

Volume 7, 2020 - 2021

SENIOR HONORS STUDIO
EST. 2014



Introduction

The New York University Curatorial Collaborative began as a student initiative in 2014.

The program brings together artists, senior BFA students from the Studio Art Program, and curators, Masters and PhD candidates in art history from the Institute of Fine Arts, with tools and resources to organize a series of exhibitions and accompanying publications.

Each year, the thrust and significance of this collaboration is redefined by the participating artists and curators, and the team of faculty and staff that mentor and support them. In this sense, this year's Curatorial Collaborative is no exception; though it has been formed in exceptional circumstances. In the summer of 2020, when we began to consider the possibility of organizing these exhibitions, the world was engulfed in a fog of uncertainty, brought about by a global pandemic.

As it appeared nearly impossible to plan for such a collaborative effort in a moment of isolation and precarity, we found even greater significance in the act of planning itself. As we planned with uncertainty, we placed renewed value in the process of curatorial and artistic collaboration, in conversation, in mutual understanding and misunderstanding, and in the joyful and painful process of continuously shifting our fixed perspectives. This collaboration, the research, rigor, and challenge it embodies, is an expression of hope. It is, as with all meaningful artistic endeavors, an expression of the desire to reimagine the boundaries of individual and collective possibility.

Shadi Harouni
Clinical Assistant Professor of Studio Art
& Director of Undergraduate Studios,
Art & Art Professions, Steinhardt

There are as many definitions of "curating" as there are websites about the subject. I have found one (coschedule.com) that seems to present a sensible, if incomplete, description of the job of curator as someone "in charge of a collection of exhibits in a museum or art gallery. Their job is to build up collections...work with colleagues in areas such as conservation, education, design and marketing." Many years ago, curators were often called "Keepers" (this is still often the case in the UK) indicating that they were principally tasked with the preservation of permanent collections in museums. Now, it often seems as if anything may be curated, from a brand of coffee or clothing to one's own shoe or hat collection. In my estimation curating should still refer specifically to the act of choosing works of art for display, working with the artist (if it is an exhibition of contemporary art), create a pathway (through wall texts, catalogues etc.) for the viewer to understand what they are seeing and organize events in which the works are discussed and debated. All of this needs collaboration and team work. The Steinhardt-IFA Curatorial Collaborative was formed several years ago to provide synergies between promising undergraduate artists and MA and PhD students in Art History. Artists and scholars are mutually nourished by this important experience that gives the art historians a special entrée into the creative process that they do not always get listening to lectures and researching in archives and libraries. The art students are equally inspired to create their best work for individual or group exhibitions held in the spring term. It is a proverbial "WIN-WIN" situation for everyone involved.

Edward J. Sullivan
Deputy Director & Helen Gould Shepard
Professor in the History of Art, Institute of
Fine Arts

The Intersubjective World



Yinan (Rebecca) Chen
Bathroom I, 2020
Acrylic on canvas
17.75 x 25.5 inches



Oona Bebout
Harvest, 2020
Oil on canvas
16 x 20 inches

The perceived boundary between our bodies and the outside world is fundamental to our understanding of selfhood. Vision mediates that experience of the body as a self-contained entity: our gaze emanates outward, fixing our bodies at the center of perceived reality. Similar to the way the Cartesian grid schematizes boundless space from a single origin point, one-point perspective creates a carefully ordered reality in which to see is to know, and to know completely. Touch, however, resists this visual hierarchy. Instead of emanating from one point on the human frame, like vision does, touch is commensurate with the body as a whole: the scalp, the small of the back, and the sole of the foot are all keyed to haptic experience. And while our eyes survey an entire vista at a remove, to touch something or someone is always to be touched in return. *The Intersubjective World* explores what it means to disorder the integration of vision, space, and self, and instead to privilege a fragmentary, relational experience through careful attention to surfaces, textures, and objects.

