FACIEBAT

"FAKE MODESTY IS BETTER THAN NO MODESTY AT ALL"
Faciebat

The 34th generation of the
ONTARIO COLLEGE
of ART & DESIGN
Florence Program

2008-2009
As I sit at my father’s bedside, holding vigil until the end, I am reminded of the cycles of life and the potential it holds. The creative act, as manifest in the minds of young artists, is a gift that thrives if well nurtured. I have been privileged to witness the development of my students as they grappled with their ideas and their work. With much dedication and many distractions, together we navigated the creative process. Their progress from idea to sketch and concept to artwork is more than even they could sometimes imagine. It is a leap of faith that I help them take, and in the end they find their way. Florence offers a special opportunity to go deep into the art making process, it is an apprenticeship in studio practice that requires focus and discipline. To witness the beginning of something, from my perspective at the end of something else, I feel the richness that life offers. These students are an inspiration for the future and I am thankful to have played a very small part in their journey.
The bridges over which we walk everyday were blown up in WW II, 65 years ago. A photograph of Mussolini shaking hands with Hitler on the balcony of the Palazzo Vecchio can be seen in the Teatro Communale, where our seats in the orchestra were at least three metres below the high water mark of the flood of 1966. History continues to sweep over and around this beautiful city. In 2003, several thousand people encircled the lungarno and across the two bridges on either side of the US Embassy, hoping for PACE, Peace, instead of war, again. Perhaps because of this, Florence and its visitors, many of them artists, seem to prefer the intense shadows of the 15th century. There is perhaps no place more studied, more painted, drawn, and photographed.

What impact could a small group of students from Canada have on the city that belongs to Cosimo de Medici, Lorenzo and Maria Luisa? Can the city of Massacio and Pontormo possibly embrace another artist from yet another time and another place? The answer is yes, happily, openly, unexpectedly, yes. And the feeling is mutual. The place and the people connect with each other, and we are inspired by each other’s company to make our own history.

Jaspal, Alison, Evin, Wes, Liza, Amanda, Briget, Misha, Stefan, Tara, Ellen, Sabrina, Tim, Nicole, Sangwan, Erin, Natasha, Lex, Jennifer, Mike, Vanessa and Rachel are artists in Florence. Faciebat = I’m making it, I’m making it now…
CLASS of 2008 - 2009
Peter Dorcal

Emerging from his cavern after negative mysticism meditation.
RUBBER NECKING
First term I spend my days photographing and painting anonymous tourists looking at the Duomo. I enjoyed capturing these simple moments of awe. Maybe someday I will inspire someone just by being me.

1840 - 1994
For the second term, I painted photographs attached to graves in San Miniato Cemetery. Is it possible to remember someone, even if you never knew them?
ERIN JOSEPHSON-LAIDLAW

LIST OF WORKS. THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: STRIPES (DETAIL I), ** HOTEL (DETAIL), STRIPES (DETAIL II), STOLEN BIRDS.
OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SKIN, CROCS AND/OR GATORS, L & B (LEGS AND BEAK).
Painting is the key to my subconscious, my way to unleash my inner deamons, my mirror. I paint from the inside out. A series of grotesque reflections energized by dimly lit spaces, battered flesh and skewed perceptions. Layers of skin and paint work with another to radiate the immense opportunity of deformation and abstraction.

I reveal the closeted and covert brute and savage that is born from delusional paranoia. It is you, the viewer, that has painted me.
THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

To explore the abstraction of dreams I went through a process of bringing my unconscious to a conscious level. Composing the recreations of my dreams I limited myself to found objects that represent feeling, compositions and textures of my dreams. After building my models I deconstructed the 3-D form to 2 dimensional picture plane in painted form. The paintings I have made based on the models I constructed are a deconstruction of the 3 dimensional objects scene from multiple view points. Through different mediums I have investigated the states of conflict within my consciousness.
“I believe in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a surreality, if one may so speak.”

- Andre Berton, The First Manifesto
My art finds itself tangled in the correlation between the collective and the individual where the bonds formed are inexplicable but not easily ignored.

“Seven to eleven is a huge chunk of life, full of dulling and forgetting. It is fabled that we slowly lose the gift of speech with animals, that birds no longer visit our windowsills to converse. As our eyes grow accustomed to sight they armor themselves against wonder.”

- The Favourite Game,
Leonard Cohen
1. Left: Untitled (Detail), Oil on Canvas, 3.4x2 ft.
2. Right: Untitled II (Detail) Oil on Canvas, 3.4x3.4 ft.
3. Found Photographs
Convinced to covet less, she remains to want it all without knowing what it means. To her, the unknown is boredom’s opposition. Revealing and adapting to find a certain comfort in the world. The moment when she is finally understood, is the moment she is gone and both perception and she must begin again.
Rachel MacFarlane uses tiny maquettes made of found refuse that serve as references for painted worlds that fall somewhere between mimetic representations and abstraction. Through a two-step process of translating and transforming, materials that are considered unattractive and unwanted become the basis for imaginary painted spaces. In the illusionary settings, materials transcend their original capacities, sometimes becoming weightless, anthropomorphic, and grandiose. She was awarded the Painting and Drawing Medal in 2008 and is currently represented by the Nicholas Metivier Gallery in Toronto.
A volte ritengo
diviso fra due
mondi.

