

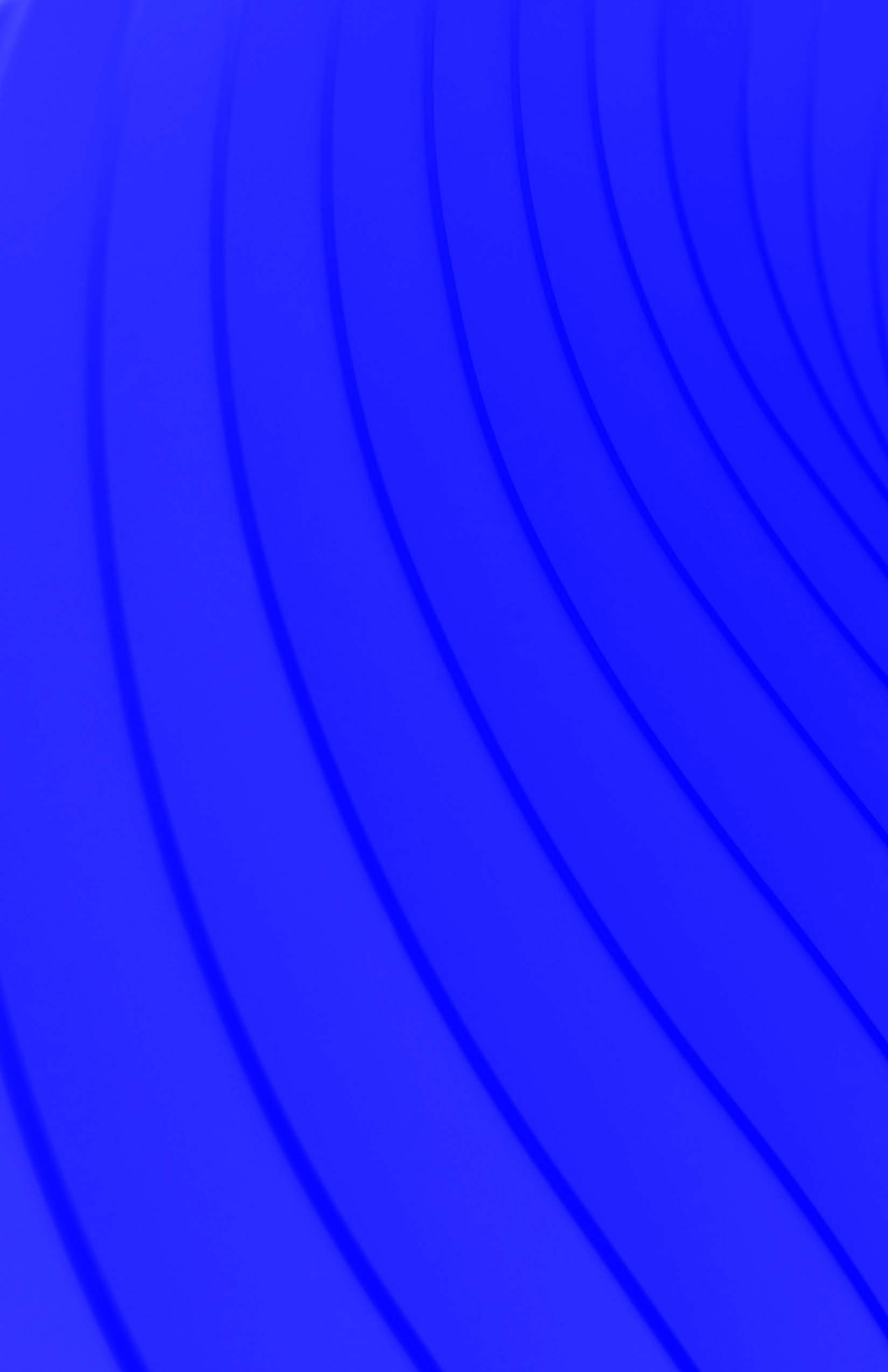
School of Art and Design
Graduating Student Exhibition

FINE ARTS



State University
of New York





School of Art and Design
Graduating Student Exhibition

FINE ARTS

How does a young artist create work that is relevant in our contemporary culture? In our ever-changing and interconnected world, the students considered multiple social, cultural, and political influences within their creative practices, while forging a formal visual language uniquely their own.

This year FIT's Fine Arts thesis students grappled with these issues and responded with works that reflect a range of expanded perspectives. Themes of personal experience and identity, as well as that of a strong interest and love of nature were explored. Paintings were produced with mixed media. Work was painted from observation and the photograph, and the use of abstraction was employed as well as the use anti-formalist painting. Because of FIT's proximity to New York's art galleries and museums, these students have developed a greater awareness of how their own ideas relate to both their creative predecessors and today's contemporary dialogue.



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Brittany Davis

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I AM BRIGITTE

Oil on canvas

After my second semester of freshman year, I started to truly fall in love with painting. While developing painting skills, I found more of myself; a part of me that was missing. I always had a fondness for nostalgic imagery, and with stronger painting abilities, I was able to further turn my dreams into reality. I was now able to bring my life stories, desires, passions, and everything that went on in my complex imagination to life.



LADY CHALET

Oil on canvas

During my final year at FIT, I decided to fully embrace my true nature and get more intertwined with my childhood self by doing self-portraits as a Victorian-era empress. After all the years of searching, I found the best thing for me was literally creating myself. I understand myself and my life story the best, so it made sense for me to be in my own spotlight.

Sofya Dudnik

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EMBRACE

Oil, stretched gessoed burlap



SILVER BOY

Oil, stretched cotton canvas

I work in oil. My favorite genre is painting from direct observation—whether it is a portrait, a landscape, or a still life. My works incorporate all the media I have worked with in the last four years, including sculpture, photography, and textiles. In my thesis project I explored a topic of emotional resilience during challenging times. I wanted my paintings to reflect how I dealt with life during the coronavirus pandemic. I felt confused, frustrated, angry, and sad. From that experience, my “Silver Boy” painting was born. The next stage of my journey was acceptance and hope. My painting “Embrace” manifests the universal love and affection that our planet and humanity needs so direly. I plan to continue working on expressing the whole range of emotions and feelings I have experienced during this unique time through my art.

