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Photographs of Maia Paroginog’s work courtesy of Maia Paroginog.
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present \ ABSENT

Works by
The Stanford University Class of 2016 Art Practice Majors

Evelyn Anderson
Chloe Colberg
Tess Dufrechou
Brooke Mandujano
Hadley Nelson
Maia Paroginog
Michelle Vue
Lena Wright
Kevin Zhai

On display at the McMurtry Building for the Department of Art and Art History
May 26- June 12, 2016
Showcasing the work of nine graduating seniors majoring in Art Practice at Stanford, Present \ ABSENT is the culminating Senior Exhibition for these ambitious, curious, engaged, and promising artists. Collectively through their work manifested in a broad range of media, disciplines, and practices, Evelyn Anderson, Chloe Colberg, Tess Dufrechou, Brooke Mandujano, Hadley Nelson, Maia Paroginog, Michelle Vue, Lena Wright, and Kevin Zhai have explored an array of personal memories, cultural histories, and societal mythologies through inventive visual narratives incorporating the body and figuration.

Over the past several weeks of our class ARSTUDI 249: Undergraduate Senior Seminar, we decided upon this idea and exhibition title, identifying and locating a common thread amongst everyone’s work. Present \ ABSENT lays out broad iterations of how we can envision positioning the body as a locus for how to engage and interact with the world at large on multiple cultural political, historical, and social fronts - either through conscious presence or prescribed absence. How we are seen is often pre-determined and pre-defined for many of us, negating ownership and agency. To define it for ourselves is an act of ownership and creation, either through the presence or absence of artistic expression.

Being an artist is an incredibly difficult undertaking, and I don’t state this flippantly. In addition to teaching and curating, I also have an active studio practice and continually negotiate the journey between peaks of acknowledgment and opportunities and valleys of self-doubt and rejections. In the greater Bay Area alone this year, with schools such as Stanford University, UC Berkeley, San Jose State University, California College of the Arts, San Francisco State University, Academy of Art, San Francisco Art Institute, Mills Col-
lege, and others, there are well over a thousand students (enrolled in both Bachelors and Masters programs) that will be graduating with a major in fine arts or studio practice. Combine that number with those graduating from schools nationwide, and that adds up to a lot of young, aspiring artists working in every media and discipline executing innumerable conceptual and aesthetic perspectives. The large majority of graduating students simply won’t be making art a year from now, but for the ones that do, it hopefully is just the beginning of a lifelong commitment to engaging with ideas through visual means.

To the nine students I have had the privilege to work with this last quarter, I want to say this to you: The work you produce five or ten years from now will be radically different from the work you are making now, and that’s an exciting prospect to ruminate on, that you haven’t even begun to make your best work yet.

Thank you for everything.

Kevin B. Chen
Instructor ARSTUDI 249: Undergraduate Senior Seminar, Artist, Curator
Evelyn Anderson

Images have weight. They not only illuminate and reflect the present, but they also create a drift towards themselves—a path in our minds to imagining them. Creating these paths is a huge responsibility. Images dictate how people think and what face they put to words like “frightening,” “normal,” “ugly” or “beautiful.” I take this responsibility very seriously. Perhaps the most prevalent theme in my work is the representation of women. This is a challenge because one of the problems that women face is the disproportionate amount of value, scrutiny, and control placed on their physical appearance and bodies. However, it is difficult if not impossible to undermine an image with only rhetoric. We tend to believe what we see, so instead of denouncing other images, I intend to make one of my own. I try to place women within their own narrative, where their sense of agency, context, or stories are brought along with their physical presence. By representing women, I hope to help create a climate where women are represented as whole—physically, intellectually, and emotionally—rather than as storyless body parts.

Recently, I’ve been exploring different ways to visually elevate our Latin American mythologies, histories, and cultures. The current project I am working on uses the visual language of heroism and super-heroism in order to elevate Latin American historical figures and mythical characters that are often completely overlooked.

evelyn-anderson.com

Right, continues onto next page:
Superhero Series 1-4
2016
Pencils and Acrylic
12” x 16”
Chloe Anh Colberg

