

# INTERPRETING RENDITIONS OF INTERACTION

Featuring Selected Works by  
TCU School of Art Faculty

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**Hosted by Moncrief Cancer Institute**  
in partnership with  
**Texas Christian University School of Art**

**Madeline Boehm, Michelle Contreras  
and Emma Thompson, curators**

# INTERPRETING RENDITIONS OF INTERACTION

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*Interpreting Renditions of Interaction* presents a diverse selection of eleven works of art by the artists of Texas Christian University's permanent faculty in the School of Art. Exhibiting a wide range of media—from paintings and sculpture to found objects and schematics—*Interpreting Renditions of Interaction* focuses on the interactions between people and their selves, communities, and natural environments. The show offers a chance for the viewer to find correlations to their own life among the themes presented and find similarities between the works.

The exhibiting artists' works deal with themes in one of three categories: *self*, *community*, or *nature*. The artists representing *self* use art as a visual medium to explore the relationship to their identity, memory, and body. Functioning as either a self-reflection or a manifestation of site-specific memory, artworks by Dr. Amanda Allison and Lynné Bowman Cravens each represent a facet of their personal experience and feelings. The compositions concerning the second area of exploration, *community*, illustrate how the faculty members draw on their lived experiences as well as cultural monuments in representing aspects of their community. In translating these familiar items and encounters from the world into their art, artists Dan Jian, Rachel Livedalen, Mary Nangah, Nick Bontrager, Dick Lane, and Cameron Schoepp create a disruption of form that challenges the viewer to reconsider the established notions and markers of society. Artists in the last category of the exhibition, *nature*, turn their sights to the world around them to explore humanity's complex relationship with the environment. Artists Chris Powell, Kalee Appleton, and Adam Fung explore themes such as environmentalism, the perception of nature, and transformation through technology.

By juxtaposing seemingly dissimilar artworks against one another, *Interpreting Renditions of Interaction* encourages us to recognize our interconnected existence—to explore what belongs to us and how we belong to a place. Visitors are invited to experience this connection by following along with the prompts in this brochure.

## Curator Biographies

**Madeline Boehm** grew up in the Chicagoland area and graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History. She is currently a first-year graduate student of Art History at Texas Christian University. She worked in the Registration Department of the University-affiliated Spurlock Museum for three years and plans to continue this line of work after the completion of her Master's degree.

**Michelle Contreras** received a Bachelor of Arts in Art History with minors in Anthropology and Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at San Antonio. She has an interest in anthropology and ancient cultures, and has experience traveling and working at current dig sites in Belize. She has intentions to return to anthropological work and teaching.

Originally from the DFW area, **Emma Thompson** received her Bachelor of Arts in Art History from the University of North Texas. She is currently a first-year graduate student at Texas Christian University, working towards her Master of Arts in Art History. After completing graduate school, she would like to work in a museum or similar cultural institution.

*With special thanks to Hailey Boutelle and Kathryn Schneider*

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*Interpreting Renditions of Interaction* was initially developed for Dr. Babette Bohn's graduate seminar, The Art Museum, in the fall of 2020. As a requirement for the course, first-year graduate students are tasked with curating an exhibition from scratch. Developed with our fellow students, Hailey Boutelle and Kathryn Schneider, our exhibition for the class, titled *Interpreting Renditions of Nature, Community, and Self*, included twenty-six works from current TCU faculty and staff members in the School of Art. We sought to acknowledge the wide array of diverse art practices among the faculty and chose to divide the show into three main themes: nature, community, and self. By scaling back and modifying the show for Moncrief Cancer Institute, we were able to adjust the initial concept in order to emphasize how the pieces in the show interact with one another visually and conceptually.



**Mary Nangah**  
*Faded Memories*  
2020  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 16 inches

When drafting her doctoral dissertation, Nangah was confronted with expectations for her own art to navigate issues of race or African culture. She began to question which objects are considered “authentic” African art and how those notions have been colored by the effects of colonial expansion and the displacement of the objects from their original context. In *Faded Memories*, with her identity overwritten and her memories drifting out in tangled threads, an African woman struggles to retain her sense of self-authenticity.

