

Art & Art History Program, University of Vermont
The Mollie Ruprecht Fund for Visual Arts, Annual Report 2023-2024

The Mollie Ruprecht Fund for Visual Arts significantly enriched the academic experience of students in the University of Vermont's Art & Art History Program during the 2023-24 academic year by supporting 8 events and 14 visiting artists. These events included public artist talks, student workshops, gallery tours, and class presentations, providing diverse programming and learning opportunities. Highlights from the fall semester included the exhibition *Ongoing Abstraction* featuring works by Stacy Fisher, Meg Lipke, Sun You, Rachel Eulena Williams, and Andrew Kuo, along with engaging artist talks and interactive sessions with filmmakers and public artists like Dan Habib and the Juniper Creative Arts team. In the spring semester, notable activities included exhibitions and lectures by artists such as Adrianna Ault, RaMell Ross, and the duo Lily Moebes and Željka Blakšić, who presented their interdisciplinary work on the social potential of utilitarian objects. These events collectively broadened students' perspectives on contemporary art, fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

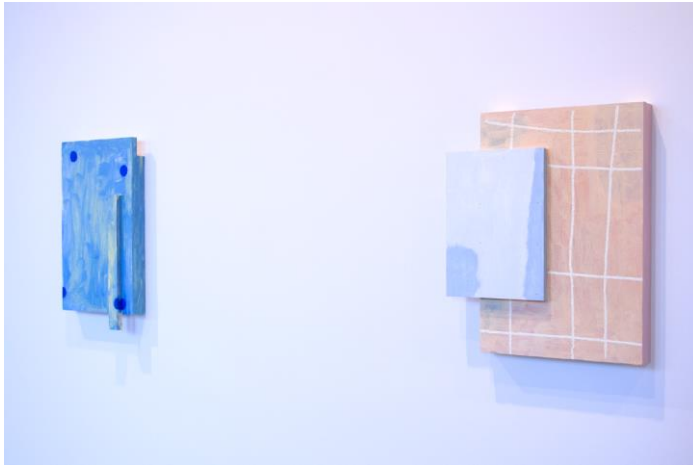
Fall 2023



Ongoing Abstraction, the Colburn Gallery, September 12-29, 2023

1) Ongoing Abstraction

The exhibition *Ongoing Abstraction*, curated by Steve Budington, featured Stacy Fisher, Andrew Kuo, Meg Lipke, Rachel Eulena Williams, and Sun You. It was on view from September 12 to 29, 2023, and the artists' panel discussion on September 20 was well attended. The exhibition included the work of five artists who take an expansive, ongoing approach to painting and abstraction. Their work lushly invites us in with its sense of humor, unrestrained logic, and unconventional, inventive use of materials.



Stacy Fisher's paintings transform factually small objects into psychically expansive events. She achieves this through her profound engagement with the internal scale of paintings and their ability to import material memories from the everyday world. Fisher recalls early memories from her parents' upholstery shop, where she observed fabric and pattern samples—visual indexes pointing to larger, more tactile, embodied objects in the world. The logic and touch of Fisher's abstractions evoke the magic of

the everyday, quickly opening to other interpretations: landscape light, games, visual music scores, and other visual and tactile forms that resist easy codification. Fisher's paintings seem at ease but are not simple; they are more discovered than designed, with each painting bearing the scars, layers, erasures, and nail gun holes of its own making. This is where the quality of ongoingness enters Fisher's work; these three-dimensional paintings remind us that we're at just one stopping point along a longer continuum of world-building.

Stacy Fisher lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BFA in Sculpture from Ohio State University in 1997. She has exhibited with galleries such as Marisa Newman Projects, Thierry Goldberg, BravinLee Programs, Jeff Bailey Gallery, Hesse Flatow, Sardine, Underdonk, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, LVL3, and Left Field. Fisher participated in LMCC's Process Space Program and has completed residencies at the Edward F. Albee Foundation, the Vermont Studio Center, and the Chautauqua School of Art. Her work has been reviewed by Artforum, The New York Times, New American Paintings, Beautiful Decay, and Two Coats of Paint.

