



SCREEN PRINT BIENNIAL

NOVEMBER 1 / DECEMBER 14



2018



The work in this year's biennial exhibition continually exceed my expectations in the way so many elements come together to create compelling, important, and timely narratives. These art pieces also draw upon a depth of expression, and open windows into creative worlds.

When looking at the stories in the biennial exhibition, many fall under the shadow of the stark political landscape that is 2018. When biennial artist **ALEJANDRO ARAUZ** creates a series of images of himself sitting on top of an ATV with his young daughter, combined with an image of an immigration form applying for Canadian citizenship (for minors), you can't help placing it in the context of detained migrant children here in the USA. Far from creating a generalized, didactic piece, Arauz's images contain so much power by way of their specificity: every immigrant child is someone's daughter or son. Veteran political graphic artist **JOSH MACPHEE** has no problem with the didactic; his *Close Rikers/Build Communities* yardage print is made as a work of radical political expression. The power (and the story) of this piece comes not simply from the visual object he produces, but in the social action it is a part of—cut up and used in protests as bandanas and armbands. Screenprinting began acting as a medium of social protest with graphics produced by University of Paris student protesters in 1968; MacPhee's work is a direct descendant of this tradition.

Many of the artworks in this year's biennial surprise me with how good they are at generating and amplifying expressive visual experiences. The gesture and action generated in Polish artist **STANISLAW CHOLEWA**'s prints are downright brutal in their directness and emotion. In *Efflictim's Anguish* by **DADISI CURTIS**, the emotion comes from the friction created by combining figurative elements with popping color. A similar strategy is employed by **EMILY HARTER**'s *Beast Woman Bull Dyke PT 2*, where hyper-harmonious colors and figures express a lonesome story of, well, beast woman bull dykes. Both Curtis and Harter's prints would be right at home plastered on the walls of punk rock art space Fort Thunder in the early 2000s alongside the works of Brian Chippendale and Leif Goldberg. Can expression be quiet and loud at the same time? Because **MYLES CALVERT**'s *Ottoman Empire* series are both jam-packed with color and surface, while at the same time discretely commenting on class, privilege, and perhaps more than a little Claes Oldenburg/Andy Warhol.

There are more than a few world-builders in the biennial, with artists giving everything from glimpses to panoramas of their imagined artistic realms. In his *Factory Fantasy*, **ROBERT SCHWIEGER** breaks his world wide open for all to see—a scene of playful psychedelia and impossible architecture. **CORRIE SLAWSON**'s panorama is no less colorful, but at the same time dystopic and glitchy in the best sort of way. Perhaps just as weird, but more personal, are the prints in the show by **MATT HOPSON-WALKER**, combining cryptic metaphors, disturbing narratives, and virtuoso printing chops. **AMANDA KNOWLES** just gives us a brief snapshot of her generated environment—a moment of mysterious tendrils interacting in space, making me wish we could have included a dozen such pieces in the show. Several artists in the show quite literally build a world in the gallery. **SHELIA GOLOBOROTKO**'s *Sistema* is a diverse macrocosm of organic screenprinted components, highlighting the chimera-like properties of the screenprinted medium that can quite easily become embedded in 3D or 4D forms. **TATIANA POTTS** is also literally building, combining screenprinted modules into a hybrid of sculpture and architecture in the same artistic vein as a mid-period Seripop.

A combination of politics, punk, and perceptual experimentation permeate the art pieces in this year's biennial. They work as a masterclass in how to put together disparate thoughts, concepts, emotions, and stories, all using the powerful artistic glue that is screenprinting. These artists have a lot to say, and, as Klaatu warned, we had better start paying attention before it's too late.

Lastly, I was luckily enough to have a team of jurors helping make selections for this biennial, and I thank them immensely for contributing their insights, energy, and wisdom. Below are some of the things they had to say about the selections.

