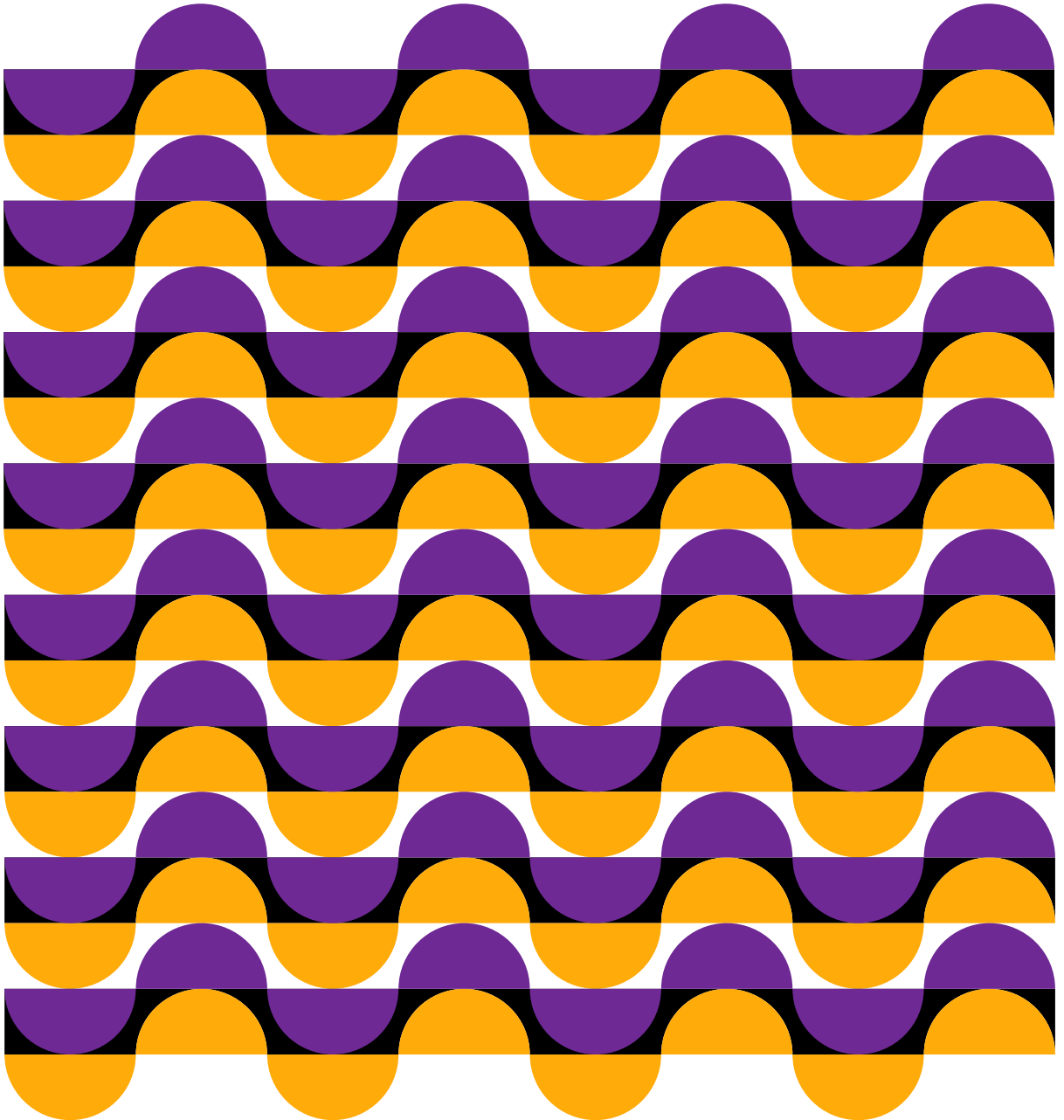


BEYOND BINARY

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY
FINE ARTS GALLERY



SEPT 17 — OCT 27 / 2022

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BEYOND BINARY

Beyond Binary originated as a contribution to the Feminist Art Coalition (FAC), a platform that fosters collaborations among art institutions that are committed to social justice and wholesale structural change. Through exhibitions and related programming, FAC challenged the Trump administration's retrograde policy agenda and its rippling effect. Appreciating the generous critical framework shaped by FAC, we committed to producing an exhibition that builds on the teachings of intersectional feminism and gender as a construction.

Influenced by generational, individual, and collective experiences, work by the 20 participating trans and gender non-conforming artists challenges accepted social and art historical narratives that reinforce gender as a strict binary state. Engaging multiple media forms, they position the body as a site of liberation, resistance, and love for self and community. As state legislatures nationwide pass laws prohibiting gender affirming care and bar trans athletes from competing in high school and collegiate sports, the accomplished contemporary art animating *Beyond Binary* joyfully rejects such bigotry.

