



Sioux City Art Center Selects

August 20 – December 4, 2016

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Stephanie Brunia
Dana Fritz
Rick Johns
Sherry Leedy
Guy Loraine
Daniel Perry
David Sebberson
Jessica Teckemeyer



Introduction

Sioux City Art Center Selects is a regional juried exhibition, open to all artists in Iowa, as well as artists living within 300 miles of Sioux City. Artists were asked to submit a body of work, which was judged by the quality and consistency of the artworks and by how well they reflected the artist's stated ideas. The Art Center's director and curator selected eight artists. The curator then visited and worked with each artist to bring a cohesive group of artworks for this exhibition.

The exhibition presents visitors with a glimpse into how some artists in our region are thinking right now. We are fortunate to live in a region with an abundance of creativity! The artists represented in this exhibition have been influenced by: a relationship with an aging father; trees, rocks, and land through Asian ink painting traditions; the impact of unintended marks and gestures; still-life traditions and objects with personal meaning; applying a scientific method to documenting fallen acorns and acorn caps; the spatial differences that occur when visualizing minute details within the scope of our universe; a Nebraska childhood reviewed from a distance; and, the good and bad sides of human nature symbolized by animals.

Just as the exhibition represents diverse ideas, it also includes many different materials: paintings and drawings made from acrylic and oil paint, pastels, chalk, graphite, and charcoal used on paper, wood panels, and canvas; photographs in both color and black-and-white created through digital processes and traditional darkroom methods; wall-mounted sculptures and those sitting on pedestals that have been constructed from wood, paint, a variety of found materials, and cast polyurethane; and, thousands upon thousands of acorns.



cover

Rick Johns, *No. 50.3.16*, 2016
acrylic and graphite on wood panel
9.5 x 12 inches



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Stephanie Brunia

Oxford, IA

Stephanie Brunia's works are distinguished by their uncluttered spaces and their heightened sense of compassion and intimacy. Her creative poses, which often bring multiple subjects into very close contact, explore our best efforts at trying to understand how each of us is connected to and separated from others.

Stephanie received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Mexico and her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Iowa.

Stephanie's statement about her work:

In photographs, I make visual that which is largely intangible—my human desires to connect and to remember as well as the need to let go. The history and function of photography largely influences how I conceptually approach the medium, most specifically in the dichotomies of self/body, permanence/the temporal, surface/interior, and evidence/knowledge. Soft light, weighted bodies, domestic spaces and performative undertones have become the language of my photographs of late.

In my most recent body of work, *Thursday's Child*, I am using photography to examine my transitioning relationship with my aging father. The resulting portraits allow me to see (and

ultimately to understand) the weighty and largely indiscernible moments of his aging. At the core of these portraits is my desire to stave off his inevitable decline. Yet this desire, in itself, is incorporeal. In order to visualize these intangibles through photography—a medium that can only deal with physical bodies in concrete spaces—I find myself performing futile gestures for the camera. The futility of these attempts means I often repeat the same gestures—ones of shrouding, erasing, gazing and tracing—as if hoping for a different outcome. In this work, his flesh is my flesh; and in his aging, I face my own.

1. *Gesture 4534*, 2014
archival inkjet print
30 x 40 inches
2. *Gesture 2152*, 2014
archival inkjet print
30 x 40 inches



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Dana Fritz

Lincoln, NE

In a general sense, Dana Fritz is a landscape photographer. She uses traditional darkroom methods, including the blending of multiple negatives, to construct photographic prints that are as mysterious as they are beautiful. Recent experience in Japan has influenced her compositions, with the white negative space playing as important a role in the final work as the trees, rocks, and land.

Dana is professor of art at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from Arizona State University and her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Kansas City Art Institute.

Dana's statement about her work:

The photographs in my series *Views Removed* render trees, stones and other natural materials in ways that their scale and perspective become ambiguous, sometimes combining more than one negative to create a "landscape view" that exists only in the final print. The composition and contrast in the resulting gelatin silver prints emulate the white paper background and equivocal space in ink painting traditions that are free from the technical constraints of photography. The photographs are inspired by questions about pictorial space, idealized nature, and landscape as construction and concept, suggesting the history of

landscape depictions and the inherent tension between the real and ideal.

