

# CONTINUED



DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION · SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS  
*CREATE/CONNECT/COMMUNITY*



## Día de Muertos

A Day of Celebration in the Flatiron Plaza

by Stephanie McGovern

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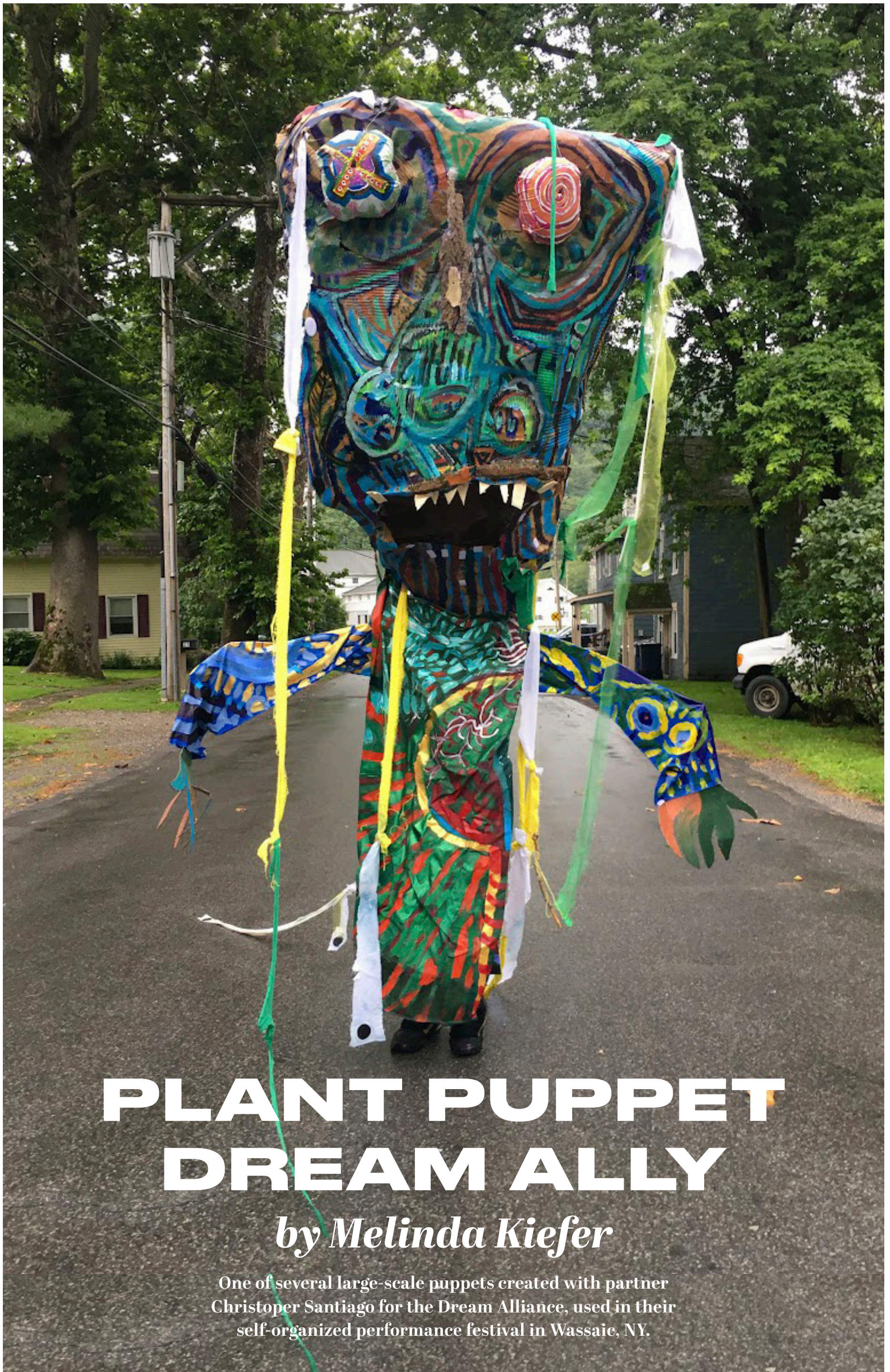
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# PLANT PUPPET DREAM ALLY

*by Melinda Kiefer*

One of several large-scale puppets created with partner Christopher Santiago for the Dream Alliance, used in their self-organized performance festival in Wassaic, NY.

**CONTINUED  
PROJECT SPACE  
EXHIBITIONS**



**Victoria Krassa**

Through her art, Victoria explores her long-held fascination with the energy of the in-between: everywhere we look, roughness—even ugliness—coexists inextricably with beauty.

Victoria Krassa, *Fearlessness*, 2022, graphite on paper, 8"x10."

**COURSE**

Digital Photography: Basic  
PHC-1042-A

FOLLOW OUR STUDENT EXHIBITIONS:  
**#SVACESTUDENT**



**CONTINUED**  
Summer 2023

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# CALLEY NELSON

## SVACE SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL MARKETING COORDINATOR



### by Valerie Smaldone



Calley Nelson joined the Division of Continuing Education last year after participating in SVA's Art Therapy Project. Impressed with the College, Calley sought a position at SVA and was delighted to learn there was an opening in their area of expertise.

In addition to being adept at social media, Calley is also a multidisciplinary artist—one who wants room to explore creatively. Calley does not wish to commit to one discipline over another because they believe that art (and artists) can easily blur lines.

