

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Minneapolis College of Art and Design Presents 2019/20 MCAD–Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Early Career Artists Exhibition

Minneapolis, MN—February, 2021—The Minneapolis College of Art and Design, on behalf of the Jerome Foundation, is honored to spotlight the recent work of the recipients of the 2019/20 MCAD–Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Early Career Artists: Sarah Abdel-Jelil, Zachary Betts, Sophia Chai, and Kaamil A. Haider.

These artists were selected out of a pool of 157 applicants by a panel of arts professionals that included Marcela Guerrero, assistant curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art; Karissa Isaacs, associate curator at the Tweed Museum of Art in Duluth; and Dave Kennedy, a Seattle-based artist.



Sarah Abdel-Jelil Caldera, *Detroit Lakes*

This competitive fellowship provides \$10,000 awards to each recipient. In addition, the fellows have the opportunity to meet with visiting critics over the course of the fellowship year, have their work featured in a group exhibition in the MCAD Gallery, have an essay written about their work that appears in the exhibition catalog, and participate in a public panel discussion.

The Jerome Foundation has generously supported this fellowship program since its inception in 1981.

Online Panel Discussions

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 6:30 p.m. CST; moderated by independent writer and curator Christina Chang

Event Details

When: Tuesday, January 19— Sunday, March 7, 2021

Where: MCAD Main Gallery, 2501 Stevens Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404

Gallery Hours: Thursday—Sunday, 12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.; open to the public by appointment only beginning Monday, February 1.

This event is free and open to the public.

ABOUT THE JEROME FOUNDATION

The Jerome Foundation, created by artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905–1972), seeks to contribute to a dynamic and evolving culture by supporting the creation, development, and production of new works by early career/emerging artists. The Foundation makes grants to early career artists and those nonprofit arts organizations that serve them in the state of Minnesota and the five boroughs of New York City.

ABOUT THE MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Recognized nationally and internationally for its innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to visual arts education, the Minneapolis College of Art and Design is home to 800 students and offers professional

About the Artists

Sarah Abdel-Jelil is a Mauritanian American filmmaker, dancer, and choreographer. As a dancer/movement artist, she centers the body as a primary way of knowing and experiencing the world. Inspired by her nomadic upbringing in eight different countries in a multicultural, interfaith household, Abdel-Jelil explores the relational nature of home, movement, and liminal spaces. She is drawn to the ephemerality of dance and performance art, as well as to the seemingly permanent nature of film and photography. Her work questions notions of time and bodily wisdom by investigating the intersection of the artistic process and "what remains." Her creative practice prioritizes somatic intelligence, trusting the instinct of one's body in space and time, and inspires reflection on the embodied nature of the lived experience. Her current practice of "dance time-lapse" combines slow movement with time-lapse photography as an invitation to move in tandem with cycles of the natural world. As a community educator, Abdel-Jelil holds creative movement workshops across age groups to facilitate dialogue through movement in order to build community, connection, and a sense of groundedness in one's body. She holds a BA in cinema and media studies from Carleton College and is a recipient of a 2017 Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant. Her work has been screened at numerous venues and festivals, including the Twin Cities Arab Film Festival, St. Cloud Film Fest, and Altered Esthetics Film Festival. Recently, she completed residencies at Caldera Arts Center in Sisters, Oregon, and Château de La Napoule in Mandelieu-La Napoule, France.

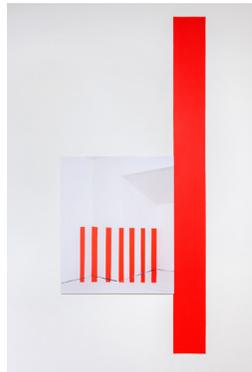
Zachary Betts' equivocating sculptures are simultaneously familiar and difficult to decipher. Like artifacts from a world that is akin to but not our own, these objects emulate the forms of everyday objects while obscuring their purpose. The use of silicone and various metals intensify their cold, smooth, and machinelike appearance, heightening qualities of the sterile and melancholic while still being emotionally charged. Sometimes made of collaged ready-mades and sometimes reproductions of newly made objects, each sculpture combines elements that are industrially fabricated with those that are meticulously handcrafted using a variety of traditional techniques. Betts has shown his work nationally at various galleries, including SOIL Gallery in Seattle, FJORD Gallery in Philadelphia, Adler & Floyd in Chicago, and the Visual Arts Center in Austin, Texas. He has completed residencies at the White Page in Minneapolis, FOGSTAND Gallery in St. Paul, and the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson. Betts received his BFA from the University of Wisconsin–Stout, and his MFA in sculpture and extended media from the University of Texas at Austin. He currently lives and works in St. Paul.