I am fascinated by the tensions and contradictions inherent in the human experience: in our identities, in what we believe, in what we remember and what we forget, in how we choose to present ourselves and how we see ourselves. My work seeks to identify, explore and question these tensions in my own life and more generally in a way that makes them recognizable and accessible to a variety of viewers. Having been raised with the mixed heritage of American and Vietnamese culture, I find that these two backgrounds have been important to me and brought strength to me at different times in my life—my work allows me to link these two identities into one unified self. My art practice is rooted in a desire to reconcile the culture of my family with the present experience I am living, and a need to make sense of my identity and my memories as they relate to my upbringing. I am driven by and drawn to the constant anxiety of losing memory, while also acknowledging the human need for the constant, cyclical creation of new memories and a new self. While much of the inspiration for my work comes from personal sources, I hope to create works that are at once intimate but also address universal themes such as impermanence, vulnerability, the passage of time, and the struggle to form and understand our identity. Using a variety of mediums, from photography to printmaking, I am interested in translating what is unseen in the world, drawing connections where they are not always apparent, and reflecting on the ephemeral nature of the human condition.

Chloe Colberg was born in Atlanta, GA and most recently lived in New York, NY before moving to Palo Alto, CA to attend Stanford University. She is scheduled to graduate in June with a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Art Practice and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. Chloe is a multidisciplinary artist working primarily in photography, printmaking and painting. Her most recent work explores ideas of identity and vulnerability as they pertain to her own experience as someone of mixed American and Vietnamese cultures and more broadly as they relate to the human experi-
ence. After graduation, Chloe will be moving back to New York to begin working full time as an investment banker.

chloecolberg.com

Above:
Propaganda (from the War)
2015
Silk Screen Prints on Paper
52” x 74”

Previous Page:
Memory Collision
2016
Inkjet Transfer on Paper, String
6’ x 7’ x 2’
Chloe Colberg
Warrior (Part 1)
2016
Digital Prints
22” x 44” each
Tess Dufrechou

My grandfather passed recently, and the next day I began sketching all the objects in my life buried at the bottom of dirty ant tunnels. The objects I drew were often a source of frustration for me; they represented the chaos that I feel as I try to organize my life and prepare for a transition out of college into an unknown. I didn’t know what caused me to draw them, but once I started, I began to think about how my grandfather left his material form behind, along with all of the objects that he used daily. I think about how I soon will be packing up my own objects, all these little frustrations that paradoxically I cling to in this life. I wonder as I move through the world which ones will become buried in my memory and which will persist and survive me, after I myself am buried in the ground. And so my resulting piece Bury Me With My Things Please, I Need Them Everyday came to represent the chaos of everyday life and the immateriality of life itself, while also helping me grieve for my grandfather.

In many ways, like in the description of my sketches above, my art process reminds me of dreaming. I believe that dreams provide multiple metaphors to the dreamer in order to illuminate new perspectives on our lives and concerns. When it’s good, my work reveals new threads of feeling and thought to myself and others, just as the ant tunnels in my piece could represent burial, or chaos, or journey - or all of those at once.

I often complicate my work with research, experience, and the help of others. In the case of Whiteness Baby, a plaster sculpture results from the combination of a book called Whiteness, my own efforts to tease out what white culture means to me, and many hours of discussion in an intergroup communication class and with friends. While I do not believe this piece nearly captures all I have heard and learned, for me it is a first step in understanding my whiteness.

I am learning to guide my work while still allowing for the unexpected - for the process to complicate me and give me new
Tess Dufrechou
*Self Portrait*
2014-2016
Paint, Paper Mache, Saran Wrap on Canvas
3’ x 4’
insights in return. I hope to ground these works in my experiences and my communities’ struggles and values. I aspire to practice art in a way that consistently holds many interpretations and inspires new landscapes to dream in.

I will graduate this June from Stanford University with a B.A. in Art Practice and return home to Montana for the summer. In my time at Stanford, I have explored and developed skills in sculpture, charcoal drawing, printmaking, video art, digital and film photography, and painting. I am working to find an art practice that is accountable to myself and to the communities that matter to me.

tessdufrechou.squarespace.com
Left, Below:
*Whiteness Baby*
2016
Plaster, Wood, Found Doll
1’ x 1’ x 3’

Left:
*Mother and Sister*
2015
acrylic on wall
4’ x 5’ 6”
Brooke Mandujano

My practice is inspired by the human body. I explore the body’s associations with notions of “strength,” “vulnerability,” and “weakness,” and I seek to separate body presentation and body image from the imbalance of power felt between bodies labeled “male” or “female.” My work examines the relationship between the aforementioned strength and vulnerability by confronting the “male” gaze-- who has the power, the viewer or the viewed? Using ink, video, or vinyl to capture the physicality of a subject, I make art that aims to show both the power and sexuality of a model without objectifying them. I hope to help viewers become aware of the dignity of the bodies around them, as well as their own.

