NORTH OF THE 45TH
2018 Upper Midwest Juried Exhibition
AUGUST 24 – NOVEMBER 4, 2018
Printed in conjunction with the exhibition:

**NORTH OF THE 45TH**

**AUGUST 24 — NOVEMBER 4, 2018**

Exhibition Juror

**Cortney Lederer**
Director
**CNL Art Consulting**

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**DeVos Art Museum**
School of Art & Design
Northern Michigan University
nmu.edu/devos

**MUSEUM DIRECTOR**
Emily Lanctot

**COVER IMAGE**
Noah Roberts

**DESIGN**
Edwin Carter & Noah Roberts
ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The North of the 45th is an annual juried exhibition of artists living in the geographical area north of the 45th parallel in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. This line is known as the halfway point between the equator and the north pole, and crossing this line from the south is often associated with being “up north.” The exhibition and this catalogue showcase the breadth and depth of artists living in this upper Midwest region from both rural and urban areas. Each year, under the guidance of a juror, the exhibitions have been completely different but equally fascinating to present.

The 2018 juror is Cortney Lederer, a Chicago-based arts consultant, advocate, and project manager with sixteen years of experience managing an array of artistic programming for organizations and businesses. From 2011–14 she served as the Director of Exhibitions and Residencies at the Chicago Artists Coalition (CAC), where she designed and managed its two residency programs: BOLT Residency and HATCH Projects.

In 2014, Cortney launched CNL Projects (CNL), which provides project-based consulting to organizations with a specialization in curating, project management, program design and development. CNL has worked with notable organizations such as 3Arts, Chicago Artists Coalition, Lillstreet Art Center, EXPO Chicago, Fashion Outlets of Chicago, LinkedIn, Wilson Sporting Goods, PurePoint Financial and Hyatt Hotels Corporate Office Chicago. She also provides professional development workshops and individual consultation to artists. In addition, Cortney works closely with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) where has curated three master of fine arts exhibitions. She also teaches two graduate-level courses in the Arts Administration and Policy department.

Cortney received her BA in Sociology from George Washington University (1999), a BFA from the University of Victoria (2002), and a dual Master’s degree in Modern Art History, Theory and Criticism and Arts Administration and Policy from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2009). Currently, she serves on the board of Every House Has a Door, the Education Advisory Committee for the Chicago Artists Coalition, Programming Advisory Committee for Snow City Arts, and is an Art Table member.

Image credit: Noah Roberts
FROM THE JUROR

This exhibition presents a diverse range of artworks, each of which uniquely shows the power and influence of place on artistic practice. The stories that these works tell about a specific region are not straightforward narratives; they are layered and surprising, mysterious and occasionally humorous, much like the complex nature of place itself. Some of these stories appear to be pulled from life—exploring the people and places surrounding the artist—while others present surreal figures or landscapes that challenge direct or formal representation. As these artists demonstrate, existing within any environment is a dynamic and evolving experience, changing over time and through the lives of individuals. The geographic parameters of this show reveal how a localized focus is not a limitation, but rather a demonstration of the textured creative practices found within any region, no matter the size.

The artists in this exhibition act at moments as archivists and documentarians, surveying their surroundings and creating records of the place and time in which they live and work. At other moments, their artworks present alternate worlds and reimagined landscapes, prompting us to examine our own surroundings more closely. By bringing together a wide range of practices and material experimentations into a single space, North of the 45th challenges conceptions of what “contemporary” art can look like and what we might expect when we hear the word. Placing a traditional Ojibwe woven basket in the same space as an electronic sculpture reveals how two different creative practices exist simultaneously, each exploring very different ways of engaging with material culture and history. In this way, we are invited to consider the vast creative possibilities for engaging with our contemporary moment, no matter the place or time in which we find ourselves.

