

Tenure Review, Fall 2025

External Review

Research and Publications

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M.A., M.F.A.

September 2025¹



Alchemical Spell 1, 2023, xerox transfer, beeswax, decoction on white rag paper, 9 1/2" x 9 1/2" framed, private collection

Research Narrative

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I. Visual Publications, Recent Solo Artwork

Personal healing has been the subject of my recent “visual publications,” i.e., my visual artwork production and exhibition. I have mostly shown this work in New Orleans, where issues concerning physical and mental health (I tend to combine the two), reconstruction, “resilience” (here, a somewhat hackneyed and dirty word; many of us are tired of having to be resilient), and healing are central to the progress, evolution, even existence of this area. New Orleans and its environment are steeped in generational trauma across a wide variety of events, cultures, and histories. I explore and share my experiences of healing from personal trauma – my thoughts, feelings, actions, and practices - in my visual artwork. As a member of the healing community, I have experienced the most growth and repair by communicating about shared experiences. I do this primarily in visual language because it is my most comfortable writing style. Like many visual artists, I think I most comprehensively and best express myself in the forms of visual compositions.

¹ Author’s Note: This document is about work in progress. It will be updated after my solo exhibition, “Parts,” is installed in October 2025. I will submit the edited research document with teaching and service narratives by December 1st. This document is intended to serve the external reviewers who are evaluating my research/publications.

I work in a variety of media, but this narrative begins with recent work primarily in painting. Oil paint will always be my primary medium. Sometimes my work needs to be made in different materials, which range from sculpture, fiber, drawing, watercolor, printmaking, and installation. I value each process for the content of its form – from breaking from two- into three-dimensions in sculpture and installation, to the idea of repetition in printmaking, and to the immediacy of drawing and water-based media.

Second Story Gallery in The New Orleans Healing Center on St. Claude Avenue is a prime example of a site of healing tradition and the city's resilience. Since 2008, St. Claude Ave has been the locus of the experimental art scene in New Orleans, where artist collectives flourish and art spaces exist within and without the walls of the architecture along the strip. Restaurants showcase local talent, music clubs boast visual performances, and murals stack from block to block.

I was a member of the Second Story artist collective from 2021-3. The gallery is nestled on the second floor of The Healing Center. The Center itself is a community space for mind and body health, with programming including visual art exhibitions and various recovery support groups, plus massage therapy, a barber shop, and a food co-op.

I ran a space catty-corner from Second Story for The University of New Orleans for seven years, creating programming that engaged a variety of communities such as alumni, LGBTQIA+, university undergraduates and graduate students, and national and international arts organizations. I worked with other gallerists and collectives that came up in the area, and I believe we collectively helped create necessary spaces that joined arts and community. Keeping the UNO Gallery open was difficult enough without a budget or resources, and its mission of community engagement was complicated by the realities of working at the site: in the heart of a community suffering from diseases of addiction, PTSD, and utter physical decadence and decay. I ran the UNO Gallery from 2011-2018, and despite our challenges, it persists to this day under the expert direction of my colleague, Professor Tony Campbell.

In this narrative, I document and discuss some of the work I will show at UNO Gallery on St. Claude this October. The exhibition will be a sculptural installation, and some works are still in progress. The installation centers on the deeply, exploratively personal healing I am creating in myself as a person in recovery “from life,” as one licensed clinical therapist put it; or rather, from the trauma that has threaded through familial generations before me and through me.

I will not delve into the specifics of my own trauma in this narrative. I most often use generalized terms like “process” and “trauma” to reference the content and processes of the work I am making. The phrase “mental health” functions as a placeholder for my psychiatric diagnoses, which include panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), major depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and alcohol use dependence or disorder (AUD). I am recently diagnosed with unspecified dissociative identity disorder (DID), formerly called Multiple Personality Disorder, which is actually a coping mechanism

framed as a “disorder” of identity. It is important to me to acknowledge and accept that I have been a victim of traumatic events; this has been part of my healing process. It is more important to me now to write from the perspective of a survivor, stepping forward from the past and making sense of it in the present towards growth throughout my future.

Eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing, or “EMDR,” talk therapy, psychiatric care, Jungian-framed dream work, meditation practice, and mindfulness are both the media of my healing processes and frame the content of my recent artwork. My work is personal not because it is political,² so to speak, but because as Carol Hanisch began writing in “The Personal is Political,” I believe the personal is relatable. Looking at the work through the lens of broader social issues inevitably evokes political themes. I don’t know if healing is political, though.

Community work in recovery from life has taught me that personal communication is the key to growing healthy social and cultural structures. I understand that I am privileged to have access to and use the above-listed therapies in my own healing. I became certified in SMART Recovery meeting facilitation, a donation-based four-point recovery system that uses CBT to help attendants develop healthy coping strategies. I can bring what I have learned in my therapies to these meetings, and plan to start hosting gatherings using SMART concepts in spring. My personal is the best way for me to communicate because it is both what I know best and what I am still learning about. Sharing my personal “experience, strength, and hope,” to paraphrase one twelve-step group, follows a community healing tradition that has always been a part of the fabric of New Orleans, which is, ironically, perpetually tasked with the work of resilience and healing.

Because painting is the most familiar form to me in writing in visual language, I relate most to painters. I often cite James Elkins’ *What Painting Is* when I search for the words to answer why. I identify with Elkins’ unabashed geekery in this book, familiar with the kind of devout, knee-creaking worship at the shrine of Oil Painting I sense coming through his writing. He is also a painter-turned-art-historian – as I found I was in graduate school – though unlike Elkins, I continue to use painting as my primary language.

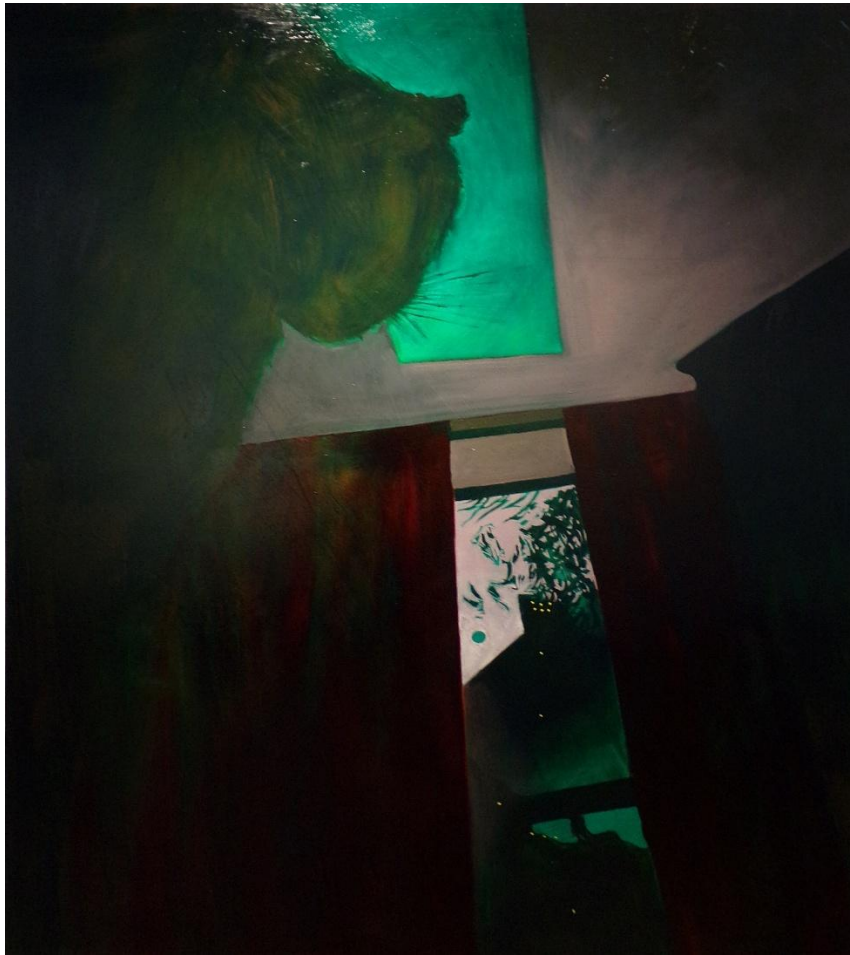
Elkins’ Aristotelian musings on painting as alchemy coexist with his emphasis on the bodily, physical aspects of painting. Noting the “scratching, scraping, waving, jabbing, pushing, and dragging”³ that exercise the painter’s body while paintings suggests that painting is as much mindful practice as it is pseudo-scientific experiment. Painting is both awareness of the body in front of paintings being seen and being painted, and painting is hypothetical investigations into the chemistry of paint, i.e., if I combine this, I may get this, I’ve seen that THIS has been the result, how do I get it again?

