



# BODIES

MFA Thesis Exhibition 2017

March 18 – April 11

Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery  
Stony Brook University

# Introduction

In the Fall of 2016, the Zuccaire Gallery hosted the exhibition “Not Ready to Make Nice: Guerrilla Girls in the Artworld and Beyond.” For thirty years this anonymous collective of feminist activist artists have used humor, satire and performance to question explicit and implicit bias in mainstream cultural narratives. Their interventions are intended to make visible the discriminatory practices of museums, galleries and broader cultural institutions in hopes of bringing change, change that begins with awareness.

The Guerrilla Girls remind us that the creation of a work of art is an act of expression and, at the same time, a political act. An artist may decide to focus on the intimate and personal or the overtly political, what is important is that the artist has the freedom to choose. Over the last three years, the young artists represented in the MFA Thesis Exhibition have explored themes of identity, embodiment, gender, race, politics, memory, authority and experience, among others in their work. The results reflect concentrated individual effort as well as collaboration and critique.

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 centers not only in Stony Brook but also in Manhattan, Southampton and East Hampton, where our Department administers 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, Music, History and Women’s Studies, among others, and they participate in the Department’s affiliation with the Humanities Institute, the Consortium for Digital Arts, Culture, and Technology (cDACT) and the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics, among others.

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. We are not ready to make nice!

Barbara E. Frank  
Chair, Department of Art

# Tanya Kaiser Robinson

My sculptural and installation works examine decidedly female themes while exploring and at times challenging preconceived notions of beauty. I often use botanical and female forms as catalysts in my work because of their shared symbology when representing subjects of fertility, beauty and life. I often draw on my Catholic upbringing as I explore the role of the sacred vessel by combining elements from the Neolithic period with modern Christian cultures. I am especially interested in the cultural silencing of women's suffering due to the social stigma associated with a woman's physical gender; specifically the female reproductive form. I do this through my examination of the relationship between politics and religion in the United States and how this relationship still influences women's societal roles and reproductive health rights. I hope that my works may serve as a vehicle for further discussion on women's societal roles, health and bodily autonomy.

[tanyamkr.com](http://tanyamkr.com)



Tanya Kaiser Robinson

*Ovary Rosary*, 2016, installation view

Stoneware, porcelain, glaze, brass wire and pink rope

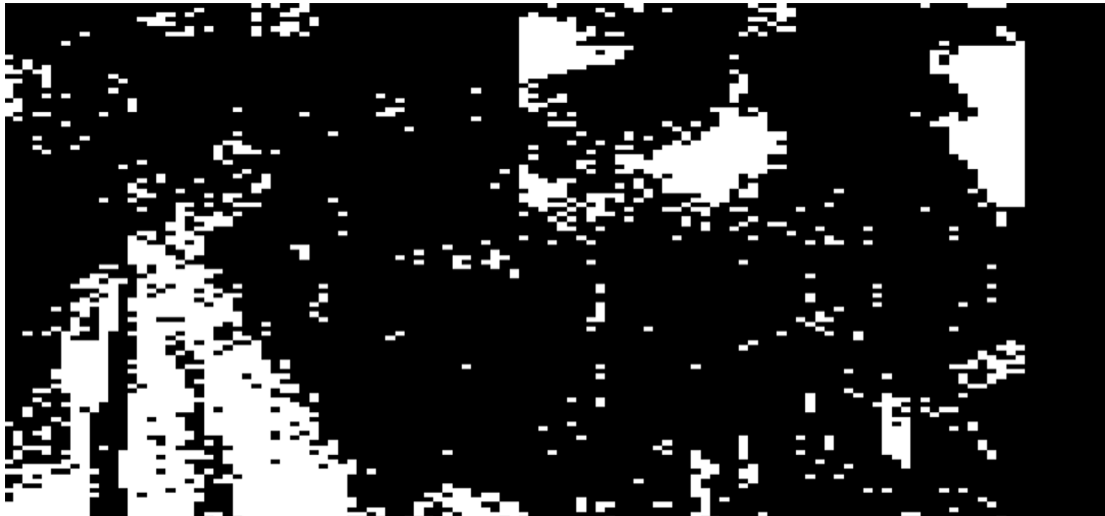
5 ½' x 12' x 15'

# Rebecca Uliasz

I conduct research in time-based media, which inspires a practice that incorporates new forms of physical experience mediated by telecommunications systems. My work engages with technologies that have become commonplace to the way that we interact with and experience the world in order to explore the ways in which our lived realities are virtually mediated. Self-contained worlds, abandoned spaces, and multi-media objects act as records of certain types of previous or forgotten human connection.

In *Modus Operandi*, the horizon line is utilized as an epistemological motif as a way to re-render images of power in the form of New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) infrared traffic security cameras. Using the concept of “bad” algorithms, or algorithms that work to break action, these images of control are subverted by removing the cars observed, rendering them unusable and thus producing a form of counter surveillance. Using traditional landscape composition techniques, moving images are algorithmically re-rendered to present the viewer not with an image of the drivers below, but with an image of the machine eye itself, gazing upon an open sky.

