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At the University of Tennessee, we believe in the capacity of art to express beauty, evoke wonder, confront injustice, and test our values. While the creation and experience of art are mysterious processes that may never be fully understood rationally, they invite us into an inexplicable but meaningful dialogue through sensuous visual language and metaphor.

The School of Art’s 2023 MFA exhibitions mark the culmination of a degree program dedicated to the development of a rigorous, interdisciplinary studio art practice. Over the last three years, each student in our nationally ranked program worked under the close mentorship of a committee of accomplished faculty from across the arts, art history, and humanities, engaging us in a conversation with a distinct and individual voice.

These exhibitions document the evolutionary and unpredictable journeys of individual artists pursuing knowledge, understanding, and fulfillment, and collectively demonstrate how contemporary art practice can serve as a vehicle for transformative individual and cultural discovery.

These artists now join an expanding community of School of Art MFA alumni. As they move out into the world, they will continue to engage us in dialogue through their work and actively shape the future of creative expression in our broader collective culture. We treasure the time that they have spent with us and look forward to witnessing the fruits of their fertile imaginations.

Christopher McNulty
Director and Ellen McClung Berry Professor
School of Art
University of Tennessee
Nocturne is a record of a finite moment along an endless process of construction and destruction. It is a topography of self, an amalgamation of memory and image formulated from personal history and adorned with metaphors of reality.

This is my internal landscape: a noctiflorous territory along the limit of the perceptible. Embedded in its surfaces are the navigational tools I use to traverse it, including abstractions of astronomical tools, cartography, and my own written hieroglyphic language. This language, which I have nicknamed Noctic, is an allegory for the cover of darkness, similar to how a nocturnal creature maintains its obscurity in the shadows.

Night is not only a different time, it’s a different place.
Mouth of the River, neon, argon, glass, bronze, red grand (wood), wood: 8 x 6 feet; neon lungs (each): 13 x 8 x 4 inches, 2023
The Only Thing Burning, cast bronze, 9 x 9 x 11 inches, 2022
Relics, ceramic shell, 13 x 4 x 6 inches, 2022
TOP - *Bat*, bronze, suture cotton, 16 x 4 x 4 inches, 2022

BOTTOM - *Nocturne Installation* (detail), cast iron, brick, 2023
Bat, bronze, 16 x 4 x 4 inches, 2022
Sarah Bernstein is a project-based studio artist whose investigations of poetry, ecological cycles, theater, and digital media coalesce into dialoguing bodies of work. She works from a place of obsessive curiosity, researching subjects, theories, and techniques with near tunnel-vision. This creative research practice transcends laboring towards comprehension; it becomes a methodology for encountering and cultivating a poetic poignancy that blooms through operating in an embodied and committed state of inquiry.

Through Terrible Miracles, Bernstein deconstructs and reimagines imagery sourced from first-hand accounts detailing the Rocky Mountain Locust plagues of the 1800s. The tonal quality of these texts, which often resemble folktales, weaves its way through the entire body of work. Bernstein uses textiles, sculpture, audio installation, and recorded poetry to examine how intimacy and theatricality transform research into a multilayered, subjective storytelling experience. The work explores how shared experiences of the natural world move towards a state of folklore. It investigates a personal and collective desire for revision, reenactment, and contemporary adaptation of extraordinary events, what she calls “the folkloric instinct.”

Terrible Miracles transformed the Ewing Gallery into a haunted space, simultaneously theatrical, contemplative, historical, and contemporary. History stretches into folklore and research into emotional autobiography. Like an ancient altar illuminated by LED lights, Terrible Miracles uses a vocabulary of time-based material to describe an anachronism which accompanies contemporary participation in lineages of storytelling, craft, and cycles of the natural world.
exit skeleton II, wood, velvet, brass buttons, string, hat pins, silk gauze and linen dress, LED torpedo light
dress patterning and fabrication by Lindsay Shelden, 2023
exit skeleton I, wood, resin, grass, hand dyed plastic sequins, grasshopper exoskeleton, hat pin, gold leaf, nail, string, LED torpedo light, 2023
exit skeleton I, (detail)
myself, agrarian myth (demeter/persephone), wet plate collodion tintype, wood, grass, graphite, LED torpedo light, 
*wet plate collodion tintype by Kelsey Dillow, 2023*
TOP and BOTTOM - terrible miracles, gallery installation view
The Buck Wilde Attraction is as close as most will get to meeting the fabled “Buck Wilde!” Having lived a life that few can believe, Buck Wilde primarily exists on the fringe of collective memory. Those who have met her are often stunned by her “larger than life” personality, eccentric sense of style, and often fumbling nature. This exhibition presents a collection of artifacts, ephemera, and photos, as well as first-hand accounts of the eclectic character Buck Wilde. Due to her migratory and elusive nature, her history is not widely known. Part gallery, part gift shop, part “once in a lifetime experience,” The Buck Wilde Attraction seeks to display the fragmented history of the feminine icon, Buck Wilde. A former rodeo clown, dairy spokeswoman, and traveler, her life is nothing short of extraordinary.