²Carol Hanisch, “The Personal Is Political,” *Notes from the Second Year: Women’s Liberation*, 1970, <https://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html>

Hanisch’s editorially titled article published in the wash of second-wave feminism is a good reference, but I struggle with fully identifying with the ideology; I think there has been progression in thinking about community and feminism since the original language was published, and it seems Hanisch does, too.

³James Elkins, “How Do Substances Occupy the Mind?” *What Painting Is*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2019, 96.

I seek mindful moments during insomniac hours under moonlit night skies, as I depict in *Moongazing in the Front Yard* and *Bean Moon*. I seek them while laying on my back in bed with the green light of the solar-powered bulb in the backyard glowing through the sliding glass door in my cat's *en suite* using a "54321" or a breathing exercise; I record this experience in *Portrait of Buddy Cat at Night*, exhibited in my solo show "SIGHTINGS." I practice EMDR with a licensed clinical therapist to be aware of the physical presence of my memories, trauma, thoughts, and feelings in my body. I have learned I am a "bottom up," identifying what thoughts are first by where and how they present in my physical form (usually the stomach, neck, throat, shoulders, and forehead). I use CBT in talk therapy to consciously manage the redirection of my neural wiring as I recover from C-PTSD. I have attempted to create spaces for my audience that mimic the ones that have helped me the most, because I am a codependent in recovery. I feel my body when I am painting, and I lose myself in dissociation when I am painting. There is no known or consistent strategy to find my balance – consistency itself has been the only practice that works. Painting has been a consistent practice in my life, almost more familiar than breathing.



Portrait of Buddy Cat at Night, 2023, oil on muslin, 46" x 36", private collection

The green light from the backyard silhouettes Buddy Cat's looming, foreshortened profile as he sits on my chest during breathwork.

Buddy Cat is my cat of almost 16 years. He has donated his time and fur by allowing me to brush him, a practice that is healing for us both. He has always loved a good brushing.

There is both slowness and speed in *Bean Moon* and *Moongazing in the Front Yard*, both illustrated below. They combine the indices of my body painting, from the physicality of impasto punctuating the surface to broader swaths of luminous glazes in oil paint. Dark, horizontal green and browns swipe the surface in the lower half of *Bean Moon*. These underscore passages of night sky whipping above them,

surrounding the lead-white slathered crescent of the moon. This bean anchors a polychromatic night sky over the rushing tree line and highway. In *Moongazing*, the small pearl of a planet in the top third calms me with its warm glow. It is the light at the end of the dark tunnel of a flashback. Glazes of quinacridone magenta, then pthalo green or viridian, then ultramarine blue thin and slip over the smoothness of primed muslin. I vigorously scrubbed the planet's orb with a rag to let more light through. I attempted to recreate the universe of variety in the light of the sky with the atmospheric glazes, like the clouds that blanket my most painful memories. The staccato slaps of filberts against the dark tree line create half-step values and textures of night-licked leaves. Slow and fast, these paintings depict the subject matter of my calming focus points with the physical acts of painting them, quasi-methodologies of sometimes successful therapies. As Elkins writes, "each painter, and painting, finds its own way forward."⁴ I find healing in the acts of painting, and in the subject matter I paint.

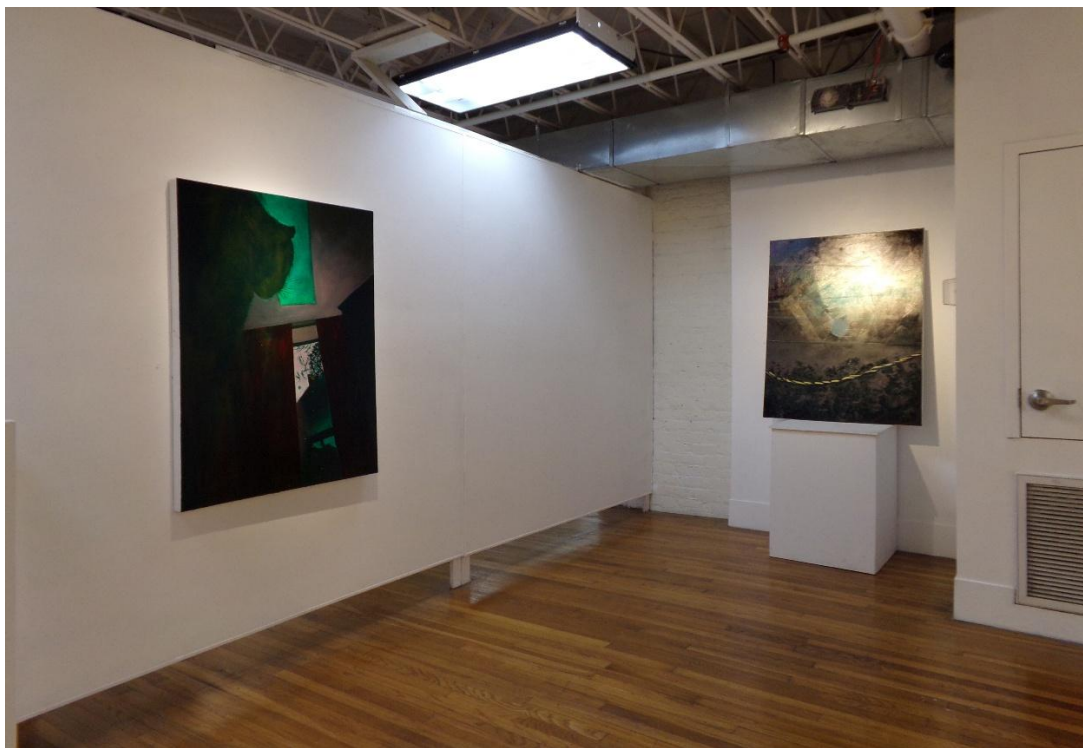


Bean Moon, 2022, oil on muslin, 48"x36", private collection

⁴ Elins, 145.



Moongazing in the Front Yard, 2023, oil on muslin, 46" x 36", private collection



Installation View,
Moongazing and
Portrait of Buddy Cat in
"SIGHTINGS," August
2023, Second Story
Gallery, New Orleans,
LA.

