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*Gathering: Montclair State University 2016 MFA Studio Arts Thesis Exhibition*, curated by Eleanor Heartney  
June 9 - June 18

Magnan Metz gallery and Montclair State University is proud to announce the opening of *Gathering: Montclair State University 2016 MFA Studio Arts Thesis Exhibition*. The exhibition features the work of Ruth Borgenicht, Natalia Borisenko, Jandy Carvajal, Maryann Ficker, Meagan Green, Juana Rodriguez, Belmira Silva, Kasia Skorynkiewicz, John Spano, Stephanie Spitz, and, Mina Zarfsaz.

“Two members of the class are painters. Maryann Ficker paints portraits from life, making the interactions with sitters an integral part of the process. By contrast, Juana Rodriguez draws on her dreams, expressing the fragmented, irrational and other worldly nature of her night visions in works that are equally free of ordinary visual logic.

Both Mina Zarfsaz and Natalia Borisenko are concerned with the nature of perception. Zarfsaz presents situations and environments that force viewers to focus on the bodily element in our experience of space. Faux mirrors, rooms with obstructed passageways or moveable parts, tilted floors and other traps all test our understanding of our physical surroundings.

Borisenko is more interested in the visual aspects of perception. As a photographer, she sees the camera as a tool that extends our senses. She uses it to combine multiple time frames within a single image or to make open-ended visual narratives that unfold through the juxtaposition of subliminally connected individual images.

Several artists here manipulate environments to bring out very different aspects of the relationship between self and world. Stephanie Spitz is drawn to the literal experience of home building as a metaphor for the ways we make a place for ourselves in the world. Construction materials, house paint, floor tiles and Sheetrock serve both as her artistic medium and as memory triggers that collapse the distance between past and present.

Belmira Silva draws inspiration, not from the past, but from the imagined futures to be found in science fiction films and graphic novels. Coercive environments and worlds hollowed of human interaction serve Silva as cathartic substitutes for her own and her viewer's personal battles with anxiety.

At a far remove from Silva's evocation of claustrophobic isolation, Ruth Borgenicht explores ways to make normally individual experiences more social. Using food as a medium, she creates situations in which a temporary community is created through shared utensils, perplexing table arrangements and orchestrated moments of discovery.

Quotidian objects form the starting point for the works of John Spano and Kasia Skorynkiewicz. Spano borrows signage and objects that are the detritus of urban life to critique the contradictions between the bucolic fantasy embedded in the ideal of suburban life and the wasteful and anti-ecological realities on contemporary society.

Skorynkiewicz is inspired by the pathos and mystery of found objects, whose unknown previous histories touch her imagination. Reworked, rearranged and reimagined they are also reborn for a new life as part of works of art that speak of the impermanence of all matter and life.

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Jandy Carvajal and Meagan Green draw on their histories and personal connection to the Catholic religion to suggest new uses of the language of faith. Green seeks a “queer space” within Catholicism that allows her to reconcile her religious beliefs and her sexual identity. She finds that space in sculptures, installations and video work that transform aspects of Catholic ritual into vessels of hope, love and desire.

Carvajal similarly transforms the gaudy objects of popular devotion employed by the faithful in his native Philippines into playful commentaries on homosexual male desire. Underlying the work is a more serious concern – the links between the universal search for corporeal and spiritual love.”

Eleanor Heartney

*Gathering: Montclair State University 2016 MFA Studio Arts Thesis Exhibition* will be on view from June 9th to June 18th, 2016. The opening reception will be held on Thursday, June 9th from 6 – 8pm.

Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm.

For additional information please contact [info@magnanmetz.com](mailto:info@magnanmetz.com) or 212.244.2344