In a recent artist's talk **Meg Lipke** discussed wanting to make a body from a grid; stuffed,

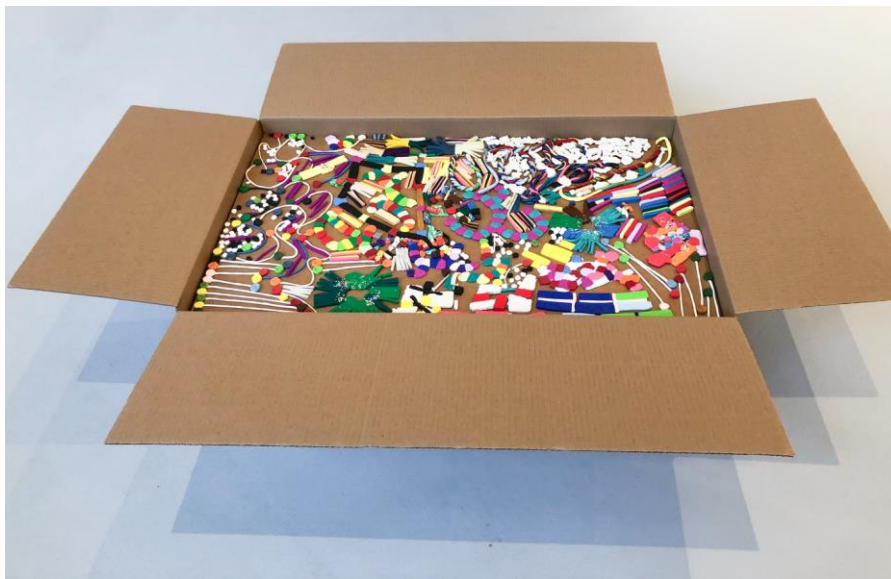


stained, slumped, failing, and somehow commensurate with a life lived – not typically the stuff of modernist grids or the mensurational spirit they signify. Indeed, the artist has made some of these works in her car, awkwardly carrying the large scale and heavy canvas materials around in the passenger seats and trunk, tending to their required labor in the gaps of time and parking lots of our more practical errands. Lipke's work holds an amazingly affective ongoingness without resorting to description; just how do the

abstract forms of these 'soft' paintings continue to elicit the hilarious, irreverent, joyful, critical, pathetic, practical, psychedelic, and sophisticated all at once? Lipke has shown such works as stand-alone paintings and as surrogate figures and props among human performers in choreographed dance, furthering the idea that the work operates in an ongoing relationship to the world the various contexts of its presentation.

Meg Lipke (b. 1969) received her BA with College Honors in Painting and Women's Studies from the University of Vermont and her MFA in Painting from Cornell University. Lipke's work has been exhibited at Broadway Gallery, Jeff Bailey Gallery, September Gallery, LMAK, Moore College of Art, TSA Philadelphia, Morgan Lehman, and Gold Montclair. She has lectured extensively in universities and art programs across the country, most recently at MICA in Baltimore and the University of Buffalo in addition to Pratt Institute and Cornell University. Lipke is a 2020 recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Craft/Sculpture. Her work has been featured in many publications, including *Art in America*, the *New York Times*, and the *Village Voice*. Lipke lives and works in New York's Hudson Valley.

Sun You's presentations of abstracted polymer clay elements arranged in cardboard moving boxes carry and reveal the history of their own making. The visible indices of the artists touch



and decision making, and the material associations of the clay – a readily available craft supply typically cured in home ovens – suggest a playful, even democratic approach to artistic labor. In this way the works presents an alternative to, or even critique of the demand for more rarefied uses of 'fine' materials in our art. In a recent talk, Sun You discussed the importance of the horizontal floor plane in her works. With

credit to her Korean upbringing where floors are often the place of work, rest, and gathering, Sun You also suggests the horizontal plane as a zone of heightened visibility and perspective, a map-like use of space where a viewer can take in the totality of a structure. Are these maps, diagrams, some kind of rebus like form that can be decoded? Contextualized within the cardboard boxes that brought them to the gallery (and that will deliver them to their next stop), the ongoingness of You's work gets at the itinerancy of living and working today, a courting of and finding joy in the impermanence of things.

