UC SANTA BARBARA

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An Open Canvas

Artists will tell you their work is a journey of discovery and development, and two exhibits at UC Santa Barbara offer windows into the paths of Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) students.

The first, “MFA First Year Review,” features the works of seven artists: Lucy Holtsnider, Robert Huerta, Daria Izad, Jennifer Lugris, Jimmy Miracle, Carlos Ochoa and Toni Scott. Open now, it runs through May 19 in the Red Barn Project Space (Building 479, next to the UCSB Bus Loop). The exhibit is by appointment only; email Lugris at jlugris@live.com to schedule a visit.

The second, “MFA Graduate Exhibition 2017: Past Is Prologue,” will highlight art by six graduating students: Rose Briccetti, Marcos Christodoulou, Yumiko Glover, Sunny Samuel, Peter Sowinski and Scotty Wagner. It will run Saturday, May 13, through June 4 in the campus’s Art, Design & Architecture Museum, which is open noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday and noon to 8 p.m. Thursdays. A reception will be held Friday, May 19, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the museum.

“Apart from highlighting the growth and development of our graduate students at different stages, the exhibitions also highlight the multidisciplinary nature of art practice in the age of global media and the internet,” noted Colin Gardner, professor and chair of UCSB’s Department of Art. “Traditional issues such the relation of history to personal narrative and identity have given way to a much more cartographic approach whereby subjectivity (both of the artists themselves and their ostensible subjects) is decentered in favor of a much more ‘cobbled together’

hybridity, a kind of cognitive mapping. The artists approach disciplinarity in the same way, so that, for example, biology, genealogy, linguistics and anthropology are readily appropriated for more relational aesthetic ends, enabling a far more universal application outside the boundaries of the exhibition space."

The exhibits, Lugris said, "mark an important turning point for both classes. The first-year students transition into a deeper, more directed study. The second-year students graduate and move their creative practice outside of the university, beginning their careers as dedicated, professional artists."

"The exhibition symbolizes a time of self-reflection," she continued, "of looking at the growth I have made in my first year of graduate school. It is also a time of planning, thinking about what is left or what I wish to accomplish during my second and final year."

Lugris, who paints images of small children, said her works are commentaries on privacy in the no-place-to-hide landscape of the internet. "My paintings are appropriations of images of minors I found on social media," she explained. "I use a combination of realism, cartoon-like line and flattened areas of color in a symbolic, but failed, attempt to conceal an already exposed identity. In these paintings, I am critiquing our public broadcasting of the once private lives of babies and children. I hope to highlight ethical concerns of privacy for minors in the current digital age."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.