WOMEN AND CREATIVITY HOUSE STUDENT EXHIBITION

April 20 – May 2, 2016
Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series Galleries / Douglass Library
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 20 – MAY 2, 2016
Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series Galleries
Douglass Library / 8 Chapel Drive, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

CO-CURATORS
Stacy Scibelli and Sarah Ferreira

ARTISTS
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank, Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez, Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

EVENT
Monday, April 25, 2016 / 7:15 - 9:30pm
Global Village Student Showcase & Exhibition Reception
Trayes Hall, Douglass Campus Center & Douglass Library
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Cover: Self-Deification, 2015, Digital Prints, 10 x 8” each
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank, Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez, Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa
Women and Creativity House Student Exhibition
Introduction and Acknowledgments

We are pleased to present the 2016 Women and Creativity Student Exhibition, a culmination of work that has accumulated from a year-long survey course of creative expression, identity, and visual communication of young women artists.

The Women and Creativity House Living Learning Community seeks to expose students to various creative outlets for cathartic expression and a higher understanding of the self as a feminine creative entity. Throughout the duration of the course, students focus on the creative process by embracing this practice as an outlet for problem solving, self-actualization, and communal and collaborative object making. Through examining their own identities and sharing their findings with the class in an open and honest environment, close bonds are formed between classmates.

This year-long experience focuses on analyzing the feminine identity as artists and subject through self-portraiture, archetypal investigation, poetry, ritual object making and activation. As well as researching and embodying creative feminine idolatry (personal or global) and the celebration of these amalgamated figures produced by twelve student artists during the course of the academic year.

Following this examination of the self and creative spirit, students traveled internationally to various areas near Cusco, Peru, where they analyzed and experienced first hand a variety of processes that women were responsible for in their communities. This service trip emphasized the practical application of creativity, ritual, community, identity, independence, and feminine strength, themes that were explored in the course.

This catalog includes twelve young women artists who exhibited their work in the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series Galleries from April 20 to May 2, 2016. The works these women have created let us see the growth each of them have gone through in the past year, individually and as a community. By allowing these women to experiment with various art making practices, we are allowed into their the personal worlds. The classes experiences in Peru were prevalent in the work they created by creating a body of work which focused on self identity through the process of art making and spirituality. Altogether presenting a vast collection of art works delving into topics of gender, sexuality, identity, creativity and perception.

We would like to acknowledge Douglass Residential College and the Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities, a unit of the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Rutgers University for co-sponsoring this exhibition. Special recognition goes to Connie Tell, Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities Director, for providing us with this opportunity and insightful guidance. In addition, deep gratitude goes out to Nicole Ianuzelli, Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities Manager of Programs & Exhibitions, for her advice, creative solutions, patience, and hard work that brought together this exhibition and catalog. Many thanks to Gwendolyn Beetham, Global Village Director, for organizing the exhibition reception.

Stacy Scibelli, Women and Creativity House Community Coordinator 2015-2016
Sarah Ferreira, Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities, Intern
SELF-DEIFICATION
2015, Digital prints, 10 x 8"

Project Description:
Students selected a female figure that informed their lives and their work. Students were then photographed as the embodiment of these personal icons through the use of costume, make-up, and posture. Students then manipulated these “self-portraits” in Photoshop, creating a digital image that celebrated the woman’s work and presence – elevating her/self as a deity.

Images

Cristina Sanchez

Sarina Aquino
Mariah Painter

Jane Frank
ARCHETYPAL WHEEL MANDALAS
2016, Mixed media on paper, 15 x 15"

Project Description:
Students chose 12 archetypes that they identified with (4 of which are universal: child, victim, prostitute, and saboteur). These archetypes were randomly paired with each of the twelve houses of the zodiac and translated into a Mandala with twelve sections. Students were asked to represent each section using symbolic imagery as an interpretation of the house as it relates to the archetype.

Images

Cristina Sanchez
Avantika Butani

Courtnay Garcia
**TAROT QUILT**
2015, Fabric and mixed media, 4 x 4’

Project Description:
*Students were each assigned two Tarot cards from the Major Arcana randomly. Students were then asked to create a quilt square for each card using symbolic representations as descriptive imagery to create a visual narrative.*

Image
TAROT QUILT (DETAILS)
RITUAL OBJECT
2016, Mixed media, Dimensions variable

Project Description:
Students were asked to identify a real or imagined ritual that they enacted in their every day lives or that was pertinent to their habits or personalities. In response, students created sculptural objects using a variety of mixed media to be utilized in that ritual.