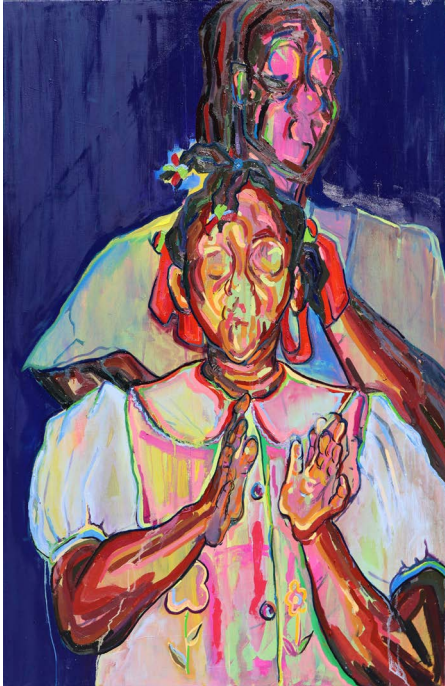
Marchelle Fleury

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LANMOU PA GEN PAREY

Oil on canvas



LANMOU PA JANM FAYI

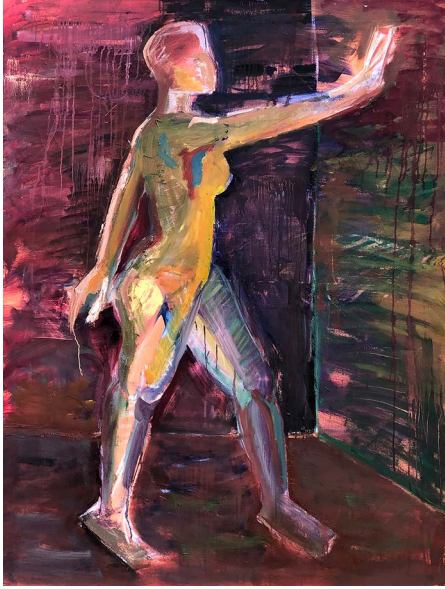
Oil on canvas

With these paintings, I wanted to commemorate my life in Haiti with my family—a simpler and happier time. Growing up in Haiti as a dyslexic child, color played a big role in my education and art language. I struggled to learn my native language, but I excelled in physical activities and the visual arts. I work in oil because it allows me to highlight the rich colors I remember from my childhood, from the exquisite, colorful costumes of traditional Haitian dance classes to vibrant Haitian paintings. I derive inspiration from my country's natural rainbow of colors: green palm trees, bright tropical flowers, and beautiful orange mangoes. By painting with these colors, I can articulate my culture and experience as an immigrant to viewers. I never give myself guidelines or limits. I just begin with a movement that is organic and keep going until the canvas is filled.

MY GOAL IS: To pursue my art to the best of my abilities and continue to strengthen myself as an artist.

Evelyn Franco

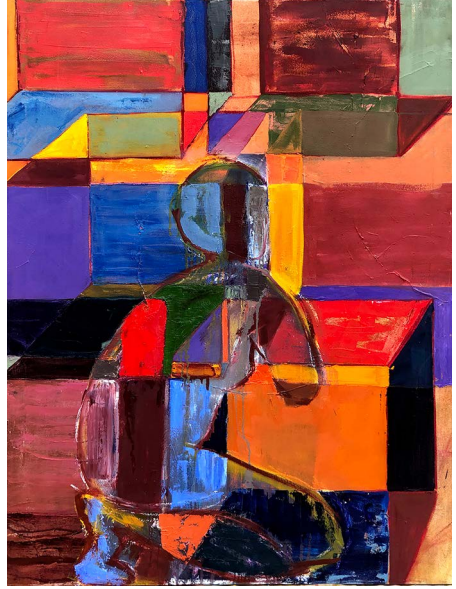
@bakedmagic



STRENGTH

Oil paint

A painting is a window into the complexities of an artists' life. The everyday struggle of simply being human has inspired my work through many phases. Throughout my life I have grappled with mental health issues which were not acknowledged because of the stigma that lies in many households regarding anxiety and depression. Years of unresolved issues, and my perseverance despite them, has fueled the exploration for my thesis. Perseverance



VULNERABILITY

Oil paint

is defined as “persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.” My anxieties have forced me to question myself every step of the way. The goal of this thesis is to try and understand my mental health through the medium of painting. In my thesis series titled *Perseverancia*, I am using geometric forms while incorporating figuration—wrestling to find balance, and clarity.

Elle Gregg

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GERMS

Acrylic spray paint and tube acrylic on canvas

In my artwork I explore the combination of sculpture, street art and graffiti, and painting. My greatest influences have been Fiona Rae and Takashi Murakami.

Using many different styles (such as graffiti and expressive abstract painting) and materials (such as acrylic paint, spray paint, and digital prints), I find joy when stylistic worlds collide, and also in sprayed mistakes. I'm inspired by decisions that feel odd and daring. The artworks evoke a clean nature. They are simultaneously precise—configured



INSIDE US

Acrylic spray paint and tube acrylic on canvas

purposely—and are free. The images I depict are heavenly, dreamlike, and evoke escape. I hope the artworks suggest to the viewer a different visual standpoint every time they look at them.

I'm attracted to boldness. When making the work, I question every angle and color.

The over-analyzers will understand my work most, and over-analyze with me, in the most positive effort to engage with the work.

Vladimir Ignatov

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UNTITLED, EXPEDITION1

Water-soluble oil paint



UNTITLED, EXPEDITION2

Water-soluble oil paint

As an emerging artist I find that my process focuses on exploration: exploration of color, harmony, form, and perspective. Yet I feel compelled to dive deeper than the fundamentals of visual thinking—to imbue my work with a meaning that serves as both the reins and the horse, inspiring my continual adventure in image making as well as steering it in the direction of infinite progress. I can think of no better subject matter than the furthest reaches of man driven by an endless wonder of the world around us. Whether it is the untamed wilderness of the rainforest or the mysteries that lay beneath the oceans, the desire for understanding is what makes us human. Such is the artistic endeavor, to understand the ways we communicate and perceive our experiences. Thus, this work is a metaphor of its own meaning: examining the desire to know and see.

MY GOAL IS: To explore my own mind through the “artistic method.”

Donghyun Kang

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EXPERIMENTS ; SLEEP PARALYSIS (GULPING FOR AIR)

Oil on paper



EXPERIMENTS ; SLEEP PARALYSIS (BLOCK)

Oil on paper

With the act of painting I strive to create a subtle ambiguous world made by a compression of the conscious and the unconscious. The development of my visual language is embedded in a rigorous undertaking, driving me to understand my interior life. For me, the painting process is one of constant destruction, erasure, and inclusion, made prescient by experiments with color, shape, composition, and line. The use of the formal lexicon enables me to describe my emotional struggle using the painting process. It is with this practice that I hope to find what I perceive to be the existence of an inner skewed balance, belonging uniquely to me.