A writer, musician and visual artist, Calley says they have “commitment issues” when asked to choose one artistic endeavor they most favor. It’s fair to simply call Calley a creative, and in that creative space, Calley is also an “intuitive.”

Having studied tarot since a young age, they are now a seasoned tarot card reader. Calley believes tarot cards can be used as guides in our lives because they connect each of our own unique stories to a story that is greater than ourselves. “[Tarot] can be used as a line for self-inquiry and questioning,” Calley said. “It’s a great place to explore taboos.”

Calley believes art also provides a personal window into each other’s lives. When asked what they want people to know about their art, Calley replied: “I would like to be an accessible artist. Breaking down that class barrier is an important part of my work. You don’t need to be a trained artist to make art.”

**Clockwise from upper left:**

1. Calley Nelson holding a Rider Waite Smith tarot card deck with an up-facing four of wands card. Photo by Brendan Landis.
2. Calley Nelson, *Erasure Myth*, 2022, acrylic paint, 9"x12."
3. Calley Nelson, *Gutter Witnesses*, 2022, pastel, 9"x12."
4. Calley Nelson, *Protection Spell (for the Queer Kids in Ohio)*, 2022, mixed-media, 9"x12."



# Día de Muertos

**I**N THE FALL OF 2022, the Division of Continuing Education was approached by Flatiron NoMad Partnership—a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the community and development of the Flatiron neighborhood—to participate in their first-ever production of Día de Muertos. Their vision was to bring SVACE in as a collaborator to design the centerpiece for the event, The Community Altar, along with creative activities to engage the public. This unique opportunity provided our department with the chance to work with SVA MFA Fine Arts alumnus Paulina Mendoza Valdez to envision an altar display that would encapsulate the spirit of the day and the traditions of Día de Muertos.

During this one-day event, passersby were invited to decorate ceramic “sugar” skulls, to provide offerings to honor passed loved ones, to write messages of remembrance, and to enjoy the many traditional performances presented by the Calpulli Mexican Dance Company. In this issue, we would like to introduce our readers to some of the makers behind this very special event, beginning with Flatiron NoMad Partnership’s Chief of Staff/Vice President of Marketing & Outreach Megan Garcia and Events & Program Manager Claudia Rincon.

**How was your experience working to bring Día de Muertos to the Flatiron Plaza?**

Claudia Rincon (CR): It was a very exciting and fun experience from start to finish. From the moment I proposed this event, I had 100% support from my team, which got me really excited. I am very lucky that I always have creative freedom for events and programming and that my team believes so much in the ideas that I propose. We all work so hard to bring them to reality, and this was one of those ideas. When I started reaching out to partners I was surprised by the amount of enthusiasm to participate in this event, especially from SVACE. They really wanted to take on the altar, which is always the masterpiece of the celebration. The day of the event was just as I imagined, with everybody working together to bring the best, authentic experience.

**What did you enjoy most about the day of the event?**

CR: The setup was one of my favorite moments, from SVACE setting up the altar to my coworkers helping to decorate the plaza. It was for me like setting up a table and waiting for the guests. We were able to see the space change from a public plaza to this explosion of colors with the papel picado everywhere and the altar so beautiful standing between the Empire State and the Flatiron buildings. It was a moment I will never forget.

**Were there any particular moments of the day that stood out to you?**

Megan Garcia (MG): It was truly beautiful witnessing our Flatiron and NoMad community members honor their beloved family and friends who have passed by leaving an item on the altar or writing a heartfelt note on the altar’s chalk wall. It felt so special and healing. The dancers of the baile folklórico did a wonderful job engaging with the crowd and creating that feeling of celebration. All day long, I was also completely impressed by the sugar skull decorations I saw at the SVACE tent. We have such talented artists in this neighborhood!

**What were you most proud of on this project?**

MG: I felt immense pride in seeing Claudia Rincon, our events manager, truly bring her vision to life. As a first-year member of our team—and with her desire to accurately and authentically represent a celebration so integral to her own experience—it was a lot to take on, and the results were spectacular. The altar itself was the key element that absolutely had to be just right for this event to be a success, and I’m so glad SVACE turned out to be the perfect partner to help us execute it. I can’t wait to see how our Día de Muertos events evolve in the coming years.

\*Please also visit [sva.edu/blog/continuing-education](http://sva.edu/blog/continuing-education) for the full interview with Megan Garcia and Claudia Rincon.





**Opposite and this page:**

Photography by Dan Rosen via the Flatiron NoMad Partnership.



MEET THE ARTIST

# PAULINA MENDOZA VALDEZ

*by Stephanie McGovern*



## Get to know Paulina Mendoza Valdez, visionary and SVA alumnus behind the Día de Muertos Community Altar.

**Can you describe Día de Muertos?**  
 Día de Muertos is a celebration and opportunity to honor not just our families, but also people in the community. Mexican culture, and most, if not all, Latin American cultures exist around the idea of being one of many. This is a day during which we are all reminded where we come from. It is also important to mention the historical significance of the practice itself; what started as a year-round ritual in pre-Columbian societies became a Christian holiday during the period of religious indoctrination. Today, communities in Mexico pray to different deities.

### How did the event relate to your art practice?

A Día de Muertos altar was my first attempt at a public art installation. I had done it twice before in two different places, with a very different amount of success. For this last year, my third one, I was so grateful for having access to a location with a huge amount of foot traffic.

I started setting up altars because I had questions about my relationship to my own culture—having been outside of Mexico for such a long

time—and my own understanding of such traditions and their roots. It was important to invite people from other cultures to participate in the ofrendas (offerings) because I wanted to know: how much are other cultures willing to venture into foreign traditions? How much can a tradition be displaced until it becomes something completely different?

