

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



January 9, 2015

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to announce the opening of the 2015 *MFA Biennial*. A public reception will be held on Thursday, January 15, 2015, from 5:00-7:00pm, and the exhibition will be on view through February 15.

The *MFA Biennial* presents the work of seventeen students currently enrolled in the School of Art's Master's of Fine Arts program. These artists are at various points in the three-year program that is dedicated to helping them "develop a mature body of work by exploring the relationship between active studio practice and rigorous intellectual inquiry." The mediums represented include photography, painting, glass, printmaking, ceramics, and sculptural installation.

Although each exhibiting artist offers a distinct point of view, shared concerns are evident. Works based in biomorphic form and nature run the gamut from the representational, in **Mike Tracy's** exquisite glass bonsai trees, to the surreal, in **Jeremy Lampe's** mischievously stalking glass creatures and **Stoney Sasser's** floor-to-ceiling, patterned fabric-wrapped tendrils, to the nearly abstract, in **Venise Keys's** gestural swirls of rich pigment recalling Action Painting, **Micah Zavacky's** meditative prints inspired by direct observations of nature, **Emma Farber's** fiery color-field paintings referencing landscape, and **Dylan Welch's** prints' "simultaneous evocation of physical internality and cosmic vastness."

The grid, with a particular reference to woven fabric, is evident in **Gina Hunt's** pulsating stripes, sometimes sliced, twisted and stapled, other times spray painted directly onto the canvas, as well as in **Samantha Buchanan's** frayed-edged, bulging paper weavings, and prints on paper with loom-like interstices.

Prints by **Chris Hagen**, ceramics by **George Barecca**, and color photos by **Catherine Davis** address the idea of service. Hagen's impressions result from food and wine spilled inadvertently on embossed paper during dinners he hosts, while Barecca's brightly colored and irregularly shaped cups, tureens, and plates dare the viewer to put them to use. Davis's vivid, iconic portraits of "pink-collar" workers allude to inequity in the service industry.

The human figure has a strong presence in **Krista Profitt's** brash, erotically charged paintings teeming with sunning, jumping, and bicycling nudes, **Meg Coonelly's** traumatized veterans fittingly rendered in painterly machismo, and **m. jo hart's** legions of exquisite, doll-scaled ceramic feet lined up on the floor and ascending onto the wall. In **Laura Newman's** monumental yet fractured ceramic throne, the absence of a power-wielding monarch is palpable. Finally, the eerie lighting and oblique point of view in

**Lexie Bragg's** photographs of isolated figures in domestic and institutional settings contribute a Lynchian touch to the exhibition.

Please contact University Galleries at 309.438.5487 or [gallery@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:gallery@IllinoisState.edu) to schedule a free curator-led tour for your class or community group.

*University Galleries is located at Uptown Station at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available directly above in the Uptown Station parking deck, and the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01pm. If you need special accommodations to participate in any event, please contact University Galleries at 309.438.5487 or [gallery@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:gallery@IllinoisState.edu). All events at University Galleries are free and open to the public.*

*Like us on Facebook ([facebook.com/University Galleries](https://facebook.com/UniversityGalleries)) or sign up to receive emails by clicking the Constant Contact link on our homepage.*