



6



7



8



9



10



UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM  
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

MFA

APRIL 30 THROUGH MAY 16, 2010  
UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY  
MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

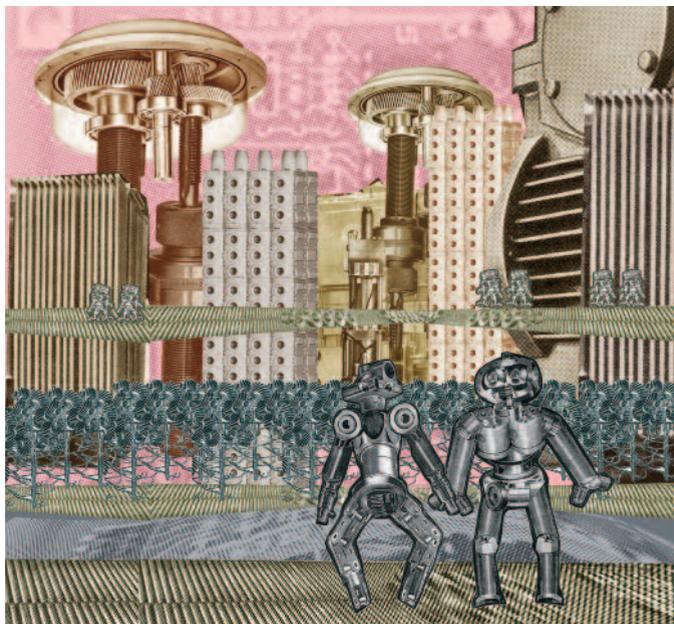


Supported by the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Ann C. Mataraso Endowment Fund, and University Auxiliary Services.

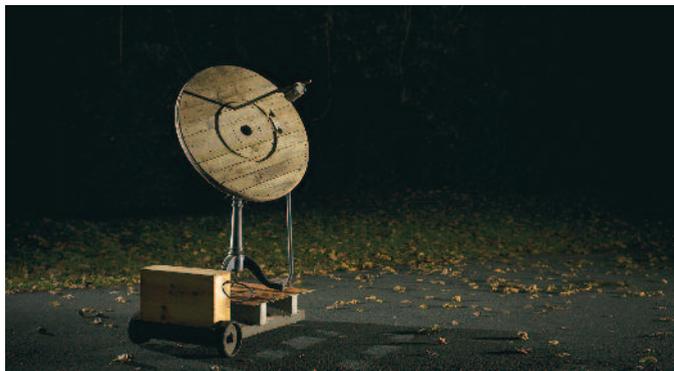
We are pleased to present the work of Erin Aubeuf, Ray Felix, Sierra Furtwängler, Kathryn Bilharz Gabriel, Thomas Jack Hilton, Doug Holst, David Kvam, Nathan Meltz, Sanford Mirling, Meredith Schwab, and Ben Tritt, Master of Fine Arts degree candidates for the spring semester 2010. The 60-credit M.F.A. is the terminal degree in studio art. A tradition since 1983, the M.F.A. exhibition is an important way in which the University Art Museum and the Fine Arts Department collaborate to enhance the academic environment at the University at Albany. The exhibition represents the culmination of these students' intensive training and study in fine art practices. It provides an opportunity for them to exhibit in a professional museum setting and to share their efforts with the academic community, alumni, audiences of the Capital Region, and beyond.

We are grateful to the Office of the Provost, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Ann C. Mataraso Endowment Fund, established in honor of Professor Mark Greenwold, and University Auxiliary Services for support of the exhibition and this publication. The Art Department would also like to thank the museum staff for its hard work and dedication throughout the exhibition process.

Danny Goodwin, Chair, Art Department  
Janet Riker, Director, University Art Museum



1



2

### Erin Aubeuf

I have a sick fascination with my own shallow desires. I'm needy and girly. I like pink. Haunted by the male gaze, I objectify myself. In performance and video I find a world where I can "out" my violent musings and confront my relationship to pop culture, self-image, and love.

### Ray Felix

Distracted by the world around me, I stare at things. If they stare back I photograph. Existential questions about purpose, death, and isolation consume me as I contemplate the nature of reality. Searching for answers along the terrain of my environment has led me to a kind of meditation, where things overlooked or taken for granted reveal a poetic and symbolic relationship to my inner reality.

### Sierra Furtwängler

The boys call me "Mad Dog Sierra." This title has been a driving force in my sculptures, in which powerful, monstrous women revel in their own grotesqueness. Obsessive craft and detail testify to my ego, even as these beastly bodies lurch forward to vomit self-loathing. The endless needlework that created these objects is, like a tattoo, a self-abuse I enjoy; the work itself pricks at who I am. These installations and the identity constructed within recall a religious cult built on comic books, tattoo culture, punk rock, horror movies, taxidermy, biological illustration, and Catholic iconography. These figures are holy relics; the passage of my life is measured out in shirts.