A SPECIAL THANKS

To our outgoing Director of the DeVos Art Museum, Melissa Matuscak Alan. Her leadership and vision expanded the museum’s unique collection of art and culture, highlighted annually by the North of the 45th and Rabbit Island exhibitions.
WILL AGAR

CHURCH DOOR, MAPLETON, MN
16" × 20"
Silver gelatin print
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
I approach the collage as a painting not a mere assembly of pictures. As I collect materials, they seem to connect individually or in groups and from those materials, I begin to see an interaction in space and form, arranging colors and shapes. Each added element will build on the previous one by changing, adding, or even result in eliminating the other components. A successful collage requires a high degree of discrimination if collage is not to degenerate into mere decoration, clichés, or a gaudy assembly of meaningless material. What you remove is as important as what you put into the composition. I use hand cut pieces, color paper, along with transferred or print images, transfer rubbings, airbrush, gouache, pastel, gilding, and acrylic paint. The potential of the collage medium is infinite so one must explore and take full advantage of these possibilities.
JOSEPH BAKER

DOLOMITE AND STERLING SILVER PENDANT
3.5” × 2”
Jewelry
ISHPEMING, MI
I am inspired by the repetition of shapes and color. Many of these elements I observe in nature, others are from memories. The complexities of life—both past and present—are united in my work through textures, mark making and layering. Painting is a physical process for me. I am drawn to moving paint around a canvas, finding the story in the shapes and letting the colors speak. Sometimes I work in series, this work allows me to explore patterns in changing environments. The cycle of decay, loss, new growth and stability is thus ever present and influences my work.
SAMUEL BJORGUM

WHITE/BLUE LINES
72” × 91”
Oil on canvas
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
I am a full time visual artist with a summer studio in Egg Harbor, Wisconsin and a winter studio in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. My surroundings of nature and my travels inspire and influence my oil/mixed media paintings on paper or wood panel.

I have been a full time artist for over twenty years, but it is my intense studying of art history and just 'experimenting' that have broadened my personal techniques to art making. I work in oil, cold wax and mixed media layering, adding and removing many layers to each piece. It is this in-depth process that lets subtle markings and layers emerge into the finished painting which is an abstracted minimalist version of a landscape. A few of my influences include Richard Diebenkorn, Mark Rothko, Helen Frankenthaler, Agnes Martin and many others.

Peace, serenity, and joy is what I would like to accomplish in my painting.
As a sculptor, I try to create pieces that combine the aesthetic possibilities of the figure with elements of geometric and natural structures. My process begins with a number of sketches using automatic and gestural movement incorporating elements of the human figure. After alterations and manipulation of impressions of sense and environment, I have enough information to construct a coherent composition in 3-dimensional relief. These pieces draw upon my background in traditional realistic figural sculpture, but strive to combine creative abstraction with objective structural elements. My intent is to produce an elegant, but mystifying, figural abstraction.
JARON CHILDS

GEYSER

22” × 22”

Oil on panel

MINNEAPOLIS, MN
TAIMUR AMIN CLEARY

LIKE HUNTING
28” × 64” × 1”
Oil on board
MARQUETTE, MI

In painting, I hope to remind you that there is no empty space between you and I. The ether does not exist, and while we are on the subject, neither does the solid object. Reality lies between these extremes in synthesis and balance. I want the real and the abstract, the surface and the space, the painting.

Yes, this is ruin, but the mark that erases still stands for something.

Yes, this is the sun, but only a dim reflection, and don't forget that paint is paint, is paint.

If a painting is a window, it only opens as we suspend our disbelief to meet suggestion with imagination. It can be a delicate balance. See for yourself.
TOMAS CO

AZUL
26" × 42"
Sumi-e ink & watercolor on rice paper
HANCOCK, MI
“Ageless Ingenuity: Industrial Evolution" captures centuries old layers of China's changing industrial landscape. Traditional paper lanterns, wooden shop signs with cola cans opened up as attention getting whirly-gigs, tangles of electrical, telephone and cable lines, are all contrasted by hillsides of the most modern power and telecommunication towers. The concentrated infrastructure tells a story of change in the extreme evolutionary development China is undergoing to take care of its huge population.
Clear Sky is one of many paintings in my body of work I refer to as “Places I’ve Been”. The paintings not specific to any particular place or time but refer to many landscapes, seascapes and the memories of those places I hold. Over the years my travels have taken me to many beautiful places and it is the feelings from these places, these visits, which I am working to express in my work. Soft, warm sunsets, rushing rivers, dense forests, massive rolling hills and dramatic mountain views all come to mind. The richness of the land, rebirth in the springtime and nasty storms on the sea all hold memories for me. I paint out of necessity and recall my life’s journeys in my paintings. I love the land and landscapes that my memories behold and work to capture those feelings in the paintings. I want to look at a painting and want to go there, to know I have been there before and now have recreated that feeling on the canvas.
HEATHER FAITH