### Did you enjoy working directly with the community?

I got to talk to people who had a lot of questions about the celebration, its meaning, and how long it has been celebrated for. Some other people were not only willing to share the name and photos of their loved ones on the installation itself, but also shared their personal stories with me about being stranded from their families or losing people they have loved. It was a beautiful experience that not only answered my questions, but it also created a strong, bittersweet connection among all of us.

### Any plans to carry the momentum of this experience into your next creative project?

Yes, absolutely! This was the third consecutive year I invited people to participate in this specific tradition. One of the plans now is to invite other artists from different backgrounds to create their own installation using a similar concept with the purpose of also correcting misinformation or teaching a valuable aspect of their culture to people who are curious. I want to learn from others through art, while keeping it available for everyone to enjoy.

\*Please visit [sva.edu/blog/continuing-education](http://sva.edu/blog/continuing-education) for the full interview with Paulina Mendoza Valdez.

**1.** Artist Paulina Mendoza Valdez in front of the Día de Muertos altar in Flatiron Plaza.

**2.** Depicted on the back of the altar is a character in Mexican folklore, La Catrina, made with upcycled fabrics and chalk.

**3.** Participants leave messages in chalk directly on the altar to honor their loved ones who have passed.

**4./5.** Las ofrendas, offerings, placed on the altar to help guide those who have passed back from the underworld to partake in the celebration for one night.

**6.** The CE staff, Paulina Mendoza Valdez and volunteers pose together in the final hour of Día de Muertos.





# EXPLORING MFA PRODUCTS OF DESIGN

## WITH CHAIR ALLAN CHOCHINOV

by Bianca Dunn

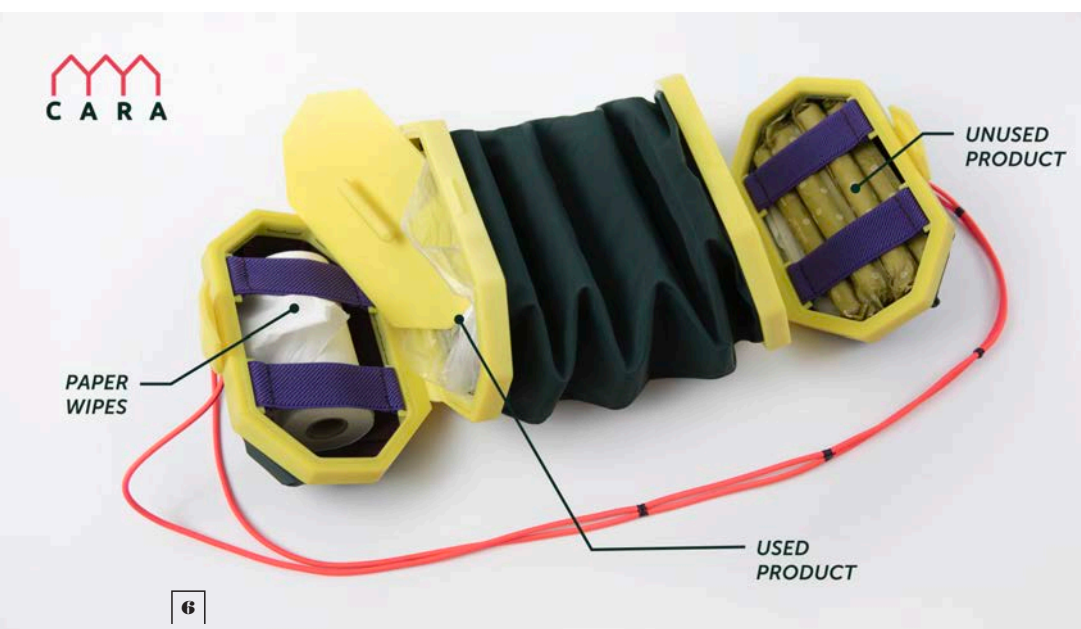
**W**hen exploring the intersection of art, design and community, SVA's MFA Products of Design quickly comes to mind. MFA Products of Design is a two-year graduate program that teaches core design principles with a holistic viewpoint. It is a trailblazer of graduate design programs—moving swiftly and deftly over a wide breadth of topics, all while centering social and global impact. Students learn about product design, interaction design, service design, public policy, design for justice, and more. The program also covers professional development skills, such as the language of business, entrepreneurship, leadership, sustainability and branding. I sat with the founding chair of MFA Products of Design, Allan Chochinov, to discuss how this innovative program started, where it is now, and how it is influenced by our unique setting of New York City.

The multifaceted approach of MFA Products of Design stems from Chochinov's own unique background. Chochinov has had many design lives. He has experience in industrial medical design, consultation and education, and he is also currently a partner of Core77, a global design network. When collaborating with SVA to dream up the ideal design master's program, Chochinov wanted to incorporate his industrial design roots along with his professional expertise to reimagine the future of graduate design education. "You'll be working for the rest of your life," Chochinov said, so he aims to help students make the most of the brief, two-year program. Chochinov believes the program's priority "should be laying

the groundwork for as broad a design career as possible."

MFA Products of Design has accomplished this goal by offering more diverse courses over shorter time frames, both in and out of the classroom. "People can learn things faster than [they] think that they can, particularly graduate students," Chochinov remarked. To further encourage students to take risks, the program does not give out grades. They want students to think big and to become comfortable with complexity, ambiguity and contradiction. This fast-paced style makes room for more guest speakers, faculty and cutting edge creatives who pass through our vibrant city.

