



NORTH OF THE 45TH

2019 Upper Midwest Juried Exhibition

JUNE 18 – AUGUST 9, 2019



**DEVOSART
MUSEUM**

Printed in conjunction
with the exhibition:

NORTH OF THE 45TH

JUNE 18 — AUGUST 9, 2019

Exhibition Juror

Steven L. Bridges

Associate Curator

MSU Broad Museum

DeVos Art Museum

School of Art & Design

Northern Michigan University

nmu.edu/devos

MUSEUM DIRECTOR

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COVER IMAGE

Noah Roberts

DESIGN

Edwin Carter & Noah Roberts



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

North of the 45th is an annual juried exhibition of artists living in the geographical area north of the 45th parallel in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. This line is known as the halfway point between the equator and the north pole, and crossing this line from the south is often associated with being “up north.” The exhibition showcases the breadth and depth of artists living in this upper Midwest region from both rural and urban areas. Each year a new juror is selected, and this year’s juror is Steven L. Bridges.

Steven L. Bridges is associate curator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University. Most recently, Bridges curated the major exhibition Oscar Tuazon: Water School, and co-curated the exhibitions Michel Parmentier and Michigan Stories: Mike Kelley and Jim Shaw. Other notable projects include Beyond Streaming: A Sound Mural for Flint, a residency and exhibition for which artist Jan Tichy was invited to respond to the Flint water crisis. Previously, Bridges was the curatorial assistant at the MCA Chicago where he curated solo exhibitions of the work of artists Faheem Majeed and Jason Lazarus. He also assisted the major retrospective exhibition of the work of Doris Salcedo, which traveled to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Pérez Art Museum in Miami. From 2011–15, Bridges co-curated the annual Rapid Pulse International Performance Art Festival in Chicago. His essays and articles have been published in numerous journals and exhibition catalogues and other online and print media. In 2017 he was named a curatorial fellow at the FACE Foundation.

Image credit: Noah Roberts

FROM THE JUROR

Halfway to Somewhere

Steven L. Bridges

Any geographer worth their salt is quick to point out that the 45th parallel is not the precise halfway point between the Earth's equator and North Pole. But nearly so, and as a result perhaps this imaginary line carries more symbolic meaning than literal. Yet the 45th parallel nonetheless does create a kind of psychic threshold. It is a point of reference used to orient oneself—on, above or below—the implications of which can be quite loaded. Of course, there is justifiable reason for this: from environmental and climactic perspectives, for example, there are very real differences between living north of the 45th and south of it. These factors exert great influence upon human life and, ultimately, the cultural values that develop and grow out of such conditions.

And while everywhere is halfway to somewhere, focusing on the 45th parallel led me to consider more deeply how this certain latitudinal line demarcates certain sociopolitical, cultural, economic, and historical realities that are not everywhere, or somewhere, but here.

More recently, I have also been thinking about the many narratives spun around globalization and how humanity is more connected than ever before. This is true, I have no doubt, but what concerns me about these spectacular claims is the overlooking and undervaluing of the local within the global. In the art world we see this all the time. “International” trends steam roll the unique qualities and voices located in or grown out of particular places, and worse, if the work or the artist is not “circulating” in these global networks then it remains invisible. Or at least that's the story we are often told.

With these many thoughts swirling in my head, I proceeded to review the submissions for the DeVos Art Museum at Northern Michigan University's annual North of the 45th exhibition. First and foremost, I must say, it was an honor to be invited to participate, to be exposed to so many great artists that I had yet to encounter. In reviewing the submissions, I found myself increasingly interested in the particular perspectives and insights of artists invested in locating their practices in the specific geographic, sociopolitical, and cultural delineation that is “north of the 45th.” Admittedly, there were many other noteworthy artists whose work I admired, but I gravitated most heavily towards those whose work brought to mind the important distinction of being locally situated. As a result, the selected works for this iteration of exhibition collectively describe something quite unique: what it means to live and work and create north of the 45th parallel.

The selection is also intended to revel in the many facets of life and creative expression evoked by the different artists who responded to the open call. This includes the natural beauty of the landscape, of course, but also the joy, humor, hardship, and perseverance of the individuals who live north of the 45th parallel. The role of art in any society is multifold, and in this exhibition I selected artists and works of art that reflected and refracted the realities from which their work derives meaning. It's not all beautiful, per se, but this is important, too. The experience of art should not always be an escapist detachment from the present; at times it is also necessary to confront ourselves, our pasts, in an effort to better envision the future.

