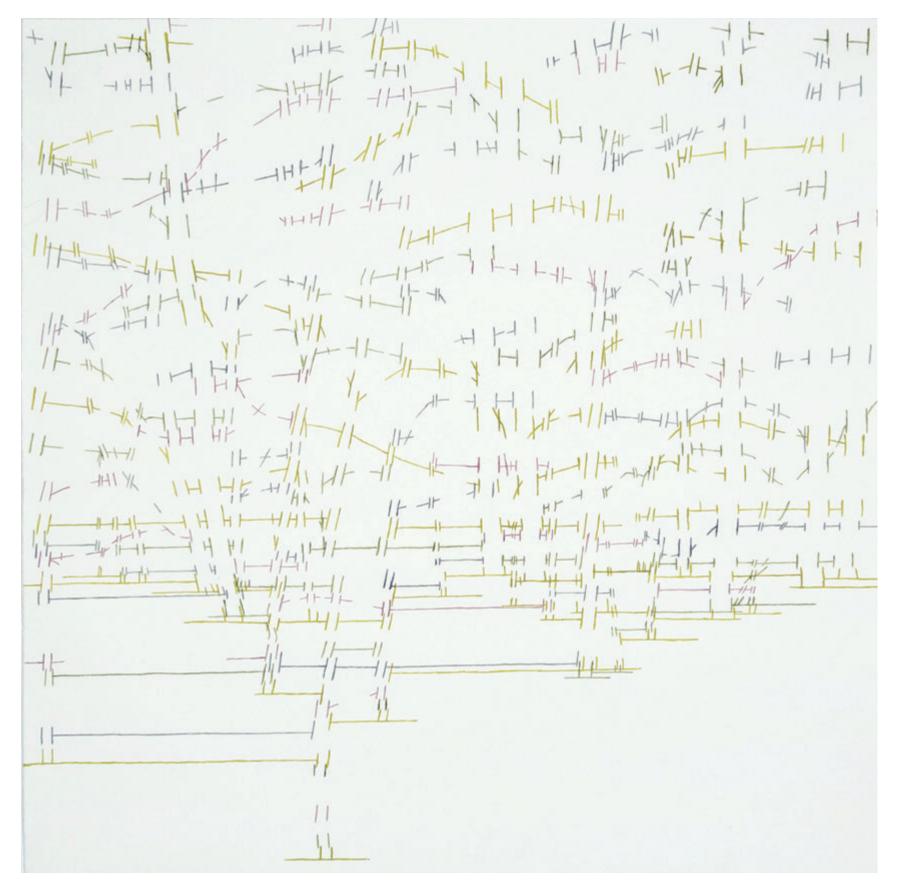
RACHAEL WREN

Rachael Wren received a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania, and an M.F.A. from the University of Washington, Seattle. She has had solo shows at The Painting Center, New York City; Schema Projects, Brooklyn; the University of Massachusetts, Lowell; and Providence College. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Garis & Hahn, the National Academy Museum, and Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York City; Geoffrey Young Gallery, Great Barrington, Massachusetts; Trestle Gallery, Brooklyn; and the Fosdick-Nelson Gallery at Alfred University, New York, among many others. Rachael is the recipient of the Julius Hallgarten Prize from the National Academy Museum and an Aljira Fellowship. She has been awarded residencies at Chashama North, the Anderson Center for the Arts, the Saltonstall Foundation, and the Byrdcliffe Art Colony, New York; the Vermont Studio Center; and the Artist House at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

WREN



Outlook, 2014



Untitled, 2013

My paintings use geometry to structure ephemeral atmospheric and natural phenomena. I am intrigued by moments in nature when air has a tangible presence, almost becoming visible – fog playing between tree branches, light peeking through clouds, the darkening sky before a thunderstorm. At these times, form and space seem to mingle; edges disappear and atmosphere becomes all-encompassing. To reproduce this sensation of dense, particulate space, I work with an accumulation of small, repeated brush marks of subtly shifting color. These individual marks echo the fundamental particles that compose all matter. They hover, shimmer, and vibrate between the crisp lines of an anchoring grid, an interplay that suggests the universal duality between structure and randomness, order and chaos, the known and the unknown.

-Rachael Wren



Untitled, 2013

WREN



ink, spray paint, Metrocards, calling card, & found objects on paper 30 x 22 inches

Spider Crest, 2015 mixed media on wall: calling card, Metrocards, computer disk, record, coke cans, ink, & found objects on paper dimensions variable

SIMONE MELTESEN

Raised Eyebrows, 2015 oil on canvas 72 x 60 inches

Untitled (Bauhaus Plaid), 2015 acrylic on unprimed linen 30 x 24 inches

Untitled (Purple Dots), 2015 acrylic on unprimed linen 30 x 24 inches

Untitled (Tablecloth), 2015 acrylic on unprimed linen 30 x 24 inches

Untitled (Yellow and Purple Plaid), 2015 acrylic on unprimed linen 30 x 24 inches

KAREN SCHIFF

Field Notes, 2014 graphite & ink on paper $5 \frac{3}{4} \times 5 \frac{1}{2}$ inches each, 20 drawings in grid total

Midnight Field, 2015 graphite, charcoal & pastel on paper 48 x 42 inches

SAM VERNON

Self Portrait with Twelve Boxes, 2015 digital collage on vinyl, twelve 12 x 12 x 12 inch Plexiglas donation boxes, metal locks, sand, ink, paper, inkjet prints on canvas, two 4 x 8 foot wood walls, Xerox drawings, cotton, sheets, charcoal, resin, tile, red gels & water, dimensions variable

RACHAEL WREN

In Step, 2015 oil on linen 36 x 36 inches

Outlook, 2014 oil on linen 36 x 36 inches

Untitled, 2013 watercolor on paper 20 x 20 inches

Untitled, 2013 watercolor on paper 20 x 20 inches

CHECKLIST



807 Union Street, Schenectady, NY 12308 518.388.6004 For more information: www.union.edu/gallery



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opposite: Sam Vernon, detail from Self Portrait with Twelve Boxes, 2015

DESIGN: Elizabeth Laub Graphic Design PRINTING: Fort Orange Press