### Kathryn Bilharz Gabriel

Each of my paintings and drawings derives from an internal dialogue between hope and fear, leading to what could be certain apocalypse or eternal bliss. I submerge painting into drawing, transforming a matrix of paint layers into a skin that reveals specific imagery or indefinable figures. The result becomes a strange world, part nostalgic post-Pop graphics and color and part romantic drawing. Sometimes the dialogue is internal or interpersonal, and at other times I ponder the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the numerous unresolved crises here at home. I am attempting an alchemical transformation, changing leaden reality into a golden image—an exorcism of sorts.

### Thomas Jack Hilton

The way a distant memory looks and feels as contrasted with the crispness of yesterday fascinates me. I work to explore how occurrences long past intermingle with other happenings real, imagined or even overheard. I use photographic imagery because of its historic, widespread use as a documentary medium and incorporate it in constructed environments as a way to convey familiar experiences.

### Doug Holst

When people ask me about my work I feel as speechless as Dorothy waking up back in colorless Kansas, unable to describe where she has been. When I tell people that I like to spend my days squeezing bright paint out of plastic bottles onto smooth surfaces, I often become painfully aware of the vast divide that exists between the adventures of painting and the limitations of words. Terms such as "imaginary landscape" or "lyrical abstraction" often come to mind, but they threaten to hamper an appreciation of my work rather than help it. Few things

engage me more than arranging glossy puddles of paint into visual relationships that are both sophisticated yet simple. Painting for me is like a trip down the yellow brick road of Modernism to a place that feels familiar yet fresh, impossible yet very real. I like to lose myself in that Emerald City and to believe the image without ever paying attention to the man behind the curtain. These paintings are souvenirs from my time there.

### David Kvam

My paintings develop out of physical activity, mental exertion and the drama of nature, all of which are cornerstones of my life. While pouring color puddles over large panels and articulating competing marks, the paint swells and spreads under the pressure of my breath forced through straws. As I paint, I'm in conversation with color. An orange seems to shout at me and I respond by pouring blue on its face. This dialogue is playful, dynamic, and fantastically real. The place that grows below my feet transports me to memories of tomorrow's adventure.

### Nathan Meltz

Part critique, part fascination, the short films I create examine the infiltration of technology into every facet of our lives, from family and food to politics and war. Nightmarish industrial creations are set against images of grand mechanical constructions, an off-kilter vision of technology. In my visual vocabulary, the contemporary world of nanotechnology and genetic modification is retrofitted with analog mechanical parts. The Captains of Industry are sadistic gods.

### Sanford Mirling

By creating sexually fraught environments, real or illusory, I expose my own anxious attempts at seduction. I recontextualize human flesh through the use of leather, laminates, and synthetics. Memories of people are degraded to characters and ultimately into objects: uncanny versions of themselves.

### Meredith Schwab

I transform high-fashion slickness, and its illusion of perfection, into a punk-inflected anti-chic. This love/hate relationship shows itself in gemstone reliefs and wild monochrome paintings that use hip fabric patterns unapologetically. These illusions are furthered in video loops where I exploit myself, acting out conflicted fascinations with music video vixens, Boho-chic hipsters, and B-list fashionistas.

### Ben Tritt

I have designed and decorated an environment akin to a Renaissance chapel or a room in a Roman villa. Forever at War is an epic in five parts, each containing several forms of representation: painting, architecture, poetry, and film. Each of the five parts is labeled under the title of a "book" (Book 1: Creation, Book 2: The Fall, Book 3: The War, Book 4: The Flood, Book 5: Reconstruction). "Book 4: The Flood" is a series of scenes from the Biblical flood narrative, from the initial deluge to the Tower of Babel. The construction is meant to be both an independent architectural form and an integrated series of decorated panels. The interlaced quality between space and surface creates a transversality or latticework of intersecting layers in fictive space. The overlapping strata create an effacement of conventional expectations of narrative imagery, resulting in an experience both sequential and kaleidoscopic.



3



4



5

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| 1. Nathan Meltz, <i>Motherboard</i> , 2010, animation still  | 4. Kathryn A. Bilharz Gabriel, <i>Comfort and Softness</i> (detail), 2010, mixed media | 7. Doug Holst, <i>Untitled</i> , 2009, acrylic on wood                                | 10. Meredith Schwab, <i>Gem White</i> , 2010, mixed media        |
| 2. Thomas Jack Hilton, <i>Home is where you make it</i> (detail), 2010, mixed media  | 5. Ben Tritt, <i>Temple, no 7</i> (detail), print on paper with tar and gesso          | 8. Sierra Furtwängler, <i>This is Not a Sloth (Tip of My Rod)</i> , 2010, mixed media | COVER: Erin Aubeuf, <i>EZ Bake</i> , 2010, production photograph |
| 3. Sanford Mirling, <i>Nothing could drag me away from the soft glow of electric sex in the window</i> , 2010, mixed media | 6. David Kvam, <i>Variation on a Theme 42</i> , 2009, oil on panel                     | 9. Ray Felix, <i>Lady Americana</i> , 2009, archival inkjet print                     |  |