As curators, and more importantly, as people who identify as both cis and heterosexual, we recognize both the privilege and relative ease by which our gender identities allow us to operate in the world. Working on this project has expanded our understanding of non-binarism, its long and rich history worldwide, and current cultural implications. We are deeply thankful to the participating artists for committing to this project through nearly three years of pandemic-protracted planning and schedule changes, Zoom calls in lieu of in-person studio visits, and considered daily effort in challenging the gender binary.

— ROULA SEIKALY
(with exhibition co-curators
Sharon E. Bliss and Kevin B. Chen)



BEN CUEVAS — DUALITY #1:
MASCULINE/FEMININE

2013, Knit wool and fiberglass mannequins, 50 x 24 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the artist

BEYOND THE BEYOND

be-yond | \ bê-'änd

Definition of beyond (Entry 1 of 3)

1 : on or to the farther side : farther. We could see the valley and the hills beyond.

There are no hills or valleys on the farther side of the river here, only a modest slope down to the broken concrete pretending to be its banks. The awkward chunks of cement on each side are accompanied by tangled tree roots, plants still bright spring green in early autumn. Yellow and purple flowers push through cracks towards the sky, insects crawl on packed dirt as herons glide by. The branches of trees arch over and are reflected in the opaque water, its surface a hue of green that nears brown. In this moving mirror, it is as impossible as it is unnecessary to disentangle the clouds (as above) from the water (so below).

The river is wide enough here for four lanes of traffic. The expanses of prairie and marshland that would allow for the grace and movement of its true ever-shifting path have long ago been hemmed in by a metropolis. The eroding moss-covered concrete lays claim to the river as if its course is a permanent formation. A shape that will hold until it doesn't. When, and it is a matter of when, the water rises, its spillage co-mingling with the soil will erase these delineated edges. In its stead a continual recollecting and reshaping surfaces, notions of river and not-riverness evaporating, for a spell or beyond. May it break free of the one-hundred-and-twenty-two-year-old backwards curse cast by human engineers and once again run East, into Michi Gami ¹, a great lake the size of a small sea.

Definition of beyond (Entry 2 of 3)

happening or continuing after (a specified time or event).

"You can see the evolution happening. Now they're like, 'You can't change your DNA! You can't change your chromosomes!' The metric for 'realness' is moving." — Juliana Huxtable ²

1492

In endless repetition, reconfiguration, re-calculation.

2022

In my hand, a device fueled by coltan, zeroes and ones. Scroll backwards.

Stop.

1685

An age of 'reason and science' that makes clear cuts across reason/emotion, civilization/nature, human/animal, white/black, (becomes human/non-human) the well/the sick, those at ease/those dis-eased.

Scroll

The grey areas eliminated, obfuscated, impermissible—what gets lost in those gaps between one and zero.

Scroll past 1993

a connection fee of \$3.95, plus 89 cents per minute, plus a 47-cent prison surcharge for calls made from the Washington State Penitentiary. ³

Unease, Dis-ease

Follow this to 2022.

In my hand, a device fueled by coltan, zeroes and ones, across the screen an algorithm spits out a post on insta, a global telecommunications company marketing acceptance for non-binary people—complete with a spokesperson (authorized and trademarked)—who describes phone calls and texts as lifelines. The latter is not untrue.

In my hand, a device fueled by coltan, zeroes and ones across the screen an algorithm spits out a post on insta, a global telecommunications company manufacturing acceptance of said global telecommunications company to (and by) trans(ness) —
A niche, a tool, a double-edged sword.

Scroll back to 2008
histories of the voices of incarcerated people inside, answering phones for call centers



NICKI GREEN — KISSING FIGURES

2017, Glazed stoneware with felt, hardware and kiln bricks, 60 x 43 x 19 inches
Courtesy of the artist

contracted out by a global telecommunications company at a pay rate of \$2.00 a day ⁴
Citizen/prisoner.

Scroll forward

Definition of beyond (Entry 3 of 3)

3: something that lies outside the scope of ordinary experience

Outside, above, the night sky is full of satellites
Can you see the constellations, trace them with your finger?
Divine the configurations amongst the stars
Use them to navigate to the river and dissolve
As it flows backwards through a canal
Float all the way down to join the Mississippi
Empty out into the gulf below.

"Whether psychic, discursive, linguistic, or ideological in origin, affective states that take us beyond the boundaries of the self and illuminate the "transparent network that covers the world" may be more than just personally formative experiences; they have the potential to open up new modes of relationality. On this view the oceanic cannot be reduced to mere egoic dysfunction or a delusional hallucination, but instead could be considered a revelation: the illumination of an already-existing communalism and the direct experience of our embeddedness in the world."

