

Contemporary Photography 2018

CICA Museum

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Featured Artists 참여작가:

Syl Arena, Chenlin Cai, Veronica Dimitrov, Jill Gewirtz, Mahobe Ghods, Lee Yu Juan, Junnan Lyu, Rose Materdomini, Allen Morris, Naghmeh Navabi, Steffanie Padilla, Thomas Pickarski, O. Gustavo Plascencia, Wong Ho Sang, Marija Stankovic

Syl Arena

“Ela” (2017)

My 'Constructed Voids' merge mystery with spectacle in a manner that diverges from typical expectations of how photographs convey light, vision, and time.

I position these works as ethereal landscapes of an unseeable reality—sublime, yet otherworldly. I embrace the idea that their visual ambiguity invites interpretation. To that end, their titles ('Ela' for instance) are fabricated words intended to strip away narrative connotation and encourage unmediated consideration.

Many mistakenly see these photographs as computer-generated. Certainly they appear to contain non-photographic qualities—deeply saturated colors, shifting figure-ground relationships, shadows that randomly change hue, and zigzags that suggest glitches in digital code.

Their visual truth is that these images originate as tabletop constructs of glossy, white paper. Their twists provide form and reflection. A trio of primary-colored lights paints the color palette. Where two hues converge to create a third, spatial ambiguity emerges where the interference of the paper's edge casts a shadow that reveals just one of the parent colors.

Counterintuitively, artifacts of time are visible throughout. Each exposure requires many minutes for the sensor of my vintage scanning back to walk in micro-steps across my 4x5 camera. Zigzags result when the paper vibrates under the heat of the lights. Their visibility establishes these photographs as analogs of the time that passed during their creation, gentle reminders of time's flowing nature.

Ideally the 'Constructed Voids' are exhibited as bare sheets of chromogenic paper with internal frames that arc the print several inches away from the wall. Viewers are often surprised to find that these photos undulate under gallery ventilation (or when blown upon by the inquisitive guest). In our increasingly screen-based world, this physicality reminds us of the legacy that photographs have long existed simultaneously as images and as objects.

Syl Arena (born Phoenix, Arizona) is a California-based artist known for his explorations of non-representational photography. He freely admits that he is addicted to color and shadow. In his current series, *Constructed Voids*, Arena deconstructs white light into vibrant hues and mixes them onto monochromatic constructs. Through the intersection of light, construct, and lens, Arena finds transformative relationships that he describes as “inner landscapes.” Arena is also greatly interested in commenting on the loss of the image-object in our screen-based world. Increasingly he positions his photographs as objects rather than merely as images. To this end, the *Constructed Voids* are hung as bare sheets of chromogenic paper in a manner that bends the prints outward from the wall and allows them to undulate gently. Arena earned an MFA from Lesley University (Cambridge, Massachusetts) and a BFA in Studio Art from the University of Arizona (Tucson, Arizona).

Chenlin Cai

“Contemporary Landscape” (2017)

I scanned the X-ray pictures of people from different races, with different jobs, and used them as digital collage to recompose a typical, traditional Chinese landscape painting. When different X-ray images overlap on top of each other, the individual identity becomes very vague, and the commonality and inclusivity are shown in our sight. It is just like the structure in this landscape painting, countless individuals together build up an entirely different scene.

The traditional Chinese landscape painting is a culture signature in the philosophy of “Dao”, which represents a spirit of universal harmony. I think this spirit is the core platform of the communications between different races.

Chenlin Cai 蔡陈林, Born in Fujian in 1984, now lives in Beijing and Philadelphia. Cai received his MFA from two of the renowned universities in fine arts. The Tsinghua University in Beijing, China and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Art in Philadelphia, PA, USA

Many Chinese artists studying & living abroad believe that western abstracts dominate the contemporary landscape, they must abandon their tradition to cater to the art markets, and the result is often disappointing.