The idea of being “halfway to somewhere”—as embodied by the 45th parallel—is also the experience of the artist. It’s a difficult and precarious way of life, but there is great importance in not always knowing where you are headed, or what comes next (creatively or otherwise). This is another lesson to be gleaned from the many artists on view in this exhibition. The pursuit of something—a form, a vision, a particular essence or meaning—which may never be obtained, would be a maddening misadventure for most people. But for many of the artists presented here (I would venture to guess), the pursuit itself is what holds meaning, the striving for something greater, delving deeper into one’s own creativity in order to communicate profoundly with others. To seek such experiences is remarkable in and of itself.

In this striving, we are all halfway to somewhere; figuring things out, together. And so we should celebrate each other in all our different places and stages in life. Celebrate our differences and the things that bring us together despite them—like the works of art in the gallery, in the museum, and on the wall. Each work has something to say, a truth to behold. For me, the reality is this: the artists who live in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, north of the 45th parallel, are truly remarkable in their many pursuits, and rooted here, their visions and messages will travel everywhere.



BEN BOHNSACK

SENEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - THE PONDS, MARSHES AND FORESTS

15" x 35"

Woodblock print

MARQUETTE, MI

I make woodblock prints (woodcuts) inspired by the landscapes, creatures and human enterprises of our world, especially centered in life in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It is my way of saying that these things are valuable - they truly matter! As you see my art, I hope that you will think so too. This particular series was created during the summer of 2018 when I had the privilege of being Artist-in-Residence at Seney National Wildlife Refuge, one of the real treasures of our area. Here the vital work goes on, preserving a gorgeous natural environment and an array of creatures that really do matter. Go see for yourself!

MADDY BRADLEY

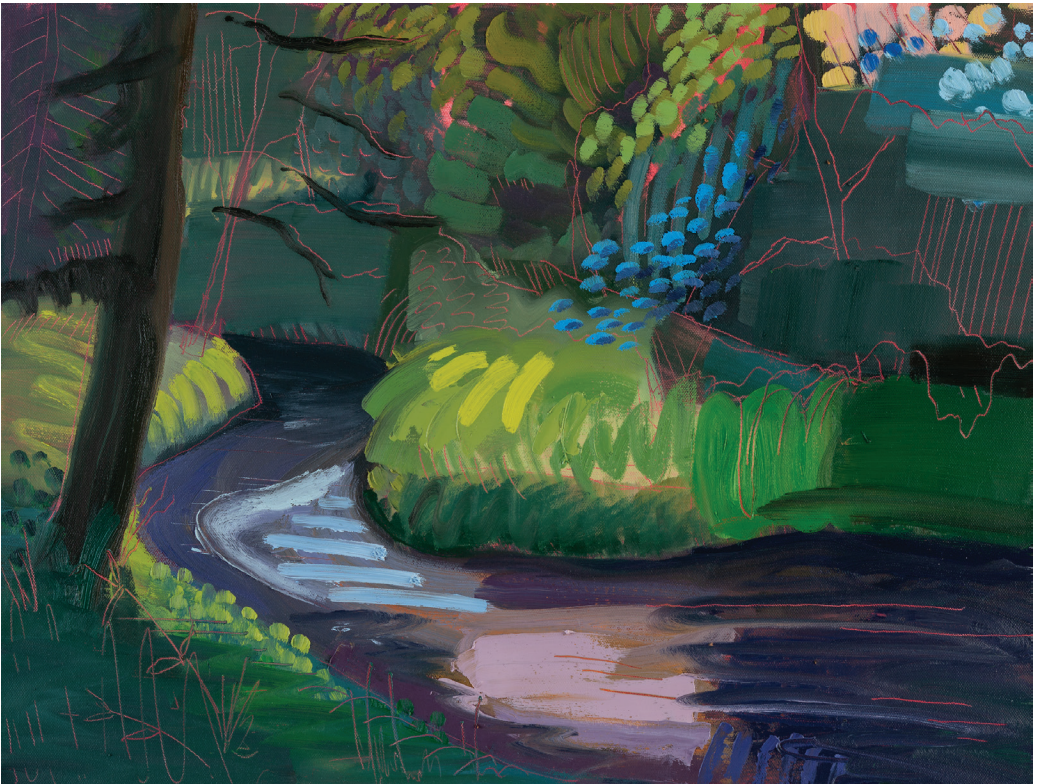
SNELLING #2

18" × 24"

Oil on panel

RICHFIELD, MN

The measurable and the immeasurable. Though as unromantic and grounded plein air painting is, it reveals the spectrum of tangibility. The measurables of plein air painting are heavy. I lug my easel and backpack full of paints, plastic Target bags, mineral spirits and fruit snacks for miles until I reach the scene. Then, for several hours I look. It's then that the immeasurables present themselves, the spiritual weight of the landscape. The weight of this is heavier. The result of all of this is a painting that marks not just the time and place but the celebration that happens in the process.