A COLLECTION OF MEMORIES
12" × 12" × 3"

White Stoneware, terra sigillata, clear overglaze
WETMORE, MI

I am a Michigan-raised artist who has a sincere passion for ceramics. From a young age, I have shown interest in the arts through tasks like drawing, painting, creating art from scraps, collecting rocks, and even gardening. After completing high school, I went on to obtain an Associate’s Degree and CADD Certificate from North Central Michigan College. From there, I have worked as a design engineer, substitute teacher and am currently creating a senior thesis piece for a Bachelor’s Degree in Fine Arts from Northern Michigan University. My current focus is on creating sculptural arts through the use of bright colors, organic patterns and asymmetrical forms. I draw my inspiration through life experiences, photographs and the lines and colors present within those photographs. My current line of work is a series of studies on various mineral specimens with a focus in their aesthetic qualities, like: color, form, line and proportion. This series uses a primitive firing process known as saggar, which connects my work back to the basic elemental properties/characteristics/processes of mineral formation in nature. Saggar firing is the process of containing ones’ art within another ceramic vessel in order to create a new atmosphere within that vessel. I fill those vessels with various organic materials, like cat food, glitter and fertilizers to create unique surfaces on my works.
I think of the Equivalence Series as social bodies; a re-thinking of Modernist abstraction conjoined with an interpretative representation of the Breast Cancer experience in all its permutations. Through acknowledgement and distance they are a formal language, reductive and abstract, investigating feminist subjectivity while establishing a new normal through what is and what is not.

These works are determined by an anxiety necessitating excision, treatment, implant, and survival. Color is saturated and communal; surfaces are thin, stained, and raw; forms are structured, incised, and permeated; space is autonomous, dependent, and open. Yet, these works are a re-determined whole cloth made whole again by the generosity of social context and structures with and through the viewer’s perception. It’s my intention that they operate as reveals of humor and hope. With a vocabulary of forms and gestures, logic and feelings, my work investigates the effectual and contingent spaces in relationship portending places where assurances can be found.
Photography has been a lifelong pursuit. I started seriously doing photography with a Nikon film camera in 1987, while living in Manley NSW, Australia. Initially, I devoted myself to black and white images, following the pioneering processes of Ansel Adams who defined black and white as a true artistic medium.

A dedication to detail and quality continues from the film world to digital. Today my emotions and feelings are captured on a full frame Nikon DSLR camera, which has greater image resolution and detail than many film cameras.

Calming Waters on Merced River–Yosemite National Park, CA. - The sun was setting, and I wanted to capture the valley on what turned out to be the best weather day during our brief stay at Yosemite. We drove to an iconic spot along the Merced River and Valley Trail. The river took a bend and slowed the waters, the setting sun light was hitting the valley and peaks making for a perfect end of day.
I am of Ojibwe ancestry, and a member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan. My love for working with the traditional building methods of my ancestors from times long ago brings me to a place that makes me feel close to them and happy that I am continuing in their footsteps. I am a self-taught traditional crafts artist who works with the same natural materials my ancestors used. All of the materials I use in my artwork, birch bark, spruce root, cedar and sweetgrass, are hand-gathered by me during long treks in the woods. My mother, who made ash baskets, is a big influence on my love of working with my hands to bring a new item to life from the joining of the natural materials. I have made numerous items from birch bark including baskets and bowls with the largest item being a traditionally crafted 12’ canoe that now resides in the Crazy Horse Museum in South Dakota.
KRISTINE GRANGER

WIRES
Sculpture and video installation

Digitized super 8 film, wood, and metal

MARQUETTE, MI

When I was a child and would visit my grandparents, I was always intrigued with the bookshelf behind my grandpa's chair. The shelves held books such as "The World Encyclopedia," big pictures and words for such a small child. I would go through all of these books, but my favorites were the ones that held the human form in transparent pages. These pages could be lifted to show the skeleton, muscles and the separate organs, all of the layers of the human form. It fascinated me that they broke down the body into layers and that you could simply lift the pages to discover another layer, one that was just as important as the first for the function and completion of the human. I saw this as a greater picture, and this concept of layering has intrigued me throughout my life. I struggled to understand that personal events, whether positive or negative, had to be accepted and seen as creating my existence. It is a theory that I have continually nurtured and dissected. The layer of living: the construction and destruction of self that is necessary for growth. This is a process that is articulated for me best through the creation of my work.