Cai immerses in the conflict of these two different art cultures, and art environments did the opposite. He did no compromise, following only his instinct and vision, combining the best of his traditional training as a classical artist and his unorthodox use of paint on non-traditional materials and surface, experimenting with multi-media expression, Cai had successfully created his unique painting style using cellular structure and X-ray landscape. The result is a highly acclaimed collection sort by collectors.

Veronica Dimitrov

“Ashley, My Bathtub” (2016)

“Phoebe, Korean Bell” (2017)

These two portraits, “Phoebe, Korean Bell” and “Ashley, My Bathtub” create a balanced harmony when shown together. Although both subjects stare intently at the viewer, they evoke very different emotions. Ashley is shown nude and hunched in an artificial environment in black and white film. Phoebe is shown clothed, standing tall in an organic environment in color film. The juxtaposition of these photos cause the viewer to feel safe, secure, and strong when looking at Phoebe and unsure and vulnerable while looking at Ashley. Experiencing them side by side can be compared to the ups and downs of life. Together the images create a balance visually and emotionally.

Born 1996 in California, **Veronica Dimitrov** has been practicing art for all of her life. Primarily shooting in 35mm film, Veronica focuses on portraying the life that she observes around her. Common subjects of her photos are close friends, nature, and the interaction between the two. Over the years, Veronica has become active in the DIY art scene that her city of Long Beach has to offer. Veronica has single handedly put together two popular art shows under the name Honey House. She has also been on the curation team of multiple shows at Long Beach galleries.

Jill Gewirtz

“Stuck in Thought” (2014) “Staten Island Cowboy” (2018)

Whether it's tourists travelling to see New York and its wonders like the Statue of Liberty or the City from river's perspective, commuters becoming anesthetized to the surroundings around them to travel in their daily grind, or serious people lost in their own emotion or circumstance, the Staten Island ferry is a fascinating resource of chilling and sentimental portraits. To me, it represents people in transition, who are absorbed and dazzled by the sea and by their own thoughts, a time of reflection. People on this mode of travel are united for several minutes, not necessarily checking their cellphones, but rocked into the motion of New York's austere and sometimes perilous river. Perhaps that's a metaphor for people's experience of New York. These are images taken in the last 4 years.

Jill Gewirtz

I see the world as a real-life museum full of Rauschenberg's and Rothko's through found abstraction in everyday life. I use the medium of digital and analog photography with themes of abstraction, surrealism, loss and infinity and introspection. Over time, I've done alternative photography, used digital photography, recent return to film using multiple exposures with Holga cameras. My attraction to history, found objects in flea markets, multiples of objects and reflections has been long-time interests. I was exposed to photography by my father who owned color labs in NYC, so photography is in my blood and has been a part of my world throughout my life time. In photography, images stand alone, often capturing a story that the photographer discovers mid process. I have an image in the permanent collection at the Museum of the City of New York. I've also had my photos in group shows at Alexandria, Marin, Marietta Cobb, Griffin, Masur, Attleboro, and Hockaday Museums. I recently had 2 photos included in the Berlin Biennial through the Julia Cameron Awards. Recently, I was in a 3 person show curated by Jessica Porter at the Yard in NYC, featuring doors in different neighborhoods.

Mahobe Ghods

“Mckinzy River, Portland Oregon” (2017)

Dr. Mahobe Ghods is an Iranian artists working and living in New York. She teaches printmaking at Teachers College, Columbia University and for past three years she has been working on water and has photographed many different bodies of water such rivers, reservoirs, lakes, and oceans. The works in this exhibition are surface water of three rivers in the north west of United States and Canada. The Kootenary river in Banf, Canada and Columbia head waters in Washington state and also Mckinzy river in Portland Oregon.

Lee Yu Juan

“Candied Dreams” (2015)

In Nightfall, the lines of photography are blurred. The camera-less images are created from a scanner using everyday materials. The cosmic-like imagery created is to celebrate the quiet beauty of the everyday. Seeking solace in the shades of Black, forgetting one's self and embrace the beauty of darkness that encompasses.

