

Nine
2017 Queens
Museum Studio
Program Exhibition

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Queens Museum Studio Program Artists

ruby onyinyechi amanze
Andrew Beccone
Chris Bogia
Gloria Maximo
Denniston Mikalson
Karolina Sobocka
Alina Tenser
Tuo Wang
Bryan Zanisnik

ruby onyinyechi amanze, *Chasing relentlessly after fading things— The Birth of black, audre marries its indigenous self— Shadows validate existence (ada and Twin find ground)*, 2014 (detail). Pencil, ink, pens, photo transfers, collage, 80 x 208 in. Courtesy the artist and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Seattle, WA

Cover: Tuo Wang, *Addicted*, 2017 (video still). Single channel HD video, 20'30". Courtesy the artist

Nine features the artists who took part in the Queens Museum studio program between 2015 and 2017. Although the artists were selected as individuals, certain ideas link the work in this exhibition. In the first gallery, Andrew Beccone, Chris Bogia, Karolina Sobocka, and Alina Tenser each re-visit objects from the realm of learning and display to ask questions about the limitations of the body and of knowledge. In the second gallery, formal issues in artmaking—such as surface, dimension, monumentality, movement, and material—mix with questions of identity in works by ruby onyinyechi amanze, Gloria Maximo, Denniston Mikalson, Tuo Wang, and Bryan Zanisnik. In the case of almost all of the artists, the artworks on view were made while they were part of the Studio Program.

Parallel to the Studio Program exhibition, collaborative presentations and performances will be presented by the current cohort of Social Practice Queens. Students in Social Practice Queens (part of the Queens College/Queens Museum MFA program) share a studio at the Queens Museum. Collaborative presentations and performances arose out of the current cohort and will be presented parallel to *Nine*.



ruby onyinyechi amanze

Drawing, as a medium, moves in and out of the larger conversation of contemporary art. Its perceived intimacy and vulnerability are aspects that amanze both embraces and confronts through scale. *Chasing relentlessly after fading things....*, 2014, was created partly as “a personal challenge to make the largest drawing I could at that time.” This drawing is part of an ongoing body of work—a non-linear, mostly fabricated narrative that explores the malleability and magic of space, through the lens of a figure amanze calls “ada the Alien” and her cohort of kindred creatures. They move effortlessly through spaces that playfully disregard the laws of physics, and exist in no specific place or time. The freedom of flying or inventing one’s reality becomes a mundane norm, and their alien, hybrid and ghost forms are neutralized in this world.

The small drawings/finished studies continue to expand on the central question of how to shift or conflate multiple dimensions. Though called studies, they do not serve as preliminary drawings for larger works. Working in this scale allows for a different type of play.

ruby onyinyechi amanze has exhibited her work nationally and internationally, including New York City, Johannesburg, Miami, Paris, London, and Lagos. She is currently an Open Sessions participant at The Drawing Center, New York City.

Andrew Beccone

The *Reanimation Library*, 2002-2016, is a collection of used books. Simultaneously prosaic and peculiar, the books are relics of the rapidly receding 20th century. Chosen primarily for the images that they contain, they have been culled from thrift stores, rummage sales, flea markets, municipal dumps, library sales, give-away piles, and used bookstores across the country. The library has been open to the public since 2006 and encourages people to use its resources to whatever ends they wish.

Reanimation Library Accumulated Ephemera, 2002-2016, displays every item discovered inside the books of the library since the collection began. *Sound and its Relation to Music*, 2015-2016, is a series of audio pieces comprised of language found in books in the library. It is an attempt to draw out sonic characteristics of the library—a space known for its absence of sound. Individuals were invited to select passages that they were attracted to and then to read them out loud. Each reading was recorded and subsequently manipulated with software.

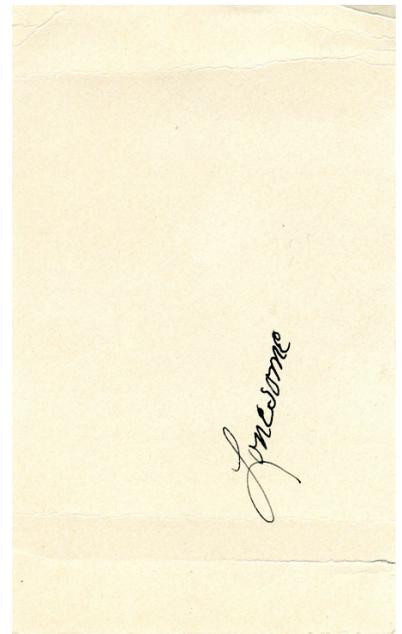
Andrew Beccone, an artist, librarian, and musician, is the founder of the *Reanimation Library*. The library has been exhibited widely at venues around the world including Vox Populi, Philadelphia; SPACE, London; High Desert Test Sites, Joshua Tree; talcual, Mexico City; 98weeks, Beirut; Museum of Modern Art, New York City; and Kunsthalle Osnabrück.