[rebeccauliasz.com](http://rebeccauliasz.com)



*Modus Operandi*, 2017  
Video still

# Allison M. Walters

I'm a person who makes things and loves people. My work deals with what it means to be human, with what it means to be imperfect. I study the imperfection within myself, and broadcast that into the world so that others may relate and feel closer to me and to one another, as imperfect human beings. I am most interested in communication between humans, and the failure of that communication. What happens when we love too much, and our feelings become warped or perverted? What happens when we want to get close, but we cannot? I deal with emptiness, fullness, lust, love and abuse. I am interested in happiness, and subsequently images, text and ideas that are connected to happiness, especially ones that have been deprived of context or emotion. Ultimately, I want to share feelings with people.

*Different People in the Same Pink Suit* is a series that compares the physical bodies of different people dressed in the same pink *zentai* suit. Through photography and video, I explore the erasure of physical characteristics that define individuals. Through this erasure, genderless and inhuman personas arise.

[allisonmwalters.com](http://allisonmwalters.com)

*Different People in the Same Pink Suit #1*, 2016

Framed archival pigment print

15 ¾ x 19 ½"



# Dewayne C. Wrencher

My work is about building a dialogue on complex questions of identity. I want viewers to question their current assumptions of reality regarding social differences.

The question is key in all of my projects, followed by research and social investigation. These factors help to guide and form my studio practice. The materials used to create the visual works are comprised of a collection of prints and found objects with poetic wordplay that serve as an aesthetic modifier.

Essentially, I see the final works that I present as artistic studies and each study is a visual representation of the conclusions reached in my research. It's designed to evoke thought with the intention of catching the viewer off guard and make the moment last beyond the initial viewing.

[dewaynewrencher.com](http://dewaynewrencher.com)



*Hair Theory IV, 2016*  
Black and white linoleum cut  
20 x 38"

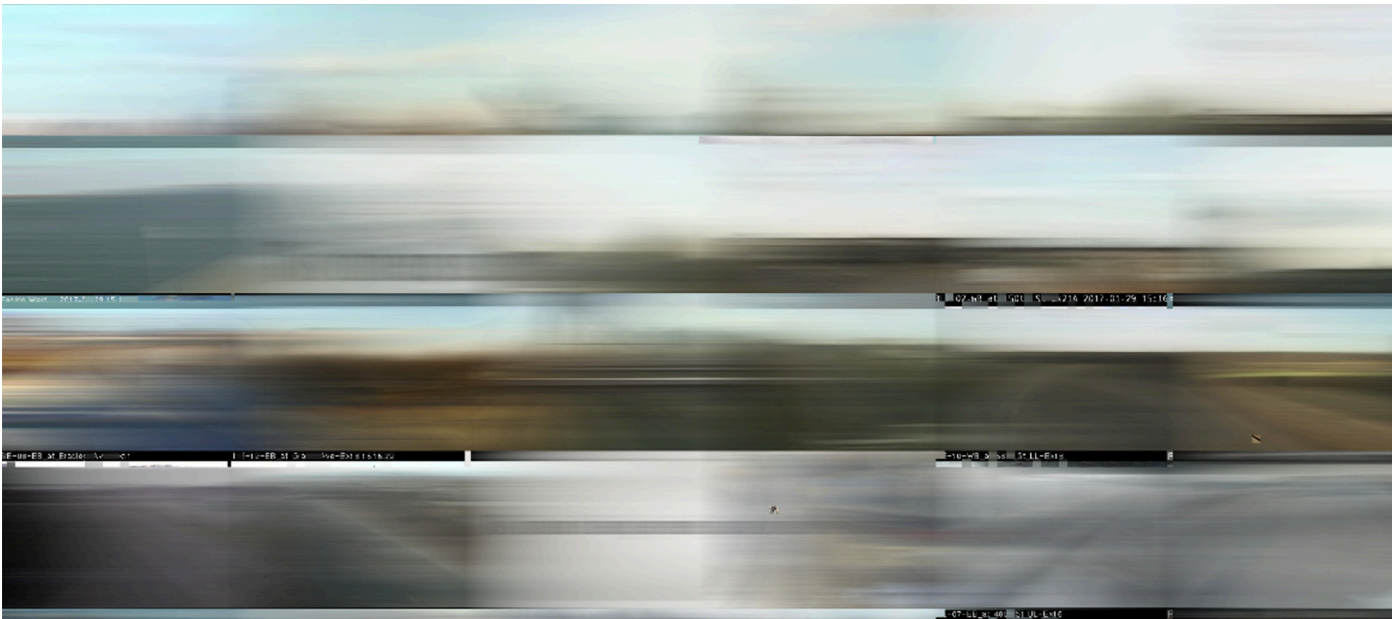
# Acknowledgments

BODIES is the culminating presentation of the intensive three-year MFA program at Stony Brook University. I would like to thank the artists, Tanya Kaiser Robinson, Rebecca Uliasz, Allison Walters and Dewayne Wrencher, for the process of creating and presenting their thought-provoking and beautiful work.

My gratitude to Professor Barbara Frank, Chair of the Department of Art, and Professor Nobuho Nagasawa, MFA Program Director, for their contributions to this exhibition. I also want to express my appreciation to the Staller Center for the Arts staff, especially Alan Inkles, Director, and Samantha Clink, Gallery Associate, and our student gallery assistants. Also, many thanks to Pete Pantaleo for installation assistance.

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Karen Levitov  
Director and Curator






Gallery Hours  
Tuesday-Friday 12-4pm, Saturday 7-9pm  
Also open during intermission and one hour prior to  
Staller Center season performances and Spring Film Series.  
Free admission.

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 Paul W. Zuccaire  
GALLERY

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