Using the sequestered alcove in the gallery as a place to mount large scale work as though in a shrine did not evoke the hallowed atmosphere I wanted in the busy white cube space.

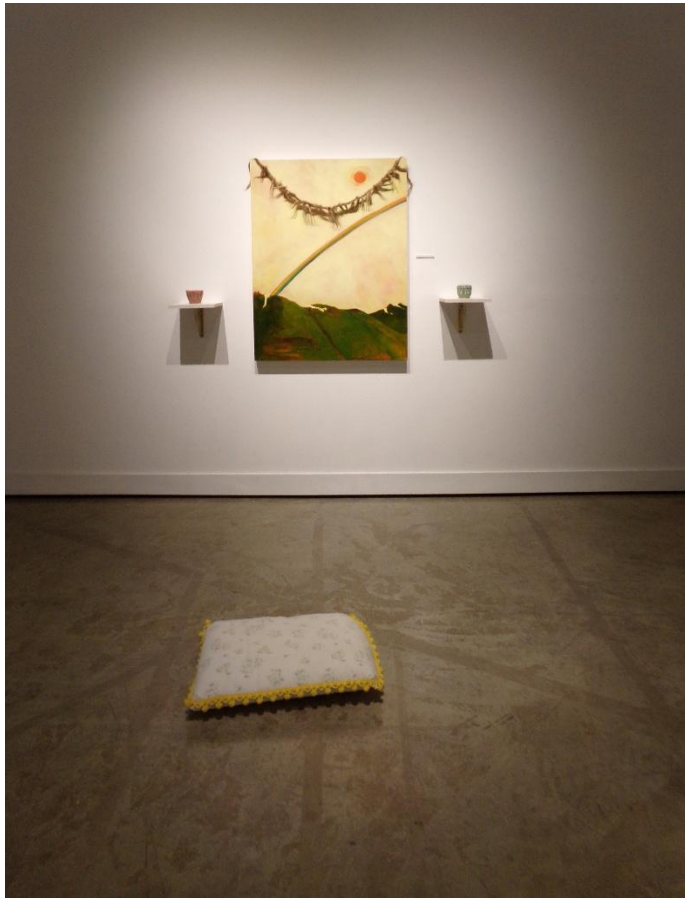
I realized I was trying to do a Creator's work by showing these paintings in the white cube, whether that cube was situated in a "healing center" or not. Gallery space could never be as solitary or timeless as the

studio, or as enrapturing as the power line striped sky in my front yard in the middle of the night. It could not provide the eerie quietness of Buddy Cat's room, listening to the mid-century windows creak with the breeze. The audience doesn't hear my breathing while I calm myself from the panicked throes of a flashback, or the voice of one of my dissociated parts yelling at me (it is me, yelling at me) amid art making. Like usual my people-pleasing tendencies led me to "find a solution" in showing the work without even questioning whether one was needed. I made paintings that were impossible to document, had to be witnessed in person, and had no means to truly convey their content unless the viewer was willing to suspend disbelief similarly to how I was when I was processing in EMDR.

I began to feel I was locked in a Sisyphean task in the work I made. My attempts at creating healing in the years when I was making "Ruminations" and "SIGHTINGS" (when I showed this painted work) were similarly up and down. I spiraled deeper into depression fueled by explosive flashbacks and alcohol use disorder. In February 2024, I took FMLA leave and put myself in inpatient treatment for AUD and mental health. It was the third time I went inpatient in my life – it had been 25 years since I felt the need to step back from such a harrowing precipice of mental decline for mental healing – and the first time for alcoholism. It was one of the most difficult and one of the best decisions I made in my life; I chose to keep trying, to be alive.

I read *Man's Search for Meaning*, written by a psychiatrist and inventor of logotherapy who survived the Holocaust. The author, Viktor Frankl, cites hope as the driver of survival. Making things has always been hopeful for me. It's how I ground and process where I am, anything from meal planning to making paintings. After 30 days of inpatient, I went into an outpatient program and started making drawings of the people around me. I was processing in the groups I attended and in the EMDR practice I continued. People waited to see the drawings I made of them, and I usually gave the drawings to those people. There is always a sense of hope in a human likeness, in the familiarity of one's face.

One rule of recovery is to avoid trying anything different for the first year, but I wanted to try new ways of making and understanding. I taught myself how to knit using a kit I bought on Amazon. During this meditative process – also Sisyphean at first, as I continually dropped stitches and started over – I thought of a mixed media painting I made for a show called "Farewell to the Flesh" in 2022, hosted by the artist collective to which I belonged. It was a show for Carnival season, in February. I made a painting of what I envisioned as a post-Apocalyptic landscape enshrined with a garland of my hair and cat fur, framed with two shelves holding burnt candle offerings for abundance and protection, and facing a pillow made from my grandmother's bedding. This was the closest I had gotten to creating a physical "healing space" in the white cube gallery.



Installation View at Sella Granata Art Gallery, *Fare Well to the Flesh: Apocalyptic Landscape (The Day the Earth Caught Fire (1961) / Missoula on Fire 2007)*, 2022, Installation: oil on muslin (47 ½" x 34 ½"); hair and cat fur garland; shelves and brackets (10" x 9 ¼"); handmade candles by Sarita Mahinay (IG @sarita_ceramics, Los Angeles, CA); pillowcase, fringe, pillow from Grandma Lo
Overall dimensions variable

The memories of rolling and tatting the hair and fur fibers filtered into my consciousness as I learned to knit and purl. The garland served as proof that I had skills to make my own yarn. Getting to the point of becoming a spinner myself is a longer story, and I must give reference and recognition to Grace Rennie, a former student and fiber artist who I originally outsourced the spinning to until she remembered she was allergic to cats. No one in New Orleans spins. I began hand-spinning the yarn I would use to knit *Mea Culpa*, one of the first works I made in recovery.

Mea Culpa (Latin, “by my fault”) is literally a hair shirt, also called a “cilice;”⁵ a garment worn by penitent Christian saints and martyrs to atone for sins – particularly sins of lust and the body.⁶ I was raised Catholic, and identify as non-practicing confirmed Catholic as part of my recovery. This hair shirt, fitted to my body, is an architecturally delicate and medieval empire-waisted V-neck camisole. A close friend and fellow artist who has been dear to me since high school said, “Yes, you would totally wear that,” when she saw it in progress.

⁵ From “Cilicia,” ancient country in Asia Minor, where goats who gave their yarn for making the shirts were herded; Merriam Webster Dictionary

⁶ Christina Garton, “The History of Hairshirts,” *Handwoven Magazine*, 27 March 2019

<https://handwovenmagazine.com/history-hairshirts/#:~:text=as%20the%20hairshirt.->

,Hairshirts%20are%20garments%20made%20from%20rough%20animal%20hair%20(usually%20that,avoid%20the%20temptation%20to%20sin.

The bottom half is an open-knit form made from hand-spun yarn of my own hair and Buddy Cat's fur. This yarn is both disgusting and comforting; it has the uncanny nature of hair and dandruff off the body, but I procured it by rhythmically and soothingly brushing my cat and my own hair. The bralette halter top is knit from yarn donated by my talk therapist. The hand-embroidered tag reads *Mea Culpa* in a font that is likely to be found on similar tags of department store lingerie. The tag is unnecessarily large, evoking the uncomfortable irritation of neck tags in other garments. The adjustable buckles for the shoulder straps are heavy, bronze-colored metal, and fine 18-carat gold plated wire threads through the fibers, barbing the soft yarns with sharp, scratchy unfinished ends.