June Lee Yu Juan is an artist based in Singapore. She graduated with a Bachelor in Contemporary Arts from the University of Tasmania, Australia. She has held two solo exhibitions in Singapore and Indonesia and has taken part in several group exhibitions locally and abroad. Lee is interested in subverting the status quo in art-making methods

Junnan Lyu

“The Unseen #2” (2017)

“The Unseen #3” (2017)

“The Unseen #4” (2017)

Lyu's photography project The Unseen shows his reflections on the Chinese immigrants in the U.S. context. All the three works shown in this exhibition were photographed with 4 x 5 large format view camera, which has long been preferred for staged photography for its ability in exposing the maximum of photographic details. Using the large format view camera with complex staging of the scene, Lyu's photographs expose tantalizing dramatic tensions. In The Unseen-3, two Chinese accountants were busy with paperworks, and one of them overturned the coffee accidentally. Wearing a nude-color foam suit, the artist is lying on the ground in the scene with coffee dripping down on him, alluding to the invisible anonymous people who bear the pain and sufferings in their displaced life as immigrants. Lyu's works then uncovers the limitations faced by immigrants, as their freedom to move is just another form of control in the capitalist system that requires free circulation of capitals to boost production and consumption.

Junnan Lyu (b. 1994, Tianjin, China)

Graduated from Studio Art Department, Lewis & Clark College in 2017 (B.A.), Lyu now lives and works in New York. With a cross-media approach, Lyu combines sculpture, performance and photography to stage complicated scenarios on Chinese immigrants from different generations. His recent shows include Displacement, 7s Labo, New York (2018), Boarding, Ray Gallery, New York (2018) and To Be Very Tender, Ronna and Eric Gallery of Contemporary Art, Portland (2017). Lyu's recent artist residency includes Salem Art Works Artist Residency (2017) and he also has been rewarded with Andrew W Mellon Foundation research grant (2016).

Rose Materdomini

“ON A WALK” (2017)

Street photography is often a starting point for my photographs. My images utilize photography for diverse and contemporary cultural issues. By including visual symbols to portray conceptual content, I include unfinished fragments of objects, which are moved and rearranged to represent ideas and conjure a human presence. The human figure is a point of shared identity and to start a conversation about the human experience.

Rose is a New York City based photographer and painter. She earned an M.F.A and B.S from New York University and also studied at the School of Visual Arts and the Parsons School of Design. Her work has been exhibited in group exhibitions nationally and internationally including the Smack Mellon Gallery, Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, Upstream Gallery, Aljira, A Center for Contemporary Art, A.I.R Gallery, the Salmagundi Club, PH21 Gallery, Budapest, CICA Museum, South Korea, Millepiani, Rome, Italy, and the Blank Wall Gallery, Athens, Greece,

Allen Morris

“ISO - 59 (9 Mile)” (2015)

Using the landscape as a stage on which to act out feelings of geographical and social insecurity, “ISO” explores the tense feeling of uncertainty felt while searching for something to hold on to - a place of security and permanence in which to take root. The moments of stability provided by these static objects found within these photographs provide a brief moment of security, reassurance, control, and order in the face of uncertainty and chaos.

Allen Morris is a photographer based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received his M.F.A. in Studio Art in 2015 from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, B.F.A. in Applied Visual Arts in 2005 from Oregon State University and an Associates Degree from Eastern Oregon University in 2002. He makes photographs that focus on the relationship between humans and their environments with a particular interest on the influence of place on identity. His work has been exhibited in galleries in the United States and internationally. He is an active member of the Postcard Collective and the Society for Photographic Education.

Naghmeh Navabi

“A home, no longer mine” (2018)

Naghmeh Navabi is using photograph and found images as the source material for her investigations about Islamic feminism. Her work is mostly concentrate on the notion of “A home no longer mine” is her response to the recent event in Iran about compulsory hijab where Iranian women risk their lives to fight for their freedom.

Naghmeh Navabi is Iranian Visual artist based in London. She is recently graduating from London College of Communication. She always using photograph and found images as the source material. her investigation is about Islamic feminism and female issues. "A home no longer mine" is her response to the recent event in Iran about compulsory hijab where Iranian women risk their lives to fight for their freedom.