Whether you come to admire her for her unabashed clownishness and sincerity, or raise an eyebrow about the validity of her identity, this exhibition offers every viewer an intimate portrait of this amazing woman. Like the character Pagliacci mixed with Dolly Parton, and the allure of watching a car crash, The Buck Wilde Attraction is sure to captivate your attention, or at the very least, generate mild bemusement. If anything, it offers some limited souvenirs that cannot be found anywhere else.

This exhibit is merely a fragment of the colorful tapestry of Buck Wilde’s life, and we hope that with this collection you will feel closer to Buck Wilde and may bring a piece of her home with you.

- Zoe Brester-Pennings, Publicist for The Buck Wilde Attraction
Gallery Installation View (detail), Buck Wilde's Boots & Face, leather boots (women's size 8 US, 15 inches tall) & makeup cloth, 2023
The Incident, newspaper clipping, approx 8 x 13 inches, 2023
Souvenirs (detail), screenprint, matboard, elastic, fragrance, 3 x 3 inches, 2023
The Buck Wilde Attraction, gallery installation view (detail), Lover's Milk, found object, gallon, half gallon, pint, 8 x 8 x 12 inches, 2023
TOP - *The Buck Wilde Attraction*, gallery installation view (rear), Left: newspaper clipping, banner, Center: found objects, video, print, Right: photo

BOTTOM - *The Buck Wilde Attraction*, gallery installation view, belt buckle, makeup cloths, pillow, photograph, newspaper clipping, milk cartons, digitally printed banner on bookcloth, souvenirs, 2023
This multimedia installation reminds us that we all see from a perspective where some things are visible while others are invisible. Employing handmade papers and animations to remix ancient Seal Script Chinese characters, appropriated instructional materials, and diagrammatic family portraits, Cai re-enrolls herself in her past education to re-consider and re-create what it means to be a child. The sign “child” (zi 子) is shared by the Chinese words in this work and conveys various meanings when combined with different signs. Ultimately, this work helped Cai process her adverse childhood experiences and gain perspective and sympathy for her parents.

Our early experiences formed the basis through which we interpret subsequent ones. This work embodies multi-layered perspectives and Cai’s attempt to re-form herself. Central to the installation are hybrid pieces where projected animations stack atop multi-laminated handmade papers. Thanks to handmade papers’ semitranslucency and animations’ light, hidden images become visible as the viewer moves from the front to the back, and the perceived information reverses as a whole. According to art historian Jennifer L. Roberts, reversal “engenders critique, a refusal of the status quo, and the insight that every form is accompanied by its reverse.” Ultimately, these pieces’ multi-dimensionality provides many perspectives and allows the viewer to choose.

The language we use to discuss the world influences our perceptions. Cai’s bilingual proficiency is crucial to reshaping her inherited framework of meaning. This work uses Chinese characters and appropriated instructional materials to hint at the cultural beliefs she critiques. Most general audiences wouldn’t fully grasp the Chinese words. Total comprehension is improbable even with translation, which always involves gains and losses. Translation’s symbolism of understanding and misunderstanding adds to the theme of perspective; Cai is less concerned with precisely conveying hers than encouraging the viewers to engage with theirs.
female + child = good (detail), handmade paper, hidden collage, and animation projection, diptych: 15 x 44 inches, video: 06:47 run time (looping), 2023
TOP - *female + child = good* (front), handmade paper, hidden collage, and animation projection, diptych: 15 x 44 inches, video: 06:47 run time (looping), 2023