Sun You is a Seoul-born, New York-based artist. You has exhibited her work in galleries and museums internationally. Recent exhibition venues include The Pit, Glendale, CA, Step Sister, New York, The Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, Queens Museum, New York, The Korean Cultural Center, New York, Scotty Enterprises, Berlin, Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral, Bad Ems, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, SARDINE, New York, and The Suburban, Chicago. You was an artist in residence at The Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program, Marble House Project, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Triangle Arts Association, and Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral in Bad Ems, Germany. She was also selected as Artists to Watch in 2016 by WIDEWALLS and 18 Artists to Watch, by Modern Painters, 2015.

The rope in **Rachel Eulena Williams**' works suggest tethered and untethered relationships to the physical world, a history of painting, and material use. While the rope is just one form of mark among many in Williams' work, one can't ignore its tactile-metaphoric implications, or its

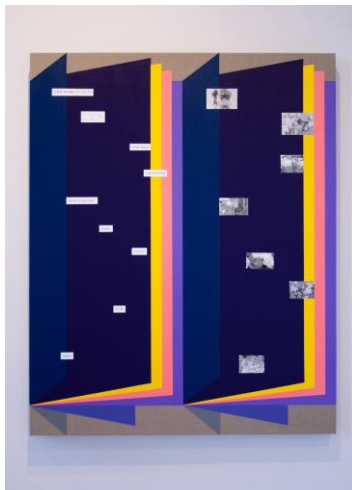


material memory – braided, tough, importing the idea of hitching one thing to one another, no matter how disparate, frayed in one situation, taught in another. The ropes embody pressure, and Williams deftly applies this pressure in all her work; her painting-sculpture hybrids speak to the ongoing physical, psychological, personal, and social pressures applied to painting as a whole, and abstract painting in particular – the pressure to signify and the effort to resist that expectation,

the pressure to innovate, modify, and change from within the materials, forms, and languages inherited from our historical past.

Rachel Williams (b. 1991, Miami, FL) received her BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York. In 2023 she exhibited *Hair and Body* at Dundee Contemporary Arts, her first major solo exhibition in a UK institution. Her work has been exhibited at venues such as Xavier Hufkens, Brussels; Ceysson & Benetiere, New York, Saint Etienne & Luxembourg; The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Journal Gallery, and Turn Gallery, all in New York; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; and Loyal Gallery, Sweden. Her work is included in the collections such as the Pérez Art Museum, Miami and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.

Andrew Kuo chart paintings present the appearance of quantifiable information as they invite us into a more inchoated quality of thinking. The two paintings in this exhibition use book forms as motives presented as hard-edge abstractions – an image and a formal approach that forms that



suggest certainty and clarity of intent. Absurdity and irreverence take over from there as the carbon copied text and image snippets get at the problem of searching for, but not finding what you need. Forgetting, spacing out, finding something else altogether in the process are introduced in an ongoing interaction with these works – a welcome detour of the mind. Painter, musician, sculptor, graphic designer, and regular contributor to the New York Times, **Andrew Kuo** is a fixture in New York's creative milieu. He is known artistically for chart paintings that quantify the inner workings of his psyche. The diptych *The More You know About Me the More You'll Think Twice Before Calling/I'd Be More Tolerable If I Smoked Weed Because...* (2011), for instance, documents Kuo's personal life and emotional experience through images and text. "I

paint the forms for the charts on the surface of the piece and they keep changing as I work on them,” he says. “One color could expand, and another could be erased and brought back through the process.” Stylistically, Kuo references various modern and contemporary artists, including Josef Albers and Sophie Calle, and gleans pop culture references from music and social media. The artist is represented by Broadway gallery NYC and has shared his work internationally.