— Jackie Wang, Oceanic Feeling and Communist Affect ⁵

Patterns run throughout these pages and these works, clashing and unruly. There are moments of disruption or the alteration of traditional concepts of commodity and confession, two familiar hallmarks of (queer) art with a capital A.

We find evidence of artists' bodies engaged in the work: in clay, loops of yarn, hands deftly

cutting paper with scissors. Imagine J Wu's zines passed, person to person, a gesture at once mundane and far reaching. If the larger web of people brought together via words and image are made legible. Jeffery Cheung cultivates community with his crew of P.O.C., queer, and trans skaters, moving together the din of revolving bearings in their wake.

"We will all be well" – MCXT

The "STOP MEN" Mutual Aid project run by Xara Thustra of MCXT, prints "STOP MEN" on used clothing, selling these pieces and giving all profits to community projects and friends in need, centering P.O.C. trans, queer, and disabled folks. This is a continuation of XT's long-standing anti-capitalist fashion practice and history of distributing printed works for free en masse. Scroll back to 2019. An unfathomable time ago. I am pushing my feet slowly across the wooden floor of an art space in Oakland, California surrounded by my fellow undead; the culmination to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's workshop, *In the Name of the Zombie: The Radical Potential of the Undead*. The collective cacophony of our voices echoes, as our bodies ricochet off each other in slow motion in an disconcerting chorus of refusal.

"As with many artists who look to the future, Queer Muslim Futurists do so with awareness that it can be an unknown space of potentially great fear, but also tremendous generosity. Like the Afrofuturists from whom the name of our movement is derived, we look to our multiple histories, cultures and legacies, which we cut up, carve, copy, corrupt and then cast into a future of our own imagining." — Zulfikar Ali Bhutto ⁶

With the *Mussalman Musclemen* series, Bhutto has engaged in another form of re-animating

bodies. This time, a reproduction of an athlete's body, inscribed with masculinity & athleticism, is hand embroidered along the muscles using colorful threads. Monstrous and beautiful.

Throughout the show pastoral works are flipped into chaotic and colorful worlds, some filled with creatures or laced with flowers. Landscapes honoring the delightful and intangible. Swapping out watery worlds for an interior, Juliana Huxtable's *Ari I* is found inexplicably lounging on leopard print furniture, unwilling to be categorized or moved. The leopard spots migrate onto the back of a hybrid mermaid possessing a winding fishy tail that is worthy of myth.

Vivek Shraya's poignant (self) portraits mirror earlier photos of her mother, transcending time while memorializing the gulf between them. A doubling and inhabitation that both aligns and distances the two figures. Anachronistic touches — an Elmo doll, a laptop-cum-digital-alarm-clock — hint at the past playfulness Vivek writes about wishing to have seen in their mother. Shraya's eyes, though, yield a longing, a knowing that bring poignancy never digressing into camp.

The work of Demian Dinéyazhi' is central and essential to any future discourse. It both annihilates, intervenes, and annotates (as in the Latin *annotatus*, past participle of *annotare*, from *ad-* + *notare* to mark) art histories, whether wielding indigenous feminism(s) with poetry and text as seen here, or through their collective work with R.I.S.E. (Radical Indigenous Survivance and Empowerment). If you haven't yet read their zine *Swimming to the Island: Performance Art & the Occupation of Alcatraz* ⁷ do so. Now.

To operate, to move—both together and separately—requires not negating or collapsing difference. It requires listening. And waiting. Making mistakes and starting again.

What is the work

What is dismantling

What is beyond the beyond

— SAROLTA J. CUMP

This essay was written in the traditional unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations.

¹ Michi Gami, “Great Water” in Ojibwe also known as Lake Michigan. The Shikaakwa/ Chicago River no longer empties into the lake and instead is engineered to flow backwards diverting to the Mississippi watershed.

² Bailey, Makayla “Juliana Huxtable, Let’s skip the essentialism and devour the semantics.” Flaunt Magazine, 7 October 2019. <https://flaunt.com/content/juliana-huxtable>

³ Rigby, Michael “AT&T Settlement Includes Fines, Reimbursement for Overcharging Recipients of Phone Calls From Washington Prisoners,” Human Rights Defender, 15 March 2008, <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2008/mar/15/atampt-settlement-includes-fines-reimbursement-for-overcharging-recipients-of-phone-calls-from-washington-prisoners/>

⁴ “AT&T Exploits Prison Labor.” Human Rights Defender. 15 April 1993. <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/1993/apr/15/att-exploits-prison-labor/>

⁵ Wang, Jackie “Oceanic Feeling & Communist Affect.” Friendship as a Form of Life II: Continuum. July 2017 <https://friendship-as-a-form-of-life.tumblr.com/post/162453258727/readprint>