3. *Elephant Bush*, 2013
gelatin silver print
16.5 x 14 inches

4. *Black Hills Spruce*, 2012
gelatin silver print
16.5 x 14 inches



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Rick Johns

Vermillion, SD

While most of what we see in the works of Rick Johns is acrylic paint, he uses materials such as graphite, charcoal, chalk, and pastel to add marks that appear slight, random, or otherwise insignificant. But as Rick says, “For me, it is the unintended gesture or the unpretentious mark that holds the most value.” Marks that would be lost in a more densely packed painting are brought to the foreground. The result is that these marks hold our attention and become “what creates the structure that holds the work together.”

Rick received his Master of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees from the University of South Dakota.

[Rick's statement about his work:](#)

I'm rarely satisfied with my work, if so, only briefly. I am always searching for something new and honest, trying to find a more accurate answer to what painting is for me. Because of that, my practice is about discovery. I embrace the search and the necessary changes to find each painting's identity. In the end, the successful paintings are but a point in time, balanced by the countless traces of my efforts to find meaning.

As a contemporary abstract painter I am tied to painting's history. We have all searched for a truth. Paint is an inert material that has the unique ability to create visual realities of

unlimited possibilities, whether representational or imagined. I am seeking to lay down that unpretentious, honest mark, concerning myself more with the physicality of paint than with an image or subject matter. Traces of those previous marks and gestures culminate to form the structure and subject matter that holds the work together. These works aren't about something else. I want what's before you to be absorbed and read for nothing more than what they are, paint and the actions that came together.

The energy they project is a fluid balance. They acknowledge extremes but play around the fulcrum. They are both and neither, masculine/feminine, bold/subtle, balanced/imbanced, everything/nothing. This polar dynamic sets up a dialogue that allows you to take in the whole and its parts simultaneously, creating an ongoing circular exchange that emphasizes the importance that everything has, even the seemingly unimportant actions, on the construct of the bigger picture.

5. *No. 51.3.16*, 2016
acrylic, graphite, and chalk line on wood panel
60 x 60 inches

6. *No. 46.2.16*, 2016
acrylic and graphite on wood panel
9 x 12 inches



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E.G. Schempf, Photographer

Sherry Leedy

Kansas City, MO

Sherry Leedy creates beautiful still-life drawings using pastels and charcoal. She fills her works with complex arrangements of objects, often beginning with a single object that is especially meaningful, precious, or fragile. The titles of the works often indicate the inspirations for her works. The colors and sense of light that she is able to achieve are simply stunning.

Sherry is the owner and director of Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art in Kansas City, one of the Midwest's leading galleries. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Kansas and her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Kansas City Art Institute.

Sherry's statement about her work:

My pastel drawings are based on direct observation and seek to tell a visual story about the beauty and depth of life around me, made precious by the truth of its transitory nature. I am interested in what is discovered and revealed during the process of slow looking over a long period of time, as the drawing evolves, creating itself, slowly, mark-by-mark.

The tradition of Vanitas and the symbolic meaning of objects has a long and rich history in art, one with which I feel connected. The possibility that subject matter carries iconic meaning, in addition to visual power as form, pattern,

color, light, and line, provokes and keeps me in the studio late at night.

The objects in my drawings are often loaded with personal meaning but my intention is to have the subject matter open to all viewers so that they may fill them with their own life experiences and interpretations.

The red velvet shoes in one of my drawings are those of my dear friend, Ann. Ann danced on her sixtieth birthday in those shoes, happy that she was still alive in spite of Parkinson's disease. She danced in those shoes until she didn't need shoes any longer. I made this drawing to honor her courage and recognize her loss.

Seeing and feeling, reading and listening, observation, ideas, friendship, nature and day-to-day interactions inspire and sustain my art practice. Making mark after mark of pastel as soft as butter, I strive to make visible the unseen, as I continue to explore my place in the world.

7. *Ann's Dancing Shoes*, 2011
soft pastel, pastel pencil, charcoal on BFK paper
30 x 22 inches
8. *Anne's Sea Shell*, 2013
soft pastel, pastel pencil, charcoal on BFK paper
30 x 22 inches



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Guy Loraine

Newton, IA

Some artists' projects are easy and quick to describe. Guy Loraine's project, *Fuller & Grand*, is not one of those. Ultimately in *Fuller & Grand*, Guy has produced photographs of acorns. But the photographs, as remarkable as they are, were not necessarily the goal of his project, as you can read from his statement. Sometimes, a plan can lead to a desirable, predictable conclusion. Sometimes, even the most carefully controlled plan can lead to uncertainty and questions. Read the label information to learn more about each component of *Fuller & Grand*.