GINNIE CAPPAERT

FOGGY MORNING

8" x 8"

Oil / cold wax / mixed media

STEPHENSON, MI

I am a full-time visual artist with a summer studio/gallery in Door County, Wisconsin, and a winter studio in the beautiful Upper Peninsula of Michigan. My surroundings of nature and my travels inspire and influence my oil/cold wax/mix media paintings. My in-depth process of up to 40 layers being added and excavated is what gives the painting the depth and intriguing varieties of color and value. Each piece contains subtle mark making and the layers emerge into the finished painting, which is an abstracted minimalist version of a landscape. Both of the exhibited pieces, "Foggy Morning" and "New Beginnings," were inspired by my time along the Lake Superior shore. "Foggy Morning" was inspired by the break up of the ice and shifting patterns in the early springtime. A push-pull with warm and cool colors. "New Beginnings" was inspired by the rugged shoreline and the strong trees that cling to that ground. Although my travels take me to New Zealand, Ireland, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Santa Fe area of the US, it is definitely Lake Superior that has the strongest influence in my work.



TAIMUR AMIN TR CLEARY

FACES EAST (HIS AND HERS)

12" × 14.5" (each)

Oil on board

MARQUETTE, MI

The paintings I make depict buildings that are no longer in use, which also implies the existing culture that no longer has any use for them. I am interested in the conditions and mindset in which architecture is abandoned, as well as the symbolic interpretations these subjects encourage.

Rigid, logical, and architectural geometries stand in harsh contrast to the natural forms of the environment – often confining them to the margins of the painting. These facades are constantly marked, reshaped, and reclaimed by the landscape itself. Like sundials, they mark time and create meaning by collaborating with the living elements of nature – constantly changing, and also cyclical.

Foundational divisions within the compositions approach symmetry, but simultaneously allow more organic forms of decay and nature to develop their own asymmetrical balance. While elements of beauty (light, color, ruin and harmony) refer to classical themes in landscape painting, these works should also challenge conventional aesthetics by favoring more formal, abstract and minimalist compositions.

The tension these works establish between symmetry and balance is intended to invoke uncanny similarities in the imagery, and directly acknowledge the flat, abstract nature of the picture plane. If a painting is a window, it only opens as we suspend our disbelief to meet suggestion with imagination. It can be a delicate balance, and a closed window is still a window.

VINCENT DEZUTTI

UNTITLED

10" × 15"

Archival digital print

MINNEAPOLIS, MN



My work remixes, de-contextualizes, and re-contextualizes photographic images in order to examine the way we as humans create and consume images. The main concerns of my artwork are conceptual and aesthetic examinations of the photographic image itself, using this entry point to explore issues such as nature, technology, and memory. I am also interested in how the camera sees the world and how that differs from the way that the human eye sees, but also shapes the images we encounter in our daily lives. I combine both analog and digital photography, digital manipulation, 3D renderings, and vector graphics—often all in the same composition. The incorporation of digital manipulation in my work emphasizes the way that the digital consumes all other media and its ubiquity in our daily lives. Although I work in a variety of subject matter and the aesthetic varies by project, my process ultimately comes back to how I can create something that subverts expectation—that raises questions about the photographic object itself—inviting the viewer to think more deeply about their relationship with image viewing and creation.



PADDY FOERSTERLING

THRONE OF RECLAMATION

48" x 24" x 24"

Steel and wood

MARQUETTE, MI

To achieve a solid foundation as an artist, I believe it is important to continually question and challenge the methodology in your work, along with the exploration of new styles and media. "Throne of Reclamation" was a departure against my typical creative flow, of pre-project visualization, sketches and material sourcing. Using only found materials and developing them into a new form it allowed me to open my full imagination; keeping my head focused on each singular element as they were added, piece by piece, to the whole. From leaf springs to a snowmobile cargo rack, each individual part shows the wear and tear of its previous use. With no records of their past, we as viewers and users can only guess where they originated from. However, with trimming, bending and welding all of these past pieces come together to begin a new story - a new purpose.



CHRISTOPHER FAUST

ADJOINING ADM BIN DEMO

7" x 22"

B&W silver print

ST PAUL, MN

This image is from a collection of work that ended up being a requiem for a group of elevators that started the milling industry in Minneapolis and St. Paul. I, of course, did not know the real history until I started researching to save this site from demolition.