⁶ Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali “Queer Muslim Futurism.” Archer. 10 February 2019, <https://archermagazine.com.au/2019/02/queer-muslim-futurism/>

⁷ You can find the zine and other work that supports the artist directly at <https://www.etsy.com/shop/DemianDineyazhi>



**ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO — KNEES FROM THE SERIES
MUSSALMAAN MUSCLEMAN**

2017, Screen print on muslin, printed polyester fabric, gold metallic fabric, applique and quilting, 69 x 51 inches

Courtesy of the artist



CRAIG CALDERWOOD — CLOWN FISH

2021, Faux fur, acrylic, dimensional paint, plastic clips, 36 x 42.5 inches
Courtesy of the artist



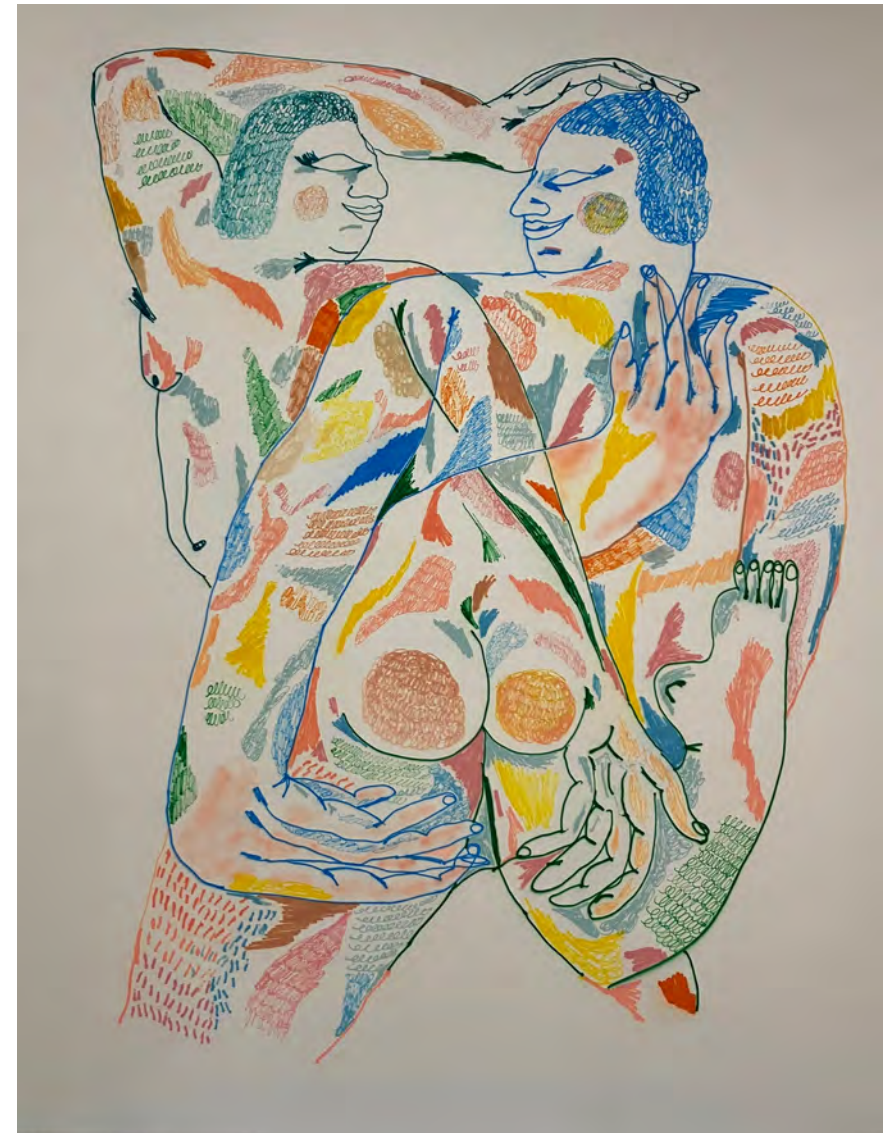
CASSILS — FAST TWITCH // SLOW TWITCH

2011 Two channel video installation, a part of a 160 day durational performance, *Cuts: A Traditional Sculpture*, runtime: 11:08 min
Courtesy of the artist Artist: Cassils Photographs from Time Lapse: Cassils; Director of Photography: Alison Kelly; Art Department: Brody Creighton; Lighting: Dean Haysak; Sound: Barn Owl Folly Sound; and additional composition: Cristy Michel; Editing: Rhys Ernst