Dan Habib, on Virtual Talk with UVM, October 3, 2023

2) Dan Habib

The documentary film maker **Dan Habib** visited with ARTS 2030B virtually on Tuesday October 3, 2023, in the Williams Seminar room as opposed to our normal classroom to allow for easier interaction. After Andy Elrick delivered a brief introduction, Habib did a short presentation on his work and then answered questions from the students for more than 30 minutes. During this online session, Habib demonstrated a deft understanding of how to overcome the barriers posed by technology. The students were fully engaged, and Habib showed bits of his work and answered questions about both his production style and aesthetic as well as his career trajectory and personal experience of working with a community of people who are underrepresented in media.

Dan Habib is a documentary filmmaker whose work focuses on engaging with the stories of members of the disabled community. His first film, *Including Samuel*, told a story of his son Samuel, who has a severe physical disability, and his early years in public school as Dan grapples with what “inclusion” really means. He has gone on to produce award winning films on subjects ranging from ALS to people with intellectual disabilities. A week before his class visit, Habib won an Emmy Award for his short New York Times Op-Doc *My Disability Roadmap* on which he collaborated with Samuel. He is also currently a Project Developer at the Westchester Institute for Human Development.



Juniper Creative Arts, *The Wall of Respect: Luminaries of Justice and Liberation*, 2021, Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center

3) Juniper Creative Arts

Jennifer and Will from Juniper Creative Arts met with ARTS 2030 Public Art on October 26, 2023. The class visit was at Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center where the Juniper Creative team created *The Wall of Respect: Luminaries of Justice and Liberation* in 2021. The 1100 square foot vaulted ceiling mural documents 230 years of revolutionary history and pays tribute to historical, present-day, and local heroes who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) set among a natural landscape of vibrant colors, flowers, and cascading waterfalls. On October 25th, Jennifer and Will also gave a public talk in Williams Hall. The talk focused on their experiences of creating public art in Vermont, their aesthetic, the intersections of symbolism, nature, and art, and the impact and challenges of their work. Both the talk and the group trip opened students' eyes to the intricacies of an art form of the community arts.

Juniper Creative Arts is a Vermont-based Black and Dominican family collective of nationally recognized muralists, facilitators, photographers, and more. Their work and vibe are inspired by their cultural and spiritual lineages, urban art, Hip-Hop culture, the mystical, plant spirits, and the natural world. They have a purpose-driven practice of creating art that celebrates the lives and stories of the African Diaspora. They believe in the power of the arts to heal, build community, beautify, and create dialogue; to these ends, they use visual art and murals to lift the voices, images, and people often left on the margins.



Lorenzo Triburgo with the UVM community, artist talk and the opening event of an exhibition *Shimmer Shimmer* in the Colburn Gallery on October 26th, 2023

4) **Lorenzo Triburgo**

NYC-based trans artist **Lorenzo Triburgo** created an exhibition *Shimmer Shimmer* collaboratively with his partner Sarah Van Dyck where the artists full-body nude self-portrait photographs were featured. Students in Ace Lehner's color photography class learned the basics of curating and installing a photo exhibition over the process of curating and installing Triburgo's exhibition under Lehner's direction in the Colburn Gallery. Triburgo also engaged in a classroom visit with Lehner's photography students and gave students feedback on individual projects. The exhibition and talk were very well attended and utilized by faculty throughout the show's duration in various educational ways, from drawing classes, learning about classical sculpture, and sketching nude figures to contemporary art classes discussing trans representations.