I want to create a subtle world of ambiguity compressed with the known and the unknown, the conscious and the unconscious.

Mira Kheyman

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AND YET TO EVERY BAD THERE'S A WORSE

Oil on canvas

The question, "Who are you?" is one I excessively ponder. When I think about my life and who I am, the cultural details come to the forefront of my mind, but as I dig deeper into the details which make me an individual, it is hard to ignore the fact that for over a decade of my young life depression immensely contributed to who and why I am the way I am. My art is a complete parallel to the pains, joys, and experiences I have endured. With my paint-



THERE'S MUCH A MIRROR DOES NOT REFLECT

Oil on canvas

ing series I am trying to depict the feelings that nobody sees, memory loss, and mental insecurity. This series is about myself, my experience with mental anguish, and my way of saying the words I wish someone told me when I was younger.

My Goal Is: To pursue art therapy as it is the field which would allow my fascination with psychology as well as art to continue to flourish.

Shane Kidd

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SELF
Oil on canvas



SATURN DEVOURING HIS SON
Digital collage

I work in collage because it allows me to physically and creatively engage with my work and highlight contradictions. I created these works to express my need for connection. These collages are about self-identity and layering pieces of myself together. I am investigating what pieces of the world and my life make up who I am. I find inspiration in using found images and blending them with original images to create a unique work that can represent something greater than its individual parts. I discovered that my approach needed to be open to change and I needed to allow myself to engage freely with the process. My goal is to create harmony between different textures and images in order to reveal the unconscious.

Fiona Krugolets

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FIELDS OF MEMORY

Acrylic, oil, oil stick, collage



TIME WARP

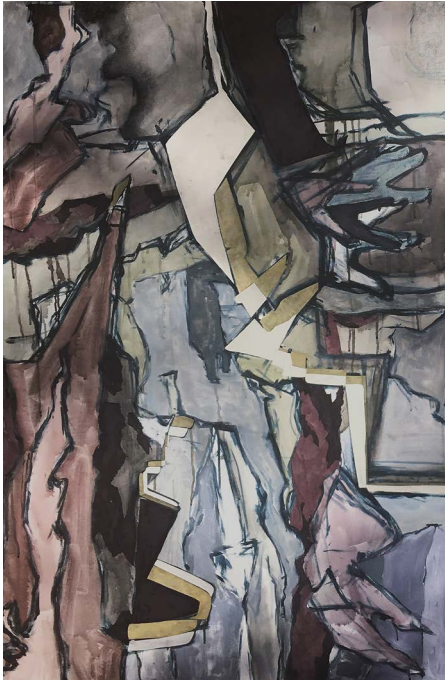
Monotype print, acrylic, collage

My work explores imagery of the growth, aging, and transformation of the landscape and architecture that colors my surroundings. When painting, I reflect on the environments that have shaped my childhood: Luna Park, Coney Island's beach, and playground structures that I once played in. The movement and transformation of life translates into my artistic search. Working in a process-based style has helped open doors to changing landscapes on canvas, while pushing the exploration of the composition in my work. Layering and adding new media such as collage and oil paint on top of acrylic surfaces, create a push and pull in imagery and motifs that symbolize architectural surfaces and nature. This method works in creating a lively energy of a living being and soul. As the world changes, my goal is to use my process and personal meditation of memory to connect with the world around me.

Erica Blue Leibowitz

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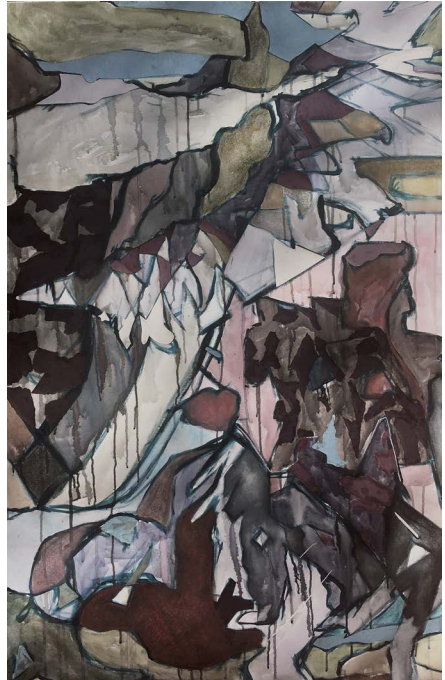


REST

Watercolor, acrylic, oil pastel, collage

Shadows silhouette the objects they represent. My interest in shadows grew when I noticed that the chandelier in my parents' bedroom produced a gradient of multiple shadows of objects that were reflected in the lights. Through simple contours and color value change, these shadows displayed a sense of movement and depth.

In my paintings, I eliminate the objects and focus instead on the shadows as the subject of the pieces. By using multimedia and forming a



RELAX

Watercolor, acrylic, oil pastel, collage

collage of images of repetitive shadows, I am able to contrast the softness and sharpness of shadows. This series of paintings highlights the power of shadows to illuminate absence; it commands a presence when the tangible and physical is lacking, allowing art to thrive within the shadows.

My goal is to elevate overlooked subjects and focus on their values and strengths so that they too are given the platform to shine.

Niko Lowery

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STOP! EXIT! GO!
Spray paint on paper



THE ROCKY IV
Acrylic on boxing gloves on canvas

My art acts as a voice for my beliefs, opinions, thoughts, and views. The angry strokes, my emotional approach to painting, and the attack on the surface with my raw emotions, offers me the relief I need. Displaying these feelings is both rejuvenating and exciting. Art can be just as effective as punching a pillow or screaming. In the case of my artwork, punching a canvas, writing out and drawing these feelings, or channeling thoughts onto one piece, for a long period of time, is an act of release for me. I want my work to show that I struggle like everyone else, and we can help each other by using our feelings and thoughts to create artwork to inspire the world.

My goals are to make an impact on everyone who sees my artwork, inspire artists of all ages and skills as an art educator, continuing my practice, growing as a human and creator, and passing my skills onto other artists who are as hungry as I am.