WELLS CHANDLER — PINK LOTUS

2019, Hand crocheted assorted fibers, 62 x 35 inches
Courtesy of the artist



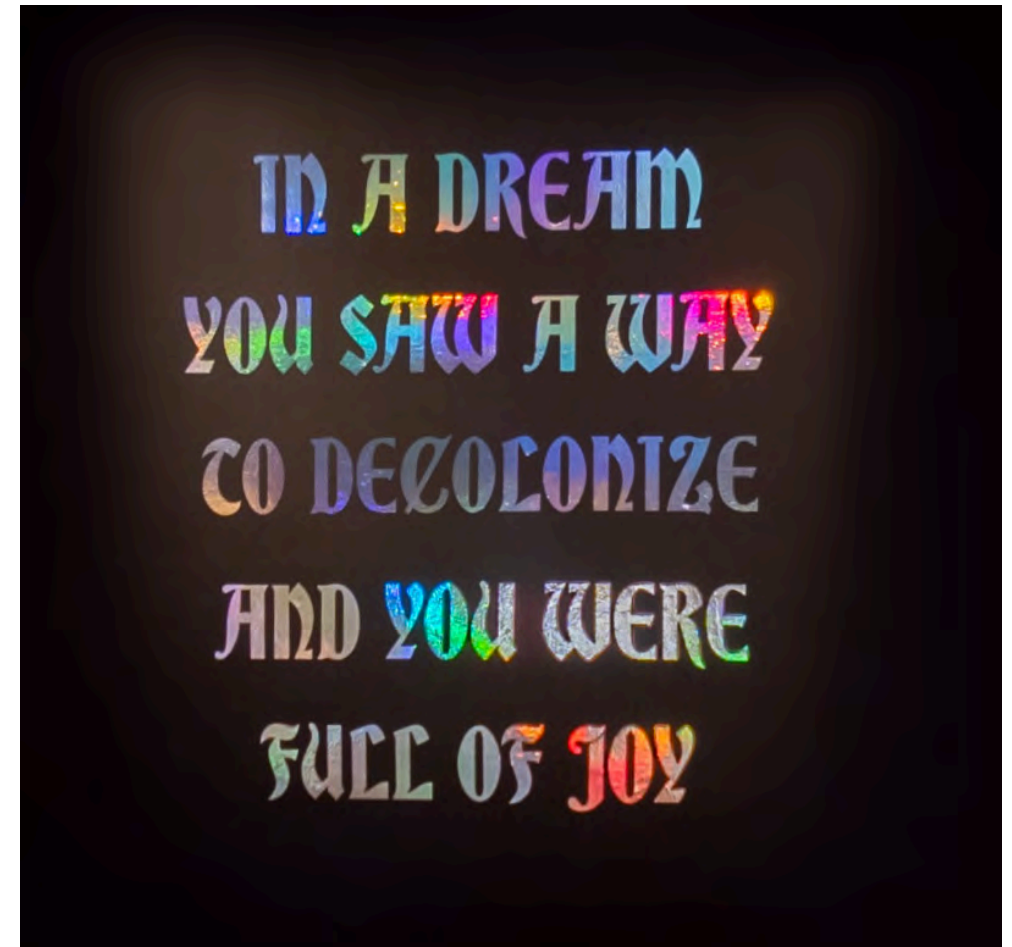
JEFFREY CHEUNG — UNTITLED

2021, Acrylic on canvas, 69.75 x 52 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Jack Hanley Gallery



BEN CUEVAS — NON-BINARY CODE (DETAIL)