Lorenzo Triburgo is a Brooklyn-based artist employing performance, photography, video, and audio to elevate transqueer subjectivity and cast a critical lens on notions of the "natural." They often use a bright palette and a playful campiness to flip (or trans-) conventional power dynamics that exist between artist, subject, and outside viewer. They were a 2019 Workspace Resident at Baxter St/CCNY and an AIM Fellow at the Bronx Museum of the Arts in 2020. Permanent collections include the Museum of Contemporary Photography (Chicago, IL), Portland Art Museum (Portland, OR) and select exhibition venues include Bruce Silverstein, NYC; Photoforum Pasquart, Biel, Switzerland; Kunst und Kulturhaus, Berne, Switzerland; Dutch Trading Post, Nagasaki, Japan; Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA; Magazzini del Sale, Siena, Italy; and Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, the Netherlands as a winner of the international Pride Photo Award. Triburgo is a full-time Instructor at Oregon State University's College of Liberal Arts (online campus) who teaches critical theory, photography, and gender studies with a focus on expanding liberatory learning practices in online environments.



LJ Roberts, virtual artist talk “Wildness in Williams Hall: LJ Roberts Artist Talk,” November 2, 2023, virtual and projected live streamed in the Colburn Gallery

5) **LJ Roberts**

LJ Roberts, a UVM alumnus, shared their work via Teams, which was then projected into Triburgo's exhibition at the Colburn Gallery, creating a dynamic and interactive experience for the attendees. This, along with Triburgo's exhibition and talk, was part of the LGBTQ+ art events program, supported by the Director of the School of the Arts, Kelley DiDio. The Ruprecht Fund played a crucial role in the success of these projects. The gallery was full of eager listeners for both talks, including faculty, staff, and students. Both artists' talks covered their career trajectories, multiple projects, community engagement work, creating work for LGBTQIA+ communities, and creating much-needed representations. Roberts' talk also included a discussion of their time as an undergraduate at UVM. Roberts earned an undergraduate degree from UVM in 2003 in Studio Art and English and went on to earn an MFA/MA in Fine Art and Visual and Critical Studies from California College of the Arts in San Francisco, CA.

LJ Roberts is an artist and writer who creates large-scale textile installations, intricate embroideries, artist books, collages and mixed-media sculptures. Their work illuminates oft-erased and unacknowledged queer and trans narratives, people, and places. The artist creates conceptual and geographical maps of queer life of the past, present and future through material deviance and re-imaging craft practices. LJ's work has been shown in exhibitions at Barbican Centre, Smithsonian American Art Museum (Renwick Gallery), The Victoria and Albert Museum, The Brooklyn Museum, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Yerba Buena Center of the Arts, The 8th Floor, Museum of Arts and Design, Vox Populi, Smack Mellon, Archives of

American Art at the Smithsonian Institution, Orange County Museum of Art, Leslie-Lohman Museum, Powerhouse Museum, FLAG Art Foundation, National Academy of Design, The Museum of the City of New York, The Oakland Museum of California, The ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at The University of Southern California, and The Bowdoin College Museum of Art. LJ's first New York City solo exhibition, Carry You With Me: Ten Years of Portraits opened at Pioneer Works in 2021 and traveled to Cantor Center for the Arts at Stanford University in 2022. LJ has been the past recipient of a MacDowell Fellowship, the Fountainhead Fellowship at Virginia Commonwealth University, and residencies at IASPIS (International Artists' Studio Program in Sweden--Stockholm), Ox-Bow School of Art, ACRE, The Textile Arts Center, The Bag Factory in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Pioneer Works in Brooklyn, NY. LJ is currently the 2023-2024 halley k. harrisburg and Michael Rosenfeld Artist-in-Residence at Bowdoin College. In 2015, LJ was one of nine recipients of The White House Champions of Change Award for LGBTQI artists from President Barack Obama. They also received the 2019 President's Award for Art and Activism from the Women's Caucus for Art. Recently the artist was a recipient of BRIC's Colene Brown Art Prize and the Arthur and Sheila Prensky Island Press Fellowship at the Sam Fox School of Art, Washington University (St. Louis). Institutional Collections include Brooklyn Museum, National Portrait Gallery, The Renwick Gallery, and the Archives of American Art, all at the Smithsonian Institution; Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University, Leslie Lohman Museum, Oakland Museum of American Art and the Tretter Collection at University of Minnesota. LJ lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island and teaches at Parsons School of Design.