BOTTOM - *female + child = good* (back)
TOP - *Three / 2006*, handmade paper and collage, sheet: 15 x 20 inches, 2022

BOTTOM - *Three / 2006* (detail)
Scene of the Crime, vinyl and animation projection, vinyl: 12 x 27.5 inches, video: 00:35 run time (looping), 2023
TOP and BOTTOM - heavens have one sun; mortals have one way 天无二日, 人无二理, gallery installation view, 2023
Using abstraction as a framework, my work exists in a non-objective visual language, but is resonant of landscapes, objects, and architectures. The imagery in the paintings references lived and imagined experiences, memory, emotional states, and a separate writing practice.

The “Sky-Looker” paintings evolved as a metaphor for searching and self-discovery. Longing, wonder, uncertainty, and frustration are amongst the emotions that lead me to gaze skyward. The operative “Looker,” is intended to function dually as a reference to the act itself, but also to the geometric armatures within the painting, a device through which one may more clearly see the sky. For the imagined Sky-Looker, turning skyward functions as a way to consider the internal; the expanse of the sky serving as a place for considering, rebalancing, and reimagining their experience of the world.

Recently I have begun drawing and painting on the profiles of certain works, treating the profile as a separate, but adjacent place on which to take notes, collage, doodle, or otherwise experiment with materials. I see the act, which is at times diaristic, bored, reactionary, or playful, as a marker of the time passed in the creation of the front image. The profiles are often in contrast to the images they accompany—I see this secondary embedding of information as one which supplements the object-hood of the painting.
Sky-Looker (For Mary Laube), acrylic on linen, 14 x 11 inches, 2022
Sky-Looker (Dawn to Dust), acrylic on linen, 14 x 11 inches, 2023
Clearing, acrylic on canvas, 65 x 39 inches, 2023
TOP - *Apparition*, acrylic and flashe on canvas, 60 x 30 inches, 2021 - 2023

BOTTOM - left: *Sky-Looker, Despair (Americans Want Just Survive)*, acrylic on linen, 14 x 11 inches, 2023
right: *Pendulum*, acrylic on linen, 14 x 11 inches, 2023
TOP and BOTTOM - Discretionary Monuments, gallery installation view, 2023
NOAH LAGLE

Raised on Replicas

*Raised on Replicas* presents translucent envelopes and wax-coated plaster forms as analogs for diaphanous architectural structures. In peering through these networked layers, which are concurrently rooted in the imagery of antiquity and that of contemporary digital information systems, new readings are realized that are rooted in a simultaneous multiplicity of times, places, and selves. Within these mutable spaces of contemplation and transgression, this body of work contends with themes of authenticity, opacity, and veracity as matters of degree to be investigated rather than as absolutes to be taken at face value. To that end, this networked installation contends with ambiguity and metaphor as a way of complicating the boundaries that delineate containers of meaning from one another within linguistic, material, temporal, and social schemata.
House of the Tragic Poet (In the Morning He Consumes the Foe, And in the Evening He Divides the Spoil) (detail), 2023
House of the Tragic Poet (In the Morning He Consumes the Foe, And in the Evening He Divides the Spoil)  
stenciled monotype with ink wash drawing and chine collé, beeswax coated plaster cast with map pins on stone plinth, etching on plaster, folded and cut beeswax coated inkjet prints, screen printed ash, found stone
Merely the Residue (Before the Flood, After Belshazzar’s Feast), beeswax-coated plaster casts on stone plinths, etching on plaster, cut beeswax coated inkjet print, screen printed ash, found stone
Exhales in Logic (I Here Now, I There Then), stenciled monotype with ink wash drawing and chine collé, plaster cast on stone plinth, etching on plaster, folded beeswax coated inkjet print, intaglio monotype, found stone
TOP - left: *Playing With Seriousness*, stenciled monotype with ink wash drawing and chine collé, cut beeswax coated inkjet print
right: *The Most Varied Sorts of Emblems*, stenciled monotype with ink wash drawing and chine collé

BOTTOM - *Raised on Replicas*, gallery installation view, 2023
EMILY
ROCA RICE

Gleaning the Spirit

*Gleaning the Spirit* is born from a deep dedication to sustainability and belief, where ideas and spirits intertwine with materials. Emily Roca Rice uses a variety of materials, including plastics, textiles, wax, wood, cement, soil, ceramic, plaster, iron, and found objects, to establish an intimate and essential relationship between themself and materials. Roca Rice’s studio-based work extends to urban and rural interventions, seeking collaboration with the landscape and its elements through sculptural drawing. The repetitive act of making is a transcendent experience that enables communication with spirits and entities beyond their consciousness, reinforcing their beliefs and understanding of the world beyond the physical realm.