Amanda McLean-
Doman
my two dimensional reality

Tara Westermann
The many peculiarities of Florence have persistently baffled me throughout this past year. Everything from the elegant old ladies in their mink coats to the clumsy pigeons to the countless trinket dealers trying to sell you an "original" Cassio. All of these characters have left a great impression on me, along with the curious relationship shared between the grotesque and humove.
Venezia
Watercolor on paper
11" x 15"
My landscapes are barren and polluted, the buildings are crowded and dilapidated. I have painted them repeatedly, relying more on memory than any on-site drawing or photograph. These buildings are rearranged like objects in a still life and are symbols rather than copies of the visible reality.

“One eye sees, the other feels.” - Paul Klee
Life, what is it but a dream?

- Lewis Carroll

Or rather, a high definition screen? As a society, we are continuously processing ongoing changes, resolving broken codes, and downloading new software for upgrades. Though, with these advances being executed each day, our perceived world, like most technologies, has flaws; glitches, that arise even when the proper precautions are followed through. Consequently, this may call for a specialist in the field, one that knows how to handle and work through such situations while others are on standby.

Those whom prepare to refresh and restart, can you spare some change?
I Made the Vet Do It
Oil on canvas
4 x 5 feet
Natasha Subban

"Iconic silence is central to their fundraising, this allows them to become magnets of meaning and nodes in the urban sprawl that is fast becoming in the dominant world we live." - Aaron Betsky
Just stop thinking, worrying, looking over your shoulder, wondering, doubting, fearing, hurting, hoping for some easy way out, struggling, gasping, confusing, itching, scratching, mumbling, bumbling, grumbling, humbling, stumbling, rumbling, rambling, gambling, tumbling, scumbling, scrambling, hitching, hatching, bitching, moaning, groaning, honing, boning, horse-shitting, hair-splitting, nit-picking, piss-trickling, nose-sticking, ass-gouging, eyeball-poking, finger-pointing, alleyway-sneaking, long waiting, small stepping, EVIL eyeing, back-scratching, searching, perching, besmirching, grinding grinding away at yourself.

-Sol Le Witt in a letter to Eva Hesse
Traveling back to the past, until I was child through painting, is a whole different experience than struggling in the present or what will be in the future. I now have my own term to describe this context of art as the ‘the time machine syndrome’.

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And now I am extending myself to use different mediums. Facebook, iMovie, Adobe Photoshop and millions of other mediums to hang out with.

“What medium speak is what I speak.”
NICOLE DINARDO

“Human beings’ general fascination with looking is very revealing of our psyche because it provides a reflection of our innate and primitive desires. Sigmund Freud refers to it as voyeurism: taking pleasure in looking, while not being seen. Our voyeuristic tendencies can be seen in many of our daily actions; from looking at oneself in the mirror in the morning, to watching a film in a dark theatre. “Part of the fascination”, according to Baudry, “is that the darkened theatre and the conditions of watching a mirror-like screen invite the viewer to regress to a child-like state. The viewer undergoes a temporary loss of ego as he or she identifies with the powerful position of apprehending the world on the screen, much as the infant apprehended the mirror image.”

- Bojana Videkanic
Visual Culture: Practises of Looking
“What we call chaos is just patterns we haven’t recognized. What we call random is just patterns we cannot decipher. What we cannot understand we call nonsense…” - Chuck Palahniuk
...No imminent punishment can be violent enough to make me abandon the pursuit of my pleasure, especially when this pleasure is from the young bosom of truth.
(Nabokov)
The style of my work is a synthesis of Modernist abstraction and graffiti, and much of my mark-making is an attempt to represent electronically-produced-sounds. My figures face days their toothbrushes are more ready for than they are.
LEX BUCHANAN

My work is an exploration of the urban environment. I navigate the rugged terrain and document the detritus that inhabits the landscape. These mundane objects of discarded waste, cardboard, wood, fabric, scrap metal and the like, take on characters. They are piled and muddied, stacked and lumped. They are remnants of human activity and artifacts of urbanity in a state of entropy. These pictures punctuate the violence of development yet perpetuate the discovery of a rejuvenating landscape.

1. Right: Habitat, oil on canvas, 59"x53", 2009
2. Top left: Aftermath, oil on canvas, 35.5"x64.5", 2009
3. Trespassing, acrylic on paper, 10"x7", 2009
4. Nook, acrylic on paper, 10"x7", 2009
5. Bench, acrylic on paper, 10"x7", 2009
A New Hope
Johanna Householder

In this performance a message from a well-known rebel princess was sent from the OCAD studio in Florence to the Toronto Free Gallery live via Skype, in the form of a simulated hologram. In the accompanying video, Princess Leia contemplates her own mortality while confronting the Challenger disaster and the current collapse of the world economy, both brought about during the reign of Ronald Reagan.

The works were part of PRESENTLY ABSENT, curated by Sophia Zheshui Lin, an exhibition that explored states of physical presence and absence and the idea of presence/absence in terms of consciousness or awareness concerning the world around us.
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