Spring 2024



6) **Adrianna Ault**

Photographer **Adrianna Ault** spoke to two classes, ARTS 2510 Photography and ARTS 3500 Advanced Photography, on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. Ault also gave a public artist talk, “Photographic Work: Bridging the Personal and Universal,” in Williams 301 on March 6th.

Adrianna Ault (b.1972) is an American photographer raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. Adrianna studied photography from a very early age. She lived and worked in New York City for seventeen years and has spent her life working in the realm of photography, whether commercial or artistically driven. In 2017, she collaborated with Tim Carpenter, Raymond Meeks, and Brad Zellar on *Township*, a photobook centered around the auction of her family farm in central Ohio. Ault holds an MFA from Hartford International Limited-Residency Photography School. She works in her studio in the Hudson Valley of New York. In addition to making work for publication, she has taught at colleges and workshops.

Adrianna’s book of photographs, “Levee”, was published by VOID in October 2023.

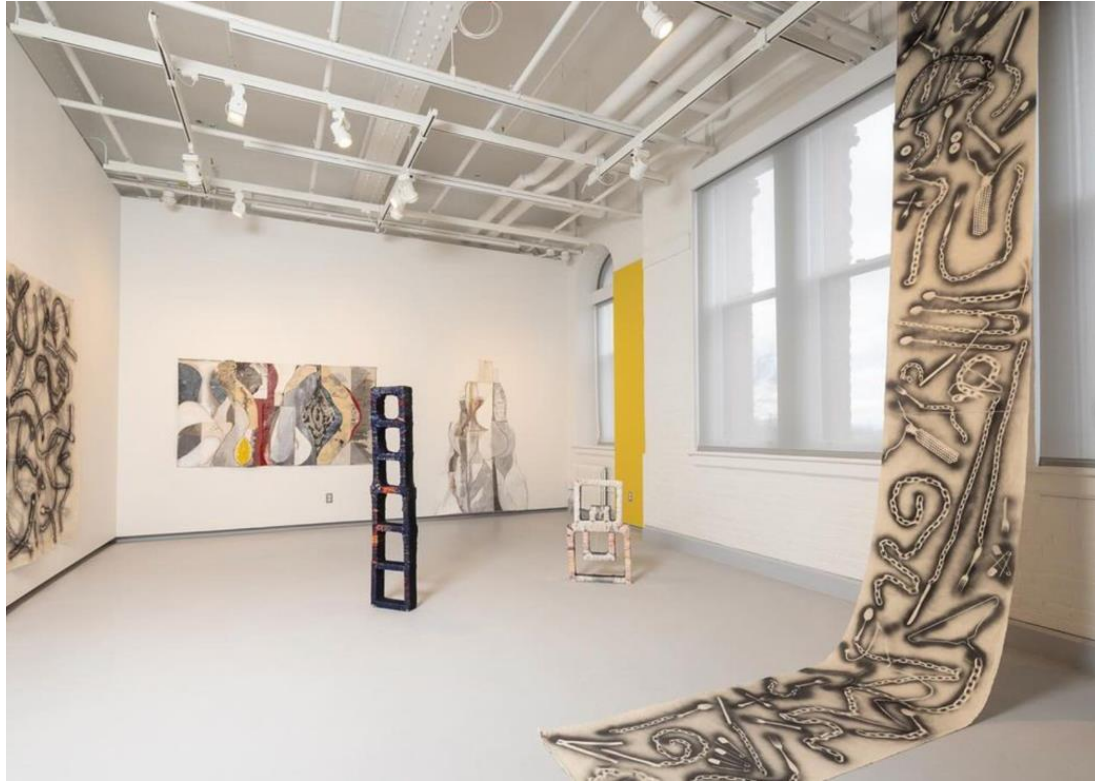


7) **RaMell Ross**

Photographer **RaMell Ross** spoke to two classes, ARTS 2510 Photography and ARTS 3500 Advanced Photography, on Wednesday, April 3, 2024. Ross also gave a public artist talk, “Magnets, Impossibility and the Historical South”, in Williams 301 on April 3rd.