Images

Cristina Sanchez

Erin Conversano
Niji Hernandez

Avantika Butani
Courtney Garcia

Jane Frank

Mirna Beshay
Nancy Wang

Andrea Zerpa
VIDEO PERFORMANCES
2016, 1 minute each

Project Description:
Students utilized their fabricated ritual objects in a one-minute video exemplifying the use of said object through a performative action.

Images

Andrea Zerpa, Untitled
Cristina Sanchez, *The Loosing of One’s Shell*

Imani Munford, *Untitled*

Erin Conversano, *Untitled*
Courtney Garcia, *Untitled*

Mirna Beshay, *Panda Panda Panda*

Sarina Aquino, *Untitled*
Jane Frank, *Untitled*

Nancy Wang, *Untitled*
POETRY
2016, 12 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.

Poems

_Pacify Her by Andrea Zerpa_

you think this is greyed out
why
do people lie
over the garden wall
wondering if the same old understanding stands
maybe it’s a cruel joke
until you throw up
it’s my party anyway
i digress
lie over me
whatever
i don’t want to be your
happy garden
greyhounds
show up in droves
with my missing
heart
pacify her they growl
The next room the same, slightly emptier than the last
this time no stall, instead a dingy couch with a dead staff.
in searching I found all squished together
On top of
each
other
Bodies that belong to drained and brainless faces
all staring at me while I search with urgency, for
relief.
suspicious of me, uninviting, but I stare back wondering
where the time went
because I’ve seen them before but now they are gone,
they instead sit there, dark and dissembled.
two faces I used to cling to –
here, confuse me as they morph and disidentify, and warp
their selves.
from the hallway Joy erupts and
Seeps into the air, dispersing hope.
I am pulled into the hallway that leads to endless
similar rooms.
my pocket rings and my phone connects to my ear and I
imagine her face as though I knew her
as she says “You did it!
he’s happy again!” Followed by a blur of words that
I translated to ‘thank you’ and to a permanence from
that ‘again’ that I doubted whole-heartedly.
it was implicit; she spoke of him and I understood
it was him, but
he can’t be happy; I definitely couldn’t make him happy.
her joy pronounced, wise, transparent, caught me
in silence I stood in ice, my sight panning
spinning, glancing back into the room
their stares fixed, seized my sense
till I drowned deep into the backs of their
eyes.
galactic by Courtney Garcia

a mysterious air enveloped the planet
disintegrated loneliness and fear
left only treasures like solitude, nerve
visceral nothings flourished
a mysterious substance coated the planet
dissolved toxins so orchids could bloom
right when we thought all was lost
all balance was restored
the planet twirled for an audience of stars
the lunar satellite shadowed in awe
cosmic everythings dazzled us
soft stardust stung my eyes

Funeral (A Found Poem) by Courtney Garcia

Flowers for Newman’s funeral
Nick and Sage step outside
The nurse questions the connection and feels this is personal
She was a target too, not just Nick
From the most ancient records of prehistory
In the corridor, Nick advises to give her Time
If society comes to her aid voluntarily
Heavy clubs will be brandished
Strength slightly beyond that at woman’s disposal
Wild Beasts held at bay
When Eyes Close by Erin Conversano

A field of flowers
Stretches as far as the eye can see.
Butterflies aflutter, but they seem somehow
Transparent.
Up in the sky, water flows
Instead of clouds.
Small fish swim against the gentle current.
Creatures walking through the field
Their canine bodies fully feathered
Giving off an aura of calm
Melancholy.

Untitled (Found Poem) by Erin Conversano

The hand, with its opposable thumb
It was enough to make her appear utterly powerless
Abundance makes for superiority.
To have too much is no better than to have enough.
She becomes…man’s equal
She cries.
Step outside.
This is personal for him.
He asks what she wants.
She’s a star.
**Blood Red by Mirna Beshay**

Brown roots, green stalks, red petals
Red like Blood. Like a new baby born.
9 months, carrying, swelling and growing
Growing from the roots up. Watering and feeding everyday.
More like raising. Red and Beautiful from the beginning.
Only to be taken from me soon after!
Ripped out from me!
Taken away like one rose is taken from its dozen.
Like ripping out a portion of yourself, unwillingly.
Red petals turning brown and wrinkly.
Soft and gentle, becoming hard and rough.
Eventually I softened up, recovering, after much pain
And crying. Eventually accepting, the hardest thing to do.
It won’t ever be the same but embracing it
As a blessing. One to remember forever!

