

MEDIA RELEASE

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present *Margaret Crowley: Hazard* from January 14 through February 26, 2025.

Hazard premieres new paintings and sculptures addressing the industries and textures of “health, wellness, and pain management” by Chicago-based artist and Illinois State University alum Margaret Crowley. She explores the effects of manual labor and how the repetition of overuse mirrors the repetition of repair. The exhibition title alludes to occupational hazards and serves as a warning.

Crowley frequently references family labor histories, whether her father’s background as a welder or the decades her mother worked as a hairstylist. Following nearly a year of accompanying her mother to physical therapy appointments meant to aid in her recovery from an occupational injury, Crowley began translating those experiences into gouache-on-silk paintings. Rather than depicting a figure or scenes of the clinic, the artist explores, in her words, the “particularities of repeated visits to a space.” Examples include the ubiquitous timers that keep track of the bodies’ necessary movements toward healing, a cheerful row of pet-portrait snapshots that adorn the wall, the radio that provides constant background noise and rhythms for the staff and clients, a therapist’s informative badge with decorative elements added to its lanyard, and every tiny detail of the anti-fatigue floor mats that aid in prolonged standing. Multiple works were inspired by the therapists’ mobile carts that overflow with tools used to manipulate and heal, often via close, precise encounters between two bodies. Meanwhile, her newest work takes the form of an exercise strap, which is often used in the appointments for stretching and increasing flexibility. In Crowley’s version, the strap is 4-5 times the typical length, made of silk, populated by small paintings, and draped through the exhibition space.

Crowley uses her mother’s MRI scans to introduce the exhibition. She sees them as “containers for decades of work, relationships, and repetition.” She continues, “The MRI feels like a prompt, or an origin point, for the whole project.” Throughout her work, Crowley asks why we subject our bodies to these stresses, particularly in the name of a “work ethic,” and what tolls they take on us individually and collectively.

This exhibition is the center point of multiple programs. Margaret Crowley will have a public discussion with artist Karen Reimer. Crowley will also conduct studio visits with ISU students. University Galleries’ staff is leading art-making workshops for ISU students, K-12 students, and community members. Sensory-friendly times and scavenger hunts are available. Virtual and in-person curator-led tours are available by appointment. Field trip reimbursements are available for K-12 schools and community organizations.

Margaret Crowley: Hazard is organized by Kendra Paitz, University Galleries’ director and chief curator. This exhibition and programming are supported by University Galleries’ grant from the Illinois Arts Council. Workshops and field trip reimbursements are supported by the Lori Baum and Aaron Henkelman University Galleries Community Fund.

Artist biography

Margaret Crowley (b. 1987, Ottawa, Illinois) is a Chicago-based artist. Her work has been exhibited at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, University of Chicago; Devening Projects, Chicago; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Chicago Artists Coalition; Cue Foundation, New York City; and Área: Lugar de Proyectos, Caguas, Puerto Rico. Crowley has received the Jarislowsky

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 3, 2024

Foundation's Emerging Artist Award, which included a residency at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Banff, Canada. She has also been awarded multiple individual artist grants from the Illinois Arts Council and a residency at Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists. *NewCity Chicago* named her one of Chicago's 10 Breakout Artists of 2023. Crowley is the co-director of Produce Model Gallery, Chicago. She received her M.F.A. from University of Chicago, M.A. from Eastern Illinois University, and B.S. from Illinois State University.

Events and programming

All events are free and open to the public.

- **Sensory-friendly morning**
Saturday, January 18, from 11:00 a.m. to noon
Visit the galleries before opening hours where you can enjoy dimmed lighting and a quiet space.
- **Artists in Conversation: Margaret Crowley and Karen Reimer**
Thursday, January 30 at 4:00 p.m. with a reception immediately following
- **Independent Drawing Hour**
Wednesday, January 29, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Spend time looking closely at artworks in the exhibitions and drawing at your own pace. Materials provided.
- **Art-making Workshop**
Saturday, February 1, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Create artwork inspired by Margaret Crowley's paintings. All materials and instruction provided. [Registration required.](#)
- **Independent Drawing Hour**
Wednesday, February 19, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Spend time looking closely at artworks in the exhibitions and drawing at your own pace. Materials provided.
- **Poetry at the Galleries**
Thursday, February 20, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
Write and perform poems in response to artworks on view. Performance is optional.
- **Sensory-friendly morning**
Saturday, February 22, from 11:00 a.m. to noon
Visit the galleries before opening hours where you can enjoy dimmed lighting and a quiet space.
- Field trip program, curator-led tours, and workshops available by appointment throughout the exhibition. Reimbursements are available for K-12 schools or community organizations to offset the costs of transportation. Please contact University Galleries at Gallery@IllinoisState.edu or (309) 438-5487 to schedule an appointment.

University Galleries

University Galleries, a unit in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, is located at 11 Uptown Circle, Suite 103, at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available in the

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 3, 2024

Uptown Station parking deck located directly above University Galleries—the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01 p.m.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#), and sign up to receive email updates through the [newsletter](#). Please contact Gallery@IllinoisState.edu or call (309) 438-5487 if you need to arrange an accommodation to participate in any events related to this exhibition.