2022, mixed media, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist



**DEMIAN DINÉYAZHI' — DETACH YOURSELF FROM THE SETTLER
FASCIST COLONIZER IMAGINARY, 2022**

Vinyl text installation
Courtesy of the artist



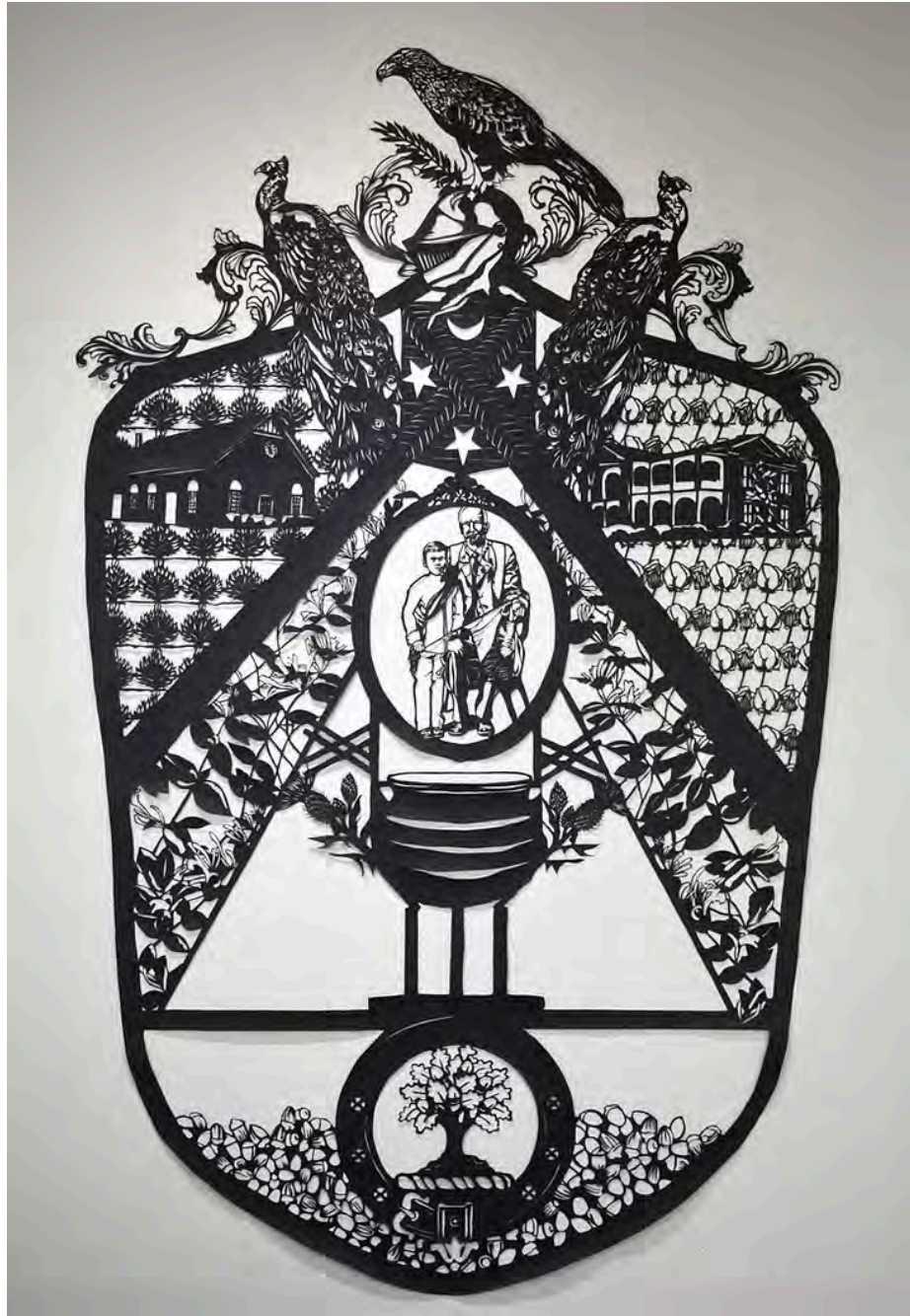
NICKI GREEN — UNTITLED WATERCOLOR #1

2020, Watercolor on paper, 9 x 12 inches
Courtesy of the artist



JULIANA HUXTABLE — ARI I

2019/2022, Inkjet print, 45 x 30 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art NY/LA



E. "OSCAR" MAYNARD — ANDERSON COAT OF ARMS

2019, Papercut, 78 x 42 inches
Courtesy of the artist



MCXT (Monica Canilao + Xara Thustra) — ALL BODIES OUR QUEER BODIES

2019, Acrylic mural paint, spray paint and glitter enamel
on museum built wood panels, 11 x 28 feet
Courtesy of the artists



VIVEK SHRAYA — TRISHA (DETAIL)

Color photographs mounted on foamcore, vinyl text, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist



**BEATRICE L. THOMAS AKA "BLACK BENATAR" — WEAPONS OF MASS
 RECONSTRUCTION #02**

2022, Site-specific installation, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist



ELI THORNE — RESCUE HORSE

2020, Oil, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas, 46.5 x 72 inches
Courtesy of the artist



ALOK VAID-MENON — TRANS/GENERATION

2019, Video of live performance, duration: 04:26
Courtesy of the artist. Written & Performed by: Alok Vaid-Menon; Curated by: Simar Singh; Shot by: Omkar Potdar; Sound Mixing & Mastering by: Sohaill Gandhi; Sound Recording by: Abhay (The Hive); Edited by: SimarSingh; Art Design by: Allwyn Pereira; Shot at: The Hive, Bandra. Special Thanks: Rhiya



