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# Sponsors





Museum of Art

School of the Arts



quix-ot-ic /kwik'sädik/

# adjective

exceedingly idealistic; unrealistic and impractical. "a vast and perhaps quixotic project".1

# **Class Statement:**

Our theme "Quixotic" relates to the way in which our class has inspired their practices over the course of our program. This year brought us new perspectives in the way of creating art and tested our innovation. As idealists, we adapted to a process of impracticality that freed us from the unrealistic notion of perfection.

1."QUIXOTIC." Lexico Dictionaries | English. https://www.lexico.com/definition/ quixotic.

# Alexis Moline

Email: molinealexis@gmail.com



# **Curator Biography:**

Alexis Moline is a curator, writer and researcher who has worked in Vancouver, Toronto and Hamilton. She received her Bachelors in Art History from McMaster University, and her Master of Museum Studies in collaboration with the Sexual Diversity Studies program from the University of Toronto. She is currently the Curator for the Building Cultural Legacies project at the Hamilton Arts Council. Alexis is excited and honoured to work with and learn from emerging McMaster artists for SUMMA 2021.

# **Curatorial Statement:**

The 2021 SUMMA Exhibition explores the quixotic, all that is deemed idealistic, starry-eyed and impractical. Working and creating under unusual circumstances, quixoticism has become a liberating vehicle for these artists to explore and sharpen their craft. This show encapsulates the multiple ways that these bright young artists have adapted, grown and investigated the undeniable cruciality of art and quixotic perspective in tumultuous times.

# Julianna Biernacki

Instagram: @Julianna.the.artist Email: juliannabie@gmail.com



# Artist Biography:

Julianna Biernacki is an emerging artist from Welland, ON who is a BFA candidate in the McMaster Studio Arts program. As a young child, her interests and passions have been ever-changing, from tennis to dance, writing and sewing. Each interest has helped shape her into the individual she is today. Biernacki has been included in the Hamilton Artist Inc. members SWARM (2019) show, was featured in Candy Floss Magazine (2020,) and received the Young Artist Award for best painting (2017).

# Artist Statement:

My current work combines painting and hand needle punched rugs to create dynamic diptychs. Conceptually my work revolves around themes of voyeurism, privacy, and individual projection of self-image through their spaces. How we are perceived and how we perceive others make up a lot of our lives and I am interested in deconstructing this through my work that presents ambiguous spaces that are simultaneously familiar and yet impersonal and unknown.



# Evelyn Bohn



# Artist Biography:

Anthroposophy's educational philosophy shaped Evelyn Bohn's worldview towards interdisciplinary approaches to visual arts, mathematics, and science in childhood. During high school, she furthered her artistic education by earning a Specialist High Skills Major in Visual Arts and Culture. This was Bohn's first exposure to the vibrant arts community of James St. North; the same community that convinced her to attend the Studio Arts program at McMaster University, in which she is currently completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts.

# Artist Statement:

I aspire to capture intriguing variations of insects' form and colour in paintings located between observation and geometric abstraction. Referencing abstract art traditions highlights shortcomings of visual communication, which only points indirectly beyond surface interpretations. My practice is detail-oriented, gravitating towards minutiae; the observational approach intends to reflect nuanced sensorial experiences.

Magnifying lenses are a form of technology that accentuates close looking. The application of lenses to viewing bugs, while revealing hitherto unnoticed details, still fails to uncover depth beneath exterior appearances. Laterally, subtle variants of colour and shape enliven my inner visual lexicon. The resulting artwork, by virtue of increasing sensitivity towards my surroundings, reflects my primary encounters with insects.



# Jet Coghlan



### Artist Biography:

The date of their birth has been lost but it is believed they were born in the 90's. For at least three years, Jet has been using the moniker #money\_monet . All that can be found on them is this written letter;

"My name is Jet, I believe it is necessary to express that I am a neurodivergent individual. One of the purposes of my work is to create safe places, holding room for creating ideas outside the norm. These places and pieces are made with the intention of sparking conversations around things not being openly discussed and to experience feelings that are often difficult to confront. I work with dialectical outlooks and juxtapose reality with new possibilities. My art attempts to present counter-narratives of a future we can hope to achieve."

