WOMEN AND CREATIVITY HOUSE STUDENT EXHIBITION

A collection of works from the Women and Creativity course, a year long survey of creative expression, identity, and visual communication of women in the arts.

April 24 – May 4, 2015
Mary H. Dana Women Artist Series Galleries / Douglass Library
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WOMEN AND CREATIVITY HOUSE STUDENT EXHIBITION

Introduction and Acknowledgements

The focus of the Women and Creativity House Living-Learning Community is to de-mystify the creative process and encourage the development of themes and ideas through multiple vehicles of expression including visual art, performance, and creative writing. In this community, the topics of gender, sexuality, identity, creativity, and perception are explored and discussed through texts, films, lectures, and critiques.

We are pleased to present the 2015 Women and Creativity Student Exhibition, a collection of works from the year long survey of creative expression, identity, and visual communication of women in the arts. This exhibition and catalog highlights the self-portraits, digital collages, sculptures, performances, and poetry produced by twenty-two young women artists during the course of the academic year. Through the use of various forms of artistic expression, these young women create artworks that are closely tied to their personal lives. Some artworks celebrate creative women who inspire and inform their lives and work, while others explore and reflect on their intersectional identities. Altogether presenting a dynamic collection of artworks delving into topics of identity, gender, and sexuality.

We would like to acknowledge Douglass Residential College, the Mary H. Dana Women Artist Series, a program of the Women and the Arts Collaborative in partnership with Rutgers University Libraries, and the Women and the Arts Collaborative, a unit of the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, Rutgers University for co-sponsoring this exhibition. Special recognition goes to Connie Tell, Women and the Arts Collaborative Director, for providing us with this opportunity and her insightful guidance. In addition, deep gratitude goes to Nicole Ianuzelli, Women and the Arts Collaborative Manager of Programs & Exhibitions, for her advice, creative solutions, and hard work that helped make this exhibition and catalog possible. Thanks to Leigh-Anyaa Passamano and Deborah Lee for their hard work assisting with the installation of the exhibition. Many thanks to Gwendolyn Beetham, Global Village Director, and Kayo Denda, Head of the Margery Somers Foster Center, for organizing and co-sponsoring the exhibition reception. Thanks also go to Douglass Residential College Dean Jacquelyn Litt for her continued support of, and enthusiasm for, the Global Village Living-Learning Community.

Stacy Scibelli
Learning Community Coordinator 2014-2015

Gabriella Shypula
Women and the Arts Collaborative Intern
**SELF-PORTRAIT**
2014, Acrylic on paper, 24 x 18” each

Project Description:
*After a brief demonstration of facial proportions, students were asked to illustrate a simple self-portrait in acrylic paint, capturing aspects of their identity through collage and color.*

Images

Esi Bissah

SungSoon DeSouza
Lillie Hannon

Kimberly Hoyos

Anastasia Ivanova

Sierra Johnson
Monica Morano

Cecilia Phillips

Nicoletta Romano

Jessica Ronan
Samantha Shen

Caitlyn Sullivan

Huda Yousef
**MUSE PORTRAIT**
2014, Digital photographs, 14 x 11” each

Project Description:
Students chose and researched a woman visual artist that inspired them. Utilizing costume, make-up, and props, students embodied these artists in a photographic portrait in the style of a woman artist, for example, Cindy Sherman or Martha Wilson.

Images

Esi Bissah, *After Petah Coyne*

SungSoon DeSouza, *After Kara Walker*
Celine Dirkes, After Jenny Morgan

Marjorie Eyong, After Yayoi Kusama

Sarah Ferreira, After Jill Magid

Elisabeth Flinsch, After Marilyn Minter
Anastasia Ivanova, *After Jill Magid and Rachel Whiteread*

Sierra Johnson, *After Frida Kahlo*

Douvaee Miller, *Untitled*

Monica Morano, *After Yayoi Kusama*
Cathryn Mosink, *After Yayoi Kusama*

Cecilia Phillips, *Untitled*

Nicoletta Romano, *After Janine Antoni*
DIGITAL DEITY
2014, Digital prints, Dimensions variable (approx. 8 x 10” each)

Project Description:
Students selected a creative woman that informed their lives and their work. Through the use of Photoshop, students created a digital image that celebrated the woman’s work and presence – elevating her as a deity.

Images

Esi Bissah, Esperanza Spalding

SungSoon DeSouza, Julie Andrews
Nakaysha Gonzalez, Avril Lavigne

Kimberly Hoyos, Alexa Chung

Anastasia Ivanova, Angelina Jolie

Avery McWilliams, Ella Fitzgerald
Douvae Miller, Yendi Phillips

Monica Morano, Lana Del Ray

Cecilia Phillips, Alissa White-Gluz

Jessica Ronan, Jackie Kennedy
Samantha Shen, *Frances Perkins*

Caitlyn Sullivan, *Mary Lambert*

Huda Yousef, *Erykah Badu*
RITUAL OBJECT
2015, Mixed Media, Dimensions variable

Project Description:
Students were asked to identify a real or imagined ritual that they enacted in their lives or that was pertinent to their lives. In response, students created sculptural objects that were used in that ritual through a variety of mixed media.