Born and raised in the glorious state of California, Brooke is a practicing Visual Artist, who produces installations, video art, and other two dimensional works. She favors video, stencils, and vinyl for her projects. She creates art to deconstruct gender, confront and remake the “male” gaze, and bring beautiful things into the world.

brooke-mandujano.squarespace.com
If you have ever spoken to me for more than an hour, you have probably heard me speak about: 1) Joseph Beuys’ How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare 2) my favorite country, Bhutan 3) personal thoughts concerning grief. With an initial loss comes countless unforeseen changes in one’s life like ripples, known as secondary losses. These include such things as loss of self: the part of the self that was given to the loved one and that with death, seems wrenched from one’s identity; loss of self-confidence: failure to recognize one’s own personal wholeness without the bereaved; loss of security: the recognition of human fragility and the uncertainty of not knowing what will happen next; loss of the future, loss of the past, loss of known family structure, loss of direction, the list goes on.

I am constantly writing letters in my head to the people and things that have become lost to me. I am searching in books and songs and images for the words that will make things make sense, but sometimes I have to create my own sense. Books provide a natural narrative structure that allows me to compartmentalize, organize, and recontextualize my thoughts into themes: family or memories or fears or some combination of all of the above. Books function as both 2D and 3D art objects: they can be sculptural and inventive in their binding, but contain pages that function as unique views contributing to a greater, unified whole. Pages allow for any manifestation of 2D media: painting, drawing, text, printing, collage, image transfer—and really, who says you can’t incorporate 3D media into a book. I bind books by hand using a variety of methods, but I also alter existing books and rebind damaged books.

In my paintings, I use exaggerated color regardless of the subject matter: portraits, landscapes, abstract works. Abstraction allows some relief and mystery, but hardly anything I do is truly abstract: a color field canvas is actually a photographic sample of the sky; a nebula-like explosion is actually a bruise.
With my art, I am trying to tell you what is happening to me and what has happened, but more importantly, I am trying to tell these things to myself.

Hadley Nelson was born in Bellevue, Washington. She began pursuing art in a formalized context in high school, developing an AP drawing and painting portfolio that explored portraits of loved ones in the style of Alice Neel. She also learned to book bind in her senior year of high school while interning at Assemble Gallery & Studio in Seattle, WA. In 2012 she moved to Palo Alto, California to attend Stanford University, from which she will receive a B.A. in Art Practice in June 2016. At Stanford, she has explored a variety of art forms including oil painting, ceramics, photography, artist books and printmaking. After graduation, she plans to continue her art practice and move back to the Seattle area.

hadleynelson.com

Arthur’s Seat
2015
Acrylic and Oil on Canvas
18” x 24”
Hadley Nelson
*Bruise Paintings 1-3*
2016.
Acrylic and Oil on Canvas
36” x 36” each
Maia Paroginog

Maia’s practice is grounded in somatic accumulations and intuitive exercises in color and motion. They deny the figure its wholeness; instead referencing the fragmented sense of self as a body displaced from its physical origins. The work reflects the transitive nature of diasporic movement through the manipulation of material and painterly process. Rather than relying on stroke and gesture to reveal the human form, Maia uses experimental materials in concert with their entire body to apply the pigment to the canvas; they dilute and reinforce the paint until it masquerades as other mediums. This intentional ambiguity and transformation of the self is a direct response to feelings of unfamiliarity.

The intense verticality and the instability of the grounded plane within the work translates Maia’s experience with global and cultural hierarchies into physical form. The denial of the ground in the work implicates a deficiency of verticality as it manifests in stratification and imbalances between “first” and “third-world” nations; the center and the periphery, the east and the west.

Maia is an artist whose varied practice focuses on the immediacy of painting and drawing. Their work is characterized by intuitive mark-making that fluctuates in scale and urgency.