NATHAN MELTZ

Screenprint Biennial Founder
October 2018



TRAVIS JANSSEN

It was both an honor and a delight to serve on a panel of jurors that challenged one another while collectively selecting a range of works with diverse conceptual aims and technical approaches. At the same time, strong aesthetics and high production values were chief concerns for the group. Numerous mixed technique/media pieces were submitted. Given the nature of a screenprint biennial, a tipping point was frequently discussed. How dominant did the screenprinted component(s) need to be? Although all four jurors possess discerning eyes when evaluating print techniques, there were questions as to how these submissions were produced and why screenprinting was integral to the work. This points to some of the challenges of jurying via digital images. Moreover, it speaks to the malleability of screenprinting and its ability to generate a multitude of styles and effects or seamlessly meld into hybrids of techniques or mediums. I would argue that screenprinting, as one of the most accessible print techniques, is predisposed to inviting many to the table—the smorgasbord that is printmaking. The diversity of entries received (as well as the selections we made) attests that screenprint is a technique bursting with possibilities, playing a vital role in the field of printmaking as well as the larger sphere of contemporary art.

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Janssen received a Master of Fine Arts in printmaking from Arizona State University in 2007 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2000. His current creative practice often focuses on bridging the gap between contemporary and historic methods of printmaking as well as forays into video and installation art mediums. Janssen's interests also extend into the collaborative process and cross-disciplinary investigation, having collaborated with a variety of individuals on a diverse range of projects including prints and documentary videos. Over the last five years he has shown work in over 85 exhibitions across the US and venues in New Zealand, Russia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Currently, Janssen's creative practice is based out of Carbondale, Illinois where he teaches printmaking and 2D foundations at Southern Illinois University. Prior to moving to Carbondale he taught a variety of courses including printmaking, digital imaging, and foundations at Arizona State University and Phoenix College.




TARYN MCMAHON


I look forward to each Screenprint Biennial exhibition and am honored to be a juror for the 2018 show. It was both thrilling and challenging to jury this exhibition from the many impressive entries we received. As an artist working with screenprint, I was elated to see the diversity with which artists are using the medium, from installation to objects to exquisite works on paper. The overall exhibition showcases that diversity as well as a commitment to challenging subject matter and conceptual intent. Thank you to Nathan Meltz for organizing this exhibition and to all of the artists included for sharing your work.

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McMahon received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. She has received numerous awards for her work including the Southern Graphics Council International Graduate Fellowship and fully funded residencies at Anderson Ranch Art Center (Snowmass Village, Colorado), Anchor Graphics (Chicago), and Women's Studio Workshop (Rosendale, New York). Her work has been featured in recent exhibitions at The Print Center (Philadelphia) and Carroll Gallery, Tulane University (New Orleans), among others. McMahon is an Assistant Professor in the School of Art at Kent State University, where she teaches print media and serves as the area head of Print Media & Photography.



ALEJANDRO ARAUZ
TYANNA BUIE
MYLES CALVERT
SARA CARTER
STANISLAW CHOLEWA
AMY COUSINS
BRIAR CRAIG
DADISI CURTIS
JOSH DANNIN & TODD IRWIN
NADYA EIDELSTEIN
HANNAH FRAY
OLIVIA FREDRICKS
MOLLY GOLDWATER
SHEILA GOLOBOROTKO
EMILY HARTER
MATTHEW HOPSON-WALKER
MARK HOSFORD
NEAH KELLY
AMANDA KNOWLES
MICHAEL KRUEGER
RACHEL LIVEDALEN
JOSH MACPHEE
TATIANA POTTS
NICK SATINOVER
ROBERT SCHWIEGER
CORRIE SLAWSON
JILLIAN SOKSO
CORINNE TEED
TONJA TORGERSON
WENDI RUTH VALLADARES

 **OPALKA GALLERY**

An inviting and innovative gallery on the campus of Sage College of Albany, Opalka Gallery showcases outstanding modern and contemporary art and design from national and international artists. An important part of the cultural life in New York's Capital Region, the gallery frequently hosts lectures, films, performances and other events in conjunction with exhibitions.