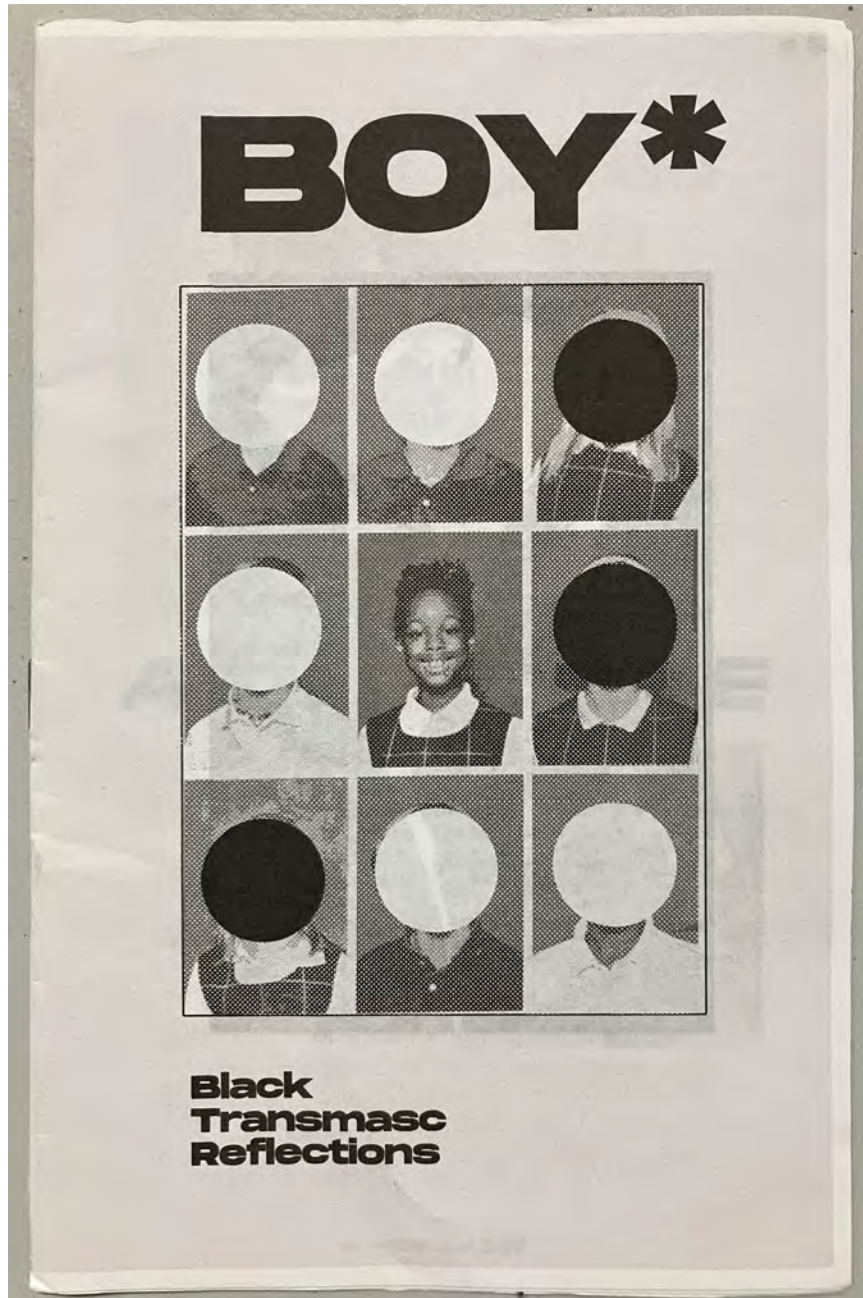
CHRIS E. VARGAS — HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A TRANSSEXUAL BEFORE?

2010, Digital video, duration: 4 minutes
Courtesy of the artist



LEILA WEEFUR — A SPELL FOR DISSENT

2022, Digital Video
Courtesy of the artist



J WU — COLLECTION OF ZINES ON NON-BINARY
THEMES CURATED BY THE ARTIST

Courtesy of the artist



ASRI WULANDARI — UNTITLED

2022, laser-cut clear acrylic and colored lights, dimensions variable.

Courtesy of the artist

CHECKLIST

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2017, Screen print on muslin, printed polyester fabric, gold metallic fabric, applique and quilting, 69 x 51 inches

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2020, Vinyl text installation, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

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2022, Vinyl text installation, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

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2017, Glazed stoneware with felt, hardware and kiln bricks, 60 x 43 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist

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2020, Watercolor on paper, dimensions vary

Courtesy of the artist

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2019/2022, Inkjet print, 45 x 30 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art NY/LA

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2019, Papercut, 78 x 42 inches

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2019, Acrylic mural paint, spray paint and glitter enamel on museum built wood panels, 11 x 28 feet

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Color photographs mounted on foamcore, vinyl text, dimensions variable

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2022, Site-specific installation, dimensions variable

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ELI THORNE — HE WISHED HE HAD A RIVER TO SKATE AWAY ON

2020, oil, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas, 53 x 68 inches

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2022, Digital video

Courtesy of the artist

J WU

Collection of Zines on non-binary themes curated by the artist

Courtesy of the artist

ASRI WULANDARI — UNTITLED

2022, laser-cut clear acrylic and colored lights, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

This exhibition and related programs presented from September 17 through October 27, 2022 at the Fine Arts Gallery, San Francisco State University.