Chris Bogia

Chris Bogia's work reflects his ongoing interest in interior design and decorative art. Domestic objects, both lived with over time or desired from afar, can become charged with personal meaning. How can that meaning be visualized? Bogia employs many of the strategies and materials that interior designers use, but unburdened by a client or even a room, the work can refer to spaces both physical and psychological. As Bogia says, "My work sits in a queer space between contemporary art and decorative art, courting and resisting both worlds simultaneously."

The two sculptures on display suggest furniture and decor both in scale and surface. Lacquer finishes, walnut veneer, grass cloth wallpaper and folksy hand-laid yarn mixed with other decorative objects like vases and scented candles suggest an abstraction of a domestic interior, while the overall compositions refer to framed abstract paintings. The conventional beauty suggested here is precarious—the works are precisely designed to be held together by only balance and tension, suggesting that even private personal utopias are fragile and easily disrupted. A selection of drawings from an ongoing series called *Plants vs Zombies*, 2016, illustrate these ideas further. In these works, an ongoing conflict between two forces is depicted within the same domestic archway.

Chris Bogia is the Director and co-founder of Fire Island Artist Residency (FIAR), the first LGBTQ artist residency in the world, located in Cherry Grove, on Fire Island, New York. He is also as an instructor of sculpture at New York University. Bogia is the recipient of the 2015 Tiffany Foundation Grant. He has lived and worked in Queens for more than 15 years.



Andrew Beccone, *Reanimation Library Accumulated Ephemera*, 2002-2016 (detail). Various found materials, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist



Chris Bogia, *Untitled (Plants vs Zombies)*, 2016. Pencil and watercolor, 12 x 9 in. Courtesy the artist

Gloria Maximo

Using painting and performance, Gloria Maximo's work looks at the figure in relationship to structures often thought of as background.

In the installation *Two Black women in relief*, 2017, images of two women are combined into a loose portrait of one. One is a maid in a household in the 16th *arrondissement*, a wealthy and traditional neighborhood in Paris. The other is a single mother living in her car with her young daughter in a parking lot in the U.S. The piece speaks abstractly to an individual's separation and isolation within larger structures like their jobs, physical architecture, and psychic space. In *Woman with Laptop, Melissa Ip*, 2011, our view of her body is obstructed by the rectangular form of a laptop screen. The work was previously used in a collaborative performance, displayed on a wall inset for a living room interior. In the performance, a synchronized dance movement was performed by several women with an object that represented a laptop. Both works attempt to give formal language to a view from the outside and to examine hierarchies of seeing.

Gloria Maximo is an artist living and working in Queens. Her work has been included in exhibitions at Palais de Tokyo; MOMA P.S.1, New York City; Portland Institute for Contemporary Art; Bridget Donahue Gallery, New York City; and elsewhere.

Denniston Mikalson

White Knuckle (Hammock), 2016, is a hammock hand-knotted of cotton work rope, filled with dozens of hand-built clay balls that together imply the weight of a body. The hammock's meaning as a symbol of rest, leisure and easy living is complicated by the way it hangs from two noose-like knots tied to wooden structures suggestive of gallows. The labor of the makers' hands is visible, implicating the artists themselves in systems of power and oppression. In conflating and relating comfort and ease with violence and death, the artists insist that whiteness can be neither neutral nor innocent in a white supremacist society.

Score for Stages (1-6), 2016, comprises the first six panels in a series of instructions to be performed by two dancers. Drawn in opaque gouache on translucent drafting film, the diagrams represent the positions of rectangular rolling platforms which the dancers manipulate with their bodies over the course of a thirty-five minute performance. The score was performed in May 2016 at The Kitchen in New York City.

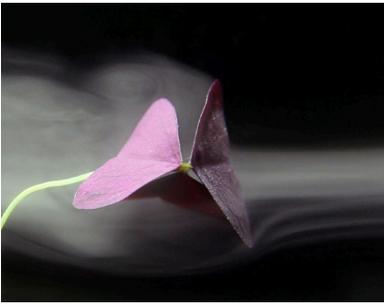
Denniston Mikalson is the collaboration between Carey Denniston and Ander Mikalson, formed in 2015. Working with tap dancers, jugglers, marching bands, ballerinas, opera singers, and visual artists, they use spectacle as a Trojan horse for critical inquiry into the politics of the body. They have co-authored performances at MOIETY, New York City; The Kitchen, New York City; Storm King Art Center, New Windsor; Fridman Gallery, New York City; and Kate Werble Gallery, New York City. They will be summer 2017 artists-in-residence at the Rauschenberg Foundation, Captiva.