Roca Rice engages viewers on intimate and monumental scales, weaving storytelling and belief systems sourced from archival research and personal memory. Through generative fictions, they explore the transmutation and transcendence of materials and the entities that witness them. Roca Rice is fascinated by the relationship between place and space and how animistic qualities can be observed and applied to sculptural drawings, linking different time planes and functioning as portals to pass through.

The exhibition follows a two-room floor plan that offers a physical story on transition and transformation—from the forest to the clearing. It reveals post-apocalyptic fragmentation and sustainable resurrection through their queer futuristic lens, where materials such as plastic, textiles, plants, wax, wood, cement, soil, ceramic, plaster, iron, and found objects remain in such a world. Investigating and reshaping torn, broken, and dead materials is their alchemical method for transfiguration and a way to gather time together, examining the fascia between relationships and time. *Gleaning the Spirit* provides a discourse on landscape, myth, and historic folklore, connecting spirit realms above and below.
Gleaning the Spirit (Holding Space) (detail), worn silk clothes, *Phytolacca americana* and *Tagetes* dyed cotton and jute, and plastic, dimensions variable, 2023
Gleaning the Spirit (Bodily Fondness) (detail), brick, ceramic, beeswax, acrylic, gouache, watercolor, found iron, aluminum, and *Phytolacca americana* and *Tagetes* dyed textiles, dimensions variable, 2023
Gleaning the Spirit (Carrying the Weight of the Sacred through the World) (detail), foam, aluminum, Tagetes dyed textile, worn silk clothing, wood, beeswax, 36 x 17 x 10 inches, 2023
TOP - *Gleaning the Spirit*, gallery installation view, acrylic, gouache, watercolor, colored pencil, paper, foam, plastic, textiles, dye, beeswax, wood, brick, cement, soil, ceramic, plaster, iron, aluminum, steel, and found objects, 2023

BOTTOM - *Gleaning the Spirit (Sowing Worlds)*, gallery installation view, 120 gallons of Tennessee soil, ceramic, acrylic, watercolor, gouache, beeswax, steel, wire, mirror shards, Tennessee marble, iron, found objects, brick, plastic, wood, silk, *Phytolacca americana* and *Tagetes* dyed jute and cotton, and aluminum, 38.75 x 36 x 6 feet, 2023
Gleaning the Spirit (Magical Thinking) (detail), 120 gallons of Tennessee soil, ceramic, beeswax, watercolor, gouache, acrylic, and steel, dimensions variable, 2023
Attention 1. n. The act or state of applying intentional thought and care.
   2. n. The consideration of needs.
   3. n. A fundamental state of being.

Being 1. n. Anything that has existence - human, object, etc.
   2. v. to be.

Attention and being, as defined above, prompt action: to think, to care, to consider, to exist, and to be. All tasks of the individual that directly nurture oneself and the connective relationships they have with the other people, places, and objects that exist alongside them in the world. The work exhibited in Attention and Being seeks to visually record the phenomena of human experience. It is the act of intentional art making that offers the ability to attend to oneself and further examine one’s personal experiences, whether deemed extraordinary or mundane to the viewer.

In fact, Seggerman has found the act of making is akin to that of meeting needs, creating as a means to meet a need that has been left unmet. The visual records produced from her process-focused way of making exist as trace, line, object, artifact, material, and tool. The resulting free-motion quilted textiles and their corresponding prints are derived from the careful extraction and abstraction of information found within the many contours that delineate the earth, the sky and the recognizable, tangible objects and figures that all exist within the four corners of a photograph. She releases control of the process and embraces chance through the physical flow of material as the ink transfers from the fully saturated fibers of the quilt to the fibers of the paper placed below. These types of meaningful interactions are what leave marks on oneself while simultaneously leaving marks on others.
Pair I, bronze, 6 x 9 x 3 inches, 2022
TOP - *That is to Be*, quilt monoprint of India ink on Rives BFK, 41 ¼ x 76 inches, 2023