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COCOON

Recycled plastic and wire on welded steel



ASPHYXIATE

Recycled plastic and wire

I have focused on diversifying my work and pushing myself to take on new mediums. My selection of materials is heavily influenced by my interest and concerns involving climate change. I believe that giving these materials a new life is very important, especially in my sculptures. Formally, I am fascinated with the characteristics and texture they introduce in my work. These sculptures attempt to push the boundaries between comfort and suffocation. Inspired by nature and human interference with nature, it is my goal to continue investigating these interferences with a wider range of materials.

Kendra McLean

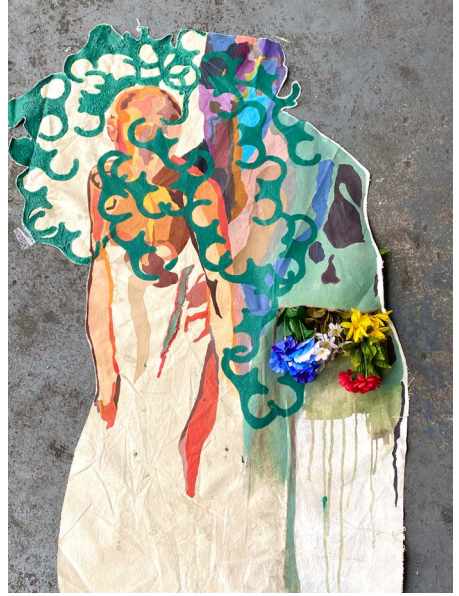
@kenspeckles



MEMORIAM

Acrylic, oil paint, glue, mylar, artificial flowers, rhinestones

Originally, I was going with a different idea for my senior thesis. However, being inside has unlocked a different approach and changed what I have been working on. I have learned that nothing is planned, and that ingenuity is developed through adversity. I have had the time to cherish many memories on how the world used to be, and I have witnessed death around me, witnessed my loved ones on the precipice of it. This is a battle of within, and I am oddly grateful for it. During quarantine and COVID-19, I have learned that not only is it a time to reminisce, but also, a time to accept.



MORTIS

Acrylic, matte medium, glue, duck canvas, artificial flowers

My Goal Is: To inform and express myself with my thoughts and expressions of memory and death, thus, these artworks are titled "Memoriam" and "Mortis." Both represent death and memories—memories of what used to be and death to those memories, and those people. Death is not always damning, though associated with pain and loss. It can also be bright and beautiful, like a flower, or like a phoenix.

Rosa Miranda

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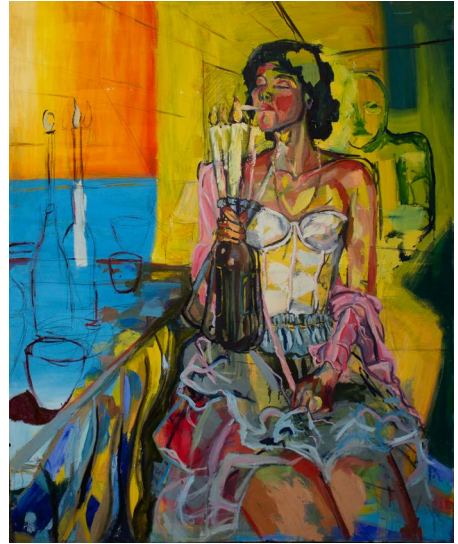
@slimjimxrosa



TUTU

Oil on canvas

The human experience is dictated by the senses; we chase what feels good and run from what our body deems dangerous. However, these instinctual powers have weakened with the ever presence of technology in our daily lives. When we just lie in bed on our phones, our senses become muffled. Your brain travels to a virtual realm as your body remains unmoved and stagnant. It causes you to disconnect from the physical world around you.



SAVANNAH

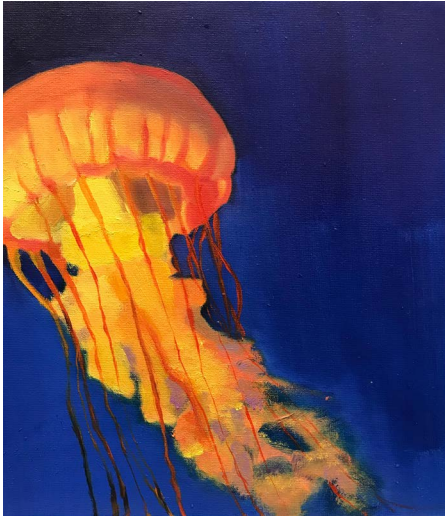
Oil on canvas

Drawing from my own experience with this sensation, I created a series of oil paintings to exhibit the dissociation of oneself with the present. My visceral color palette is inspired by the strength of the concentrated light emitted from electronic devices, as opposed to the world's natural light, creating a feeling of instability between the two realms. I use the repetition of body parts and objects to further demonstrate this inconsistency.

My goal: To continue growing as an artist.

Veronica Nelson

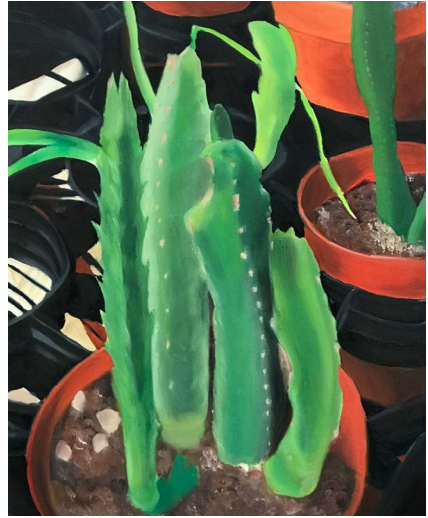
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UNTITLED
Oil on canvas

In the last two years, making artwork as a student at FIT, I've been passionately depicting the subject matter that calms me. I have been making work about what pleases me. I really like fine aesthetics and personal beauty.

Initially, I struggled to find subject matter that I enjoyed depicting and that motivated me to make my work. I believe I have finally found what I have been searching for: ocean life, plant life, and all things in the natural world.



UNTITLED
Oil on canvas

As an artist, I like creating works that are especially meaningful. Painting the natural world works as therapy for me. My artwork is a reflection of who I am and helps to describe my vulnerability. Art makes me feel at ease and puts me in a great mindset.

My Goal Is: I plan to continue with painting ocean life, plant life, and the natural world. I hope that by painting the subject matter of my interest, I will have the ability to work fruitfully into the future.