Gloria Maximo, *Woman with Laptop, Melissa Ip*, 2011. Acrylic gouache, ink, plaster, burlap, canvas stretcher, 36 x 48in. Courtesy the artist



Denniston Mikalson, *White Knuckle (Hammock)*, 2016 (detail). Wood, rope and unfired clay, 93.5 x 151 x 24in. Courtesy the artists. Photo by Maria Baranova



Karolina Sobecka, *Cloud Services* (2016–ongoing) (video still). Transmedia, performance, experimentation, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist

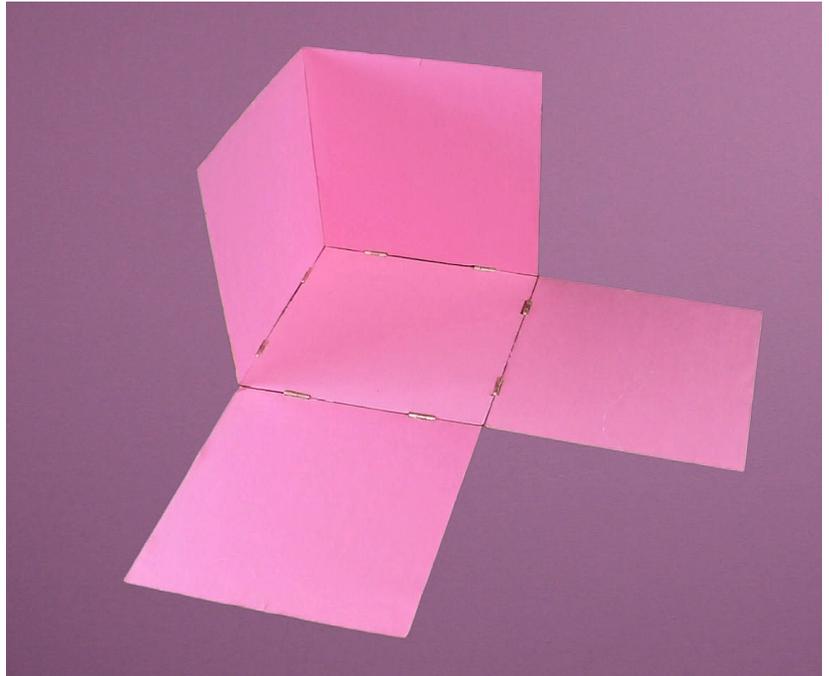
Karolina Sobecka

Playing on the name of the digital information storage known as “the cloud,” Sobecka’s *Cloud Services*, 2016, envisions a new information infrastructure in which atmospheric clouds are used as a data storage and transfer system. This is accomplished by encoding information into the DNA of the cloud, thereby tapping into nature’s own information storage method optimized by millions of years of evolution within planetary material and energy constraints. *Cloud Services* invites reflection on how knowledge commands natural resources, appropriating nature through the exercises of science and technology. The project points to the fact that we already have the infosphere in our atmosphere, and in our stomachs; our material reality is encoded and re-arranged through knowledge systems.

Karolina Sobecka works at the intersection of art, science, and technology, examining social arrangements that accommodate, exploit, resist, or accommodate technological change. Karolina’s work has been shown internationally and has received numerous awards, including from Creative Capital, Rhizome, NYFA, Princess Grace Foundation, Eyebeam, and Vida Art and Artificial Life Awards.

Alina Tenser

In psychology, the term “affordances” is used to describe an object’s possible uses. For instance, the affordances that describe a coffee mug would be some kind of open concave depression for holding liquid and a handle proportioned for a human hand to grip. The term has a certain scrutiny and exhaustion built into it, a handling and groping of an object to grasp all of its potentials. Tenser’s videos each investigate a single object in order to understand them through their affordances. *Kismet Tutorial*, 2016, features a doughnut shape which revolves into itself or out of itself. Like an orifice it has the capability of injecting or rejecting matter which is



Alina Tenser, *Ampersand Box*, 2017 (video still). Video projection, plexiglass, video goo, hardware, 05:30. Courtesy the artist

demonstrated with ping pong balls. In *Ampersand Box*, 2017, Tenser explores a box which is in evolving states of being open and closed. As the box's contours transform, it oscillates between being an almost 2-dimensional shape and a functional container. Both videos use the language of magic and children's educational programming to communicate the object's relevance.

Alina Tenser's practice spans sculpture, video, and performance. In her performance and video work, Tenser often uses objects that she has made or altered making the performative examinations of the objects an extension of the maker/object relationship. Alina Tenser was born in Kiev, Ukraine in 1981, and lives and works in Queens, New York.