**What kinds of objects do you think of when you think about African art? Where did these ideas come from? Movies? TV shows? The news?**



**Adam Fung**

*magenta transparent  
earth orange 1984  
Challenge launch*

2019

Oil and wax on linen over  
panel

12.5 inch oval

Inspired by the recent developments of the company SpaceX, Fung considers the possibilities that space holds and the human drive to explore and conquer new frontiers. The bright colors and beautiful imagery speak to the romantic ideas of travel and the glorification of exploration. However, *magenta transparent earth orange 1984 Challenge launch* ultimately encourages the audience to consider the choices made in the name of modern colonialism and the role that technology plays in its perpetuation.

**How has space travel changed in your lifetime? If you had the chance to take a trip into space, would you take it? If so, why?**



**Kalee Appleton**

*Southwest  
(Pink & Green)*

2017

Archival inkjet print  
with wood frame

16 x 20 inches

Appleton examines the moment of technological transition in photography from analog to digital. In *Southwest (Pink & Green)*, she blends the two methods by recycling a large photographic desert backdrop used by commercial photographers to suggest scenery and using software to alter and abstract forms. By making this backdrop the focal point rather than a mere background, and layering bright synthetic colors over the abstracted image, Appleton highlights the artificiality of mediating nature through technology.

**If you were getting a commercial photo taken today, what studio backdrop would you choose? A plain color? A landscape? An interior scene?**



**Lynné Bowman Cravens**

***Kitchen /  
Bruce & Lynné***

**2017**

Inkjet print on paper and acetate, from 120 mm negative and appropriated photograph

16 x 20 inches

In *Kitchen / Bruce & Lynné*, Cravens overlays a photograph from her childhood onto a more recent image of her empty family home, stripped and in the process of being remodeled in order to be rented out. By layering a transparent acetate sheet sandwiched between two sheets of plexiglass, the viewer is able to trace the physical changes to the room made between the past and the remodel. By juxtaposing these two moments in time, Cravens questions how physically changing a house affects its meaning to the previous inhabitants. She navigates the complicated feelings of leaving a family home and watching it transform into something unfamiliar.

**Have you ever revisited a site from your childhood? How had it changed? What memories did it bring back?**



**Dan Jian**

***A Mountain Is  
Not a Mountain***

2020

Oil on paper

24 x 27 inches

In *A Mountain Is Not a Mountain*, Jian uses imagery native to her home country of China to explore how the objects gain meaning and become personal symbols that represent her cultural heritage. The title references a Chinese Zen saying that states that before studying Zen, a mountain is just a mountain. While studying Zen, a mountain is not a mountain but rather a symbol for something else. Finally, when enlightenment is achieved, a mountain is again a mountain. Jian plays with the objects by flattening and abstracting them, testing the boundaries of physical object and conceptual symbol.

**What objects do you place personal significance on? Is there an object in your life that connects you to a community?**





**Chris Powell**

*houses*

2020

Found object and ceramic glaze

9½ x 8 x 4¾ inches

Raised on a ranch in southwest Arkansas, Powell grew up collecting items he found in the landscape, a practice which has continued throughout his adulthood and which informs his artistic practice.

*houses* is a mud-dauber nest that has been glazed and fired. A mud dauber is the common name of a number of types of wasps that build their nests out of mud. The mud dauber female constructs the nest, creating cells for each individual egg, that allows the larvae to safely grow into adult wasps. Mimicking this power of transformation, Powell fossilizes the nest and transforms it into an object of art.

**If you were to make a piece of art from found objects, what would you choose to work with? What would it look like?**



## Dick Lane

### *Untitled (Saragosa)*

2020

Archival ink jet print

24 x 30 inches

After traveling to Saragosa, a small community in West Texas, Lane was inspired by the countryside he photographed there, finding parallels between the dry grasslands of the present and the landscape found in his old family photographs. Lane evokes the stories of past generations by placing an aged photograph of a school house and school children over an image of the rolling hills of present-day Saragosa. Lane's grandmother is one of the children in the group, connecting him to his family's history and the history of the land.