I started photographing the Electric Steel Elevators in 1984. I've been in many places in this country, doing commission work and project work, but I always came back to this site for the next 30+ years. I trespassed at night and on Sundays for 4 months. I use medium format film and made 72 rolls of film. This is a unique set of elevators and they were used up until 2013. They first came into being in 1905.

RAYMOND GAYNOR

DETERMINATION II

20" × 30"

Digital photo printed on metallic art paper

HARBOR SPRINGS, MI

Photography has been a lifelong pursuit. Capturing nature's exceptional beauty and uniqueness is an invigorating passion which recharges my body and soul. With art expression, when something is seen, it is a vivid experience, sudden, and compelling. The visualization is complete, seemingly instant. My travels and experiences have made me more conscious of these elements of art in the selection, seeing, and execution to the final print. My goal is to create a worthy image of art, a combination of composition, lighting, emotions when pressing the camera shutter button, then transforming to the final print, to evoke the viewer's emotions, memories, and desire to witness firsthand the beauty of our country.





LARRY GODFREY

EAGLE CLAW DANCE STICKS

46" x 22"

Eagle claws, glass beads, leather and wood

GLADSTONE, MI

I am of Ojibwe ancestry and a member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan. My love for working with the traditional materials of my ancestors of times long ago brings me to a place that makes me feel close to them and happy that I am continuing in their footsteps. I am a self-taught traditional crafts artist who works with the same natural materials they used.

The eagle claws I used on the dance sticks are real, not imitations, and according to our traditions, will never be offered for sale. I have honored the eagles by beading and decorating their claws and the dance sticks will eventually be given to young male pow wow dancers who might deserve and appreciate an honor gift from an elder. The mounting board is a wash-up gift from Lake Michigan. (Note: the attached eagle feathers are imitations.)

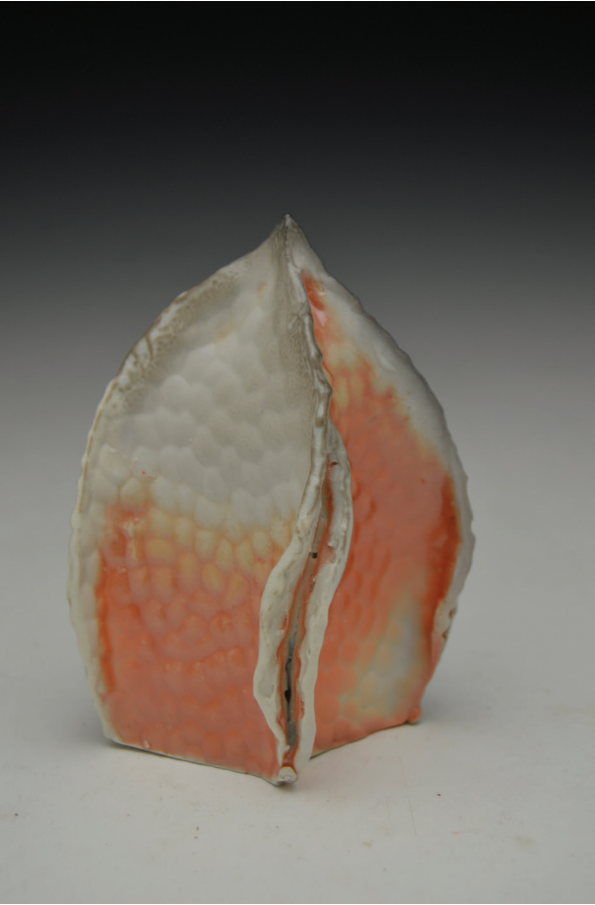
NIKAH HATFIELD

HUSK LIGHT

5" × 4" × 4"

Ceramic

MARQUETTE, MI



Slip cast in porcelain, this form celebrates the delicate husks of ground cherries. When lit from within, the piece emanates a soft glow of light that counteracts the common harshness of artificial lighting. The nuances of the soda atmospheric firing process is captured on the surface, speaking back to the singular nature of handmade objects.



LINDSEY HEIDEN

MATCH UP BUNNY

4.25" × 10.5" × 6.25"

Earthenware, glaze, paint, mixed media

DOLLAR BAY, MI

My natural surroundings, more specifically the animals that I see daily, consume my visual work. Currently, this infatuation has surrounded the rabbits that I see eating out of the birdfeeder, in my yard every morning and night. This coupled with my interest in the advances being made with the genetic engineering of animals results in the creation of hybrid creatures. I intertwine these two worlds into a body of work that can span months to years, and crosses many visual forms and mediums. Eventually a path to a tale is laid down and these animals turn into characters who become part of an ever evolving story.