### Artist Statement:

The reality of this capitalist world, which I struggle against, is that for this system to exist it is necessary to create a repressed individual that must exchange their time for money. This is why I make free art!



# Lynda Dong

Instagram: @lyndadong Art Instagram: @lyndadong.dy Email: lynda.ly.dong@gmail.com



# Artist Biography:

Lynda Dong was born in a coastal city in southern China. She immigrated to Canada with her family in 2013 and currently lives in Toronto. Lynda graduated from high school in 2017 and is currently a BFA candidate in the Studio Art program at McMaster University. Lynda is eager to explore new things in her life, and this characteristic also can be found in her artworks.

### Artist Statement:

My work often combines Chinese traditional culture with Canadian contemporary art. I seek to innovate through experimentation and exploration of materials in my practice. Recent works include concerns over environmental issues and reflections on the inheritance and development of traditional culture. My goal is to foster traditional art practices in the context of our contemporary culture and society to respond to the increased cultural awareness of our generation when preserving and making beautiful things.



# Juliana Duimstra

Instagram: @arts.juliana



# Artist Biography:

Juliana Duimstra is a female artist of Christian faith. She was born in British Columbia but lives currently in Hamilton, Ontario. She is part of a family of four. Her mother is an elementary school teacher, her father works for an insurance company in IT, and her brother is studying mathematics at Ryerson University. She is currently in her fourth year as a McMaster student in the Studio Art program seeking a minor in Psychology.

### Artist Statement:

In my practice, I experiment with high-key, vibrantly coloured, and sometimes abstract landscapes, ocean scenes, and distorted self-portraits on canvas and wood board. I attempt to convey stimulating and spiritual experiences that are better articulated with paint rather than words. I am particularly drawn to the ocean, where I see metaphors and lessons for life.

My work takes on a personal narrative when I include myself in the composition, literally or metaphorically. I utilize distortion, movement, saturation, and exaggeration in my paintings to allude to what is transcendent and divine. My faith in God as a Christian fuels my work, as I seek to articulate my connection to God and bring attention to His dynamic qualities, e.g. gentleness and power, love and justice, simplicity and intricacy.



# Teba Faisal

Instagram: @Teba.jpg Email: tebafaisal99@gmail.com website: www.tebafaisal.com



### Artist Biography:

Teba is an Iraqi-Canadian multidisciplinary artist who grew up between her birthplace of Iraq and the United Arab Emirates, where her family resided for work. In 2013 she immigrated to Canada with her family, later receiving her citizenship in 2019. Teba's work was recently exhibited at the Hamilton Artist Inc. and was the recipient of the Ignition award (2021).

# Artist Statement:

Throughout my life in Canada, I have become more conscious of depictions of Arab culture and Islam in the media and the way it mobilizes racism and xenophobia in the Western world. Xenophobia and white supremacy has been perpetuated historically through Hollywood films; this recognizable and easily accessed form of media has informed the Western world's view of marginalized communities. Hollywood has created fictional narratives of these communities and their cultures. In the case of Muslim-Arabs, Hollywood often showcases Arabs as a violent, barbaric, oppressive, and uneducated group of people. In my current work, I clip scenes from Hollywood movies that depict Muslim-Arabs in a racist manner and use audio and visual editing to disrupt and refute them. To do this, I use basic video editing methods as well as datamoshing, a process of manipulating the data of media files to achieve visual or auditory effects when the file is decoded. The titles are used to carry humour and sarcasm to further criticque these depictions in Hollywood.



# Cait Gautron

Instagram: @sweatrat Email: cait.gautron@gmail.com



# Artist Biography:

Cait Gautron is a cis-gendered female of Irish descent. Raised in a military family, she has lived and travelled extensively across Canada and Europe. Having initially studied theatre, Cait switched her focus to visual art in 2016. She is currently practicing life casting and silicone work.