This broad, experimental approach can be rigorous but also deeply rewarding. The program asks students to push the boundaries of their comfort zones, which is natural to those living in New York City. New Yorkers are surrounded by myriad design opportunities and design innovators. MFA Products of Design has embraced this positioning and holds a partnership with one of the key design leaders in the city—The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Each year, students have the incredible opportunity to propose products to be included in MoMA's wholesale catalog. The best designs are ultimately included in the catalog and produced for sale in design stores around the globe. This collaboration, alongside the comprehensive curriculum, shows MFA Products of Design's dedication to upholding their values of technical prowess, real-world applications, service to others and finding delight in design.







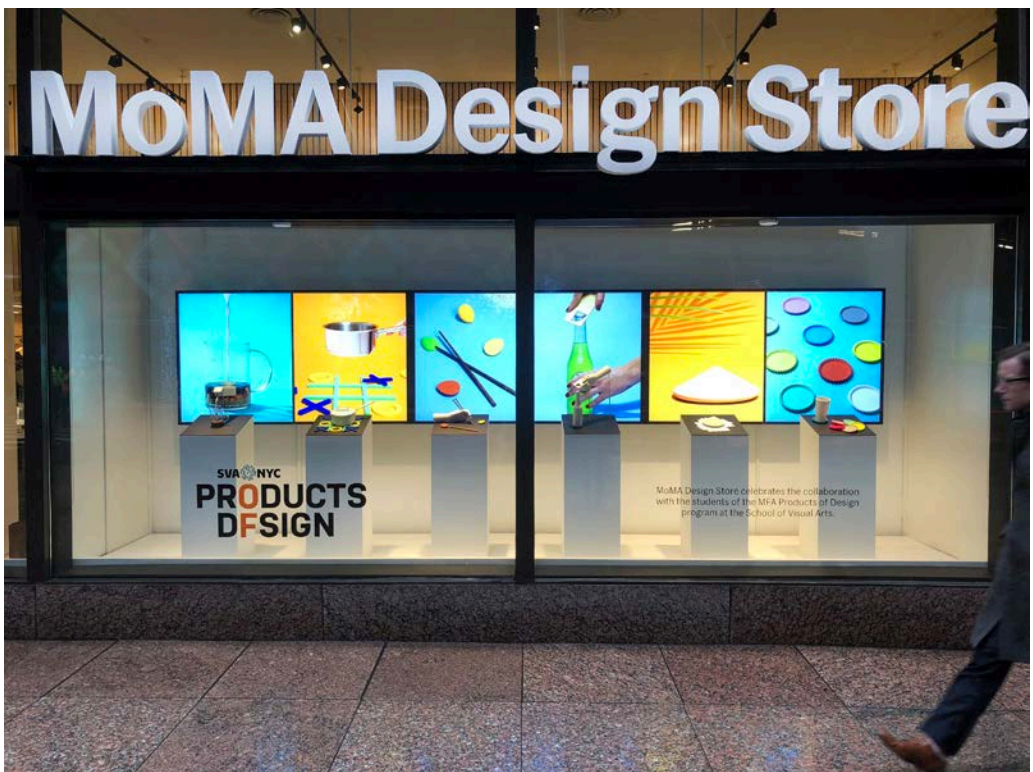
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**1.** Cathy Tung displays her design, Mousk—a digital face mask to display expressions, 2022.

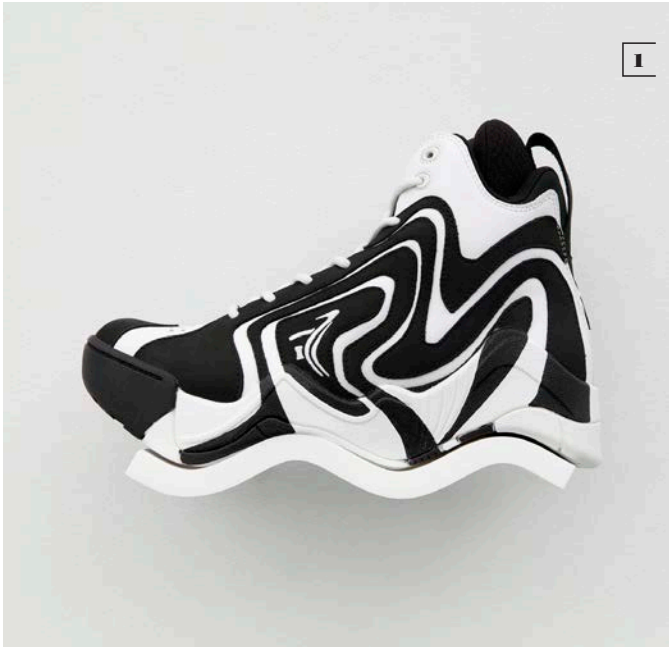
**2.** Students and companies meet at DESIGN:MATCH, the annual MFA Products of Design Job Fair, 2016.

**3.** One of five design interventions by the Class of 2023 called RE-ACTORS at NYCxDESIGN Festival, 2022.

**4.** The Museum of Modern Art Design Store in New York exhibiting their collaboration with MFA Products of Design, 2018.