"Match Up Bunny," came to life this past winter. The resilience of the rabbits during a long and dark U.P. winter was inspiring. These rabbits entered into a tale where they became a hybrid bunnies with the traits of deep sea bioluminescent fish, giving them the ability to glow.

JULIE HIGHLEN

ON SOLID ROCK

48" x 24"

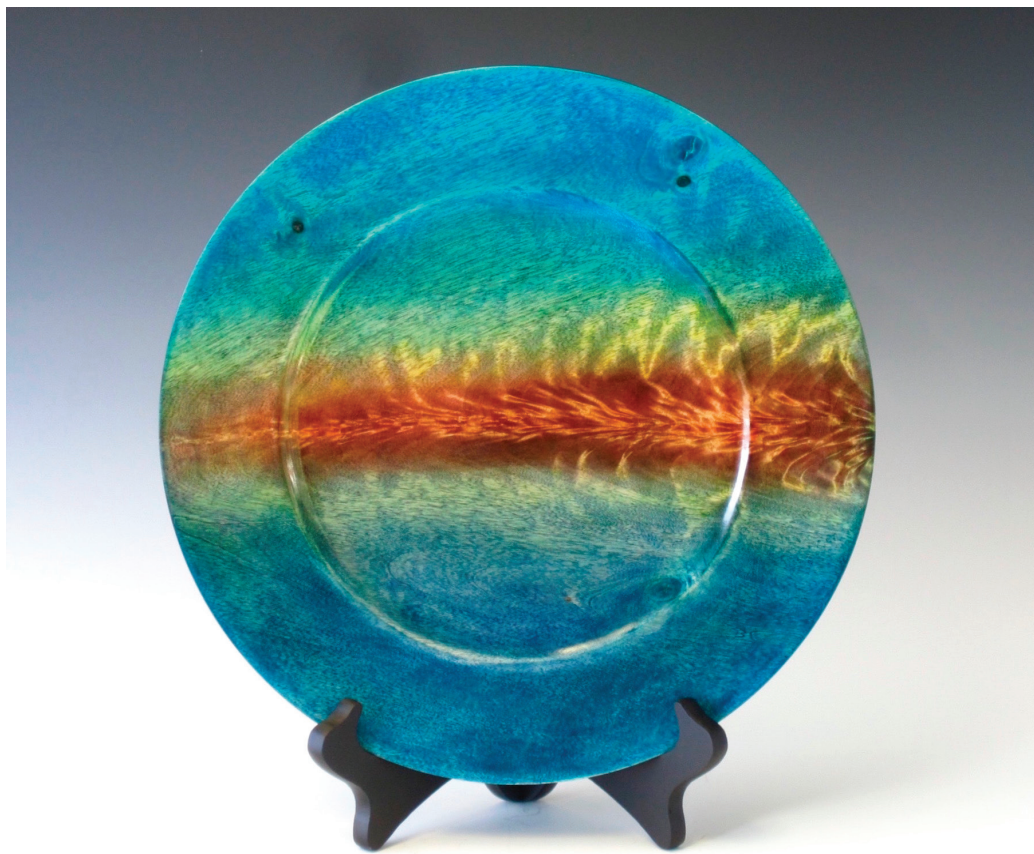
Acrylic

DEERTON, MI

Since moving to the U.P., it was only natural for my artwork to celebrate the north. I want the viewer to not only enjoy the beauty of the Upper Peninsula, but the strength and resilience of it as well. Whether depicting a lone tree or a single boulder along Lake Superior's shore, with cedars miraculously growing out of it, there is majesty. I have been described as a "mood painter" with my work "capturing the serenity of the moment," "taking a vacation on canvas."

After experimenting with other mediums, I prefer using acrylics. Pouring over art books and belonging to local art associations help develop my skills. Attending critiques, demonstrations, workshops and interacting with other artists are vital in my development as an artist.





MATT HIRVONEN

RED SKY AURORA

11.5" × 11.5" × 1"

Turned and dyed wood

SKANDIA, MI

As a woodturner, my goal is to make bowls, platters, and vases that are as beautiful as they are functional. To that end, I work with locally sourced figured hardwoods, and augment the existing grain and figure in the wood with color. "Red Sky Aurora" started out as a simple platter made from a white birch crotch. The feather-like figure through the center was created when the wood fibers from two branches knit together in response to environmental stressors imposed by extreme temperatures, strong winds and snow load (i.e. a typical U.P. winter). In creating "Red Sky Aurora," my intent was to combine color with the natural figure in the wood to create an abstract landscape suggesting the onset of northern lights as the sunset fades over Lake Superior.