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**Pacify Her by Andrea Zerpa**

you think this is greyed out
why
do people lie
over the garden wall
wondering if the same old understanding stands
maybe it’s a cruel joke
until you throw up
it’s my party anyway
i digress
lie over me
whatever
i don’t want to be your
happy garden
greyhounds
show up in droves
with my missing
heart
Untitled by Jane Frank

It's been an amazing journey
from here to there
You look through glass and see a distorted reflection, fearing
the possibilities of its composition
Every thought is distanced
and the heart itself gets lost
In murky waters where the mind
destroys
all that is good

Continuity
I don’t want to be reduced
to a pattern of thought
The pressure to conform will break me
Unless I can snap out of it
Not all is one
Please allow me to be solid and real
To act on my thoughts, believe in my existence
This should be my prayer

You yearn to understand why you are different
Without realizing that you are the same
And these pangs of longing
Are the artist’s growing pains
To recreate the rhythmic beauty of the world
And share it with all
Click by Avantika Butani

“Clink”.
There’s some noise coming from another room.
Maybe the kitchen. I am tired. I can feel it in my face.
I can see it from the reflection in the window.
I have no idea where I am. Who are those people laughing?
But I’m comfortable. Tired but comfortable.
I’m drifting. Someone is behind me. It’s dark and cold and now I’m outside.
I can feel their hot breath on my neck.
It’s like the sun is choking me, making me melt. I feel hot. I’m melting.
“Clink”
I’m back at the kitchen. It was the oven.
The sun in the oven was chasing me. Making me melt.
I am cooking now. God knows what I’m stirring in this pot.
I can’t smell it though. But I smell you. You’re right there.
I’m not cooking. You are. I can’t see you but I know you’re there.
I see your reflection from the window. I’m drifting.
They’re laughing.
“Clink”

Untitled by Imani Munford

As the sun rises I feel the warm embrace,
That it is time to begin my morning.
Covers back. Feet hit the floor.
I’m ready for my morning
Shower.
Warm water beats my body
As I rise.
On this Monday morning,
Feeling refreshed.
Aiming for my morning coffee.
Dressed and ready for
My Monday performance.
As the stage is ready
Dance. Move forward
Balance the books
Agenda ahead
Exhale before
I return to bed
From nothing to green
A green haze with a yellow haze
Over a clear view
My gaze
Straight ahead
In my bed
In a river
Long, narrow, shallow
Just below the knees
And they need
Searching, looking
Down into dirty green
They see them
I see them
I see me
Keep walking
POETRY PROJECT
2016, Magnet poetry lines on metal sheet, 24 x 36"

Project Description:
Different lines were taken from students’ poems, and were put in conversation with one another on metal sheet.
## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

**Self-Deification**, 2015, Digital prints, 10 x 8” each  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Archetypal Wheel Mandalas**, 2016, Mixed media on paper, 15 x 15” each  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Tarrot Quilt**, 2015, Fabric and mixed media, 4 x 4’  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Ritual Object**, 2016, Mixed media, Dimensions variable  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Video Performances**, 2016, 1 minute each  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Poetry**, 2016, 12 Written works  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa

**Poetry Project**, 2016, Magnet lines of poetry on metal sheet, 24 x 36”  
Sarina Aquino, Mirna Beshay, Avantika Butani, Erin Conversano, Jane Frank,  
Courtney Garcia, Niji Hernandez, Imani Munford, Mariah Painter, Cristina Sanchez,  
Nancy Wang, Andrea Zerpa
Sarina Aquino
Major: Painting
Minor: Psychology
Class of 2018

Mirna Beshay
Major: Psychology
Minor: Women’s and Gender Studies
Class of 2018

Avantika Butani
Major: Undeclared
Class of (Unknown)

Erin Conversano
Major: Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources
Class of 2018

Jane Frank
Major: (Unknown)
Class of (Unknown)

Courtney Garcia
Majors: English and Art History
Class of 2016

Niji Hernandez
Major: Biology
Class of 2018

Imani Munford
Major: Dance
Minor: Education
Class of 2018

Mariah Painter
Major: (Unknown)
Class of 2018

Cristina Sanchez
Major: Philosophy
Minor: English
Class of 2017

Nancy Wang
Major: Undeclared
Class of 2018

Andrea Zerpa
Major: English
Minor: Russian Literature
Class of 2018
The **Women and Creativity House Student Exhibition** and event is sponsored by Douglass Residential College; New Jersey State Council on the Arts; and Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities, a unit of the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a consortium member of the Institute for Women’s Leadership at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

The Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series is a program of the Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities in partnership with Rutgers University Libraries. It was founded in 1971 by renowned artist and Rutgers graduate Joan Snyder, 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.