BOTTOM - *Sitting with Your Present Self*, premium muslin, polyester batting, Gütermann embroidery thread, and India ink, 44 ½ x 76 ½ x ½ inches, 2023
TOP - left: *Trace of Time Spent*, quilt monoprint of India ink on Rives BFK, 42¼ x 29¼ inches, 2022
right: *Connected Ground*, premium muslin, polyester batting, Gütermann embroidery thread, and India ink, 39 x 25 x ½ inches, 2022

BOTTOM - *Connected Ground* (detail)
TOP - A Gesture of the Sky, quilt monoprint of India ink on Rives BFK, 35 ½ x 60 inches, 2023

BOTTOM - You Are Part of This Great Whole, premium muslin, polyester batting, Gütermann embroidery thread, India ink, and mirror, 36 x 60 x 1 inches, 2023
TOP - Connect, mild steel rod and sheet, 48 ¾ x 51 ½ x 30 inches, 2023

BOTTOM - Attention and Being, gallery installation view
HALEY TAKAHASHI

Shadows in the Shoji

Shadow inoculates the plain white wall with presence
Liquid manifestation of light
Particulate creation of perforated body
Shape shifter
Liar
Prophet
Paper screen between truth and truth
Molten solidification of promise

Shadows in the Shoji is a multimedia installation that explores the intimate relationship between comfort and fear. Inspired by “Shadows on the Shoji” by Utamaro, the artist translates isolation, liminality, hope, and fear through her Japanese-American cultural identity. The structural form takes inspiration from shoji, paper screens used in traditional Japanese architecture. Screenprinted with floral kudzu patterns and stretched over a cedar frame. While the kudzu appears decorative, it encases the shoji room and creeps along the exterior walls, slowly enclosing the structure. This interior space represents self-inflicted isolation and faulty means of protection.

At the structure’s base, ceramic daruma dolls are another barrier between the interior and exterior. They represent forlorn hope and longing as a means of self-soothing. Traditionally, paper mâché daruma dolls start with two blank eyes. When a wish is made, one eye is filled in. Once the wish comes true, the second eye is filled, and the ritual is completed by burning the dolls at the end of the year. Takahashi’s abstraction of traditional daruma has only one eye filled, suggesting that a wish has been made but is yet to come true. As ceramics, they have prematurely gone through the fire and are thus suspended in an incomplete state.

Red light encompasses this space, highlighting the paradox between fear and comfort. Its warmth and intimacy draw you in while also maintaining a sense of discomfort and caution. White light represents idealization, a doorway separate from the primary structure. It is a faulty portal that leads nowhere.

As a whole, this installation is a self-portrait of the artist’s internal struggles and psychological space. It is the manifestation of self-preservation in light of societal pressures, malevolent humanity, and anxiety for the future.
Shadows in the Shoji (left wall corner), screen print, ceramic, sculpture installation, 5 x 5 x 8 feet, 2023
Blinds, cardboard, newsprint, polyurethane, flowery fabric, yarn, 2021

Shadows in the Shoji (back wall), screen print, ceramic, sculpture installation, 5 x 5 x 8 feet, 2023

*Shadows in the Shoji* (back wall), screen print, ceramic, sculpture installation, 5 x 5 x 8 feet, 2023
TOP - *Shadows in the Shoji* (detail featuring Dante), screen print, ceramic, sculpture installation, 5 x 5 x 8 feet, 2023

BOTTOM - *Shadows in the Shoji* (gallery installation view), screen print, ceramic, sculpture installation, 5 x 5 x 8 feet, 2023
Close Quarters, screen print, mulberry paper, wood, light, fibers, and ceramic, 5 x 3 feet, 2023
TOP - *Close Quarters* (detail), screen print, mulberry paper, wood, light, and ceramic, 2023

BOTTOM - *Close Quarters* (detail featuring Jiro), screen print, mulberry paper, wood, light, and ceramic, 2023
THE MFA PROGRAM

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is Tennessee’s premier public research institution. A department within the College of Arts and Sciences, the UTK School of Art is committed to excellence in all of its programs. The School of Art’s MFA program is ranked #22 and its printmaking area is ranked #3 among public universities by U.S. News and World Report. The NASAD-accredited, 60 credit-hour, three-year graduate program offers concentrations in ceramics, painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture, and time-based art.