# Artist Statement:

I have always been fascinated by ideas of autonomy and its limitations through the state policing of our bodies. The social climate in Canada is one that prizes idealized representation, a narrow, non-inclusive view of the human form. In working with distorted representations of human anatomy, I am importing ideas of psychological subjectivity while anchoring the experiences in their tangible, physical expressions. I am seeking to discuss the complex intersections of physiology and psychology which underlie specific social phenomena such as body modification, mourning and trauma. By inviting critical thought about our constructions of self, viewers may meditate about themselves and their judgements of others.



# Payton Husk

Instagram: @paytonhuskart Email: paytonhusk12@gmail.com



# Artist Biography:

Payton Husk is a Canadian artist born in Waterloo, Ontario into a close knit Newfie family. Diagnosed with several different mental illnesses throughout her life, Husk has struggled with her own personal demons from a young age. She uses her art as an escape from her own mental anguish by recreating her own visions, infused with humour, into an established space for others to experience.

# Artist Statement:

I make video installations using GIFs, projection mapping and audio. My 'monstrous' imagery walks along the lines of being dark and disturbing while still having comedic and approachable elements to them. The spaces are designed to resemble a safe space being invaded by things that are unknown. My art is physical, psychological, and visual, affording a look into my mind and experiences. These works deal with issues of mental health in the hope of abolishing stigma and promoting conversation and awareness. Viewers are asked to become aware of their own vulnerabilities and fears, coming to terms with them. By accepting fear as a primary force in our lives we become stronger, smarter, and more accepting of new experiences, allowing us to evaluate our lives in a completely new way.



# Amanda Jameson



# Artist Biography:

Amanda grew up inspired by her rural surroundings. She started drawing, sculpting and painting at a young age. This led her to take art classes before finishing the art foundations program at Dundas Valley School of Art. Amanda's passion for painting and creating directed her to work with children and youth as an assistant at DVSA. She continues to pursue her art education and is currently working on completing her BFA at McMaster University.

# Artist Statement:

In my practice, I focus on the themes of abstracted memories, nostalgia, landscape, personal narratives, nature, visual poetry, ancestry and isolation. Working with collage, I enjoy the tactility of paper and pair them with found objects to create something new. Playing with the ideas of belongings and collecting, both physically or mentally, I am examining how objects pass hands and how memories become attached to them. There is beauty in everyday objects. I am inspired by ancestry and family relations, working with still-life to evoke memories of domesticity. These paintings use a white background to express the absence of memory and space; some objects faded and drawn in pencil or ink to show forgetting, contrasted against boldly painted elements.



# Jill Letten

Instagram: @j.letten\_art Email: j.letten.art@gmail.com



### Artist Biography:

Jill Letten is an artist based in Hamilton, Ontario, and is currently completing a BFA in the Studio Arts program at McMaster University. Growing up around a lower-middle-class area prominent with industrialized factories and toxic waters, the visible effects of a gradually degrading environment became normalized. Jill explores climate change through experiences and scientific research to understand and address challenging subject matter often disregarded or denied in society. Her work manifests itself into acrylic paintings, visualizing environments with realistic and surrealistic elements. Jill has recently shown her work at the Hamilton Artists Inc. as one of the recipients of the Ignition Award (2021).

### Artist Statement:

Climate change has presented humanity with the most profound and urgent challenge ever faced. Reflecting upon my understanding of the rising environmental issues occurring globally, my work addresses how we interact and perceive the natural world. I use my practice to combine art with research, contextualizing archival images into the contemporary through digital manipulation before translating the composition into an analog painting. I specifically use images taken during the 1950s, to critique this period of modern economic growth that has significantly contributed to how our global society has embraced exploitative human activities, both socially and systemically.



# Antonella Mendola

Email: mendolaa99@gmail.com



# Artist Biography:

Antonella Mendola is a Canadian artist of Italian/Portuguese decent. She is a 4th year BFA candidate at McMaster University's Studio Arts program. As a child, Antonella learned to draw watching videos from contemporary artists. While at McMaster, she has explored many mediums. However, she has fallen in love with painting and abstraction, which is the basis of her current practice.