Guy received his Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, his Art Education Certificate at Towson University in Towson, Maryland, and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Maryland Institute College of Art: Baltimore.

Guy's statement about his work:

I'm bound to my environment and use it to explore the subtleties and differences in words that reflect my own humanity. At one time I believed in knew the exact location of every acorn cap and acorn I collected from under an Oak tree. Now I don't, and as beneficial as that is, it causes me great emotional pain. The self-assurance and faith in a rational system of mapping, numbering, collecting,

cataloging and documenting collapsed because of a missing acorn cap. The instance of pain that I interpreted as failure became a profound moment that shifted *Fuller & Grand* away from an honest attempt at an irrational undertaking into an examination of how process defines words. A simple careless mistake has made me realize my project *Fuller & Grand* isn't about randomness found in natural events, but the meaning and relationship of value, time and labor.

9. Installation View:
Fuller & Grand Boxes with Sheets and Bagged Acorns and Caps, 2011
 clear pine, sisal rope, 996 plastic sheets, 15057 acorns and caps
 43.5 x 26.25 x 26.25 inches

Fuller & Grand Acorn Cap Photographs, 2011-2014
 inkjet prints
 24 x 24 inches, 36 photographs total



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Daniel Perry

Waterloo, IA

Daniel Perry has made a great variety of sculptures since completing graduate school ten years ago. Some of them are floor sculptures that include parts he made that mimic construction materials such as sawhorses and cinderblocks. He has also received commissions for large outdoor sculptures. The works selected for this exhibition usually begin with a basic wood form that is reminiscent of interior architectural details such as mantels or balusters. Dan is an excellent carpenter and sometimes enjoys experimenting with familiar shapes. From there he lets his imagination flow, as common wood objects are transformed through the addition of found objects and plastic into sculptures that are anything but common. His craftsmanship is so good that his unusual blending of materials seems perfectly natural. Look carefully as some of his most unexpected details are the smallest.

Daniel is a sculpture professor at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Buena Vista University in Storm Lake.

Daniel's statement about his work:

The visuals presented in my works are best described as a fusion of cultural imagery and fabricated realities

constructed in the guise of toys, props, architecture, and machines. Sculptures are composed in ways that imply a narrative to which the viewer becomes a witness—part of a scene; a moment suspended in time. I use color to accentuate form and push shifts in scale and perspective challenging viewers to question their physical relationship to the world around them.

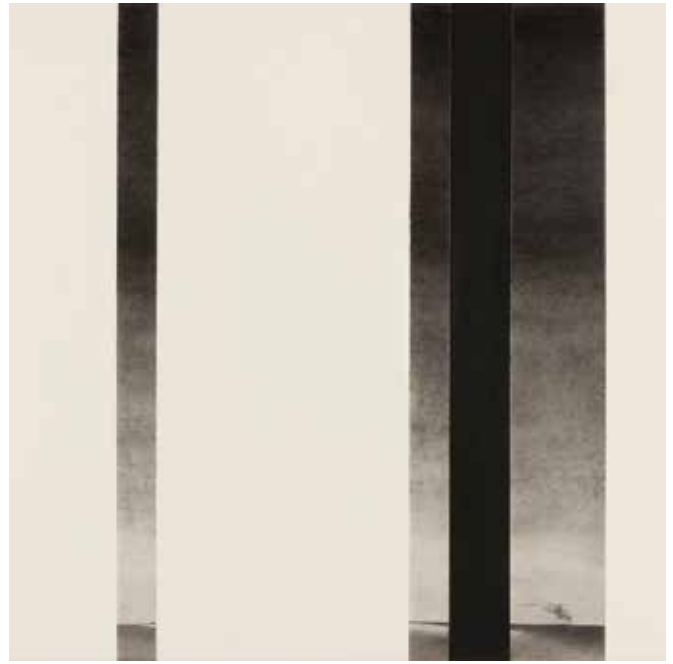
My recent work explores the influence architecture has on our cultural and social interactions. I find that seemingly mundane architectural elements become historical markers—visual beacons to our passage through time.

10. *Capsule*, 2016
wood, acrylic, cast plastic, laser etched stainless steel
40 x 28 x 14 inches

11. *Nested*, 2016
wood, MDF, acrylic, plastic, bee's nest
36 x 20 x 8 inches



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David Sebberson

St. Cloud, MN

David Sebberson grew up an hour south of Sioux City in Oakland, Nebraska, and his ongoing series, *A History of the Plains*, is inspired in part by his childhood. The crisp geometry of his landscapes comes from both the wide, distant vistas of the Plains and the architecture of traditional farm houses. In applying a contemporary style to the long tradition of landscape painting, David displays an awareness of the complexities of life in the Plains that go beyond simple stereotypes.