I think what is most relatable and important about the shirt is that it points to culturally harmful conceptions of femininity and female identity. Girls are routinely sexualized from a young age, whether in their own families or in other social structures where appearance is key. Work in fiber specifically refers to craft traditions historically used to overtly feminize and subversively educate women; to create both comforting clothing and instruments of torture; and to make everyday objects more meaningful with decoration.⁷

I am not attempting to support a second-wave or whitewashed feminist approach to femaleness. I am interested in exploring how the definitions of femininity with which I grew up – which are couched in rebellious, late-twentieth century feminist thinking – have helped me construct dissociative coping strategies to deal with trauma from my childhood. My trauma is partially informed by the perpetuation of feminist ideals that second-wave feminism wanted to spurn, and that second-wave feminism is vilified for largely ignoring: the diversity of women, the broad spectrum of female experience, and what I call post-rage self-care. I feel more kinship with Louise Bourgeois, Tracey Emin, and Kiki Smith than I do with Miriam Schapiro and Judy Chicago. *Mea Culpa* is a symbol of my own distorted senses of my femaleness, which have manifested in disordered eating, AUD, and a series of paintings of disfigured humanoids – [one of which became haunted and is now housed in Bloody Mary's Haunted Museum in New Orleans](#).

It is both the general historical context and the personal history I have, learning to sew as a child, that frame the content of this work. I would remember the reasons why I needed to make this form with further processing in EMDR. At first, I intended to show the hair shirt in isolation, projecting from a wall or hanging in space so that it could be viewed in 360 degrees. Now, as my memories have started to unmoor from their bindings in my mind, I want to make it part of an installation for "Parts," my solo show in October exploring concepts of dissociative parts/coping mechanisms I created and maintained since I was child. I understand that I need to transform the white cube with installation, much as I did in my thesis work at The University of Montana. Installation is, in my mind, the better overall form for the work because will help me communicate better. The work, and the memories I have, both help me understand

⁷ Roszika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2019
This book has been very helpful to me in linking my ideas about femininity to the forms and media I am using.

why I created these dissociative coping mechanisms in the first place, and thus gradually heal and re-seal myself into one whole person.



Mea Culpa, 2025, hand knit yarn from my therapist and hand-spun yarn made from my hair and my cat's fur, satin ribbon, hanger, adjustable shoulder buckles, 18k gold plated wire, size M/6



Detail, *Mea Culpa*, 2025, hand knit yarn from my therapist and hand-spun yarn made from my hair and my cat's fur, satin ribbon, hanger, adjustable shoulder buckles, 18k gold plated wire, size M/6



Detail, *Mea Culpa*, 2025, hand knit yarn from my therapist and hand-spun yarn made from my hair and my cat's fur, satin ribbon, hanger, adjustable shoulder buckles, 18k gold plated wire, size M/6

In early recovery, I found a twelve-step group that met for a weekly book study. I became enamored with passages about recovery in this book. The first edition dates to the mid-1930s, and the language in successive editions has remained relatively consistent except for the forewords, which serve to describe how many thousands of people have been helped by its pages.

My mother's mother, Granny, taught me to embroider, my mother taught me to sew, and my Grandma Lo worked crochet from her recliner, making skeins of yarn into yards of blankets. GLo, as we abbreviated her name, was the uncontested matriarch, and knew about cross stitch too. As a child and a girl, I often made samplers for the holidays and occasionally my own clothes. It was the embroidery – not my ability to cut and stitch a pattern and therefore clothe myself at a young age – that received the most recognition. As Roszika Parker points out, by the 17th century, Anglo middle-class girls were “tested” in a way through “educational exercises in stitchery – individual tests of skill ...They provided evidence of a child's ‘progress’ on the ladder to womanhood.”⁸ I followed suit.

⁸ Roszika Parker, “The Inculcation of Femininity,” *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2019, 85.

Parker also notes that by the sixteenth century, embroidery especially “served two functions: endowing an education with elevated class associations, and making an education, which might otherwise have been deemed dangerously masculine, safely feminine.”⁹ I knew about Parker’s text but hadn’t read it at the time I started making samplers from the 12-step book of my meeting. Parker’s writing inculcates the dogma of a “feminine” education that I sensed through my near life-long, intermittent practice of embroidering.

The meditative quality of the stitching was a fine companion for the meditation of spinning. I began to make finer yarn from my hair and Buddy’s fur, intended for embroidery. I used GLo’s embroidery thread, some of which likely also belonged to my great grandmother Elvira – who I knew as a child. We had the same birthday.

As I studied this book about recovery, I was troubled by the anachronistic tone of the writing (it had always been a problem for me in previous periods of sobriety). I began writing the phrases down on notecards. . I found what I thought were the most maudlin anathemas and made a series of five samplers with them. The name of the chapter is an acronym at the top, the page number for the quote is at the bottom, and the phrase is embroidered in a mid-twentieth century font with my grandmother’s thread. Hand spun yarn and skin – evidence of my own sloughing of these perceptions to heal and grow anew – frame and decorate the work.¹⁰

I felt I was codifying my own learning about recovery as well as sloughing off the perceptions of negative core beliefs (I am awful, I am broken, I am heartbreaking) that I was surprised to also find codified in the blue 12-step book. I believe the original authors meant to reach their readers with empathy, recognition, and consideration. However, I could easily interpret castigation in the language, supporting the livelihood of the powerful convictions I already had about myself, throughout my life.

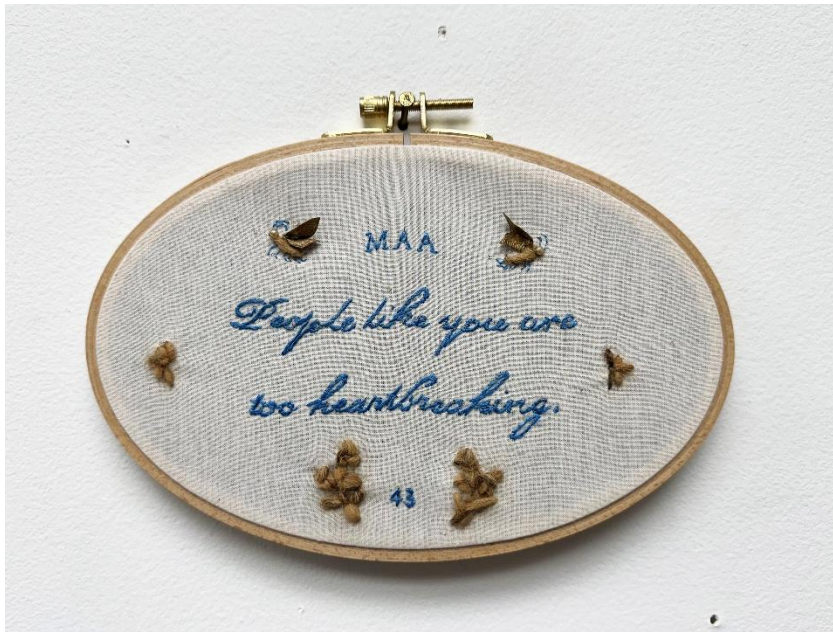
TO me, the most heartbreaking phrase in the book is “People like you are too heartbreaking.” It comes from an anecdote related by two of the authors, regarding Dr. Percy Pollock. The two patients, one of whom was Bill W(ilson), were, in the text, concurring with this doctor’s opinion that the average alcoholic’s plight is hopeless. Unless, for certain, the alcoholic decided to follow the spiritual principles and suggestions laid out in the text. Western medicine could do nothing to save the alcoholic from this disease/coping mechanism/affliction.¹¹

⁹ Parker, 73.