# Artist Statement:

I am interested in abstraction, the act of painting, and the movement of my body when I create. My painting process references American abstract expressionism stylistically and conceptually. Quick brush strokes, gestural mark making and the fast application of paint express my personal feelings, emotions and experiences. I work with diverse colour palettes to explore textures that are responsive to my movements and emotions. I make my work as a way of expressing how I feel and resist suppressing it. I address the internal, positive or negative and find that my practice can be a stress reliever, a form of self-care, as well as a tool for meditation and reflection. I don't want my emotions to cloud the way in which I view my life or to prevent me from being authentic and active in the world.



# Megan Mercier

Instagram: @mercier\_studios Email: mercierstudios@gmail.com

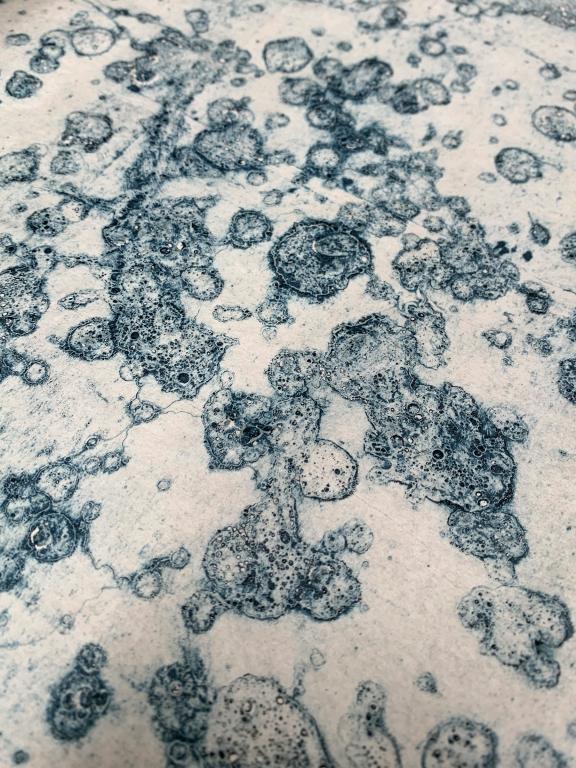


### Artist Biography:

Megan Mercier is a female 4th year BFA candidate at McMaster University. Born and raised in a small city near Niagara Falls called Welland, she moved to Hamilton to pursue the arts. With her French-Canadian heritage, Megan is fluent in both French and English. Throughout the years at McMaster, she has explored many mediums, but she has developed a newfound love for printmaking, and it is the base for most of her work.

### Artist Statement:

My practice has been exploring the various relationships found within nature and finding the different ways they can be interpreted. My inspiration comes from the imagery I capture, and experience at my cabin in the northern part of Quebec. I use printmaking processes, mainly woodcuts, as well as digital printing to create a contrasting effect of realism vs abstract textures. Although my work is not site-specific, it is the experiences that I have had with nature that creates the inspiration for my work. I accentuate elements like trees, plants, water and fungi, to open up the viewers' eyes to the inner workings of life which surround them.



# Donna Nadeem

Website: www.donnanadeem.ca



### Artist Biography:

Donna Nadeem is a Canadian artist based in Toronto, currently completing her BFA in Studio Arts with a double-minor in Art History and English at McMaster University. She is informed by her Iranian heritage and inspired by medieval Persian art, literature, and poetry. Geometry plays a major role in her designs, as she focuses on creating patterns that consider proportion and scale. Donna's practice explores her Persian heritage through a modern lens, creating work as a remembrance to her culture.

### Artist Statement:

My work takes a critical view on how art and architecture has played a significant role in Persian culture, extending reflections that specifically observe the geometric designs and patterns used. I primarily paint these designs on glass and plexiglass as natural and artificial light can then be used to further dimensionality in the work, of the designs to activate the surrounding space and work beyond its borders, representing hope and the possibilities outside of its constructs. I have further explored these patterns by laser cutting into plexiglass, layering, painting on fabrics and unstructured materials. My academic practice extends from my artistic practice, examining how this unique exploration of my heritage breaks the norms of how we view and understand our history.