Lindsay Orlando

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MAP OF STATEN ISLAND

Oil paint and natural clay on artboard



UNTITLED

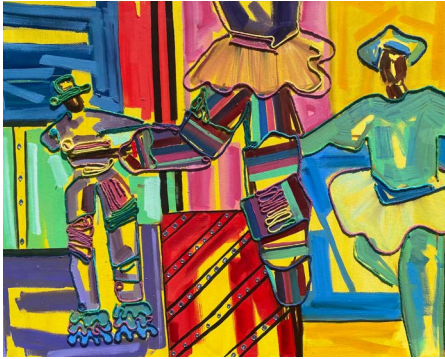
Solar plate etching and black walnut wood shavings

Through printmaking, painting, and collage I am able to express the deep connection I have with the natural world. My affinity for mycology and relic hunting have helped me interlace my worldly perspective onto paper. Growing up on Staten Island exposed me to a unique biosphere that was nestled away from the big city. The wildlife and history of the island is my fuel for creating works that showcase how truly unique this borough is.

My process starts outside. I will spend hours walking in the woods, combing beaches and old dump sites, and photographing wildlife. Once I create enough paintings and prints in addition to gathering natural materials, I will begin to assemble them into final pieces and series. When I am creating these pieces, I like to think about the asymmetry and symbiotic relationships that exist in nature.

Delisha Parris

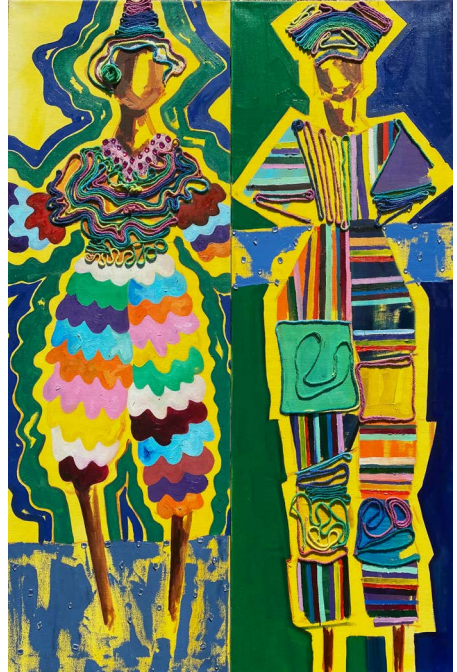
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MOKO JUMBIES - STAND STILL AND BE MOVED

Oil paint on canvas, yarn, gems

Moko jumbies are traditional, colorful, stilt walkers or dancers that perform at parades or festivals. A *moko* is an Orisha, or god, of fate and retribution, and the term jumbie, West Indian for spirit, was added post slavery. When this traditional carnival stilt-walking character is asked where he is from, he responds that he has walked across the Atlantic Ocean from the West Coast of Africa. As a child growing up in Trinidad and Tobago, I'd look on admirably at these characters who stood 10 to 15 feet, heads touching the sky, as they danced in their long pants or skirts and covered faces. With these images in mind, my brush moved freely, dipping frequently into my palette, while the yarn took play, representing the dancing, child-like element that would flow through the streets.



MOKO JUMBIES - STAND STILL AND BE MOVED

Oil paint on canvas, yarn, gems

MY GOAL IS: To inform people an aspect of Carnival culture. It's not just feathers and beads. As many of the characters, here, the moko jumbies, pay homage to the ancestors of those who either forcefully or voluntarily migrated to Trinidad and Tobago.

Camryn Ramirez

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THE LIFE AND MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Rope, string, fabric, trees

My art practice has been consistently focused around humans. Whether that be the physical touch of human beings, the deep relationships we form amongst ourselves, or the rights I feel every human deserves. I gravitate towards sculpture because of the closeness I can achieve with my materials.

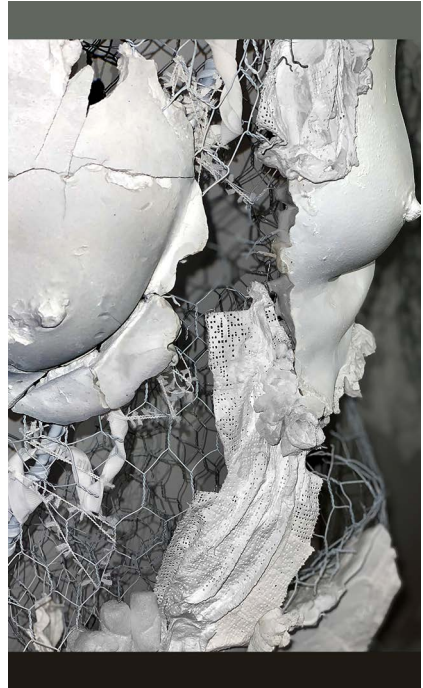
My visual interests were in flesh on flesh. However, if social distancing has taught me anything, it has reminded me that I miss being even a whopping five feet away from my friends and family.

So I have made a web, intertwining all of the connections I feel like I am missing out on. I am manifesting the physicality in connecting with someone amongst other living things, giving life to the web and all of the relationships it holds.

Goal: I am hoping to have endless hours to pursue my career as an artist, while in the process of reminding people the importance of human connection.

Miku Sekimoto

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DIALOGUE

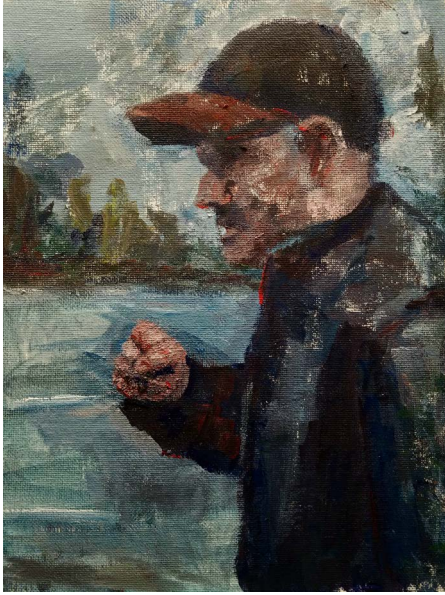
Plaster, fabric, chicken wire, steel, packing peanuts, paper, yarn

Born and raised in Japan, I came to New York in 2016. In Japan, I belonged to a dance club and was in charge of costume design. I like working with fabric from my culture and enjoy the touch and feel of the texture. I recognized that I was a figurative painter before I transferred to FIT. I recently had the opportunity to attempt sculpting for the first time. I experimented with body casting last year, and since then it has become important

for me to “capture this moment in moving ways.” I created this sculpture to express my frustrations. The three figures supporting the big head represent the three major desires of humans: eating, sleeping, and sex. My various desires in my head are amplified and are about to explode. When it comes to future artworks, I’d like to keep working on sculpting and painting to express myself.