Steffanie Padilla

"Cambridge" (2018)
"Slaughterhouse" (2018)
"Swap-Meet" (2018)

This series is about observing spaces that are in constant flux and my relationship to these momentary encounters. Photography is a medium I use to create still memories from often missed events due to their temporal nature. In one image, we find ourselves at a Swap-meet, a place where people from neighboring communities frequently gather to search for cheaply priced or rare goods. In another image, we are in view of a transport truck carrying cows into a slaughterhouse facility, a specialized institution that is always in constant movement due to consumer demand. At last, we are confronted with a pile of snow, a temperature sensitive material, slowly disappearing as a new season takes place.

Steffanie Padilla is an artist working in photography whose practice includes advertisements, video and installation. She is currently a prospective MFA Photography applicant and received her BFA from California State University Long Beach. Her interests are centered around the different ways in which animals are perceived through various cultures, including how media information constructs our perception towards those animals. In addition to animal studies, she often photographs her family, strangers and current events as a way to stay connected with her environment.

Thomas Pickarski

"In Snow 1", from the series, "The End of Nowhere" (2018)
"In Snow 2", from the series, "The End of Nowhere" (2018)
"In Snow 3", from the series, "The End of Nowhere" (2018)
"In Snow 4", from the series, "The End of Nowhere" (2018)
"In Snow 5", from the series, "The End of Nowhere" (2018)

I've always been intrigued by the process of consciously transcending reality through exploring, and then shifting, one's perception. Several years ago I set out on a series of international travel adventures to confront psychological fear and limitation. Having lived in the scorching deserts of Arizona for many years, I was intensely drawn to the opposing arctic deserts of places like Iceland, Greenland, and Patagonia. I traveled twice a year for month-long adventures, often on a bicycle, days away from anyone, and camping in a little tent. The images I created reflect my love for the unusual shapes, fragile settings, and desolate landscapes I discovered. I continue to return to these places. Each time, the layers of exploration continue to broaden and deepen.

Thomas Pickarski

I am a multi-media visual and performance artist. The themes I work with include minor obsessions, the bizarre landscape, self realization, and social justice. I often integrate storytelling into my work through text and spoken word. I hold a BFA in Painting and an MFA in Performance Art, both from Arizona State University. I have had solo exhibitions at The Cultural Center of Cape Cod in Massachusetts, the Harbor Gallery in Boston, and Ormond Memorial Art Museum in Florida. My current exhibition, *Floating Blue*, debuted at the 10th Annual Songzhuang Art Festival at the Czech China Contemporary Museum in Beijing, China, in the fall of 2017. My self published photography books include, *Floating Blue*, *The Middle of Nowhere*, *The End of Nowhere (Stories and Photographs)*, and, *Adventures of Otto, a Tiny Toy Dinosaur*. I live in Greenwich Village, New York City, USA.

O. Gustavo Plascencia

“Earth Ruminations: Abstracted Data 01” (2018)

“Earth Ruminations: Abstracted Data 56” (2018)

In *Earth Ruminations*, I make images using traditional, alternative, and hybrid photographic processes; sometimes scanning them half way through the process to capture the in-between stages of the process to highlight the ephemeral nature of my data collection and its contents. I use organic materials to create these images; yet these images are reminiscent of turn-of-the-century sky and space imagery. Are we looking at the skies? Or are they bodies of water? Are the images depicting something microscopic or immense? This data collection process yields images that are very abstract, but yet they reference the past or a possible future. The disappeared, the lost, and the wished collide in these naturally imagined landscapes and its inhabitants. The people that walked these places in the past have left a mark in the environment – for better or worse – and now we can be part of those narratives and share our histories by inhabiting the same spaces. My creative research heavily borrows from Queer Theory, social art and contemporary philosophy practices; these influences have led me to explore intersections of place, personal narratives, and the absence of the body; anchoring these experiences with the notion that place/landscape is a silent witness to the histories that affect an individual on a personal and a communal level.