Images

Esi Bissah

Celine Dirkes
Nicoletta Romano

Jessica Ronan

Samantha Shen

Caitlyn Sullivan

Huda Yousef
VIDEO PERFORMANCES
2015, 10 minutes each

Project Description:
Students were asked to either perform an intervention of an everyday action or present or demonstrate a non-art practice that informs or excites them. They could invite the audience to participate or choose to perform for a passive audience.

Images

Elisabeth Flinsch, Film still

Jessica Ronan, Film still
POETRY
2015, 7 written works

Project Description:
Students were asked to write a poem set inside of a dream, without using the word “dream” or communicating in any way that they are dreaming. Each line had to include a concrete word referring to sound, sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing, etc. This assignment was coordinated by Dean Rebecca Reynolds for a poetry workshop for the Women and Creativity Class.

NIGHTMARE, MARCH 19TH 2015
Celine Dirkes

I’ve been in places like this before with their pinched staircases
And hallways full of smoke and
Doors that lock behind you and disappear into the ugly wallpaper
With the pattern that tongue-ties your eyes between vines and stripes
In colors that don’t so much clash as snarl
So I reach out and brush my mother’s arm with the whorls on my fingertips
And I tell her we need to get out while we can still see our own feet

But there are old women in colorful dresses without shape
Except for the wrinkles on their necks and the
grins into which their dentures have been cast
And while Nathan and I click our fingernails against
the plastic clasps of our seatbelts and heave closed
The dusty doors of the family Town and Country
My mother lets the passanger-side hang open like a broken wing

And she bows her head and stretches her lips open in front of the tallest of the old women
And either this hag is over 6’1 or my mother has shrunk because
My mother’s dark chapped lips barely reach her swollen wattled pharynx

And my colossus mother collapses into the fairground dust
of the path and the steering wheel reels back and forth while
momentum takes over and that awful heavy van careens backwards
down an isolated farm-caked byway
while Nathan and I claw at the tinted windows.

And although I want nothing more than to shatter the glass
I feel my own pharynx achingly still and my scream
Drips out from my paralyzed lips as only a whisper.
I’M ANGRY
Sarah Ferreira

I’m angry because I didn’t leave
Because he touched me with his sweaty hands
I’m angry because he paralyzed me
My legs stiff like pillars
I’m angry because he had power over me
Forced to play along with his stupid game even though it was not real
I’m angry because he was happy
As if he had met the love of his life
I’m angry because he treated me like a child
Holding my hand like a little girl forbidding me to leave
Our encounter left me anxious of my surroundings
Scared I would one day see him for real
I’m angry because of the anxiety
So bad I grind my night guard to bits
I’m angry because all I taste is acrylic
The constant taste of anxiety in my mouth and fear in my body
I’m angry because he is many

UNTITLED
Anastasia Ivanova

Lock turns…
Anticipation.
I know he is there.
He senses my perturbation.
I am chained by my fear,
And limitations
Of studio apartment
that gives no salvation to me.
Where to hide
from his starvation?
Maybe a bathroom
will be a temporary shelter for me?
Run! Run!
Slam the door!
He is in!
So close to me!
A knife through the door
almost reaching my throat!
Breathe in, air out…
He disappears with it...
LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL
Jessica Ronan

Life is Beautiful
Cold, Crisp air grazes my arms,
Laughter pierces the quiet night
Along with the strong smell of Polish Vodka
Glasses sliding off my face
in front of my Big, Hazel Eyes

Life is Beautiful
The bright lights ahead draw me inside,
“Weren’t you here a few weeks ago?”
A familiar face against the wall,
Refusing to meet my Big, Hazel Eyes

Life is Beautiful
A grimy carpet soaked with “trust”
With red walls that remind me of the past.
The cotton t-shirt feels so warm,
But does not prevent the goosebumps of nerves.
Look at me in my Big, Hazel Eyes

Life is Beautiful
The Kool-Aid of Bravery sloshes down my throat,
However all I taste is possible regret.
I stick my hand out as I did before
While you slowly raise your head,
Afraid of my Big, Hazel Eyes

Life is Beautiful
My eyes adjust to the blindings sun
As you retreat back to my memory
Right in front of my Big, Hazel Eyes.
I'M TRYING
Caitlyn Sullivan
Dedicated to Kieran Walsh

Even though I say it
At least once a day
Especially to those who
Try the hardest to make it better

It’s so hard to try though
I’m the one locked in here
These thoughts echoing inside
I try to remind myself that
It used to be so much worse

I remember the sleepless weeks
Too afraid to even blink
All the crying if someone touched me
It used to be so much worse
And I try to remember that

I’m trying to remember how strong I am
Strong because I survived
Strong because I’m still here
Strong because of what I’ve done
Strong because of what I will do

I’m trying to remember how much I’m loved
Loved because some stayed
Loved because I’m not forgotten
Loved because I’m needed
Loved because of them

I’m trying to remember everything every day
But it’s harder than you know
Rome wasn’t built in a day
I can’t be rebuilt in one either
So I’ll lay a brick every day as best I can

I’m trying to be better
And since that takes time
“I’m trying” is my promise
My promise to be better
Just stay with me
Because it might take forever
THE REAL STRUGGLE
Caitlyn Sullivan

Crossing your legs
Waiting for your moment
Running can get real annoying real fast
Look at it this way
It was never in the cards for you
Maybe you were born without it
The real struggle is the surface stopping you
Stopping you from lifting yourself higher
But not even you can save you
Running can get real annoying real fast
Help.