I am interested in the psychological and physiological imprints that memory carries. The elasticity of our beings: when one has been stretched so far, what are the effects, or if there is a repeated pattern, can it be broken by perseverance of self? My work communicates my personal and emotional state in relation with the surrounding world as I have experienced it. I investigate what makes a person, the moments in one's life where events or individuals have made an imprint, handprint or shadow. These pivotal moments change you for the rest of your life. They are moments where personal decisions are made and their effects felt. My work derives from very personal events, but I believe the work's strength is that there is the shared experience enacted by the viewer. The continuation of the experience that is created at that moment then becomes a memory for the viewer.
Excitement is followed and mostly chased with some desperation in the working of a new picture; nothing is totally drawn from the subconscious. I do have an education and personal taste is also involved. I love expressionism and constantly play with paint and its properties and limitations. Formalism is important in itself, but the paintings have subject matter such as history, pain, sex or quiet, even though I may not recognize it at first. I walk a fine line between the empirical and the unseen, a glimpse of a timeless presence. The eternal. The paintings aren’t to decorate. They are poems to snap us out of our mundane sleep or to flow with our natural rhythm. Something true is recognized. I think so.
This piece is made from a large slab of Italian Olive wood. The shape was cut out of a larger piece and sanding and grinding were used to create shapes within the form. The cracks were filled with crushed stone, or powdered copper and cyanoacrylate glue and the piece was sanded. It was then dyed with multiple colors and the finish was applied. Holes were drilled, for copper pegs, in the side of the piece and in the pieces of Padauk, which are used to “frame” the central portion. Within the wonderful figure and the outline of the piece itself one can see many images and thus the name “Hidden Images”. I can see water, islands, animals, lovers embracing and other images. Viewing from a distance lets you see the form and forms, but come and look closely to fully appreciate the wonderful grain patterns as well. What do you see?
JOHN HUBBARD

GUARDIAN 3

36" × 48"

Oil paint

GWINN, MI

This tree is one of a few that survived the lumbering in the late 1800's and is now one of the lone giants that oversees the surrounding forests. These guardians show their age and stand with dignity among their younger counterparts. It is a theme to which I frequently return, always finding it to be engaging.
First and foremost, I am a weaver and I speak in yarn and color. Speaking in this language of fiber can be a challenging endeavor, but the fiber speaks to me too. This current piece is part of a series of woven panels, so named, “Waterfall.”

Like a naturalist who is out in the field collecting specimens, taking photos, and making quick sketches in their journal, I am trying to mimic those actions. This series is like a journey, connecting me to the out of doors, rivers, creeks, and waterfalls. I have accepted the challenge: turning woven yarn into images of falling water, rocks, sky and soil.

This series is a reflection of my interests, travels and research in the natural world of Michigan and beyond.
KAREN JILBERT

SOMEWHERE IN TIME

3” × 25”

Acrylic ink on yupo

MARQUETTE, MI
After five years of traveling over four hundred million miles through our solar system, the space probe Juno arrived in Jupiter’s orbit. It began taking resplendent and highly detailed portraits of the endless atmospheric complexities of a planet thirteen hundred times the volumetric size of earth. For the first time in human history, we are able to gaze into the eye of the Great Red Spot of Jupiter and discovered it to be churning with abstract wonder.

The inspiration for the piece “Shell of Jupiter” comes from new strides in exploring microbial worlds as well as expanding our reach in the solar system. By hurling telescopes further into space or glancing through powerful microscopes, we are creating highly detailed portraits of planetary and cellular bodies. In order to relate to these different and vivid worlds that we are seeing for the first time in human history, I merged together these two terrains of incomprehensible size and scale together. The new abstract world created from the fusion of these discoveries is intended to identify visual similarities in worlds that exist in exponentially different scales. By searching for visual similarities in both cosmic and cellular entities, we can better understand the inner mechanisms of the universe and life itself.
As a photographer in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, I am inspired by a broad range of subjects. While I am certainly awed by the grandeur of the area’s landscapes and moved by its history, my eye is also caught by smaller, more intimate subjects in which I perceive stories; such is the case with this image I titled “Waiting.” As with all of my photography, it is my hope that the viewer will pause, reflect and be inspired to create his or her own story behind this scene.
TRUMAN JONES

