

BEADS & BELONGING

SFSU ●●● Fine Arts Gallery

Joshua Albeza Branstetter

Demetri Broxton

Taraneh Hemami

Chelsea Kaiah

Conor McNally

John Paul Morabito

Gabrielle Severson

Charlene Tan

Nico Williams

08.09.2025

09.04.2025

BEADS & BELONGING

Patterns, connections, and narratives come to life bead by bead. Through means of trade, adornment, and cultural signifiers, beads are global visual and physical communicators. The act of beading allows for connections to ancestors—those who came before—and is an act of honoring, both representing and shaping cultural narratives. From beaded artifacts to contemporary beadwork, the broader complexities of colonial influence forge a narrative that is revealed and subsequently addressed by contemporary artists.

This exhibition brings together nine artists and filmmakers who actively respond to these impacts of colonialism while making meaning of current realities. The common perception that beadwork is not a “fine art” is challenged by each, transforming the definition and pushing its boundaries. Here beadwork is a form of reclamation of identity and an act of resistance. Using beads of all kinds to tell these stories, *Beads & Belonging* explores beadwork as a means of expression across cultures.

We would like to thank the artists and the Zellerbach Family Foundation for making this project possible.

—Kristina Singleton, Curator

JOSHUA ALBEZA BRANSTETTER



Pinguat (2020)

Film. Duration: 17:24

DEMETRI BROXTON

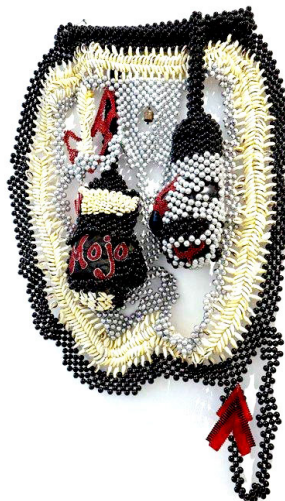


Ancestral Echoes (2024)

Glass and wood beads, brass elements, ink, cotton, wool, rayon yarn, birch panel.

31 x 24 in.

Ted Russell Collection



DEMETRI BROXTON CONT'D

Mojo Hand (2021)

Everlast boxing gloves, glass pearls, 19th century white heart beads Czech seed beads & tube beads, money cowrie shells, shredded denim, nylon thread, steel wire, felt, High John the Conqueror powder, brass bell, red clay, herbs.

50 x 30 x 7 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Sweetow Gallery



You Won't Break My Soul (2023)

Wool, hair canvas, glass beads, hand cut Cypraea moneta (money cowries), Mauritania arabica (chocolate humpback cowries), Cypraea mauritiana (chocolate humpback cowries), South African reedbuck and blesbok horns, long tailed spindle.

59 x 59 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Sweetow Gallery

TARANEH HEMAMI



Heroes Martyrs Legends: Naaser, 1360; Mohammad, 1360; Tahereh, 1355; Syroos, 1350; Ghazaal, 1356; Hameed, 1364; Mehrnoosh, 1350; Behrooz, 1350; Asmar, 1360; Mokhtar, 1362; Shireen, 1354; Yoosef, 1352 (2009)
6mm faceted plastic beads, steel, thread.
25.2 x 16.1 in. each, grid of 12.
Courtesy of the artist

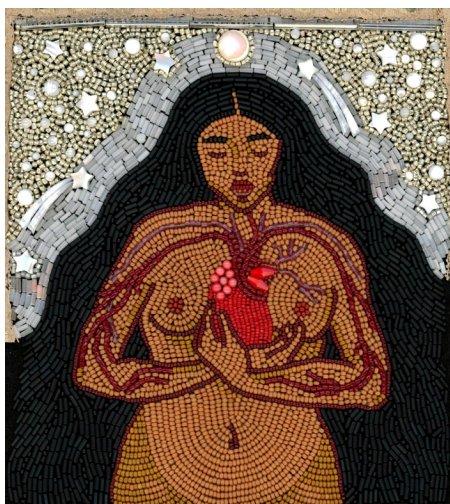


CHELSEA KAHIAH CONT'D

Spamming You (2025)

Vintage beads, wood, vintage Spam cans
20 x 20 in.
Courtesy of the artist

CHELSEA KAHIAH



Nuche (2022) (detail)
Seed beads, coral, vintage beads, mother of pearl, dyed lamb leather, rope and cloth.
11 x 8.5 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Tools for Celebrating (2024)