¹⁰ Prior to this period of continuous sobriety, after a bender, the poison of the alcohol would often cause my skin to slough off. I intuitively saved these sheets of skin and incorporated it into the samplers as wings of metamorphosed insects. These creatures had grown and evolved into something completely different along a trusted and typical evolutionary path, like me. They bore the relics of my cocoon as part of their embroidered bodies.

¹¹ Excerpts from “More About Alcoholism, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed., New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2019, 43.

The tight and pinched text across the elliptical sampler – the shape reminiscent of orbits and cycles, and certainly not a perfect circle – are like the tightness I feel in my chest when I think of these words together. They evoke grief and shame, linked like so many stitches to my throat and chest. By educating myself about the context of the words, and having my own healing experiences in sobriety, I was no longer beholden to the twelve-step process. I am extremely grateful that the twelve-step practice exists, that it has been a part of my recovery, and that it works for so many. I found that I needed to explore EMDR and talk therapy with greater passion, because these aligned better with my needs. I am healing myself from that shame.



Sampler 4 (People Like You), 2024, antique blue silk embroidery thread, artist's skin, antique beads, hand spun yarn made with artist's hair and cat's fur, muslin, wooden embroidery hoop, 8 ½" W

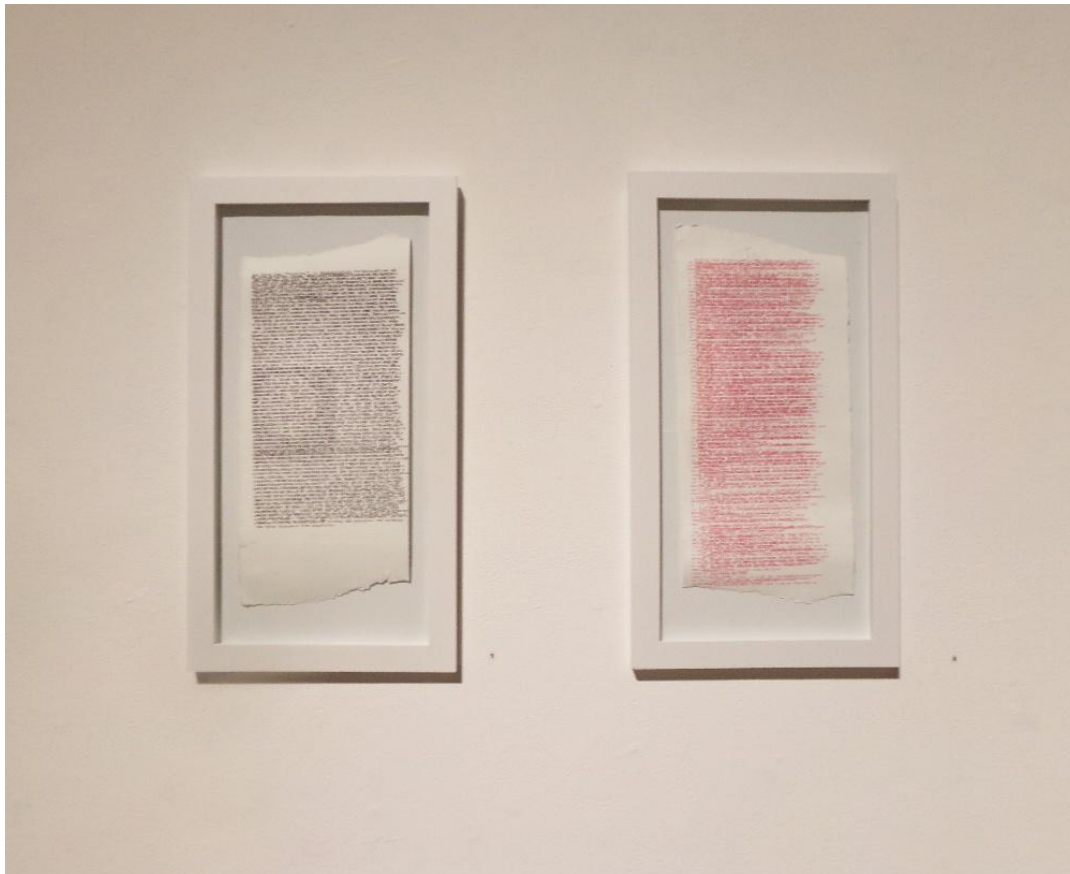
My work with text was not a new practice. I showed a series of typewriter prints in "Ruminations," that to me spoke (or misspoke) about an inability to communicate, about redaction, and about the whirling thoughts that intrude upon meditative space. I am interested in the idea of print and easily disseminated information contrasting with the reality of language barriers and isolation that verges on the unhealthy.

I typed out the definitions and etymologies of personally or intuitively significant words like "hollow," "warp," and "pit" from the Oxford English Dictionary. I redacted them by typing them line over line, the text becoming a partially legible blur. I typed and redacted self-authored short stories which I wrote to help me cope with traumatic life events. I typed out emails between my ex-husband and myself when I was teaching in Innsbruck, Austria, for UNO Study Abroad at the same time as getting divorced from him and selling my house. It was a physical way of processing the work. [I liken it to the way I would chop up journals and turn them into sausage in "Eat Me" in 2017, or the paintings of chewed up food from that same exhibition.](#) In fact, both kinds of "processing" were akin to how I coped with alcohol: address it head on, ruminate, and then masticate and repress to obliteration. [Sometimes, it exploded out of me, a](#)

[sensation I hoped to capture in the work I had in the two-person show “SOLAR” with Jeffrey Rinehart at that same time “Ruminations” was on display.](#)

While the clickety clack of the typewriter and the meditative tapping of my fingers on keys are arguably healthier versions of the same coping strategy as AUD, none of these methods were completely effective at helping me manage what felt unmanageable inside and outside of my body. Hindsight affords me the ability to trace the provenance of my healing, observing the places along that timeline where it sat until it moved again.

There was in fact no one way I could process the traumatic experiences that scarred my brain and body. I found that a combination of methods used them together has been the best “one” method. The most important part of healing is trusting my intuition and trusting this process, knowing that I will and can tell myself the truth about what I need to do to heal, and that sharing my practices gives the community one more example from which they may find their own healing. My goal, though, is to participate fully in my own healing processes especially by trusting the process itself.



Installation view
in “Ruminations,”
*Excommunication 8: Munich
emails (R)* and
*Excommunication 7: The Vacation
(Revised), Smoke
Disappearing (L)*
Both: 2022 Red or
Black ink
typewriter print
on white rag
paper, dirt shoe
print
17” x 7 3/4”
unframed
22” x 12” framed

I have long contended that looking at art is part of making art, and so my time as a publishing art critic in New Orleans, between 2009-2022, factors in my visual language research. It is also a stand-alone practice of critical thinking and constructive creativity, determining content as it reveals itself to me, and sharing that interpretation as an “expert,” so to speak. Though, I am no expert. I do my best to write what I feel is right.

This practice began while I was a graduate student, when I worked on a thesis-driven professional paper for the Master of Arts in Art History at the University of Montana, Missoula. I earned this degree concurrently with a Master of Fine Arts in Painting and Drawing at the same school, between 2005-8. I wrote the catalog essay for an exhibition I co-designed called “Henry Meloy: The Portraits” in 2007. I had big feelings for Meloy, then long deceased, and his record of portraiture ranging from the regionalism and realism of the 30s to the abstraction of the 50s. I said in my thesis defense that I was jealous of him, of his production and passion – but in truth I wanted to identify with him as an artist.