Our MFA program offers courses and opportunities that provide the fundamental skills artists need to develop and sustain a professional life. Embedded in the common curriculum are experiences that enable our students to plan, promote, fund, organize, and build community as part of their creative practice. Graduate students take advantage of university-wide graduate courses that relate to and expand their creative horizons.

MFA students work closely with faculty, visiting artists, and each other in small studio classes and participate in regular critiques, studio visits, and school-wide graduate reviews. The three-year degree provides students with the time necessary to research, experiment, and hone their practice. The final year is devoted to creating a thesis project that will serve as a springboard to a wide array of careers in the arts and education, including successful art practices as well as positions in industry, museums, and galleries.

The School of Art oversees a host of visiting artists’ programs. Accomplished artists from a variety of disciplines visit the UT campus each semester for lectures, critiques, and week-long collaborations. Additionally, the nationally-recognized artist-in-residence (AIR) program in the painting and drawing concentration brings a different visiting professional artist to campus each semester to teach a graduate seminar. The AIR, who typically works in a major urban art hub, acts as a bridge between the university and the global art community.
Graduate student Delany Bal working in the UTK metal shop
FACILITIES

The UTK School of Art boasts impressive facilities to support its students and faculty. The Art + Architecture Building, completed in 1981, is a state-of-the-art facility recognized as one of the finest in the country. Named in 2017 by USA Today as one of the 25 Must-See Buildings in Tennessee, the building offers various amenities, including a 120-seat auditorium, a smaller lecture hall with advanced media equipment, multiple lecture rooms, a spacious commons area, the Ewing Gallery, a sculpture courtyard, studios, classrooms, an equipment check-out room, photo labs, metal and wood shops, a print shop, a makerspace, a computer lab, a branch of the UT VolShop, and an Einstein Bros. Bagels. Each graduate student in the MFA program is provided with a private studio of approximately 350 square feet in the Walters Academic Building just a short walk from the Art + Architecture Building.

Adjacent to the Art + Architecture Building is the Ceramics Building, which houses the ceramics studio, glaze lab, kiln room, a computer lab, and faculty offices. Graduate students also have access to additional facilities including a sand blaster, slab roller, extruder, electric kiln area, and a gas kiln shed.

The printmaking facilities are located in a 4,500 square foot area and are accessible 24/7 to graduate students and until midnight for undergraduates. The facilities include equipment for intaglio, relief, lithography, screenprinting, papermaking, letterpress, and a computer lab with digital resources. Graduate students also have access to the Faculty and Graduate Student Pressroom which includes an intaglio press, a lithography press, a large vacuum screen printing table and an American French Tool intaglio-relief press with a 5 x 10 foot bed.

The sculpture facilities include an indoor foundry, an outdoor work area, and a large metal shop maintained by a full-time dedicated technician. The 3,000 square foot metal fabrication area features a range of equipment for metalworking, while the casting support area provides resources for ceramic shell casting, a wax casting area, and a sandblaster. The foundry includes burnout kilns, melt furnaces, and a sand pit. There is also a 4,000 square foot outdoor workspace with covered storage.
The photography area offers a well-equipped space, including a digital imaging lab, film scanners, wide-format printers, and projectors. The darkroom is equipped with 4x5 enlargers and variable contrast enlarger heads, catering to both digital and traditional photographic processes. The smART Lab makerspace provides a range of equipment, such as 3D printers, laser cutters, vinyl cutters and a large format printer, allowing students to explore digital fabrication and innovation.

The School of Art Media Pool offers high-end digital cameras, lighting equipment, laptops, and more for checkout, ensuring that students have access to the necessary tools for their artistic endeavors.

For woodworking projects, the College of Architecture + Design operates a full-service woodshop within the Art + Architecture building. The woodshop features a CNC router and three laser cutters, and it is available to all students in the School of Art and College of Architecture + Design.
Professor Jered Sprecher discusses his artwork with students in the Ewing Gallery
G A L L E R I E S

The School of Art offers multiple, high-visibility opportunities for its graduate students to build their professional skills through public exhibition of their work. These exhibitions provide the critical groundwork and experiences for sustaining a successful professional practice.