A POT TO PISS IN
1" × 1" × 1.5"
Copper/brass
MARQUETTE, MI
ANDREAKA JUMP

FORMATIONS 2
18” × 24”
Oil on board
MARQUETTE, MI
KEITH KAZIAK

ONE776
62” × 117”
776 circulated dollar bills, thread
WAUSAU, MI

My work seeks to explore, navigate, and interpret the contemporary American social landscape.

As a symbol, the flag represents freedom and equality, while the one-dollar bill embodies financial and economic freedom. In my work, ONE776, I juxtapose these iconic symbols, interpreting this convoluted notion of freedom.
My life has taken place among a diverse range of cultures. As I move within these varied spheres of cultural influence, I take photographs of the people and places I interact with. Over the years, these portraits have changed and taken many forms. Sometimes it’s a picture of me. Sometimes it’s the light cascading through the window. Sometimes my son appears in these images, and other times it’s the impression I leave behind on an unmade bed.

The images I make document and dedicate themselves to expanding definitions of diaspora, identity, family and home. I consciously effect, frame and inform my photographs with nuances of light, tonality, atmosphere and elements of narrative.

You will get glimpses of a continually evolving narrative but it is on you to find the veiled stories.
With watercolor on paper, I create dense and detailed organic formations of vibrant geometric shapes. Small meticulous lines and delicate washes of watercolor are repeated and layered, expanding into large-scale multi-paneled works. Thematically, these structures are topographies of wonder and belonging. The imagery originates from fragmented childhood memories and present-day everyday surroundings: a web of sunlight on my grandmother’s bedroom floor, crystalline formations on frozen snow. I am searching for moments at the edges of things, imaginary, impossible, made of time and memory, landscapes of the mind. The work is made over many hours, meticulously, carefully, like a woven tapestry, suggesting a slowness of experience, a slowing down of time, and in turn a connection with the hand, the maker, and the audience. The scale of time becomes part of the work, each mark a measure of the passing of time. The play between micro and macro, the fragility of the single line against the physicality of the whole, and the fluid interconnectedness of memory, time, and place, drives the work.
The sun shines through the fog after a rainy-day hiking on Isle Royale at Daisy Farm, taken June 1, 2016.
DAWN LAPOINTE

MIGHTY MAC AND THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE
12” × 18”
Archival pigment print
HERMANTOWN, MN

Mother Nature is the master artist; I am a messenger. Behind the lens, I strive to honor the essence and convey the messages of my subjects, whether in their most vulnerable state or in their full glory. My photographs reflect my heart-felt reverence and appreciation for the natural world. I feel suspended in time while capturing a scene or an essence – intrigued by its artistry, resilience, energy, and purpose. Nature photography strengthens my mindfulness in each moment and inspires feelings of gratitude and harmony. Ultimately, I hold the intent that my photography may inspire others to see their own surroundings with an open perspective, appreciate the dynamic beauty and intricacy of Mother Nature’s palette and her inhabitants, and live more mindfully and gently upon our Earth.
Lake Superior is our chameleon lake, ever-changing, and always so inspiring. Northern lights are ethereal, and paired with our “mother lake,” how can one not be inspired? Using watercolor batik on rice paper technique; melted wax is used to preserve lights, and colors.
YVONNE LEMIRE

MOHOLY NIGHT
33.5” × 16” × 8.5”
Steel
MARQUETTE, MI
CHRISTINE LENZEN

MOTHER’S SEWING ROOM
10” × 10”
Archival inkjet print
MARQUETTE, MI
In Overhead 21, much of the space is translated into rectilinear shapes, often squares within squares, with only the branches and the tree trunks breaking this pattern. These forms fit together easily and echo the shape of the painting itself. They are energizing, strong and joyous. They seem to charge across the painting. The season is indefinite, but the use of a peachy color hints it is late afternoon, when the slant of the sunlight casts this hue on the tree tops.
When I draw, I'm in the world I draw. I smell the forest, touch the beaver, and run with the wolves, sense their thoughts. I fly and swim under the sea. My fingers know the bear's teeth, the lizard's skin, and the tree's bark. Sometimes the image draws itself—when I let it. Sometimes we argue—a lot.