David is a professor in the art department at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota, and has spent many years as the chair of the department. Prior to that, however, he was a professor of English at St. Cloud State University. He received his Ph.D. in English from University of Maryland-College Park and his Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.

David's statement about his work:

My practice focuses on cultural formations of the rural. At its center is *A History of the Plains*, an on-going series oscillating between abstraction and representation and depicting rural landscapes, often with architectural traces: old farm houses, for example, or new structures of industrial agriculture. My work reimagines regionalism and engages such quiet

vernaculars and counterstatements of US art history as luminism, precisionism, abstract classicism, and minimalism.

My primary medium is paint because it is one part mud and two parts history. I investigate the Plains not as a site of enduring values, a nostalgic past, or sublime nature but rather as a site of slippages where we embrace the environment but commodify the land, pursue technological change but yearn for cultural stability, seek individuality but construct brand identities, and value communities but market life-styles.

12. *A History of the Plains CX: A Draw, a Place, and a Windbreak*, 2016
oil and graphite on panel
30 x 30 x 2 inches
13. *A History of the Plains XCVII: Structure and Smoke*, 2014
oil and graphite on panel
16 x 16 x 1.5 inches



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Jessica Teckemeyer

Dubuque, IA

Jessica Teckemeyer's perfectly smooth sculptures featuring animals are actually all about us. She discusses each of her sculptures in detail in her statement below.

Jessica is a professor of art at Clarke University. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Minnesota State University Moorhead.

Jessica's statement about her work:

My sculptures engage with contemporary debates about consciousness, social constructs, vulnerability, and violence of human nature. The human condition is domesticated; we are animals. As social creatures, we combat reason versus instinct. Through translating a human experience into the form of an animal, we look at ourselves from another viewpoint. I create surreal animal sculptures devoid of race, gender, and body politics. Glossy, realistic human-like eyes and smooth surfaces, relating to skin, provide viewers with clues to the introspective nature of my ideation.

The conjoined existence of *Reliance (sinners and saints)* positions the opposites to stare directly into one another creating an inescapable physical confrontation and an implied mental confrontation. Duality presented between the reason side and the instinctual side of personality is rooted in the literary conflict of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Robert L. Stevenson wrote, "man is not truly one, but truly two." The existence of moral dilemma in the sculpture relates to the contemporary self, allowing viewers to contemplate inner struggle.

Each sculpture explores psychological aspects of being human through an understanding of animal behavior. *Fawn or Foe*, *Human Shadow*, and *Devour* pair predator and prey. This multiplicity plays on the vulnerability we associate with deer and the danger we associate with wolves or mountain



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lions. In *Fawn or Foe* the prey is masked by the predator to disguise vulnerability. *Human Shadow* is a fawn casting the shadow of a wolf. The head is visually distorted as if a slow motion blur has morphed the physicality. This frozen action attempts to convey confusion. Each person naturally develops a "shadow" beginning in childhood composed of repressed personality traits. Those traits were found to be unattractive by others and/or yourself. Therefore, the sculpture visualizes author Robert Bly's insight, "our culture teaches us from early infancy to split and polarize dark and light." According to Carl Jung, the founder of analytical psychology, great potential waits to be retrieved in the "shadow." In both *Human Shadow* and *Devour*, the predator is the monstrous portion the person would rather keep private and unseen. The two sculptures share a narrative link, as I depict the same individual at different stages. In *Devour* the wolf is a physical being and no longer merely a shadow. The irregular body of *Devour* is a psychological portrait that represents the unthinkable qualities that lie in the periphery. The monstrous appearance is outside of what is acceptably human in any social context.

The work embodies a metaphorical language that explores the complexity of human behavior from our celebratory moments to disastrous events. In observing the extremes, both the dark and light of humanity are present. Through understanding our polarities, we establish a new sense of awareness.

14. *Fawn or Foe*, 2012
polyurethane, glass, paint
11 x 27 x 14 inches

15. *Devour*, 2015
polyurethane, electronics, paint, glass
14 x 36 x 30 inches

back cover
Installation View



This exhibition and brochure have been made possible by the generous financial support of the Persinger Family Foundation.