**5.** Jonathan Lung shows his prototype to New Yorkers on the street during the futuring workshop, 2015.

**6.** CARA: A Menstrual Product and Waste Carrier for Multi-Day Trips Outdoors, designed by Alexia Cohen, 2018.



**1./3./6.** View of the exhibition "No More Tears, I'm Lovin' It," MSCHF, New York, NY, 2022. Photos by Guillaume Zicarelli. Courtesy Perrotin.

**2./4./5.** "Wild Strawberries," 395 Broadway, New York, NY 10013, September 30 – November 19, 2022. Photography courtesy Peter Clough.

**1.** Wavy Reebok Shaqnosis, 2022.

**2.** Installation view of the exhibition "Wild Strawberries."

**3.** Wavy Jordan 1, 2022.

**4.** Kathleen Ryan, *Bad Melon (Rainbow)*, 2022.

**6.** Installation view of MSCHF, "No More Tears, I'm Lovin' It."

**5.** Robert Gober, *Man Coming Out of the Woman*, 1993 – 1994.



# TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY ART WITH BRIAN APPEL

by Nivia Herron Hernandez

**▶** Brian Appel is an art critic, art consultant, editor and writer. Here, Brian discusses some of his most memorable moments across 12 years of teaching the course Trends in Contemporary Art: What's Happening Now.

## How would you describe your course?

The course Trends in Contemporary Art: What's Happening Now is an insider's overview of the contemporary art world—the people and institutions with a connection to the creation, promotion, exhibition and collection of contemporary art.

## How long have you been teaching this course, and what do you hope for your students to take away from it?

I've been teaching the course since 2011. My hope is that my students go deep inside what's often regarded as a niche, elitist industry and end up having thoughts and ideas that will be invaluable to their appreciation of the unpredictable art world.

## What are two of your most recent memorable moments during a trip to a gallery with your students?

The great galleries in New York provide images that sear themselves into your

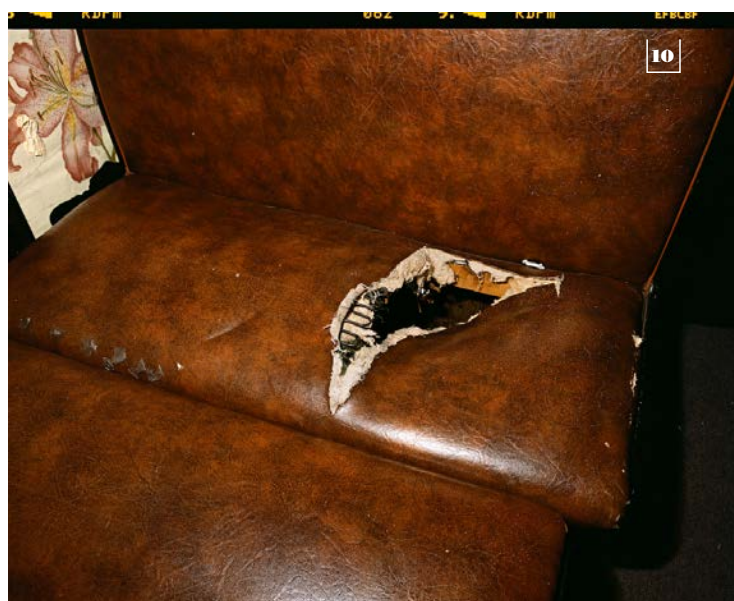
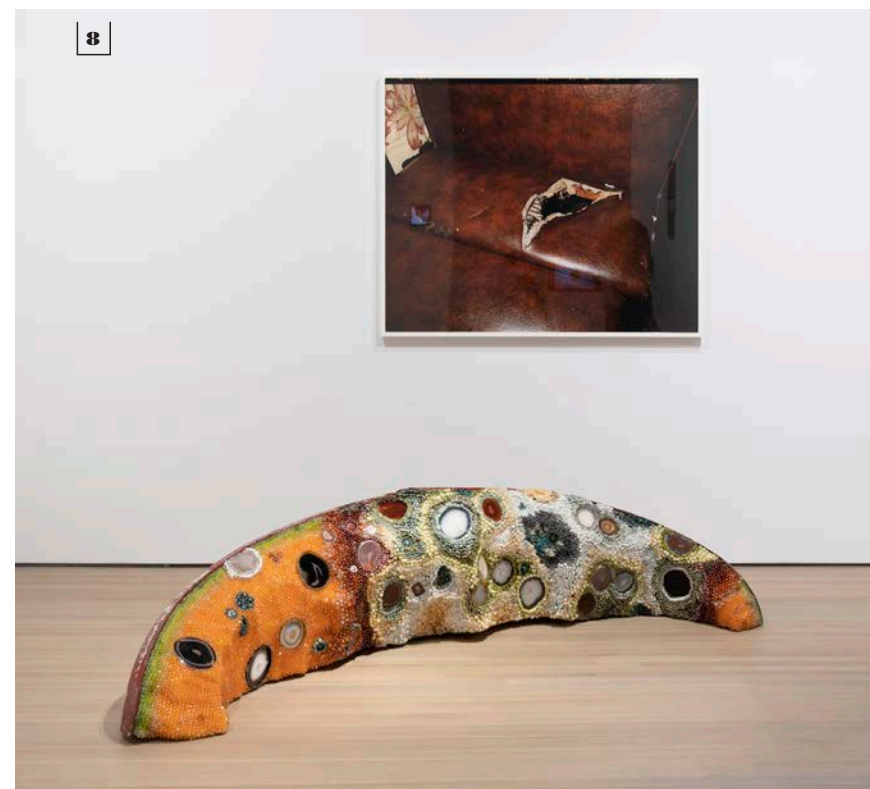
mind. Here are two moments among many from this past fall 2022 semester that provided the class and I depth, luster and a little bit of magic:

[A] Perrotin Gallery on the Lower East Side showed an entire wall of sneakers [during the exhibition "No More Tears, I'm Lovin' It,"] from the collective MSCHF (short for "mischief"), which depicted the shoe's liquified patterning on a molded rubber of the outsole. It was like Foot-locker on L.S.D.