Our Earth doesn't have a voice, though she can react to extreme changes. I try to add her voice in my work.

When I feel joy or sadness, art is where those feelings can go and express themselves.

I use whatever mediums fit what the drawing wants. Graphite, ink, colored pencils, acrylics, watercolor. Most have a realistic edge that morphs into surrealism, children's illustrations, magical realism or straight realism.

This particular drawing, the Butterfly Man didn't want color. Later, I painted an acrylic climate-based painting using this as a beginning.

After writing articles for the Marquette Monthly on our earthy habitat/environment, one on pollinators, I was intrigued. The subject is one of the previous owners of the Butterfly House on Mackinac Island. He posed amidst butterflies, plants and an indoor waterfall.

The layering of graphite onto Arches paper reflects a blending of social observation, emotional response and cultural input brought into detailed design and reflection. Mythological themes resonate. Being of Scotch-Irish and Norwegian heritage brings cultural connotations of collective memories into my work.

Life for me is an ever-unfolding mystery.
I am a visual artist/cinematographer/educator based in Marquette, Michigan, where I run an art gallery entirely of my work in downtown Marquette, and educational photography workshops out of my studio. My gallery specializes in the curation of large works of exceptional photographic compositions of the natural Lake Superior landscape. With a unique vision for capturing the dramatic, my collection is in high demand, unmistakable, and focused on the capture of the many different moods that the greatest lake is renowned for.
CAROL PHILLIPS

SECRET IDENTITY - EMILY
12” × 20”
Oil on Baltic birch
MARQUETTE, MI
I make visually volatile renderings of simple forms and ordinary objects. I apply tinted acrylic medium—in patterns of dots and other marks—to sheets of transparent polyester film, and either align these on metal rods that hang from the ceiling, or layer them between aluminum screen frames stacked atop light boxes that sit on the floor. In either case, whether looking up or down, what viewers see are layers of two-dimensional surfaces, like cross sections, that collectively conjure a three-dimensional body. My art asks basic questions about the relationship between perception and thought. I am attracted to paradox, and driven by a desire to blur boundaries, between painting and sculpture, for example, the abstract and representational, object and subject. I want the experience of my work to be both confounding and compelling, and unburdened by conventions, categories, and habits of thinking and looking. I dare to hope such experiences—paying careful attention to incomprehensible things—might be instructive even beyond the walls of a gallery or museum.
LINDA PROND

KOKANEE BEND
19.5” × 29.5”
Giclee print on watercolor paper
MANISTIQUE, MI
Discarded industrial objects call out as they are encountered. A story is told of when their hard work was integral to the function of humanity, now their service is no longer required. The combination of mysterious forms with common human interactions and the relationship between useful and forgotten is explored. Refilled is a conceptual work of art utilizing over 1000 individual pieces. The sculpture consists of a satellite dish receiving a simulated electronic transmission beam. The 6' long freestanding beam is composed of several hundred interlocking prescription pill bottles of varying size. Each individual pill bottle contains a unique modern relic. Refilled glows from an interactive, multicolored light source, that reacts to sonic energy. Ambient sounds alter the color of light that is displayed.
The Chair has become a narrative of mine over the past two years. I insert it in many of my landscape images questioning, investigating our surroundings...of daily life. The intrigue of why the chair is in the image engages the viewer to pause and ponder... Interesting what happens when you take the time to sit in a chair and pause your life. Signed the chair...
120° TABLE
32” × 15”
Corrugated cardboard & glass
MARQUETTE, MI

120° is a coffee table made of laminated corrugated cardboard that has been turned on a woodturning lathe and topped with a piece of glass. It is part of a series of functional tables that are made up of three volumetric forms that are joined together at a 120° angle. In this body of work I am interested in exploring the corrugated patterning and texture of this low-status and often overlooked material. Creating finely crafted furniture with corrugated cardboard is an exciting challenge that results in an elegant surface and form.
As an artist, I am interested in exploring the delicate relationship between humans and the natural world. I am fascinated with the beauty and wonder of the natural landscape. Inspired by the quiet, spiritual qualities of a dark forest or mossy knoll, I find myself drawn to the textures and shadows found within these captivating places. Working in a malleable medium, such as clay, allows me to explore textures using many different techniques. My sculptures are hand built using slabs and multiple layers of added or removed clay. Each piece is individual and creates a unique story that grows intuitively from the clay.
JOHN VASILIOU