Postcard image for “Henry Meloy: The Portraits”
(*Untitled (Portrait of Helen?)*, Graphite on paper, undated,
On Permanent Loan Courtesy Henry Meloy Educational Trust)

<https://www.missoulaevents.net/07/12/2007/henry-meloy-the-portraits/>

https://www.umt.edu/montana-museum/exhibitions_events/pastexhibitions/2006-2007.php

After the essay was published by the Montana Museum of Arts and Culture, I was asked to write a catalog essay for Brad Allen’s installation at the Missoula Art Museum, part of a grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation. “LooM” was a visual speculation on suburban sprawl over the western landscape. I have no copies of the catalog, but I still have the essay, somewhere. Sometimes things are only meant to be remembered, without material reference.

When I returned home to New Orleans from graduate school in Montana in 2008, I soon found an opportunity through a friend from undergraduate work to write for *New Orleans Art Review*. I believe I sent my essay on Allen’s work to the editor of *NOAR* at the suggestion of a friend, and I was promptly assigned to cover gallery and museum exhibitions in the city on both the north and south shores of Lake Pontchartrain.



New Orleans Art Review logo,
<https://www.noareview.org/>

Some galleries I wrote about no longer exist, such as the Brunner Gallery in Covington. Some are differently named, like Ferrara Showman Gallery in the commercial Julia St. Arts District in New Orleans. Some artists whose work I have covered have changed names, like Dan Charbonnet. Some work was here for a finite time in international partnerships like the Innsbruck Artist Exchange, which ended in 2016.¹³ Some of the work was proposed to me as subject matter for these writings and some work I personally sought, personally connected, and wrote about to process my thoughts and feelings about it.

The last article I wrote for *NOAR* was about the Dawn DeDeaux retrospective at New Orleans Museum of Art.¹⁴ Like many of the shows I wrote about, I felt an unnamable kinship with this work and awed by DeDeaux's prolific career. I focused on the environmental themes in her artwork, no doubt correlating them with personal themes of deep change in my own life.

NOAR mysteriously disappeared after I submitted this and one other piece for publication. Repeated emails to the editor yielded no response. Now the journal is contained as a website, chronicling only the last fourteen years of its multi-decade and multi-generational run.¹⁵ I have hope that I will research and archive the journal in the coming years after gaining tenure at UNO. Hope means a goal, and a plan to follow.



Dawn DeDeaux, "The Unquiet Sleep," 2018-2019

Now. And Then.

BY KATHY RODRIGUEZ

DAWN DEDEAUX

three dimensions, with hologram-like effects as the viewer moves left to right, back and forth in front of them. At life size or larger.

Screenshot, "Now. And Then." *NOAR* article, Dawn DeDeaux, "The Space Between Worlds," unpublished, 2022

[https://www.noareview.org/uploads/4/3/5/8/43585085/kathy_rodriguez_z_-_dawn_dedeaux_retrospective_-_noma.pdf](https://www.noareview.org/uploads/4/3/5/8/43585085/kathy_rodriguez_-_dawn_dedeaux_retrospective_-_noma.pdf)

¹³ Embassy of Austria, "Innsbruck & New Orleans: A Model Transatlantic Partnership," Medium, 29 Sept 2016, <https://medium.com/euintheus/innsbruck-new-orleans-a-model-transatlantic-partnership-762d9a403945>

¹⁴ <https://artstatenola.blogspot.com/2022/05/archive-dawn-dedeaux-ive-seen-future.html>

¹⁵ <https://www.noareview.org/archive.html>

Being published in *NOAR* led to a stint with the now defunct, online-only rag, *NOLA Defender*, and two reviews with the now defunct Pelican Bomb. Denizens of the city often lament to me that no serious art criticism exists in New Orleans anymore. Our most dedicated art critic, D. Eric Bookhardt, passed in 2019. Doug MacCash, an alumnus of UNO, serves as a multi-faceted arts and culture reporter for our main newspaper, the Times-Picayune/Advocate. He is tasked with covering multiple aspects of the widely interpretable “arts and culture” of the city, difficult work in a place where the arts are the culture and both are distinctly individuated and everywhere.

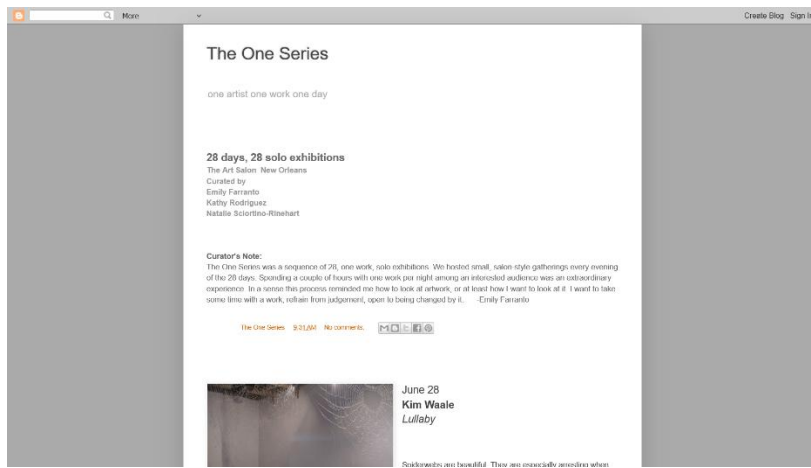
I have not yet returned to regular critical review and writing practice because I am ensconced in working in visual language. I am actively archiving articles I wrote on my blog, [State of the Art NOLA](#). I intend to connect with past authors for *NOAR*: Ted Calas, Judith Bonner, Peggy McDowell, and Marian McLellan to begin. There is no guarantee they would want to participate. However, I envision what I hope would be an easy segue into documentation, such as recording oral histories from the writers about their experiences writing. I am not certain if this is solely something I must pursue on my own, or if there would be interdepartmental support at UNO for the research. I look forward to the opportunity to find out more.

III. Curation

Writing and publishing led to curatorial opportunities through the New Orleans community, first and especially “[The One Series](#)” in 2012. I was invited to co-curate this exhibition with New Orleans transplant and vibrant art writer Emily Farranto. In this month-long series of salons, we showed one artwork by one artist on one day for 28 days. Works ranged from complicated installations to a print hung with magnets on a wall. We each invited several artists and scheduled the calendar. Our artists shipped the work when needed. In one case, I picked up five wheelbarrows in my Ford Ranger to install in a pentagram at the gallery, then called “The Salon,” located on Magazine Street near Napoleon Avenue.¹⁶

We held a salon each evening to discuss the one work of art installed at The Salon (I would later co-found TEN Artist Collective here and change the name of the space to TEN Gallery). Each night, we discussed different work. Each day, we de-installed the work from the night before and installed a new one for that evening. It was brutal and it was a lot of wine. Even so we emphasized the necessity of devoting our attention solely to comprehensively considering one person’s output, thoughts, heart, and head in the relic of their visual artwork.

¹⁶ Magazine Street is prime real estate for the visual arts. It is more like the historical arts district in New Orleans and is the site of New Orleans Academy of Fine Art, a non-degree granting institution known for its academic training in sculpture, painting, and drawing. Magazine Street is home to many contemporary art galleries and at least one auction house, as well as ceramics studios. New Orleans and Newcomb College at Tulane have been recognized for sought after Newcomb Pottery, and the ceramics studios in this area continue to produce meaningful forms in that tradition.