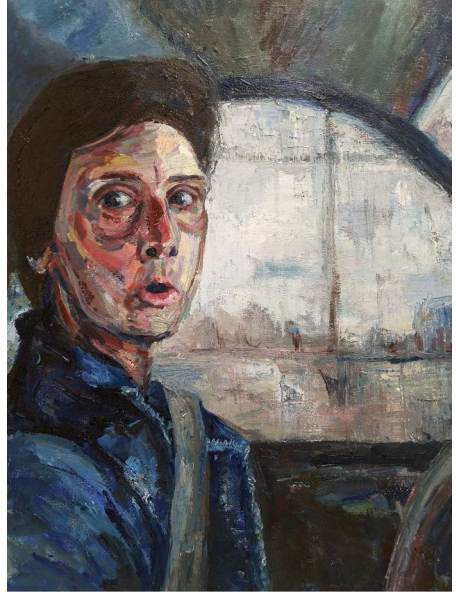
Mariel Tepper

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FITS OF RAGE
Acrylic on canvas board

I paint and draw directly from personal photographs as a way to process and interpret my surroundings and history. I draw inspiration from my family, friends, and neighborhoods of Staten Island. My main focus at the moment is portraiture, which I have been drawn to since childhood. I am fascinated by faces, the individuality and emotion inherent in the human face. Working from observation is a crucial foundation part of my process, but I aim to go beyond surface reality. I incorporate gestural



THE BEST IS YET TO COME
Oil on canvas

lines and brush marks, as well as an intuitive color palette, to express more of my emotional connection to the subjects. With each artwork, I feel one step closer to revealing the mysteries contained in myself and the world around me.

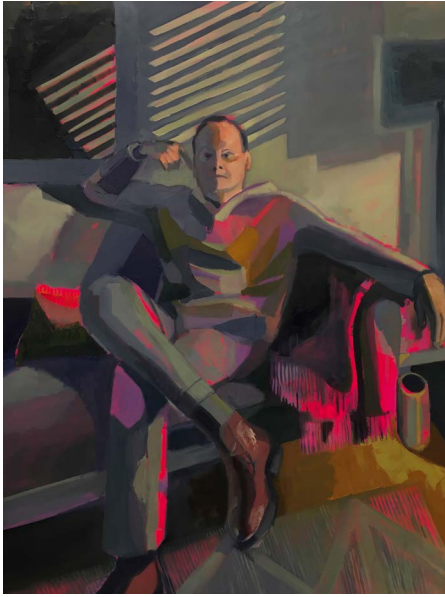
MY GOAL IS: To keep challenging myself, and to keep making art, whether it be through painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, filmmaking or another creative endeavor.

Cynthia Villamil

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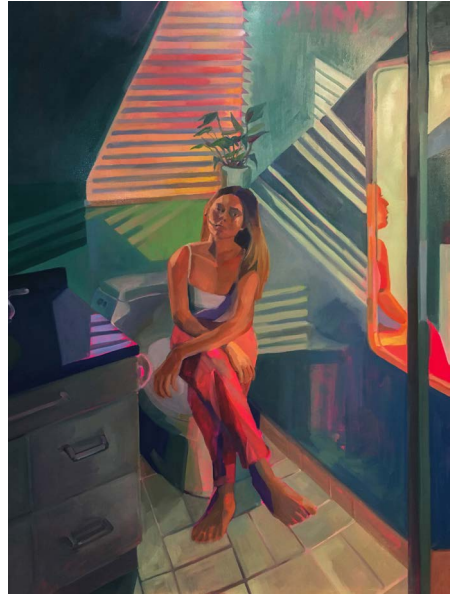
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PAPI IN THE LIVING ROOM

Oil on canvas



CYNTHIA IN THE BATHROOM

Oil on canvas

Home, its confines, and the walls within, have shaped me as a person. Foundation comes from a physical edifice, as well as from those living around me. This series merges the idea of structure within a domestic space, and family, because both shaped my foundation and who I am today. The geometry of the walls give structure to the people within them. By virtue of my painting style, my family and the

walls that surround them are both painted similarly—a representation of foundation.

My goal is to extract the idea of what home means to me and the people who occupy those spaces. By simplifying form and color, I observe the relationships between people in intimate settings.

Nia-Alexsandra Wallace

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MY LOVE, MY MIRROR

Acrylic on muslin



LEARNING & OMISSION

Acrylic on muslin

The art I created for my thesis represents different turning points in my life. From being in a healthy relationship for the first time, unlearning childhood trauma, and how the current pandemic is affecting me. These are all situations that are both profound moments to rejoice, as well as very anxiety-inducing circumstances that are new to me.

The paintings are all self-portraits that feature those close to me. I wanted these paintings to have a nostalgic and almost dreamlike feel to them. Even though these are completely different situations, they're all connected and influence one another. I also kept this in mind when picking the colors for each painting, as they all share a similar color palette.

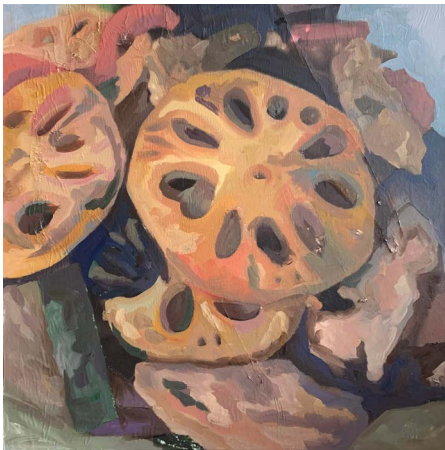
MY GOAL IS: I want to be a voice for the Black children who weren't encouraged to be themselves.

Ashley Wu

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SHRIMP
Oil on canvas



LOTUS
Oil on canvas

Why do I choose nourishment as a subject matter? This is a question I am often asked about my work. I use food from my household as a subject matter to truly describe my way of life as an Asian person. Real food and fresh ingredients are of great importance to me.

My compositions are designed to praise the shapes, hues, and tones of the food I use as subject matter. I arrange my lighting with deliberateness.