Our thanks to the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the SFSU School of Art, and SFSU’s Instructionally Related Student Activities Fund for their support of this project. Public programs were funded through an Extraordinary Ideas grant from SFSU’s College of Liberal and Creative Arts. Special thanks to the students of the SFSU ART 619 Exhibition Design Classes for their collaboration in planning and presenting this exhibition.



The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

EXHIBITION CO-CURATORS

Sharon E. Bliss
Kevin B. Chen
Roula Seikaly

WRITERS

Roula Seikaly
Roula Seikaly is an Oakland-based independent curator and writer. She serves as Senior Editor at Humble Arts Foundation and Curator for the NFT platform Quantum Art.

Sarolta J. Cump
Sarolta J. Cump (aka Sarolta Vay) is an educator, artist and white settler residing on stolen Ohlone Land.

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Leila Weefur in conversation Jo-ey Tang,
Wednesday, October 5

Demian DinéYazhi’ & Ari Bantias reading,
sponsored by the Poetry Center, Thursday,
October 6

Asri Wulandari in conversation with Dr. Kathy
Zarur, Wednesday, October 19

Drag Queen Story Hour with Beatrice L. Thomas
aka “Black Benatar”, to be scheduled at the time
of this printing.

HOURS AND LOCATION

Fine Arts Gallery
Fine Arts Building, Room 238
San Francisco State University campus
19th and Holloway Avenues
San Francisco, CA

Tuesday through Friday, 12pm—4pm

WEBSITE

gallery.sfsu.edu

INSTAGRAM

@sfsugallery

Graphic Design / Anton Holmgren
(holmgrenanton.com)

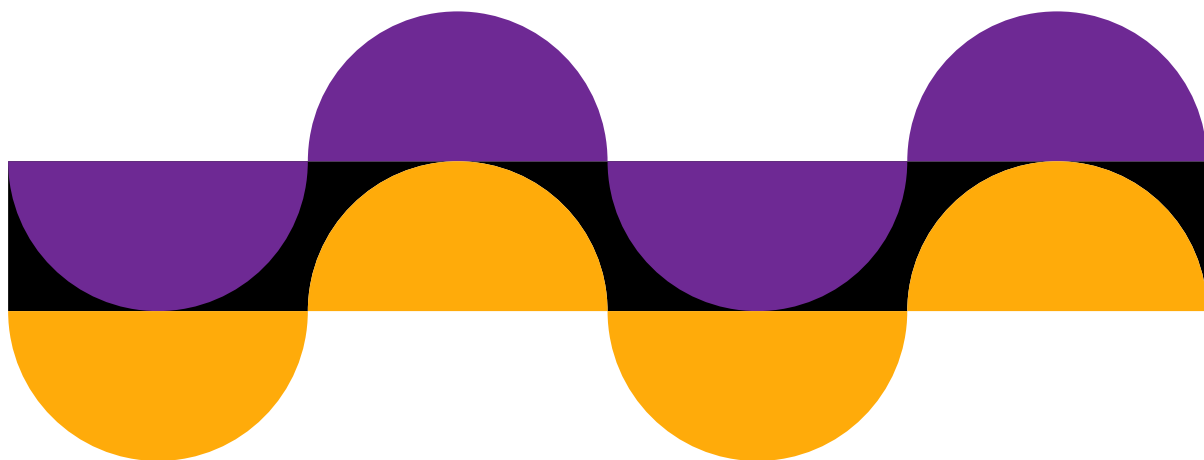
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BEYOND BINARY

Beyond Binary celebrates trans and gender-nonconforming artists who engage the body as both a form and site of social sculpture and who challenge established narratives of art history to become more inclusive. Through this project, we ask what dialogic space opens up when we consider gender beyond traditional binary limitations—what lies beyond prohibitive gender definitions?

Beyond Binary is organized by Sharon E. Bliss, Kevin B. Chen, and Roula Seikaly, and features 19 artists/collaboratives representing a broad arc across cultures and generations, media and discipline, and identification along the gender spectrum, in the formation of their personal and collective identities.

Featuring: Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Craig Calderwood, Cassils, Wells Chandler, Jeffrey Cheung, Ben Cuevas, Demian DinéYazhi', Nicki Green, Juliana Huxtable, E. "Oscar" Maynard, MCXT (Monica Canilaoa+Xara Thustra), Vivek Shraya, Beatrice L. Thomasaka "Black Benatar", Eli Thorne, Alok Vaid-Menon, Chris E. Vargas, Leila Weefur, J Wu, and Asri Wulandari.



Fine Arts Gallery
San Francisco State University School of Art

gallery.sfsu.edu