STEVEN HUGHES

MADONNA DEL LAGO SUPERIORE

14" × 11"

Acrylic

MARQUETTE, MI



KATHRYN LUND JOHNSON

CHAMPION MINE

20" x 30"

Photograph

AUTRAIN, MI

Fascinated by the rich history of the Upper Peninsula, I spend much time photographically documenting the austere beauty of historic mining communities and cemeteries. My editing style reflects the emotions I was feeling when viewing my subject. It is my hope that this image of the once dynamic Champion Mine in Painesdale will resonate with the viewer, and that he/she will find a story there, just as I have.



ASHLEY KOLKA-LEE

LITTLE MARAIS INN, LITTLE MARAIS, MN

10" × 12"

Printed magazine paper

DULUTH, MN



CARIE KOSCIELNY

IMMURE

2" x 6" x 6"

Mixed media and found objects

MARQUETTE, MI

As an artist I am more interested in questions than answers. My work is about possibility, potential and experimentation. The main goal is to create an abstract narrative that gathers people together and activates an experience that will extend into a memory that all people can identify with, no matter where they are from. In the end it is essentially about putting questions into the public domain to consider one's self and existence.

TED LAKOMOWSKI

Black and white photo taken in the spring of 2019. Traveling down an old camp road, I thought the shadows and textures were very interesting.

ICE ROAD

20" x 30"

Photograph

GWINN, MI





CHRISTINE LENZEN

SWELTERING DAY ON THE AU SABLE

24" x 24"

Archival inkjet print from film

MARQUETTE, MI

The ongoing series *Forever a Wilderness* was born from my desire to create a visual mythos of the Great Lakes' north woods culture – specifically for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Although I am certainly documenting the region, my approach is intended to poetically illustrate characteristics of the area and its people. Similar to how place can become intrinsically important to understanding the psychologies of characters in great literature, my goal is to create photographs that echo the sensibilities of this region.

The Upper Peninsula is isolated and remote - even the first governor of Michigan once described the area as a "sterile region... destined by soil and climate to remain forever a wilderness." It is the sparsity of population combined with the harshness and longevity of our winters that elicit the characteristics of Yooper culture: nonconformist and self-reliant - but fiercely supportive of their communities with a strong sense of regional pride. While this work is perhaps an ode to my love affair with the Upper Peninsula, it is also a portrait of what much of rural America embodies: pride in our wilderness, commitment to our communities, and the ability to forge through tough times.



MICHAEL LETTS

BESTIARY VI

60" × 120"

Carbon pencil on paper

NEGAUNEE, MI



SHAWN MALONE

MONOLITH - ORE DOCK

40" x 60"

Photograph

MARQUETTE, MI

It was a late 1990's road trip to Grand Marais, Michigan, when on a windswept day I saw Lake Superior for the first time, the incredible crystal clear aquamarine blues and greens leaving an unforgettable impression. Looking for a change in surroundings and direction in life, that's all it took to make the decision to move north, settling in Marquette, Michigan, in early 2000. Always having a latent interest in photography, capturing the beauty of the region photographically became my full-time profession in 2006. A few years later, I opened a gallery of my photography in downtown Marquette, and we are now in our sixth year of business. With infinite moods to draw upon, the greatest lake, Lake Superior, provides endless inspiration. Finding that magic light, angle and moment are what I look for in a composition, with hopes of capturing the full spectrum of emotion in those magic moments.

BILL MURCKO

SUGARLOAF

24" × 36"

Oil

MACKINAC ISLAND, MI





NICK PRENETA

THE OBSERVER

14" × 11" × 11"

Ash wood

NORTHPORT, MI

This wood is really old.

Occasionally... I plunge the end of my chainsaw bar into the log I am working with. This operation can be good or bad. If it is bad the upper tip of the chainsaw bar can get caught somewhere in the cut and have enough force to kick the chainsaw back towards my body. If it is good the cut feels smooth and effortless. Once the bar is completely buried in the log I can not see what I am cutting. I have to rely on my hands to guide the saw cut, and the feel of the saw cutting to guide my hands. Trust. Knowing without seeing. The form that came from this work is a contemplative figure, one that observes its environment but is not influenced by it.



PAUL ROSE

MORNING DREAM

20" x 30"

Photography

GARDEN, MI

Can you hear the birds chirping in the forest?