[B] 125 Newbury Gallery in Tribeca showed the pioneering filmmaker/performance artist Maya Deren with her burst-onto-the-scene short film *Meshes Of The Afternoon* from 1943. Deren, with her somnambulist doppelgänger, faces threat and violence, leading the viewer to a surreal ecstasy.

## You enjoy photographing street art; what aspects of art in the streets inspire you?

Art is a reconsideration of how the street can be represented and/or distorted into an expression of truth. Similar to how NYC is the world's greatest place for artworks to be seen in galleries, NYC also has the best graffiti on its streets.



**7./8./9./10./11.**  
"Wild Strawberries,"  
395 Broadway,  
New York, NY 10013,  
September 30 –  
November 19, 2022.  
Photography courtesy  
Peter Clough.

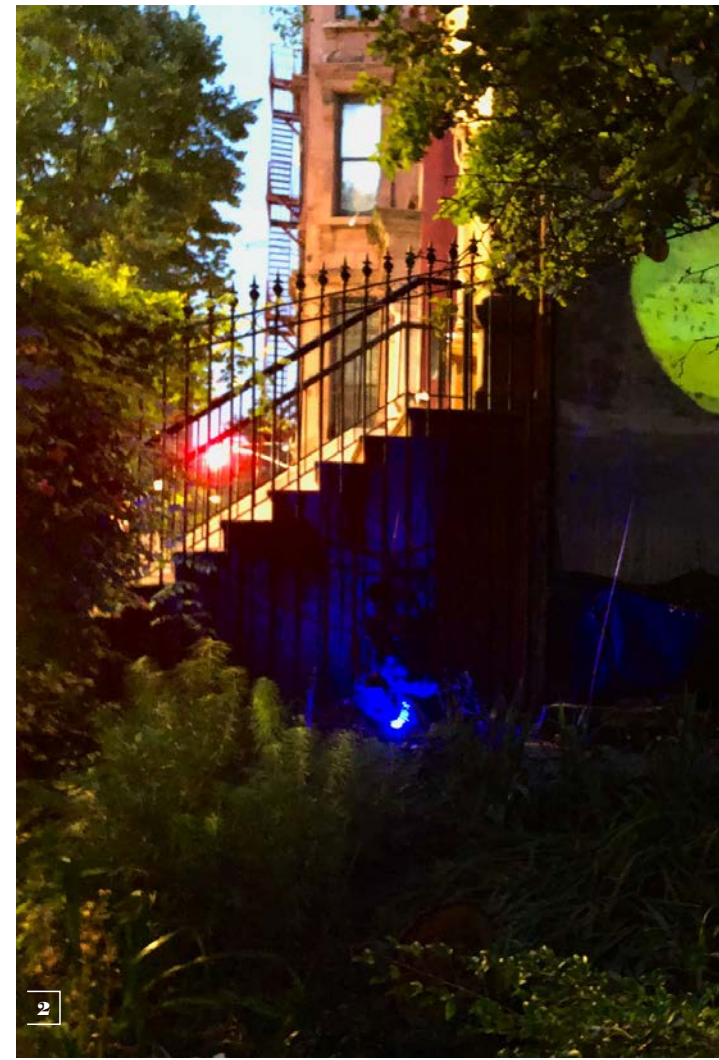
**7.** Hannah Wilke,  
*S. O. S. Stratification Ob-  
ject Series* (Perfor-  
mance Self-Portrait with  
Les Wollam), 1974.

**8.** Deana Lawson,  
*Portal*, 2017. Kathleen  
Ryan, *Bad Melon*  
(*Rainbow*), 2022.

**9.** Hannah Wilke,  
*The Orange One*, 1975.

**10.** Deana Lawson,  
*Portal*, 2017.

**11.** Lucas Samaras,  
*Untitled Box #6*, 1963.



# THE ARTIST GARDENER



**1.** Natsuki Takauji, *Shin Project: Lucky Charms / Wish Daily*, 2021, Dimensions variable, installation view from the group exhibition "Koha" at The Artist Gardener NYC, West 132nd Street Community Garden, New York, NY. Photo by Natsuki Takauji.

**2./3./5.** Morgen Christie, *Inheritance*, 2022, installation view from "Echoes in Harlem." Photo by Natsuki Takauji.

**4.** Exhibiting artists and friends of The Artist Gardener NYC, including SVA Artist Residency cohort members C Fodoreanu, Morgen Christie, Mag-

dalena Dukiewicz and Natsuki Takauji. Photo by Natsuki Takauji.

