

Maggie Avolio



*Krimson Lake Blue* (detail), 2018. Canvas drop cloth, acrylic, wooden paint handle extender  
84 x 108 x 30"

Through process-based manipulations of material, color, and space, my artwork exists simultaneously as painting, sculpture, and installation. My practice is based on contextual material analysis of canvas, the most rudimentary ingredient in a painting. I use canvas as a focal point in my study because it exists at an intersection between the “high” art of classical and modern painting and the culturally “low” value of manual labor.

My pieces are often conceptually layered and contradictory as the material undergoes several transformations by my hand. I drape painted canvas so it rolls to produce voluminous curves or folds to reveal sharp angles. I create three-dimensional space using a two-dimensional surface. I complicate the context of the painting by questioning its position in space and in culture. I problematize the perception of time, labor, and social stratification by physically and conceptually dissecting preexisting structures of both material and socioeconomic nature.

Katherine Kaiser

Revisiting and archiving significant places in my hometown area has become the focal point of my creative process. Most recently, my work has dealt with a place that triggers intense memories, often dealing with trauma. I find these specific memories to be fragmented, something that is experienced in a non-linear passage through time and are cyclical.

I want to speak to this form of memory experience by producing marks in an automatic way, relying on my emotions to direct my movements. This form of mark making and creating is combined with some of the visual elements present at that place, such as references to the specific landscape. The end result of this process is a mixed media work of ambiguous forms that speak to landscape, autonomic processes, and fragmented memory.



*Untitled* (detail), 2018. Oil and acrylic on yupo paper. 12 x 26"

Lauren Ruiz



*Gestational Artifact*, 2018. Mixed media. 8 x 6 x 10"

My research-based practice examines the interface between human life and anthropogenic climate change. In my work, I engage in institutional critique and produce speculative fictions in order to critique corporate authority, the ethics of bioengineering, and the corrosive effects of plastic pollution. Through producing interactive environments and installations informed by science fiction, I create aesthetic forums for contemplating the effects of climate change on human life, critically examining the intimate and immediate relationships that exist between environments and subjects. My most recent work interrogates the utopian and dystopian imaginaries surrounding genetic modification as they relate to a historical conjuncture defined by anthropogenic climate change.



## Introduction

When you stand in front of one of these artworks, listen for what is being shared. Listen with your whole body. See the choices made by the artists, choices that may have been struggled over in challenging critiques with peers and faculty mentors. Feel the impact of the size of the work or the sense of movement that it inspires. Notice what it reminds you of or the memories that it brings up. These works of art are inviting you into an experience and communicating in ways you may not know how to perceive yet. Allow them to guide you, touch you, reach you.

This exhibition is one of the final requirements of our three-year Master of Fine Arts degree program at Stony Brook. Through their close interaction with faculty, our graduate students hone their skills and develop the means to express their personal vision. They focus on their own work in individual studios on campus, and they have access to our excellent technical facilities (hybrid studios, foundry, kilns, darkrooms, presses). They also have the advantage of being part of a large, world-class research university with resources that include the historic Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center. They are encouraged to increase their breadth of knowledge by engaging with faculty in Art History, Philosophy, Theatre Arts, Music, History, and Women’s Studies, among others, and they participate in the Department’s affiliation with the Humanities Institute and the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics. Additionally, the last three years have brought incredible speakers to our classrooms and galleries: Dread Scott and Jenny Polak, Young Min Moon, Ha Na Lee, Basim Magdi, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, Verónica Peña, and Jenny E. Sabin, to name a few. Stony Brook’s proximity to New York City has enabled us to expand the influences on these exciting young artists.

We wish to thank Karen Levitov, Director of the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery, for her energy in making this exhibition possible, and for her fresh perspective on the world of contemporary art. We hope you find the work of these artists to be provocative, challenging and deserving of support.

Amy Cook  
Chair, Department of Art

## Acknowledgements

FOLD FRAGMENT FORUM is the culminating embodiment of the intensive three-year MFA program at Stony Brook University. I would like to thank the artists, Maggie Avolio, Katherine Kaiser and Lauren Ruiz, for the process of creating and presenting their compelling and beautiful work.

My gratitude to Associate Professor Amy Cook, Chair of the Department of Art, and Professor Nobuho Nagasawa, MFA Graduate Program Director, for their contributions to this exhibition, and to Lauren Ruiz for the elegant catalog design. I also want to express my appreciation to the Staller Center for the Arts staff, especially Director Alan Inkles, and our student gallery assistants.

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Karen Levitov  
Director and Curator

Gallery Hours  
Monday-Friday 12-4pm.  
Also open during intermission  
and one hour prior to  
Staller Center season  
performances and films.  
Admission is free.

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Katherine Kaiser  
Lauren Ruiz

## MFA Thesis Exhibition 2019

March 23 - April 18  
Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery, Stony Brook University