Having moved to a remote area of the U.P. from Detroit 15 years ago... where daily life is best described as dark and far, this place without strip malls, subdivisions, office buildings... etc, my entire way of photographing took on the characteristics of my new surroundings. Home was not about stoplights, the night sky blinded by city lights, highways and streets consumed by vehicles. My place was waterfront where the night skies stared back with luminosity of an infinite amount of stars. A canoe, paddle, and a big body of water entered my life and formed a new narrative... a vision over time I found important to my soul. I'm not surrounded by people, nor city streets, my office can be entered by exiting my home, camera in hand. The canoe became a part of my daily life, it became a partner in my vision, it developed into a romance of visual simplicity with the pureness of water.



BILL SAVAGE

WOMAN IN RED

21" x 23"

Photograph

MUNISING, MI

Nearly all of my Native American images are captured candidly, at Pow Wows throughout Upper Michigan. The resulting unposed facial expressions I seek are key to the spiritual mien of their performances and give a quality to the image that is exclusively free from influence.



ERIN SCOTT

WHO AM I WITH OUT?

35" x 46" x 4.5"

Cone 10 soda, varied clay bodies, found objects

MARQUETTE, MI



JOANN SHELBY

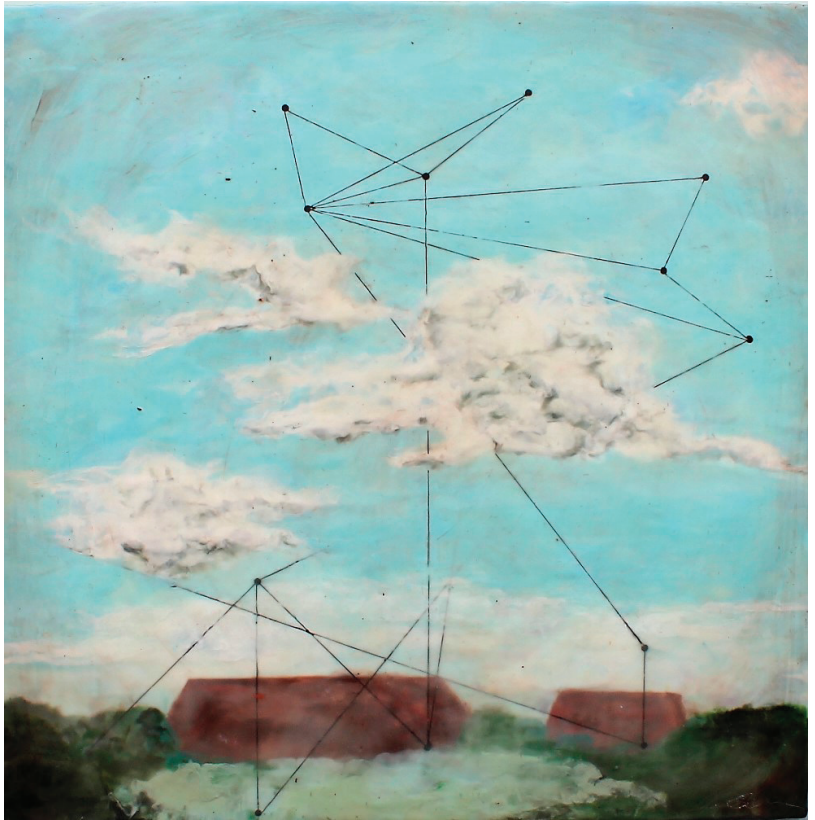
GARDEN REMAINS

9" x 12" x 3/4"

Eco print with mixed media

MARQUETTE, MI

Creating, drawing, and painting is part of my everyday. By experimenting with many mediums, I often discover new techniques. Sometimes it fails, but that is how we learn. I have produced eco printing on fabric, but using this technique onto paper is a recent exploration. It is a joy to collect plant material from my gardens, the woods, and translate it onto paper, and embellish it with watercolor, inks, or colored pencil.



APRIL SOUTH-OLSON

FROM THE STRAWBERRY FIELDS

30" x 30"

Encaustic

ESCANABA, MI

I am fascinated by the act of creation. Sometimes that creation is a child drawing a line on paper; sometimes it is the changing skyline that surrounds us every day. My work subtly exposes the human connection to the natural world by capturing a single moment in time--a connection that is easy to misplace. Every moment we experience is a collection of our histories reflected back at us--all of our choices and everything that helped inform those choices.

The encaustic medium allows me to layer the work and develop a history within the piece. Each layer helps create the next by guiding the bristles of the brush around elevations and into the deficits. Color from previous layers bleed into the next giving direction to the final surface.