Oona Bebout approaches all of her work with a sculptor's attention to volume and space. Thus, her intimately-scaled drawings and the quiescent yet discomfiting painting *Harvest* transcend their two-dimensionality, prompting an imagined caress of their attractive surfaces and enigmatic forms. Meanwhile, the pristine glossiness of *Nest (If I Were Small)* scrambles our haptic expectations: organic lines twist together to create a delicate jumble, yet they are improbably wrought of transparent glass rather than the homey twigs, fluff, or yarn the title evokes. Like the proverbial Surrealist "chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table," this tension between frigid, unyielding glass and the comfortable warmth of nests

shocks our haptic sensibilities awake. Yinan (Rebecca) Chen creates fugitive portrayals of a woman, alone in her home, engaged in everyday rituals. The fragmentation of space and Chen's keen sense of pattern make these banal moments sublime while also foiling our visual access to the interiors and the women who occupy them. Mirrors and bathrooms become a kind of proscenium for self-examination and documentation, yet the view they offer is always partial. Our visual access to the subject is interrupted by the intermediaries of the mirror, the camera, and the surface of the canvas itself. In her graphic design practice and video works, Chen further complicates the relationship between the body, interiority, and objecthood as faces and bodies fragment into biomorphic shapes of pillowy skin, transgressing the boundary between embodied "reality" and the virtual.

In the wake of the coronavirus attenuating our opportunities for embodied experience, Chen and Bebout's challenges to the primacy of the visual explore how our senses order understanding and intimacy. The virus itself has undermined the comforting illusion that our bodies operate in isolation from the outside world: rather, selfhood is contingent and always relational. Meanwhile, the opportunity to think through touch and material space provides a powerful function for a world stripped of collective, embodied experience.

Senior Honors Studio

February 10 - March 13, 2021

Gallery One

80 Washington Square East
New York, NY 10003

Senior Honors Studio 2020/21 chronicles a series of five, week-long exhibitions, featuring pairs of BFA Studio Art majors from the New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development's Department of Art & Art Professions, working in close collaboration with curatorial Masters / PhD candidates from New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. The exhibitions are conceived under the dual auspices of the student organized NYU Curatorial Collaborative and the Senior Honors Studio Program.

Organizers:

Priyanka Dasgupta - Senior Studio Faculty & Program Coordinator
Charlotte Kinberger, Katie Maher, Kaitlin Ann Johndrow & Lilia Kudelia - NYU Curatorial Collaborative Coordinators
Tammy Lee Brown - Director, Planning and Communications
Lucas Quigley - Manager, 80WSE Gallery
Jon Huron - Exhibitions and Installation Administrator
Aaron Kissman - Operations & Facilities Manager
Olivia Andrews - Exhibitions Coordinator & Technician
Caleb Williams - Senior Studio Assistant
Jenny Noguchi - Publication Designer
Paula Rondon - Digital Studios & Technology Manager
Jason Varone - Web & Electronic Media Manager
Omer Ben Zvi - Photographer

Advisors:

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Edward Sullivan, Deputy Director;
Helen Gould Shepard Professor in the History of Art;
the Institute of Fine Arts and the College of Arts and Science

Cover image:

Camila Rodriguez

Cover photo:

Omer Ben Zvi

Artists:

Oona Bebout, Yinan (Rebecca) Chen, Naava Guaraca,
Les-lie López, Eleisha Faith McCorkle & Tonisha Hope
McCorkle, Giovanna Pedrinola, Camila Rodriguez,
Isabella Wang, Shane Weiss, Derek Koffi-Ziter

Curators:

Chloë Courtney, Janelle Minter, Madeleine Morris,
Martina Lentino, Leigh Peterson

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Marlene McCarty, Vonetta Moses, Jenny Noguchi,
Julia Louise Olson, Isabelle Perkins, Christine Poggi,
Laurel Ptak, Lucas Quigley, Paula Rondon, Julia Seibolt,
Linda Sormin, Jamie Sterns, Edward Sullivan,
Hiroshi Sunairi, Rhiannon Thomas, Bella Wang,
Caleb Williams, Omer Ben Zvi, Vanessa Stone
and Conley Lowrance.