**Do you have any old family photographs? Do you know where they were taken?**



**Nick Bontrager**

***Crystal Castles***

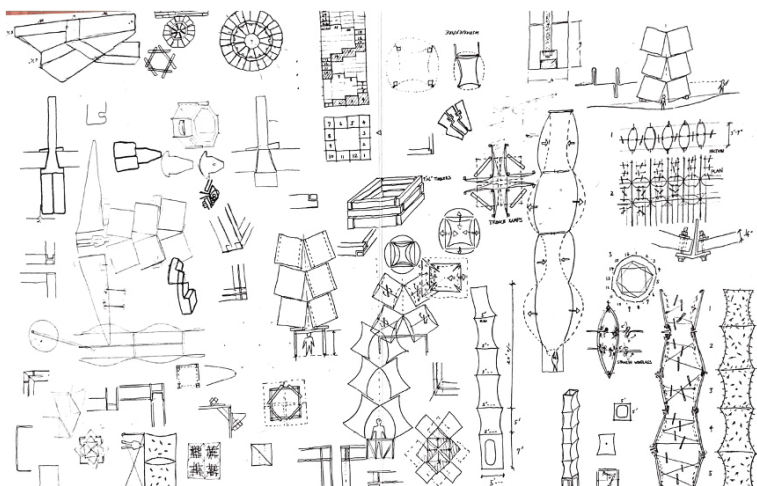
2017

Smooth Bristol paper with  
archival ink

8 ¼ x 11 ¾ inches

Bontrager works in a variety of media, from digital video to drawings and sculpture, exploring how pop culture influences nontraditional art forms. In *Crystal Castles*, the outline of the drawing is the shape of the side of an arcade cabinet and echoes how an old screen will have shapes permanently burned into it after prolonged and repetitive use. The shapes within the outline draw on geological map patterns and explores how art can connect nature and technology through visual minimalization. Part of Bontrager's "Alone Together" series, *Crystal Castles* investigates the seemingly conflicting nature of the arcade - an activity one does alone in the presence of a group also playing alone.

**Have you ever been to an arcade? When was the last time you went? What was your favorite game?**



**Cameron Schoepp**  
(in collaboration with Peter and  
Mark Anderson)

***Wall Horn Process Sketch***

2019

Printed reproduction of preparatory sketch

8 x 16 inches

Schoepp explores space and material in his work, which often consists of site-specific sculptures. *Wall Horn Process Sketch* is one of the preparatory sketches of a larger constructed project made in collaboration with architects Peter and Mark Anderson. *Wall Horn* continually investigates the issues of tension, compression, gravity, mass, and more through the vehicle of large-scale installation work. Overall, the preparatory sketch is a snapshot of the imagination and ingenuity of the Jet Construction group and invites viewers to reflect on the various forms and find their own meaning in the shapes.

**What do you see in these preliminary sketches?**

**Do you sketch? What types of things do you imagine and draw?**



**Amanda Allison**  
***Mind, Body, Spirit***

2012

Mixed media

14 x 10 x 10 inches

Allison maintains a close relationship with Jane Avila, founder of the Art Station art therapy studio in North Texas, who helped conceive the *Mind, Body, Spirit* sculpture. Compiling objects into a column on a cut-box base, she uses these various items to represent aspects of either her mind, body, or spirit. Her sometimes conflicting thoughts and values gain representation here and demonstrate how people can be complex.

**If you had a box with three items in it, representing your mind, body, and spirit, what would those items be?**



Rachel Livedalen

*Page 56 Part 1*

2019

Screen print, gouache, and  
acrylic airbrush on panel  
30 x 24 inches

In *Page 56 Part 1*, Livedalen works with a passage taken from an art history textbook detailing the Knidian Aphrodite, the first female nude in Western art. Blacked out and overlaid with a series of color-coded shapes mimicking Lisa Frank stick-on earrings popular in the '90s, Livedalen creates her own code out of these shapes to overwrite prior conceptions of the feminine ideal. The use of the stick-on earrings that coincided with the '90s girl-power movement promotes the reassessment of contemporary beauty standards.

Look up “blackout poetry” to get some ideas and then create your own poem. Print out an article you’re interested in, use a newspaper page, or a page from an old book. Black out all the words except a few to create a short poem.

# Moncrief Cancer Institute Art Gallery



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FINE ARTS

*School of Art*

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Moncrief Cancer Institute is not open to the public for exhibition viewing due to COVID-19 restrictions; however, the exhibition is available for virtual viewing at <https://linktr.ee/MoncriefArtGallery>.