Plascencia is a visual artist and educator whose creative work explores the constructive nature of identity, the conflict that individuals face building their identities, and the duality between domesticity and utilitarianism, personal and communal, and self and society. He attended the *Escuela de Artes Plasticas “Ruben Herrera”* in Saltillo, Mexico before immigrating to the USA. His work has been shown nationally and internationally including: Instituto Fotografico de Medellin, The International Center of Bethlehem, The Polytechnic University of Valencia, and Academia de Bellas Artes San Carlos. He is currently resides in Memphis, TN, USA.

Wong Ho Sang

“Life 1” (2017)

“Life 2” (2017)

“Life 3” (2017)

In his *LIFE series*, Wong Ho Sang uses abstract photography to express the importance of balance in life. In these monochrome images, the light and darkness represent two forces that are opposites and yet also complement each other, drawing on Taoist philosophy and the theories of balance that inform the Yin and Yang. The use of geometric patterns combined with close-up focus recalls various visual, spiritual and psychological elements that create complementary oppositions, such as clarity versus obscurity and detail versus ambiguity. The individual photographs in the series carry disproportionate light and darkness, indicating that balance in life is not always in simple parts and measures.

LIFE also explores the ability of photography to turn physical objects or locations into abstract images. The artist photographed striking architectural features, capturing the extreme contrast of light and shade cast by the buildings' structure. The resulting images feature striking geometric patterns in bold monochrome. However, close inspection reveals tell-tale elements of the ostensible subject of the photographs: the distinctive grain of stone, the bubbles in sheets of concrete. This creates a visually intriguing tension between the initially apparent abstraction, and the subsequent revelation of the physicality of the photographed structures, alluding to the historic conflict between two-dimensional and three-dimensional, between reality and illusion, that is one of the central tenets of photographic theory.

In this way, Wong Ho Sang connects his practice to a strong tradition of art photographers and theorists, drawing on the ideas expressed by writers such as Susan Sontag, who drew attention to the complex relationship between truth and interpretation inherent to photography as a medium: “Despite the presumption of veracity that gives all photographs authority, interest, seductiveness, the work that photographers do is no generic exception to the usually shady commerce between art and truth... Although there is a sense in which the camera does indeed capture reality, not just interpret it, photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings and drawings are.” Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, 1977

The title of the series, *LIFE*, serves to confound viewer's expectations and encourage them to consider the word's meaning and implications. Although one might expect to see human figures, these photographs initially appear to be devoid of “life” in the traditional sense. However, the series alludes to pattern-making as the earliest human artistic impulse, as well as the significance of buildings as a context for our lives. Furthermore, the patterns refer to our psychological lives and the essential need for balance between light and dark.

Wong Ho Sang is a native photographer and artist of Macau. His journey of artistic endeavors incorporates the foundation of western painting, aesthetics of photography and ideas of contemporary art. Wong Ho Sang received his bachelor's and master's degrees of fine arts at the Art Center College of Design in the United States in 1989 and 1991 respectively, majoring in photography. Since his first solo exhibition in 1989, Wong Ho Sang has been continually pursuing photography and fine art projects. Through out his career, he explored various forms of photographic and artistic expressions – from conventional black and white photography, primitive wet-plate collodion photography, high-tech digital imaging, three dimensional art pieces combining images and objects, to installations beyond the scope of photography. He continues to expand creative possibilities by utilizing diverse techniques and ideas.

Marija Stankovic

“Possibilities” (2018)

This piece was inspired by the train station, like a representation of constant movement, change and possibilities. Place where people come and go, in a hurry or totally calm, where people meet and say goodbye, where they are alone in the crowd, where they want to get away. All those hectic emotions and events are represented through this collage, trying to transfer that tension through an image that imitates movement.

Marija Stankovic is an architect and visual artist from Belgrade, Serbia. During her studies, besides architecture, she was exploring a field of graphic design and learned more about collage as a medium. First, she started using collage in an architectural presentation of spaces and ambients. Now she's often using photos from her trips to create both real and surreal imagery while saving memories from fading.