My hope and goal as a painter is that my images bring to my audience the passion and enjoyment I have enjoyed in my life, and invite the viewer to understand the culinary adventure I have experienced daily in my Asian household. With the paintings of my culture's food, I hope to inspire my audience to feel the same about the food of their own ethnic origins as I do about mine.

Megan Yoos



LOUNGE

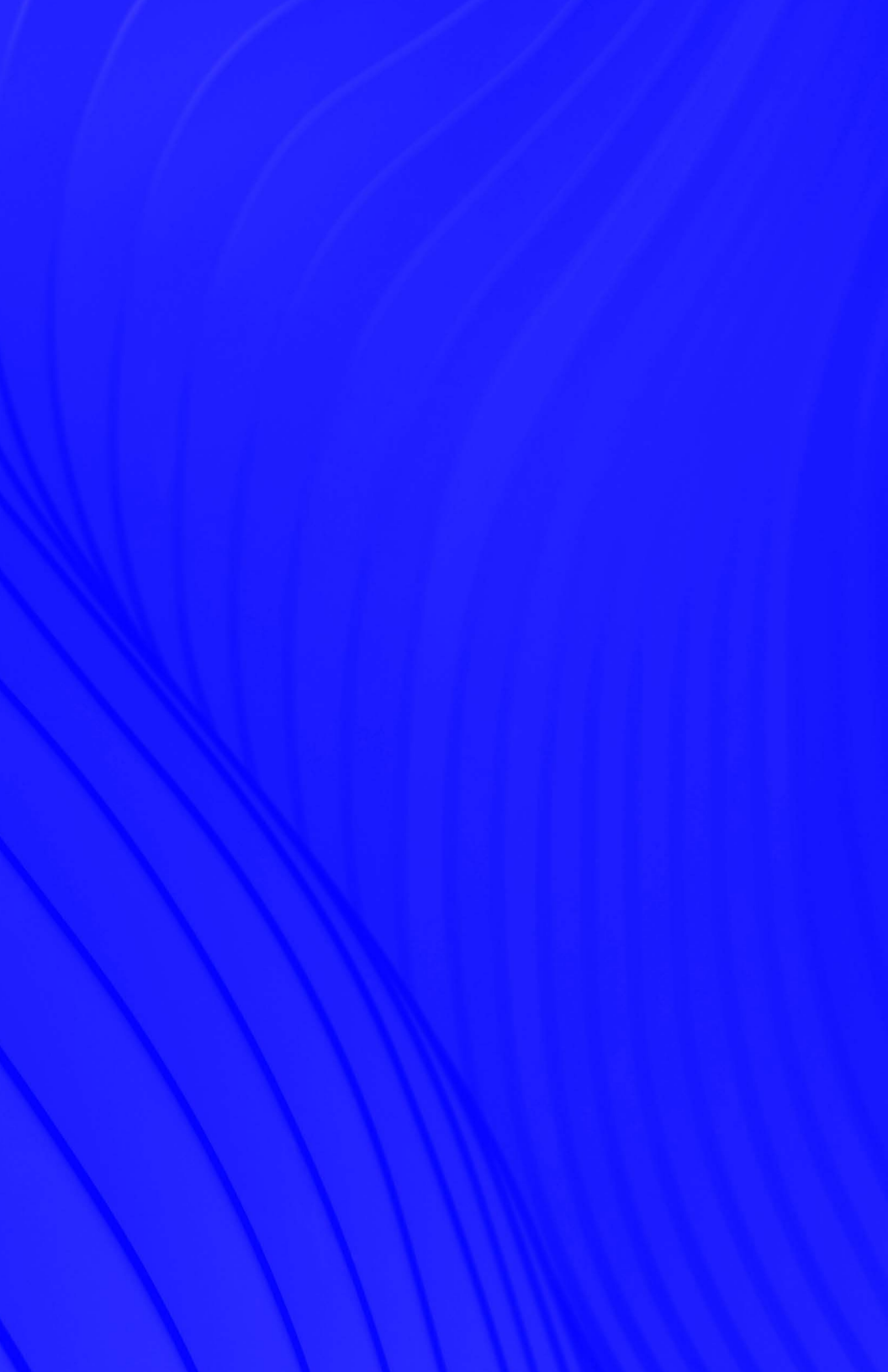
Oil on canvas

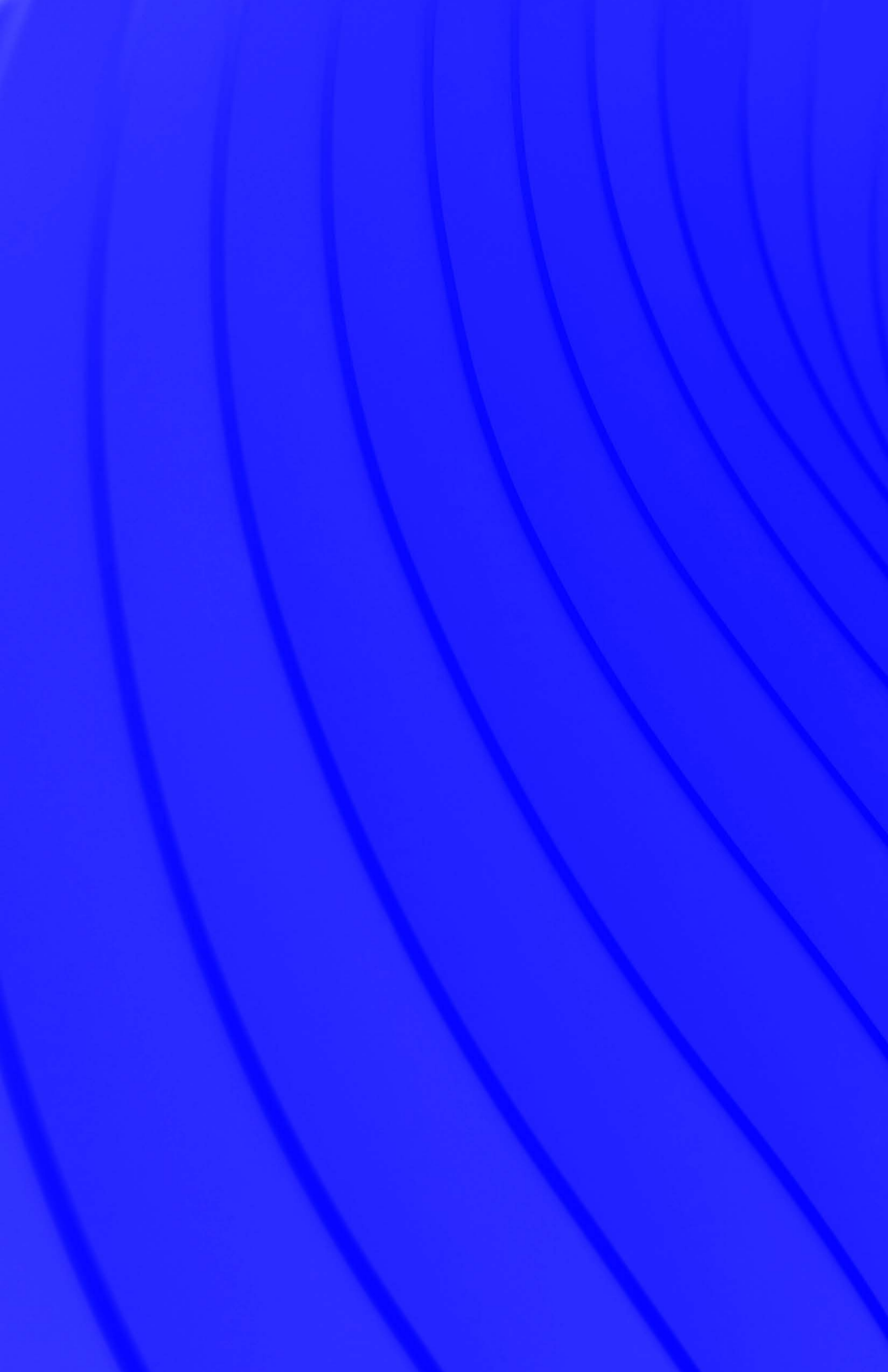


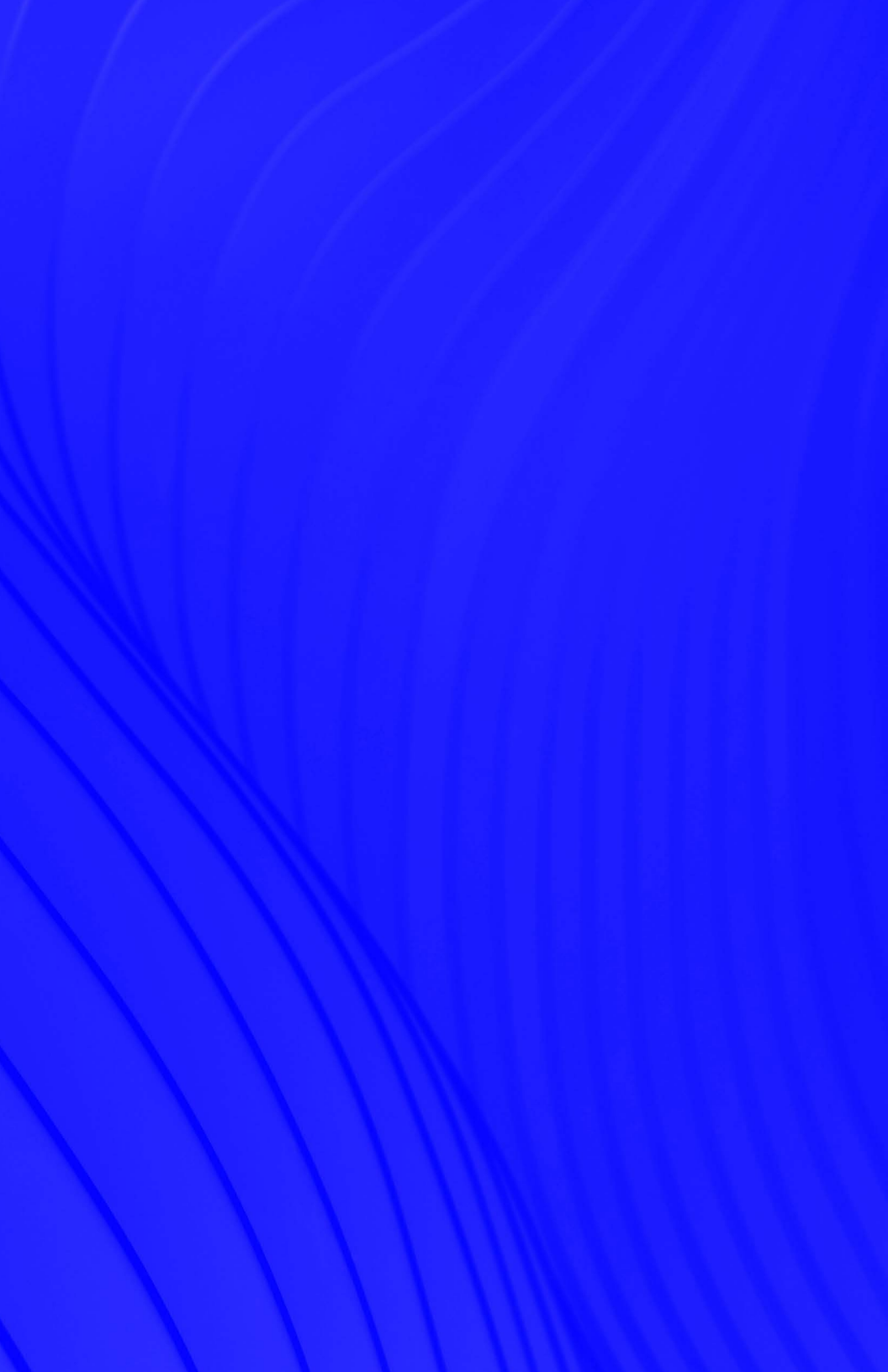
POOL

Oil on canvas

My work explores the dichotomy of wealth inequality. I achieve this through experimenting with texture, form, and pattern. I constructed dioramas to highlight the ideal American dream. I want my viewer to resonate with familiar iconography in the world through images of luxury. I'm intrigued by creating an atmosphere of distortion through perspective by physically exaggerating the space. I work in oil because this allows me to articulate the significance of materiality with the piece itself. The relationship between the abundance of material and its application amplify the contradictions in the work. This reflects an exclusivity that neglects the majority of Americans. My goal is to capture the viewer's attention with the extravagant illusion of materialism. With this pervasive look into these synthetic lives, I invite the viewer to investigate their principles.









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