MONSTER
Caitlyn Sullivan

This creature lurks in the shadows, evading my eyes
I cannot always see him, but I feel his presence
The floorboards creak beneath him as he walks
Each one groaning under his massive size
I saw him once, right before he caught me the first time
He’s large with dull black fur and red eyes that pierced my brown ones
His paws are strong with sharp, shiny black talons
Suddenly, darkness overcame me, and all I saw were those red eyes
I tried to run, but landed on the hard ground with a loud thud
My head spun as I found myself in the monster’s grip again
He was about to swallow me whole when he gave a deafening shriek
I shielded my eyes, nearly blinded by the sudden white light
The monster dropped my back on the hard ground
The coward shook the room as he scurried for a hiding spot
I took the soft yet strong outreached hand and stood
When the light dimmed a little, I opened my mouth to thank my hero
I’ll never forget the look on both our faces when I saw the hero was me
This fight is long from over because I see him lurk
Now, I know how to fight him now that I’ve seen the hero inside myself
EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

**Self Portrait**, 2014, Acrylic on paper, 24 x 18” each
Celine Dirkes, Sierra Johnson, Anastasia Ivanova, Esi Bissah, Cecilia Phillips, Monica Morano, Sarah Ferreira, Kimberly Hoyos, Elisabeth Flinsch, SungSoon DeSouza, Lillie Hannon, Nicoletta Romano, Jessica Ronan, Caitlyn Sullivan, Huda Yousef

**Muse Portrait**, 2014, Digital photographs, 14 x 11” each

**Digital Deity**, 2014, Digital prints, Dimensions variable (approx. 8 x 10” each)

**Ritual Object**, 2015, Mixed media, Dimensions variable
Celine Dirkes, Sarah Ferreira, Huda Yousef

**Video Performances**, 2015, 10 minutes each
Elisabeth Flinsch, Kimberly Hoyos, Jessica Ronan, Anastasia Ivanova, Esi Bissah, Caitlyn Sullivan, Sierra Johnson, Huda Yousef, Douvae Miller, Celine Dirkes

**Sound works**, 2015, audio files, NO IMAGES AVAILABLE
Celine Dirkes, *Untitled*, 10 minutes; Sarah Ferreira, *Misophonia (Nails on Chalkboard)*, 5 minutes

**Poetry**, 2015
WOMEN AND CREATIVITY
HOUSE STUDENT LIST
2014-2015

Esi Bissah
Major: English
Minor: Criminology
Class of 2017

SungSoon DeSouza
Major: Visual Arts
Class of 2017

Celine Dirkes
Majors: Theatre and English
Class of 2018

Marjorie Eyong
Majors: Political Science and
Journalism / Media Studies
Minor: Women’s and Gender Studies
Class of 2016

Sarah Ferreira
Major: Art History
Class of 2018

Elisabeth Flinsch
Major: Women’s and Gender Studies
Minor: Cultural Anthropology
Class of 2015

Nakaysha Gonzalez
Major: Psychology
Class of 2017

Lillie Hannon
Majors: English and History
Class of 2017

Kimberly Hoyos
Major: Journalism
Minor: Gender in Media
Class of 2018

Anastasia Ivanova
Majors: Mathematics and Economics
Class of 2017

Sierra Johnson
Major: English
Minor: Women’s and Gender Studies
Class of 2017

Douvae Miller
Major: Biological Sciences
Minor: Entrepreneurship
Class of 2016

Monica Morano
Major: Public Health
Class of 2017

Cecilia Phillips
Major: Set Design
Class of 2018

Nicoletta Romano
Majors: Comparative Literature and Italian
Class of 2016

Jessica Ronan
Major: Political Science
Minor: Religion
Class of 2016

Samantha Shen
Majors: Marine Science and Microbiology
Class of 2017

Caitlyn Sullivan
Majors: Music and Psychology
Class of 2017

Huda Yousef
Major: Landscape Architecture
Class of 2017
The **Women and Creativity House Student Exhibition** is sponsored by Douglass Residential College and the Women and the Arts Collaborative, a unit of the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, Rutgers University. The Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series is a program of the Women and the Arts Collaborative in partnership with Rutgers University Libraries, and is the oldest continuous running exhibition space in the United States dedicated to making visible the work of emerging and established contemporary women artists.