The Ewing Gallery of Art + Architecture serves as an on-campus space for the campus and community to connect with art. The gallery coordinates exhibitions that represent current attitudes in art and architecture, supports the curricula of the School of Art, The College of Architecture and Design, and campus constituents, and serves as a cultural resource for Knoxville and East Tennessee. The Ewing Gallery permanent collection holds over 5000 objects for study with focuses on contemporary printmaking and works by Knoxville-born Joseph Delaney. The Samuel A. Yates collection study room and program was established in 2021 to provide students opportunities for more in-depth access to works held in the permanent collection as part of their classroom and studio experience. The Ewing Gallery hosts MFA Project in Lieu of Thesis exhibitions, supporting and collaborating with students throughout the installation process.

The UT Downtown Gallery has been a founding art organization of the downtown Knoxville art scene since it opened in 2004. As the only public facing University of Tennessee professional arts organization located within the community, the gallery presents culturally thought-provoking, educational, and engaging art exhibitions. Uniting campus and community, the gallery features a diverse range of contemporary exhibitions, including experimental installations and multidisciplinary projects, free to the public. The UT Downtown Gallery hosts the annual First Year MFA exhibition to welcome our students to the Knoxville arts community.

Gallery 1010 is a contemporary art exhibition space located inside the historic Emporium Center in downtown Knoxville. Gallery 1010 is the only fully student-run, non-profit, off-campus exhibition space in the state of Tennessee. Art Students are invited to submit exhibition proposals, which can be solo exhibitions, group shows of UT students, or works by artists from other universities and community programs. New exhibitions open weekly throughout the academic year.
LIFE IN KNOXVILLE

Nestled between the Cumberland Plateau and the Great Smoky Mountains, Knoxville is home to a population of about 190,000. It offers a small town feel alongside the amenities of a thriving metropolitan area.

Knoxville hosts numerous art exhibitions, theater productions, and cultural festivals throughout the year, providing a rich tapestry of experiences for students to immerse themselves in. The city has a thriving music scene that includes iconic venues like the Tennessee Theatre. Knoxville proudly hosts Big Ears, an avant-garde music festival that attracts artists and enthusiasts from around the world. This annual event showcases groundbreaking performances and pushes the boundaries of musical exploration.

The historic Market Square in the heart of downtown hosts a vibrant farmer’s market, live music performances, and community events throughout the year. Market Square’s outdoor patios and sidewalk cafes create a welcoming atmosphere which serves as a gathering place for locals and visitors alike.

Adjacent to downtown, the Old City presents a mix of historical and contemporary charm offering a diverse range of venues and nightlife options. This former industrial district has been revitalized into a vibrant entertainment destination. Historic buildings have been repurposed into restaurants, music venues, and art galleries, creating an atmosphere brimming with creativity and excitement.

For those seeking outdoor adventure, Knoxville’s Urban Wilderness awaits. Dive into a network of trails that wind through scenic forests and along picturesque rivers, offering 1000 forested acres with 112 miles of paved greenways and natural trails, and lake and river access.

Only a 45-minute drive from Knoxville, The Great Smoky Mountains National park is an easy day trip destination with endless opportunities for hiking, camping, wildlife spotting, and scenic drives. The Great Smoky Mountains provide a rejuvenating escape from downtown Knoxville.
World’s Fair Park in Knoxville, TN
Interior view of the Art + Architecture Building
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Art emboldens individuals to share their unique voices and that of their communities. Art can also fuel courage to deviate from harmful conventions and embrace heterogeneity and difference. These qualities have empowered art to serve as a powerful catalyst for social change — giving voice to the disempowered, challenging systems of oppression, and raising awareness of social inequity.

The School of Art recognizes that marginalized communities face forms of oppression on and off our campus. In the face of those challenges and in keeping with its educational and artistic mission, the School of Art seeks to foster a welcoming, equitable, and accessible community, characterized by respect and civility, for all its students, faculty, and staff. To cultivate the artistic development and growth of our community, we see it as our responsibility to create spaces in which everyone can think for, express, and freely be themselves, unencumbered by barriers. As individuals within this community, we recognize our own privilege and role in realizing and continually upholding these shared aspirations.

Endorsed by the School of Art Faculty, 23 January 2023

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