**Artists-in-Residence: Artist Statements**

**Alyssa Coffin**

My artwork incorporates mixed media sculpture, installation, performance, photography and film. Combining organic materials, objects, and often my own body, I create poetic metaphors. I am interested in materials that can be representations of the body or conversely, how the body can become sculptural.

My artwork is an investigation of what it means to be human as mind, body and spirit. These three components are also how I engage with my process as a collaboration with their source- the triune God.

My work often begins by going for walks where I practice noticing and letting my curiosity guide me to gather a material or interact with the landscape.

Embodiment is the initial phase of my process. The repeated physical exertion to contort my body or use it to manipulate material becomes a type of performance. In my photography work, I act as both the artist and the artwork.

Mind is the component that evaluates my performance to further compose my piece through approach and retreat. It is the focuser of play and improvisation into precise intention- adjusting a composition or problem solving a way to alter a material.

Spirit is the component that drives and directs my investigation in the physical realm. It is the ideas discovered through my artwork that transcend my artistic intention. It is the breath in the “bones” of the piece working to reveal meaning.

Writing is the final element of my practice that serves to create an access point to the piece. Often I compose poetic statements that beckon the viewer into my frame of contemplation.

Together these components construct visual narratives about human being and becoming. The specific concepts emerge as I engage with my surroundings and themes prevalent in my life such as death, creation and landscape as internal and external space.

**Everett Hoffman**

Reconfigured found objects shape scenes of everyday life, questioning the structural histories that go into defining an identity. Engaging in a multidisciplinary approach of making, my work re-imagines the function of ornamentation and its relationship to the body. I approach new materials and found objects with the eye of a jeweler, highlighting and exploiting the subtle, and often invisible, links between material histories and their connection to identity. Material debris patinated with age like wood beads, vintage needle point, and Avon cologne bottles are used to penetrate normative structures around identity, gender, and sexual desire. Using adornment as a support in my installations I propose a new lens for viewing function through the use of ornamentation. In doing so I highlight the bodies’ impact on objects, and call into to question the role these objects play in shaping our understanding of identity—An identity that is never singular, constantly evolving, and more often than not contradictory and confusing.

**Stephanie M. Wilhelm**

My ceramic work uses narrative of the dog and human relationship to communicate the internal sense of belonging and comfort formed through companionship. Vessels depicting imagery of the dog and human interacting in quiet, intimate moments are used not to convey a specific animal, but to convey a feeling and to talk about all relationships and our innate desire to belong.

The bond between human and canine was the first documented and strongest inter-species relationship to exist, and it is a dog’s ability to provide unconditional acceptance and loyalty that is the foundation to one of the oldest and most influential relationships of our time. Throughout Western art, dogs have also played a canonic role extending back thousands of years as a form of symbolism or essential to the meaning of a human cast of characters and narrative.

I find inspiration in the history of ceramics moving beyond conventional function and form, creating union between shape, decoration, and story is fascinating. Like this, my work varies in shape and incorporates low relief volume and gold luster details within the handpainted nostalgic patterns.

**Kari Woolsey**

Through referencing specific objects and vessels found in the home, I want to connect my work with viewers’ personal experiences. Our domestic spaces, like an overlooked corner of a living room or a catch-all windowsill next to a reading chair, can talk about different moments in our lives, either introspective or relationships with loved ones. I hope to explore that space just under the surface of familiarity through formal elements like color, texture, line, as well as, referencing specific vessels commonly found in our everyday lives. My work becomes the expression of intimacy of the home, and how aspects of our domestic life might be uncomfortably sensitive but common.

The forms I have been exploring through a rich, red terracotta clay body are vessels found in the domestic realm of our lives. These vessels, such as dish racks, laundry baskets, or containers for storage, are an inherent, inescapable part of our lives when it comes to the home. The everydayness of the objects speaks to the amount of attention we lack to give them. They are common, easily replaced, and readily forgettable when it comes to how we relate them to our lives. Yet, these objects are unquestionably needed, while also representing decisions that reflect our own daily needs, design tastes, and aspects of our personalities. Maybe this starts a conversation between a viewer and their things, or the space they live to think deeper about how we are connected to the objects that exist in the home, or maybe it is reminiscent of feelings of a childhood home. Ultimately, these domestic vessels reference what is actually found in our homes on a daily basis: a compilation of time, material things and memories.

**Sasha Baskin**

When I watch reality television I see the Raphael tapestries; I see a mythological tableau presented in the language of cocktail dresses and hair extensions. What is reality television but another attempt to represent human interaction? To study beauty, love, drama, and competition: to entertain and distract through drama? It is the Iliad and the Odyssey in high heels and contoured makeup.

In the Greek Myth of the judgment of Paris, three goddesses wait for a mortal to offer them an apple proclaiming the chosen goddess the most beautiful. On *The Bachelor* women wait for roses delivered at overly dramatized “Rose Ceremonies” when a man makes the choice of who he wants to keep dating out of his pool of available women and sends the rest home. The rose is just a new manifestation of the apple. It is the same story over and over again. It is another symbol of acceptance and validation. The repetitive structure of each episode becomes a retelling of a Hero’s Journey: a new myth for a new era.

My work examines this retelling, this human drive to create idealized simulations to better understand the world around us. Using screenshots from *The Bachelor* as source material for my woven images, I explore reality television as a modern form of mythology. I weave screenshots like chapters in an odyssey and overlay digital patterns to create veiled goddesses out of reality television starlets.

Using natural dye processes and American coverlet weaving patterns, I embed analog weaving traditions inside digital images and construct moments of tactile and material glitch. These moments highlight the breakdown of the simulation and expose the realities behind the mythologies: just as the gods and goddesses of mythologies past, these modern deities represent both an unobtainable ideal and the true realities and flaws of being human.