**6.** Artist Morgen Christie with her installation *Inheritance*. Photo by Natsuki Takauji.

**7.** Community engagement with artwork in Encircle, 2020. Photo and artwork by Natsuki Takauji.



**THE ARTIST GARDENER NYC** is a green space art program located at the West 132nd Street Community Garden in Harlem and cofounded by five artists, including SVA Residency alumnus and interdisciplinary immigrant artist Natsuki Takauji. Natsuki met with us to tell us more about her project and how her experience at SVA helped grow her community of artists and strengthen her desire to work collaboratively.

by Rachel Gisela Cohen

**When did you start The Artist Gardener NYC?**

In the midst of the pandemic, when there were almost no art events, a small group of immigrant artists—including Francine Rogers, Haksul Lee, Bruna D’Alessandro, Shantel Rose Miller and I—presented the first outdoor group exhibition at the West 132nd Street Community Garden in West Harlem. Francine works there as a neighborhood volunteer and organized the first iteration. It was such a great experience for the artists and the local community, so we decided to create an organization. We currently program art exhibitions, workshops, live concerts and local tours at the garden.

**How did your experience in SVA’s Artist Residency Program influence your project?**

The program taught me the power and potential of artist collectives. Our residency cohort was from across the world and was very supportive. Our virtual meetings and critiques organically connected us and created a sense of collective work. We were inspired by the feedback we received from one another. The program also offered valuable lectures, including Alex Paik from Tiger Strikes Asteroid, a nationwide artist-run organization that generates artist communities through exhibitions

across the U.S. These experiences in the residency gave me a clearer vision and desire to work collectively.

**Tell us a little about your collaboration with fellow Residency alumnus Morgen Christie.**

I met Morgen during our residency program. At the same time, I was curating “Echoes in Harlem” for The Artist Gardener. As I became familiar with her site-responsive and time-specific artwork, I wanted to see what she would create in Harlem. She lives near the Mason-Dixon Line, in Philadelphia, where she creates artworks in response to several historical locations. She had never created work in NYC, so we were both excited about her project in this historically and culturally rich neighborhood. She visited the garden to film and record the sounds of the neighborhood, and she created *Inheritance*, a series of video and sound projections along with sculptures. She performed different works every month for the four-month long period and, at the closing event, combined all three works into one immersive view across the garden.

**Do you have anything planned in the future for The Artist Gardener NYC?**

Yes, we will be curating a new exhibition this summer! You can find out more by following us on Instagram @theartistgardernyc.



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# THE SEMI-CHARMED ART SCHOOL LIFE OF LINDSEY FRANCES JONES

by Calley Nelson



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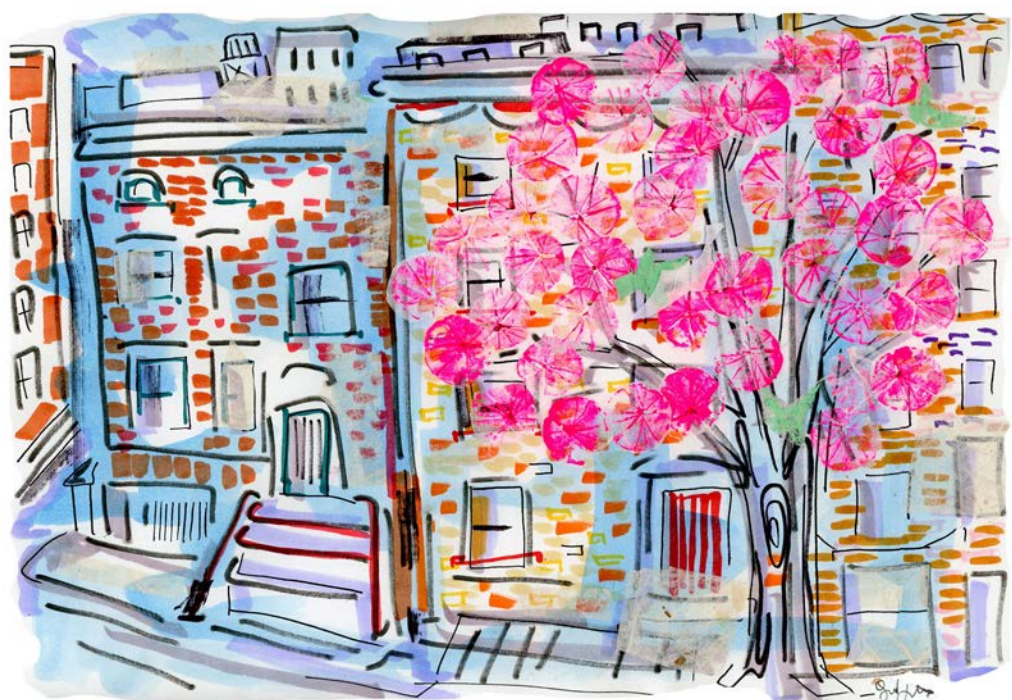
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**Why did you start drawing NYC streets?**  
Lindsey Frances Jones is an online sensation known for her sketches of the city SVACE calls home—iconic views emerging from a dizzying array of color, drawn fast and always on the go, in the New York way. We asked her some questions, and she wisely imparted to us the ways she has succeeded in cultivating a sustainable and empowering art practice.

**Why did you start drawing NYC streets?**  
Because it was as cheap as a Micron pen, a sketchbook and going outside! I drew a lot sitting on the subway or during my lunch breaks (I would take a lot of photos for later, too). NYC presented the most accessible entry point for getting started and keeping an art-making practice.

**What aspects of your courses with Continuing Education did you find most helpful in developing your work as an artist?**

The community of people wanting to explore art and be artists helped me the most—it presented a way to keep going. I started taking classes one by one and began to understand what other practices might build upon the art I was [already] doing. So, if I'm in an illustration class, I might learn that children's illustration suits me or that printmaking has a relationship to graphic art. Community of practice is so crucial for finding a style.