Tuo Wang

Tuo Wang's recent practice focuses on the unreliable relationship between reality and the presumed truth of our ideologies, myths, and cultural archive. In *Roleplay*, 2016, the artist put two actors in a rented living room. An actual couples therapy session is carried out; actors then improvise a "perfect middle-class couple." Footage of a seemingly trouble-free relationship is intertwined with extremely dramatic monologues—replays in first person of the classic American noir romance film *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981). In *Addicted*, 2017, twelve actors who usually work in commercials are invited to mimic a group photo shoot like the ones seen on the cover of the magazine *Vanity Fair*. They all present the images that they usually play in the commercials—identities that are distinct from their real ones—but the truth is revealed as they start to share their intimate issues. These confessions sound very persuasive, for they are made up of quotations from the commercials these actors have previously made.

Born in Changchun, China in 1984, Tuo Wang now lives and works in New York and Beijing. In 2017, he will have his first major solo exhibition in China; *Myths We Don't Outgrow* at White Space Beijing.

Bryan Zanisnik

Philip Roth Presidential Library, 2017, consists of hundreds of copies of novels by prominent American fiction writer Philip Roth inserted into a wall. A tribute and a critique of the author's ego, the work was initially inspired by a legal battle between Roth and the artist in 2012.

In 2012, Zanisnik presented a performance at Abrons Arts Center in the Lower East Side in which he stood inside a plexiglas and wood vitrine and held Roth's book *The Great American Novel* (he did not read it out loud). At the opening Zanisnik was served with a cease and desist letter by attorneys acting for Roth. After much back and forth between Zanisnik's copyright attorney and Roth's lawyers, the matter was dropped. Zanisnik utilized Roth's novel in his performance because he felt an affinity with the author and his writing. Both men are from New Jersey, explore ideas of masculinity, Americana, and family in their work, and have an abject sense of humor.

Bryan Zanisnik was born in New Jersey and currently lives between Stockholm, Sweden and New York City. He received an MFA from Hunter College and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. He has recently exhibited and performed at MoMA PS1, New York City; Sculpture Center, New York City; Brooklyn Museum, New York City; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; and LAXART, Los Angeles.



Tuo Wang, *Roleplay*, 2016 (video still).
Single channel HD video, 24'31". Courtesy the artist



Bryan Zanisnik, *Philip Roth Presidential Library*, site-specific installation, 2017.
Courtesy the artist, Aspect/Ratio, Chicago and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles

Social Practice Queens

Social Practice Queens (SPQ) is a unique MFA Concentration and Post-graduate Certificate Program bringing together the resources of an academic research institution, Queens College (City University of New York: CUNY), with the long-standing community-based activism of the Queens Museum. As part of the partnership, students in the program share a studio at the Queens Museum. For this exhibition, Social Practice Queens presents a series of events on reimagining and reformatting social organization. Artists include Alix Camacho Vargas, Floor Grootenhuis, Paula Frisch, Tara Homasi, Zaid Islam, Jeff Kasper, Julian Phillips, Erin Turner, Uno Nam, and Pedro Vintimilla.

June 11, 1-5pm: Art as a Tool for Resistance

Resistance Theater

Led by Julian Philips and Zaid Islam

A workshop and activity book on resistance with photos by Islam.

How To Protest: A Tool Kit

With Floor Grootenhuis, Tara Homasi, Zaid Islam

What do you need to bring to a protest? What are follow up actions?

Debtbank

By Alix Camacho Vargas and Jeff Kasper

A surreal bilingual (Spanish/English) resource desk where you can ask question or answer your neighbor's queries about debt.

June 25, 1-5pm: Building Shared Identities

Mosaic Metaphor

Led by Paula Frisch and Pedro Vintimilla

Participants piece together a mosaic and social sculpture.

Estructuras Penetrables

Led by Alix Camacho Vargas and Jiemin Yang

Participants reshape and transform wearable buildings or interiors as more actors join in.

Collecting Gestures Of Empathy

Performed by Floor Grootenhuis

An interactive performance with the public.

You Don't Know

Performed by Uno Nam

A musical performance with moving images.

About the Queens Museum Studio Program

As part of its 2013 expansion, the Queens Museum added eight artist's studios to its North Wing. One of the only US studio programs housed within a major museum, these highly subsidized spaces are available for one year with a possible extension to a second. Artists are selected through a juried open call which draws from hundreds of submissions yearly from all over the world. Students in Social Practice Queens (part of Queens College/Queens Museum's MFA Program) also share a collaborative studio space in the Queens Museum's studio wing.



Jeff Kasper and Alix Camacho Vargas, *DebtBank (service desk)*, 2017. Participatory performance, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artists

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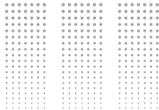
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