Maia was born in the Philippines and raised in Washington state. They will receive a B.A. in Studio Art with Honors from Stanford University in June 2016.

maiaparoginog.com

Right:
1899-1902
2016
Ink and Cotton
20’ x 48”
Above:
Maia Paroginog
1899-1902, Detail Shot
2016
Ink and Cotton

Right:
Michelle Vue
Color Harmony
2015
Photography, Ink Jet Prints
8” x 10” prints (15)
Michelle Vue

My art is born from my love of video games that originated from my childhood, and whenever I play my favorite games they envelop me in a welcoming comfort that makes me feel like I’m at home. I have always been a fan of Japanese role-playing games, especially their characters and stories, but watching their compelling tales unfold wouldn’t be possible without their beautiful art and graphics. The graphics of video game worlds have always captivated me, whether they are built from 8-bit sprites from the early generations or the elaborately rendered 3d models that engines are capable of displaying today.

My photographs and paintings seek to capture the same bright colors and pleasing aesthetics of fantastic words brought to life that were a considerable part of the foundation of my youth. As I move on with my work, I hope to combine my technical skill in photography, drawing, and painting with my programming background in computer graphics to create 3d models for video games of my own. When people play my video games, I want my graphics to immerse them in a whimsical world that may even impart the same nostalgia I feel when I pick up a controller myself.

Michelle Vue is a Bay Area artist who grew up in Wisconsin and moved to California for college. She has been inspired by video games since she first picked up a controller as a child and aims to capture their magical whimsy in her art. She hopes to combine her prowess in both coding and fine art to create 3D models for video games in the future.

michellevue.com

Right:
Self Portrait
2016
Oil on Canvas, Thread, Wood, Ribbon
24” x 36”
Lena T. Wright

I never see my work as something contained. If anything, each piece is meant to have some sort of connection to my own perception of identity and culture. Traditional arts and contemporary ideas are things that must be used now as it becomes harder to stay connected to both worlds, them being the old and the modern. From the mediums that I choose to work with to the content that’s thought out, I always relate it back to what it mean to be indigenous and alive.

My background is Yurok and Paiute, which is what inspires me. I grew up on the Pyramid Lake Paiute reservation in Nevada, but am affiliated with the Yurok tribe near the Klamath River in California. Both cultures are different, and show how indigenous people in American are more diverse then depicted. Moreover, my work aims to use similar ideas to move past what main stream society would consider to be “Native American” (mascots, headdresses, mysticism, etc.) and working against those stereotypes to combat issues that are prevalent in my community. In doing so, there is part of my work that celebrates the positives of indigenous culture, such as dance, celebration, and music, but also the part that coincides with the negatives.

While I have worked with different forms of media, I choose to focus on drawing and painting, as they can extend further into other mixed forms, not just pencil and paper or canvas and oils, but traditional arts such as beadwork and drum making. I want to pay tribute to my heritage while trying to grow as an artist.

Lena Wright is a Native American artist who works in mixed media, with a concentration in drawing and painting. She combines traditional arts with contemporary ideas to create pieces that focus on indigenous cultures and communities.

lena-tseabbe-wright.com
Detail Shot from *Without (Self Portrait Series)*
2016
Film Photography
Lena Wright
Without (Self Portrait Series)
2016
Film Photography
6” x 6” x 65”
Kevin Zhai

The human brain does a tremendous amount of work to fill in the gaps of its sensual understanding, connecting sequential static images into a moving animation or perceiving objects in negative spaces. I seek to explore this by crafting minimal frameworks for the brain to latch onto through digital and traditional media.

Through figure drawing, I am interested in how to warp bodily proportions while still creating instantly recognizable forms. By doing so, I hope to draw attention to the elegant and complex structures that we are all composed of yet often take for granted as we go about our lives.

I’ve always been fascinated with how we now communicate in bursts of messages that jump from topic to topic without a need for resolution or closure. Although this has always been the case for human relationships, technology has made it possible to access these archives of conversations past. By scrolling through my old text messages with someone, I can piece together a recollection of our relationship at that point in time. I have recently been exploring how best to visualize such text-based exchanges to create engaging narratives by coding animated environments, each crafted for the relationship at hand.

We as humans have immense capacity to empathize with even the simplest of visuals and movement, so it’s a fascinating starting point for creating and performing stories.

Kevin was raised in the Bay Area and currently attends Stanford University. In addition to making art, he conducts human-computer interaction research, performs in a children’s theatre group, and parties with his bros.

Check out his podcast at bfypod.com!

kevinzhai.com
missed call from
- Mom
Jun 1 2013 at 6:11 PM

Be here at the House at 12:15 in a suit with your Pledge Pin. You’d better be back at Stanford by now.
- D.J.
Jun 2 2013 at 10:42 AM