

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present *Ashley Jude Jonas: Not Knowing* from March 4 through May 16, 2021. In accordance with public health guidance, attendance will be kept under 25 at all times and visitors must book an appointment. Please see additional information below.

Not Knowing features recent work by artist, educator, and independent curator Ashley Jude Jonas. Comprised of installation, assemblage, photographs, drawings, and found objects, this exhibition is the most comprehensive for the artist to date. Jonas's multidisciplinary practice is informed by close looking and domestic spaces, particularly her own experiences in her unconventional childhood home in Key West, Florida, a place filled with odds and ends and eccentric homemaking solutions like decorative rugs covering the yard and holes drilled into the floor to sweep away the dust. Jonas recalls her father's house as both a hub for creative individuals who helped shape her young mind and a place where she discovered the value of wonder—not unlike her current home, which for six years existed as an alternative exhibition space called The Blue House.

In the months following the coronavirus (COVID-19) stay-at-home orders, Jonas began to re-examine the finite nature of beauty in her surroundings. Through appreciation of delicate objects, fleeting light, and ever-changing reflections, Jonas realized that joy can be experienced even in tumultuous times. She embraces the uncertainty of life by observing intimate moments of interdependence and independence. For example, *Death Drawings I, II, and III*, a wall installation first exhibited in 2016, references the grief Jonas's husband faced after the passing of his grandfather. Three large gray painted ovals encompass small fragments of drawings, paintings, photos, and fabric. These collected objects carry the weight of heartache and comfort of holding on to the past.

Watching. Walking. Falling Apart., a 30-foot-long installation comprised of small mirrors, reflects the viewer and surrounding works. To bridge the space between inside and out, the resulting disjointed images are paired with a selection of Polaroid photos that Jonas took while standing at her kitchen window. Created through repeat visits, these photographs reference the ephemerality of nature and address how easily we can overlook subtle changes when we fail to be present. Similarly, *Yard Play IV* and *Yard Play V*, a pair of large-scale photographs, resemble windows framing Jonas's backyard during the summer and autumn months. Vibrant green, red, and blue shapes—placed in the trees by Jonas—interrupt the foliage and leave colorful marks in the landscape. Standing nearby are *Holding it. Having it. Safety.* and *All these window days*, two precariously arranged sculptures built with found materials that once served specific purposes, including wooden drawers, tree guards, and spindles. Jonas manipulates, rearranges, and amalgamates these items to create a semblance of balance. As stated by the artist, each object helps “every other thing so we can move carefully and slowly, looking at peculiar connections and think[ing] about chance, change, and how we build space for ourselves and each other.”

Ashley Jude Jonas: Not Knowing is organized Jessica Bingham, University Galleries' curator. The exhibition and programming are sponsored in part by grants from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the Alice and Fannie Fell Trust, and Faculty Studio Research Funds, CAS: Department of Art and Design, University of Dayton.

Biography

Ashley Jude Jonas's work has been exhibited at Riffe Gallery, Columbus, Ohio; Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana; Undercurrent, Brooklyn; The Clay Studio, Philadelphia; and The Neon Heater, Findlay, Ohio; among others. From 2014 to 2020, Jonas co-directed and curated at The Blue House, an alternative artist-run space operated within her home. The artist has an M.F.A. from University of Colorado at Boulder and a B.F.A. from University of Florida. She lives in Dayton, Ohio, where she teaches at the University of Dayton.

Events and programming

- Virtual exhibition tours are available for classes, community groups, and individuals by appointment. Contact gallery@IllinoisState.edu or (309) 438-5487 to schedule.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 16, 2021

- *appreciate your patience #1*, a free Zine produced by the artist, will be available for the duration of the exhibition.
- A free online artist lecture will be announced via University Galleries' Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.
- Educator resources, activities for children and youth, and art lesson videos will be available on the exhibition web page.
- An exhibition video tour will be available in April via University Galleries' [Vimeo](#).
- April 17 at 1:00 p.m.: Art Around You, a virtual exhibition tour and workshop co-presented with the Children's Discovery Museum. Participants (ages 7-10) can register for this free program at childrensdiscoverymuseum.net. This program is made possible by an Illinois Prairie Community Foundation—Mirza Arts and Culture grant awarded to the CDM.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) response

Please note the following updates as University Galleries reopens to the public.

- In accordance with Restore Illinois guidelines, attendance will be kept under 25 at all times.
- University Galleries remains free and open to the public, but visitors must book an appointment through the Bookings link on University Galleries' [website](#).
- Visitors to University Galleries will be required to wear a face covering and practice physical distancing.
- University Galleries' main entrance will function as the "in-door" and the emergency exit in our east gallery will function as the "out-door" to reduce congestion in the entry vestibule and lobby.
- Hand sanitizer stations, physical distancing decals, and directional arrows will be located throughout the gallery spaces.
- There will be additional cleaning of high-contact points and restrooms.

For information on Illinois State University's Coronavirus (COVID-19) response, please see coronavirus.IllinoisState.edu/.

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 Uptown Station parking deck located directly above University Galleries.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#), 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 these exhibitions.