# Eryn Penner

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### Artist Biography:

Eryn Penner is a female artist from BC. As an art student of many years, she has trained in the study of human anatomy and physiology, drawing, sculpture and art history. She reinterprets historical art works to create a new relationship between high art and everyday life, in the hopes of reaching a diverse audience.

# Artist Statement:

I distill elements from works of art history and reinterpret these in their simplest forms to reach a contemporary audience. Through extensive research, I sythesize surreally simplified sculptures or still lifes composed of single forms and a setting. Through my interest in technical and historical study, I have developed my art practice. My work is informed by classical pieces which acts as the foundation of Western understandings of art. Arts mutability often results in a fixation on its present, neglecting its roots. My intention is to remind people of these iconic works in a new way that is not only vastly different from the original but is presently relatable.



# Ashley Plante



# Artist Biography:

Ashley Marie Plante is a 21-year-old, Hamilton based artist. Born in Maple Ontario, Ashley has struggled with general and social anxiety, major depression and post-traumatic stress disorder since her early teens. She uses her art practice as a tool to understand herself, her conditions and to learn how her experiences and pain can be used to start conversations about mental health.

### Artist Statement:

The word "feeling" has a vague dictionary definition. In my practice, I aim to find and develop visual definitions for the act and experience of "feeling". My visual style is best defined as psychedelic surrealism. Conceptually I focus on mental illness and the feelings associated with that reality. My work consists of personal memories and emotions associated with drugs, major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety, social anxiety and PTSD. My works' conceptual basis in mental illness is expressed through colorful, psychedelic and surrealist imagery that tries to convey "feeling". I present myself as representative of universal humanity. I do not depict myself literally, but rather a simpler, undefinable avatar of the human form that is not necessarily gender specific. I feel my work is accessible to everyone because of this approach to the human form and selfrepresentation.



# Mariana Quinn

Instagram: @Quinnie\_Art\_

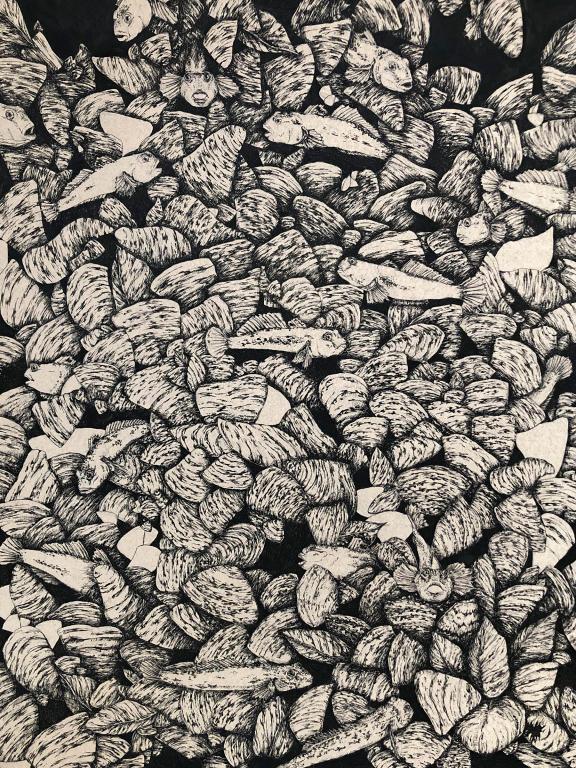


### Artist Biography:

Mariana Quinn is an artist based in Whitby and Hamilton, Ontario who works with archival inks to produce large-scale, mixed-media works. She is currently seeking her BFA at McMaster University. Quinn's practice brings attention to the environmental effects that invasive species pose to the native plants and animals within North America today. Quinn is actively involved in multiple art communities. She has previously exhibited at McMaster University, the Whitby Station Gallery, and the Members Exhibition, SWARM, at the Hamilton Artist Inc.