RaMell Ross is an artist, filmmaker, writer, and liberated documentarian. He has been awarded an Aaron Siskind Foundation Individual Photographer’s Fellowship, Howard Foundation

Fellowship, a USA Artist Fellowship and was a 2022 Solomon Fellow at Harvard University. His feature experimental documentary *Hale County This Morning, This Evening* was nominated for an Oscar at the 91st Academy Awards and an Emmy for Exceptional Merit in Documentary Film. RaMell holds degrees in Sociology and English from Georgetown University and is an Associate Professor in Brown University's Visual Art Department. His work is in various public and private collections such as the Museum for Modern Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and the High Museum.



Lily Moebes and Željka Blakšić, *Utile Ties*, March 19—22, 2024

8) *Utile Ties*

Lily Moebes and Željka Blakšić presented *Utile Ties*, highlighting their shared interest in the social and radical potential of usefulness and the utilitarian. Their work, featuring sculpture, print, mixed media, and video, incorporated everyday objects (clothing, studs, string, cutlery) to explore the concept of usefulness, especially in relation to a gendered/working body. Both artists, based in New York, NY, extended their show from the interdisciplinary exhibition *If Work* at Anonymous Gallery in August 2023. From March 19 to March 22, 2024, Moebes and Blakšić held an exhibition, gave a public lecture, and visited Professor Christopher Kojzar's ARTS 1400 and ARTS 2600 classes. On March 20, from 1:50 PM to 3:30 PM, Moebes visited ARTS 1400 in Williams 305, presenting on material use and warp/weft weaving techniques. She engaged students with a slideshow and introduced the class project, a weft-faced weaving. She showcased works by artists like Lenore Tawney, Josh Faught, Jamie Boyle, Erik Bergrin, Diedrick Brackens, and Cecilia Vicuña. Moebes provided resources, advice, demonstrations, material tips, drawing critiques, and process examples, illustrating how interdisciplinary textile art functions as an image, bandage, binder, thickness, surface, sculpture, organizer of space, and record of

history. Earlier on March 20, from 10:40 AM to 12:30 PM, Blakšić visited ARTS 2600 in Cohen 201. She presented her film, critiqued students' digital fabric designs, and lectured on the political and union action of Bosnian women in clothing and textile production from the late 1960s to 2010s. Blakšić, previously involved with musical bands in Croatia and a member of Zagreb's first female punk band, The Schizoid Wiklers, developed the film *Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream*, which she presented to the class.

Lily Moebes is an interdisciplinary artist whose work in painting, sculpture, and installation examines how notions of safety, home, and health operate in the context of the post-traumatic body. Understanding trauma as one of many aspects of positionality rather than as a source of shame or distinction, Moebes uses materials, often post-consumer scrap, to explore the relational possibilities of a post-traumatic position and how they can strengthen community ties. Her work stems from a desire to untangle the body from dominant forms of knowing and mastering as well as a desire to intervene in cycles of abuse that cling to family structures. Moebes received her MFA from Parsons in 2022 and her BA from Barnard in 2015. Based in Brooklyn, she was born in Greenfield, MA in 1992 and was raised between Austin and San Francisco.

Željka Blakšić AKA Gita Blak is an interdisciplinary artist and educator who works with performance, 16mm film, video, and installation. Her work often stems from the subculture of the 1990s-era in Croatia, when punk, anarcho- and eco-movements were having a renewal. Resistance manifested itself through the cooperation and gathering of different alternative social groups. This experimental environment became a university of rebellion—a key force, giving voice to new expressions of democracy, justice, common values and free speech. Blaksic often collaborates with members of different subcultures, activists, schoolgirls, singers, urbanists, and students, creating sites and praxis of collectivity. Using pedagogical methodologies within the context of contemporary art she organizes workshops, creates publications, makes films and exhibitions.