Sophia Chai is a Rochester-based artist who was born in South Korea and immigrated to New York City at the age of fourteen. Chai's studio practice began with the camera as a constructed site where the phenomenon of light and space unfolds in order to ask the question, What is a photograph really? With her most recent work, Chai has expanded on that inquiry by looking at the lines drawn between photography, painting, and architecture by means of site-specific installation of her photographs. Chai received her BA in chemistry from the University of Chicago and her MFA in photography from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Before relocating to Rochester in 2017 from Brooklyn, New York, Chai showed her work in group exhibitions at venues in New York City, including Trestle Projects, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Knockdown Center, A.I.R. Gallery, and TSA Gallery, among others. In addition to a solo exhibition at 106 Green (Brooklyn) in 2016, Chai mounted two solo exhibitions earlier this year: Sight Lines at the Rochester Art Center (Minnesota) and Interpolation at Hair + Nails Gallery in Minneapolis. Chai is a 2019 recipient of the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMACE) grant for advancing artists, and a 2020 recipient of the Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant. She is one of the three Rochester-based artists selected for an art integration project for Discovery Walk, a new green parkway spanning five city blocks in downtown Rochester.

Kaamil A. Haider is an interdisciplinary visual artist whose work examines the relationship between objects, meanings, and heritage in contemporary Somali art, with an emphasis on memory, both private and public. He draws from diverse cultural, archival, and oral tradition references. As a cofounder of Soomaal House of Art, a Minneapolis-based Somali artists collective, Haider has supported a growing number of emerging and established Somali artists living in Minnesota and beyond. He is currently a teaching artist at Ubah Medical Academy High School, where he teaches design and art. Haider received his BFA in graphic design from the College of Design, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and is the recipient of the 2018 University of Minnesota Alumni Association's U40 Alumni Leader Award for his academic achievement and community engagement. In 2019 he was a Soomaal Fellow, an initiative by Soomaal House of Art in partnership with Augsburg University Art Galleries. In the past year Haider received a Springboard for the Arts 20/20 Artist Fellowship and a Forecast Early-Career Research + Development grant, and is currently an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Heritage Studies and Public History (HSPH) Fellow.



Sophia Chai
Construct R1, 2020
Archival inkjet print on Hahnemuhle
photo Rag paper mounted on
Dibond, wall paint
Photo Credit: Rik Sferra



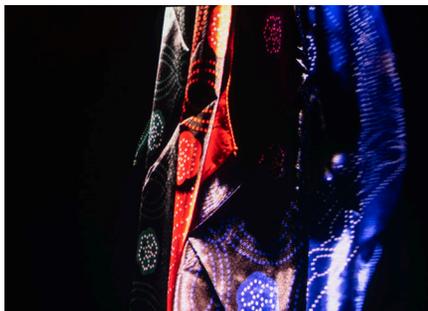
Sophia Chai
Construct R9, 2020
Archival inkjet print on
Hahnemuhle photo Rag paper
mounted on Dibond, wall paint
Photo Credit: Rik Sferra



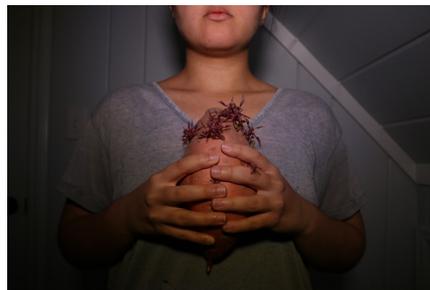
Zachary Betts
monitoring my
decisions, 2020
Cast silicone and
epoxy



Zachary Betts
over and over
and over, 2020
Cast silicone



Kaamil A. Haider
Sweet and Sour: The Perpetual
Transpose, 2020
Three-channel video installation
Photo Credit: Rik Sferra



Sarah Abdel-Jelil
Sweet Potato, 2020
Video still, dance time-lapse



Sarah Abdel-Jelil
Okay Overall: What if we just sit
here?, 2020
Three-channel video installation,
dance time-lapse

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