IMAGO 206
8.5” × 11”
*Mixed media on paper*
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

I make abstract images that originate from ideas, materials and various forms that resonate with me. The Imago series reflects my intuitive approach to artmaking—using familiar motifs and archetypes, with recurring forms like the sphere and triangle and the signature black calligraphic stroke. Beauty, complexity and nuanced color characterize the Imago series, allied with “matrixing,” a term used to describe the human mind’s natural tendency to find familiar forms in complex shapes and colors. Serendipity, the “happy accidents” of artmaking, has an important place in my creative process also; I often experiment with various materials and techniques. I’m able to integrate all my influences into a certain harmony, where abstraction and objectivity meet. Ideally, I expect a sense of discovery in the process, and I strive for an original quality in the finished piece. When my art is engaging and thought-provoking I’m successful on many levels. In the end, I trust that viewers along with me, will make their own associations.
CINDY WEDIG

MARCH OF THE PECULIAR

24” × 24” + 24” × 24”
Oil & cold wax on canvas
GWINN, MI
KEVIN WEEDEN

FRiction Ridges
9.5" × 7.75" × 1"
Cast iron, wire & paint
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

The potential for the unexpected inspires me. I find freedom in exploring the process and being open to the results.

I enjoy working with the texture and form found in common building materials to create new work. Sculpting, creating molds and casting iron are processes used to memorialize the unnoticed. The pieces have an affinity with discarded found objects, tread or signage on a sidewalk.

I am fascinated by the role of the individual self within society. Conflict and harmony. Through variation and repetition, I reflect on personal uniqueness and group conformity.
Like language being spoken in paraphrases, photography may also give us visual paraphrases. One can try to analyze a photo so much that the fun is taken away. SpinBoy was a candid photo taken with a smartphone and post processed in Photoshop. Though Fine Art is my desire I also feel it is important to step back and enjoy the gifts in life that are thrown at you. As artists we seek to find the “perfect” photo and miss the ones that actually are. I find pleasure in the oddity of what was captured making me giggle when my grandson thought he was actually hiding from me. Capturing these innocent moments are priceless and well worth sharing!
The Vacancy series was created using salt printing, a technique developed in the late 1800s. This method involves painting on a salt solution, exposing the image by sunlight or UV light, and then developing in a dark room with toner and fix solutions. When viewing early photography, viewers often experience a disconnect with the people in the images. Despite being hardly different from us, the subjects feel alien and removed. Similarly, when individuals experience a vacancy of emotion, they become hollow and equally disconnected with the outside world. When we lose our own sense of identity, we become exiled from those around us—nothing more than a hollow image of our true selves.
Singing in anishinaabemowin is more than just carrying a tune, it is a way to heal, to keep our language alive, and to decolonize our thought process. When we sing, we are healing from years of genocide and forced assimilation that left so many Native peoples lost. The singer in this piece exemplifies how powerful our voices can be. See as she breathes life back into a landscape in which nature is dying and the sky is clouded and gray. While it’s customary for our beadwork to include mirrors, to either ward off evil or inspire self-reflection, I decided to use metal discs instead to represent the Western industrial society and its attempt to cloud the vision of our communities through the introduction of substance abuse, capitalism, and so many other harmful practices. Other materials used in this piece include cotton and nylon thread woven through glass seed and bugle beads. The beads were stitched onto stiff fabric following the traced lines of my own design. The singer’s face, hands, drum, and moccasins are all made from hide that has been train-tanned and smoked in the old way. She is using a drum stick made from a modified tooth pick and wears a dress made from the same fabric as my own traditional ribbon skirt. The entire piece is mounted on a bag made of recycled genuine leather. I present this piece as a member of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians.
MISSION
The DeVos Art Museum enhances the mission of Northern Michigan University through exhibitions and programs that engage creative culture across campus, local and regional communities.

VISION
Connecting people, art and ideas through exhibitions and collections that celebrate interdisciplinary thinking and diverse perspectives.

ArtThrivesHere.