### Artist Statement:

I make a variety of two-dimensional works that examine the connections between invasive species and the deterioration of ecosystems. I am reacting to the remnants of Imperialism that can still be seen in North American ecology today. I depict a variety of invasive species in my practice and contrast them with the native species that they are eradicating. I express environmental concerns for how desensitized we have become to the swarms of invasive flora and fauna around us. In a society that pushes the concept of "post-colonial", I display the tensions within our environment, of native species struggling to survive within the ever-growing populations of invasive species. I question if the land can ever actually be post-colonial or if colonialism is embedded in the physical spaces around us all.



### Selena schaefer



### Artist Biography:

Selena Schaefer most often works with portraiture, representing the people around her in paintings and sculptures. Her most recent work is an exploration of fashion history, drawing her concepts from both observed fashion and historical research. With her fashion based work, she will explore the underlying symbolism of fashion and the industry's effect on the world. She hopes to uncover how fashion interacts with the environment and influences socio-political landscapes.

### Artist Statement:

My work has a strong focus on feminine and abstract imagery, usually mixing the baroque and surrealistic. In my portrait work, I stage settings that look strange and unrealistic with the incorporation of historic, contemporary and surreal elements. Bright colours or graphic, modern shapes are often contrasted with more conventional themes, colours and styles in my work. Film is very influential to my work, especially various uses of cinematography, sets and costumes. Researching the connection between renaissance fashion and current issues caused by the western eurocentric fashion industry has been the driving force behind my thesis work. I hope to continue to push the boundaries of my art practice and keep expanding my skills as an artist.



# Taylor Tabry-Dorzek

Instagram: @taylortabrydorzek Email: taylortabrydorzek@gmail.com



### Artist Biography:

Taylor Tabry-Dorzek is a young artist who is inspired by the distortion and abstraction of natural forms, more specifically wood grain. Since beginning her undergraduate career at McMaster University, she has grown and changed with her practice and continually looks to push herself as an artist. Taylor is currently moving towards bringing her works into a sculptural form, grounding the pieces in a new way. Her goal is to create paintings that do not force a narrative and allow the viewer to interpret her work independently.

### Artist Statement:

My artistic practice consists of large scale abstract paintings. I paint predominantly with acrylic paint on wooden canvases and am inspired by distortion and the natural form of wood grain. It has taken me a very long time to really figure out why I paint how I do and what drives me. I used to use my art as a way to cope with the multiple brain trumas I have suffered and would draw distorted lines and shapes to help calm my mind and focus my thinking. These patterns have since then developed into more realized pieces and continue to change. When I began to paint on wood, I noticed that the natural forms matched the shapes that I had been seeing in my mind and I was able to bring them to life. In the future, I will continue to explore my practice from a conceptual standpoint, while enhancing and disrupting the natural forms I am given.



### Javan Wellum



### Artist Biography:

Javan Wellum was born and lives in southern Ontario, the youngest of four siblings. He is a Christian and enjoys reading theological and philosophical books. He enjoys working outdoors, film, basketball, comedy, and painting houses.

### Artist Statement:

My art practice consists of oil painting on wood boards and tree rounds. I primarily source imagery from reflecting on moments, environments, and people in my life. I try to combine these elements into compelling, narrative minded compositions. I am not interested in conceptual, post-structuralist or political activist art as I find it narrow minded, pretentious and void. I am intrigued by the implicit not the explicit. I am interested in self-reflection and experience. I strive to make work that adds to life and doesn't merely comment on it. Frequent themes of my work include the passage of time, my fear of societal coercion and individual unconsciousness. I try to paint the natural world with reverence to its author. I explore transcendence, feelings of catharsis, sudden awareness of the sublime, intangible emotions, the experience of flow, moments of stillness. I navigate schools of philosophy like stoicism and existentialism and Christian apologetics to support the foundation of my personal ideas and convictions.



# Faculty Statements

"2021 will be forever marked as the year of the Pandemic; on-line teaching, where students and faculty shared the unique experiences of navigating virtual environments, muted microphones, glitchy connections, and exhaustion. However, through these trying times I watched and experienced a group of BFA graduating students navigate unfamiliar territories, where their practice did not rely on printing presses, wood shops / ceramic studios and various other equipment, but rather, relied solely on their commitment, and trust in their ability to embrace the unknown, to allow failure, and to have the self-confidence to see their practice unfold in new directions. This is apparent in the work created for SUMMA 2021. Well done! Best of luck to you all in the future, you shall all be missed; keep in touch and visit."