I always say, "I am in the art school of life." The way I experience SVACE is like having an art school available to me, but without some of the pressure to compete or complete a formal degree. You can have the review process of art school with the community, but you can build your [own] program.

I'm looking forward to taking more courses in the SVA Printshop. I love that people repeat courses like Silkscreen, building their work and businesses through that repeated course.

**You have quite an extensive online shop with many prints of cityscapes. How did you start selling your work online and how has that process evolved?**

I started selling pretty randomly! A friend of a friend asked me if I could sell her a print of my *Gray's Papaya* painting in 2018. It took a lot of trial and error to figure that out. Later, I discovered a fine art printer that would print my work on excellent paper with archival ink and then send it to the customer.

**Do you have any advice for our readers who are pivoting careers by taking CE courses?**

Get started in any way you can, letting courses guide you to what you might be interested in, but focus on being "you." Talk to other artists and students for advice, but remember your own authentic story is the most important and exciting part of your work.

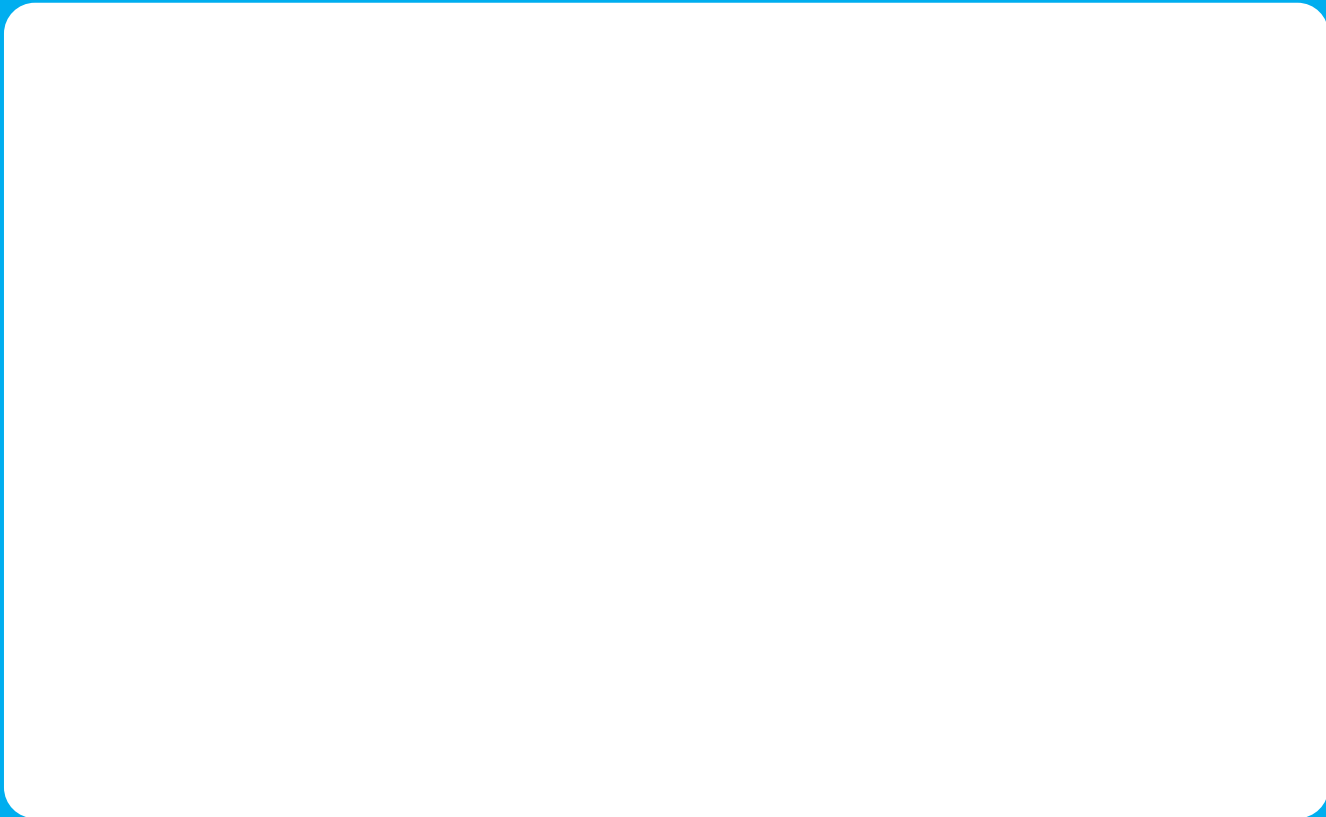
#### Captions

1. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Brooklyn Bridge*, 2021, watercolor and ink, 11"x14."
2. Lindsey Frances Jones, *La Bonbonniere*, 2021, mixed media, 9"x12."
3. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Cherry Blossoms*, 2020, watercolor and collaged paper, 11"x14."
4. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Cup and Saucer*, 2021, acrylic, 5"x7."
5. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Nom Wah Tea Parlor*, 2017, watercolor and ink, 11"x14."
6. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Grand Central Station*, 2020, watercolor, 9"x12."
7. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Coffee Cups*, 2022, watercolor and ink, 11"x14."
8. Lindsey Frances Jones, *Fanelli Cafe*, 2021, watercolor, 9"x12."



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***Student  
Gallery***

*Color Tetrad | Prima Reunion, 2021,  
natural wool on burlap, 50"x69"x1.5"*

**ARTIST**  
Davina Hsu

**COURSE**  
Soft Sculpture | FIC-2527-A

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