CORRIE STECKELBERG

CHARISMATIC MEGAFUNA

26" x 38" x 28"

Wire, lead, foam, silk, porcelain

HOVLAND, MN

My most recent body of work, titled "Charismatic Megafauna," consists of a series of three-dimensional, anthropomorphized versions of some of the animals native to the Arrowhead region of Minnesota, where I live. Conceptually, my work deals with the question of agency from the imagined perspective of animals, and hopes to shed a little light on the unstable nature of power in the contexts of both environment and class. I think the perception within the developed world of having "mastered" the earth is undergoing a transformation as we find ourselves contemplating things like the loss of coastal cities to rising sea levels and our culpability for a sixth mass extinction. As in a revolution that transpires when a subservient class finally reclaims their agency with violent force, my recent work imagines an underrepresented class of animals that finally seizes on a dormant or long disregarded power. Still, I don't want this cast of creatures to come off as an unambiguously virtuous social movement. We have all seen how latent fears can be used to leverage political change, and animals – like people – are nothing if not survivors, willing participants in the unstable dynamics of power.

CINDY WEDIG

ANTICIPATED POTENTIAL

7" x 7" x 7"

Clay, resin, yarn

GWINN, MI



This was a new sculpture created in 2018 - "Anticipated Potential"- I was curious about the idea of the created soul prior to conception. What did God mean by Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations." Where is the soul prior to conception? I imagine because of the words of Jeremiah and other scriptures that God nurtured each one of us individually in a tender and loving way before He gifted us to the world. I wanted to suggest a living form, pure and beautiful endowed with LIFE-a gift from the very breath of God. Do they look as though they are breathing? I incorporated glow in the dark resin which can only be seen in darkness so it doesn't function well in a gallery setting but is amazing at home. I thought this would also suggest "life" to my forms. It is my goal that as you encounter "Anticipated Potential" you realize or remember how beautiful and cherished you truly are.



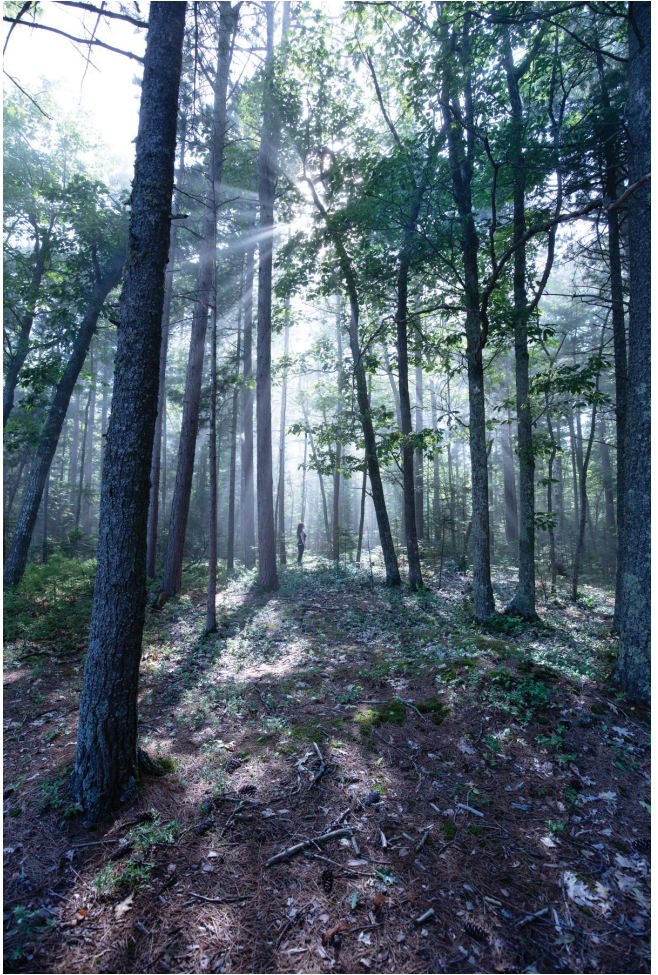
CAMERON WILCOX

PATHWAYS

18" x 24"

Photograph

MARQUETTE, MI



KAELYN WRIGHT

GODSPEED

11" x 16"

Photograph

MARQUETTE, MI



**DEVOSART
MUSEUM**



MISSION

The DeVos Art Museum enhances the mission of Northern Michigan University through exhibitions and programs that engage creative culture across campus, local and regional communities.

VISION

Connecting people, art and ideas through exhibitions and collections that celebrate interdisciplinary thinking and diverse perspectives.

Art Thrives Here.