Metal armature, black faux leather, thread, seed beads.
43 x 11 x 4 in.
Courtesy of the artist

CONOR MCNALLY



Beading Red: The Red Paper Through Generations (2021)

Video. Duration: 15 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

JOHN PAUL MORABITO



For Félix (red and blue like a kiss you will never taste again) (2022)

Cotton and glass beads

92 x 46 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Sweetow Gallery



For Félix (rose like sweet and sweaty intoxication) (2022)

Cotton and glass beads

88 x 45 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Sweetow Gallery



For Félix (yellow like the sky when the sun dies) (2023)

Cotton and glass beads

88 x 45 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Sweetow Gallery

GABRIELLE SEVERSON



Ancestral Land (2025)
Fuse beads, artificial sinew
4 x 7.5 in.
Courtesy of the artist



Berry Inheritance (2025)
Fuse beads, artificial sinew
17 x 40 in.
Courtesy of the artist



First Basket (2025)
Fuse beads, artificial sinew
45 x 60 in.
Courtesy of the artist



The Matriarch (2025)
Fuse beads, artificial sinew, rabbit fur, branch
from Oregon
20 x 9.5 in.
Courtesy of the artist

CHARLENE TAN



Kumot ng Bata Screen (2025)
Aluminum panel, gold leaf, digital photo print,
cowrie shells, bugle beads, freshwater pearls,
microbeads, grindstones.
6 panels, each 43 x 32 in.
Courtesy of the artist and re.riddle gallery, San
Francisco

NICO WILLIAMS



GTA San Andreas (2024)
Delica beads, cotton, thread, wood frame
12 x 16 x 2 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Blouin Division Gallery



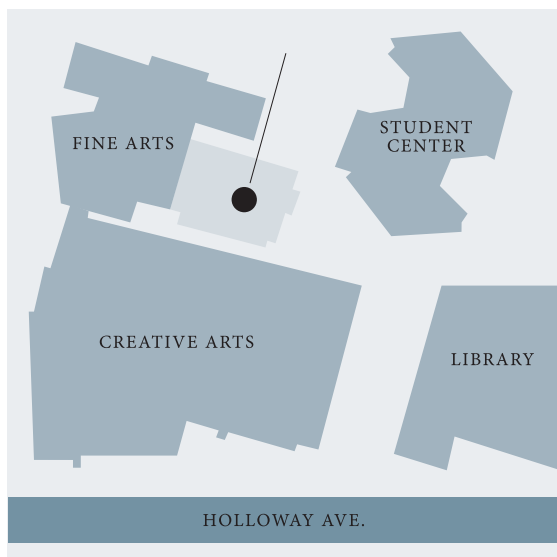
Tintin en Amerique (2025)
Japanese cylindrical beads 11/0 on braded/heat-sealed polyethylene thread, VHS cassette
7 x 4.25 x 1.25 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Blouin Division Gallery



Pokémon Snap! (2025)
Glass beads, thread, pastic game case.
8.5 x 5 x 1.25 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Blouin Division Gallery



Zane's game (sonic 2) (2025)
Plastic beads, game case, cartridge
7 x 5 x 1.25 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Blouin Division Gallery



SFSU Fine Arts Gallery
San Francisco State University
Fine Arts Building, Room 238
1600 Holloway Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94132

REGULAR HOURS
Tuesday-Friday,
12noon to 4pm
gallery.sfsu.edu
[@sfsugallery](https://www.instagram.com/sfsugallery)

The Fine Arts Gallery collaborates with the SFSU School of Art's Exhibition Design class, ART619, taught by Kevin B. Chen. The class teaches researching, planning, installing and curating exhibitions. During summer 2025 they worked with guest curator Kristina Singleton to design and install the *Beads & Belonging* exhibition.

–Sharon Bliss, Gallery Director

–Kevin B. Chen, Curator

ART619 Summer 2025

Kimberly Alarcon, Sol Arellano Calderon, Erin Bauer, Ava Boyd, Rodney Chang, Conner Che, Logan Davis, Helen Gannon, Veronica Gonzalez Flores, Abigail Grossman, Katrina Ng, Lindy Nguyen, Anhely Pacheco-Oropeza, Carmen Perez-Guzman, Leon Prentice, Cianna Price, Raechel Ramirez, Andrea Rodriguez, Matthew Stevens, Sierra Weiler

FINE ARTS
GALLERY

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