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Debra Herrick

# Cartoonist and illustrator presents senior art show, plans new comic book project

After graduating, College of Creative Studies (CCS) student Owen Jenkins has clear plans. He's going to start a new long-form comics project while continuing to do freelance illustration work and sell his prints and books online.

"In the next few years, I hope to participate in the nationwide comics scene — to have my comics published and to be tabling at art book fairs," said Jenkins, a CCS art history and studio art student who is also in the honors program.

He is already off to a great start. His senior show, "Epiphany," is on view in the CCS Gallery, June 8-13, with a reception on Tuesday, June 11, from 5-7 p.m. In the fall, he's hoping to be a presenter at Off Register, the first Santa Barbara art book and print fair. And back in 2022, he displayed his work in the climate-themed group show "Through What Agency?" at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara, part of an ongoing CCS civic print studio titled Social Print Lab. He was the Art Department's 2022 Wendy Anne Finkel Scholar and a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellow in the same year. His senior show is one of 12 senior shows being presented this spring quarter.

“I met a lot of brilliant people here, especially through the art honors and CCS art programs,” Jenkins said. “I was changed by discovering kinship with them, and by being part of an ecosystem of creativity and ambition. CCS’ print facilities have also been transformative; I'm completely addicted to the Risograph printer, and it's a big part of my practice now.”

In “Epiphany,” Jenkins presents comics, drawings, paintings and posters. His work, he says, is “a record of visions and revelations that playfully hint at prophecy.” Delivering prompts for meditation via tightly crafted linework, intense colors and organic forms, Jenkins questions the unknown and “what it means to hand over authorship to an enigmatic other.” His work also engages cryptic images and symbols, surrealism, world-making and poetic word-image pairings.

“Owen has always stood out in the most kind and humbling ways among his peers in the CCS program,” said Iman Djouini, assistant teaching professor in CCS. “With a skillful, strong and exemplary art practice, expanding across various mediums (including print), there is no doubt that Owen will go very far, beyond his time here at UCSB. I'm delighted to have worked with Owen throughout the years and see his collaborative and thoughtful approach inspire us all.”

To view Jenkins art exhibition “Epiphany” on the weekend or by appointment, email owenjenkinsart@gmail.com.

Media Contact

**Debra Herrick**

Associate Editorial Director

(805) 893-2191

debraherrick@ucsb.edu

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