Screenshot, “The One Series,” blog archive
<http://theoneseries2012.blogspot.com/>

In 2011, I began as a full-time instructor at The University of New Orleans, after three years there as adjunct professor. A major part of my responsibilities as a full-time employee involved running the UNO St. Claude Gallery, now called UNO Gallery on St. Claude. My work as Director there brought me both the opportunity to curate and produce programming I felt was meaningful, and to collaborate and cooperate with faculty from UNO and other institutions. In addition to running the gallery I taught three classes per semester and participated in TEN Collective as a practicing visual artist.

The main mission of the UNO gallery is still to serve our Master of Fine Arts students in visual arts. The gallery continues to host MFA thesis exhibitions. No other university in New Orleans offers this unique exhibition opportunity, where students are able to show their research in the heart of an increasingly important area of the visual arts. Many of our grads have gained gallery representation from their thesis shows.

At times our MFA alumni will show in solo or group exhibitions at the gallery. I hosted exhibitions of works by Christine Sauer, Jessica Goldfinch, Jeffrey Rinehart, Valerie Corradetti, and Dan Charbonnet. The emphasis on alumni showcases in the mission of the gallery was established with the group show “HxWxD: 30 Years of MFA at UNO” in 2009. When I began my time as director in 2011, I was able to offer many of the artists included in that exhibition solo opportunities at the gallery.

Prospect New Orleans was a major impetus for the formation of the St. Claude Arts District. When this then-biennial, now-triennial began in 2008, artist collectives had just begun to sprout in the Katrina-wrought remnants of spaces along the avenue. UNO opened its gallery then, too. In the second iteration of Prospect in 2011, we served as an official venue. The programming was in progress when I took the helm. With the invaluable help of Suzanna Ritz and Peter Hoffman, two graduate assistants, we managed to install a massive neon fence in the design of New Orleans’ wrought iron by Chilean-born artist Ivan Navarro. This required a \$16,000 renovation of the gallery’s wiring and the intervention of UNO’s facilities workers. It was an extremely unpleasant and difficult show, mostly because the artist had a straightforward intention to evoke the sense of imprisonment with the work. Successive iterations of Prospect were, in my experiences and opinion, more engaging and approachable, such as The Propeller

Group for Prospect.3. In the summer of 2015 this Vietnamese-American artistic group also showed their work at the Venice Biennale. I was involved in the determination of the Prospect artist for the space to some extent, though the artists and Prospect curators would determine the artwork to be installed.

Ritz and I cocurated our first graduate cohort exhibition, “2-D/3-D,” in 2012. We rotated two groups of grad students working in two- and three-dimensional media, respectively, over two months that summer. June was reserved for two-dimensional artists’ work and July for sculptural work and time-based media. Exhibitions like this and “Presences” in 2016 served the community by introducing new graduate students to the New Orleans art scene and promoting our program as a professional launch pad for emerging artists. These exhibitions gave even more weight to our MFA degree in visual arts in addition to our NASAD accreditation. These exhibitions literally gave our program street cred.



Postcard for “2-D/3-D”, 2012
<https://www.kathyrodriguez.info/curation>



Postcard for “Presences,” 2016
<https://www.unostclaudegallery.org/post/m-f-a-2016-summer-graduate-show>

Another gallery mission has been to feature the work of full-time and adjunct faculty. The first faculty exhibition in 2008, titled “Payoff,” included all faculty teaching that fall semester. I was just starting as adjunct faculty and was joined by two of my peers from my undergraduate study as adjuncts. Since then, we have held faculty exhibitions for Professors Ariya Martin, Tony Campbell (as Generic Art Solutions with alumnus Matt Vis), and Jeffrey Rinehart. Professors Martin and Dan Rule each curated different exhibitions for the space. I organized a “UNO Painting” exhibition in Fall 2015, which commemorated the three painting professors: Professors Emeritus Jim Richard, Doyle Gertjejansen, and Richard Johnson, who served as UNO faculty and occasionally department heads since the early years of the Fine Arts program in the 1970s. Faculty shows were a major part of my research as I wrote materials and prepared exhibition design to highlight the achievements of our small but stellar teachers. I think it is apropos that I am mounting my own faculty solo exhibition at the gallery this year, seven years after voluntarily stepping down as Director – a position in which I served seven years.

There is an ongoing research project about the gallery in which I am involved, and I maintain relationships with many of the alumni I curated into exhibitions. I am glad for the administrative and creative experiences, but my current focus is on my own visual art production and publication. I look forward to continued collaborating and coordinating with faculty in the historical research and future planning for our exhibition spaces.

Other curatorial efforts involve co-curation with other members of the collectives which I have joined. The exhibitions grew from conversations about desires and drives for the galleries’ various purposes. Much of the desire and energy was for community engagement, especially by inviting other members of the visual arts community in New Orleans to show in our spaces.

I do not foresee myself serving as a gallery director for UNO again, nor do I have current curatorial plans or projects in the works. However, I am grateful for the administrative and leadership experiences I gained. I brought some of this to other professional service for UNO as the former director of the Fine Arts Gallery on Campus and the current Director of the Women’s Center. I continue to co-curate the Fine Arts gallery with other faculty, focusing on programming for our undergraduate Fine Arts cohort. We work with graduate assistants to maintain and run this on-campus space.

My work for the Women’s Center over the past three semesters of a three-year term has joined with my research in visual arts. I am committed to recording oral histories of the women who founded this important space on campus, and am communicating with faculty about projects and productions that will benefit their own research. The Women’s Center itself, situated in the middle of the Earl K. Long Library on campus, is a safe space, a calm space, and a space of intellectual and academic inquiry for the whole university community – for our health, mental and physical, and for our hearts, steeped in memory, tradition, and healing.

IV. Selected CV Citations

Jurors and Curators

André Ramos-Woodard, Charles Lovell, Don Marshall, Leona Strassberg Steiner, Rachel Wolff, Kelley Scott Kelly, Holly Andres, John Calsbeek, Adele Borie, Veronica Cross, Tom Walton, Cristina Molina, Dale Newkirk, Holis Hannan, H. Grace Boyle

Private Collections

Mr. Alan Brickman
Ms. Veronica Cross
Bloody Mary's Haunted Museum
Professor Doyle Gertjejansen
Professor James Bailey
UNO Office of Research

Solo Exhibitions

- 2025 "Parts," Solo exhibition, forthcoming October
- 2023 "SIGHTINGS" (July-August) Second Story Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2022 "Nine Paintings" (January) *Unlikely Stories*, New Orleans, LA; Johnathan Penton, curator, virtual; <https://www.unlikelystories.org/content/nine-paintings-january-2022>
"Ruminations" (September) Sella-Granata Art Gallery, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; Bryce Speed, curator (concurrently with two-person exhibition, "SOLAR")
- 2018 "Making Room" (October) UNO-St. Claude Gallery. New Orleans, LA: The University of New Orleans; solo exhibition of new work in conjunction with two other solo exhibitions by Heather Weathers and Cheryl Hayes, both members of TEN Artist Collective

Two-Person Exhibitions

- 2022 "SOLAR" (September) Second Story Gallery, New Orleans, LA; with Jeffrey Rinehart (concurrent with solo exhibition, "Ruminations")
- 2016 "A Little Step Towards Everything" (August) TEN Gallery, New Orleans, LA. Collaborative drawings and installations with Ariya Martin.