> - Briana Palmer Assosiate Professor School of the Arts

"Over the past four years, it has been a privilege for me to witness this group of individuals learn through the critical and creative practice of our discipline. I appreciate the various lenses from which you all experience, express and think. I enjoyed watching how you contributed to each other's educational and personal experiences during long nights in the studio, discussions and the chaos of gala critiques. This incredibly turbulent time is part of your zeitgeist- a context which challenges, expands and proposes new possibilities as you graduate. I look forward to meeting up with your future selves.

A warm congratulations and welcome to the 2021 BFA Studio Arts students."

-Carmela Alfaro-Laganse Associate Professor School of the Arts "I began teaching at McMaster in 1983 and have witnessed many graduating classes over a time period of almost four decades. Each year I am struck by the tremendous transformation that occurs as the students approach their graduation date and summa exhibition. The last year of our program is a time of great evolution with growing maturity in artistic practise and marked evolution of personal vision. It is a time of deep self-reflection, uncertainty, searching, realization of responsibilities to things larger than self and imagining of futures beyond McMaster. It has been my great pleasure to be on this journey with the 2021 graduating class as we share and learn from each other. I am inspired by their youthful passion, civic consciousness, creativity and care for each other and look forward to staying in touch with them as they move on to new adventures."

#### - Judy Major-Girardin Professor School of the Arts

"Congratulations to the BFA class of 2020! Saying that it has been a strange and challenging year is an understatement – but through it all it's been so rewarding to watch you grow as individuals, and to witness the development of your creative practices. It's been an honour not just to teach, but to learn alongside each of you. I'm looking forward to bumping into you and seeing your work at future art openings and events!

Stay cool."

-Adrienne Crossman Assistant Professor School of the Arts

# Faculty Statements

"You are the first group of students that I had the opportunity to teach here at McMaster. It's been a great experience seeing the progress you have all made and how your artwork has evolved over the years. Take the time to appreciate your hard work and achievements; take time to reflect; and remember, this is still only the beginning of your long artistic careers. When you look back on your days at McMaster, I hope you look back with bewilderment and surprise of the path it set you on and I hope that path is one where you get to work with and meet creative people that inspire you and encourage you to keep experimenting and growing as an artist."

> -Troy Coulterman Instructional Assistant School of the Arts

"For a student of Fine Art, developing a body of work is a challenging pursuit at the best of times but for the graduating students of 2021 when we add the additional obstacles placed before them this past year, we can truly appreciate their Quixotic quest. Even though students were participating in an on-line collaboration through screens and phones, they were creating, for the most part, in complete isolation.

The artists contributing to this exhibition have learned how to adapt, how to be resilient, and how to be resourceful under difficult circumstances but most importantly they have learned that creativity flows despite the circumstances we find ourselves in."

> -Angela Busse Instructional Assistant School of the Arts

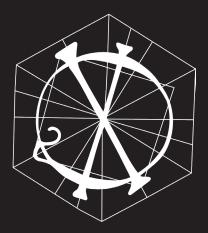
"Dear graduating Studio Art folks,

Congratulations on fighting through a final year like no other. Thank you for your energy, resourcefulness, and hard work. I look forward to catching-up on what everyone has been doing for the SUMMA show. When we are finally back on campus, I will certainly miss seeing the "usual suspects" (you know who you are) hanging-out in the lovely yellow-green foyer of TSH.

Stay in touch when you can, and all the best as you hit the open road.

Keep your microphones warm, and your cameras clicking!"

-Chris Myhr Assistant Professor Communication Studies and Multimedia



Content designed by: Teba Faisal Logo designed by: Evelyn Bohn

A special thank you goes out to the team leaders and collaborators in the design team, copy editing team, photography team, photo editing team, communications team, accessibility team and project management team.