Juried Exhibitions

- 2025 "2025 Irene Rosenzweig Biennial Juried Exhibition" (August '25 – January '26) Arts & Sciences Center of Southeast Arkansas, Pine Bluff, AR; Eepi Chaad, juror

“a fervent and necessary arrangement” (March) Midwest Nice Art, Aberdeen, South Dakota; virtual spring exhibition; André Ramos-Woodard, juror
 “EmPowHER” (March) Arété Gallery, Floor 13, New Orleans, LA; Holis Hannan, curator

- 2024 Finalist, “Green” (May) Art Room Gallery, international virtual exhibition; first annual juried exhibition on the theme of green
- 2023 “We Like It” (September) Cult Favorite Gallery, NY, virtual inaugural exhibition.
- 2021 “Purely Abstract” (May) Las Lagunas Gallery, Las Lagunas, CA, virtual Virtual juried group exhibition on the theme of abstraction, one work ("Lovers," 2020) selected from a pool of over one hundred international applicants.
- “Skies” (April) Grey Cube Gallery, virtual; Finalist in international virtual juried exhibition, one work ("Lake Pontchartrain Driving (Night), 2021") selected from a pool of over one hundred international applicants.
- 2018 “Activating the Apparatus, vol. 2” (October) StrangeMatterATL, Atlanta, GA. Open call for juried show, accepted two collaborative drawings.
 “Thirty New Orleans Artists” (September – November) Second Story Gallery. New Orleans, LA: The Healing Center. Charles Lovell, juror. Invited to submit work for a juried exhibition at SSG by Charles Lovell on New Orleans-centric themes, including food - the subject of "Unlikely Odalisques" (2017), oil on linen; reviewed locally and included in UNO newsletter.

Invitational Exhibitions

- 2025 “With Bated Breath” (July) Studio Waveland, Waveland, MS; H. Grace Boyle, curator
 “18th Annual Louisiana Art Showcase” (June ’25 - June ’26) President’s House, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond: LA; Cristina Molina, curator
- 2023 “Salon des Bons Enfants” (December) Good Children Gallery, New Orleans, LA, invitational
 “Paper Cuts,” (October) OW Home, New Orleans, LA; Veronica Cross, curator
 “O What a Night,” (October) Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA; invitational
 “Connect” (June) Second Story Gallery, artist collective member exhibition.
 “Knowing Who We Are: A 20th Anniversary Exhibition” (June) Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA; invitational.
 “Adamantine: Women Who Are Artists,” (March) Second Story Gallery, New Orleans, LA; Heather Weathers, curator; artists included Carrie Beene, Muffin Bernstein, Harriett Cortez, Moira Crone, Veronica Cross, Kami Galeana, Jessica Goldfinch, Christina Juran, Julie Korte, Daphne Loney, Gina Laguna, Darlene Marcello, Cynthia Ramirez, Kathy Rodriguez and Heather Weathers.

- 2022 “The Rabbit Show: A Collection of Hares” (October) Second Story Gallery, New Orleans, LA; Heather Weathers, curator; Invitational group show curated by Heather Weathers with the theme of bunnies, a running theme in her work and a past running theme in my own. Including Christopher Brumfield, Jason Chaffin, Dan Charbonnet, Jeannie Detweiler, Julie Korte, Bryce Rabbits, Hazel Weathers, and Heather Weathers, one painting
- 2021-2 “As We Heal” (October-February) The New Orleans Healing Center, New Orleans, LA; Leona Strassberg-Steiner, curator; group show of 65 New Orleans artists on the theme of creativity and healing.
- 2019-20 “13th Annual Louisiana Arts Showcase” (June-June) President’s House, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA; Tom Walton, curator; 3 works selected for a year-long exhibition at SLU president's house - the only artist out of approximately 50 to have three works chosen based on adherence to the show's theme
- 2018 “Birds of a Feather” (June) Barrister’s Gallery. New Orleans, LA: Barrister’s Gallery. [Attachment]; Tony Campbell, curator
 “Flagged” (Spring) UNO Fine Arts Gallery. New Orleans, LA: The University of New Orleans.; Tony Campbell, curator. One collaborative work with Ariya Martin

Group Exhibitions

- 2023 “Select: Faculty Exhibition” (February) UNO Gallery on St Claude. New Orleans, LA; faculty exhibition
 “Float” (February) Second Story Gallery, New Orleans, LA; artist collective member exhibition
- 2022 “high anxiety” (August) Second Story Gallery. New Orleans, LA: The New Orleans Healing Center. Group show of SSG Artist Collective members
 “Farewell to the Flesh” (February) Second Story Gallery. New Orleans, LA; Group show of SSG Artist Collective members.
- 2021 “Faculty Exhibition” (September) UNO Fine Arts Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2019 “Faculty Exhibition” (September) UNO Fine Arts Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2018 “Humid” (February) TEN Gallery. New Orleans, LA: TEN Artist Collective. TEN Collective member group exhibition as part of Prospect 4's satellite programming

Curation

- 2018 “James Bailey: The Map is Not the Territory” (November) UNO St. Claude Gallery, New

Orleans, LA. Solo work by Professor James Bailey, UM Missoula
“José Torres-Tama: Hard Living in the Big Easy: Immigrants and the Rebirth of New Orleans” (September) UNO St. Claude Gallery, New Orleans, LA. Solo exhibition of work by local artist Torres-Tama.

- 2017 “Lakeshore Drive” (October) UNO St. Claude Gallery, New Orleans, LA. Group faculty exhibition.
“Sarah Marshall: Heat and Ambiguity” (August) UNO St. Claude Gallery, New Orleans, LA. Solo exhibition by UA Tuscaloosa Professor of Printmaking.
“David Rex Joyner: scaping” (May) UNO St. Claude Gallery, New Orleans, LA. Solo UNO MFA alum exhibition.

Self-Authored, Editorially Reviewed Articles

- 2021 “Dawn DeDeaux: The Space Between Worlds,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Fall, published online at <https://www.noareview.org/>
“Identity and Connection: Meg Turner / Esperanza Cortez,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer
“SOLOS at the CAC,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer
- 2019 “Two for White Linen 2018: ‘Constructing the Break’ and ‘Louisiana Contemporary,’” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer
“Life Cycles: Simon Gunning and Raine Bedsole,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer
“Of Contrast and Harmony: Mildred Thompson and Tina Girouard,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer
- 2018 “Rolón and the Global South,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer, 8–10.
“Queens and Archetypes,” *New Orleans Art Review*, Summer, 20–22.

Panel Presentation

- Fall 2021 Panel Member, “Art and Healing”, Second Story Gallery, The New Orleans Healing Center
- 2014 “Public Art and Emerging Artists,” International Sculpture Center Conference. Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA: International Sculpture Center.

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[https://handwovenmagazine.com/history-hairshirts/#:~:text=as%20the%20hairshirt.-,Hairshirts%20are%20garments%20made%20from%20rough%20animal%20hair%20\(usually%20that,avoid%20the%20temptation%20to%20sin.](https://handwovenmagazine.com/history-hairshirts/#:~:text=as%20the%20hairshirt.-,Hairshirts%20are%20garments%20made%20from%20rough%20animal%20hair%20(usually%20that,avoid%20the%20temptation%20to%20sin.)

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Coelho, Paulo. *The Alchemist*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2014.

Ruiz, Don Miguel. *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom (A Toltec Wisdom Book)*. Albany: Tarcher, 1997.

Van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York: Penguin, 2015.